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Oral history interview with William J. Brown,
1991 January 19-March 2

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with William and Jane Brown on January 19 and March 2, 1991. The interview took place in Bakersville, North Carolina, and was conducted by Jane Kessler for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The sound quality for this interview is poor throughout, leading to an abnormally high number of inaudible sections. The Archives of American Art has reviewed the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

JANE KESSLER: —1991. This is an interview with Bill Brown and Jane Brown at their home in Bakersville, North Carolina. Okay, we have [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Which is about four minutes from Penland School.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, great. I want to start out this conversation asking Bill where you're—where you're from originally, and how you became interested in the crafts. You know, we know about you when you—when we ran into you up here, but I don't know a lot about you before that.

WILLIAM BROWN: You're good. Well, when I was in first grade, it rained. [They laugh.] And my other chum who I went with—

JANE BROWN: Went to school with?

WILLIAM BROWN: —yeah, what's their—

JANE BROWN: Meduen?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And when it rained, their mother made soap.

JANE BROWN: Oh, the Aldrich boys, yes.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And we'd go down in the basement, and she would give them—our mother would give everybody, you know—

JANE BROWN: Eight bars of soap.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah. And then—and so when we're—we would get work at [inaudible]. Well, you don't let little kids to make art. Was it he'd pick up—she'd order the pieces of—

JANE BROWN: Soap? Leftover soap?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, when it's—what's the one—

JANE BROWN: Ivory soap, it was Ivory soap.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [Laughs.] Yeah, yeah. And so then she'd do the laundry—

JANE BROWN: Oh, with the leftover pieces.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then—

JANE BROWN: [00:02:00] But you really liked doing those forms, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, then—no, and nobody knows nothing like that. I mean, nobody—we were just making the things, and if it fell on the floor, whatever, that's okay. And sent—what the hell [inaudible]?

JANE BROWN: You were—well, let me shoot you this. I think when you were 14, your dad was a dentist, and a woman came and saw one of your pieces—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yes.

JANE BROWN: —which is really outside right now, isn't it? You know, one of his pieces. And said, "Who on Earth made that?" And he said, "My son."

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, no. You've never seen that one.

JANE BROWN: Oh, okay. All right. Well, at any rate, she liked it.

WILLIAM BROWN: She had a—well, I got one, and her—what am I talking about? This dumb thing—I gave Pop a fisherman.

JANE BROWN: Oh, okay.

JANE KESSLER: That you carved?

WILLIAM BROWN: In—

JANE KESSLER: Soap?

WILLIAM BROWN: —soap.

JANE BROWN: Oh.

JANE KESSLER: Oh.

JANE BROWN: I see.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then he had it in his place there, and they had a little bit big to hold it up, you know, for the—

JANE KESSLER: Folder.

JANE BROWN: Folder, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: How neat.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And then—so then—

JANE BROWN: Could I take over for a second here?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Alright.

WILLIAM BROWN: Do it.

JANE BROWN: This woman that came to see Pop Brown, or was having her teeth worked with, said she would like to see Bill Brown. Now, the reason I'm talking about her is that she ends up on one of the major public TV programs about Diego—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —Rivera.

JANE KESSLER: Rivera? Mm.

JANE BROWN: Pardon me, Rivera.

WILLIAM BROWN: Her—

JANE BROWN: And her name is Lucienne. And Bill saw that a few months ago and said, "That's the lady that came to Pop's office."

WILLIAM BROWN: She's alive, and staying [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: And she, then, became a major apprentice of Rivera, and she talks probably a third of the time on this particular TV program. She's the one who found Bill's piece and said—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, he was—

JANE BROWN: —"I'd like him to come to my studio."

WILLIAM BROWN: [00:04:04] Well, why—the—she came to Pop, my father, to get her first [inaudible] already, and they got talking, see, and then she looked over to the thing, and, "Who did that?" And he—Pop says, "Bill," what a quick thing. And so she said, when she came back again—I [inaudible] doing anything like that. And she gave him a—

JANE BROWN: Key.

WILLIAM BROWN: —key to get into the whole place. I could go anywhere I wanted. She said, "Give him—Doc, give him this, and if he wants to go in [inaudible] anywhere in there." Well, I'm not going to be a sissy, and anyway I don't know what the hell am I doing.

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible], huh?

WILLIAM BROWN: This is this—yeah, well, this thing here, here. Yeah, sure. And so I did some other things. And then she gave me the—

JANE BROWN: Was it a piece of marble?

WILLIAM BROWN: Marble.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, piece of marble, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, it's not all, you know—and it was this wide, not tall. And so she gave me the thing to go in and out. And if she was there, fine, or if she wasn't there it wasn't [inaudible]—

JANE KESSLER: So this was a studio.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, no, it's the Flints—used to be—

JANE KESSLER: Flint School?

WILLIAM BROWN: School—no, it was—well, they had things up on the thing, and it was—people had a little thing. [00:06:06] They didn't get in and, you know—

JANE KESSLER: To—

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] thing, but it's down in the basement. Kids were getting things done, and [inaudible]—

JANE KESSLER: Like a—

WILLIAM BROWN: —and—yeah. And—

JANE BROWN: That's the piece, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, God! [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Oh!

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that was his first piece—

JANE KESSLER: That's—

JANE BROWN: —with this lady.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh!

JANE BROWN: I don't know if I can hold onto it.

JANE KESSLER: Now, this was—and this was—Bill was going to tell me where the—where this was.

JANE BROWN: In Flint. In Flint, Michigan.

JANE KESSLER: In Flint, Michigan.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: In a school, in a—

JANE BROWN: An art school, art academy.

JANE KESSLER: —an art school, art academy.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, art—

JANE KESSLER: In Flint, Michigan.

JANE BROWN: —the Arts Center, I guess, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And now it's a big thing—

JANE KESSLER: Yes, sure.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible], but so she gave me that thing—

JANE BROWN: Lock.

WILLIAM BROWN: —lock , and then—

JANE BROWN: Whatever this is, it isn't marble.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, it is.

JANE BROWN: Is it really?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Oh, [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: And the—

JANE KESSLER: It's wonderful.

WILLIAM BROWN: The—she'd give the thing for me, and sometimes her—she'd be there when I would be—

JANE KESSLER: Together.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and no one would be around, and she'd—[laughs] I'd talk—she says, "It's coming, it's coming good." "Good? What the hell do you mean?" I can't see it, you know. I just tried to do it, see? And then—yeah—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —yeah, then. See, I was—

JANE KESSLER: Realism.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And, oh, it's terrible. [They laugh.] But so we'd argue, and she'd—with me, and say, "That isn't a person—"

JANE KESSLER: Purple.

JANE BROWN: It's not a real person, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, first, that's—

JANE BROWN: A representation of, right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, no, I was trying to get it all [inaudible], and she's standing there, giving me help. And so that's [00:08:00] well, but that's what happened to it.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: So that's when you began your love of art or sculpture.

WILLIAM BROWN: Pain in the ass, doing this stuff.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. But it was still—

WILLIAM BROWN: It was fun, anyway.

JANE KESSLER: [Laughs.] Isn't that true?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so that's how it got [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: He was about this big, but he—in the ring there.

JANE KESSLER: Now, that was—

JANE BROWN: Okay, so then you went into the war.

JANE KESSLER: And that was—and that was—so you were interested in sculpture. You really started out being a sculptor.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE KESSLER: That's—

WILLIAM BROWN: —I never knew what it was, and—

JANE KESSLER: You didn't have a name for it, did you?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible] soap, I think it'll help you dry them off. Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And so this is the best thing we ever had. I can't recall if I got this in my mouth. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Oh, he can't talk, in other words. He's got it in his mouth.

JANE KESSLER: Well, we're going to stop a minute.

[Audio Break.]

WILLIAM BROWN: [They laugh.] It's very cheeky. What are you doing that for?

JANE KESSLER: [They laugh.] You got me so fired up, I'm off the line.

JANE BROWN: Are you all too warm in here?

JANE KESSLER: No, I'm—

JANE BROWN: No? Okay.

JANE KESSLER: —I'm fine, if you all are. Okay, so you—

WILLIAM BROWN: So you went to Fenton.

JANE KESSLER: Went to Fenton.

JANE BROWN: Michigan.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's a—

JANE BROWN: Little town.

WILLIAM BROWN: —little town.

JANE BROWN: Little town outside Flint.

WILLIAM BROWN: Because my Pop, father, awful, got a great big house that shaped the falloff. And so all of us kids were there, and went to the—

JANE BROWN: Local school in Fenton, Michigan.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Oh, yeah , it was only about a block away, so everybody's everywhere.

JANE KESSLER: Is this high school?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, I was—four things, yeah—

JANE BROWN: Fourth grade?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. No, no, no.

JANE BROWN: Fourth grade-ish?

WILLIAM BROWN: [00:10:01] It's—I was—came out of there when [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Well, he graduated finally from Fenton. You know that, but when did you go?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, I did not.

JANE BROWN: You didn't graduate from Fenton School, Coll—High School?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, oh, yes, but not in the—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —anything in—

JANE BROWN: Oh, not college.

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't do anything.

JANE BROWN: Oh, you did nothing—

WILLIAM BROWN: Everything—

JANE BROWN: —while you were there. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, because that's—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: See, I'm—

JANE BROWN: Ninety kids, and you and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, no, but, Jane—

JANE BROWN: All right, excuse me.

WILLIAM BROWN: —the thing—I'm not going to go to a new place and have anybody think that I did these things—

JANE BROWN: Artist.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible], we're not going to do that kind of [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: I know he died but I didn't know that. Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, sir.

JANE BROWN: So you didn't tell anyone you liked doing anything in the arts.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, in the house. And then we put up the—all of the, you know—

JANE BROWN: Oh, the steam plant.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: He worked very hard with his dad on his house.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they—people—

JANE BROWN: Twelve-rim steam plant.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's the thing you should be—[laughs] with that thing, that big old thing, and building it with, oh—

JANE BROWN: They put in a 12-rim steam plant that they ordered from Sears, and it came in all of its parts, and Bill was 12 years old, and so he and his father, who was a dentist, who worked at night with his son, and on Saturdays and Sundays—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —put that thing in. So he was learning how to make things work is what he's talking about.

WILLIAM BROWN: Or just pulled. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: You were just learning how to—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, a little bit there, there, there. I got it. Oh, God. Yeah, got it.

JANE BROWN: When he got to Penland this all made a big difference, because he knew how all those steam plants—

WILLIAM BROWN: Everything in the goddamn world , and—

JANE KESSLER: All steps , wonderful.

JANE BROWN: —[inaudible] got here. They were all coal. He knew well how they worked.

JANE KESSLER: Great training you didn't know you were going to use, wasn't it?

WILLIAM BROWN: Those dentists, see. Clean hands?

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: My dad was there , "Look, buddy, it's alright, but it's black." [00:12:02] "What?" See that here? Hand me—see, it's terrible, but you can't get it off for about a week.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, once you get it on your hands, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Once you get—[they laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: So you were always getting your hands dirty at the time , yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, everything's going.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah. Well, now, you went—after high school did you go right into the Army?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: No, you went in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, I [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: No, you didn't at that point? Oh, okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no. The—

JANE BROWN: Flint? You went to the Flint something-or-other, some little school in Flint first, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, the—

JANE BROWN: It wouldn't have been a technical school in those days, but—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, it's where—

JANE BROWN: Junior college.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Flint Junior College.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And I didn't get anything.

JANE BROWN: See, he was never doing very well scholastically in school.

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't think—

JANE BROWN: He always laughed.

WILLIAM BROWN: —every—if I—all of the time around , if you get something—

JANE BROWN: The answers [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: —that no—the guy is talking—

JANE BROWN: Everybody else knew, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —the hell with it. You can ask him.

JANE BROWN: He says he decided that in the first grade. If all the other kids knew the answers, why did he have to bother?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: He'd get it from them.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's dumb.

JANE BROWN: But really what it was was they checked him in second grade—he was sick a lot with rheumatic fever and boils and different things that he had in the first and second grade, and by the time he got to the third grade they did an IQ test and he was the highest IQ score of any child in Flint, Michigan at that point, but he was not achieving in school. I presume he was dyslexic. I am dyslexic—

WILLIAM BROWN: I was lazy.

JANE BROWN: —and I think it ran in our family. Anyway, he didn't get a basis because he wasn't in school, but they kept saying, "Oh, no, this boy's so bright," saying, "Mom." So he never achieved well in school. And he didn't like school. He thought school was pretty dumb. It was uninteresting.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, it's crazy.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, which all, again, much affects what he did at Penland later.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, your attitude about the school—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —came out of some of your feelings that you had when you were in your—of your own education, and how you learned?

WILLIAM BROWN: [00:14:01] Oh, well, yeah.

JANE BROWN: And how dull it was, right? How dull. How dull school was.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, sure, for the kids to do [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Boring work, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Open the doors and let them go out and, you know—

JANE BROWN: Really [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] that stuff.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: And so at Flint Junior College, it was a joke with his daddy, he said, "If you keep going this way you're going to go backwards or something in your grades." [They laugh.] So then the war came—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and he volunteered.

JANE KESSLER: Of course.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, [inaudible] three years.

JANE KESSLER: And then—

JANE BROWN: He used to be a pilot.

JANE KESSLER: Is that right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, we ran—

JANE BROWN: And, again, this was—

WILLIAM BROWN: —we got too many, so—

JANE BROWN: They washed out his whole class.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: And so then they asked him, "What would you like to be?" And he said he would either like to be a mechanic or a pilot, and the pilot was out now so he said he'd rather be a mechanic. And they said, "Wait a minute, mechanics are not officers." And, of course, he was to be an officer. And he said, "It doesn't make any difference to me. I know that the most important people are the pilots and the mechanics."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, certified [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: So then he became a very unusual thing called normal training unit, and it was where you had about ten men. It was started in, well, a couple years into the war, I guess, [inaudible]. Anyway, it was started by a man who later came to Penland, which, again, was kind of fascinating. He was the headman. He thought up the idea. They had these mobile training units—

WILLIAM BROWN: Right. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —and then they—Bill, at 19 years old, would teach a class with mockups of the airplanes, because they didn't want to send the pilots back to the United States. They wanted to train them all in the Pacific. So Bill, with these nine other people, with the headman, who had a card saying "Give them men absolutely anything they want anywhere in the world"—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, we could have anything—

JANE BROWN: —because, you see, they'd have these massive mockups of airplanes, and when the whole troop had moved out, what was this mobile training unit going to do? They needed their own trucks to move them wherever they needed to go. So Bill would then be training generals. [00:16:02] Generals would be in his class—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible], too. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: —and he would tell them—he was their boss when he was teaching—

WILLIAM BROWN: When I was—I—

JANE BROWN: —a 19-year-old Bill Brown, who had not done well in school, [laughs] was now telling them to shut their mouths and listen.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, they don't know anything.

JANE BROWN: Which I'm sure he did very well, in that he was in 19.

WILLIAM BROWN: You know, yeah—the last—yeah, I was—wait a minute, what's his name? He's a good guy. But he was—I was just going to eat or something, and he runs in there. I said, "Come on. Who are you?" Well, I—

JANE BROWN: He was the general?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Mr. [inaudible]. And he says—I said, "Okay, what do you want?" He says, "How come these do this and that, that, that, that, there?" Because of the [inaudible]—the—

JANE BROWN: Should be—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Because it's two same things on those [inaudible] things. I can ph—

JANE BROWN: Speaking—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, anyway, then he says, "Alright," and then now we know him, see. And—

JANE BROWN: He's been in class—

WILLIAM BROWN: —oh, yeah, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Wow.

JANE BROWN: So did you stop and tell him, or did you say, "I have to eat first"?

WILLIAM BROWN: I ate. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: So they had a pretty amazing time in this role—

WILLIAM BROWN: I couldn't—

JANE BROWN: —and later at Penland, in about 1978, a very handsome man who had been in the military all his life started talking about what he had done, and he was the man who had contrived this idea that the mobile training units would be built, and Bill ended up being one of them, so that was kind of exciting.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, that is—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, all kinds of people who met at Penland. So then after that you go back, and then you go back to Kalamazoo, and then you decide you will be an artist, right? You come back from the war and all your friends in Fenton, Michigan are talking about being—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, well—yeah, well, we went up—Chicago—

JANE BROWN: Art school?

WILLIAM BROWN: —art thing. [00:18:01] And they were full of, you know, too many guys coming—

JANE BROWN: Army people.

WILLIAM BROWN: —many of them. And so when Buck—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and I, and his older dog thing, we got to Chicago and couldn't go there for nine years.

JANE BROWN: It was—the enrollment was so over after the war.

WILLIAM BROWN: Full, yeah, full from all of the—

JANE KESSLER: Was that the GI Bill that was that?

JANE BROWN: Yeah, everybody was on the GI Bill, and so he and Buck wanted to go to the Chicago Art Institute. Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, right. But they said, "Oh, we'd like to have you about 10 miles—[inaudible]." [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: So you went—

WILLIAM BROWN: And so we'd come back, and my uncle in—

JANE BROWN: Uncle and aunt live in Kalamazoo—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, and there's the—

JANE BROWN: —and they say, "Why don't you go to school—"

WILLIAM BROWN: —there's a state—

JANE BROWN: "—the University of Kalamazoo?"

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] down there. It's down the [inaudible]. And so I said, "Well, I don't know." "Well," they said, "well, you could walk around [inaudible]. You could—"

JANE BROWN: Go look at it, anyway.

WILLIAM BROWN: Look at it, and—well, anyway, so I did it, and they said—

JANE BROWN: One semester.

WILLIAM BROWN: —one—and—well—

JANE BROWN: Mrs. Sleshlok. I'll fill this in. Mrs. Sleshlok—

WILLIAM BROWN: So, yes, sir,—

JANE BROWN: —[laughs] was the head of the art department.

WILLIAM BROWN: She was great.

JANE BROWN: And one semester—

WILLIAM BROWN: Good mother. [They laugh.] And, you know, sitting on her head, or, you know, German back late—

JANE BROWN: Just—

WILLIAM BROWN: —and so it was presumed we were doing—well—

JANE BROWN: Is that when you were doing this bear?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible], alright. It was this bear.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, we—well, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: It's gorgeous.

JANE BROWN: This is out of plaster.

JANE KESSLER: Isn't that amazing?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: It's gorgeous, gosh!

JANE BROWN: Just feel something and love it.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yeah, it's warm.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, that's what she came in and said to you?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, she'd been seeing, looking, I guess.

JANE BROWN: [00:20:02] Watching what you were doing in general.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and the other guy was a great gentleman, too, one guy. And he let—he had things for the rest of everybody, but he said, "Don't—"

JANE BROWN: Don't do that.

WILLIAM BROWN: "Just make—do what you want." Mel Kauffman.

JANE BROWN: Oh, he had projects for them, and he let you do the job.

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't know what it was, what [inaudible], I think, you know? And then Ms. Miskosh—or what's her—

JANE BROWN: Sleshlok. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Sleshlok, goddamn it. She was great. And so she comes—I was sitting [inaudible], and she got this wad of papers. She says, "Type—put your—"

JANE BROWN: Name on these.

WILLIAM BROWN: "On all of these, all of these. I'll be back in an hour." And I said, "What the hell are we doing?" She said, "It doesn't need to be big. You're stuck with it. You know, just say—"

JANE BROWN: Sign them.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I think I'm going to get thrown out of the place. [They laugh.] And then she says, "Okay —"

JANE BROWN: Cranbrook.

WILLIAM BROWN: Cranbrook.

JANE BROWN: She wanted—

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't know—I couldn't know—I don't know what the hell these are.

JANE KESSLER: So that's what the papers you were signing were?

JANE BROWN: Yeah, yeah, to go to Cranbrook.

JANE KESSLER: To Cranbrook.

WILLIAM BROWN: To Cranbrook, you know, and then they had the—well—

JANE BROWN: And Mitchell, she knew Wally Mitchell?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, see, she knew the—

JANE BROWN: The registrar. She knew him well.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and his family. So I said, "What are we doing here? Don't say anything. Get in the car and go over there to get up there by ten." And that's it. German, she is. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: So you did it.

JANE BROWN: She told him what to do. So she had you—

WILLIAM BROWN: So I go down there, and I've never seen this place.

JANE BROWN: Nor heard about it, probably, very much.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, I guess not [inaudible]. And good Lord, I'm going up and down the road.

JANE BROWN: [00:22:03] It's a beautiful main road of Cranbrook. It's just [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and there's—oh, there was all kinds of stuff, you know. And I get out of the car, and we're turning out. Where the hell do you put the car?

JANE BROWN: This is 1946 probably, huh, '46, '47?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so finally I got in—what—

JANE BROWN: Wally Mitchell's office?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, he was—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And everybody was—had big boxes outside in place.

JANE BROWN: And you had all sent in work, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, all—

JANE BROWN: They were all trying to get into this school—

WILLIAM BROWN: A few good, good boxes.

JANE BROWN: Big paintings and stuff, probably, packed up in crates.

WILLIAM BROWN: There were great big paintings, and so—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —I go and get—ask for—

JANE BROWN: Wally.

WILLIAM BROWN: —Wally, and he says, "Who's this? Oh, yes." And he took—

JANE BROWN: Mrs. Sleshlok. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: And then—and he was—he just knew his—and so I said, "Well, I don't—I don't know if I don't like this place." [They laugh.] And he said, "Don't worry about that. Come to the board." And he put all these things. He says, "All these people want to come here, and they get housed, and—"

JANE BROWN: And look at all this stuff.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh! It's—[laughs.]

JANE BROWN: I didn't tell you not to send anything more?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, he just said—yeah, no, don't. And so afterwards he says, "We're going around the school." [Inaudible] all of this stuff all around. And I didn't—never even knew what it was. So I got home, and—

JANE BROWN: Oh, you said, "Do I call you again?" And he said—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —"No, just wait. I'll write you."

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, no.

JANE BROWN: Right? Something like that. I remember you saying that "Don't worry, I'll write you," and you thought, he'll never write to me. Forget that. Right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah. [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, whether you'd be entered or not, uh-huh,—

WILLIAM BROWN: And I said, "Don't worry about it." I—you know, look at all of the stuff that—in the—so [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: A few days later, a week—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, no.

JANE BROWN: —or a week—

WILLIAM BROWN: Long time.

JANE BROWN: Oh, weeks later?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then he comes to my house in—

JANE BROWN: Flint.

WILLIAM BROWN: —Flint, so I didn't even [inaudible]. I said, "[inaudible]." And I said, "[inaudible]."

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Nuts , because it couldn't [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: What happened, his mom got the mail, called him wherever he was, and said, "You have a letter to the Cranbrook." He said, "Well, you can open it." And when she read—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —that he had been accepted, he was pretty shocked and delighted.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, that's—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So you then went to Cranbrook.

JANE BROWN: Four years, five years altogether, four whole years at Cranbrook.

WILLIAM BROWN: And—

JANE BROWN: One of the rare beasts that did such a thing.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, that's—

JANE BROWN: Wally's?

WILLIAM BROWN: Wally.

JANE BROWN: Wally.

WILLIAM BROWN: He's—[laughs] he says, "Don't say anything, you jackass. You're in." [They laugh.] Just piles of stuff, you know.

JANE BROWN: Then he washed dishes there, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —it was on the GI Bill. And he did, as to major—your major in school was design.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, but that's—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, major was design, but then he was also a major/minor—[laughs] I mean, he filled a lot of time—

WILLIAM BROWN: More things I sent when it was there—

JANE BROWN: —in sculpture, metal.

WILLIAM BROWN: —so alive—

JANE BROWN: Sculpture and metal—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] He says, "Can't you do that. What'll you do?" Well, I look at two years of this and four there, and, well, okay, then. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: So you were a design major, and then sculpture and metal minor, and wood, also? Was wood—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, you have to make the stuff.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. Yeah, okay.

JANE KESSLER: And then—

JANE BROWN: So and then he did his master's degree there, but then, an important thing he did—again, to connect it to Penland—at the end of the four years the Corning glass people—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —decided that they—and Steuben—decided that they wanted to choose ten or eleven designers across the United States who would come and design glass for them, especially at Steuben. And they looked around and they found there wasn't a glass designer in the United States to choose, so then they went around the U.S. and chose—was it ten or eleven? Do you remember, ten or eleven? I guess it doesn't matter, but at any rate, Bill—

WILLIAM BROWN: Ten, ten.

JANE BROWN: Ten of them. So Bill was one of those ten chosen to go—

WILLIAM BROWN: And I don't know what—I don't—[laughs]. Well—

JANE BROWN: And he had just graduated his four years, and now he was for the summer—

WILLIAM BROWN: What the hell do you do now?

JANE BROWN: —he spent three months then up in Corning, New York—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —with Steuben, with ten other, nine other people.

WILLIAM BROWN: They let you go anywhere you want, you know. Hook up those pieces—

JANE KESSLER: Now, what year was this, Bill? When would that have been?

JANE BROWN: 1940—'49?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: Because you got to Delaware in '51.

WILLIAM BROWN: They may—when we were there, the new place wasn't there.

JANE BROWN: The museum wasn't built yet.

WILLIAM BROWN: And back—and all the Steuben stuff then were over there, you know—

JANE BROWN: It was very simply done, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, it's been going for a hundred yards—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, yes, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Oh, years.

