

FAIRMOUNT NEIGHBORS HISTORY PROJECT

Marvin Krenk and Mary Stayton Krenk, Consultants

Marjory Ramey, Interviewer

August 4, 2010 (Also present was Judi Horstmann, assistant to Marjory Ramey)

0804_141438

MR: This is an interview conducted on August 4, 2010. I'm Marjory Ramey, and with me is Judi Horstmann from the committee on the Fairmount Neighbor's History. And we are interviewing today Mary and Marv Krenk. We're in their home on Eaton Place and here we're going to start right in and ask when you moved to this house.

MK: We moved to this house in April of 1946 and our house was on Eaton Drive.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: You said Eaton Drive, all right.

MK: OK

MSK: It was only 1 block.

MK: And this is, we've lived here all of this time.

MR: All these years.

MK: Yes. Next March on the 16th, which is our wedding anniversary, we'll be celebrating our 70th.

MR: Isn't that something!

MSK: You, maybe. I'm not that old.

MR: Well, that's right. She was a child bride.

MK: Of course.

MR: Of course.

MSK: Very shy.

MK: She has a period of time when, I...I see I'm currently 93, so she's coming into the time she doesn't like which is only two years of difference instead of three, but when there's three there, then she can say "Well I married an older man".

MR: Right. I understand exactly how that goes.

(Laughter)

MK: Anyway. Yes.

MR: Now tell me something about your children, your family.

MK: Well I have a wonderful family, thanks to nature and luck and whatever. We have two boys we're quite proud of. Michael, who lives here in town and Christopher, who lives in Portland.

And...

MSK: Chris has a wonderful job. He works with the Albertina Kerr.

MR: Oh.

MSK: There's a nursery up there. He's the CEO.

MR: Oh, isn't that nice.

MSK: And it's wonderful.

MK: Albertina Kerr Nursery it was originally.

MR: Yeah.

MK: And, then it turns out that he's, it's been what the seventh director, since 1907.

MSK: Yes.

MR: My goodness.

MSK: They haven't changed a lot.

MK: They've taken on charities in three counties and then they book keep and supervise foster systems throughout the state.

MR: It was a going concern when I was a kid living up there. Right.

Now both of the boys were born and raised in this house?

MK: That's correct.

MR: Now tell me, where did they go to school here in Eugene?

MSK: U of O.

MK: They both went to the U of O.

MR: OK, but where did they go to grade school?

MSK: Let's see.

MK: Oh, Condon, down here.

MSK: Condon.

MK: Condon, at that time, which is...

MR: The building on Agate there?

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Was that then Condon? Now, you both remember, then, the old Condon that was the stone building at the corner of 15th and Moss?

MK & MSK: Yes.

MR: Remember that was the outside metal fire escape. A slide.

MK & MSK: Yes. A slide.

MR: By the time your boys were ready to go, they went down to Condon, which the University now owns and it's called Agate Hall.

MK: Right.

MR: But it was Condon Grade, what 1-6, when your boys were there?

MSK: Yeah.

MK: Yeah.

MSK: Grade school.

MR: Right and then they went...

MK: to...

MR: Where'd they go to middle school?

MK: Roosevelt.

MR: Roosevelt Junior High, they called it.

MSK: It wasn't a middle school, it was a junior high.

MR: Junior high. And then they went to South.

MSK: South Eugene. Both.

MK: Both of them.

MK, MSK: (unintelligible)

MSK: Both at the University of Oregon.

MR: And both at the University.

MK: And Chris later went on and got a masters or MSW in social science.

MR: Social work, uh huh.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Very good.

MK: At the University of Washington.

MR: Uh huh. Tell me, when you first moved into this house, (I want to ask you about the house to begin with), what was the neighborhood like? What was your feeling? Of course, we were all much younger, but what was the Fairmount neighborhood like in 1946?

MSK: It was quite quiet. Our only neighbor, really, was Nina Sweet and Mahlon.

MK: Mahlon.

MSK: He died about not too many months...

MR: Now he's the man that the Eugene airport is named after. Right?

MSK: That is correct.

MR: Mahlon Sweet Airport. Right.

MK: He was a great friend of Bill Tugman's.

MR: Right.

MSK: He and Bill were buddies.

MR: Oh.

MK: They used to come out of, away from the humdrum of the village often, and sit out and chew the fat and whatever.

MR: And Tugman was the editor of the Register Guard?

MSK: Um, hmm.

MR: That's right.

MK: Also, Nina, his wife...

MSK: Sweet

MR: Nina Sweet.

MK: Yeah. Was quite a recluse. And she didn't go out much. But she had a, they had, a short wave radio on at all times. Tuned to the aviation frequencies, in case any, there were no towers...

MR: Right.

MK: No landing places. So in case they were in trouble or went down somewhere, she could recode, she had the data of what it was. Then for years she did that until. Cap Arnold was used to come out here to go fishing with...

MSK: Yeah

MK: With...

MR: Who did?

MK: Cap Arnold.

MSK: Oh, Cap Arnold.

