

MARJORIE L. SHEPHERD
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ABSTRACT: In this interview with An Sweeney, Marjorie Shepherd reminisces about her life before coming to Diboll in 1960 and after. Mrs. Shepherd, the wife of C.H. Shepherd, was born in Mississippi, but moved to New Jersey with her husband and worked in the fashion industry in New York and New Jersey. She traveled all over the world for her job at Lord and Taylor and later for a store in New Jersey. The Shepherds moved to Oregon and Michigan before moving to Diboll. After coming to Diboll, Mrs. Shepherd attended Stephen F. Austin State University and received a bachelor's and master's in Fine Arts. She taught art in Diboll and throughout Angelina County and continued to travel the world. Mrs. Shepherd was also the founder of the Diboll Garden Club.

We are going to interview Mrs. Marge Shepherd and this will go into the Temple Archives at the T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library in Diboll, Texas. Interviewed by An Sweeney.

An Sweeney (hereafter AN): Mrs. Shepherd, your life has been such a wonderful adventure and I wonder if you would share some of the things that happened to you before you came to Diboll, and then we will talk about Diboll.

Marjorie L. Shepherd (hereafter MS): Well, maybe I shouldn't begin back too far because, you know, we came from Alpena, Michigan to Diboll, Texas which was like going from the North Pole to the equator and, then before that, we had been in many other states where we had lived because Mr. Shepherd had started up mills similar or different, or like the ones that he did in Diboll. But early on our first big move in our life was moving from Mississippi to New York.

AN: I can imagine the culture shock going from one place to the other.

MS: Well, I'm going to write the history of my life, I have started it, did they give you part of it? That always makes an interesting part for people, you know, when they are reading statistics of....born to other people, so you need to interject a little bit of humor, or fun, or something to make it carry on. What we did was I had a shop where I designed wedding dresses, wedding veils, and millinery and I also sold other things, too, in my shop. But before I had my own shop I had worked for my dear friend, Sher, from the time I was ten years old. I had worked for that lady in the middle.

AN: What was her name?

MS: Mrs. L. A. White and we all called her Rena. But then when she decided she was getting too old and she needed to retire, so I took over her business, but I had it in my house because I couldn't afford starting on such a shoe string to rent a building and all that so I took half of my down stairs, we had a two story house, and I took half of that and turned it into a shop and then, one day, one of my customers called me on the phone and she said "Mrs. Shepherd, one of my dear friends from New York is here and she is interested in who made all of these darling hats that I had been wearing." This lady's husband was a senator or a congressman, the name was Wynn, and I said, "Okay, when would you like to come." So we set a date and she came by and it was Dorothy Shaver, the President of Lord and Taylor in New York. Well, we all just carried on something terrible because we were so thrilled by the whole business. Because she had admired Mrs. Wynn's hats. Mrs. Wynn had no head, that's why Mrs. Wynn had to come and get her hat because she had a little beany head. And she said to me. "Young lady, you are wasting your time in this place," she said, "Whenever you come to New York you come and see me and I will give you a job." That was kind of like talking about going to the moon, you know, because at that particular time we were talking about – how old were you at that time? Something like that and I know you were little. So we dismissed the whole thing from our mind and poor Mr. Shepherd he went back to work from 7 to 11, and 11 to 7, 3 to 11 and all that horrible shift work.

AN: Who was he working for then?

MS: Unites States Gypsum, I think. That was where he had started as a young man in school. He had worked absolutely from the bottom, if you can get any further from the bottom, you know we were pretty low on the totem pole. About three months in, the United States Gypsum Company in New Jersey called Mr. Shepherd and asked him if he would come up and be one of their supervisors and, of course, we were so happy to get away from Greenville and the poor conditions and no money and just everything, we just had to leave, the only thing we could do. But of, course, our family thought it was horrible and they all cried. It was real sad for us to pick up because southerners were supposed to be born and die in the house no matter how poor they are. But anyway, so I said "You are going to take the job, aren't you," and he said "Sure," and so he flew to New Jersey to check out the living conditions and where we would live and where would the children go to school. All this time I am forgetting about Lord and Taylor's because I was just so happy over being able to leave Greenville because it was a bad situation for us. But we got up all the little stuff we had and we had an old Chevrolet and we drove to Clark, New Jersey. We found an apartment, really a nice apartment, and I met a lot of friends and then one day I said, "You know I've got to go into New York and see Mrs. Shafer, she told me to come and see her, she is going to give me a job." So I put on the best I had which wasn't much and went in and oh, she was so happy to see me and was a lovely, lovely lady. She was the only President of any department store in New York, a woman President. Then she took me around and introduced me to this one and that one and the other one and then she took me down to the millinery lady because she knew that was where I should be. She said, "Mrs. Browning, I've brought you a young lady who will be here to help you sell all of these beautiful hats that you have." And that same day