JANE BROWN: Years, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so Johnny was the best guy—

JANE BROWN: Gatlin.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —yeah. And you could go out walking—

JANE BROWN: Watch him?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. What's happening is that his medication makes his mouth very dry.

WILLIAM BROWN: If you—this place is—

JANE BROWN: He hasn't talked this long in a long time.

WILLIAM BROWN: —for them—you—your thing for the whole world—I can't work. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: What happened—I can maybe fill in here for you—was that three-month period went by, and he—something he did that was very interesting is the headperson came to all ten of them and asked them to sign a piece of paper that said that anything that they designed while they were there would go to Corning. And Bill read that very thoroughly. You know, this is the kid who wasn't, supposedly, doing very well in school. He read it and he went back and said, "I'm not signing this." The renegade Bill Brown.

WILLIAM BROWN: And the barstead , the whole dog , said, "What?"

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: He says, "What?"

JANE BROWN: He said, "I wouldn't begin to do that, because I'm a designer of many mediums. I'm not going to —"

WILLIAM BROWN: Make wood , or whatever—what—

JANE BROWN: "And if I'm signing that, I am saying I would—"

WILLIAM BROWN: He says, "Give me that," and—

JANE BROWN: Tore it up.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and tore all of them, all ten. "Why do we do this?" Well, the—

JANE BROWN: Well, it was poorly written—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —because if Bill designs anything in any material—and so that was part of a knock for them. But then they had a wonderful year—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —good summer. And at the end of it there was this big problem for the headman Bill admired a great deal, and—

JANE KESSLER: Who was that? Who was the headman?

WILLIAM BROWN: Um, um—

JANE BROWN: Was his name Jack?

WILLIAM BROWN: Jack—

JANE BROWN: Jack—maybe that name will—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, we can—

JANE BROWN: It was Jack somebody. That'll come to us, because—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: —in '54, '55, when Bill and I were married, he wanted Bill to become the head of Corning's Design, and Bill refused it.

JANE KESSLER: Was he the—was he the head of design at Corning?

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: He was the headman, meaning he was the head of design at Corning.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, there were two that—what's his name? The big, tall guy.

JANE BROWN: Probably have those letters.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: We can find that out.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. But then—

JANE BROWN: But back to the three-month period, this man named Jack is our—whatever his name—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, the—

JANE BROWN: —had to decide who would be the head—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, the, the—

JANE BROWN: —who would stay, out of the ten.

WILLIAM BROWN: They—well, we got two days, then it's time to go home.

JANE BROWN: To leave, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: You know, they didn't give a shit whether they were [inaudible]. And so finally he says to—we've got to do it, get down to three key guys.

JANE KESSLER: Got to get it down to three people—

JANE BROWN: To stay and design—

JANE KESSLER: —to stay, okay.

JANE BROWN: —just [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And there's two things, too, the old—you know, the—this kind of stuff, and that—

JANE BROWN: You mean Steuben as well as Corning.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so, started at—all the people were, you know, wanting to do this.

JANE BROWN: Oh, some of them did want to stay?

WILLIAM BROWN: And I said—I said, when they talked about it, I said, "Well, wait a minute. You can get—you can get one, maybe, because I don't want to do this." [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Did you not want to?

JANE KESSLER: They would—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, I didn't. What—did they—

JANE BROWN: He wanted to go back and do his master's, first of all—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, yeah!

JANE BROWN: —at Cranbrook, but he also, I think, showed up a year later, two years later, when they called him and asked him to be the head of Corning's design, and live in New York City and so forth—

WILLIAM BROWN: No way.

JANE BROWN: —he just said, "I don't want to just design in glass." And yet he'd had a tremendous devotion to glass.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, that's right, too. Mr. what's-his—oh—

JANE BROWN: Name nearly came to me then, too. The head of Corning entirely?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and—well, yeah. He did [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Well, who cares. We don't care what his name is. What did he do?

WILLIAM BROWN: I—they were working, working, trying to find out who [inaudible]. I walked in the place, "Hey! I don't want to [laughs] run around with that little thing around." And they laughed and laughed, and they said, "What? You do—"

JANE BROWN: Don't want the job.

WILLIAM BROWN: "You don't want the wall?" They learned—now they know that I'm crazy. [They laugh.] Everybody a hundred—oh, God. And I said, "No, I can't. I got—I don't know what I'm gonna—"

JANE BROWN: Things to do.

WILLIAM BROWN: "—do, to do, and it's probably—" What is that terrible—

[END OF TRACK AAA_brown91_2824_r.]

WILLIAM BROWN: —walk with me, and he says, "Are you going to—" Or I said, "Well, it's all—in a little while it's all over." He says, "How—are you—"

JANE BROWN: Leaving?

WILLIAM BROWN: "Are you leaving?"

JANE KESSLER: Cranbrook.

WILLIAM BROWN: He was stunned.

JANE BROWN: Cranbrook.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: This is his fifth year.

WILLIAM BROWN: And I said, [they laugh] "What am I doing?" He says, "My God! Well, we're going to miss you."

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible.] [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: So by the way—

WILLIAM BROWN: And I had a car for Mr.—

JANE BROWN: Saarinen.

WILLIAM BROWN: —Saarinen—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —drove his car.

JANE BROWN: He drove Mr. Saarinen around. He was his chauffeur.

JANE KESSLER: Well, now, I did want to find out about Saarinen, and what—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —because I know he influenced you and what you thought about what you did at Penland, didn't he?

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know. I didn't—

JANE KESSLER: Or I thought that. I should—

JANE BROWN: Sure, he did.

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know. I mean, well, with him—

JANE BROWN: Didn't you think that that was—

WILLIAM BROWN: You know, if you were here, there, you could be, you know, walking, or be, like, some sit , and it—he didn't like—he—he didn't—

JANE BROWN: He never gave you answers, right? He gave you questions.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, sure. That's—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —he's—yeah, yeah. And all kinds of funny things.

JANE BROWN: And did you prove, Bill, or did you find out while you were at Cranbrook that this—education was fun? Would you say that? That when you got to Cranbrook you realized this was good education? This was what education could be.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, we could do anything we could do—want to do.

JANE BROWN: Wanted to do.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's a good—[laughs].

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it was open-ended.

JANE KESSLER: So that was the freedom.

JANE BROWN: But her question was did Saarinen affect you. Well, yes.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, well, yes.

JANE BROWN: You bet.

WILLIAM BROWN: I mean, I saw—he was—

JANE KESSLER: I—this is a quote that I got from you when I was here before—

WILLIAM BROWN: Okay.

JANE KESSLER: —that you said about Saarinen.

JANE BROWN: All right, good.

JANE KESSLER: You can zap it if you want to, [they laugh] but you said that he said, "You may do anything at Cranbrook—"

WILLIAM BROWN: That's right.

JANE KESSLER: "—gentlemen, if you do it well."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes—

JANE BROWN: Yes.

WILLIAM BROWN: —baby.

JANE KESSLER: Yes, baby. [They laugh.] Yeah. So that—

WILLIAM BROWN: But he wasn't mean. He would say that mean to you, and you're—he's walking around somewhere, overlooking the guy, come time, "That is a good one," when you're scared to death, but then you find out, oh, but he doesn't know—he—I told him, "I'm not even going to let you come back."

JANE BROWN: You told him that?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Well, that was—

JANE BROWN: And he went to Saarinen's funeral in his white bucks. He always wore white shoes, and he thought that was very appropriate, to not wear black to Saarinen's funeral, because there was nothing dark in his whole makeup.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Saarinen was such a bright person—

JANE KESSLER: Well, I can see why you two—

JANE BROWN: —it was fitting to wear his white bucks. And later, when Bill was with me at Haystack, and we were newly married—it would be about '55—

WILLIAM BROWN: Seems longer. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: —there was a design department job open, and Bill had always talked Cranbrook up to here with me. You know, I thought I'd almost gone to Cranbrook because I heard so much. And I said, "Bill, would you like to go back and teach design at Cranbrook someday? Wouldn't you?" And he looked up at the stars, and he said, "Oh, no. I don't think so. I think I'll build my own." So—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I don't know—

JANE BROWN: —I had no idea what a strong statement he was making to me at that point.

WILLIAM BROWN: —what I'm doing, so I just say things like that, and everybody thinks I knew what I was doing. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: But you knew what you thought was right—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and you found out what education could be. Right? So when you—

JANE KESSLER: Now—

JANE BROWN: —graduated—

JANE KESSLER: Okay, go ahead. So you graduated?

JANE BROWN: Well, when he graduated, and he did not have a job—

WILLIAM BROWN: I think I did.

JANE KESSLER: But you're not sure? [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: —he had not sent out one application. He was not one bit worried about it. And then he got in the car after graduation, and you said to Pop, "What do I do next?" And Pop said, "Well, you've never starved yet, have you? You never missed a meal. Come on home." So that was only an hour away, so they drove on home, and he started doing his sculpture.

JANE KESSLER: And is that where—

JANE BROWN: In Flint, Michigan.

WILLIAM BROWN: I was doing—I think—well, that's not worth—

JANE KESSLER: Design?

JANE BROWN: In your garage?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, with—

JANE BROWN: Weren't you in the garage?

WILLIAM BROWN: —um—

JANE BROWN: Oh, is that where you were doing the scarves?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: You were doing—printing scarves, which was—

WILLIAM BROWN: I threw the—

JANE BROWN: —a big sale item in those days.

WILLIAM BROWN: —car out of there, then put the stuff in there, and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. I see. Because, see, printing was another one of his majors. He was doing a lot of printing.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, you just make them, yes. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: So then the phone rang, and it was Francis S. Merritt, who was then the head of the Flint Institute.

JANE KESSLER: Oh.

WILLIAM BROWN: Now—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and Francis said, "I called Cranbrook to find out—"

WILLIAM BROWN: The whole place was—

JANE BROWN: "—I need some help, because there's a show I have to do—"

WILLIAM BROWN: For two days, two days.

JANE BROWN: "—and I need two days of help."

WILLIAM BROWN: Two—no, no.

JANE BROWN: No?

WILLIAM BROWN: Two—I—

JANE BROWN: You promised to help two days.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah. No, my mother—

JANE BROWN: Mother.

WILLIAM BROWN: —say what—

JANE BROWN: Mother forgot to tell—

WILLIAM BROWN: —too much, Jane. He had 20—or 40, \$40 for two—

JANE BROWN: A secretary?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE KESSLER: Weeks?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: He had \$40—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and then the girl that was—

JANE BROWN: Secretary.

WILLIAM BROWN: —yeah—had to go away, because the guy that [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Commission.

WILLIAM BROWN: —moved them for—

JANE BROWN: Moved people around, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then so now he's got that, and he's not got—he's gotten me, and I can't spell, or anything.

JANE KESSLER: So you were to be his assistant?

WILLIAM BROWN: Ah, yes.

JANE BROWN: Oh, yeah. It was—well, it started out—

WILLIAM BROWN: Two—

JANE BROWN: —just, "Will you come and help for two weeks?" is what you were trying to say.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, but you don't—

JANE BROWN: He was supposed to go for two weeks to help Francis do wheelbase to wheelbase show—

WILLIAM BROWN: You bet.

JANE BROWN: —which is a big thing in Flint, Michigan, with Buick and Chevrolet and everything they had.

WILLIAM BROWN: That was the only one they ever did.

JANE BROWN: Okay, and it was a fantastic show, and they fell in love with each other as great friends. They just

—

WILLIAM BROWN: Not him. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: You and Francis. Francis was raising children, living in Fenton, Michigan, living in Flint and—I mean working in Flint. So anyway, the secretary quits, and he says to Bill, "Here's this 40 bucks for the secretary." And Bill said, "I can't spell." Fran said, "Well, I'll learn how to type."

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: "If I can keep you, I'd rather do without a secretary." So then—

WILLIAM BROWN: The two of us!

JANE BROWN: Okay, so then—

JANE KESSLER: Then at Flint Academy.

JANE BROWN: Right. This is the Flint Institute of Art, which has now become a very big school in the center of Flint. So now Francis, at the end of the year, goes—or two years—oh, no, it was a year—it must have been a year you worked with him. He then is told by a woman, or asked by a woman named Mrs. Bishop in Flint, Michigan if he would come to Haystack Mountain—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, he—

JANE BROWN: —School of Crafts and run a school up in Maine. And they had hired somebody else, but he was coming down from Canada—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and the visa didn't come through, so Mrs. Bishop was one of the big industrial widows in Flint, Michigan, has plenty of money, and she decides—

WILLIAM BROWN: She loved it. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: She has been to Penland. See, this is—there is a hook or a connection in all this.

WILLIAM BROWN: You bet.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Ah!

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Mrs. Bishop had come to Penland in 1949 and had fallen in love with [inaudible], and she lived over the Leer House, with her great friend. They were Christian Scientists, so she had her doctor with her, ex-doctor who was now a Christian Scientist, Nelly Everett. So the two of them come to Penland, fall in love with it. Then one of Mrs. Bishop's children or grandchildren falls in love with somebody in Maine, at Haystack Mountain, in Liberty, Maine, and Mrs. Bishop goes to visit in the wintertime, and says, "This is where I should start a school." And she puts \$10,000 in the bank—

WILLIAM BROWN: Just bang.

JANE BROWN: —and started a school called Haystack.

JANE KESSLER: Bang.

JANE BROWN: Because all this little community and this wonderful area, where there's now going to be a new in-law, have always dreamed of having a school also, so, perfect. Mrs. Bishop wants to start a craft school like Miss Lucy's. This group at Haystack wants to. So she decides to put the \$10,000 smackers in, which is then like \$100,000 today.

JANE KESSLER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE BROWN: And then she goes home, hires a man from Canada. That guy can't come, so she loves Fran Merritt, and she's on the board at the Flint Institute, so she said, "Fran, would you do it?" So Fran goes in June, July, up to this school that started off-base like you couldn't believe it, and Bill says he'll stay at the Flint Institute and run it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Till [inaudible], yeah.

JANE BROWN: Till August 1st, when he has a vacation.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: So Bill and Mom and Pop drive up to Flint—to Maine, and they're out on—to see what Francis was doing—

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know if [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Oh, yeah, you went with them.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Okay. So they all go up together. Fran Merritt is driving on Route 1—

WILLIAM BROWN: Everything—

JANE BROWN: —showing them the territory. And this is a part—very big part of history—Fran is stopped by a policeman, and he goes into a telephone booth to find out who on Earth is calling. A major emergency, if you're stopped on the road by a policeman. And Bill and Mom and Pop are there, too. And Fran goes in, and he was told by the acting board person in Flint, at the Flint Institute of Art, that he's being fired, and he better retire quickly, or resign quickly. Did Fran resign or did he fight it? He resigned then?

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know.

JANE BROWN: Anyway, Fran was pretty damn mad, but Bill Brown—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, I got a fat [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: —was wild! [Laughs.] Oh, he was—because his uncle Jerry, his favorite uncle, was on the board, and Mrs. Bishop was on the board. No one was there—it was a summer meeting—and so they did Francis in. So now Francis could be full, 24-hours-a-day, all year, then, the director of Haystack.

JANE KESSLER: At Haystack.

JANE BROWN: But Bill was—

WILLIAM BROWN: But he had no nothing to—[laughs] you could do—

JANE BROWN: Nothing to work with.

WILLIAM BROWN: —whatever you want, but it's snowing.

JANE BROWN: [Laughs.] Yeah, in the winter.

WILLIAM BROWN: This is a little sad. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: So Bill goes back to the Institute and tells them off, and quits—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, I sure did.

JANE BROWN: —and then within a few months the University of Delaware called Cranbrook to say, "Who do you think could work as a design instructor at the University of Delaware?" And they chose Bill Brown. And so by— and this would be now 1951, or '50, the fall of 1950, and I'm at the University of Delaware, which is where I weed into this. But Bill—[laughs] Bill goes in then into teaching design at the University of Delaware, and every summer goes to Haystack to continue working with Francis, which is where he's also building his dreams of how he wants someday a school to [inaudible], because Fran and Bill together were doing—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, well, the two of us—

JANE BROWN: —again, what Bill—

WILLIAM BROWN: —we—

JANE BROWN: Bill was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Nobody knows [laughs] what we're doing, and we don't, either.

JANE BROWN: Well, all of Francis's faculty members came for just three-week slots, but Bill was—

JANE KESSLER: And that was—

JANE BROWN: —invited all summer.

JANE KESSLER: But you taught that whole summer.

JANE BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: You were—

JANE BROWN: In the woodshop.

JANE KESSLER: —you were teaching at—

WILLIAM BROWN: In the woodshop.

JANE KESSLER: In the woodshop?

JANE BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: With not much tools.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah. And—

JANE BROWN: And I got there in about '52, because I was a student of Bill's at the University of Delaware, and I went to be a scholarship student—'53, I guess—and then the next year I graduated and we were married. So we went back to Haystack, then, every year.

JANE KESSLER: And that was where—was that where the connection—

JANE BROWN: Until 1962.

JANE KESSLER: —with, with Penland came, then? Through Haystack?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Yeah—

JANE BROWN: Well, not a con—not a connection so much as learning what you felt a school could be, and should be. But Fran was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —stuck with only a summer, see.

WILLIAM BROWN: See, he just—

JANE BROWN: So the way Penland had gone then was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they've got to do—

JANE BROWN: —we—

WILLIAM BROWN: —what work they're doing, and—

JANE BROWN: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: —take it very soft, [inaudible] the times. [Laughs.] Until they get it—

JANE BROWN: But—

WILLIAM BROWN: —the sonofabitch get going.

JANE BROWN: But Fran started it really from the beginning, except for there were four people in the community that wanted to do certain things, and then they got unhappy with Fran bringing in so much really vital thinking that they pretty quickly backed off. And then Mrs. Bishop, by the way, became—she's a Christian Scientist and can't ever be angry, right, or upset about things, and if you are you'll be ill. So the local people that had been so

interested in starting a darling little school, because they—

WILLIAM BROWN: No—

JANE BROWN: —and I say darling little school because their vision was not very broad, but they were very effective, good craftspeople in their own simple way.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, they weren't.

JANE KESSLER: No, they weren't. [Inaudible]—[they laugh].

JANE BROWN: Yeah, they really weren't, but they were nice people—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, nice people, nice—

JANE BROWN: —but they didn't have any knowledge of the arts.

WILLIAM BROWN: —but what they were getting into was something they never, ever did.

JANE BROWN: They built a studio that would take care of one person—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] Yeah, or two, I think.

JANE BROWN: —and that was—see, they built the buildings between—

WILLIAM BROWN: And their—

JANE BROWN: When Mrs. Bishop dropped her \$10,000 in that bank—that was in April—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and by June 20th Fran was starting school, and they'd built the four buildings, these local people, but they were no larger in vision than for one person to work in as a little studio. So Fran met a lot of those kind of problems, and by about the sixth or seventh year the pain that was suffering from these people that wanted to be a part of Haystack was making Mrs. Bishop some miserable feelings, and so she went up then towards Deer Isle, Maine, and found land up there that—she bought 60 acres of land for \$3,600—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible.] [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —which was the start of Haystack that you know of today, these famous, beautiful views up on the island.

JANE KESSLER: Right, okay.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: And so that's where Fran then was at that Haystack, supported by—

WILLIAM BROWN: We were both, too.

JANE BROWN: Mrs. Bishop—

JANE KESSLER: And you were there, too—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —and supported by Mrs. Bishop.

JANE BROWN: And Bill stayed there till '62, when he was invited to come here. But what we did in the interim is we left Delaware and went to Oswego State Teachers College, where Bill was offered a full—or associate professorship and a \$12,000 [laughs] job, and after one year Bill just said, "You're not trapping me. I am not going to get a house and two cars and a garage and a lawnmower to cut my grass. I will not get caught in that. You aren't doing the right thing for your students. You're locking all the doors, and you're putting them in a box that will not allow the creative mind to work, and I won't have anything to do with it."

WILLIAM BROWN: They stole things.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. They said, "You've got to lock your doors when you leave, because—"

WILLIAM BROWN: You're crazy.

JANE BROWN: "—because they'll steal things if you don't lock them." Yeah, it made him furious.

JANE KESSLER: And you didn't—you didn't buy that. You didn't—

WILLIAM BROWN: I just—I told them, look, these dunderheads, you guys aren't here. Say you think—you take things. It's in the board there. And I said to the—

JANE BROWN: Oh, to the students he said this.

WILLIAM BROWN: —head dean—

JANE BROWN: He said to the students, "They say you're going to steal things."

WILLIAM BROWN: And I took—went over to the—"This is crazy."

JANE BROWN: Dean, president.

WILLIAM BROWN: And said—I told them I would not—I bet—

JANE BROWN: And told them—

WILLIAM BROWN: —they were all there, and if you—if we have to buy one, I'll buy two of them.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. In other words, if they steal anything—

WILLIAM BROWN: This price is just so dumb that I can't stand for it.

JANE BROWN: So, in other words, you went back to the president—

WILLIAM BROWN: That statement—

JANE BROWN: —and told them that you had done that.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. The chancellor, right.

JANE KESSLER: Well, that was your—you know, that really ties into your attitude about—

JANE BROWN: You bet.

JANE KESSLER: —Penland, too—

JANE BROWN: You bet.

JANE KESSLER: —that you kept everything open, you believed the best about people, you believed that people would be honest, that you—

WILLIAM BROWN: That's what it is.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Anything.

JANE KESSLER: That's just—

JANE BROWN: Now that you've dealt—

JANE KESSLER: That's how you viewed people and life, period.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. You were told—they wanted him to stay in—not go to Haystack but to stay and put up flags up on the stage for the graduation. [They laugh.] That kind of finally blew it. But also—

JANE KESSLER: So you left there, and—

JANE BROWN: So his job was to be the designer, and to connect the Art Department with the Design, and this was New York State Teachers College at Oswego—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, that thing that had.

JANE BROWN: —which has now become a very big department, but there were only five of us there then at that point, five of them.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: And so they—he then would set up a project, and he'd ask the kids to go over to the other departments, and the departments would say, "No, Mr. Brown, you can't do that." And Bill would say, "Why?" And they'd say, "You can't use our wood. Two years ago we made the order for the wood, that these kids—"

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: "—are going to make certain lamps to teach seventh graders to make certain lamps and industrial art, and if you send your students in and they use that wood, then you've blown it for us. We don't have our requisition. We'd have to wait two more years to get the material."

JANE KESSLER: Okay, well, that was—and that was also your—

JANE BROWN: Came back.

JANE KESSLER: —your open studios with the exchange of media.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, then, we had—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —first thing, the—the new—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: They couldn't—

JANE BROWN: They—what they did was two years prior to Bill's getting into that classroom, they had ordered cabinets, pink, blue, gold. They were pretty good-looking cabinets. And that came in two years later, when Bill was there. All of a sudden Bill walks in and he wants his kids to have room to move and walk, do what they need —

WILLIAM BROWN: But they do [inaudible] all of these things.

JANE BROWN: —and they've just got all these damn cupboards that he could care less about. You know, who cared about those? So—but when he left what he did was he chose to go to the Worcester Craft Center, which does lead back into Penland. The Worcester Craft Center was run by a man named Robert Gray, who later became the head of the Southern Highlands facility.

WILLIAM BROWN: He got in minutes—

JANE BROWN: And so—and he took \$4,000 for a job.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's—

JANE BROWN: He went—well, he volunteered. I know this.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, I know.

JANE BROWN: So it was a \$4,000 job, but Bill was in love with it, and it was a school that he felt—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE BROWN: —had much potential—

JANE KESSLER: Wait, wait.

JANE BROWN: Okay.

JANE KESSLER: Let's stop just a second, because I'm getting—it's getting sort of—

JANE BROWN: Lost? Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: No , [inaudible]—

JANE KESSLER: But I wanted to—

JANE BROWN: He left Oswego and went to Worcester.

JANE KESSLER: Alright, so you were at Worcester, and Bill—Bob Gray was there.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: At Worcester.

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: Yes. Sure. Bob Gray was the head of the Worcester Craft Center.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, okay, but the—[inaudible]—

JANE KESSLER: And then—

JANE BROWN: He was, and that was '56.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: You got in there '56.

JANE KESSLER: And then Bob Gray came south—

WILLIAM BROWN: And I—yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —to become—

JANE BROWN: In '61, he came down.

JANE KESSLER: And then left you at Worcester.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: You were still at Worcester.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: For a year.

WILLIAM BROWN: For a year.

JANE BROWN: The only reason he left it was that it was—the board was saying, "How many wastebaskets should we buy this year?" Everybody was—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: —quibbling and arguing, and Bill just wasn't about to sit in that kind of muck, and guessed it would—

JANE KESSLER: Right, and then—

JANE BROWN: —take them 10 years to straighten it out, and it did, and—

JANE KESSLER: Now,—

JANE BROWN: —he was director for 10 years.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so—well, let's get back to—was Bob Gray then a friend of Lucy Morgan's? Were they connected?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE KESSLER: They didn't—so the Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild.

