

**Ben Anthony**  
**Interview 1a**  
**May 12, 1976**  
**Marge Shepherd, Interviewer**  
**Retyped by Courtney Lawrence**

**ABSTRACT:** In this 1976 interview with Marge Shepherd, Ben Anthony remembers life as a real estate agent in Beverly Hills, California and his interactions with movie stars Jack Benny, Will Rogers, and Barbara Stanwyck. He also mentions his accomplishments as a shooter.

**Marge Shepherd interviewing Mr. Ben Anthony in 1976**

**Ben Anthony (hereafter BA):** I am Ben Anthony.

**Marge Shepherd (hereafter MS):** Was born?

**BA:** Born in Bonham, Texas, in 1880, January 30.

**MS:** Okay, that's fine. I understand you had a birthday party Mr. Anthony. Can you tell us a little something about what you did at your birthday party?

**BA:** Well, they interviewed everybody there, and a lot of them told jokes on me and about me and...uh....I don't know.

**MS:** Did you talk about your business that you used to be in a long time ago? Weren't you in the real estate business?

**BA:** Yes, I was in the real estate business in Beverly Hills, California, and I was also in uh...and of course, in Diboll.

**MS:** When did you come to Diboll? Do you remember that? Remember the date on that? How many years have you been in Diboll?

**BA:** I just can't...

**MS:** Just can't remember all that, all right. And they told me, too, that you knew lots of movie stars when you lived in California. Did you sell them their cars?

**BA:** Some yes. I sold, fact of the business is that I worked with Mr. Reed, a real estate man there, and I had access to people that was hard to get. You know the real movie stars were hard to contact and anybody that but you could sit in our office and so many men came there to talk to Mr. Reed and you (pause) I would get to know them real well and (pause) like Jack Benny. And I went one time to a place, a drugstore place, where they served things and if you had a (pause) waiting for you to stand behind the fellow's chair

and so one guy came in there and stood behind a chair and they had big windows out on the sidewalk. He said, "Is that Jack Benny going down there?" All of these people jumped up and ran out and this fellow sat down in his seat. That's all he wanted to do. I had some very, very dear people that are influential and everything and I knew them real well, lots of 'em. Those like Jack Benny and parties like that.

**MS:** Well, ah, you knew Will Rogers real well?

**BA:** Real well. I used to. He lived out from Beverly Hills quite a ways and I would go back and forth going to the ocean, and I would always stop and have a visit with him. We always had some nice visits that a ways.

**MS:** Was he as human a person as he seemed to be? Was he very sincere person – Will Rogers?

**BA:** Will Rogers, he's just as plain as possibly can be, always in a good humor and a pleasure to go see him any time. He didn't know what stuck up was. Stanwyck I knew real well and visited at her house. But those people are all people that were just in contact from our office. It was a lot of fun to be around them all. Will Rogers was one of the best friends I ever had.

**MS:** (Apparently a skip in the tape)

**BA:** I just picked up around in job lots or wherever I could find one and (pause) just anywhere I could get them cheap (skip in tape) pick out whatever I had mostly (skip in tape) how I was said the basic color I don't know I didn't realize that I had (laugh) (laugh). (skip in tape) I can't remember. You know that's the bad thing about getting old you haven't got any sense. Club Championship. (skip in tape)

**MS:** Was that in Texarkana?

**BA:** In Texarkana, yes.

**MS:** Well, ah, and you played up until the last few years, didn't you, Mr. Anthony?

**BA:** Yes, uh-huh.

**MS:** You always enjoyed sports real well.

**BA:** Oh yes. Everything...shooting...(pause) I was invited to come to Canada one time to shoot in the shoot there with all expenses paid and when I got there I got hay fever and couldn't shoot and I had to come home. Didn't get to shoot. (skip in tape) It was quite a honor to be selected among six men in the whole United States to be – represent the Canadian Exposition in that.

END OF INTERVIEW