MR: Cap Arnold.

MK: He was a complete air force...

MSK: Whenever he went over in a plane, he'd toot his horn.

MR: (laughs) Saying hello to the Sweets. Oh, that's wonderful.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Now this house that we're now sitting in and in which you've lived since 1946, you were telling me was built by whom?

MK: It was built by Alan Eaton himself.

MR: E-A-T-O-N.

MK: E-A-T-O-N

MR: Alan Eaton, OK.

MSK: He established...

MK: He was not only establishing the Art and Architecture School at the University...

MR: At the University, um hmm,

MK: ...but he also was in partnership at one time with Gorell in art supply.

MSK: Oh yeah. Gorell.

MR: I see.

MK: And at other times, he, well he would. Just a senator, he'd been elected to the senate and he acquired all this property all the way clear up across Eaton.

MR: Really?

MK: Across Summit, all the way up to the line...

MR: Oh.

MK: ...of the Rhododendron Garden.

MR: Now when did he build this house?

MK: He built this in 1902.

MR: 1902.

MSK: Yes.

MR: My word. Isn't that something? It's held up very well.

MSK: It's very secure.

MK: Let me tell you this story. I came back from military service in the Pacific and was discharged in December of...

MR: '45

MK: '45

MSK: ...years.

MR: That's when Howard was, that's why I know.

MK: Yeah

MSK: Yeah

MK: And so they saved my job, which had developed into producing a lot of 22 hours of radio over land lines to take, 'though in AC under the problem of me being in the extension building, which was not acoustic. And having a no access to the control features, except the engineer hired by KOAC permitted, so you could naturally could not rehearse anything thoroughly, with the, until you could get to the control room and establish who views who and what was there.

MR: Now this was at the University of Oregon?

MK: That's right.

MSK: It was.

MR: This was your profession and I want to talk about that too, but go ahead and tell me about the house.

MK: Well, the house was here on a little postage stamp.

MSK: Barely a lot big enough to hold it.

MR: Really?

MK: Down below here there was a garage built from, from 6, but maybe 4...

MSK: Four-foot timbers.

MK: Four, five, six.

MR: Oh.

MK: Somebody living here, a later tenant worked at the University and brought these boards back and built it. Of course it was not even on the property.

MR: Oh. I bet they didn't even have a permit for it.

MSK: Probably not.

MK: There was no, no such thing.

MSK: No

MK: So the best way to explain to me is, I think is, Mary's parents lived at 570 W 10th Eugene, and so if you started there and came up to the campus, you went right through the middle of the campus, where, which is now closed and you can't do that.

MR: You can't do that.

MK: And then turn by the field.

MR: Hayward.

MK: Hayward Field, yeah. And then you turn on Orchard Street. Now we're all gravel, no paving, and no real street signs much and you keep coming across up Orchard St. and then, in between 2 teeny squeezed entries, which are still evident, as you saw, all, all gravel up to here, where we, we put a mail box down there. And the mailman stuck it in there, fortunately. There was a woodshed on the back of the house here, which was one mass of termites.

MR: Ohhhh.

MSK: It was really...

MR: Oh, gosh.

MK: So we pushed it over. So when I got back from service, Mary had been living with her parents, we wanted a place of our own. And we, frankly, were as poor as church mice, because I made nothing in the military in those days.

MR: And very little more at the University.

MSK: (Laughs). Right.

MK: They hired me after they had enrollment on. In 1939, October the 22nd to be exact, I arrived here. They waited to hire me until they had the extemporary classes without teachers. Of course Art Wally Dalberg couldn't teach all the persuasion classes. Nobody was handling the radio. And they got the radio by osmosis, because everybody had some idea about radio. Journalism thought it would replace the newspaper; the Music School thought it was the perfect (unintelligible) for artistic performance and would probably ruin that. The advertising people were all interested in the business aspects of the thing and...

MR: And speech wanted it, of course.

MK: Yes, because of all the speech, and drama wanted at least a piece of the action...

MR: Right.

MK: ...and so consequently it was a hydra-headed matter.

MR: Absolutely.

MK: It was 22 hours of broadcasting a week, expected and provided. We did several shows that were landline, clear to Portland with variety shows

MR: Ahhh. Ah, ha.

MK: I did quite a series on the history of various personalities: McKansas Straub, and the lady whose name now escapes me.

MSK: Lola.... Carson

MK: There you are.

MR, MSK & MK: (conversation, laughing)

MK: This is at the time when the water and sewage was running down Willamette Street.

MR: Right

MK: With wooden sidewalks. So here I was, I was busy, busy, busy, busy. But when I came back, they hired me the first time, \$1900 to be paid in 9 months and nothing in the summer.

MR: Nothing in the summer.

MK: No.

MSK: Oh boy.

MK: So I...

MR: Do we ever remember that?

MSK: Well we should.

MK: One summer I worked on the green chain and liked to killed myself because out West 11th, because the people who were doing the sawing, I think, thought it was kinda cute to run that college boy.