JANE BROWN: They hired Bob Gray in 1961, and then do you remember what happened was Miss Lucy had been asking her board to let her retire before five years—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and that she had started the Southern Highlands Craft Guild, so she—Bob Gray is the new man in town, so they always said that. Bob Gray was the new man in town, and she went to Bob and said, "Bob, who do you think should be the head of our school? I've got to leave." And he said, "Well, there are two men: Bill Brown up in Worcester, and Joe Trippetti," who was in Worcester and had moved to New Hampshire, and was heading the New Hampshire Guild. So Trippetti was a very Catholic name, Italian Catholic name.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: And Miss Lucy honestly said later, "I have to tell you: I decided I didn't want to see him." And, of course, she didn't know he was a fallaway Catholic; Bill Brown was a Catholic. [They laugh.] So she—so then she says she has a head of her board was Sid Montague, or if he wasn't the president of it he was one of Chris Bruce Pine leading helper people. So she said, "Sid Montague, would you look up Bill Brown?" And he said, "Yeah, I have to be in Massachusetts to—because I'm running a mica company, and I have mica up in Massachusetts. I'll go visit with Bill [inaudible]."

JANE KESSLER: Okay. And tell me—tell me what that visit was like. Can you tell me what your response to that visit was? Were you taken by surprise?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I knew that he's coming'.

JANE BROWN: I think—yeah.

JANE KESSLER: But were you taken surpris—by surprise by the invitation to—or this sort of idea of—

JANE BROWN: Remember what your first words were?

JANE KESSLER: —Penland School?

JANE BROWN: "Oh my heavens." You said, "What did you think of Penland School?" And you said, "That's where —"

WILLIAM BROWN: Christ lost his galoshes.

JANE BROWN: Lost his galoshes. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: And he said, "They do [inaudible]."

JANE BROWN: Something is wrong, he said.

WILLIAM BROWN: Somebody said—and I said, "Well, this—the lady that is there has been here for years, and she's done things that never in the world could do." She [inaudible], you know, with her. It's her thing, and she's getting' tired, I think, from what other people. And goodbye. Go home.

JANE BROWN: Mr. Montague went home?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Oh, no, by then, sweetie, he had asked you—he had begged you and pleaded with you to come down and see Penland School, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, to—

JANE BROWN: —he paid the bill.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, [inaudible]—

JANE KESSLER: But you—

JANE BROWN: Paid the bill.

JANE BROWN: —did you—did you understand, though, that Miss—was that you saying that Miss Lucy—that was her thing, and—but she was getting tired? Is that what you knew about—

JANE BROWN: Or he said that? Didn't he say it?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, he did.

JANE KESSLER: He said that.

JANE BROWN: So he had a very good friend—

WILLIAM BROWN: I knew him—

JANE BROWN: —in jewelry that had told him there was something—they weren't keeping up with things, and he didn't understand the arts at all—he was a businessman—but he said, "This good friend of mine I respect, and she's saying that something is wrong, and—but we love Miss Lucy." And then he said the good things about her. And the reason Bill said the Christ losing the galoshes business is the one thing that they had done visually that I think had caused them trouble for quite a few years was they had the same advertisement with the silhouette of a woman sitting at a loom, right? And that's really what I think Bill and I both immediately thought of when we got the letter. We got to see Roger coming down to visit Penland.

JANE KESSLER: And you had that image. That was the image you had.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, because he had been through Cranbrook. He was now [inaudible] Haystack, where everything was just getting wilder and more wonderful and exciting and creative, and—

JANE KESSLER: So this was pretty—

WILLIAM BROWN: And what now?

JANE KESSLER: This is—

JANE BROWN: And now they want you to come back here.

JANE KESSLER: This was pretty much—

JANE BROWN: Staid, it was, let's say, staid. I mean, that would be another word about Christ losing his galoshes. Another word would be it was a staid school in comparison.

JANE KESSLER: Uh-huh [affirmative].

JANE BROWN: But he didn't know—you had no history on it, Bill.

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: You had no knowledge.

JANE KESSLER: But you—had you heard of it at all, of Penland School, before—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yes. Yeah, a long time ago. That's where Bob—

JANE BROWN: Lost his galoshes.

WILLIAM BROWN: His galoshes.

JANE KESSLER: That's what you'd heard. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Well, all over knew it was true. [They laugh.] Everything was nice, clean, and quiet, and —

JANE BROWN: Loving. Very loving.

WILLIAM BROWN: Very nice people. They have a nice fight, but I don't think there's—

JANE KESSLER: So it was sort of like a very quiet community, this—

WILLIAM BROWN: I would like to have it now. [They laugh.] [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Years later he—

JANE KESSLER: Sounds good now.

WILLIAM BROWN: What in the heck did I do?

JANE BROWN: Years later—this is an absolute Bill Brown quote—we had a parking lot full of Cadillacs, and we gave them all up, and here we are with motorcycles.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah! Well, those people—

JANE BROWN: Nobody—everybody took naps when we got here, and went to bed early, and plucked violets, and now we've got these kids running around that we can't hold down. [They laugh.] Why did we ever do this?

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know.

JANE BROWN: No one sleeps now, much less taking naps. They don't even go to bed. That's what he'd say about the '70s.

WILLIAM BROWN: Not many [inaudible] anyway.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And Miss Lucy would have wanted it that way.

JANE KESSLER: Sure.

JANE BROWN: He found that out as soon as he met her, because she fell in love with him.

JANE KESSLER: Well, wait—

JANE BROWN: He came—okay.

JANE KESSLER: —now let me hear what—let me see if—okay, so you—at this point you've been invited to come down, and you've decided, yes, I'll go down and take a look at Penland School.

JANE BROWN: Because he's been forced by Montague, really. I mean, Montague really—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —really pushed him.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I mean—

JANE BROWN: Begged.

WILLIAM BROWN: —I—

JANE KESSLER: Were you curious? Were you—

WILLIAM BROWN: If I was going to try it, or think you'd do, go to—or whatever [inaudible]. But if you—if you go—you've got to have the guts to do it.

JANE BROWN: To put your money where your mouth is.

WILLIAM BROWN: Fran—well, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, so what he—

WILLIAM BROWN: And Fran and everybody, the guys I'd been doing [inaudible], and if I said, "Oh, I know—"

JANE BROWN: Don't want to.

WILLIAM BROWN: "—no, I don't want to—"

JANE KESSLER: So you chickened out, huh?

JANE BROWN: Yeah, this is what he finally said after he talked to Miss Lucy. Really, you [inaudible] there. When you first went down, you really were just doing it to be nice, and how could it hurt? It's February, and you'd see Bob Gray, your old friend—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —who was now down here. And he did say, "I should go." He didn't think he was going to be that interested, so I stayed at home.

JANE KESSLER: That's it—

JANE BROWN: And then you came back, and you said to me, with a twinkle in your eye, "You can't believe it, this—all these buildings, and all this material—"

WILLIAM BROWN: Falling down!

JANE BROWN: "—and nothing's being done."

WILLIAM BROWN: All of them!

JANE BROWN: "Everything is neat and clean, and the halls are all wax, but nothing's being done."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, all this—[inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: And that's when he said what he just said to you, which was, "Look, if I've been trained by Saarinen and Francis and Bob Gray, we've all worked together all these years, and I've been the renegade, and I've always told them what I thought should happen, and now I've got to put my money where my mouth is."

WILLIAM BROWN: Don't do it.

JANE BROWN: You can't just keep talking loudmouth and not put your money where your mouth is. So that's why he agreed to take it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes.

JANE KESSLER: Do you have—do you want to say something else about that?

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't say—I don't know. I—you're lucky if you get little bits, not big ones. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: Little bits what?

WILLIAM BROWN: You could—you know, you catch things, or—

JANE BROWN: On the tape, you mean?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, just—I see or find things. Oh, yeah, sure.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Well, and then talk some more, and—

JANE KESSLER: Fill them in.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and fill it in, and there—that's way back here. Now, what the hell are we [inaudible] for? [They laugh.] We've gone by the thing, and then what's the difference.

JANE KESSLER: But that's okay. I—you know, I feel like we'll do that a little bit during this thing.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: But I—when you—

JANE BROWN: Tell her about sitting at the table. I think she'd be interested in this.

JANE KESSLER: When you—

WILLIAM BROWN: What?

JANE KESSLER: —when you first—when you first met Miss Lucy, though, I guess, was your—did you have a really positive response to her? Did you feel immediate warmth toward her, or—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, I did. Sure. She's crazy, [they laugh] and old, but, boy, she was something else. And she invited—

JANE BROWN: She was 72 then.

WILLIAM BROWN: She's better to make things work nicely for other people and stuff like that. And then she had—what's the plants?

JANE BROWN: Violets?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: They were all over the place.

JANE KESSLER: All over Penland.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, shelves of violets everywhere.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] God.

JANE BROWN: And people played cards [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, that was nice.

JANE BROWN: And she said to you—isn't that what she said to you? "Well, we just all got grey hairs together and we didn't notice it."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, we did.

JANE BROWN: He liked Miss Lucy, I think, a lot.

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know.

JANE KESSLER: I thought you—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —thought you did. Well, it would probably be pretty hard not to—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —like Miss Lucy, I guess, but—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, boy, she was something'.

JANE BROWN: It was in ph—

WILLIAM BROWN: She didn't give a shit. If she wanted it done—or she wants it done, it's gonna get that way. [Laughs.]

JANE KESSLER: Yeah. She was a determined woman.

WILLIAM BROWN: And she's only about to there.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, [laughs] a little woman.

JANE BROWN: You know, she told us that there was a mimosa tree out in front of the pines, which was, in the beginning, just an old farmhouse, and it burned down, and she said, "You know, everybody was just standing around mourning and in grief after this explosion, this building burning down. We were all so upset." And she said, "I just saw a whole bunch of boards they had thrown over on that mimosa tree, and I went over and I pulled them off." And now—

WILLIAM BROWN: Here we go again.

JANE BROWN: —she was standing up, you know, with this beautiful mimosa tree, which has now, I think, died because of a disease, but in 1962 it was still there. And she said, "I just looked at the situation and then got in my car and I drove down to the lumber company, to Mr. Bitticks, who was on our board—"

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, Mr.—he owns it.

JANE BROWN: And she said, "I said, 'Let's start building,' and we did, the next week."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and they do. See, everybody's—

JANE BROWN: Everybody was there building.

WILLIAM BROWN: —"Bob, okay, come on, let's go." [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: So that was—

JANE KESSLER: Well, that stayed the same, didn't it, Bill? I mean, that was something that you certainly preserved at—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —Penland School was, like, when you needed to get something done—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they never had any money.

JANE KESSLER: —yeah, and you just did it anyway.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JANE KESSLER: I mean, do you—

JANE BROWN: With everybody's help.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, if you—[inaudible]—lumber, lumber—

JANE BROWN: Mr. Bitticks? Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. He wore that hat, a man's hat—

JANE BROWN: That's right, he always wore a man's hat—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and he—

JANE BROWN: —like a dress-up hat you'd wear to church—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and his—

JANE BROWN: Suit—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and tie.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, kind of not—well, not his best one there, but so—and he looked like he'd eat you, you know.

JANE BROWN: He was pretty firm, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah. Well, I think, well, he's got to go, or we're going to play my way or his. And so one day I come in, back, [inaudible] would—it did. We got not-right stuff, and here he's—

JANE BROWN: Oh, not the correct stuff that came from the lumber company.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah!

JANE BROWN: Oh.

WILLIAM BROWN: It's—he's got his hat on, and he's working on stuff, and looking at the thing, and, "Hey! Where'd I put this damn gun, this gun? What—"

JANE BROWN: Stuff.

WILLIAM BROWN: "—stuff?" And he said [laughs]—and he said, "What?" We were hollering for a bit. "Is this the real place to get the good stuff?" [They laugh.] "Hey! Hey!"

JANE BROWN: This is head of his board—not head of his board, but one of his five—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah! So—

JANE BROWN: —executive committee ones. But could we also tell this? This is really important.

WILLIAM BROWN: What are you telling?

JANE BROWN: When he first got there and they were having lunch—it was Saturday, noon, and Bob Gray picked him up at the airport and then drove him on up here, and Bill took pictures, which he brought home to me, but he gets into the Pines to eat, and it's Mr. Deaton, who was the head of the school, was the superintendent. This is Miss Lucy's board that she has built, because they had people that would just constantly help her—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: —will never get in her way, and never—

JANE KESSLER: They all were—

JANE BROWN: They just met once a year.

JANE KESSLER: But they were all—and they were all what?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, about 80.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, they were all old.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, they were all older.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and—

JANE BROWN: They were in the—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, yeah, okay.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: All right, that's—

JANE BROWN: Mr. Deaton was still the superintendent of schools, but he was probably in his sixties at best.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so this was community members that were really making it—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, this was the board, and they only met once a year, and they heard what Miss Lucy did and cheered her on, so—but they would come in on a special moment like this. And so it was Montague, who had met Bill in Massachusetts, who ran the mica mine, and Deaton—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, he's the one who got me [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: —and Bitticks, and got to have been—oh, and the man from Tennessee—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —came, who was kind of making the link between Penland and the university there, so there could be some credit. And so Bill sat down and looked at them all, and he said, "Now, I want you all to know something: that you shouldn't hire me." Right, isn't that what you said?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: "You shouldn't." Want to take off for that one? You shouldn't hire him. Why not?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I thought I—I forgot. I—

JANE BROWN: You just said, "You should not hire me because I don't like boards."

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah!

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JANE BROWN: —[inaudible]. I mean, of course, I was hearing this when he got back to Worcester, Massachusetts to tell me. He just said that he was very firm with them, saying that he didn't feel that he was going to be able to work with the board here, and—but that he would be fine if they were—

WILLIAM BROWN: But they [inaudible] anyway.

JANE BROWN: They'd never have him on anyway. He understood that. Because, you see, Miss Lucy had run the school from the start. If you read her book, you'll find out she didn't—she forced the men to come and join the board, and the lawyer in town told her that she was unwise to have them, because they would stop her from doing what she needed to do. And then they, luckily, came and met once a year, and not—Bill was talking to them and saying, "I don't think I can particularly work with a board, because I don't think that they work. They can't function very well, unless they stay—the persons of the board stay behind me every day, walking around the grounds with me, help make decisions," and then he'd be fine if he had them. So he really was not—he was showing them—he was being pretty tough with them right from the start and saying, "I think you're unwise if you hire me." Then he turned to Miss Lucy—oh, and by the way, people on the board—one most important person I didn't mention was Bonnie Ford, who was the secretary and treasurer of the school, and was the first child in the neighborhood that went to Berea College because of Miss Lucy's work with the native people. That was her mother, the Willis family. It was her mother who would be the first weaver in Miss Lucy's favorite project of the mountain weaving, Penland weavers.

JANE KESSLER: So Bonnie Ford—

JANE BROWN: So—

JANE KESSLER: —was on the board, or was she still—

JANE BROWN: She was on the board, and she was also the secretary of the board—

WILLIAM BROWN: She was everything.

JANE KESSLER: She was everything.

JANE BROWN: —and she was treasurer of the board, and she was Miss Lucy's righthand man. And had Bonnie Ford not been in steady pace behind Miss Lucy's great, exciting, and wondrous experiments, the school would not be here today. But Bonnie one of those silent—those important silent people—comparatively silent; when she had to speak she spoke with great clarity, but she basically was one of the hardest workers and dedicated workers that Penland had ever had. So she was there at that meeting, too, and a board member. So then, after making the statement to the board that we think shocked them a little bit, he turned to Miss Lucy and he said, "Now, where is the nearest Catholic church?"

WILLIAM BROWN: Ha!

JANE BROWN: That really later, Miss Lucy said, really threw her, because she already knew she wanted Bill Brown as the new director, but she didn't quite know how to handle that, because she had been raised first as a Baptist, I guess, and then in the Episcopal Church, the brother of the Episcopal commissioner who found Penland and built this children's school, and that's why she was here. So now she had a young Catholic on her hands, and she hadn't chosen to see Trippetti because she had—[they laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: And you knew about that beforehand, though, didn't you?

WILLIAM BROWN: We didn't know that.

JANE BROWN: No, we didn't know any of that. No, no, no.

JANE KESSLER: You didn't? Oh, so this was just out of the blue that—

JANE BROWN: He asked—well, because his Catholic church was very important to him, he wasn't sure there was a church close by, and so—

JANE KESSLER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —there was only one in Spruce Pine, and there were 40 parishioners, and—

JANE KESSLER: So how did she overcome that, or how did you overcome it?

WILLIAM BROWN: She took a big breath. [Exhales loudly.]

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] [Inaudible.]

JANE BROWN: She didn't say anything to you that day about it, did she?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, at least—no.

JANE BROWN: No. So it wasn't—and that was in February.

WILLIAM BROWN: When it was then [inaudible] back in.

JANE BROWN: February of '62, and when we got here in August of '62—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, [inaudible] she left.

JANE BROWN: She called?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, yes.

JANE BROWN: The priest and different people?

WILLIAM BROWN: No. She got on the—

JANE BROWN: Telephone.

WILLIAM BROWN: —telephone from here, [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: In Worcester?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: Oh, okay. And asked you what?

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible.] "I hear you're something. You think you would be happy," or something, "about being a—"

JANE BROWN: A Catholic? A [inaudible]—

WILLIAM BROWN: A Catholic.

JANE BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

WILLIAM BROWN: And I said, "Yeah, sure." And she didn't say anything much, but she said, "Well, I guess that answers everything." And we do, you know, we talked, we just talked, and that was it, but—

JANE BROWN: But do you remember the question she asked you? Now I do remember. She asked you, "Will you hire only Catholic people?"

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, but, you know—[they laugh].

JANE BROWN: "Will you hire only Catholic people?" That was her big question before she said "Yes, you're the man I want."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: That's right.

JANE KESSLER: So do you think that was actually her concern then was that—

JANE BROWN: Oh, yes.

JANE KESSLER: —it was going to become a Catholic institution?

JANE BROWN: Right, yeah. And so then she called the local priests, and then she called the priest down in Silva, where her nephew Ralph was—

WILLIAM BROWN: She was great.

JANE BROWN: —and she talked to Ralph, and finally Ralph, who was a great Episcopalian himself, sat her down and said, "You are being a bigot," [they laugh] which she didn't repeat. She could repeat these three or four strong sentences that her favorite nephew said to her, and she said, "Then I knew that I was really being a bigot. He was absolutely right, and everything would be alright." So she hired Bill.

JANE KESSLER: So did—so then she called you back and said, "Come on down here."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, "Y'all come."

JANE KESSLER: "Y'all come." [They laugh.] And you said okay?

WILLIAM BROWN: "Oh, okay."

JANE KESSLER: Were you thinking in the meantime about—I mean, were you—did you want to come by that time? Or were you still—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, I don't—

JANE BROWN: It was a duty for you, don't you think?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Well, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: It just [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Once he said he would do it, he would never change. But also, I think you—because you said earlier, too, that you felt that it was the next thing you should be doing, since you had been such a bigmouth with all these directors—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah! [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —you had worked with. It was now time to put your money where your mouth is, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Right.

JANE BROWN: So it was a combination of, yes, he would never back out. When his wife came down the steps one night in Worcester and said, "I just decided I can't do it," he just looked at me like a big father and said, "We have already said we would. There is no debate about this." And he said, "We can try it for a year, and if you don't like it at the end of the year, fine,—"

JANE KESSLER: Why did you think you couldn't?

JANE BROWN: Well, I had long—I had hair that I could sit on at that point. It was a long braid, and I had just combed it and put it in a long braid, and Selma, Alabama was going on, and I thought, we're moving down to the South, with black problems—

WILLIAM BROWN: All black, going to get killed.

JANE BROWN: —and I will be the first one running around with a placard trying to help the black people. I will never be able to be the directress of anything. This is crazy. This is not my thing. I better not do it." And I lost my nerve. Earlier, however, when he first came home, I knew the jig was up, when he walked into me from his airplane trip and told me about the school, told me about Miss Lucy, the trips they had taken on the grounds and stuff, which was only 12 acres then [inaudible]." I just looked at him and I thought, oh, this would be a wife of the '50s. Bill was totally devoted to this. I could see this gleam in his eye that I would see when he would start a piece of sculpture, so I knew there was no—there was no more debate, and Bill Brown was going to take the job, and I didn't give him any flack about it. I just thought my education of worries for my children, or my concern about education for our boys, who were then five and six, was paramount in my mind, and a move down to the South wasn't going to do much for them. So even though I had those fears, I would not quibble one moment, until about two, three months later when I walked in and said, "Can't do it." He said, "You will."

JANE KESSLER: [Laughs.] And you did.

JANE BROWN: "You will be [inaudible]." [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: And when you all—so you all came—now, what year was that that you actually moved down here?

JANE BROWN: '62.

WILLIAM BROWN: '62.

JANE KESSLER: '62.

JANE BROWN: August 20th, 1962.

JANE KESSLER: And was Miss Lucy still—she was still very much, though, on the premises before you got here. She was still running the school before you got—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it was Miss Lucy running it—I mean Bonnie Ford.

WILLIAM BROWN: Bonnie.

JANE KESSLER: And did Bonnie—

WILLIAM BROWN: She runs everything.

JANE BROWN: Bonnie really ran everything, you see.

WILLIAM BROWN: She's great. Wow, wow.

JANE BROWN: Miss Lucy was the color.

JANE KESSLER: But Bonnie stayed on and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —you was your assistant—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. If you hadn't had her, we could never have been able to be here.

WILLIAM BROWN: Ah, you can't do it.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Because it's all kinds of things other—that I never heard, no what [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Remember when Miss Lucy handed you the keys to the—to Penland on, what, September 1st?

WILLIAM BROWN: Mm.

JANE BROWN: She made—somebody made—one of the kids made a big key. But we do have to explain—I said "kids," "one of the kids." It was only one kid there. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and that's kind of easy.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, that's what I wanted to ask, too. When you got here, it was older students, older faculty?

JANE BROWN: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: From Florida.

JANE BROWN: Florida.

JANE KESSLER: Florida.

JANE BROWN: Awful lot from Florida.

WILLIAM BROWN: And [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Charlotte?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: South Carolina?

WILLIAM BROWN: Chicago.

JANE KESSLER: Chicago. Right, Edward Worst, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And that's—but that—

JANE BROWN: Oh.

WILLIAM BROWN: —that [inaudible] what we had , see.

JANE BROWN: Anyway, yes, they were all older people—

WILLIAM BROWN: Three places.

JANE BROWN: —and there was one young—there was one young woman in the group. By the way, Miss Lucy ran the summer program as the major thing, and they did it in three-week slots, pretty much. About August 28th was the end, and what they would do then is they showed us their system, and that was to have a show of at least three weeks, I guess, and they had it in Craft House, and they had punch, literal punch, with sherbet in it, and the women literally came with white gloves and hats on. I mean, that's how formal it was.

JANE KESSLER: And then how old—so what age range are we talking about here for people in—

JANE BROWN: This was all people over 50.

JANE KESSLER: Over 50.

JANE BROWN: Over 50 at least, and there was—

WILLIAM BROWN: One girl was—

JANE BROWN: —this one young woman—

JANE KESSLER: Except for this one—

JANE BROWN: —who was in her twenties, and she would no more walk into the dining room in shorts, and the men would move , and she'd go change. If she had the audacity to wear shorts, she [laughs]—

JANE KESSLER: Changed before she went to—

JANE BROWN: —would go before she went into the meal, yes. So everything was pretty formal in those days.

JANE KESSLER: Now, the classes that were being taught here when this—when you came, were metal? Copper?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Let's see, weaving?

WILLIAM BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE KESSLER: Clay?

WILLIAM BROWN: Clay.

JANE KESSLER: Dyeing, hand dyeing?

WILLIAM BROWN: Dyeing, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yes, sure. Catherine Connelly. Not Catherine Connelly but Kate—gosh—I can't think of her name. They were teaching dye. And something called related arts in the summer.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE KESSLER: Oh, they did something—

JANE BROWN: Bill always used to say—

JANE KESSLER: What was that?

JANE BROWN: —"Related to what?" And they said they taught 60 different related arts or something.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: On the thing.

JANE BROWN: On a brochure. We used to think, what 60 could they be?

JANE KESSLER: What did that include?

WILLIAM BROWN: There isn't that many thing in the whole world!

JANE BROWN: Well, Ms. Flossie taught corn-shuck dolls.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: That was one of the related arts.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, it was printing was a related art, wasn't it? Didn't they do some lot printing, or fabric printing?

JANE BROWN: Flint—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: That was a summer faculty that came in and did those things, you see, so—

WILLIAM BROWN: And the lunch—we had lunch, and then they got the—what is this thing?

JANE BROWN: Terrarium?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: The TV?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, sure.

JANE BROWN: They had a TV, in '62?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, I mean, here, the one—

JANE BROWN: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: —then they invested it to the—

JANE BROWN: Really?

WILLIAM BROWN: —students , in whatever they're doing—

JANE BROWN: All right, I didn't know about the TV when I—

WILLIAM BROWN: —and they'd go back to their things about four o'clock or so.

JANE KESSLER: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: They'd take a nap.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then—well, oh, yeah, okay. Oh.

JANE BROWN: And then they'd lock the studios—

WILLIAM BROWN: Right, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and everybody had requisition slips. No one could do anything without requisition slips.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh my God. But, you know, you just gotta say, wow, and—

JANE BROWN: You kept saying I was not gonna do a revolution.

WILLIAM BROWN: No. Well, you do, you get killed, so—you know, they're nice people, but they don't know what the hell they're doing or something.

JANE BROWN: At least they weren't very educated in the arts.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, sure.

