

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

PEARL WILLIAMS BEAUCHAMP

INTERVIEW 420

This is Marea Kafer Foster representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 400. I am interviewing Pearl Williams Beauchamp, interview number 420. This interview is being conducted on the 5th of August, 1992. We are in Mrs. Beauchamp's home, 1713 Wilmington Street in New Bern.

Marea Foster: Now, Pearl, if you give me your full name, and birth date, and your parents names.

Mrs. Beauchamp: My full name is Eula Pearl Williams Beauchamp. I was born the 13th of October, 1927 at Avon, North Carolina in Dare County. My father's name was Issac Samuel Williams and he was a resident of Avon and was in the Coast Guard for twenty-nine and a half years. He was a Mason and he moved to New Bern after the second World War. My mother was Neva Salter Williams and she was born on Portsmouth Island, North Carolina in Carteret County.

MF: How did they meet?

Mrs. Beauchamp: He was in the Coast Guard and he was stationed at Portsmouth.

MF: How old were you when you came to New Bern?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I was married and had one child. Wayne was born here and he was born in 1946. So, we came to New Bern about 1946. I was married when I lived in Avon and then we moved to Atlantic, North Carolina that's Carteret County, and then, we moved up here. Then we lived in Texas for eighteen month.

MF: Your husband was in the service?

Mrs. Beauchamp: He was in the Coast Guard and he was stationed

down there.

MF: Give me his full name.

Mrs. Beauchamp: His name is Billy Beauchamp. He was born March 22, 1922 and he was from Rome, Texas.

MF: How in the world did he get to North Carolina?

Mrs. Beauchamp: He thought he was from off a space ship or something when he got down there. It was during the second World War and we had total black out and we did not have a bridge across the Oregon Inlet at that time. He went down there in a jeep. He went in a surf boat across the Inlet and then they met him in a jeep. A bunch of these men from Oklahoma and Texas and they didn't know what a ocean looked liked. So, they was going down on the beach in that jeep and here comes this horse patrol. We had horse patrol going up and down the beach looking for subs coming ashore. They had just a little bit of light and this voice said, "if you don't shut off those God Damm lights, I'm gonna shoot them out." He knew right then he was not in the United States any more. So, he was stationed at the big Kinnekeet Lifeboat Station and then little Kinnekeet Lifeboat Station and that's where we met.

MF: You were awfully young and probably don't remember the Depression.

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, I don't.

MF: But of course you remember World War II.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right.

MF: Being right at Avon you probably had to have black out

curtains.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right.

MF: Were the air raids there?

Mrs. Beauchamp: We didn't have any air raids.

MF: Okay. No practices?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. We lived in a two story house and we could go up to the second story. Our house was close to the beach and we could look out and see the flashes of the torpedoes hitting the boats and we could hear the German U-boats when they'd come up and charge their batteries. We could feel it. We knew when there was a bombing going on off shore. You could hear it and see the flashes of the bombs.

So, we'd all go to the beach the next day to see what would come ashore.

Sometimes there'd be life boats and they'd be riddled with bullets and blood. There never were a dead person. They were always empty.

MF: Wasn't that scary?

Mrs. Beauchamp: It was kind of exciting. I guess we were too dumb to be scared.

MF: You weren't too dumb, it's called "young." We really don't know any better at an young age.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Of course my father was in the Coast Guard and he was stationed in one of the stations on the beach down there.

MF: If you could actually feel the vibrations, how far out in the ocean were they from shore?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Just two or three miles. It wasn't very far. We just could not see them but we could feel them and hear them.

MF: Was this the early part of the war or did this continue all during the war?

Mrs. Beauchamp: We did not have them at first. It was close to the shipping lanes so it got right hairy there for a while. Then we had dirigible patrols coming over. I never heard no one mention about dirigible patrols before, but we had them down there and they come so low some time you could see the men in that Gondola, I reckon you call it, and we'd wave and have a time.

MF: Where did they fly from, Norfolk?

Mrs. Beauchamp: It must of been Norfolk.

MF: The Naval Station there. I did not know they used those during World War II.

Mrs. Beauchamp: That's the only place I've ever seen them and heard of them was down there.

MF: Well, better that than nothing because they probably didn't have a plane to spare. Did you have rationing on the island as far as food and clothes went?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. We didn't have any potatoes or any sugar and I guess lard. We used to have butter and then we went down to margarine and it would come in a pound package. I don't know if it was plastic but it had a little tiny dot of coloring in it and you'd squeeze that dot and then you'd squeeze that margarine to get the color flowing.