MSK, MR, JH: (laughter)

MK: So first thing you know the things were, boards were coming over faster than we could handle them and we're stepping on the boards.... And, you know, this was not comfortable work.

MR: Exactly.

MK: And then another time I, well I sought work wherever I could. At any rate, they offered me a job on the, on my return for \$2300. They thought they could pay that. I finished out this time from December 1945 to '48.

MSK: 9?

MK: When, when was that? (unintelligible) all day.

MSK: '48

MK: '48, yes. Anyway I said I'd come back for the, for this first one, then to the end of that summer of...

MR: '48

MK: Yeah, '48 term. And since there was no way of getting a larger sum, apparently, John Castille who ran the Speech Department had very limited funds. Bob Clark was just coming in as President and so everything was in turmoil that way. So I decided there's gotta be a better way of making a living, so I went to work for KORV.

MR: I remember that. It was a radio station here.

MSK: Yes.

MR: It was the first radio station in Eugene, wasn't it?

MSK: For a long time.

MK: And it's studios were located out Willamette Street, where that's the whole strip of shops are.

MR: At 29th

MSK: 29th.

MK: And...

MR: But that way was out of town.

MK: That was way out of town

MSK: In the toolies.

MK: And I usually took the very early morning shift and I had some accounts that I would call on them and I did make enough money just to kind of survive. We decided to move back to the property that Mary and her, well you tell the story.

MSK: I don't know what story you refer to.

MK: About how you and Joe found the property.

MSK: Oh. I don't know how we found it, except I do remember very well...

MK: Well, Barnes, the realtor, she was a jewel...

MSK: Showed us. And then one night we came up, drove up, and just sat on the parking and looked up at the house and I thought, um hmm, that's mine.

All: (laughter)

MR: Good.

JH: What attracted you to it?

MSK: I'm not exactly sure, but I do know when I learned that the Mahlon Sweets lived next door, it had a lot to do with it.

JH: Um hmm.

MSK: They were wonderful.

MR: Yes.

MK: Well and also it was hard to buy, because not only was this situation apparent in front, but there was never any real foundation. See there were piers.

MSK: We put in a foundation.

MK: And this, this span here was here when later, when we acquired the property and were doing work on it, we brought this thing and we figured we'd tip the ends up and let the middle level out. Not so, everything came up.

JH: Right.

MR: (Laughs)

MK: And a perfect perching perfect arch, just higher.

All: (laugh)

MK: So anyway, we had those lovely experiences.

MR: Oh that's great.

MK: But the problem was, it was that, the property was owned by Ken Shoemaker, who...

MR: Oh.

MSK: Remember Ken and Florence?

MR: Oh, I didn't know that.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: And then later, she wouldn't live out here, because she was frightened.

MSK: Too far in the country.

MR: It was a long ways out.

MK: Yeah, so, so they ended up renting it. And then...

MR: Now he was in the, what, Continuing Education? What department was he in?

MSK: English Department.

MR: English Department.

MK: Yeah.

MR: And he did.

MK: Yeah. So they wanted, I had that \$2000 GI Bill credit to buy, but they wanted \$4000.

MSK: Naturally.

MR: Naturally.

MSK: Greed.

MR: One would.

MNK: So, one of the VLT members said that “you can’t buy that because its too old and you can’t get a loan”. So it ended up that her father, who was an insurance agent at Occidental and ran the office and it was his district, was willing to co-sign.

MR: Oh.

MSK: He never would co-sign with anybody except Marv.

MK: So anyway, well I did the old fashion thing, I went to him, he’s a Southern gentleman. And I said I would like to marry your daughter. And I asked...

MSK: I guess that did it.

MR: That did it.

MK: And I guess that meant “open sesame”.

All: (laugh)

MSK: That’s my dad.

JH: Oh, OK.

MR: Oh.

MK: So anyway...

MR: So you got the house.

MSK: Yes.

MK: So we got the house. With the \$4000 and it was a big, big grated area by this fireplace, because, frankly, under it was a coal furnace.

MSK: Um, hmm.

MR: Oh, yes.

MK: And in the basement he had, he had built a double fire, a double unit chimney.

MSK: Chimney.

MK: Because there was a kiln in the basement.

MR: Oh.

MK: But only a half basement just, just so you could get in there with the coal and on this other side get in there to work with it.

MSK: Weren't those tiles made in the basement?

MR: He must of done ceramics.

MSK: Yes, he did, those tiles.

MK, MSK, MR: (unintelligible).

MK: And he built the house, so...

MR: And this was Eaton?

MSK: Yes.

MK: You know, he lived in it for a time. He built the house for Olive, Olive, was it, the pottery teacher?

MSK: Oh...Olive, Harper?

MK: Oh, how I knew it.

MSK: Oh, I can't remember her name. Fame is fleeting.

MK: Anyway, she had, she's enlisted in the, well, I'm feathered now, what's the extra group, what's her name, jeepers.

MR: Well.

MK: It'll probably come to me.

MR: It'll come to us.