JANE BROWN: The man teaching enameling had been a milkman up in New Hampshire, and then he'd picked up

some courses at Penland in enameling, and now he was teaching enameling, and his wife was a weaver, and they were now living in Florida, and, boy, to stay in the mountains in the summer was just very important in New Orleans. But also, Miss Lucy asked Bill—Miss Lucy and Bill were just getting along beautifully, and so I met them together when we got here on August 20th, and she asked Bill—she said to Bill, "There—the faculty members, I always invite them back—" She had such a twinkle in her eyes. She said, "I always invite them back, and I ask them for the same salary." And, of course, the salary was nothing.

WILLIAM BROWN: There wasn't anything. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: So she said, "Would you mind going?" She said, "I always go around in the afternoon, the last day of classes."

WILLIAM BROWN: Last day.

JANE BROWN: "I invite them back. Bill, would you go with me?"

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure.

JANE BROWN: So I walked behind. Now, this had been the Bill Brown that I had known as the renegade. He was—I had to just swallow my own "ew" , and think, my Lord, he's going to do this. How could he change overnight like that?

WILLIAM BROWN: Turn around.

JANE BROWN: I was kind of shocked. So that he went from room to room, building to building, and asked them back, and I remember a couple of them looking up with their bright eyes, white-headed Floridians saying, "Oh, thank goodness you've invited me back, Mr. Brown, because I couldn't imagine spending the summer in Florida next year."

JANE KESSLER: Well, you let them come back as long as they wanted to, didn't you?

JANE BROWN: Absolutely. You didn't ask anyone to leave. No one.

JANE KESSLER: And some continued to teach—

JANE BROWN: It made them feel good.

JANE KESSLER: —right on—

WILLIAM BROWN: And some of them got better and better, you know, doing what they were doing.

JANE KESSLER: So they grew some.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, I hope.

JANE BROWN: You think. [They laugh.] Right, and that—well, here was the next landmark, in the—the summer people left, and then it left this structure of people that lived on the hillside, like Flossie Perisho, who was Bonnie's sister, and Adelaide Chase, and Eric Picker, who all summer now, for summers, had divided up the day in ceramics. Eric taught, for instance, in the morning, Adelaide in the afternoon, and altogether, in an entire summer they used 900 pounds of clay, which was what within a year we were using within a week, wasn't it?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, yes.

JANE BROWN: Or a day. I don't know, it was something—an amazing change.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and we go—

JANE BROWN: So—go ahead.

WILLIAM BROWN: Go ahead, go ahead.

JANE BROWN: So what I was going to tell them was then the summer people leave, and we have a base structure, about eight people living on the hillside, and Flossie—oh, Bill—the first thing Bill asked of people was, "Would you mind leaving the doors open to the studios?" And Flossie, fiery little Flossie, looked at Bill and said, "I don't want to leave the door open."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Oh, yeah, doing'—

JANE BROWN: And Bill said, "Why not?"

WILLIAM BROWN: Okay, okay, alright.

JANE BROWN: And she said, "Because people are gonna come in and take stuff, and then tomorrow morning, when I want to come in and work it won't be here. That's why, Bill Brown. I don't want to lock it."

WILLIAM BROWN: Keep in mind, she has [inaudible] money—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and she'd have to pay for it otherwise.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and I said, "You [inaudible] anything you want in this school." I thought all of you, that's yours. You don't have to—

JANE BROWN: You can use it as a faculty member, yes.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, you can show them how to do things—

JANE BROWN: You don't have to pay for it.

WILLIAM BROWN: —or make things of yourself. But, you know, alright.

JANE KESSLER: So she said okay?

JANE BROWN: And what he did say to Flossie, if she wanted to leave the doors locked she could do it—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, sure, don't tell—no, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and didn't put any—he didn't put any pressure on Floss.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, no.

JANE BROWN: And Flossie did lock it, as far as I know, for the next couple of days—

WILLIAM BROWN: For a little bit, yeah, but she—

JANE BROWN: —and then she decided that was stupid.

JANE BROWN: So then about—every—the summer people are gone. Things are calming down. We have a summer program, which was—ends up almost nobody.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] Flint.

JANE BROWN: And Floss, Flossie comes to Bill and says, "You know, we've all been here since the year one, and you want to use us, you'd better train us. [They laugh.] You're the big man in design, so why don't you give us a class?" And by the way, they decided he was a big man of design because Mr. Montague had asked Bill to please send a show done of his work, and that show was put up in Craft House for the summer, and we think it rattled the faculty members. It was too finely high-designed stuff—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, I'm sure.

JANE BROWN: —and it scared them, so I think it came in—we came in with them being pretty fearful. So now Flossie's the one who's got the guts to come up and say, "We need help." So he started a class on the third floor of the loom house.

JANE KESSLER: And that would've been—the "we" that was left then with Flossie was who, was whom? Was it Adelaide Chase, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and her husband.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it was Adelaide and her husband, Harvey, who was a photographer, a very good one, and Eric Picker, the potter—[laughs] Erick Picker, a potter.

WILLIAM BROWN: Picker, Picker, potter. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: And Maddie. Old Maddie was a weaver, and she—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, she only came up once—

JANE BROWN: Up once, but at least she came the first time.

WILLIAM BROWN: —because she's too big. She couldn't [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: She couldn't go up the three steps, three sets of steps.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, right. She could [inaudible], but she couldn't [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yeah. So that was the group. And I thought, now, big Bill Brown the design teacher who taught me and so many good people, I thought, what will he do? Will he send them off into these—his own idea was to, like, take clay and now build it up into a certain size, and then take it up modularly, you know, three inches bigger and then three inches bigger and three inches bigger. I mean, these were, in those days, way out ideas for design. What he did with these people, I mean, again, as a wife, I couldn't believe the man who had been a big noise now said, "Every one of you has worked in a medium for umpteen years and you're excellent at it at this point. Have you—I'll bet you each one of you had a dream that you wish you could get the nerve up to try something that's a total experiment, and something that you were almost afraid to even try. Will you do that between this Tuesday night and next Tuesday?" Well—

JANE KESSLER: If that's not a key statement, I don't know what is.

JANE BROWN: Right, that's right, and they took off with it. And the next week I went upstairs and Flossie's door was locked, and they—

WILLIAM BROWN: They all put—

JANE BROWN: Well, was that—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Well, she was the lady who had said she wouldn't lock her door, she would lock it, and then she wouldn't, and now she's locking it again, and I think, we're going backwards! [They laugh.] What it was was she was excited, she and Lester had been doing for a hundred years lamps of fiberglass, and they were all very much made like what you'd see in the seventh grade kids had to make, you know, as a project to make a lamp, to learn how to make a lamp in an industrial age class, and then they'd put these little lamps on it, and they'd do lanyard around it. So she took it and she made a lamp that was—well, it was kind of a takeoff on the Da Vinci kind of things. It was, like, this big, and this shape. It was incredible.

JANE KESSLER: And that came out the first time that you said to her—

JANE BROWN: The first real—

JANE KESSLER: —"Have the freedom to try something that you've always wanted to try."

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that first week. Well, she was so embarrassed she hid the door—closed the door and locked it so no one would watch her. [They laugh.] That's why it was locked. So when she opened it on Tuesday, the class went on, and everybody was trying experiments. Bill just was knocked out.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, well, look—

JANE BROWN: And he said, "Floss, let's put that down in the dining room."

WILLIAM BROWN: That's right.

JANE BROWN: In the dining room was against the ceiling tin—round tin bases, and from it came a globe, a bulb, with nothing around it, so the glare in the Pines was atrocious. And he said, "Let's hang one of those, and now make six more, and make every one a different shape."

WILLIAM BROWN: Different, because they don't have to be that.

JANE BROWN: In summer. Yeah—

JANE KESSLER: They don't have to be alike.

JANE BROWN: —they don't have to be the same.

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: So they did. And then she did, and—

JANE BROWN: She just took off.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and they loved it. [Laughs.]

JANE KESSLER: And did they keep on doing that for—

JANE BROWN: All the—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: All were there then that—on Tuesday nights, and they just went through and through. Harvey Chase had been ill for 15 years, and he had a new glare and excitement in his eyes, and he tried experimental photography, and Adelaide did. Everybody had a ball. So by summertime they loved Bill Brown. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, they had—yeah—

JANE BROWN: Because he had encouraged them.

WILLIAM BROWN: —Skip came in—

JANE BROWN: That's right. Okay, Skipper—

WILLIAM BROWN: —everybody, to take [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Tellish.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, Tellish came for the summer, even. Now you've jumped into summer.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, yeah, let's—

JANE BROWN: Okay.

JANE KESSLER: —yeah, let's go—

WILLIAM BROWN: Those guys came—

JANE BROWN: This is why spring—now we're up to spring—

WILLIAM BROWN: —get your ass down here. I'm [inaudible]. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Get down here.

JANE BROWN: Well, by spring he was asked to jury a show in Ohio, and he juried it with a man named Flint. Another question you were going to ask is how did you bring new people in.

JANE KESSLER: But I want to—let me go back one more—

JANE BROWN: All right, okay.

JANE KESSLER: —because this is still—I want to pick up one little more piece of Miss Lucy, which was the conversation—it's another quote from you in that early one, where she says—you said—you asked Miss Lucy why she didn't have a woodshop, and she said, "Because it's dangerous."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And you replied, "Everything you learn is dangerous."

JANE BROWN: Yeah, "Education is dangerous."

JANE KESSLER: "Education is dangerous."

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: She stopped and looked at me. "I think you're right." [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: That's probably the moment she decided—that's the moment she decided this is the new director.

JANE KESSLER: Oh.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, so that—

JANE BROWN: Because they were just touring the school at that point.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, so that was even—that was before you were hired, even. That was before you had accepted.

JANE BROWN: I think so.

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know.

JANE BROWN: I think so, Bill.

JANE KESSLER: But—that doesn't—

JANE BROWN: And then also she sat you down on the—

WILLIAM BROWN: On the thin.

JANE BROWN: —on that wonderful old bedshare thing that we had in the hallway at the time, and she sat you down and said, "Will you take this school?" And you said, "Oh, Miss Lucy, I shouldn't." [They laugh.] Right? "I don't think—I just don't think I'm the right one for it." And she kept saying, "Why aren't you?" She's really the one who made you talk it out, which you finally said, "Well, I guess it's true: I've talked so much up to now, it's time for me to put my money where my mouth is." So it was there—I wish I had more knowledge about that conversation, but that was the gist of it.

JANE KESSLER: And then—

JANE BROWN: And then when we got here in the fall, by the way, Miss Lucy then agreed to leave within the two or three weeks, and then she—then she was in Silva with her nephew, and then a few weeks later she'd go down, see more , come back. And so she'd drive herself back, and she'd be with her Bonnie, her favorite [inaudible] child. And they—and then people were beginning already to stir up. Bill's analogy was: "Every time she comes back I have this pot of beans, and the beans are bubbling, and we're doing alright, and I'm stirring them this way, and then all of a sudden Miss Lucy comes back and she just stirs it a little bit that way, and it goes over the edge. [They laugh.] And so I don't know what to do." And so he was suffering a lot with her returns, and yet knowing how hard it was for her not to come. So finally I went to Bonnie one day and said, "Bonnie, this isn't going to work, as much as we love Miss Lucy." And Bonnie said, "I understand what you mean. I've talked with Lucy, and I said, 'Lucy, would you like this school? Would you like to come back next month and see it all boarded up, or would you like to give this young man a chance to do what he needs to do?'" And she said, "Lucy looked at me and said she knew it had to be—to let him to do what he needs to do." And so she said, "Yes, we're going to have to leave—we're going to have to get Miss Lucy to stay away." So she promised to stay away for a year, and then she got an onslaught of letters—letters and letters and letters—that year, and finally told the people to not write her anymore, because she so believed in Bill Brown that she wasn't going to listen to them. They were really crank letters, so—

JANE KESSLER: And by that time, of course, you were winning over this core faculty anyway, so—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that would be a good name for it.

JANE KESSLER: —you were really—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Right, most of them were—

JANE BROWN: Well, but now the core faculty she's talking about is the summer—winter people, too, the winter/summer, see, alright, and then the summer—then he asked everybody back that had been there before, but in Ohio, in October, in May or June, [inaudible]—in March, probably—go to Ohio and meet LeRoy Flint, who is the head of the Akron Museum, and he's got 48 board members, which really put Bill into [they laugh] thinking this man was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, he was a painter.

JANE BROWN: He was a painter, right. And Skip Johnson—

WILLIAM BROWN: And a good one.

JANE BROWN: —who was a friend of ours, had said he wanted to be in on the beginning of this; could he come that summer—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and Bill had by then devised the resident program, which we'll tell you more about. But Roy Flint listens about Bill and Penland, and says, "I'd like to come down and help you." So it was Skipper who had moxie about the way you treat people, and Roy Flint—

JANE KESSLER: Skip Johnson.

JANE BROWN: Skip Johnson, and Roy Flint—

JANE KESSLER: Roy Flint.

JANE BROWN: —who could deal with 48 board members in a big city, he could really handle all fields, because everybody's fields obviously Bill knew were worthy, so there were only two new ones, and Skipper had tauged down at the dark bank—

WILLIAM BROWN: Nothing there.

JANE BROWN: —place, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: And finally got—

JANE KESSLER: Well, now—okay, and Skipper was a woodworker.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So—but you didn't have the woodshop yet.

WILLIAM BROWN: He was then. Well, and he could do what he wanted.

JANE BROWN: He started wood that summer. That was the only new course.

WILLIAM BROWN: Then I went out, or went to Mr.—

JANE BROWN: Flint, yeah. Oh, Mr. Montague?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: Oh—

WILLIAM BROWN: The lumber—

JANE KESSLER: The lumber man.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, Bitticks, okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so I told him, "We've got to get him."

JANE BROWN: So—

WILLIAM BROWN: And so, yeah, you can't hardly do anything.

JANE BROWN: Skipper, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And Mr. Bitticks—

JANE BROWN: Bitticks.

WILLIAM BROWN: —said, yeah, "How big you want it?" And I said, "As big as yours." [They laugh.] But I got it—I knew what the 120 needed. And they came [inaudible]. And then, when—that's what's Miss—

JANE BROWN: Miss Lucy. Oh, is that when she—

WILLIAM BROWN: She saw that thing going in there, and she thought that was—might hurt someone.

JANE BROWN: Oh, dangerous, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And the tools. But Skip, you know, there—

JANE KESSLER: Sure.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and he took it, and he got lots of guys in there, and—

JANE BROWN: So that whole summer—that was the new course offering then, and painting with LeRoy Flint.

JANE KESSLER: So those were the two new courses that were added the first—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, because he didn't drop anybody out then, you see. By doing that he brought new people in, but he didn't say, "You leave, Joe, because I want Mary to come," you know? He didn't throw anybody out, and he let them run it entirely the way they like to do it in the summer, in their classes, and they did their little—at the end of the sessions, this big, dramatic show, where they spent—the teachers usually spent two full days just preparing the Craft House for the show, which was then going to be a right/left kind of thing. And he just let them their own way. But, of course, we thought [inaudible] very easy, but I'm sure in ways that weren't that we didn't know. One thing that freaked them out most was—much part of the story that first year—our cook and her mother, who was 90 years old, were Penland weavers, and they did quilts, and they were doing an ordinary quilt, and Bill got real turned on with that, in the fall, right after he got here, and he said, "Gee, could you do a quilt for me?" And they said, "Sure, Mr. Brown." And they both had great lisps. She said, "Sure, Mr. Brown." She was our cook. She was [inaudible] woman, and she was not a cook, didn't know anything about cooking, but she did this quilting on the side. [They laugh.] So they start building, and Bill runs downtown to get the material, and I still have it, but it doesn't have its pep anymore. He chooses magenta and a light sort of pea green and an off blue, a wonderful off blue, and he brings it home to them. And then he draws this kind of shape, wiggling all the way down, so that one—pink was the background, and then this wonderful blue, and then this wonderful green, and they set it up in front of the windows of the Pines, and later Mabel, when she knew me better and had the nerve to say it, she said, "I thought I'd go blind, Mr. Brown! [They laugh.] Mr. Brown, I thought I'd be blind!" It was, you know, such a zing. Well, this quilt was a knockout. It was the best looking—I mean, it was 20 years ahead of its time. And so Violet's shelves had been where the milk stand is now—that was all Violet's—and things that Miss Lucy had picked up and all were all in different places that were mass produced. So Bill took all those things down, and had—

WILLIAM BROWN: Just put that up.

JANE BROWN: —put the quilt up. So when you walked in the Pines, that's the first thing you saw, and later we realized that was probably not a very smart thing to have done, because it really frightened the faculty when they came back in June. But it told you where Penland was going.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, of course. That's true. I mean, there's—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, pizzazz that you couldn't believe, so apparently we scared them, along with the chips, which I [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, I did want to ask that.

WILLIAM BROWN: Huh?

JANE KESSLER: The poker chips story. Can you tell me what that was, and what that was meant to accomplish?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, before I came here, somebody—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —there's put—what's the thing?

JANE KESSLER: Poker chip?

JANE BROWN: Well, we didn't put a chip down. What they did was they just set the tables up, fully. The whole table was set up.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and then they'd go around it.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, you would be seated. You'd be given a seat.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And then—

JANE BROWN: Assigned a seat when you came to Penland.

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know.

JANE BROWN: That was—darling, that's how they did it. I mean—

WILLIAM BROWN: That's alright, alright.

JANE BROWN: —you would be assigned a seat, and you knew your whole three weeks you sat in that seat, and when you got to the table, breakfast, dinner, lunch, and dinner, there was a tablemat, there was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh,—

JANE BROWN: —all the silverware and a plate—

WILLIAM BROWN: —all those terrible things.

JANE BROWN: —and a little milk container and a glass.

WILLIAM BROWN: And—yeah.

JANE BROWN: And so you knew you were to sit in that seat, and then you worked—you were working in Penland, and each person had a job. And today you would have your job. Tomorrow, if I sat next to you, I'd be in charge. All three meals, my dutybound was to take care of that table, and be a good, moral person.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so that was Miss Lucy's system for—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —for dinner and seating, and then you felt like that needed to be changed.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that was the only thing other than the doors being left open.

JANE KESSLER: And what was your method then?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I knew that you gotta [inaudible]—yeah, and you can do this, this time around, [inaudible] gonna do. And so I went—what are those things?

JANE BROWN: Poker chips.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And so when we put up the—before dinner, wherever, we kicked the guy that's what—the girls, mostly—

JANE BROWN: Scholarship and put their chip on their—yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Stick it under here.

JANE KESSLER: Under the plate? Under the—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And then, if you got it, you got it, and you'd take care of it, get the milk and stuff. And they all came out and blocked every other time. Before that, it was a big thing to do that.

JANE BROWN: It was very embarrassing. If you took somebody's seat by mistake, if you were a visitor and sat in someone else's seat, everything—you'd feel a tension around the room and you didn't know why. You had to get out of it.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so—yeah. So—

JANE KESSLER: So you broke that—

JANE BROWN: And then the funny thing that—the chip would be put under by the scholarship—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and then the kids would get smarter and smarter, and they'd come in and they'd look under the

plate, and if they saw the chip they wouldn't sit there. They'd move somewhere else [They laugh.] So the last person at the table invariably got the chip. No time at all, that—yeah. And then it became a big joke.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, sure! It got to be a game, didn't it?

JANE BROWN: And lunch, though—you turned lunch into a buffet the first summer—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —which was a shock, too, because then everything was up for grabs. So those things must have rattled the old people [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Well, you changed—you felt like the food needed to be changed, too, when you got here, didn't you?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, but just—we bring in things , and there's a lot here, you know?

JANE KESSLER: Just the way it was served, you mean, or—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, it was no good. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Nothing.

[END OF TRACK AAA_brown91_2826_r.]

JANE BROWN: The people that Bill brought in that next summer—I might add this one, too. You know, this is the famous Pete Voulkos. He was a very famous potter, and back in the '60s and '70s he was—he's always been very loud, and very strong, and he now does great big sculpture stuff. In those days he was a potter.

JANE KESSLER: Peter Voulkos?

JANE BROWN: Peter Voulkos. And so he met Toshiko with Bill and Toshiko and a couple of other guys at some sort of a conference in New York, and Peter got all excited about what Bill's dreams were for Penland. And he said, "Well, I want to come help." And Bill said, "No thanks." Just flatly.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: One of the most famous men, even then, the most famous men in ceramics—

WILLIAM BROWN: Pete gets—

JANE BROWN: And Pete said, "Why not, Brown? Why not?" And Bill said, "Because I just can't use you yet. What we're doing there has to be done as kindly as we can. You're not going to help me do that."

JANE KESSLER: And that was—

JANE BROWN: He's the kind of guy that would go to a—somebody asked him one day, "How do you wedge your clay?" And he said, "I just burp it," or something, "I burp a lot," or something like that. So he was a very gruff, coarse kind of guy—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, he's alright, he's alright.

JANE BROWN: —but absolutely wonderful.

WILLIAM BROWN: He's just—

JANE BROWN: A wonderful guy, but Bill knew that Penland would be—

JANE KESSLER: Wasn't ready for him.

JANE BROWN: —blown apart to have him there, and he had the wisdom to say "No, thank you." Toshiko, of course, he took immediately, and Toshiko came in right from the start.

JANE KESSLER: Takaezu.

JANE BROWN: To help us, yeah, yeah. Toshiko Takaezu.

JANE KESSLER: Am I saying it—Takaezu.

JANE BROWN: No, Takaezu. Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: She came right away to help, but Peter got left out of the scene, and then he never grabbed him later. But Bill loved him, and it was not said in unkindness to him. He could be open with him, so—

JANE KESSLER: Well, that was the sensitivity of the human aspect of Penland, and the faculty, which was, I think, you know, where you and Miss Lucy definitely had very much in common.

JANE BROWN: Very much.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, it was this real sensitivity to the people—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —as opposed to the objects.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: I mean, it was—they were what was important.

JANE BROWN: Right from the start, you're absolutely right, Jane. You betcha.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so they were—now they—so we had—

JANE BROWN: In the fall—what Bill did, by the way, was in two weeks or three weeks of his getting here, he formed a fall session, which only had four people. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Five.

JANE BROWN: Four or five people, on October 7th it started.

WILLIAM BROWN: You got out , you were good enough to join. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: We have a brochure on it, too. And he got those winter faculty to teach it, and they were very proud to be invited to do that, you know. But it was going—is that when we had Lily Bloom right away, or was that the next year? Gosh.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: No, it must have been the next year for Lily, I think. Maybe—well, let's wait for the next year for that. But in the meantime, the winter went by, and you kept trying to figure out how do you use the grounds of the school. It's 12 acres, and all these buildings, and nothing's happening in the winter , and you went off and you met Roy Flint at the show, but then you also knew that a big problem was that we had a registration form that said "race" on it, and you knew that that meant they were keeping black people out of the school. And so you went to Bonnie Ford, who was your righthand man, sort of the depth and life of the school that had continued all those years, and you said, "I will not be able to run a school with 'race' written on it, so I think if you want me to stay you better take that off. Let's do it, and I'll tell the board when they meet their one time a year, in June," which was like June 1st, and school was going to start on like the 18th. So Bonnie just gulped and went right ahead and did what he wanted to do—

JANE KESSLER: Did she?

JANE BROWN: —and she never—we never felt a quiver from her. We did not understand that two years prior to this event Miss Lucy had invited a wonderful black woman to spend the year at the school, and then she proceeded to go off on one of her trips with her fairy godmother, and she was not there all year. And when I later read the board meetings from—notes from Bonnie, it said on it that the population of the school had just—it had gotten totally out of hand. She had finally had to take the black woman down to her house, and that she had made the statement—

JANE KESSLER: Bonnie Ford had had to?

JANE BROWN: Bonnie Ford had had to do that to show you how she would love the person anyway, and yet she felt for the school it was seriously a mistake, and that black persons were not going to come in here again, and that it was not a wise thing ever for the school to do again. And yet when Bill came to her and said "Take 'race'

off," she said not one word about it.

JANE KESSLER: And then when you offered that to the board, did they also go along with you? Did they—were they—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they just go—

JANE BROWN: You just said, "I'll quit right now if you want me to."

WILLIAM BROWN: "I'll quit."

JANE BROWN: "I'll leave right now. I've taken it off," you said. "I've taken it off, and—"

JANE KESSLER: Was this the same board now that you—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it's the same which you've met.

JANE KESSLER: So you still had the same original board.