another girl had arrived from the country and she interviewed both of us. We started our sojourn in working at Lord and Taylor's. Every morning we dressed in our finery you know, you had to go to work in all your fine clothes, you didn't put on like we do here, I had to wear an original dress and navy blue shoes. The first day I was there, Mrs. Browning said to me "Now, look little girl, that purse has got to go."

AN: How cute!

MS: So she kept on getting me groomed because I became the leading model and I had to model every day so that meant that you had to be ready whenever you got to work. I caught the bus at 7 o'clock in the morning and rode two hours through the Lincoln Tunnel and then I walked for two miles and then I stood on my feet all day long and did all that modeling and selling and I did that for quite a while until the people in New Jersey decided they wanted me to come over and run their department. So I became the manager of the millinery department for Teppers in Plainfield, New Jersey, which is a real old, old establishment and I was the first person in that store ever to go to Europe, to Paris to buy. So I was going to go with Mrs. Browning anyway before I did the other job but I went on with her and, of course, when we said we were from Lord and Taylor, it was kind of saying you were from Neiman-Marcus or some place like that. So we had every advantage, we went to Maxine's, Sabrinas. I can't remember all the people I met. I met all of the Coutures and then I modeled for Jacques Fath and he was one of the oldest and most famous of the French men designers. I had known a lot of people in New York, like Mr. John and John Frederick and Lillie Dache and all that because I had worked for them, too. This is my first trip to New York. This is way, way back – right out of Mississippi. We got on the train.

AN: Were you intimidated at all?

MS: Never.

AN: I can't imagine you ever being intimidated.

MS: Never. As my son said to me the other day, we were riding down the road and he said, "Mama, how did you get up and do all that?" I said, "Well, when you have something in mind and you like that you want to do that you either have the drive to do it or you don't." I guess I was just kind of born with that instinct of some kind. Whatever I was doing I did it to the best of my ability and I love Mrs. Browning. She was a wonderful boss lady and she had been in that store for forty years, the Lord and Taylor's, and so whenever we said we would come down from Mrs. Browning we need this or that everybody would start running and gathering up everything. And when I moved to Diboll, Texas you can imagine what a let down I had. No body was caring whether I had...whether I was here or important or not which was fine with me. That was all right, I didn't mind. And then, let's see. What other kind of wild things did we do? But we worked very hard and we went to many fashion shows and we went to many parties and I wore nothing but \$100.00 to \$500.00 hats on my head every day.

AN: I know you were very busy. Did you have an opportunity for your family?

MS: Yes, I did. I took all of my days, I had a Wednesday and a Sunday and Mr. Shepherd was home a lot and he and Barnett liked to cook and everything so we kept the family going. We went to everything, you can't name anything we haven't seen or they didn't go to and the operas, we went to the opera just like we go to the movie up here, even more. So we had such an advantage and I guess coming from the boonies we were just so excited about it all and wanting to participate. Now my oldest son wasn't very happy about moving to New York because – I can't say it on the tape because it is not nice and I don't think he meant it the way he said it but he said "I just can't mix up with all them old people up there I'm going to stay in the South." And I said "Now, Pookie, you know you can't stay in the South for ever. Things are changing, they have already started changing and we as southerners, we have to make changes because we are the people who have been accused of not changing and we have made more changes than anybody." And so finally, after one year he graduated from high school in the south and then he came and visited us, but Barnett now came with us all the time. We have laughed all our way through, this is the only way we are going to make it through this terrible thing I'm doing is laughing. Shall I begin now? Okay. When Clarence graduated he came north to visit us to see if he wanted to go to work in the mills like his daddy and I think he went to work two days and he came home and he said "I would rather be dead than to work in that mill." So the next thing I remember I see him going down the road and he is waving at me and he has gone to join the Army. He was very good in the service, he was in the Army and the Navy and the Merchant Marines and he became a Captain. He has done very well for himself and I'm real proud of him and he came home and graduated from college. You don't have too many of them do that because they are upset with themselves. They don't go back but Barnett is going to school forever, he went on and on and on and Mr. Shepherd used to say, "Is that boy ever going to quit going to school and go to work. Doesn't he know that –

AN: Some people just enjoy going to school, which he obviously did. That was not my strong suit.