MSK: Um hmm.

MK: Anyway, she was a pottery teacher and she was not very tall, so everything in the house had...

All: (unintelligible)

MR: Slovakian, wasn't she?

MSK: Yeah. Very short.

MR: Right.

MK: But she, but this fireplace, he laid out himself, and a great deal of his planning of course was in 1902, with corner casement windows.

MR: Ah hah.

MSK: Pretty rakish for that time.

MK: With beams being seen...

MR: Oh, that was pretty avant-garde.

MK: Yes.

MSK: Um hmm.

MK: Yes. And there was a little back porch here and you came up here to this door and then came in this way and in front you ran into two French doors to come into this room.

MSK: That window beside the front door is part of the old Methodist Church.

MR: Original, huh.

JH: Oh, I wondered about that.

MR: Well now, Marv, you were talking, as you were telling us about getting the house.

MK: So we got the house, and we worked on it, in part, you know, piece by piece, this and that.

As my earning improved I, we were able to do more, and so it was well situated for the kids...

MR: Right.

MK: ... for school. And we kept working on it and finally we decided, we decided we'd remodel it, so to speak, but save every part of the feature we could that was original. So this used to be a wall, and so we just cut it down and made more room for the table.

MR: Wow, this is nice.

JH: Um, hmm.

MSK: I've always liked what happened.

MR: Yeah, this is perfect for this.

MSK: Yeah.

ML: Well and so consequently, all of our time here, the important things, we sit down at this table where everybody can talk.

MR: It's just perfect. Well listen, I want to, when you were talking about the house, you mentioned the VLT, which means the Very Little Theatre here in Eugene. Tell us about your experiences with the VLT – not all of them, but...

All: (laugh)

MR: When did you get started with it?

MSK: I got started there first. He was a newcomer.

MR: He was a newcomer. Exactly. I remember you were there. When was the first play that you were in for the Very Little Theatre, Mary? Do you remember, was it *Our Town*? No, it was before then.

MK: No.

MSK: No, it was before that.

MK: Way before that.

MSK: Quite a, several years before that. I can't...remember what year it was.

MK: There were about 36 members of the VLT.

MR: When you joined them?

MK: When we joined them.

MR: And when, do you remember what year it was that you joined them?

MSK: Yes, it was 1939.

MR: '39

JH: Hmm. And you before then?

MSK: Yes, I'd been a member quite awhile.

MR: Quite awhile. Um hmm.

MK: But you were under age actually.

MSK: Well but now, but they didn't know it then... they didn't have an age limit.

JH: Uh huh.

MSK: They let me join.

MR: Oh.

MSK: I was old enough.

MK: The VLT just kind of grew because she was very active in it and I just became active likewise. Because one of its strengths is that the husband and wife generally joined it... so if you were seized with that virus, it would take just the whole family with it.

MR: Now, when you first joined, where was the building, where physically was the building?

MSK: Uh, the Very Little Theatre?

MR: Was it still out at the fairgrounds in the log cabin?

MSK: Yes.

MR: That's where I...

MSK: Where the ramp went up to the...

MR: Yes, it was a log cabin sort of the entrance to the Lane County Fairgrounds.

MSK: Yes.

MR: And it truly was a log cabin.

MSK: It truly was. And it was, the seats were kind of...

MR: Kind of benches, yes.

MK: Benches. And the ushers had to have a hammer and knock the nails down.

MSK: Knock them down before people could sit on them.

MK: The purpose of the whole thing was behind you. The stage featured the unpleasant feature...of the women or the men having to...

MSK: We had to go through the men's room...

MK:to get on the stage.

MR: I'd forgotten about that.

MSK: Yes. We had to go through like this.

MK: So, it was interesting. Right away I got interested in it.

MR: Well, you were both a big part of it for many, many years.

MSK: For a long time.

MK: And it was a very, it was a great, great hobby.

MR: And then it moved to where it is now...

MSK: Yeah.

MR: 24th and Hillyard.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: I was first president of the organization at that location.

MR: At that place?

MSK: Yes, he was.

MK: And so somewhere there's I picture of me sticking a shovel into the ground...

MR: At the ground breaking. Oh, yes.

MSK: Groundbreaking.

MK: And we got the Spicers to (unintelligible) fund the thing. I think we had to have a \$5000...

MSK: Yeah, they did it.

MK:...payment.

MSK: They underwrote it.

MR: They underwrote it.

MK: The building itself was created by a famous architect, who was a member of the VLT.

MR: Oh, what's his name? Hamlin.

MSK: Hamlin. Claire.

MR: Daisy and Claire.

MK: And she was active and he...

MSK: You're doing good.

MK: You're great. You're just great on this.

MR: Well because we've all known the same people for 75 years.

MK: We continued all through, and became life members.

MSK: I knew Hamlins long before he did, because when I was 12, they had a place out in eastern Oregon...

MR: Now this was Claire Hamlin and he taught at the...

MSK: Well, he...

MR: ...at the Architecture School, didn't he, for a while?