JANE BROWN: You bet, right, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: And he just said, "If you don't like it, I'm sorry, and I'll be glad to leave, but I can't run a school with that." So then now Bonnie was so cognizant of everything going on in the black world, white world, and everywhere else, that when she got two applications that summer from two different people connected with, she knew, schools for the black, she looked into it very thoroughly, mentioned it to Bill that they were coming, made sure that they had private rooms, and that it was very—done with great decorum all the way around. But she got more and more nervous about it and said, "You know, I'm just not sure that your faculty will even stay or whatever." So now he's gotten the board thing, and then finally in about July the two black people come in the same session. They're not married. And we also have two Catholic nuns.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, that's right. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Two Catholic nuns. They have robes. It's in the '60s when they're still wearing all robes and habits and stuff, the whole works. And they had just by chance come all on the same Sunday, the same session. And Bill is in—you see, from the start Bill and I did everything. He was cutting the ham for the dinner, that Sunday evening dinner, and I was out on the path, and all of a sudden I see this Mr. Merritt come roaring down the pathway. He used to teach—

JANE KESSLER: Mr. Merritt is—

JANE BROWN: —[inaudible]. He's not Fran Merritt. No, this is another man—

JANE KESSLER: That taught [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: —and he was a Floridian, taught [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: And he comes roaring down, and he is ready to kill, and I've never seen a guy that mad. He comes up and he says, "I need to see Mr. Brown. I see that there are black people coming into this school, and I'm not going to have anything to do with it." And I had never experienced what this whole prejudicial thing had gone on in the South, had never before—so I sort of stood quaking and thought, let me go get Bill. And so Bill went out, and all I heard him saying was, "I understand how you feel, and it is your right if you don't want to be around black people. I would never force you. You have an absolute right to leave right now if you wish to, but the black people are not leaving. That's all." And he's mumbling around, and then he says, "Well, alright. I will not teach one." And Bill said, "I don't even know whether they're in your class or not. You can find that out tomorrow morning." And he just held his ground, and I went in and cut the ham [they laugh] while he handled this wild hornet. And then I come out again, and I find the two sisters and the two black people, and the sisters, luckily, walk in to dinner. And I remember we don't have—we have not chips under the plates for the first time in this session, and now that means nobody knows where they're going to sit, and this—now I understand why they liked that secure feeling of people being told where to sit, because now everything is loose. And I walked in with the two black people, feeling just morally sorry and wounded for them. And I kind of breaths , and I look around the table and think, oh, boy, the old faculty members have built their staunch support in a corner table where they usually sat, and I look and I see the two nuns and their habits, and I think, I know—I'm Catholic. I know they're going to put up with black people. So I walk over and sit next to them, and we get through a

wonderful meal. And one of the sisters happens to know one of the black people by somebody else, you know. It was kind of interesting. And then after dinner we all go home, and there's a man named Vic Papanek, who is a designer who later wrote a very famous book on design. He was visiting Skip Johnson, and we were over at our house, sitting up on the steps, looking down at these grounds of the school, and the black people are walking along with Bill, who was trying to explain to them the nightmare he's just gone through, and how sorry he is, but that he's going to stick by them. And they're saying, "Mr. Brown, you mustn't worry. We're used to this, and you're experiencing this for the first time but we live through this all the time. So you don't worry, and thanks for your help." They both had Phi Beta Kappa—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, [laughs] [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: —they dressed immaculately, and they were just neat people. They were really wonderful. Bill then comes up and sits on the steps with Skip Johnson and Vic and myself and wives, and Victor says, "Oh, Brown, it could've been a lot worse." "What are you talking about?" And he says, "It could have been two black Catholic nuns. [They laugh.] It could have been worse."

JANE KESSLER: Well, you felt—so you felt like you had leapt a hurdle there, I guess.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right, he did.

JANE KESSLER: That's a wonderful story. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Jump over it.

JANE BROWN: Then maybe I'm going to float one more little thing. I found about two months later that there was a bus with black children being taken every day down to Marion, and I got annoyed about it and thought, my Lord, this is incredibly awful. My kids are getting shots on Monday afternoon, and I hate coming home late at night, and every night these black kids do. So without telling Bonnie Ford, I go to town to the superintendent, and tell Bill, who says, "All right." I go to the superintendent, and he's right away very edgy. And I tell him I am not an NAACP person, I'm not a placard-carrier, but I would like to know why are children being dragged down to Marion on icy roads to go to school. And he says, "Mrs. Brown, I want you to know that next year this will not go on any longer, but I want you to know we are an Aryan race." And with that he was just shooting arrows through me. "And by next year, because financially our schools will be closed otherwise, they'll be in the schools." So I think, well, I did my duty, and I go home, and I tell Bonnie about two days later, and she got as white as a sheet, just pure white, and said, "Do you realize, Jane, that you could have—if that news gets out that you've done such a thing, that people from this community could come in and burn every building down in the school?"

JANE KESSLER: Wow.

JANE BROWN: Well, it just took my breath, and that was my realization from that moment on that I was now not fully my own master. I was running a school with my husband, and that our first alliance, allegiance had to come to the school, not to what Bill and Jane Brown want.

JANE KESSLER: But you didn't hear any repercussions from that?

JANE BROWN: Nothing happened afterwards.

JANE KESSLER: So—and was he on your board now?

JANE BROWN: That man wasn't. This was a—

JANE KESSLER: The super—the other super—Deaton is—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it must have been—yeah, Deaton was—

JANE KESSLER: So that was—

JANE BROWN: —the superintendent. This guy—so Deaton must have been the past superintendent. That's a good—good to catch me on that. He must have been a retired superintendent, and the most beloved superintendent they ever had here, and now this Mr. Thomas was the superintendent.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: Good catch, yeah, because Deaton was no—he was doing advisory stuff through all kinds of programs when the Democratic Party got in, and they were using him in lots of very exciting ways.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, well, that's—

JANE BROWN: So he was no longer superintendent.

JANE KESSLER: It's good that they had—

JANE BROWN: And Thomas straightened me out. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: You know, I didn't tell—my sons just heard this story last year. They hadn't heard it before, but—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, that's amazing. Well, let's—I want to make sure we talk about the residence program, because that must have started right about this time. Is that right? I mean, wasn't that—

JANE BROWN: In April.

WILLIAM BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE KESSLER: April of the first—of which session?

JANE BROWN: That would be—

JANE KESSLER: Let's make sure—

JANE BROWN: —'63. Well, see, it wasn't a session.

JANE KESSLER: Or April of the first—

JANE BROWN: Okay, let me straighten this out—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: —because I can do this fast. In November we had—the head of our board was Larson, Nils Larson, and he and his father were architects, and they were the greatest friends of the Reynolds-Babcock people. Babcock had been giving the school \$5,000 as a pure holding the shoestring to kind of together, if that's the word for it—

JANE KESSLER: Great, okay.

JANE BROWN: —holding it together. And so Larson says, or Bill says, "I want to go talk to him." And Nils says, "Okay," and he's like his uncle. So they go to his door, and he's in his bathrobe, [laughs] and he comes in, and Bill—the guy looks at him. Babcock looks at Bill and says, "So what is this school, anyway?"

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, because he's had—put money in it.

JANE BROWN: Is a—yeah.

JANE KESSLER: He's—he has put money—

JANE BROWN: He was putting money in it. He was putting 5,000 bucks in—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —like for 10 years.

WILLIAM BROWN: For ten years. He says, "I just keep it going. Now, what the hell is going—do you go now—"

JANE BROWN: "Is it a way stop between Michigan and Florida? Is it a restaurant? Is it—" And he gave pretty bad names. And Bill said, "I don't know, maybe it's a little bit of all that, and it may have been along the way that, but from here on in it's going to be the best goddamn school in the nation. In the world!"

WILLIAM BROWN: He says, "Now I got things going'." [They laugh.] He says—

JANE BROWN: Now.

JANE KESSLER: Now I got it.

JANE BROWN: I like that.

WILLIAM BROWN: He says, "Okay." [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Right. So then Bill told him—"I have this idea of bringing residents into the community." And you take off on that, see if you can do it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE BROWN: You wanted to bring young artists, have some—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, that we got a lot of land, or [inaudible], and we got places to sleep and all that kind of it, and there's all kinds of people around needing to have a place to work. [Phone rings.] And—

JANE BROWN: Bill, remember the lawyer [inaudible]?

WILLIAM BROWN: What?

JANE KESSLER: Remember the lawyer, she said? But—or that's what I thought I heard her say. But you wanted to set up a program for craftspeople—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, the people and their crafts, what that—what that is. It—it's—probably you don't make much money, and if you are really good—who was that?

JANE BROWN: That was Rusty, one of my students. Hadn't heard from him for a couple of months. I'll just pull this out.

WILLIAM BROWN: Pull him out.

JANE BROWN: [Laughs.] He's now a ninth grader. I don't teach him anymore, so he's just—loves to call in.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they get out of school, all these kids, or people, and there's nothing for them to do—

JANE BROWN: But to go to work at Penney's, he used to say.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. They could be the show—do the windows for Penney's, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] down here in Flint, one guy did. And so I think that's a good thing to get going on , because that's—nobody does this.

JANE BROWN: And you said like a lawyer has an office to go to, right, and a medical person has a big doctor that'll work with them, an intern, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And so we got money for—

JANE BROWN: Two thousand dollars a shop for six people.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Right. Each—it was called stretching the rubber band. That was what you called it.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: So a resident could come and work, and buy his materials, and each pays—we even paid the food money in those early years.

WILLIAM BROWN: They didn't have any.

JANE BROWN: Right, so we had to pay their food money, and they paid \$25, or—oh, it couldn't have been that much, could it? It must have been less. Or was it \$25 for their studio and 25 for their house? So they paid \$50 a month?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, I don't know.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. So that was \$2,000 apiece—

WILLIAM BROWN: What we were doing—

JANE BROWN: —yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —was the right thing, and I didn't [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: We were doing the right thing, exactly—

WILLIAM BROWN: —go back to—

JANE BROWN: —yeah, and Skip Johnson was the first one.

WILLIAM BROWN: Skip was the first.

JANE BROWN: And we knew Skip was going to come, but now April came, and Bill's family lived in Flint, and we decided to go home to Flint, and we met Dick DeVore, who was at the Flint Institute, which was now a big shenanigans—

WILLIAM BROWN: Not like he used to—

JANE BROWN: —and Dick was later the teacher of ceramics at Cranbrook, so he was a real good teacher. And he had had a man named Ed Brinkman that worked with him, and Ed Brinkman he knew was dyslexic, and he was the smartest guy in the world, and he had made five kilns for them, and this guy was the perfect person for Bill's program. He could—

JANE KESSLER: First resident, you mean?

JANE BROWN: First resident. So Ed Brinkman goes to Penney's and buys himself a \$13 seersucker suit, or—yeah. Anyway, it was a special suit. He was from Frankenmuth, Michigan, very German background, and very clever and wonderful. So he arrives as our first resident.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so before we go farther with that, then, you only had in mind, as far as the residents went, that these were people that needed help getting started, and they needed support, they need a place to work, place to live?

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure, yeah.

JANE BROWN: And it might take them two years—

WILLIAM BROWN: A lawyer gets to go with—

JANE BROWN: —to get on their feet, and it might not.

WILLIAM BROWN: —a [inaudible] till you learn [inaudible], and a doctor, you go there , but you get work until you—and you expect to help the whatever—fun—what's—nothing—but everybody else gets—goes to—

JANE BROWN: The backers, or the support.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Gets help.

JANE BROWN: Right, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And then they can go [inaudible] themselves.

JANE BROWN: By then it was not to prove that they would become craftsmen, necessarily, but to prove in their lives what they needed to do, so that if they did not end up staying in the craft world, or if they didn't start their own studio, it didn't make any difference.

JANE KESSLER: How did you think you would find these people, or choose these people?

WILLIAM BROWN: Who in the hell do you—I don't know [laughs] how you got them.

JANE KESSLER: You just—

JANE BROWN: He would never want to plan ahead exactly how he was going to do it—

JANE KESSLER: So you didn't have—

JANE BROWN: —the next day.

JANE KESSLER: —like, a set of—you didn't have, like, we look at your work, or we look at—

WILLIAM BROWN: Bullshit.

JANE KESSLER: —you have—

JANE BROWN: Well, you just took a gamble on a person.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. That they needed the help.

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure.

JANE BROWN: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. I don't know what I'm doing. I'm—what do you mean? It's—those people needed help.

JANE KESSLER: So it was sort of a person by person—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And—

JANE BROWN: And the way they were going to use it at Penland, physically, was in the summers they'd have to stop working, because they worked in the winter months.

WILLIAM BROWN: Then I could [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Oh, but that didn't happen till years later. This was in '63, we are ph—we're in '63. But, I mean, so he felt a little bound about that, that they could only work from October 1st—

WILLIAM BROWN: But they could go—

JANE BROWN: —to May first, but then they could be monitors, and they could teach—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] monitors, and teach—

JANE KESSLER: Let me—

JANE BROWN: —and they could go out and teach—

JANE KESSLER: Let me get that clear, that they could only work during those time periods, because then when you had to have that—

JANE BROWN: For students.

JANE KESSLER: —space for students.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: So then they had to quit—

JANE BROWN: So it was only—

JANE KESSLER: —but then you let them work as—

JANE BROWN: Monitors, or anything they could figure out, what—

JANE KESSLER: So you kept them—so you made sure that they could stay through the session.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So even though they couldn't work—

JANE BROWN: On their own stuff—

JANE KESSLER: —they can—

JANE BROWN: —yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then they can never say that it's a thing that—what—you have to be this high to—

JANE KESSLER: To get in.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible], yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: Nor how long. He didn't tell them how long.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no.

JANE BROWN: You guessed it might be two years, but you weren't sure.

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure, because it's—these are—these [inaudible] is a real person, and if you muck-a-muck that you've got to go now, a new charity can come in and [inaudible] folks. And so we had gotten both going, and—

JANE BROWN: With Ed Brinkman and Skip Johnson.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. Then by the summer, Ron Burke father that we'd known in New York state.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: See, two—Skipper and Ron Burke were both students that saw the fallacy of what was going on at Oswego—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE BROWN: —and they were way up in their thirties—

WILLIAM BROWN: I had them, too.

JANE BROWN: —when they came. They were your students, too. That's the first time they found education fun, so that's why they wanted to come.

JANE KESSLER: So they followed Bill.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JANE KESSLER: They really—

JANE BROWN: Ron Burke redid an entire building to live in, and—

JANE KESSLER: Here?

JANE BROWN: —got his—yeah, got—here—and got his work going just beautifully, and within a year had just really gotten it all rolling real well. He goes up to New York state to sell some of his very big pots, and they're very obvious in his car, and he drives through a gas station, and a lady says, "Are you a potter?" And he says, "Sure." And she said, "Well, there's a pottery for sale right near this gas station. You ought to go meet the people." Well, the men fell in love with Ron Burke, and they said—

WILLIAM BROWN: Two old men that [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: —"We will sell it to you."

JANE KESSLER: Two old—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Like, "Instead of 100,000, we'll sell it for \$20,000, and we want you, Ron Burke." So Ron had to come back and tell us, "Well, in a year's time I've done all of this, and now I've got to leave." And Bill said, "You do it."

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] "Take it with you."

JANE BROWN: "Of course go."

WILLIAM BROWN: "Do it, you do it." Sure.

JANE KESSLER: That's perfect.

JANE BROWN: Yeah,— time—

WILLIAM BROWN: "Those men will help you. They're going to help you with the—all of it."

JANE KESSLER: And where was—

WILLIAM BROWN: And they—

JANE BROWN: It was in New York state.

JANE KESSLER: New York state.

JANE BROWN: He later went to Maine. He lives in Maine, or New Hampshire, to this day. I think he's still living on his own. We're—yeah. So there was no—never any strings attached on that.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: The other—

JANE KESSLER: Who—other residents, then?

JANE BROWN: Another person, by the way, who left later—this would be back in about 1970, [inaudible] '70, but David Cornell and Judy—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —came. He was a glassblower, and she was a potter, and he was invited after one year, or less than one year, he had—to become a head of Archie Gray. And the fluky part was nothing in their lives had gone on schedule. They were very neat, careful people, and they wanted this done, this done, and finally the only thing that went on schedule was their cards that said Judy Cornell and what's his name.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] They had a big thing, this big.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and they came in, and then that day the phone rang, and Archie Gray said, "Would you come and be the directors of our school?" And he came to Bill and said, "Bill, we've just spent these many months getting all ready, and now the cards are here, and nothing else is totally—we're just almost ready to swing." And Bill said, "How could you not take it?" So they left. Just as an example, that's how the resident program went.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, I guess that was—

JANE BROWN: Another guy came for seven years.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, I guess that was the thing. Where was this other quote that you said that ninety-six point —

JANE BROWN: Eight, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —Ninety eight-point-six of all the residents that went through were successful, meaning that then they got out on their own, they did what you—

JANE BROWN: Well, what they needed to, not what he needed.

JANE KESSLER: —what they—right, but what—

JANE BROWN: What they needed.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, but—

JANE KESSLER: Right, but what he wanted for them to have happen—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —was for them to do with—

JANE BROWN: They'd—

JANE KESSLER: —to get out and then go on and do what they needed to do.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. Skip Johnson, you know, went back and worked as a teacher at the University of Wisconsin, where he is now, just retired this last year. And so he found out that he really needed to be a teacher, and when he was invited to do it, Bill said, "Of course. If that's what you need to do, you've got to do it." So that would be one of our 98 percent successful, because he chose what he wanted to do, and he's encouraged people to be craftsmen in their own shops ever since. But he knew that they had to be the particular personality.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's right.

JANE KESSLER: Well, now, at that time, building-wise, so the barns then were not—the barns weren't part of Penland at that time, weren't they? Or where—

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE KESSLER: The residents then were—

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible]—sorry, I just reached over. Where we are is '63, the resident program begins, and '64 it goes on the same way, and '65 Appalachian School for Children is up for sale, which was Miss Lucy's school. And when it was finally bought it was 1966. That's why I know that, why we were using it the first time. So in '65 we are told we need \$100,000 to find.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: Now, this is a school—

WILLIAM BROWN: I love ya.

JANE BROWN: —that at that point is—that's when Bonnie absolutely was getting our salary out of the Coke machine one time. I mean, that really did happen. She was counting the pennies. She never wanted us to kind of know how low we were, but Bill always knew. He had a smell for the finances. He always kind of knew. And, by the way, you, I think, at one point asked—thought about asking salaries: Bill took \$6,000 to come here as a first salary—

WILLIAM BROWN: For one year.

JANE BROWN: —and before that year was over Sid Montague wrote us this very polite letter saying, "Bill Brown, we're very glad you're here, and we're proud of what you're doing. We have collected \$5,000 for you, but there's no way we'll find the last thousand. If you want it, you'll have to find it for yourself." Miss Lucy had been paid one year for \$700, but they had never paid a director. Five thousand was the tops they could find. So, of course, I wasn't paid anything. I wasn't paid anything till '69 was my first time to get a salary. So—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] all the funding. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: So now—oh, you bet—so now in 1964 and '65, it's just egging in on us about this wonderful school that they've—240 acres from the Appalachian School. It's that whole hillside in front of us. It was the Horner Hall. It was down where Cindy Greenville is. It was the barns, which were dilapidated and decrepit, just falling apart barns. So he—one day we were, in the spring, when a man named Phil Haynes drove up, and he—what he was asking Bill to do was run a meeting for arts people, like Tom Sulynan was going to be on it, and all these people that he felt should get the crafts and the arts going together in North Carolina, and he thought Bill should be the leader of it. And Bill said, "I'm not going to do it." And then Philip said, "But you could have the meeting here." So the two minds met right then. They were great friends from there on in.

JANE KESSLER: No, so but Phil Haynes had not had any involvement up until that meeting.

JANE BROWN: No.

JANE KESSLER: So that was—

JANE BROWN: Only that he had met Clementine Douglas, who was a board member from back in the '20s, and Clementine was on the boat that Joan and Bill had their honeymoon on, and they had heard about Penland School then, and he'd never forgotten about it. He was always kind of intrigued, because Clementine Douglas was one of the most supreme, beautiful women you could ever meet. She was very [inaudible], and a spirit that

was absolutely incredible. So he knew of the school from that, and he knew Clem wouldn't have said anything stupid. So now he was coming to get this director, just have a meeting, and then, "Let's go to dinner at the Nu Wray Inn."

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: "Okay, okay." And with that—that's where Phil Haynes started his blossoming of excitement for Penland School.

JANE KESSLER: And was it then Phil Haynes who made it possible to buy that land that was available?

JANE BROWN: Do you remember on the third floor of Lynn House?

WILLIAM BROWN: What?

JANE BROWN: We should visit. You were up on the third floor of the Lynn House, and he's looking around the grounds and the hills and stuff in front, and he says—

JANE KESSLER: Phil Haynes is.

JANE BROWN: —Phil Haynes—and he said, "This is incredible. I think this place is really wonderful." He's a very hyperactive guy. And Bill says, "Yeah, it's great. None of that land we own out there, and they want \$100,000 for it, too." And Philip says, "We'll figure out a way to do that. Sure. Let's go to dinner at the Nu Wray Inn."

JANE KESSLER: Well, that seems like providence that he—

JANE BROWN: And he just wouldn't stop talking. Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —showed up at exactly the right time.

JANE BROWN: Right, yeah. Prior to that, Miss Lucy had been there during the summer, who now, by the way, could visit very easily, and she stands outside, and a man comes up and he says, "You put it in your heart, Miss Lucy, that this land will be bought and it will be bought." So now that Philip comes in a few months later, and then Philip goes to his cousin, Gordon, and he shouts, "Gordon Haynes, we need"—was it \$20,000?—" \$20,000. I need it immediately. I need it immediately. I mean, go write the check right now."

WILLIAM BROWN: "I'm not gonna listen to you now." [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: And Gordon says, "I'm not gonna listen," and then he sees Bill a few months later and says, "I have never given \$20,000 to anybody or anything that I didn't know why it was going, but you're the one that hooked me." So that got 20. And this—yeah, that's when he told you, but he'd already done it when he didn't even know you. We—in the end, what Bill did was the church kept hassling back and forth about this 100,000 bucks, and finally Bill goes to the bishop one day, and the head of the bishopry financially, and he says to him, "I have \$40,000 in cash and I happen to know that you would be a lot smarter if you took this \$40,000 and you put it in the bank and you let us buy this defunct school from you and forget this \$100,000." And the guy looks at him, finally, and he says, "You know, I think you should be on the other side of this table. You've got a very good idea. You can talk with the board."

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't know what I was saying but I looked real good. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: And prior to that, by the way, when they had board meetings with the bishopry—it was marvelous—Mr. Bishop—I mean, Mr. Bitticks, of the lumber company, had been taking care of both schools. And so he—when the bishop was saying, "Well, we have this wonderful school with these 12 buildings on it," Mr. Bitticks said, "Just—"

JANE KESSLER: This is the Appalachian School.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, this is the Appalachian School, and he said—they had a meeting with both boards, of the Appalachian School, of our school, and of the bishopry, and Bitticks, of course, was there, and Bitticks then caught the bishop and said, "You just wait a minute. I'm the one who's taking care of that Appalachian School all these years, and I happen to know that leaves come through the walls [they laugh] at that school. That's how badly it's insulated. The water pipes all need to be redone."

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh my God, yeah.

JANE BROWN: And he just laid it on the line, and I think that did—so this is where Bill's board was really doing what it needed to do at the right moment, and that's what Bill had always said. That's why you need a board, but

you need them at particular moments, right?

JANE KESSLER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And what was the—

WILLIAM BROWN: God. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: And you got it for \$40,000.

WILLIAM BROWN: Forty thousand.

JANE BROWN: Right, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: How do you like that?

JANE KESSLER: Mm, that's not bad. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Philip didn't give anything to it, but Gordon gave something—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and then—oh, and then that's when you sent out—see, Bill had only sent out two—he's only sent out three letters asking for help. Oh, gosh, we didn't bring any. The first year he got there he went to town and he took a cup of coffee for ten cents one day and thought, that's how I can get the money. And he goes home, and he writes a letter called "Hey roo" , and I have it—you could look at it—and that's the old circus call that we need help, and it's, "Couldn't you give a dime a day to Penland School?" And altogether a dime a day would be \$36 a year, right? Would be—I know it's something like that. Mrs. Bishop got the letter and misunderstood it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah!

JANE BROWN: She of Haystack. And she sent him \$360. [They laugh.] That's what tells me I think it was \$36 a year you'd spend.

WILLIAM BROWN: When I came back—we were up there, and I talked—"Don't you know how to do even anything? [They laugh.] Can't get a ball or nothing. Look at what you've done." And she says, "What are you talking about?"

JANE BROWN: She laughed. I could hear her laughing.

WILLIAM BROWN: "Oh, God!" She said, "God!" [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: She sent 360, but everybody sent 36 bucks, and this all added up, you see.

JANE KESSLER: That's—okay.

JANE BROWN: So then the second letter that goes out is saying the Appalachian School is up for sale and we have some people that want to help us, but we're really in trouble, and we've got—Bill, was it about \$12,000? I'm not really so sure of this number.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, about.

JANE BROWN: Maybe 12,000 for people—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —which really impressed Phil Haynes. He couldn't believe that one letter going out could get that much money. And then he reached—

JANE KESSLER: And who did you send that letter to, Bill?

JANE BROWN: Ex-students and faculty.

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JANE BROWN: Great. Now we're at 1966, and Bill has just convinced the board of, really, of the church, the Episcopal Church, to sell the Appalachian schoolgrounds to Penland School, and now we have 12 to fund , and I mean really to fund, Bill , and now his problem is what does he do next.

WILLIAM BROWN: Just fall in.

JANE BROWN: Philip comes back, and by now he's brought John Neely to visit us. He's decided John Neely should get [inaudible], because he's a great friend, he's a writer, but not very well known at that point, see. So they both got—

JANE KESSLER: And John Neely was not living here at that time.

JANE BROWN: No, he hadn't bought a house [inaudible]. No, it was his first visit.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: So I guess, really, Philip came without John the first time—

JANE KESSLER: Philip Haynes.

JANE BROWN: Haynes. He comes to visit, and Philip loves to be in charge, and he says, "We're going to walk around on the grounds." And Bill says, "No, we're not." Philip says, "Yes, we are." And Bill says, "No, we're not." "We're going [inaudible]." "Oh, no, we're not." Back and forth, these two men were hitting each other about it. And finally Bill says, "You're getting into the jeep, Philip."