MS: You know when I went to school back a long time ago before I married, daddy [Mr. Shepherd] and I married right in the middle of the Depression, we didn't have any money to go to school, we didn't have any clothes, we figured it was cheaper for us to get married. I'll get back to the other part in a minute. Anyway, we finally decided we would get married and it worked out very well because my Aunt had raised me. I am an orphan, you know. With all my nine brothers and sisters I never lived at home hardly more than two or three days in my life. So she always gave me a car and I always had lots of things my brothers and sisters weren't able to have because there were so many of them. Anyway, getting married was a very important thing in our life, we had a big church wedding and we had more black people than white people. We were so happy that everybody wanted to come to see Miss Marjorie and Mr. Sonny get married.

AN: It was really special.

MS: Yes. Let's see, then we went off on our honeymoon and as I said, I always had a car and that's why I could work because daddy used to come calling on me when he was courting me when I was still going to school and he had finished. He would walk seven miles every night and then walk seven miles back.

AN: He must have liked you a lot.

MS: That's what I said and when you look at that picture of me you wonder – what did he see? Anyway, we have had a very successful and happy life and I think that's something not many people can say that they have lived with the same husband for fifty-seven years and haven't swapped husbands or swapped beds. I guess I am going to die and be the same old lady that slept with the same old man all of her life.

AN: Okay, you were in New Jersey and you were working in New York. How long did you work in New York?

MS: I worked in New York two years and I worked in New Jersey two years and then this business of transferring started in again so from the Gypsum Company we went to Pilate Rock, Oregon to the Kerns Company, they were a mill similar to the one in Diboll that they couldn't make it work. They had built it and they had all the raw materials and they had all the people there but nobody could make any boards, they couldn't make anything to see, they just kept losing money and losing money. So our friend, Mr. Eustice, who came from Greenville, too, called daddy and said. "I'm setting me up a group and we are going to go to Oregon and we are going to start that mill up for those people." So we started this wonderful relationship with all these people we met and we stayed there about four years. Then we went to Michigan. Oh, I have to tell you about Oregon though, that's where Mark was born after seventeen years. Barnett was in college and Mark was born and we had no job and we had bought a very expensive brand new house. I always said if I could live through that business I could live through anything. I didn't know about this that I am having now. But anyway, we saved our money and we built this gorgeous house on the side of a mountain and we had all the views from the Blue Mountains and we had windows, and basements and fireplaces and it was really nice. We were in what they called Eastern Oregon. Pilot Rock was the name of the town and it was one of the old landmarks of the Indians, when the wagon trains came over from the east going west. When they got to that big place where all the rocks were they knew that was sort of a landmark telling them where they were. So we did that, we were there four years. Anyway Mr. Shepherd left me there in that house unfinished with a baby and went to Canada. All the men left because the Gypsum Company after we got the mill running the Gypsum bought it so all the people left. So all the men picked up and went to Canada and that's how we ended up in Alpena, Michigan. Then that was nice, we loved that, we had a lovely house there and I had a built in maid because I had that little baby, remember and we lived there about four years. Then we ran into Mr. Temple. Southern Pine Lumber Company, they kept calling and calling and calling and so finally one day we said, well we guess we had better get in that airplane and go down there to Texas and see what it is these people want us to do that they are so determined that we are going to do it. We really had moved so much, I haven't told you half of the places we moved, but

that's enough. To think here we are at fortyish, we need to be settling down and we don't need to be jumping around from one darn place to another, so finally we came to Diboll and Mrs. Denman and Mrs. Cannon and Mrs. Allen met me at the airplane. We talked about that for a while, we were having trouble deciding on that because it was such a small town and remember Diboll wasn't much at that point.

AN: It was hard for you to make the decision.

MS: To come from where we had just about everything. You know, we had a good job, we had a good house, we had a big car, we had whatever anybody wants to have. Not that that makes you happy but it helps. So then we made several trips and in the mean time Barnett had gone off to India to school.

AN: India?