MSK: Yes.

MK: Yes.

MSK: It was his parents that I knew.

MR: Oh, really.

MSK: Original Hamlin.

MR: Oh, my gosh.

MK: He was a judge, wasn't he?

MSK: He was. And they lived down on 12th or somewhere downtown.

MR: Uh huh.

MK: Well anyway, VLT was a great part of our enjoyable times together because we could direct, we could play together; we had such fun doing things like *Bell, Book and Candle*.

MSK: We had some fun times.

MR: Oh, that was a wonderful one.

MK: And Mary(unintelligible)... Yerta Brown. And she picked "Elizabeth the Queen".

MR: "Elizabeth the Queen". Yes. Oh.

MSK: There was only one Yerta Brown.

MR: One Yerta Brown.

MK: She had that precision of "I'm an actress", which ordinarily interferes with many a part, but that was perfect.

MSK: Yeah. She was...

MR: That was, that was such a lovely production.

MK: It was.

MR: Now, this Yerta Brown that we're talking about was the wife of Iler.

MSK: Iler

MK: And he was a member.

MR: And he was a member, but he was in the Architecture School as well.

MSK: Um hmm.

MK: Yep.

MSK: Yes.

MR: And she worked forever, as I remember, in the student bookstore, the Coop, as we used to call it.

MSK: She worked in the office.

MR: She used to manage it.

MK: That's right.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Right.

MSK: She was the Office Manager.

MK: Well that's when, yeah, because...

MSK: One summer...

MK: ...most of the time was in Chapman Hall.

MK, MSK, MR: (unintelligible)

MR: When you met, was it in Chapman?

MK: Yeah.

MR: OK.

MSK: We decided to apply for a job at the Coop, because we were freshman coming in. And we just thought, we went in and talked to Yerta. She hired both of us.

MR: Oh.

MSK: I stayed for three years.

MR: Ohhh.

MSK: Will stayed through the move.

All: (laugh)

MSK: It used to be down on the corner, you know, where the Coop was.

JH: The corner of?

MSK: Umm. What's that street that goes...

MK: 13th and...

MR: Kincaid

MSK: Kincaid. Yeah. At the corner and an old, old building.

MR: Where the College Side used to be?

MSK: Yes. Yes.

MR: In that same building?

MSK: The same...

MR: Or before the College Side?

MSK: No, it wasn't before but it was, the College Side was there, in that whole area.

MR: And now they're back there again now.

MSK: Yes.

MK: That's right.

MR: I knew it when it was in Chapman.

MSK: Yeah. Well this was before Chapman.

MK: Well.

MSK: Chapman hadn't been built. That was built after I worked there.

MR: Right.

MK: Maybe to continue the saga of this building. We remodeled several times.

MR: Uh huh.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: Various times. We had to raise, there was just a dormer on this side, with windows that looked out, and just a flat roof all on this side. So we, you could get to it by stairs, but it was not insulated.

MR: Oh, yes.

MK: You could see the shingles inside. So we, of course began to need extra room. So we...

Fortunately Mr. Steel was a good companion to Mr. Stayton.

MSK: My dad.

MK: And they liked to work together. Mr. Steel worked for the Forest Service and had every known rating that they offered, electricity, plumbing, carpentry.

MSK: He could do them all.

MK: In fact, he was able to direct the whole thing. So, most of his handy work is in this place, together with her father, who used to come over on the weekends and nudge us along...

MR: (laughs)

MK: ...with something else.

MR: So it has a real personal history.

MK: Oh, yes.

MSK: Yes it does.

MR: What was Mr. Steel's first name?

MSK: Will.

MR: Will Steel, just for the record here so we can...

MSK: Will. It may have been William, but we just knew him as Will.

MK: See he would be, I think he could easily be, almost in his late 80's. And some lady's 60 or so, just down the block away, and he'd say "Well, I can't come up because I have to go over and do this", whatever it is, which of course the lady was quite capable of doing herself.

MR: (laughs)

MK: But he did it. And he'd always have the phrase "Well I never eat..."

MSK: Lunch

MK: ...lunch at the same place".

JH: (laughs)

MSK: He didn't tell the truth though, because he ate lunch at my folks'.

MK: That's right.

MSK: Every so often.

MK: He also ate it here.

MR: (laughs) He moved around.

MK, MSK: (unintelligible)

MK: A good deal of his wisdom is in the thing, because I know nothing about building.

MR: Right, well that's wonderful.

MK: My father was a lumberman, and he had a lumberyard and he manufactured molding, and so on, but I despise sawdust.

MR: (laughs) It wasn't for you.

MK: If it had been in the, you know, walking place of a theater, or something, then I'd probably loved it.

MR: You would have loved it. Tell us, looking back on your years here, what kind of changes have you seen in the neighborhood, that have been, you know, really...

MK: You know when we...

MSK: Loss of the wonderful neighbors next door.

MR: Right, OK.

MSK: Now the big house. Their's was like ours.

MK: We used to be able to sit here and look over and there was one house at the corner of Summit. There was the one house up out the back part of Elk...