MF: I remember mother doing that. And that went on all during the war?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, and we had rationing books too.

MF: So, you had to give a coupon for whatever you bought and for clothes also?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, we didn't have any for clothes. The clothes were so scarce anyway. Sears Roebuck catalog and Montgomery Ward catalog was our clothing place.

MF: Were there any clothes in the stores on Avon?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: A grocery store?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, grocery stores.

MF: What about coupons for gasoline?

Mrs. Beauchamp: You probably did, but I don't remember anything about gasoline. My mother had a car or daddy had a car. I don't remember that. She probably did. Maybe every five gallons she got she had to put a coupon, maybe that was it. I'm not real sure.

MF: Did you go to the school in Avon elementary and high school?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. We only had eleven grades at that time but it was an accredited school. Each little village down there had their own school. They don't, now. It's all one, but at that time each little village had it's own school and eleven grades were what we had. The class after us did not graduate. They went up to twelve grades that year. My class was the last one that graduated with eleven grades.

MF: Did you go to school eight months of the year or nine?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Eight. We went in September and got out in May.

MF: And you had to walk to school?

Mrs. Beauchamp: School was only about a block from the house!

MF: You didn't need any school bus. But it was close enough for everybody to walk, is that right?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Everybody went home at lunch. We did not have no cafeteria or anything like that. Everybody went home at lunch.

MF: What were your activities at school?

Mrs. Beauchamp: They had singing and plays and we had a very small library and just ordinary, play ball outside and jump rope.

MF: Were you ever interested in the girl's athletics?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I used to play baseball. We didn't have what you called bats. We'd take a board and use that for the bat.

MF: That's interesting. Any unusual games that you played as a child?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, just the regular ones. Now, up to Rodanthe they had Old Christmas. They celebrated Old Christmas up there.

MF: What is Old Christmas?

Mrs. Beauchamp: That's in January. That's the Elizabethan Christmas. They still celebrate it up there.

MF: Is that what the English call Boxing Day?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, this is "Old Buck". They'd take a cow's head and put a skin over it and of course a man, and that was called Old Buck. They have a program in the church and everything.

MF: Did they exchange gifts at that time?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I don't think so. I think we all had twenty-fifth

of December.

MF: Were there any special celebrations for Easter?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh yes, we always had a big celebration in the church at Easter and Christmas. They'd have a program and the children would have things to say and sing.

MF: What about the Fourth of July and Memorial Day or Labor Day?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: Nothing special?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. That's just another day for us.

MF: After you graduated from school, did you continue your schooling or did you go to work?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I got married.

MF: You were married at a young age?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I was sixteen.

MF: What day were you married?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Nineteenth of June, 1944.

MF: Then you were in New Bern by 1946, is that right?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. My husband was still in the service when we were married.

MF: Did he continue in the Coast Guard?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, he got out just before Wayne was born. Sheila was born March 7, 1945 and he was still in service. Wayne was born September 4, 1946.

MF: Did Billy have a hard time finding a job after the war?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, he really did. That's the reason we came



up to New Bern. He worked as a night watchman, and he worked at the state on these buildings, and he worked on the railroad. He got laid off the railroad is the reason we went to Texas and stayed eighteen months. He was a policeman for nine and a half years.

MF: In New Bern?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: I didn't realize that. So, when you came to New Bern, he became a policeman?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Not right then. He went on the railroad and stayed nine years and he lost the job, and we went to Texas and stayed, and then he came back. Seemed like he went back on the railroad for a while and then he was laid off again. He was on the extra board. Then, he was a policeman for nine and a half years and then he went back to the railroad. He was a Conductor.

MF: I imagine it was hard for a lot of men after the war to find jobs.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, it really was. You had to take what you could get.

MF: He never thought about going to Cherry Point?

Mrs. Beauchamp: He tried, but never could get on. He tried a couple of times.

MF: I have heard it was hard for a lot of people. They went back to school and maybe there was a chance for those that wanted to teach because the schools were so short of teachers. Well, when did

you start working for the library? Was that your first job when you came to New Bern?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, I delivered for two drugs stores and a fish market. I didn't work until Wayne was nineteen years old. I stayed home and kept house.

MF: I know that's the nicest thing to do because you have memories of your children.

Mrs. Beauchamp: They used to volunteer me for everything coming and going! "Mama will take us there!"