MS: India. He went to the University of Allahabad you can't say I don't have an adverse family. So I had this little bitty three year old and I come to Diboll, Texas with a little Mark and we move in that little old awful gray house down there that didn't even have a heater in it and the first two ladies that called on me were Mrs. Katherine Sage Temple came one morning at seven o'clock and – yes, in the morning, she was walking and she wanted to meet me. She said she had heard about me and wanted to meet me and here I am in this old bathrobe, my hair all tied up and I am freezing to death because we had no heat in the house. I said, we are going to have the pneumonia and we are all going to die here. And the next day Charlie Wilson's mother called on me about nine o'clock in the morning with her finger nail file. I have never been able to forget that, that has been well stuck into my head ever since and so then later on when Mark got bigger and we decided to do something about school. We were very much concerned about the school because it was really bad. So I let him go to Diboll school two days. He came home and he had grown up in Michigan with this nice wonderful accent which was just super for a little fellow to be able to speak such nice English. And he came home and he had absolutely murdered the kings English and I said, "Mark, what is your teachers name?" I forgot who he told me his teachers name was but anyway. "Well, we had better go by and tell her goodbye because we won't be back." So the next day I went to St. Cyprian's to find Father Caskey because I had met him through Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Cannon and all those people, they are all Episcopalians. So I enrolled him at the St. Cyprians at the kindergarten, I guess is what that was. I don't think they had four year old and five year old in that early time. I think it was just kindergarten, what would that be, five year old and six. Anyway and I thought what am I going to do all day because I have to drive over here and bring him to school at a certain time and then I have to come back and pick him up. Then I have to fix the dinner and I have to tend to daddy. We finally found a house and I think we did finally move into that big house, the Smith house. So I said, "I think I am going to college"

AN: In my spare time I'll just go and get a degree, huh?

MS: I had never been a day in my life, everybody in my family has everything but me. How old was I, brother, fifty? So I said to the people at SFA “Can you get my transcript after thirty-five or forty years?” And they laughed, they thought that was so funny, so they called up over there and they faxed me my transcript and they signed me up right then and there. I was the only person who had ever had Latin, French and Spanish all in the same in high school. You can’t find a person now taking any of that. I’m no Phi Beta Kappa. And then I decided I was going to do the art way. But in order to do the art program I had to do the whole thing so I had to start with freshman English and I worked six years until I had my first degree was a Bachelor of Fine Arts, that’s the second degree. You can get a Bachelor of Arts, but I got a Bachelor of Fine Arts because I wanted to teach and I wanted to diversify my art programs. I wanted to be a sculpture painter and I wanted to do art history and I wanted to do the whole thing. So then, somebody in my family died, Aunt Billie, Grandma, somebody and I had to miss a little bit of school so I had to go back the next year but in two more I had a master’s. So then in the meantime I am teaching everywhere. I did all this free teaching. I taught I don’t know how many years in Diboll. Art lessons. I taught at St. Cyprians in the old, old church. I taught in St. Cyprians in the new church before they ever built the school at all. I would just be going to school and teaching and Mark’s going to school. We are just going to school together. It was really very, very nice. Then every summer I taught a big art program in Diboll. I don’t know if any of your children went, was that before your time?

AN: We let them take art at AC, I believe.

MS: Yes, that was later. I did that for twenty years, too. In fact they want to know when I am coming back but I thought I have to think about that.

AN: What was Mr. Shepherd doing all this time?

MS: Running the fiberboard plant, what do you think he was doing? That was his love and joy and he didn’t care for traveling and all that. In the meantime that is when I started off carrying the kids on trips to Europe every summer, too. I would teach four weeks here and then I would spend the other weeks abroad. I took Mark with me two years but I have a lot of pictures of students and that’s what I wanted to display if we can get up a display of some kind and I have some fine pictures of young people in Diboll who did that and I thought that would be of interest to people who came back to Diboll to see all that.

Barnett Shepherd (hereafter BS): What was it like in Diboll when you first arrived?

MS: It was very bad. They – the school was kind of bad and the town was not organized at all. They hadn’t fixed the roads and hadn’t fixed the streets, hadn’t fixed the sewage. The town just needed to be fixed. That’s when Mr. Temple got busy and got rid of all the old houses.

AN: There were a lot of company houses?

MS: Right and that's when that ended all of that. They got rid of all the outdoors facilities.

AN: So you got indoor plumbing?