WILLIAM BROWN: He's small.

JANE BROWN: And so he's got—

JANE KESSLER: He's small. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: He gets into the jeep with him, and they start at 10:00 in the morning, and they continue all the way until 6:00 in the evening, going into every nook and cranny of every building. And Philip really did: he looked into these wonderful closet areas, and Morgan Hall has a lot of wonderful kind of mazelike areas. So he was just knocked down. He just came back, and he sat down on the front porch at our house, and just put his head down and said, "Now I know what my dad meant." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, our dad said, 'You're such a great guy, Philip. You get Brown this 40,000 bucks. You helped him find the money to buy this school. And now think of the problems he's got?'" And now Philip knew: every single one of those buildings had bad electrical systems and plumbing systems and so forth. John did come that weekend, because it was the weekend that Martha Ford got married.

JANE KESSLER: John Neely did.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and he had a bad tooth, and he disappeared Saturday morning. [Laughs.] So he didn't go on the trip with you, and I got the wedding going for Martha Ford. So Bill and Philip were just sort of going in and out with me as I was pulling off this wedding. And Philip was just stunned by the end of the day, and he said, "Now I've really got to help you." So John Neely kept coming back to see us. [They laugh.] And then they both—

JANE KESSLER: Well, that was a good response! "Now I really have to help you." [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Really do it.

JANE BROWN: Right. So Bill then was asked—or Bill decided to go ahead and make a major proposal to really Z. Smith Reynolds, and to the Reynolds-Babcock, because now they had a real project of re-embellishing these buildings, and it was wonderful things happening. He pulled together this incredible photographic book and written material, which John Neely helped write, and then he helped write the grant, which in October would be always when you get those moneys, so it was the next October before the moneys came probably. But during the summer we decided, how are we going to use these buildings? So M. C. Richards, who's, of course, a very, very famous philosopher and artist person—

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: —who's written and so forth, she talks with me—

WILLIAM BROWN: Pain in the neck. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Exactly. She talks with me, she talks with—

WILLIAM BROWN: She's nice, but—

JANE BROWN: I'm teaching dyslexic kids a lot by then, too, and we talk on the phone, and we talk in New York

about—when I'm visiting her, about how this school, how it could be with children. And so we're all open-ended about how would you use this new Horner Hall. And so M. C. comes to talk with Bill on a snowy weekend in February, and they decide that, yes, it's a great idea. They're going to have what Bill wants called Crossover, because it's going to be crossing over the arts. You're going to have music and dance and theater and storytelling and so forth, and M. C. is going to be the head of that, and it's going to be a two-week-long program called Crossover. And by then the dyslexic thing has dropped out of his steam entirely, at that point, but—and we were to use Ridgeway, which is another big building, to do that. Everybody's excited about it, but it's interesting to see, again—I'm giving your personality away as we talk this stuff out—M. C. has decided—you see, this—the Appalachian School was a church school, and there was a church inside the building, where now is photography was a church. And that's where Bonnie Ford worshipped all her young life. And it's a chapel. And so there's a cross up on top of the building, because it's a consecrated Episcopal building. So M. C. drives up the driveway with matter here, and she says, "Great. We're going to call it Crossover, and we're going to leave the cross." And Bill says, "No, we're not." And she says, "Oh, yes, we are." And he says, "No, you're not." And M. C. didn't take it as well as Philip. M. C. just got furious at the dinner table. She said, "That's why at Black Mountain—" Or, no, at Black Mountain—oh, she said—oh, pardon me; I just slipped there a minute. They're eating dinner. The Crossover thing has come off, and Bill has said he's not going to give in, and then she says, "We're all going to be baking bread the way we did at Black Mountain," because she was one of the early leaders of Black Mountain. *All Through Fighting*—I don't know whether you've ever read that book, but it's a crackerjack constant war and anger and no directorship. So she says, "We baked bread all the time. Students went in and baked bread, and we'll do that at Penland." And Bill said, "No, you won't." And she said, "Why not?" And he said, "Because the cook will leave and Jane will end up cooking. We've done three years of that. We're not going to go that way."

WILLIAM BROWN: We know how to do that. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: "We have plenty of good food, and we'll have baked bread if you wish it, but it's not going to be done by students." And that made her really mad. So she went away, really—this is really telling undercover information, but—

JANE KESSLER: It's—no, this is—

JANE BROWN: —she went away angry. She went away angry with Bill, but we went ahead and pulled off the program, and people like Remy Charlotte, the very famous dancer—

JANE KESSLER: And—but she did—but M. C. did come back?

JANE BROWN: To lead this program—

JANE KESSLER: To lead the program.

JANE BROWN: —for Crossover, yeah, and she got together the six or seven people, and they were Remy Charlotte, who is sort of a Medici—I don't mean the Medici—the Leonardo of our generation, really, somebody you'll hear more and more about. He's a dancer. He's a theater person. He's an Alexander Technique teacher. He's a singer. He's a little bit of everything, and a great friend of Wallace Feris since they grew up together on the same streets in New York, and went to the Henry Street Settlement together, and so forth. So Remy came to do theater, and he was a Paper Bag Player at that point, too. So he was here, and then there were two dancers, very famous dancers, and there was a storyteller who was Ted Moynihan, Daniel Moynihan's brother, and Ted was one of Timothy O'Leary's chief—Timothy O'Leary apparently had three major people who were his closest proteges as he developed this LSD pill, and Ted Moynihan was one of them, and Ted was in very bad shape when he got here. [They laugh.] Then there were two printers, [inaudible], wonderful printers. Bill, could you bring your chair over here? I have a feeling you're out of line with this [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, no, I was—

JANE BROWN: Okay?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Can I move you over this way?

WILLIAM BROWN: I can [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible] were printers, and M. G. was literature and philosophy and so forth, and a man came to do nature walks, too, so there must have been about eight of them. At any rate, this was a two-week knockout wow session.

JANE KESSLER: Do you remember how many students you had for that? Did you have a—

JANE BROWN: Well, they lived down in Horner Hall, so it couldn't have been much more than about 20-something. One very wonderful girl was a woman who turned out to be one of the children of the Vicks VapoRub people, and she was a great friend of John Neely. She was only 20, and a wonderful spirit for a 21-year-old girl. She was something. And so she fell very much in love with Penland and joined the board after that, and became very quietly influential, never came out with her name [inaudible], but we knew a lot of anonymous things that we think she did. So she was one of the major students there, but there were about 20 of them. Oh, and there was a dancer named Carolyn Bildeback, who came back every year afterwards for 20 years, so she was an important player.

JANE KESSLER: Did the Crossover program, was that a one-year thing then? Was that was—

JANE BROWN: Just that year. We did it for two years—

JANE KESSLER: But—

JANE BROWN: —and Ted Moynihan fell apart. He literally had to be put in a mental institution, and Bill and Skip Johnson were nearly killed by him, poor thing, and the school would foot the bill for that man for about six months in a private Appalachian home out in Charlotte, because—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, was that drug-related then, because—

JANE BROWN: He—well, he was no longer on drugs, but he had been so maimed by LSD, and his wife got married on the middle Saturday of the two-week session he was there, and he just couldn't get his act together, and we had him in our house because [inaudible] Horner didn't want him there anymore, so he lived with us until it got to the point where he couldn't stay there.

JANE KESSLER: Well, did you—

JANE BROWN: So it was a horrible breakdown.

JANE KESSLER: Did you—

JANE BROWN: Go ahead.

JANE KESSLER: I was just going to say, did you feel like that Crossover program—you said a minute ago that that was, like, a critical point in that time. Was that because of what you were beginning to do with the programs? Was that because you were beginning to bring—

JANE BROWN: You had already broken loose with a lot of fantastic teachers already, with Ted Holman and Toshiko and so forth, but now you brought in the outside arts, outside crafts, anyway, to try to intertwine them.

JANE KESSLER: So it was important—

JANE BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —for that reason, that they begin—

WILLIAM BROWN: We just made some things like that.

JANE BROWN: Because he loves—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, so if the guys got treated—

JANE BROWN: Oh, that happened later, darling, wait a minute. What happened with Crossover was you decided —

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: —at the end of the two weeks that it was too rich a thing to put on the school whammo, that it was better to let them come separately over future years, and that's why it made a program thing, because that's what he did later. And then you said—a year or two later you brought musicians in from Peabody School.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, I wanted to ask about that.

JANE BROWN: That's when you built the gazebos.

JANE KESSLER: Because that was—that was—and the musicians, from what I remember or read, it was—it didn't turn out to be a particularly great thing. Did the musicians want an audience? There was something about—who told me that?

JANE BROWN: Yeah, there was a little tension about that—

JANE KESSLER: That they wanted the audience, and the artists wanted the quiet, or—can you remember what the—

JANE BROWN: Do you have a special feeling about it?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—I don't know. If they do, they are doing something—

JANE BROWN: The music—

WILLIAM BROWN: —their music, and somebody is doing something over here, and now who's going to be in the middle of this, to take sofa, you know, parts [inaudible]. What was that? But we can't.

JANE BROWN: One of the biggest problems, I thought, Bill, was the musicians needed a special sound, and if they moved into the Horner Hall central area, yes, it would bother the people on both sides maybe, but I don't think that was the problem, really. I think it was the sound that, acoustically—we didn't have a correct acoustical system. They came for two or three summers, and—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, they did, so—

JANE BROWN: —Ridgeway is famous. If you've ever been to a party at Ridgeway—I never had them there because the sound would just get so out of hand, and so you're in there practicing a gentle little Baroque music thing, and you're in there with this sound going [makes wuh-wuh sound] all over the place. It didn't work very well. And then that's why you built the gazebos in the second summer of it, but then it was too damp.

JANE KESSLER: So that they could go out—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —and be in their—

JANE BROWN: Yes.

JANE KESSLER: —spot.

JANE BROWN: But then it was too damp for them. See, so there was always something wrong for the musicians. And they're performing—I think really one of our problems was the particular musicians we chose were very dedicated, and they were students of Peabody, and they were rather tight—the main man was rather tight in his thinking. He could only do Renaissance music, and there was no variation at all. So he wasn't very flexible. And he would repeat every session exactly the same music they had done before, and then people would—poor people wouldn't come, and that would make him mad. Those kind of things would happen. But in general, it was nice.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: It was—yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, I was—I don't mean to—

JANE BROWN: It's okay.

JANE KESSLER: I just wanted to make sure I didn't lose either the Alexander Technique, that—and the—and that—

JANE BROWN: Dance.

JANE KESSLER: Then that began—that was a really early part of this program at Penland, was bodywork and dance—

JANE BROWN: It started in '66.

JANE KESSLER: —and the Alexander Technique, and it continues now.

JANE BROWN: The Alexander Technique really never got going until '75, when I brought it in, but in '66 Carolyn Bildeback was one of the teachers—the other two did not come back, but Carolyn came back every single summer, and we just knew from that day on that Ridgeway should be used as the place for movement. And in '66 and '67 we were even using two big rooms for the dance movement program, and Carolyn did happen to be taking Alexander Technique lessons in New York, so she had the spirit of the Alexander thinking, but we never had it officially taught until '75. But it's—so, as you see, it was exactly what Bill said. Crossover was a neat idea, but it was a little too potent. It was too much juice to swing in on the craftsmen in two weeks' time. Let's spread it out.

JANE KESSLER: So you spread it out, and then you—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. Also, in '66, because of my work with dyslexic people, we began to think maybe we should use the school more in that area, and so June Liday Orden, who was the lead person in dyslexia including in the world in the '60s, and was helping me to teach my son and other kids, she came to do a workshop for two weeks where 20 people came from all over the Eastern part of the United States, and they lived in Horner Hall, and they worked in classes in Ridgeway. And this is where I remember the electrical problem. We didn't have the money yet to fix it, but I walked down the hallway at Horner Hall one day, and these women now were sitting at desks all day, and they were all pretty proper and prim, and they had their hair to fix and so forth. So they had—well, I guess I did it. They needed a coffee pot, and they needed their hair blower, dryer thing, and they needed their clock, and all the things that most of the craftspeople could care less about. So I thought, jeez Louise, they only have one plug per one, because Appalachian—[laughs] Horner Hall was not well built. And so I went and got extension cords, and I put it up in the light in the center, and I brought down three extension cords for each person, in 20 rooms. And Bill happened to walk in the building, and walked down with the doors open and saw extension cords. I was too stupid at that point to know that this would be a terrible overload electrically on the building and we might burn it out. So Bill went right back to the office and said, "The electrician's in town. You come up here and put new circuits in." And so while we went there, [laughs] we were hammering and sawing.

JANE KESSLER: Putting new circuits in.

JANE BROWN: Putting new circuits in. And luckily they knew it was in their own benefit, and it was done in about three to four days. But then that's when it really became very evident to where we had to get money to redo these buildings.

JANE KESSLER: To really upfit the buildings.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: I want to make sure I ask Bill before we finish this one, too.

JANE BROWN: All right.

JANE KESSLER: It was a question I almost dropped in here was his—he said he didn't have an office and didn't want one, and that's—

JANE BROWN: Right, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Except—

JANE BROWN: While he's out, let me do the dance stuff.

[Audio Break.]

JANE BROWN: That—and this was with this fantastic woman who brought in very big people to help, too. Then, by the way, for the county, counties, for eight counties—to finish up on the dyslexic part—in '71 I decided to invite the public school teachers from eight counties to come for a one-day workshop where we had chief neurologists from Duke, the head of Duke's neurology, and one of his major assistants, who has since become very famous in neurology, and a psychologist and a physiologist, and all kinds of people came. So this was being done for the community. It's one of those many things that I would do, and I'd later think, wow did I ever pull this one off, and run Penland School? I just can't do both, but '71 was a big letter—red letter day, trying to convince the eight counties there was such a thing as dyslexia, because Appalachian University, which was training most of our people—and in those days, in general, people didn't know about dyslexia.

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: So we were forerunners on all of that. Along the way, we were also thinking should—I may be off in time on this—this may have been two years later—but Bill thought, should the school be used for very creative children who are not doing well in public schools, and that are already showing in their creativity a

wonderful direction toward the arts? So I think this would be '68, so we're jumping ahead, but it fits with this [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: This piece.

JANE BROWN: Fits into this piece, that as a learning institute of North Carolina—so we got a grant of umpteen thousand bucks [inaudible] conference, which later I realized that Bill did all this money for conferences. So stupid, but in the '60s it was the thing to do. So we had a conference at Penland School with the thought , and very big guys—Fran Merritt came down [inaudible], and John Neely was here, and that it would link the [inaudible] institute of North Carolina—it was called [inaudible]—all their upper-uppers, and a couple of other big guys. Right now I can't remember their names. But the discussion was could we turn Horner Hall into a school, and that end of the campus into a school for these children. And 90% of them would be dyslexics, and I had all the knowledge and the people would come in and help me [inaudible]. So we had this wonderful three-day workshop, and everybody got excited. It was the time then would you have a maybe all-black, all-white, combination, and then by the end of it Bill and I thought, wait a minute, running Penland School is tough enough, in our own marriage. If I'm down at that end of the campus and he's up at this end, we are really never going to see each other. It's bad enough already at that point, but—and then, also, with the population of the school being 18 and above, you didn't have the problems that you had with insurance. Once you get 18 and under, you have a whole different system where you've got to have people monitor the buildings and so forth. So—

JANE KESSLER: Were you—

JANE BROWN: —it all kind of petered out.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah. Well, I can see why. That's like—that really did become bigger than probably—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and, see, it could also—it would have to be then—that would be a way to use it in the winters. That was—we were always trying to figure out how do you use the school in the winter, and maybe they wouldn't be here in the summer, and the summer program would go as old, but the winter would be this children's program, and they'd leave. But I think, at the core of it, Bill and I realized that we were already working seven days a week. How could we—

JANE KESSLER: And you were working full-time at that point, were you—

JANE BROWN: Tutoring, you mean?

JANE KESSLER: —no, I mean were you—

JANE BROWN: Oh, I was—

JANE KESSLER: —were you working—

JANE BROWN: Yes, by 19—

JANE KESSLER: Were you paid working here at that point in time?

JANE BROWN: No, I was not paid. I was paid \$1,000, finally, in '69—

JANE KESSLER: And that was—

JANE BROWN: —and then \$2,000 a few years later, and finally my salary got up to \$5,000 before I left, seven days a week.

JANE KESSLER: But you were working full-time.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and then I went down to tutor in public schools between 7:00 in the morning and 12:00, and then I rushed home to run the finishing business and the scholarships, and the dance thing. I don't know how I did it all. [They laugh.] It had to have been so much energy, I only slept about four hours a night. That's all I needed. And then we entertained every night from 5:00 to 6:15-ish. Then we went to dinner, and then after the slides every single night someone came home that had done their slides, and friends with them. So usually it was entertaining until twelve or one o'clock at night. And then I'd be able to go to sleep, and get up and teach. But the dance thing—

JANE KESSLER: Oh.

JANE BROWN: —if you want me to do before he comes in. But Bill just had such this open mind about allowing me to do my things, but everybody to do their own thing, and I could use me as an example. I felt that the dance

movement thing was really important, and he said, "I think so, too." So we invited Carolyn back in the summer, and then Carolyn and I would think of other dancers that would come, like one of the major dancers from the Paper Bag Players, Irving Burton, came, whose picture you'll see in a little while. And so wonderful people came. He was always willing to do it, but he always said, "Now wait a minute: the dancers come, and they teach at 4:00 in the afternoon. I can't give them the same kind of treatment as I can a faculty member who comes with his four children and teaches all day long, seven days a week." So he felt that it was not right for me to be bringing a faculty member in for four kids and pay them the same—and by the way, you know, our faculty members were being paid \$30, \$30 a week.

[Audio Break.]

JANE KESSLER: This is the Bill Brown interview. This is March the 2, 1991, in Burnsville, North Carolina. This is tape three, the end of tape three.

[Audio Break.]

JANE KESSLER: We're on. We're on.

JANE BROWN: Okay. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: They used to be.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, and let me—just to remind you all, we're doing the end of tape three, so we're gonna—we'll have about 15 minutes on this side and then finish up. So we're going to finish up, okay? We're going to pick up from our last conversation at around 1968-70, and we had just finished talking about the Crossover program at Penland School. And now I—you've been at Penland, by '68 or '70, you've been there six to eight years, or—is that—

JANE BROWN: '62—from '62, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible.] Yes, what [laughs]—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: —what you say, if it is, it is.

JANE KESSLER: Seven, yeah, that's about right. So that's given you time to be there and to establish your own presence, and you're in, now, and Miss Lucy is not so visible anymore. Is that right?

JANE BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: She's not such a presence anymore. So I know you didn't believe in meetings.

WILLIAM BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Most of the time.

JANE KESSLER: Okay. And I know you didn't want to have an office.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And why was that?

WILLIAM BROWN: Why?

JANE KESSLER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

WILLIAM BROWN: No, people don't know what to do. They—ten guys be in a row here, and start talking to what we're talking to. They don't know what it is. And you might as well [laughs] go get—pay somebody that knows what they think they are, and do it. They're not there anymore, and probably not very good with it. But you put—get it going this way, you know, and the next day I got three other guys, right here, right now, wow. So you just suck them in, see, and you don't—none of these guys—they know what they're doing.

JANE KESSLER: So you got—

WILLIAM BROWN: And so you don't give them, you know, this—raise hell and have fun. They know how to do it.

JANE KESSLER: So you didn't need to have meetings to tell people how to do things.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, what the hell?

JANE KESSLER: Yeah. Just you—and you're talking about you're leaving it to your faculty to do—

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure. [Laughs.]

JANE KESSLER: —what—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible], yes.

JANE KESSLER: —what they—you trusted them to get done what—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —needed to be—

WILLIAM BROWN: Sometimes they didn't [inaudible] any here, you know, and didn't come. You know, somebody [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Oh, a teacher wouldn't come, faculty member wouldn't come.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] here. "You jackass. You got the whole stand thing up there, and you do it [laughs] for what you want to do with it." "Oh. Well, okay." Then they start up, and then somebody would come in, starting to get back in and moving around, and—

JANE KESSLER: So it's just freedom. We got the people that we thought were gone, and then you let them go.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: Also one thing that I can never remember what the exact quote was—maybe we can figure it out at some point—was that it was—that you could never ask the people what they were able to do on their own, so why—you know, they had much more potential than you could ask for, and so—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —you let them do what they do best, and your influence on that wasn't as important as them being able to have the reins to do it.

JANE BROWN: Well, yeah, the reins was good. The analogy Bill used to say was that any one individual has blinders on to a certain extent, and therefore Bill Brown might see a situation done in this manner, and another person might come in and be looking way out here somewhere, or way all over the place, and therefore what a tragedy it would be for him to tell a faculty member what he expected of them, because when he let them go he found out that they found out their potential was even greater than they dreamed, and that's, I think, the core of why everybody left to come and work under him. So—

WILLIAM BROWN: Under me? [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: They worked under you, or with you, yeah. And also, at about this time—it was probably—Jerry Brown, our son, is in on this tape this time, so—

JANE KESSLER: Right, [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yes, I forgot to say that. And, of course, we haven't—I don't—we haven't even introduced your name, either. Jane Kessler is the interviewer. Nor have we introduced Jane and Bill Brown. [They laugh.] Okay.

JANE KESSLER: That's true! Now we're getting the idea, aren't we?

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JERRY BROWN: And it's March 2, 1991.

JANE BROWN: Okay! The thing that—there were two things that happened. Phil Haynes used to bug bill a lot about board members, that boards ought to be more effective, and that all boards should be effective and active. We did have one funny experience, when—which is back before '66. He brought John Neely on that first visit, which I talked about, and that evening, just at the time Philip was at the table saying, "Bill Brown, you ought to make your board more active. You could do this and do that." And Bill would say, you know, "Bullshit."

And finally the phone rang, and he went to the phone, and two of our residents had gone downtown in the school's old Chevy, and it had a light out, and the police had stopped them. And one of the guys driving was practicing, because he didn't have his license yet, so he got picked up without a license, and it was the car alarm, of course, that had stopped him. So anyway, Bill was a little perturbed at first because, you know—disturbed. It was the school car. What do we do now? So it was so fascinating: Philip Haynes and John Neely's first visit, sitting there at the dinner table, and Bill went to the phone and called the head of the board. And the head of the board, Sid Montague, said, "Well, give me a few minutes." And two or three minutes later Frank Watson, the school lawyer, called, and said, "Don't worry, Bill, I'll take care of it."

WILLIAM BROWN: He's an old guy.

JANE BROWN: And then he called—

WILLIAM BROWN: He knows what to do.

JANE BROWN: —to the chief of police, who was a buddy of ours anyway, and the chief of police, of course, let the two guys off. And it was all done within about a 15-minute framework. And at the end of it Bill turned to Philip and said, "You see"—said to him, "You see, when I need my board, I use them, and you can see how effectively they work."

WILLIAM BROWN: Get out of town [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Now, the other thing that Philip was bugging Bill about was that Bill was carrying too much of a load on his own, so it was between, we think, '68 and '70 that he began to say, "All right, I'm making these phone calls to all these faculty members." And it would take him hour upon hour upon hour to call, because he knew never to write them. You know, he always knew, don't bother to write them; they'll never answer you. And we always did it after Christmas. He would never call them sooner than that, because he thought it was wrong, and he still thinks it's wrong to this day, the way schools are planning a whole year ahead. He thought that you should wait till after Christmas—

JANE KESSLER: Okay, so—to call them for the summer session.

JANE BROWN: —to—for the summer coming, yes.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: All right, so Philip had said, "Y'all are getting rid of some of your overload." And Bill decided then to use his faculty members. I think it happened at about somewhere between '68 and '70 that he began to say, "Okay, Cynthia Bringle, will you start inviting some ceramics for the summer, and Yvonne Sweetman, will you start doing some photography people?" So, you see, now he was getting the faculty involved in the establishment of the programs.

JANE KESSLER: So the faculty began to be chosen by the faculty, which is—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and he never doubted the faculty members he chose to do it. I mean, I don't think—I can never remember any hassle about any of it.

JANE KESSLER: Well, did you—let me go back to you as the director, I mean, of—and that's what I want—

JANE BROWN: This was his directing, you see. This was the way he—

JANE KESSLER: Right, that's what I want to make sure we have in here is that you didn't view yourself as—the way people usually view themselves when they're in that position. You viewed yourself as a—

WILLIAM BROWN: Muddle.

JANE KESSLER: —a muddle. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: A muddle.

JERRY BROWN: Well, people didn't work for you; you worked with them—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —is more the theme of—

JANE KESSLER: So you made the—you made the atmosphere available to them. You made the place available.

You—

WILLIAM BROWN: I hope.

JANE KESSLER: —you made—you got them there, and then—and so that was your role? Is that what you—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well,—

JANE BROWN: And you never lied to them. Remember, that's what you said. You never lied to them, and you always told them they'd have a lumpy bed, [they laugh] and just beer money, 30 bucks a week.

WILLIAM BROWN: For beer.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So how do you think they came, Bill? Because you asked them.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they—some of them I knew, but there's a lot of the ones that I never know, because that guy would get another one, and if that guy sends you , okay, great. So that's the way they'd come.

JERRY BROWN: Well, at first, too, you were asking people—a lot of people that you knew that were—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —soon to be the big guns at that point, and then once the reputation built up then the teachers want—would like to have been asked. I mean, it became—

JANE KESSLER: So it's the honor—

JERRY BROWN: —to the point where it was—where there were more teachers that wanted to teach than could teach, and it was a nice thing to have on your résumé that you'd done, an exciting thing to have gotten involved with, so they would hope they would get called.