MF: I know it! "My mama will do this."

Mrs. Beauchamp: "Mama will take us there!"

MF: But it's nice that you can do it!

Mrs. Beauchamp: I was still delivering when Elinor called and asked me didn't I want to work on the Bookmobile.

MF: Before I get to that, who were you delivering for?

Mrs. Beauchamp: For Langston's Drug Store and Bill Stanton.

MF: Where was Bill Stanton's Drug Store?

Mrs. Beauchamp: You know where the William's Cafe is?

MF: Yes.

Mrs. Beauchamp: It was right there on Broad Street. I think it's a used book store there now. I'm not sure if it's right there but it's right there in that vicinity. He was going to buy that First Federal building. It's a restaurant now. He had already moved his stuff in there but he got into a little bit of trouble.

MF: So, then Elinor called you to come to work at the library.

How did you meet Elinor?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh, I've known Elinor. I used the library very much. When it was back to the Stanly House, I knew here then and we would chit chat sometimes when she'd come through. She called me.

I had put in an application there at the Stanly House but it never come to nothing and I had forgotten it. So, she called me one day and she said, "did I want to go to work to the library?" She said, "it would only be part time" and I said, "well, let me think about it." Beauchamp was at that time working in Goldsboro. So, I called her back and I said, "I can't believe I'd be interested in part time work." I was working full time at that time and I said, "I believe I just wanted a full time job if I changed," so she said, "let me think about it." So, she called back and offered me a full time job, so I took it.

MF: And your first job was?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Bookmobile driver.

MF: What was the Bookmobile like at that time? What did it look like?

Mrs. Beauchamp: We had a smaller one and it was painted blue, straight shift, and NO heat, NO air condition. Mary Whitford was the Bookmobile librarian at that time.

MF: When did Sara Meadows quit?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Sara Meadows had had to quit sometime ago. Her mother got ill, I think it was.

MF: So, Sara and Hayden were on it and then Mary took it.

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. Helen Ruth Scott was on it I think.

MF: You're right.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Margaret Nassef had been on it and Faye Bullard had been on it.

MF: That was a good training ground. So, then Mary Whitford had it and then you took it.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Well, I worked with Mary a long time, several years. Her arthritis got real bad and she had to quit. Of course she was bookkeeper all that time too and the bookkeeping has gotten tremendous over the years. So, she didn't have time to do the books and Bookmobile work too, so, she gave up the Bookmobile.

MF: I interrupted you when you were describing the Bookmobile.

Mrs. Beauchamp: It's kind of hard to describe it. We had about 1,000 books on there I think. We didn't have paperbacks like we have now, they were mostly hardbacks. It was larger than a panel truck. It was about the length of a bread truck.

MF: Did the patrons go in up at the front?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, we had two doors. They'd come in the back and go out the front.

MF: So, they would go in the back and there were books on both sides and you could stand there?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yeah. There was this kind of shelf across the back window and they'd put their books up there and I'd stand there and shelve them.

MF: Did you check them out there?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. The front desk is where the books were checked out.

MF: But I could go on the Bookmobile and look around?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Sure.

MF: And you carried children's books, fiction, and non-fiction?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. We have non-fiction juveniles and fiction and biographies, of course that's the non-fiction, for adults and juveniles.

MF: What is someone asked for a special book?

Mrs. Beauchamp: If the library has it, we can get it. Now we do not do inter-library loans. We tell them to go to the library to do that.

MF: I thought maybe you could take the order so to speak, for an inter-library loan.

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, it's too complicated for us to bother with it.

MF: Your set-up is really sort of separate from the library. You check out your own books and check them in.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. If you want a special book and it's in the library, we can get. Right now it has to go through the computer, but at that time it did not. We could just get the book, take the card that's in it, and check it out.

MF: When you checked out a book at that particular time when you first started on the Bookmobile, you would stamp the date it was due and then if I were the patron I would write my name, is that right?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right, on the card. Each book had a card and we had to take the card out when the patron checked the book out and we'd put the date on the card and the patron would sign their name and then we'd put a date due card in the pocket in the back of the book and put the date when it was due back.

MF: If any of your books were damaged, did you and Mary repair them?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. We would take them into the library and they had a special person to repair the books. Of course if it was just a little bit of gluing or a little bit of tape, we'd do that.

MF: But for bindings?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, we didn't do anything like that.

MF: What was your route, Pearl?

Mrs. Beauchamp: We cover Craven and Pamlico Counties.