MSK: Elk, yeah.

MK: ...and then the dentist's house over here was back up.

MR: It was on another place. They moved that one in.

MSK: Yes, they did.

MK: Just forward to the boulevard.

MR: Uh huh.

MK: So that's the only population we had, plus, of course, the house next door. Right here.

MR, MSK, MK: (unintelligible)

MK: So anyway, we had the same designer, Hamlin. He did the design of the top so it would go with the back.

MR: Oh, for your remodel. Oh, that was good.

MK: And so we...

MR: Claire was wonderful.

MSK: He was. Very, very good.

MK: ...one bedroom on this side, one bedroom on that side, a little (unintelligible) and a bathroom up there, so and an attic space.

MR: And you were all set.

MSK: Daisy Hamlin was my sister's alter ego. They were doubles in high school and everywhere.

MR: Is that right?

MSK: Yeah. And she was a friend of all of ours, but she was my sister's age.

MR: I remember Daisy so well.

MR: Did your boys ever play down at Fairmount Park? What did they do as they were growing up for entertainment?

MK: They went to, over to, they used to shoot the baskets at the house at the corner of...

MR: That the Basses built?

MSK: Summit, yeah. Shoot basketball.

MR: And the Basses built that, didn't they?

MSK: I believe so, yeah.

MR: I mean the Bass-Williams.

MSK: That's right. Mr. Williams.

MR: The Williams, yeah. Bass was...

JH: Is that the corner of Summit and Fairmount?

MSK, MR: Yes. Right. It goes like this.

MSK: Location, location.

MR: More recently, Dr. Mulder lived there, but before that the Episcopal priest married Bass's widow, but that's a whole other story.

MSK: That's a whole other story.

MK: Well anyway, then we had this operation going with, we closed up any possibility of getting into the furnace with a stove up to there, and we went rather with the concept of getting a half basement.

MR: Uh huh.

MK: So we really excavated a half of the basement and put sturdy cement foundation everywhere and so, gradually it just got better and better.

MR: (laughs) It certainly has weathered well.

MSK: It has and it's very solid.

MK: It was brown stained, so we kept that wonderful Olympic brown stain.

MSK, MR: (unintelligible)

MK: And it's easier.

MR: It lasts longer, too.

MK: And this ceiling molding was, it was the floor.

MR: Oh.

MSK: Upstairs. That was the floor.

MR: Oh.

MSK: You get up there (groaning noise). You creaked your way up.

MK: We laid a 2 x 4 flat to not take up any more height.

MSK: Well then we had a 6'4" son.

MR: That's true.

MSK: He probably hit his head up there several times.

MR: Did the boys participate in things, neighborhood things like Boy Scouts, or...?

MK: Chris was a great game man, so kid's sports was....

MSK: Basketball

MR: Oh.

MK: So the fellow who had the filling station down on Franklin at the corner over here...

MR: McCoy

MSK: Yeah.

MR: McCoy and his partner.

MK: Yeah. Well he was instrumental in getting a lot of kids into...

MSK, MR: Yeah.

(unintelligible)

MR: Peg and I were in school together.

MSK: Is that right?

MR: Yeah.

MK: So they had a team together, they were pretty hot really...

MR: Was it a neighborhood that played together?

MK, MSK: Yeah.

MR: Fairmount group.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: Well not so much that...

MSK: Not entirely but...

MK: This was the name of the fellow who ran the filling station who was...

MSK: If you're asking me to remember that, his name...

MR: McCoy.

MSK: McCoy.

MK: Doesn't quite ring...

MSK: That isn't, he won't accept it.

MR: OK.

JH: (laughs)

MSK: Sorry.

MR: I'm trying to remember his, he had a partner, but I can't remember.

MSK: Well it's the partner we probably can't remember.

MR: It's probably the partner we can't remember. But McCoy lived right down here.

MSK: Yes, you're right about that.

MK: Well really it was the one that was down on Franklin at the corner there.

MR: Yeah.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Associated, it used to be called. We had a credit card with them.

JH: Is that the one on Walnut?

MR: No. Well it was across Franklin and it's now...

MK: It's just...

MR: 76 or something.

JH: Oh.

MSK: If you ever had a credit card with him, you'll know.

MR: Right. Associated was the, Associated. This was before your time probably.

JH: I know.

(unintelligible)

MR: Anyway, is there anything else? We don't want to keep you more than...

MSK: We're just having a good time.

JH: (laughs)

MR: Oh well,

(unintelligible)

JH: Any, any traditions that you had with the Sweets, or any? I mean, it sounds like your neighbors were pretty far away from each other.

MK: Well I can say that...

MSK: People were pretty close.

MK: Yeah.

MSK: I only saw Nina Sweet in a skirt once.

MR: Is that right?

MSK: She wore pants every time we met her.

MR: Ohhh, that was...

MSK: We were all in skirts.

MK: She used to be a concert violinist.

MSK: She was a marvelous violinist apparently, as a young person.