JANE KESSLER: I guess that was where—it was like going back to that initial faculty, and I know that was—and I want to make sure we know who those people were. You know, I know Ted Holman was one of the first.

JANE BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE KESSLER: Skip Johnson was one of the first.

JANE BROWN: Toshiko Takaezu [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Ed Brinkman.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. Now, he wasn't a faculty member, though. He was a resident.

JANE KESSLER: A resident.

JANE BROWN: He was a resident, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: He was one of the first residents. So—

JANE BROWN: Right, Edith—

JANE KESSLER: —let's stay with faculty, then.

JANE BROWN: —Blumenau, Lili Blumenau came, and broke her arm the first night. [Laughs.]

JANE KESSLER: Okay, Lili Blumenau.

JANE BROWN: Lili Blumenau was a very famous weaver in those days.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And Mary Ann Scherr came from about '66. Lili.

WILLIAM BROWN: She only broke one. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Lili, Lili.

JANE KESSLER: Lili broke one arm.

JANE BROWN: Let's talk about this, too, Bill. If you believe that the way you make a good school is through the horses, as he called them, and so when he asked Lili Blumenau, was it ever an example—we had—this was, like, in the first year or two we were here. I think it was the first year. Lili came to do a course in the fall, and Bonnie had now been a registrar since the beginning of the school. She hadn't had an overload of students for so long, and she didn't notice that she enrolled 40 weavers. [They laugh.] And it was in September, besides. I mean, that would have been low. So this was the night that Bill took Lili—he went to Lili and he said, "Oh, boy, we've done something. We have 40 weavers for you." And she said, "Bill, how many looms do you have?" And he said, "Forty or 42, I think." And she said, "Well, we're fine." [They laugh.] And then he took her—then he took her to see the Craft House and she fell off a wall and hit the—

WILLIAM BROWN: Then he fell off the wall.

JANE BROWN: —and hit the stones down below, and started that class—

JANE KESSLER: That's how she broke her arm.

JANE BROWN: —yeah—started that class with scars all up and down her arm, but never stopped. And, of course, Bill's theory—within a year, therefore, proved he was right: you get the big names, and then you get the students. So—

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Boy. Now, that's Bob.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And you get the—and you get the other faculty. You get the—

JANE KESSLER: Yes.

JANE BROWN: —good—so Bill saw himself. I mean, you start with the—you get the good horses, and then they'll get more good horses, and—

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: —and it's—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And it would help and be good to them.

JANE BROWN: And be good to them.

WILLIAM BROWN: When they're here, and have fun, and work your tail off.

JERRY BROWN: And being good with them, it never had anything to do with money.

JANE BROWN: Or a physical plant, even, really.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Cross talk] had any money.

JERRY BROWN: Or having the best studios in the world. I mean, at that point it was—I mean, now they're studios that are great studios compared to the studios of the world, but at that time they were working with the—with nothing, and as was often mentioned was the Southern mafia, where a lot of these people that were teaching at other schools would come up with things from places [they laugh] where they shouldn't have come from, and they'd be here at Penland, and things were shipped here, you know, drop shipped from all over the country to Penland, to go in studios that nobody really knew where they came from.

WILLIAM BROWN: Shh, shh, shh, shh. [They laugh.]

JERRY BROWN: Well, we didn't say where they came from.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, no.

JERRY BROWN: That was part of—

JANE KESSLER: But they just showed up. It was one of the—

JANE BROWN: We made the mistake of sending something back one time. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Huh?

JANE BROWN: A big box came in addressed to one of our faculty members, and Bill said, "Well, this has to be a mistake. Send it back to the person." The person had sent it down here from his university. [Laughs.] It was very awkward to have it returned again. [They laugh.] But don't tell the name.

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't see it.

JANE KESSLER: We won't turn that.

JANE BROWN: Turn it in , yeah.

JERRY BROWN: Protect the innocent here.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So where was it? So it was just a—

JANE BROWN: But housing, too, was terrible for them. We had place—Jerry—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, yeah. The beds here aren't beds at all.

JANE BROWN: Homasote Heaven had been a building that had been used for metal, and he turned it in—because we didn't have enough, because it was still only 12 acres of land, and we didn't have good space for faculty members that would come with children, so he took Homasote Heaven, or he took this old building and made a Homasote building out of it that was bigger, and divided in half.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, first two things.

JANE BROWN: Two years?

WILLIAM BROWN: We—it was just there.

JANE BROWN: Yes. Oh, and they lived in it that way.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, because what it—what [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: That's right, they did.

WILLIAM BROWN: —Tosh was in it.

JANE BROWN: Tosh?

WILLIAM BROWN: Tosh.

JANE BROWN: Tosh was there, and Lenore Tawney.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, all these guys are there—

JANE BROWN: The most famous people.

WILLIAM BROWN: —in this dumb place.

JANE BROWN: I mean, it was a shack. It was nothing but a shed.

WILLIAM BROWN: It is. It's still there, or almost.

JANE BROWN: But then we made it into Homasote Heaven. Once we changed it, it became Homasote Heaven.

JERRY BROWN: Homasote is—

WILLIAM BROWN: And then they kind of liked it, because—

JANE BROWN: A kind of building material.

JERRY BROWN: It's a kind of building material. It's not—it's a very inexpensive—

JANE BROWN: You're absolutely right: Tosh and Lenore lived in it when it was still a pure shack, and then we decked it out.

JANE KESSLER: Is that Lenore—let's look up Lenore Tawney, too, then.

JANE BROWN: All right, alright.

JANE KESSLER: So she was [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yeah, you betcha.

JANE KESSLER: And Mark Peiser.

JANE BROWN: He didn't come—

JERRY BROWN: No, Mark's came—

JANE BROWN: He was later.

JERRY BROWN: —as a student—

JANE BROWN: In glass.

JERRY BROWN: —to learn something about blowing glass.

WILLIAM BROWN: But then turned into a best one in the world.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, wow.

JANE KESSLER: That's right. And that, I know, had to do with you.

WILLIAM BROWN: I said, "Do it." [They laugh.] He said, "Kiss my ass." And he didn't do anything. We were just—maybe you can see him. Wonderful.

JANE BROWN: So we haven't even talked—

JERRY BROWN: But—

JANE BROWN: —about the glass studio starting yet, so he wouldn't have been there on the earlier [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Right, so—

JERRY BROWN: Well, part of the excitement, I think, for all those people, too, is that they were getting to help build something that they thought was pretty neat, too, instead of coming into an existing—

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't know what I would do.

JERRY BROWN: Right. I mean, everybody admitted they didn't know what they were doing, and—

JANE KESSLER: But they thought it was something good.

JERRY BROWN: It was something good, and they were being able to create something like they'd longed to have out in the world. You know, I think they—

JANE KESSLER: What do you think that was, though? I mean, what—

JERRY BROWN: Well, I think they were trying to get away from the big organized schools and the big universities and the big board of directors and the big things that end up happening to every organization as it grows bigger and bigger, and they were in on creating something that seemed to have the power to stand on its own in that style, and so they were all [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: And that was—I mean, I know that—I know that Penland—that you liked to keep Penland—well, I'm saying I know, so if this is wrong, tell me, but that I assume you liked to keep Penland sort of on the financial edge for a reason; I mean, that you didn't want it to get to be real—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —comfortable and—

JERRY BROWN: Well, Mom [inaudible]. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Usually we never had any money—

JANE BROWN: But you used to s—

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] pocket.

JANE BROWN: You used to say if you got—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —a large amount of money, you'd hide it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And I did.

JANE BROWN: And never tell them, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: I told what's-his-name, and he didn't do it.

JANE BROWN: [Laughs.] You told Philip.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, what's—

JANE BROWN: John Neely?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, what's the other big guy?

JANE BROWN: Oh, Reese , the man—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no.

JANE BROWN: No. I don't know.

JERRY BROWN: Nils Larson or something?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: No. Yeah, but you told him that he should go out and get—oh, Sanford? Terry Sanford?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no.

JANE BROWN: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: And he said, "Well, you've got—you should—in a million—"

JANE BROWN: Million dollars.

WILLIAM BROWN: I'm walking down the road, and he said, "Well, give it to us if you got it." [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: If you've got the money.

WILLIAM BROWN: He says, "What—"

JANE BROWN: But you said you'd hide it and you wouldn't tell anybody.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, I said—

JANE BROWN: We aren't very good at—

WILLIAM BROWN: —now, you—

JANE BROWN: —clandestine—

WILLIAM BROWN: —I'd get—I would like—I would like to have a whole—

JANE BROWN: Hundred thousand dollars?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, a whole million.

JANE BROWN: Oh, okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't go little.

JANE BROWN: All right.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so he got [inaudible]. But if you did, I have a million years—

JANE BROWN: Million dollars, uh-huh.

WILLIAM BROWN: —you gotta put it someplace. I mean, don't—you know. Right away. But so I said, "Well, what we should do with it, if we had to put it—[whispering]. Don't tell anyone."

JANE BROWN: Don't tell anyone.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Whispering] "Don't [inaudible]. Leave it there." Now, after 10 years we might make something out of the ground or [laughs] if we needed it, and—

JERRY BROWN: It would always be there as a backup, a fallback—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, and don't talk to anybody about it.

JANE BROWN: Bill got excited about doing that at one point with Terry Sanford and John Neely and someone else, but they never did it.

JANE KESSLER: To just put some more aside.

JANE BROWN: To get a million dollars and put it aside, but it didn't work. They never did it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, but don't monkey with it.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And if a big thing happens, take a little piece off of it.

JANE KESSLER: And then, so—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and the reason—

JANE KESSLER: —[inaudible] to make sure that you could keep the place going, but not to rely on it. I mean, you liked for it to be self-sufficient—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no,—

JANE KESSLER: —and—

JANE BROWN: And that everybody felt important and needed.

WILLIAM BROWN: And everybody was—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, sure, right.

WILLIAM BROWN: —everything—

JANE KESSLER: Well, that's a real important part there, that that was—

JANE BROWN: Right, it was—

JANE KESSLER: —that that was—

JANE BROWN: Sure.

JANE KESSLER: —that everybody contributed?

JANE BROWN: You betcha.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, sure!

JANE KESSLER: That they made it work because they put their—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —time and energy—

JANE BROWN: Energy and—yeah, that's right—

WILLIAM BROWN: You bet , yeah, sure.

JANE BROWN: —and they knew it was a worthy project.

JERRY BROWN: And the other thing was, as you learned when this one session got much larger than we had expected it to get, was that the biggest mistake in it was, though I'm sure the board of directors in the bank or university would have said more students, more money, that's the way to make this happen, which is part of the problem with the board that came up later, is that I remember hearing that the big mistake with that is that you didn't get to know everybody within the time period you were there, and that the smallness factor of—

JANE BROWN: Was precious, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So [inaudible]—

JERRY BROWN: —was precious, and we needed to keep it down. No, we could make the facilities bigger, and we could do all that; the thing was to keep it small so it didn't get—

JANE BROWN: He insisted—

JANE KESSLER: Growth is not always—

JANE BROWN: —he never wanted it to get bigger.

JANE KESSLER: —a great thing.

JANE BROWN: He did not want it to get bigger.

WILLIAM BROWN: No way.

JANE BROWN: Over a hundred students, he refused to go any higher than that. He would not do it.

JANE KESSLER: Over a hundred students—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —was out.

JANE BROWN: Right. He didn't ever want to do that, even with 400 acres. He liked the idea of the acreage collecting around it, just to protect it for future generations.

JANE KESSLER: And that was also—I know that to keep Penland isolated—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —was a real important—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I guess you can't do it, but they kind of do it now.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, they kind of do it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Because they go downtown to get stuff, and they go to beer, and they bring things that they would—from home. And maybe that starts at having a [inaudible] beer. Then they stay doing what they're doing, and—

JANE BROWN: So the isolation was important, you mean—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —that they stayed here close together?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: And they went downtown a little, but not much.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, if they want to do that, hell, we can't stop them.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: But basically to keep it—right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And also not just to keep them isolated while they were here, but that Penland School stayed apart somewhat from the rest of the world, too.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: That—

JANE BROWN: The students always appreciated—

JANE KESSLER: —and then—

JERRY BROWN: Well, also, at the time we moved here the rest of the world was the mountains of Spruce Pine, North Carolina—

JANE BROWN: That's true.

JERRY BROWN: —which is, you know, like in a time vacuum, or especially was then.

JANE BROWN: That's true.

JERRY BROWN: And also it was the time of long hair and all things happening in the world that weren't happening in Spruce Pine, and that was a—there was always a bit of a fear factor between the good people of the community that thought that long hair and all those things were, of course, the devil—

JANE BROWN: The devil, yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —and the end of the world. So there had to be a bit of protection in keeping them apart for their own—for everyone's safety.

JANE KESSLER: That's something I wanted to talk about as a whole different thing, so I don't want to forget that, but I do want to go back before we got done with the family and make sure that we—

JANE BROWN: A couple of funny remarks about—that Toshiko said. Two things happened. One is she would laugh, she would giggle at Ted Holman a few years later when we had gotten more buildings and more spaces to put faculty in. She'd giggle and say, "Ted, we will have to get a child to get a decent house together. [They laugh.] We're going to have to rent a baby, rent a baby." Because the people who got the better houses, as we began to collect smaller houses, that's where the faculty with children would live, and she never got that luck, see. So she and Ted should rent a baby. Another funny thing happened to her. She came in for a session, and another session had just completed, and there was a little 18-year-old gal learning to do pots, and she walked by Toshiko doing a pot one day on her Sunday afternoon. Toshiko had already been there for a weekend. And Toshiko was throwing this gorgeous pot, and the little girl looked at her and said, "Boy, do you do good for your first day." [They laugh.] And Tosh just said, "Yeah, it's fun," and just let it go, you know, said no more.

JANE KESSLER: That's wonderful. But that brings up another point, that I know that you all always encouraged the faculty to bring their families, that there was—

JANE BROWN: Yes.

JANE KESSLER: —never—there was never an attitude about don't bring your kids. You—

JANE BROWN: Made another dimension—

JANE KESSLER: —and that's a great—

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure.

JANE BROWN: —another fantastic dimension—

JANE KESSLER: I mean, all the things that we're talking about with this faculty had to do with, like, a family and a community.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, for sure.

JANE KESSLER: That's—

JANE BROWN: At one point the weaving group—one of the most beautiful examples of the children was a weaving group did a big net out of the trees, and one day I looked down and all the children were playing in that net. It was absolutely exquisite, and the other faculty members and students said, you know, "Isn't it great there are children here?" And that session, it was kind of an overload, as I remember, of about eight or ten kids, and sometimes that would happen. But such delight. They were totally involved in the project, so—

JANE KESSLER: And the faculty felt that when they came here they—that that took a big burden off of people, if they could bring their families, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, but they were scared—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —the ones that hadn't been here, and they get their car [inaudible], and they have never seen the place. And in two [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Days.

WILLIAM BROWN: —they'd got it fine—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —we'd got it going just like crazy.

JANE BROWN: And the masters—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: The masters of all these children—

JANE KESSLER: Let them go.

JANE BROWN: The masters of these children, of course, was Jerry Brown's brothers. I mean, he can fill in better on that than any of us. Maybe [inaudible]? [They laugh.]

JERRY BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: We had some faculty members that were very youthful, too, and one of them was playing with water balloons with the boys [laughs]—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, right in through the [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: I know you mentioned Don Juan.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Don Drum was—

JANE BROWN: Hyperactive.

JERRY BROWN: He's the one that did this wall.

WILLIAM BROWN: These guys did it.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, he did this wall, and a very hyperactive man who learned he was dyslexic when he got here, and so afterwards, everyone, he'd say, "Hello, I'm Don Drum. I'm dyslexic." So he was very hyperactive, and he would get playing with these boys, and they would throw water balloons at one another, and it sometimes got involved the faculty members and stuff, so—

JANE KESSLER: Well, let's talk about two, then. I mean, we're talking about faculty, and we've got—I know we've got—we talked about the weaver, and we talked about—and Don Drum was sculpture, right?

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And he did [inaudible]—

WILLIAM BROWN: I don't know what he did. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Here are those categories.

JANE BROWN: Bill doesn't know.

JANE KESSLER: Forget the categories.

JANE BROWN: And Frank Colson came from Florida, as a bronze person. So that—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, he—

JANE BROWN: —[inaudible] doing sculpture way back then. He was opening a sculpture studio back in the early '60s. And he had little Ann Colson. We had wood, say—

JERRY BROWN: Now, vegetable dyeing was something that was still going on—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, sure.

JANE BROWN: You bet.

JERRY BROWN: —that was here kind of on the changeover—

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JERRY BROWN: —from the two—

JANE KESSLER: Two eras.

JERRY BROWN: —eras at that point.

JANE BROWN: And stayed with us, mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE KESSLER: And then clay, of course.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And that was—

JANE BROWN: And Karen Karnes came in the early years for us.

JANE KESSLER: Right, Karen and, of course, Cynthia Bringle was here.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And was Edwina—

JANE BROWN: Well, of course, it was just building—they were just building their names then.

JANE KESSLER: Right, I know.

JANE BROWN: Edwina wasn't even a weaver at that point—

JANE KESSLER: That's right.

JANE BROWN: —so they were just building their names. Karen Karnes was still already pretty darn well-known.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, Tom Tawney?

JANE BROWN: Sure.

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure, yeah, sure.

JANE BROWN: Right, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Because he was one of your early faculty.

JANE BROWN: He was the late '60s, maybe.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: What about Arlene Fisch? Wasn't she [inaudible]?

JANE BROWN: Oh, sure. Arlene came. Arlene Fisch, the famous jeweler.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: And Don Wrights had already come, and then—

WILLIAM BROWN: Two [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: —Ronnie was '70.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: And—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, Warren MacKenzie?

JANE BROWN: —Fred Fenster and Warren MacKenzie.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, yeah, sure.

JANE BROWN: I mean, you name any of the leaders, true leaders of today, they were here. Bob Ebendorf was just growing at that point in the '60s, and he came the first time and he had—yeah, I keep wondering if it's not over, but—

WILLIAM BROWN: It's still going.

JANE KESSLER: It's still going.

JANE BROWN: Okay. Bob Ebendorf came up from Florida, and he had—he was to teach for six weeks, and no one signed up, and he was heartbroken, and horrorstricken, and thought surely Bill would send him home. And Bill said, "Don't be silly."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, jackass.

JANE BROWN: "I mean, this is the luckiest thing that ever happened to you." [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure, go work.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, "Go to work," he said.

JANE KESSLER: Go to work.

JANE BROWN: So Ebendorf is such a giving kind of person that he started becoming sort of the tour guide. He would do his work. He'd work all night, and at 4:00 in the morning wake up—or not wake up, walk down to the kitchen, where the cook was already there, and they would sit and have some breakfast together, and then Ebendorf would go to bed. During the daytime he toured people all through that six weeks' time, and to this day I think he did some of the most incredible work he ever did in his life. It was the most human and beautiful, exquisite stuff in that six weeks' period. And then of course Bill invited him back for the next year, which surprised Ebendorf. He thought why, if I didn't fill in a class, would you ask me back?

JERRY BROWN: Well, that was something that you were known to have done, numerous times. Any teacher that ever had any trouble, for whatever reason, was always—

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JANE KESSLER: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: Is anybody in here?

JANE BROWN: Yeah. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, we're gonna go, go, right now.

JANE KESSLER: You're on. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: You're on [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: [Inaudible], Bill.

JANE BROWN: Okay, you're saying it's tape—

JANE KESSLER: Thank you, again. I was about ready to forget it again. Tape—second side of tape three. Right. And we're going to pick up—we were going to pick up with what Jerry was saying. He was talking about that any time that a faculty member had trouble during his session, the first thing that Bill was sure to do was to go and invite him to come back, and that there was—one of the things about the school was that failure was never a part of it, either as a student or as faculty.

JANE BROWN: And then I got in and said even the cleaning people—

JANE KESSLER: Right, and—

JANE BROWN: —and there were two cleaning women who had left us kind of in a hot manner, and it sort of stunned me, and it was an unhappy experience, and about three years later I was, indeed, looking for cleaning people, and they asked for the job, and I said, "Bill, what do you think? Should I hire them back? Is this stupid of me?" And he said, "But this is an educational institution, and it's for everybody to learn." I mean, he really literally said this. "This is a learning experience for everybody, the maintenance and the cleaning and the cooks and everything else. So why don't you give them a chance?"

JANE KESSLER: This is—

JANE BROWN: And they did fine.

JANE KESSLER: And this is sort of another thing that I wanted to make sure got talked about on here, because it really wasn't the objects that were important at Penland School; it was the people. And that came—

WILLIAM BROWN: Make the pieces.

JANE KESSLER: The people make the pieces. They're what's important.

JANE BROWN: And so in the end the pieces were important, too, because they were of the people, which is why all these items in this house are important. They're things, but they are so much of people that you could never put down the essence of what they made. It was their expression, wasn't it?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, sure.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, did we—I know we were going to talk about the residents in the barns, but before we get off the faculty again I wanted to—we—I don't know when the glass studio started.

WILLIAM BROWN: Neither do I. [They laugh.] It just went up. I mean, that hall.

JANE KESSLER: It just blossomed.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: It started in 1964, because we have the paper there that shows it. Nineteen sixty-four, Bill went to a conference with—it was an American Craftsmen's Council conference in New York City, and he met Harvey Littleton and Fran there, and they both got very excited about glass, but by then Bill had already—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, I knew all three. Three of us.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, you were all—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, but—

JANE BROWN: But didn't—I thought we did talk some about it in the last—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, a little, we did.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that we got started in '64 with the glass studio, and the way Bill built it was just a—was it—wasn't it 10 feet wide and 20 feet long?

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, God, no.

JANE BROWN: But the glass studio? It was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, the first place?

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, the thing was about that big—

JANE BROWN: It was about 10 feet wide—

JERRY BROWN: The furnace.

JANE BROWN: Oh, the furnace.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and about [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Alright, alright. And it was to mix batch.

WILLIAM BROWN: No—

JANE BROWN: Was just green marbles. I mean—marbles—

JERRY BROWN: —marbles.

JANE BROWN: I meant green marbles. I was—I'm sorry, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: They were using green marbles.

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure.

JANE BROWN: Right? And the first person that came to do it with you was Boysen, Bill Boysen, and—

JANE KESSLER: Bill Boysen—

JANE BROWN: Bill Boysen—

JERRY BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —who was at—

WILLIAM BROWN: He's supposed to be doing the—

JANE BROWN: Ceramics. He was—

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: He was working with Harvey Littleton, and he was at Wisconsin.

WILLIAM BROWN: Who?

JANE BROWN: Bill Boysen.

WILLIAM BROWN: Boysen.

JANE BROWN: Yes. He's the one who came—

WILLIAM BROWN: Okay, alright.

JANE BROWN: —and did this project for you, but you wanted Schulman—you wanted Harvey, and Harvey refused, and he said, "I'll send Norm Schulman."

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, I see.

JANE BROWN: Norm had just gotten a job at Rhode Island, and then—

WILLIAM BROWN: There's cows there. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: And then Norm said, "Why don't you—" Or Harvey chose Bill Boysen. And he—Bill said on the phone, "I'll have it ready in three days."

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: "I'll have—I'll have a—"

WILLIAM BROWN: He did it, too.

JANE BROWN: "—furnace running in three days."

JANE KESSLER: Did he?

WILLIAM BROWN: He did.

JANE BROWN: He did, yeah. And by—and then everybody came to see that big—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and then—

JANE BROWN: —exciting moment.

WILLIAM BROWN: —gave the thing to me.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and let you—

WILLIAM BROWN: And I had to do it.

JANE BROWN: Because, you know, Bill had been at Corning, and he was interested in glass.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. But we didn't ever have to blow it or anything, but we went down and looked at it and all that [inaudible]. And so—yeah, yeah, yeah. And we have a well-known—

JANE BROWN: Glass [inaudible]. [Laughs.]

JERRY BROWN: Glass designer.

JANE BROWN: Glass designer.

JERRY BROWN: Who made them—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and I worked [inaudible] once.

JERRY BROWN: —[inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: And so he hands—he hands me the pipe, and now he's got me stuck. I never, ever, ever did it in my head. And so everybody is now all the way around the thing there, hearing me do this. And so I know I gotta do it. You can't get out of it. And so I had seen them do the pretty lot of it, and so I just—and I never, never, ever, ever doubted them. And I said—what? [They laugh.] Oh, this is the kind that [inaudible] water in it. And what's-his-name said, "What are you saying?" [They laugh.] And so I—[inaudible]—gathered—yeah. [They laugh.] And—what?

JANE BROWN: And you blew it.

JERRY BROWN: What happened, there's a trick that you can do that's really—I mean, a really experienced glassblower can blow into a pipe and stick their finger over the end of the pipe, and if you're slick enough to do it the air that you've blown in—

JANE BROWN: Gets trapped.

JERRY BROWN: —gets trapped, and heat expands it, and it blows the bubble by itself, which is—

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure.

JERRY BROWN: —quite a trick that not many people can do. And—

JANE BROWN: Bill did it. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: He did it.

JERRY BROWN: He did it.

WILLIAM BROWN: I did.