MF: Would it be two weeks between stops?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Each stop was a month.

MF: So, you all travelled a lot of miles. What time did you have to leave in the morning?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Eight thirty.

MF: What time would you get back to the library in the afternoons?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Our time ended at three thirty. Sometime we were later getting in. Sometime we'd get in a little early.

MF: Then it would be up to you and Mary if a person wanted a special book to get it out of the library for them?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: What did ya'll do for lunch?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Sometime we had to take lunch. Sometime we'd just get a drink and a nab. Then, sometime we'd luck up and find a restaurant.

MF: That was probably a treat! What about bathroom facilities?

Mrs. Beauchamp: People have been real good about letting us use their houses. We had our special pit stops. We'd use them year after year.

MF: So, when you were on this route in Pamlico and Craven County, there were certain places you stopped? Would they be homes?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, when we used the bathroom, it would be homes. Now, we use the post office down in Hobucken.

MF: So, you stop there?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. Post Offices are a good stop. That's central and it's for the whole community.

MF: Where is it down in Pamlico County where the library is in the school?

Mrs. Beauchamp: That's Bayboro.

MF: Since the library is in the school, did ya'll still make a stop?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: Did you stop at the school?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, we would just go to the library. Of course the library parking area, we'd park right there in front. Of course, it's in the building of the school but it's a separate unit within

the school.

MF: Did anyone ever invite ya'll to have lunch with them?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh yes! You know Miss Powell?

MF: Yes, Miss Pearlie Powell.

Mrs. Beauchamp: We used to have lunch with her a lot. She'd have soup most of the time. She'd know we were coming, of course, we had our special day, and she'd have a pot of soup ready for us.

MF: Oh how nice! Well, anything special? Any outstanding memories, funny things?

Mrs. Beauchamp: They're all good memories but you know you sit down and think well, what's funny? Well, you can't think of a thing!

MF: Did you all ever have any accidents on the road?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh yes! We were coming across the bridge one time and this man hit us three times, I think it was, twice and then he skidded back and hit us again! It was raining.

MF: On the bridge?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Almost to the bridge. I said, "Mary, what's happening?!" She said, "I think that man's hitting us!" She could see out through the mirror. I was looking ahead. I was driving and there was Bang! Bang!

MF: Pearl, did ya'll ever have any flat tires?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. We had one at Eleanor Marshall school one time but we called Ballard and he came and fixed it for us or sent somebody.

MF: Well, if you were in the country, what in the world would



you do?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I don't know. Lester Gaskins is our mainstay. If anything happens, we call Lester Gaskins. Our drive shaft fell out one time down at the Lowlands, so he came in and had to pull us in. That was the awfulest noise you ever heard in your life. That second Bookmobile was a bad one about the drive shaft falling out.

MF: Hayden mentioned that the Bookmobile was called a Gergenslager. I think of something German, but this was a make?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. That's must of been the little blue one called Gurgenslager. I don't know whether it was or not. The second one was the International.

MF: Is that what you're driving now?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, I'm driving a diesel now and it's a Ford. So the blue one must of been a Gergenslager. That was the make of it and they've gone out of business.

MF: The one you have now reminds me of a Winnebago. Maybe not quite that big.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Well, this is Thomas-built. You know, up in the in the northern part of the state, he makes school buses too.

MF: Is it easy to drive?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh yes but you just have to be careful. It's longer than you're used to and you got to keep that back end in your mind all the time. We have a backup bell that rings and we have power brakes and power steering.

MF: You didn't have all that when you first started?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. You just have a regular three on the floor!

MF: I know all about that! Pearl, did you ever have any problem with people not returning books?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh yes, we have that problem like everybody in the world I think. We used to go to people's houses and try to get them.

MF: How did they react?

Mrs. Beauchamp: They were always polite. We've not had a lot of nasty talking people. People have always been mighty polite to us. We don't always get the books back. They've lost them or they've loaned them out. On the whole, we don't lose that many.

MF: Would they pay for the books?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Sometimes and sometimes they wouldn't.

MF: And if they don't then you just have to smile.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. They'd say I returned it, and you'd have to say okay.

MF: The customer is always right.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. You can't call them a liar.

MF: Even when you might know they are.