And Mahlon, well Nina, for his funeral she put on a dress. That's the only time I ever saw her.

She had an old brocade dress that she put on to go to Mahlon's funeral. She was quite a gal,

Nina. Yeah. She smoked.

MK: Yeah.

MSK: When no one, no other women were at least admitting it.

MK: He used to come down and pour himself a scotch and soda, kind of rebelling against the establishment.

MSK: He had, he had heart trouble.

MK: Yeah, so...

MSK: She didn't want him to do that.

MK: She was trying to protect his health.

MR: (laughs)

MSK: She was trying to protect him, but he'd come down here and sneak.

MK: But Bill...

MSK: Tugman.

MK: ...Tugman was a great friend of. He'd come out when things got heavy in the office downtown.

MR: The Register Guard?

MK: Yeah.

MSK: Yes.

MK: Well, I think probably the most interesting part about us and the arrangement for the park, Fairmount Park, is that we are, I think, one of the fewest unfenced. Our back line is on the park.

MR: Oh.

MK: With no fence.

MSK: There was one once, because I found a portion of it in the mud down below.

MR: Now this is Hendricks Park you're talking about.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: Yeah.

MR: Ohhh.

MK: And I'm saying that from, that the deer can come unimpeded right down here.

MSK: Oh, they come right down in there.

MR: Yes. Remember the elk? Tell us about the elk and the little zoo they used to have. Do you remember that?

MSK: Yes.

MK: And then some people tragically shot them.

MSK: I know.

MK: I can't imagine.

MR, JH: Oh, no.

MK: You know, people. Animals are a hell of a lot smarter than people.

MSK: Yes, they are.

MR: Right.

MSK: It's a good thing.

MR: But they did have, what else did they have up there? Did they have any birds?

MK: No they didn't.

MSK: No, I don't think so.

MR: They had elk, I remember.

MSK: But they had elk and...

MK: And then just beyond it, of course, they had the picnic area.

MR: Yeah. Uh huh.

MK: And then later they had to repair it totally because it was smashed...

MR: With a tree.

MSK: One of our family was married up in the park.

MR: Is that right?

MK: But to get back to a story I really think has some merit on our subject directly, is that when the 75th anniversary occurred, the University invited him: "Come back, come back, come back". You know. "All is forgiven."

JH: Sorry. Who are you talking about?

MK: I'm talking about...

MR: Eaton.

MK: Eaton. He founded the house. So he sat right over in that corner and we talked about the place and how much we liked it. And he loved the fact that we had preserved it.

MR: Oh. I'll bet he did.

MK: We were too poor not to.

MSK: I was so glad we had.

MR: (laughs)

MK: We had visions of Swiss chalets, and so on, and fortunately we were too poor to undertake.

MSK: We couldn't do any of that.

MK: But he said, he did say at that time, "I'm going to get rid of the rest of my property here. And I'd like you to tell me what you want".

MSK: What you want of it.

MK: So I just walked up and said "you can't", and I said "I'd like to maybe start about here" and I walked down, clear down below the road down there, and then we walked over here, and...

MSK: He's in my lap.

MK: ...and then we were going to come back and connect. And it saved the big trees.

MR: Uh huh.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Good.

MK: He wanted to do that. So without any further question then, we connected him with another friend of ours, Furtick, who was a builder.

MSK: Don Furtick.

MR: Don Furtick.

MSK: And Sylvia.

MK: Yeah. So he later, before he got out of town, he thought he had a sale of the first lot. He moved all the way on Elk on this side, way across the top to Summit and so on. Anyway. I'm not going to hit you.

JH: (laughs)

MSK: I'm not sure you're not.

MR: He's gesturing all these acres that he's outlining for us.

MK: So anyway, we said well OK. We didn't like it as much because it sort of crowded us over on that side. But it turned out that the campers that he sold it to didn't want it. All of it. They didn't want that part. And then finally they didn't even want the house. They didn't even want the property.

MSK: They probably didn't like us.

JH: (laughs)

MSK: I don't know.

MK: Well maybe with two noisy children, I don't know.

MR: (laughs)

MSK: We did, at that time.

MK: Well anyway, that came, then, back to us, when Furtick cut the contract with him. He built all these, all the way up above Elk.

MR: Oh. Yeah.

MK: That's all his building.

MR: His building.

JH: OK

MSK: We still see the Furticks.

MK: And then later the Rhododendron Garden, I think they had it in the park at that time, but then it became a...

MR: It hadn't really been developed.

MSK: Yeah. Yeah.

MK: So that's how we got (unintelligible) and I crossed my fingers and said "How much?" And he said, "Well, let's make it \$1100."

MR: Oh. My goodness.

MSK: Gosh. You couldn't buy this much (unintelligible).

MK: We pay more in taxes by far...

MSK: Yeah. Than we paid...

MK: ...every year than that whole purchase price.

MR: Isn't that something.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: But anyway.

MR: So that's one of the changes you've noticed.

MK: Yes, I certainly noticed that the tax rate has gone up.