MS: Yes. So Mr. Shepherd was always interested in improving the town, putting in the gutters, the curbs and fix the houses and Mr. Temple got rid of all those bad unsightly places where the people had lived. Then they built the first houses where the old people lived. Remember we started that program. Then we built the day care center.

AN: Mr. Shepherd was very instrumental in doing all this.

MS: In doing all that, although he worked at the mill full days long, but he was so engrossed in making Diboll into an ideal place to live and when we would go and tell people about the little town we lived in and how we did this and that and then our schools were totally integrated. You know we got that all done and they used to have the black school over there before they had the other school.

BS: Do you remember the library?

MS: Oh yes, we helped build the library, too, we started it in the old Love Wood Products building and we must have worked thousands of hours on the library getting the money together because we begged for money by the dollars and people would say to us when we would call on them. "We'll give you a dollar if you will fix the picture show but we are not sure about a library." So we had a really hard time getting that library off the ground and then finally the Temples became interested and they realized that was an important part of the town that we had not had. You know that Texas was the forty-ninth on the list of libraries in the United States. Now, that is horrible. So when we would read all this stuff, we would come in and think – my goodness – all the potential was here for making money.

BS: What was the nicest part of Diboll, where you eat?

MS: Oh, the Pine Bough. That was the nicest part. Because the food was great and Mrs. Davis was lovely and I want to be sure that Mrs. Davis is included in something in this because I think she is one of the most important persons that Diboll ever had. She was the one who held it together for years. And I wanted to be sure something is written about her. I wanted to write a book but after I got sick, heavens, I can't even write a letter let alone a book.

AN: Once Mark finished St. Cyprians what did you do with him? He couldn't go very far, right?

MS: I brought him back to Diboll and he and Steve McGowen, Bruce Durham and Mark Shepherd became sort of cronies and they went all through school together.

AN: The school had been upgraded?

MS: Oh yes, no we weren't happy with it but it was better and you know I tried to teach in school, that's what I went to school and they would say to me "We can't let you do it, Mrs. Shepherd, you rock the boat too much."

AN: The school told you that?

MS: Yes sir, so that is why I ended up at St. Cyprians. Everybody else loved what I was doing, Angelina College, all the people, but in Diboll they didn't want anybody to be doing too many way out things and they still don't. Don't misunderstand me, I am sure they have come a long way but Mr. Foster said that to me many time. He said, "Mrs. Shepherd I love you and I know you are a wonderful teacher, but you just rock the boat too much."

AN: Tell me a little bit about your travels. Did you take a group from Diboll?

MS: I took some from all over the United States. I started with Diboll groups, I started with my relatives' children and my friend in Louisiana Marian, she is an English teacher, she teaches English as a second language like I did when I taught in Egypt. So that is how we started. We would have all these students and each summer we would take at least six or eight, each of us would have six or eight and we started with American Leadership Study Group and then we went to ARSG, then we had independents groups that went, and then Sheila did independents group because together we had been everywhere except India and Australia. We carried students with us and they have all gotten credit. I have pictures of the students from Diboll. I was so proud of all the students from Diboll that their parents. I'll tell you, Vernon Burkhalter said that was just the most wonderful thing that ever happened for his daughter to go on a trip. The older girl, not the Miss America, the other one, the black headed one. She is a darling. She is a teacher now.

AN: An excellent teacher.

MS: Right, she is a sweet girl. She had a wonderful time. Then I have carried people from other states. Then we picked up people in other countries. We made a lot of friends all over the world, really. It was just amazing to be able to say that you had met Anwar Sadat or you had met Johann Sadat, you know, or you had met just lots and lots of important people who came to the school to visit while I was there. Now I did that in 1980 and 81. I taught one year at Rameses College for girls. Teacher of English as a second language, math and science, 500 girl's art. I lost thirty-five pounds that year.

AN: You must have unbelievable patience.

MS: Well, they weren't allowed to speak Arabic, only English. If you turned them loose with that Arabic you would go bonkers so every morning that was the first thing I put on the board "We only speak English in this class." One day I wrote my name in Arabic and a whole sentence and a whole bunch of stuff and all the kids started jumping up and

down and hollering, screaming and yelling. That's the last time it is going to be up there now. Rubbed it out real fast. That was a wonderful experience for me and I was honored by the Church of Egypt for my missionary effort in schools. We were not really proselytizing or anything of that type but our school was a Christian School and we were the only Christian School, just about, in Cairo. Cairo has twelve million people and we had the richest and the nicest girls that could pass the tests. They had to take a test, they are very strict about the tests and if you didn't pass your grade they dismissed you and wouldn't let you come back to school.