Mrs. Beauchamp: We've had people kind of talk a little ugly to them, "I have returned this book and I know I have returned it!" We had one not to long ago, she was from River Bend, and she really had a time. They charged her for an over due book up front and she said, "I have returned that to the Bookmobile and I know I have returned it!" Well, we looked high and low. I knew she hadn't returned it

to me, you know I have the Monday stop. We looked and looked and couldn't find that book. Here she come the next Monday. She said, "You know, I found that book. It was in the guest bedroom." She said I called and told them about it and she said I apologized. She gave me the book to return for her. When I went in I held the book up so everybody could see and I said, "I brought it in this time."

MF: At least she did apologize.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, she did. A lot of times they don't apologize when they're ugly to the girls. They stand you down sometime that they've returned the book. When they say that, you say okay but look under your seat and look under behind your bed and stuff like that.

MF: And if you run across it, please bring it in. Pearl, what have been the changes on the Bookmobile route, maybe in attitudes of people over the years?

Mrs. Beauchamp: The people have always enjoyed the Bookmobile to the fullest. I mean they'd say, "Oh, I don't know what I'd do without the Bookmobile!" They just loved the Bookmobile. We have lost a lot of our patrons. In the earlier years, the mothers didn't have to work and they'd bring the children on and get books for their children and get books for theirselves. Well, the mothers have had to go to work, and of course now the children have grown up and they quit coming after the mothers quit bringing them. So, we've lost a lot of our children like that. They really need the books. Television has really cut out a lot of the reading for the children.

MF: Yes, and that is a shame. Nothing can give you any more

pleasure than reading a book.

Mrs. Beauchamp: I know. I love reading.

MF: I do too. With your patronage dropping off, do you foresee in the future the end of the Bookmobile?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Not really because the patrons really do love the Bookmobile. We go to Oriental and they'd say, "Oh, I'm so glad you've come, I've run out of books. I've just got to have something to read!" We still go to some schools, but not as many as we used to go. We used to go to Brinson Memorial School, and then go over to Bangert School. We'd check out 800 books a day for them schools.

Four hundred at Brinson, four hundred at Bangert. The schools have got good libraries now. We go to Ben Quinn School and they have a wonderful library out there but they still want us. We go to Garber, and we go to Trinity.

MF: You go to the day care and nursery schools and kindergarten areas.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. We have Horizon Academy, we have Kids Korner, and Kids Korner II, we have Cobbs Child Care Center, and Child Development Center. They get books and read to those children. We still call it ADAP school but it's Coastal Enterprises now. Those children up there really love the Bookmobile.

MF: I'm glad you mentioned this because I never would of even thought to of asked, do these particular businesses, which is what they are, do they call and ask you to come?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. We do not go unless someone asks us.

MF: You do not solicit business?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: You mentioned that you checked out as many as 400 hundred books to Brinson and 400 to Bangert. In the same day?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: Didn't that deplete your shelves?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. But see, each teacher would come and get twenty-five or thirty books.

MF: And she's returning twenty-five or thirty. You and Mary could check them in as fast as they were brought?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. I'd check them in and she'd check them out.

MF: I know it can be done.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Of course when we got in, we were exhausted! We only went to those two places in one day. We'd take one day to cover those two schools. We don't have such a large check out at anyone place anymore.

MF: I'm glad to know that the schools and the day care centers used the library facilities.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Kim Trudo has Kids Korner II and she brings all of her children to the library for story hours and stuff. It's wonderful that they use the library like that. Mary Flythe goes down there early and has story hour for them.

MF: Mary is good. Well, is there anything else you'd like to tell me about the Bookmobile.

Mrs. Beauchamp: To me, the Bookmobile is very special. We love the Bookmobile and the people, I believe, love us.

MF: I'm sure they do. They couldn't help but like you and Mary.

Mrs. Beauchamp: And Sheila, she goes on out to it now and she loves it too. I'm going to miss it, I really am.

MF: I know you are. You're retiring. Well, who went on the Bookmobile after Mary retired from the Bookmobile and went full time? Who was with you?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Sheila. She came just part time with me starting and then she went to work full time. She works Mondays and Fridays in the library now. Of course, when she doesn't work Friday, she works Saturday and Sunday. But she'll be Bookmobile librarian I think.

MF: Who will be with her?

Mrs. Beauchamp: We have a substitute, Lila Wiley.

MF: I don't think I know her.

Mrs. Beauchamp: You probably don't. She was raised right down the street here a little bit. I think she wants the job but right now she's just substituting.

MF: The library has grown so much and there are a lot of them that I don't know anymore.

Mrs. Beauchamp: I know. I don't know some of them myself.