MSK: We've noticed that.

MR: That's occurred to us.

MK: And I don't know, we feel like we're adjoined to the Taj Mahal here.

MSK: Next door.

MK: This lady wanted to, she was Folger's daughter, builder of the Fifth Street Market. She wanted to build a...

MSK: She wanted to design her own house.

MK: What's the Italian area? It's that kind of a house.

MSK: Yeah, but she wanted to design her own.

MK: She wanted it with the big stones and so on. There were eight trees, beautiful trees, big trees. And they stood there quite awhile with fencing, you know the orange fencing.

MR: Protecting.

MK: Yeah.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: But we hadn't, we assumed they'd take a tree or two. But when the great day came, up came logging trucks and 8 solid, big, huge, wonderful trees went.

MR: Ohh.

MK: Not a thing you could do about it.

MR: No.

MK: I didn't try, because I just know, I doubt they would never have done it, unless they were wired with all the protection they needed.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Does she live there now?

MK: No. She started to, but she never even quite got it finished. But her husband worked for an insurance company in town, and she felt it prudent to move with him too, because he'd...

MSK: He was transferred east.

MK: In Connecticut, he'd been offered a home office position.

MR: Oh.

MK: Which was like jumping him upstairs. So, they took off and sold the property within, oh just I think, the first 5 days. A doctor was down here from Portland, Dr. Gordon, who moved, who bought it. Because he had been hired to move, transfer a lot of the equipment that was...

MSK: He helped move Sacred Heart.

MK: That's right.

MR: Oh.

MK: He moved that stuff into the new facility. So it was a temporary kind of job. And the kids, he had 3 teenage kids, but they missed their friends so, living out...

MSK: They wanted to go back where they were.

MK: So during the course of it, he decided they just not try to push them that way for the next year.

MSK: I think 3 teenage kids could be very contentious.

MR: Yes.

MK: So they moved back...

MSK: I don't know.

MK: They, fortunately they hadn't dropped the property that they had in Portland. And he, she had a PTA meeting at Edison and was kind of making the rounds and somebody said, or she said, that it looked like they were going to have move and sell the property and within, bingo, it was sold.

MSK: Yeah.

MR, JH: Oh.

MK: And after that an anesthesiologist bought it who works for McKenzie Willamette.

MR: Oh.

MK: And they have three children. So...

MR: That's part of a big change, isn't it? The houses that have gone up.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Of course Fairmount's been built up.

MSK: Oh.

MK: Yes. Everything has.

MSK: What changes.

MK: So all the other changes are just, but the latest is the huge moose that's arrived on Franklin Blvd.

(pause, then laughter)

MR: The basketball arena.

MSK: Yes, the arena. But we still are older ones.

MR: Yes.

MK: And fortunately, the greed of the University now has not quite reached us. But it's...

MSK: Almost.

MK: Their breath is on our, it starts at 15th, comes all across here, right across in front here, all the way to Villard, down Villard to 19th and bingo back to campus.

MSK: Makes you feel like you're going to be swallowed.

MK: All of that area, everything's in that area. Now it's open sesame for the University, because they own a lot of the property down here, just renting it. Next time it comes up for sale, they buy it and rent it, and pretty soon it's generating a lot of money in its own right. And they give it minimal repair and so it's minimal expense against it. And I can see how they want room for growth and they're going to get it that way.

MSK: Yeah.

MR: Well living next to the University is a different experience, isn't it?

MR: Yeah, but on the other hand, I think it's a good experience.

MSK: Yeah.

MK: I think it's good for kids to get concerned with education real early.

MR: Right.

MSK: Probably a good idea.

MR: Any questions?

JH: I think you've done a great job of asking questions.

MR: It's such fun. We know a lot of the same people here.

MR: You can tell that somebody is keeping somebody honest here.

(laughter)

MR: And we haven't even talked about the pageant.

MSK: Not at all. I was going to say one thing.

MK: You were a pumpkin and you also almost got...

MSK: I was a pumpkin in the first one.

MR: The Eugene Pageant Association started in 1925.

MSK: That's when I was a pumpkin.

MR: And you were a pumpkin. And it was done out at the fairgrounds.

MSK: It was.

MR: It started at Hayward Field...

(unintelligible)

MR: ...and then moved to the fairgrounds, in '34, I think.

MSK: Yes. I've been with it every time.

MR: Every time? Oh gosh. Remember Nora Smith? And all the wonderful times we had.

MSK: I really don't think I missed, unless for some reason, I was out of town, which I can't think of.

MK: The big names you know, like Hunter.

MR: I saw Don Hunter just yesterday.

MSK: Don Hunter, yes, he's quite a guy.

MR: Yeah.

MSK: Yeah. He's a real fixture.

MR: He's a real fixture. A photographer.

MSK: Yeah. He's done so much for us, and the city.

MR: We don't need to have this thing on.

End of August 4, 2010, Interview with Marvin and Mary Stayton Krenk

Transcribed by: Judi Horstmann

Completed: August 26, 2010