AN: How old were these girls?

MS: They went all the way from four-year-old kindergarten to high school graduates, ninth, twelfth grades and that is when I met my friend, Nadia Davies, who was my teacher and she spoke English. She had two little girls so she helped me and I helped her. I only came home once in that whole year. I told about – I said I commuted from Cairo to Houston.

AN: From Cairo to Houston, now when you came back to Diboll, did you notice any big changes? Of course most of the major changes had already been done.

MS: No, I didn't notice many, too many changes, and then I can't remember exactly what I started doing. I started teaching at AC again I think. Then I always carried students to Europe on different programs, you see.

AN: But you are still living in Diboll.

MS: Still living in Diboll, I only moved here – how many years have I been here? Five years. '87 or something like that is when I built this house. Then '88 is when daddy died.

AN: So you lived in that house for a long time?

MS: In Diboll, about twenty-five years. And that house will be able to put a fifty-year marker on it soon now. I want to find out about it so the people that bought it. I hope they like it and they'll keep it and do what I wanted them to do with it but I just wasn't able to live in that big old house all by myself. It needed a family because it had so many bedrooms and bathrooms and all that. This one I don't have enough room to cuss a cat here but Barnett says I have too much junk anyway. We are going to try to do something about making my porch into a family room out there, sunroom or something or other.

AN: Can you share a little bit with us about some of the most memorable people you remember from a long time ago in Diboll?

MS: In Diboll? Well, as I said in the beginning Mrs. Davis was a very important person because she was so caring and anybody that stopped at the Pine Bough she could tell them exactly where you were. She knew where everybody was and she was just so nice. Of course, she and Mr. Shepherd had a big love affair going because when everything

broke down in her place you know who fixed it, don't you? Anyway, he would come and would do the streets, the light and all of that sort of thing. And then I remember Mrs. Lawrence, the lady Calvin Lawrence. And then another person I want to mention and it would be nice if you would interview her, Katy Lackey. Most of the people don't even know she lives down on the river – her husband lost his leg. She is a wonderful artist. She and I taught many, many, many children for free and she did beautiful work. Brother go in there and look on top of my secretary, and bring the statue thing she did of the little boy so she'll know what I'm talking about. I'm sure you don't even know Katy Lackey, do you? She was my neighbor. She lived in that two story green house when I lived in the Garrett's house. Katy was so gifted. I felt inferior to her because she was so gifted, but she never did have the advantages of going to school. Her husband was sick and her children were having problems and things. But I thought it would be nice if they would interview Katy and they could write her a letter if she doesn't have a phone but she may be in the phone book. I ran into her in the grocery store one day and she had gained a lot of weight.

[Looking at a statue]

MS: That is paper mache.

AN: I expected it to be heavy.

MS: Is it full of dust, it's been on top of the cabinet. She made about five of those statues, I think Mr. Temple has one and I have one. I don't know who else has the others, you might find out. They would be something nice to display in the museum. Another thing I had thought about is that..... I thought it was so darling. You can wipe him off with a little rag, brother. I used it at school for my students and my grasshopper is in there, too. Don't bring him in here. I did that. It's not as good as hers.

AN: What role did women play in Diboll?

MS: Swapping husbands was a good role. When we first got here, one summer, I went to Europe, took all the kids, came back and I don't know how many people had changed husbands and wives while we were gone. To us that was just unheard of. I just couldn't hardly do that and I think that is the reason I threw myself into my work because I wasn't able to travel in that sort of circle. I wouldn't say we were religious but I would say that we were devout in our beliefs in the teachings of our church. There is a difference in being holier than thou and some other things. But women in Diboll, I guess, Mrs. Lawrence, Mrs. Love and Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Cannon. I'm trying to think of some of the older women. Who was that other lady that used to – you know there is a big picture in the corporate office on the second floor where you go to the dining room. It has a lot of ladies on that. You might check that out. Mrs. Hogue and some of those people were before my time.

AN: Mrs. Hogue was not there. Mrs. Hogue is the one who had the boarding house, is that correct?

MS: Well, she had one, I think there were more than one because Mrs. Davis had a boarding house, too. It was called the Antler's, or something, I'm not sure. See we didn't come to Diboll until '60.