MF: I mean Johnnie, of course, and I don't see Mary often and I don't see you doing the Bookmobile.

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, and when I'm in the library, I'm in the back. I'm going to be substitute after the first of the year.

MF: Oh good. You don't want to completely retire.

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, I don't want to lose contact.

MF: Pearl, tell me what you know about repairing the book section.

Mrs. Beauchamp: I don't know a thing. I can glue in a few pages and fix the spine of paperback books but a hardback book I'll not touch because they need special attention.

MF: Do we have people at the library who do that?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, we have a special person. Geri Beck does all the repairing of the books. She was trained to do that.

MF: What about ordering new books?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Debbie Cayton does that. Now I have been buying the paperbacks, the historical romances. We have a big call for those. We have been getting an allotment. Miss Hawkins would say, "You can have \$200 a year to spend on paperbacks." We used to go to L & M News and buy them. Of course they've been out of business. They gave us a discount. Well, Walden Books gives us a discount too. But if I'd see one that I'd think our patrons would like, then I'd buy it in my name. I get a ten percent discount at Walden's Books whatever it is, preferred reader. You probably got one too.

MF: No, because I don't buy books anymore. I read everything in the library. I don't have any place to put them.

Mrs. Beauchamp: You should come to the Bookmobile on Mondays and see what we have cause we have a lot of paperbacks that they don't have in the library.

MF: Well, I know. I've requested a lot from the Bookmobile.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yeah, I've noticed that sometimes! Sheila will tell you what we have and by then we'll have it up front.

MF: Your right about that. Pearl, when you say you could buy books, then you could buy them at your discretion or did you have a guideline?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, I buy them at my discretion.

MF: She trust your judgement, which I would too. When Debbie orders books, is there a committee or someone that recommends books?

Mrs. Beauchamp: They have a book committee but we ask for what we want too. So, she goes by both of them I guess. We get a lot of rental books now. We used to not have rental books at all but we get more rental books now than we do get new books. When Mrs. Hawkins was ordering, she would order one for the Bookmobile, one for the up front, one for Bayboro, and one for Carteret County.

MF: Do you still do that?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. They don't have the money to do that anymore.

MF: It's been cut back so terribly.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yeah, and Debbie orders us rental books mostly now. We have to request them from her.

MF: And the patrons can request that you order them?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: How does the book rental system work?

Mrs. Beauchamp: She gets them from Baker and Taylor and she orders



them by computer or telephone computer or however that works. She gets this long list from the computers like names of the books and she checks them off and orders them.

MF: Does she pay a monthly rental?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: So, it's cheaper to do that?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, and say we'll use it for a year and then we'll turn it back in.

MF: If the book is damaged, if the spine is loose, do you have to repair it at the library or do you send it back to Baker & Taylor?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I think they send it back to Baker & Taylor but I'm not sure about that. Some of these books come in and you open them one time and they fall to pieces.

MF: I certainly do. They're not put together very well. A lot of them are not, they're very cheap and the paper is too.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yep. They used to sew books together but they don't do that anymore, they use glue and the glue gives away sometime.

MF: Faye Bullard receives the new books, doesn't she?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, she's the processor.

MF: When the library buys books, she processes them. Does she also process the rented books?

Mrs. Beauchamp? No, Debbie Caton does that.

MF: Debbie Caton handles all rental, but Faye has all the permanent books?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. She has Bobbie Hawkins to help her.

MF: About how many books does the library buy a year, do you know?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I haven't the slightest idea.

MF: We get funds from the state and federal government, is that right?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I have no idea about that either.

MF: I'm not sure if the city and country give. I think they give a little money too. I picked this up with the interviews. But Faye is the one that processes the new books and Debbie orders the rentals. When did book rental start?

Mrs. Beauchamp: It had just started in our old library, then, we moved to Heilig-Levine building. We started in our old building but not very long before we moved.

MF: Did Baker & Taylor approach you about renting books?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I don't know.

MF: I know they buy a lot of books from Baker & Taylor because Hayden would order from them years and years ago.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Mrs. Hawkins, when she was ordering, they got them through the state library and they would process them up there and then all they would have to do when they came here was put their numbers on them and stamp them. They don't do that anymore, they buy them directly from Baker & Taylor. Of course when they come in, they have to put jackets on them and process them, and put pockets in them, and all that stuff.