AN: What church did you go to?

MS: Presbyterian. I have been a Presbyterian all my life and all my family, Barnett was ordained as a Presbyterian minister but he is not any more. We have all been very active and I have been – that's how I went to the mission field, through the Presbyterian Church. You see I had to go through the Senate of New York, what was it called? The Senate of the Nile, or something or other, to get to go. It took me two years to get those stupid people to let me do that. They said I was too old.

AN: They didn't know who they were dealing with, did they? You were just about to begin.

MS: I'm telling you, one day I talked to the man on the phone.
[Skip in Tape] She was in a different scene.

BS: She was in Texarkana, right?

MS: Yes, she came and she went, then she would come and stay a little while and then she would leave. I don't think she really enjoyed staying here like she did in Texarkana; that was her home. She had been there all of her life, but she was very interested in the day care center and I was on the day care board for fourteen years and I was there when we started it and when they built the new part and then the new lady came and the other part. We went through I don't know how many day care center lady persons.

BS: You should also talk about the Garden Club.

MS: Oh yes, I forgot about that, I organized the Garden Club and it will be thirty years old now, I guess because it was in 1960 when I organized it. I was the first President of the Diboll Garden Club.

BS: The trees?

MS: Oh yes, we were the first people to plant all the trees; we were the first beautification. You know, Diboll thinks it is so beautiful. We were the first ones and they have forgotten all about us. We planted the Crepe Myrtle trees. And we hung all the beautiful baskets from the light fixtures. Who was the Mayor? I can't think of that man's name. He used to come to Diboll all the time and that's how we started planting the trees and we worked on that for years. It was really something.

AN: Can you tell me about some of the first Diboll Days you were involved with?

MS: When we first came Diboll Day was not a big deal like it became two or three years later. I'm not sure, was the Booster Club organized before or during or after?

AN: I think it was organized before. The President of the Booster Club is the one who was responsible for the first Diboll Day.

MS: For getting everything together for the Diboll Day and I know that Mr. Shepherd became so involved with the Diboll Day that he thought everybody in town should be out there doing whatever they were doing and helping so they could raise some money. That first year, I guess that was the largest amount of money they raised, it must have been about sixty – do we have it on the two years or four years. Every two years so it would be '62.

AN: 60 or 62.

MS: Well it would be about 64 was when they raised that big large amount of money. You know and all those men gave Daddy those boats and then they kept winning them and then they would give them back and they would put them out and would sell them again. Oh, they just did all sorts of things. I really didn't do much for Diboll Day because I didn't want to take anything away from Mr. Shepherd because he enjoyed it so much and he was really into it. Now the year that I did something ridiculous was we had a parade and we had the Diboll Day and it said the Diboll Garden Club is the greatest little house in Texas. Do you remember that? Oh, I have a great big picture of me in that. We won the prize and Mr. Temple said, "Now, Mrs. Shepherd, I wanted it to be realistic but I didn't want you to go that far." You know, I had on all these black stockings and all these colored drawers and stuff and my head covered up in these feathers. That was the year they honored Daddy and the Scout house and all of that. I'm not good at remembering too many dates because I have too many dates to remember.

AN: You were pretty busy.

MS: Mrs. Temple and I were real good friends, she always came to visit me whenever she came to town and I considered it a real honor for her to be nice to me because she had a lot of people to be nice to. And with a big company like that, but she would say, "I want you to tell me all about your trip to Europe" and she would write me a letter and I would send her a letter back and so I always thought that was really, really nice and I was happy to do that. Sometimes you make friends with people and sometimes you don't, especially if you are new in a community and you weren't born here and you are kind of different and all that. You are lucky that you find people that are kind and really like you. Of course, I didn't find too many people I didn't like and if I didn't like them I told them so. So you know that was not good either because – anyway it was a great life and Diboll has been wonderful to us and I would say that we did make the right decision when we moved, but at the time we were not sure.

AN: Diboll was very lucky to have you, you have been such a delight and we appreciate the interview and your sharing so much of your wonderful life with us.

MS: Thank you, I'm sorry I felt so bad and I haven't been able to really help. But I want you to read my thing that I am going to give you. Barnett had a copy made for you, be sure and read that because there are some things in there that I didn't have time and I was more concerned about Diboll Day than what I did in Michigan or Texas.

END OF INTERVIEW