MF: Now that the library is all computerized, what about the

Bookmobile?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Every book in there has been bar coded and we're getting ready for our computer. Our patrons are getting their computer cards. We've got them all fixed and ready to give out and a lot of them have already gotten them. They can use the computer card in the library or on the Bookmobile.

MF: To get their new library card, the computer card, could you issue it to them on the Bookmobile?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, not on the Bookmobile. They fill out the card and I have to take it in and then Sheila goes into the computer and gets their number and everything. She has to check to see that they don't have one from up front.

MF: Then you would give them the card the next time you went to that stop?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. We'll have it the next time when we'd go. They have to sign it in my presence. I have to see them sign it. Right now we're using the number on the back of the card.

MF: Yeah, that's what everybody's using now. Are they going to change that?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. Well, when they go into the computer, we won't have to put that number on them but it will automatically come up on the computer. But right now we have to write it in by hand or they do.

MF: Since you retired, does Sheila know how to work this computer?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Oh yes, she works the computer.

MF: So, she will already know how to get it in.

Mrs. Beauchamp: I'll go down to the library when they get the Bookmobile computer and learn how to use it.

MF: I don't think it's hard. It was quite a change to go into the library and here's this round, like a carousel in a little stall sort of and you just type on the computer and not use a card catalog, but I've had a good time with that computer. I don't always get it right but I've had a good time with it and I think that's wonderful.

Have you heard good things or bad things about the computer being computerized?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I think on the whole everybody likes it. They enjoy the computer. Of course they get aggravated sometime when they can't find the book they want. Maybe it don't come up on the screen or something like that. But on whole, I think, everybody is pleased with it.

MF: Are all the books in the computer now?

Mrs. Beauchamp: They're suppose to be.

MF: When we first opened, I don't think they were.

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, they had a lot of problems with bar codes. The public doesn't realize it but these girls at the library had not used a computer and there were a problem about getting the wrong bar codes on the books and stuff like that for a while. They didn't have enough training.

MF: That was a big undertaking.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes it was. That was a lot of books to have

to bar code.

MF: How many books does the library hold? Do you know?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, I don't. I know the Bookmobile holds approximately 2,000.

MF: Gracious sakes! And the library must hold one hundred times that if not more if you consider all the separate rooms.

Mrs. Beauchamp: And too, they have films, and they have cassettes, and they have a lot of stuff that of course the Bookmobile can't handle.

MF: Do they still check out copies of paintings?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No, they got rid of those. Don't you remember when they had they auction down at the Heilig-Levine?

MF: Yes, I do.

Mrs. Beauchamp: They sold them all.

MF: I'd forgotten that. Pearl, tell me about the Kellenberger Room. What type books are in that particular room?

Mrs. Beauchamp: That room is strictly North Carolina. We don't have any books in there except North Carolina books, the genealogy books. I think it is one of the greatest rooms in the library.

MF: I think so too.

Mrs. Beauchamp: I'm real pleased with that room.

MF: So, the Kellenberger Room is what used to be known as the North Carolina Room?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right.

MF: Do we have a separate room for reference?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. The reference is that little desk in the

back. Now, they have an office there with a computer when they have a computer on the reference desk and then the periodical room they can go in there and get books and company magazines and stuff that people want.

MF: Are patrons allowed to go into the periodical room?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: Are there any little, small, private rooms that a patron could go into to read or to listen to tapes?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Not that I know of.

MF: I know they have a Conference Room.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: Could that be used for meetings? Could any patron request the use of that room?

Mrs. Beauchamp: They can request it whether they get it or not I don't know, I really don't. I know there's a form you have to fill out when you want to use it and I don't know who uses that room besides the Board meeting.

MF: Right. The same thing would be true of the auditorium, wouldn't it? You'd have to fill out a form requesting to use that?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes.

MF: Then in addition, we have a Children's room which is just precious.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. Have you seen the Rainbow Room?

MF: Yes and I just love it!

Mrs. Beauchamp: Mary Ann has had a tremendous amount of children

for the July reading game!

MF: I'm sure she has. Mrs. Mary Ann Flythe, the children's librarian?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right.

MF: Is Elinor still doing story time?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes. Whether she is going to continue or not I have not heard anyone say.

MF: I imagine she will for a while. Now, is there anything else you can think of that you would like to tell us about the library or about the Bookmobile?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I think we've covered it pretty well. We just loved the Bookmobile and wish more people would use the service!

MF: As I said earlier, I get a lot of books from there. I think I'll have to start patronizing you. I did forget to ask you and I should have, you started to work when the library was at the John Wright Stanly House?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. They had just moved into the new building. They had moved in March and I went to work in November.

MF: You've been there a long time.

Mrs. Beauchamp: November 18, will be twenty-five years.

MF: Maybe you will have heard something about these people I want to ask you about. Did you ever hear anything about the WPA supplying book menders in 1938?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. We have a cemetery record book of the Ceder Grove Cemetery. That's the only thing I know about the WPA.

MF: I knew we had that because I used it for my great-great-grandparents. Did you ever hear anyone talk about the WPA setting up branch libraries in 1938?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: Did you ever hear anyone speak of Frances Jones Howerton, Miss Fannie?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. Was she one of the librarians?

MF: She was librarian for thirty-eight years.

Mrs. Beauchamp: If I did it was just by passing.

MF: What about Margaret Chapman?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: She was appointed on March 1, 1940. Did you ever hear anyone speak about Rosamund Meadows or Lula Broadstreet?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: Dorothy DeWeerdts did the research on the library and got the history for us and there were vague mentions of these people and things and so we were hoping that some people that we interviewed would have a recollection. At the time you went to work for the library, the colored library on West Street, had it integrated?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. Mrs. Hawkins was buying books for them and when it did go out of business we had to go down there and pick out the books that she had bought and we had to bring them back and clean them up.

MF: Since they did not have a professional librarian they could not receive state and federal funds.



Mrs. Beauchamp: No. That was a privately owned library. It was owned by the city of New Bern.

MF: So, the city had to fund it?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. That's my understanding. The books that Mrs. Hawkins bought for them probably was funded by the federal and state. She bought a lot of black history books for them.

MF: Well, knowing that some time the library would be integrated and she kept them back.

Mrs. Beauchamp: When we went down there to get them back, she didn't get a lot of them back.

MF: What happened to those books, do you know?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Probably children took them home. Sadie Lowe was the librarian at that time and then she came to work at our library.

MF: She was there when I worked there.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Right. Of course, she soon retired. She just finished out her time so she could retire. Did you know she died just recently?

MF: I know. I saw that in the paper when I thought, oh, I have to interview Mrs. Lowe and I did not know she wasn't in New Bern anymore and when I saw her obituary I was really very sad.

Mrs. Beauchamp: She was a nice lady.

MF: She was very nice. She could of told us so much.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Yes, she sure could because she was in that library a long time.

MF: Yeah, and would have known the whole operation. Do you happen

to know if the black library was started by the city for the blacks or did a group of blacks get together and start it?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I don't know.

MF: Was there any problem with getting the black patrons to patronize the public library?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No. They've always come to a certain degree to the library. They just came more often after the West Street closed.

MF: I can understand them not wanting their library to close because it's their neighborhood library.

Mrs. Beauchamp: I think Sadie Lowe had a lot of children's story time. She'd get them to sit down in front of her and she'd read to them.

MF: I can understand how they would feel about that. Do you know anything about Mrs. Betty Flowers?

Mrs. Beauchamp: Just what I've heard some of the people talk about her. Hilda can tell you a mouthful about her.

MF: Yeah, Hilda did! Then Elinor told me about the finding and sale of the rare book in 1962 and she told me about starting her story hour. Did you ever hear anyone talk about the Mary Hendren Vance Memorial Fund for book purchase?

Mrs. Beauchamp: No.

MF: Hilda mentioned a little bit and Sara Meadows gave us a little bit of information about Mrs. Vance.

Mrs. Beauchamp: Never heard of it.

MF: So, if someone wants to know about Mrs. Vance they are going

to have to listen to all these tapes which are very interesting. Everyone I have talked to has told me a little bit about Miss Fannie Howerton and they all say that she was librarian when the library was over in the Christian Science Reading Room in that house, and she had a naughty drawer, and if you had a book that she didn't think you should read she would not let you check it out! She'd put it in the bottom drawer and when I've asked a few people about Miss Fannie Howerton, the first response is, "Oh, she had a naughty drawer!" and I'm surprised you haven't heard about it. Well, now is there anything else you would like to talk about; yourself, or the library?

Mrs. Beauchamp: I can't think of a thing.

MF: Well, on behalf of Memories of New Bern I want to thank you very much for participating in our oral history program. The tape will be placed in the library. The tapes will be available to the public in a year or so and we hope to take this information and make it into a book. Thank you so much, I really enjoyed it.

END OF INTERVIEW