JERRY BROWN: Just by luck. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: I just didn't—

JANE KESSLER: That's wonderful.

WILLIAM BROWN: —get in there [inaudible]. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: That must have knocked their socks off.

JANE BROWN: Then—

WILLIAM BROWN: They started laughing.

JANE BROWN: Then a neat thing later was by chance he asked Bill Boysen to come back in whatever year it was —was it '79 or '77, when—oh, he must have come back at the first—when the new building was built, the new glass building was built. Boysen was the teacher, and Joe Mondale came.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, sure.

JANE BROWN: And so he had Bill Boysen come back and do the first session of the new completely fancy glassblowing, which was really neat, and a great honor to Bill Boysen.

JANE KESSLER: What—where was Norm Schulman in that? Did he come help build the furnace?

JANE BROWN: No, he didn't come at all.

JANE KESSLER: He did not come.

JANE BROWN: He couldn't come, because he had gone to Rhode Island, but he came—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, where the [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: —came—what did we say, it was '71? First glass conference was in 1971, which is now called GAS —

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: —the GAS Glass Group, which is now up in the thousands and thousands of members. It started here with 12 members, and it was Mark Peiser and Fritz and Norm Schulman came to that.

JANE KESSLER: Fritz Dreisbach.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And it was then that I think—yes, Fritz Dreisbach. I think that it was then that Norm Schulman decided he was going to live here, and, of course, he does live here now.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. But he only came as a visitor to that conference, and that was all.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, he'd come down—

JANE BROWN: Then after that he kept coming a lot.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] come down to help—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —do whatever.

JANE BROWN: And he was going back more into ceramics by then, anyway.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: He wasn't doing much glass.

JANE KESSLER: That's what I thought. In fact—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —I hadn't even known until recently that Norm Schulman was—did glass, or was involved in that—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —early glass. But he was.

JANE BROWN: But, see, all the early students—Harvey was a ceramist, and so when people signed up with Harvey Littleton it was to do ceramics. Then he went off the side and became a glassblower, too, and got all these other people involved.

JANE KESSLER: So when did Harvey actually come down here?

WILLIAM BROWN: He hasn't done it. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: He hasn't come yet.

JERRY BROWN: It's true.

JANE KESSLER: Harvey—

JERRY BROWN: He's gotten within about 15 miles, but I don't think he's actually gotten here yet. I don't know, maybe since we left.

JANE BROWN: I think he came probably to live here in about '70. [Laughs.] That's just what he always does to Harvey.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Harvey would say, "I'll teach you—for you someday. I'll be on your faculty." And Bill would say, "What can you teach? I'd love to have you do it." [They laugh.] "What will you teach?"

WILLIAM BROWN: He had three guys from—

JANE BROWN: Europe, anyway. Europeans.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: With all their big, fancy European names.

WILLIAM BROWN: And I was coming up the—

JANE BROWN: Path.

WILLIAM BROWN: —the path—well, inside, see.

JANE BROWN: Oh.

WILLIAM BROWN: And I'm coming up the three steps in the—

JANE BROWN: Glass studio.

WILLIAM BROWN: —you can't—, and we met. And we always [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Who was winning.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so I just met them at the three—

JANE BROWN: Steps.

WILLIAM BROWN: —things, and—the men and those people. "Who are you?"

JANE BROWN: You said to Harvey, "Who are you?" [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, well—then, "All right, oh. This is where you come from." They were from Mount Oliver. And highly skilled. He goes, "What?" [They laugh.] And "Who are—oh, you're the one who had brought them over. Oh, isn't that wonderful? Take him up there down to that mud [inaudible]." [They laugh.] Oh! [Inaudible] real sonofabitch.

JANE BROWN: Would this faculty thing work pretty well into talking about the development of the glass studio at this point?

JANE KESSLER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE BROWN: Okay, because when we started one—

JERRY BROWN: Joel Myers was someone—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Oh,— He was up in [inaudible], and he was dying to be invited to teach at Penland, and we heard later he just said, "Every year, I just wait for somebody to invite me, and finally they did." And then we just became this tremendously close relationship with family with their—he was a very closely-knit family of his own, and his three children and his wife.

JANE KESSLER: Where was he then?

JANE BROWN: He was in Blenko, up in—near Huntington, West Virginia. Where's Blenko? It's in a town near Huntington.

JANE KESSLER: Blenko.

JANE BROWN: And the Blenko Glass Factory. He was the designer for it, and terribly lonely up there, because it was no familiar friends. He was totally with the country people, but he was just really, you know, dying to be near other craftspeople, and so forth. When he got here, they came to Thanksgiving every year for a long time. So he was a teacher. He was a faculty member. Fritz Dreisbach came, and when we talk about the glass studio, this was, as I remember, 10 feet wide or 12 feet wide and about 20 long at the most, and a dirt floor, a sand floor, so that people would drop their works on the sand, and they always hoped someday they'd get the cement in. One year—one during—year during the winter Bill put cement in, but he had—they had bugged him for so long about it, he swore he was gonna put back—

WILLIAM BROWN: I did.

JANE BROWN: Did you put sand back on the cement?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes.

JANE BROWN: When they came back, so that they'd think it was still the old floor, just to tease them. [They laugh.]

JERRY BROWN: Well, now, the studio that was used for the glass studio up there, was it not—before, actually, it was even used for a glass studio, there were a potter and his wife.

JANE BROWN: Cornells? Was it Cornells?

JERRY BROWN: Later it was the Cornells, yeah. It was the Cornells were actually—

JANE BROWN: I think it was. It was certainly just a [inaudible]—

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, because I remember helping them load their stuff out—

JANE BROWN: Oh.

JERRY BROWN: —because [inaudible] out the back when they moved, so—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —they must—that must have actually been a—

JANE BROWN: A shed built for some residents.

JERRY BROWN: A shed built for something, and the residents were in there, and then it turned into the glass studio.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: And then there was the famous tearing down of the old—when they—

JANE BROWN: Which took a day and a half—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh—

JERRY BROWN: —when they kicked the walls out.

JANE BROWN: —to pull the shed down.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] in the head.

JERRY BROWN: They kicked the walls out and pulled a piece of glass all the way across the—

JANE BROWN: We might have talked about this one in the last one, but in case—do you remember this story?

JANE KESSLER: No, I—

JANE BROWN: They—just Homasote walls again, because Bill was [inaudible]—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] [Inaudible.]

JANE BROWN: —and so—

WILLIAM BROWN: Then you can smash them, and get to another one.

JANE BROWN: But by then, Mark was teaching, so that was closer to the '70s, I guess. Mark was teaching, and one of the students was Hunter Watson from Winston-Salem, who's about 6'7", and a big, chunky, young, strong kid. And they all got blowing a piece in the middle of the night, and they all thought it was funny to empty the pots or something. They were emptying the—

JERRY BROWN: The kiln.

JANE BROWN: Was it a kiln or a pot? What do you call it? The melting pot. And they brought it all out in this big blog. And then they all took the pipes, and they all started blowing.

WILLIAM BROWN: Blowing, yeah.

JANE BROWN: It got bigger and bigger and bigger. And so I can just imagine Hunter Watson was so big, they just said they just started kicking their feet [inaudible] knock the walls through.

JERRY BROWN: They couldn't get far enough away, so they knocked the walls out.

WILLIAM BROWN: Right out of the place.

JANE BROWN: So it was destruction for a reason. Yes, it was getting that big.

JERRY BROWN: Of course, the studio's pretty small.

JANE BROWN: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, it's gotten about this big.

JANE BROWN: Right, but they walked right through the walls.

JANE KESSLER: So the—

JANE BROWN: And then the knickknack—Mark had been a very conservative guy from the beginning then, as far as we knew him. And so the next day Bill comes to [inaudible] school, and he sees the walls all down on the ground. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: All smashed.

JANE BROWN: And he decides to say nothing. He said nothing about it.

WILLIAM BROWN: I didn't say anything.

JANE BROWN: Finally, by the afternoon Mark comes to him with his head hanging very low—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, no, he didn't.

JANE BROWN: —and tries to explain—no, he didn't?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: What happened?

WILLIAM BROWN: They got the—oh, he went to—

JANE BROWN: Oh, they called the lumber company—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and ordered new stuff.

WILLIAM BROWN: And here—and I did not say a word about all this.

JANE BROWN: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: And about two o'clock, the—

JANE BROWN: Truck comes.

WILLIAM BROWN: —truck—of course, the—

JERRY BROWN: New Homasote.

JANE BROWN: The new Homasote comes in.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible], yes, but that's [inaudible]. And I just didn't go there [inaudible], but I could see what they do—they get about 20 bricks—

JERRY BROWN: Sheets of it.

WILLIAM BROWN: —sheets of that—

JANE BROWN: Homasote.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and they're all pulling that old, old stuff that's all smashed, and just throwing it away, and then they'd start and put it back. And new ones. And this is alright. And, well, we had a big time over—

JANE BROWN: Mark told you.

WILLIAM BROWN: And I didn't say—

JANE BROWN: Say one word.

WILLIAM BROWN: —anything.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: That I knew anything about it. And I would just walk through there [inaudible]. "You sonofabitch, you know what you did." [They laugh.] And the kid that blew the—and upstairs in there was—

JANE BROWN: Skip?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. But the guy—the little kid—well, he was not a kid; he was pretty big. And he made that place for the—what the—all the stuff down in the bottom, all the—

JANE BROWN: The [inaudible]?

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible]. No, not that. You come down the stairs—

JANE BROWN: All right.

WILLIAM BROWN: —and under this tread—shed—

JANE BROWN: The metal shop?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JERRY BROWN: The woodshop.

WILLIAM BROWN: Woodshed.

JANE BROWN: The woodshop, okay.

JERRY BROWN: Where the tools were [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: All right, okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. Well, here I had a—I had a thing, a—

JANE BROWN: You were doing sculpture down there?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, don't think about that!

JANE BROWN: All right.

WILLIAM BROWN: I never did it.

JANE BROWN: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: They put a little thing on it—

JERRY BROWN: A lock?

WILLIAM BROWN: —so that the—yeah, so that the—

JANE BROWN: Oh.

JERRY BROWN: They put a lock on the tools to keep them—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: I'd had that removed.

JANE BROWN: Oh.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so if they weren't on something , [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. You're talking about Zucca, Ed Zucca locked it up?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: No, okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no.

JANE BROWN: All right, well, anyway, we caught it. You had—

WILLIAM BROWN: And so—

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JERRY BROWN: You were saying somebody had gone down there—

JANE BROWN: A little kid went out—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah. And I come down in the morning and go by there. It's not there.

JANE BROWN: The case isn't even there?

WILLIAM BROWN: Nothing. Well, it was—

JANE BROWN: The lock was gone?

WILLIAM BROWN: I—and so I thought, oh, hell, they don't—may—you know, don't [inaudible]. Well, funny, fine. They got—the guy that really got in there, he was—and he was—ruined the—

JANE BROWN: Lock?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, the—up on the hot—big, big, big, big—

JANE BROWN: Furnace?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Furnace [inaudible]—

WILLIAM BROWN: Outside.

JANE BROWN: Okay.

WILLIAM BROWN: You know, where we—

JANE BROWN: All right.

WILLIAM BROWN: —do everything.

JANE BROWN: All right.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, he couldn't—it got—get—and it wasn't getting going up fast enough. And it's about 11 o'clock—

JANE BROWN: This would be the kilns, I guess, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And he's had—got all his stuff in there.

JANE BROWN: And he can't get into the closet.

WILLIAM BROWN: He can't—no, he can't get into it.

JANE BROWN: All right.

WILLIAM BROWN: So I come—I see that there's—that's—

JANE BROWN: To be ripped out.

WILLIAM BROWN: —not gonna work, and I went home. [They laugh.] And next morning I go down there. Wow. We got a whole thing here. [Inaudible], and then they—he—they think took—and took that much of the wall, [inaudible], and pull out all these—

JANE BROWN: Things that they needed.

WILLIAM BROWN: —this stuff—no. Well—something you'd—well, and [inaudible] or stuff.

JANE BROWN: Oh.

WILLIAM BROWN: And pulled it all out, and get out. So I didn't pay any attention to it. Not a thing. And about two weeks later, I knew they could bang it up again, again. And then they said, "Why didn't you say [laughs]—"

JANE BROWN: Say something.

WILLIAM BROWN: "—say anything about what we did? What'd you do?" [They laugh.] Oh, that—they wanted me to know that they smashed the damn—

JANE KESSLER: And then it was gone—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, [inaudible]—yeah, that's right.

JANE KESSLER: —and then they built another one.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, uh-huh.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, then they built—

JERRY BROWN: They ended up building a—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] another one.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. You could always reconstruct.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, all that—all that kind of things. Like, I—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, go ahead. Like what?

JERRY BROWN: No, it was unimportant.

JANE BROWN: Tell it. No.

JERRY BROWN: Just the whole—I guess it goes back to the whole idea of what really mattered at the school. I mean, all that stuff didn't matter. I remember Charlie Deiser came to become assistant director, and was really nervous about his job that he had supposedly gotten, and he didn't have a car so he borrowed the new car that had just been given to the school by [inaudible] Haynes , Toyota station wagon, and drove it into town, and went to the bank to open an account his first day at the school, and he backed the car into something, you know, another car and a wall or something, and he smashed the back of the car. And he came to turn in his resignation [they laugh] for smashing this—you know, here he takes the car—

JANE BROWN: New car.

JERRY BROWN: —first day on the job takes a new car out, smashes it, and was scared to death. I remember he was scared to death.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, then—

JERRY BROWN: Dad laughed and laughed.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. [Laughs.]

JERRY BROWN: You know, I mean, it didn't make him—

WILLIAM BROWN: That was a dumb truck [inaudible]. [They laugh.] And so I got another one, not that one. What did I get?

JERRY BROWN: That was the days , [inaudible] station wagons [inaudible], I think.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: Well, the glass studio—let's not take it maybe past the '70s at this point?

JERRY BROWN: Sure.

JANE BROWN: I guess. What—

JANE KESSLER: No, that's fine. I wanted to just get that established as to when it was started—

JANE BROWN: All right, yeah, that's—

JANE KESSLER: —and who was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, at the same time—

JANE BROWN: Now, at that same time—

WILLIAM BROWN: —you just put it in.

JANE KESSLER: Just—

JANE BROWN: See, when we got to Penland they were teaching ceramics, and they were teaching metal in the

summer. Now, it was a summer/winter kind of different thing going on, and they were teaching weaving, and they were teaching some printing, and the 65 related crafts business, but what Bill decided—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah, all of those guys.

JANE BROWN: —was to go in, and—it evolved. He didn't decide it. He didn't make a five-year plan, which Philip often used to say, "Won't you please write me a five-year plan? I mean, everybody does that." And Bill would say, "Not me." So he—the glass studio evolved in a very natural way. The sculpture studio evolved quite quickly, because within a couple of year we had Frank Colson coming up from Florida, and—

JANE KESSLER: Frank Colson?

JANE BROWN: Colson. And he wanted to build a bronze foundry, and Bill was tickled to death, because Bill was a sculptor anyway and knew a lot about it, and felt it was form and needed to be there. And so he built another shed for that group, and it was sort of a small shed, again, 10x20 maybe, at the most. And then, for about a fourth year, he invited Al Verona to come and Don Drum at the same time. And I don't know that they had noticed it on the catalogue, but at any rate they both come, and Al Verona was just really quite beside himself about it and insulted that Bill would invite two of them, because he gets here and he sees that there's only this tiny studio, and Bill said, "Just don't worry about it. We'll fix it up tomorrow." And the next day the lumber company arrives with two-by-fours and probably Homasote, but I don't think he had ordered the Homasote yet. And Al then got tickled. He turned from annoyance to "How great." He took the challenge, took the gauntlet, and had the students make panels and stuff out of this. They made four—do you ever remember seeing those?

JANE KESSLER: I do. I remember seeing pictures.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, okay. And so each student's project, then, was to make a—

JANE KESSLER: Out of concrete.

JANE BROWN: —form—yeah—

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: —that would then go as the front walls, and now the studio was twice its size, and both faculty members had their place. Don Drum was doing bronze, and Al was doing this kind of thing, which was his work anyway. So it grew by sort of hook or crook, also. And then we were figuring today, as we thought about it, it must have been just before '77 or after '77 that the—yeah, after '77—the sculpture studio—the new one was built, and the new glass studio was built by 1977. So that's how they [inaudible].

JERRY BROWN: And one of the good things was, of course, all the old ones were awful easy to take down. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Right. They know how to take down a glass studio.

JERRY BROWN: It wasn't much to removing the old ones.

JANE KESSLER: No problem, yeah.

JANE BROWN: But in between they were developed a great deal by beloved students. One guy stayed and—

JERRY BROWN: Grow into anything.

JANE BROWN: —yeah, and redid the glass studio, and put the wall—the ceiling up higher. I mean, he spent a whole rugged summer. Later became a chiropractor, glassblower first and then went into chiropractory. Haven't kept up with him lately, but he gave his all to making that studio twice as big, the glass studio. Everybody did, all the way through. Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay. You mentioned earlier Phil Haynes and the barns were residents.

JANE BROWN: It was Gordon.

JANE KESSLER: Gordon Haynes.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and—

JANE KESSLER: Let's make sure we get that—

JANE BROWN: Alright, okay.

JANE KESSLER: —straightened, and so that I'm not getting this—

JERRY BROWN: One fact that I heard today that might be of interest is the fact that Philip did—I guess was the first of the Haynes to get involved, really, and was more of a person who was—I would say his greatest benefit was introducing Dad and the school, vice versa, to a lot of the big money people, and a lot of the big money people to the school. In fact, he—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, only gave about \$7,000.

JERRY BROWN: Phil only gave about \$7,000 total to the school in his involvement, but led the school to—or, vice versa—to a lot of money that came in.

JANE BROWN: But by '66 we were great friends and buddies of Roger Stevens, who was the head of the Arts Council. Kennedy had appointed him, so we were—he was at Penland all the time, and he helped bring in the—

JANE KESSLER: Or the NEA? Was—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, you betcha, with the NEA. And so we got the first major grant that any craftspeople—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, that's right.

JANE BROWN: —got, and it was about \$50,000. Two or three times we got it, so—but by the '70s, the NEA had divided the craft unit differently from the rest of the arts, and now there was only \$75,000 altogether given to the crafts when they made the big change. And we had sometimes gotten \$75,000 from them, so those were the kind of things that Philip would help set us up for. Then, in a—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, then they—they—[inaudible]—do you remember what—that I got the thing, but I didn't tell anybody?

JANE BROWN: Oh, you want me to tell that story? Okay, alright. I may have told this one in the last one, too, but I don't think I did, either. Philip and Gordon Haynes and Johnny were all helping everywhere you could, and Roger Stevens was helping and interested. And so a grant—now, this was by the time Nancy Hanks was maybe the head, and Nancy, of course, was also a great buddy, too. She was the next director of the NEA.

WILLIAM BROWN: I told her to lay down [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yeah, he made an appointment with her one time and then canceled it so that she'd have a half hour free. He did it on purpose, because he knew she was overworking, and a few years later she died of cancer, so he wasn't so off at all.

JANE KESSLER: That's amazing.

JANE BROWN: But he—my mind slipped, what I was talking about.

JANE KESSLER: Let's see, there were—

JERRY BROWN: You were [inaudible]—

JANE KESSLER: Philip and John and—

JANE BROWN: Oh, isn't that crazy? My mind just—

JERRY BROWN: A story about walking somewhere down a—

JANE BROWN: Shoot, [inaudible] that one.

JANE KESSLER: Well, that's okay. It'll come back. Why don't we—

JERRY BROWN: One thing, too, with the money raising thing is—that I always used to hear was that there was never any state or federal involvement of money, though there was oftentimes money that could've been gotten through federal or state agencies that would have tied the school into state or federal stipulations—

JANE BROWN: Paperwork.

JERRY BROWN: —and regulations and paperwork—

JANE BROWN: Absolutely refused.

JERRY BROWN: —and he wouldn't take—

JANE BROWN: Would have nothing to do with it.

JERRY BROWN: Never.

JANE KESSLER: So this was—and that was part of the thing, too, with not becoming involved with the university so that—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —because you really—you were trying to keep completely apart from regulations and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: Right, and they would come to tell you how to run your school, and—

JANE BROWN: Bill—

JERRY BROWN: And, in fact, UNC Chapel—or the UNC system tried to become involved with Penland, and Dad—or tried to get Penland to become affiliated with them, and Dad told Bill Friday that they could become affiliated with Penland when he wasn't going to [inaudible]. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: And then he felt very sorry. Bill felt very sorry for him, because he had to go through all the deans and so forth, and Bill luckily didn't have to, wouldn't have to bother. He could make the decision right now, and made the analogy that he was running a PT boat and that Friday was involved in a monstrous battleship, and too bad. He would never want to be that, you see, at all. Yeah, so Bill, you had just turned to me and asked me to tell something that had happened for you, that you had done. I'm sorry I can't—

JERRY BROWN: It was something about walking down some path or something, and John Neely and all those guys, Phil—

JANE BROWN: Helping, and they were—[inaudible] so much of what we were going to say is just gone.

JANE KESSLER: Isn't that frustrating?

WILLIAM BROWN: What was—

JANE BROWN: Well, you turned to me and you said, "Remember when I did such-and-such," but—oh, well, and then you said Nancy Hanks. It was about the NEA.

WILLIAM BROWN: Then I—she went into her thing, and [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Took a rest for the half hour. Gee. Yeah. Oh, I know.

WILLIAM BROWN: And she [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Oh, yeah, I do know what it was. Okay, he had set up a grant—I mean, they had made a proposal, and John Neely and Philip had ever brought the headman named Donohue or Dunnigan or some real kind of Irish name. He'd come and spent a weekend with us. There was always somebody here spending weekends. And so the man knew us well.

JANE KESSLER: Now, this man was from—

JANE BROWN: The—from the NEA, and he was one of the upper men under Nancy Hanks, I think, at that point. So Philip and John would keep asking Bill at different times they'd see him, "Have you heard from him yet?" Bill would say no. Well, finally this Dunnigan man, whatever his Irish name was, did call Bill and say, "Now, I'm telling you now that we just had the meeting today and, yes, you've gotten the \$50,000," I think it was, "but it's not out yet, so you mustn't tell anyone." And Bill was such a man of honor always that he just said, "Fine." Now John Neely starts asking Bill, and Bill said, "No." And Philip asks him, and Bill keeps saying, "No." Because officially Bill did not know.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's right, [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: So finally months go by, and Philip calls him one day, and he is just swearing—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —at Bill, his buddy Bill, that he admires a lot, but he's really mad now, and he said, "You son of a gun! You've known for months—"

WILLIAM BROWN: "You've known this for 30 months."

JANE BROWN: "—that you had this grant, and you didn't tell me!" And Bill looked—just said to him, "But I was told not to." And Philip's answer was, "Nobody expected you to do what you said!" [They laugh.] Bill was just stunned.

JANE KESSLER: That's a great story. That's a great story.

JANE BROWN: So, at any rate, the money—if I want to get to the Gordon thing.

JANE KESSLER: Go ahead. Okay. Oh, no.

JANE BROWN: So the moneys were coming in from these different organizations, and the NEA was helping us, and now he had the idea that now that we have a new Lam in '66—

JANE KESSLER: Who had?

JANE BROWN: —Bill did—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: —that the barns should be turned into the resident barns, but he couldn't get anyone to help him. So luckily Gordon Haynes called at some probably appropriate time when he had to give some money away, and he said to Bill, "If I had some money to give to you, do you have a project that no one will help you with?" And Bill said, "You bet I do. I have the barns." And he said, "Okay, I'll be sending you \$20,000." I thought it was 20; I may be wrong. The dates and numbers in general I may be a little off on, but at any rate Bill then starts doing the barns, and even Toshiko was coming every year to back Bill, stood there and looked at the cows and the hay and the muck and the place.

JERRY BROWN: It was a barn. I mean, it was—

JANE KESSLER: Really, literally.

JANE BROWN: —various plants. She just said, "This is crazy. You'll never get out of this one." Well, he did it for \$15,000. But the second floor never had its—it had its insulation put up, but it never had the Homasote or plaster or whatever it is put over it. And the floor was finished already, wasn't it? Yeah, almost, anyway. Then he had to borrow—or not borrow; he never borrowed. See, he never borrowed one cent running Penland. Then he got some more money to do the three raunchy barns across the street, which—

JERRY BROWN: Which were in worse shape.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and that cost about \$35,000—

JERRY BROWN: Turned it into three apartments.

JANE BROWN: So altogether you had to find \$15,000 more. So for \$35,000, he redid the barn, the big one, and the little ones, to make them into apartments for the residents to live in.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Great.

JANE BROWN: Okay, and—

JANE KESSLER: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: —then we called it Sanford Barn. You know why?

JANE KESSLER: They called it Sanford?

JANE BROWN: The Terry Sanford Barn—

JERRY BROWN: Center.

JANE BROWN: —Center, Center—because John Neely—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] to help—

JANE BROWN: The celebration.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and he fell over his boat.

JANE BROWN: And he hit his head.

WILLIAM BROWN: And so I put this plaque on and put a nameplate. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: He was supposed to be at the dedication, but Roger Stevens came. Roger Stevens came to the dedication. Bill, remember that? Roger Stevens—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —was the—Terry couldn't get there because he really had hurt his head, gashed it pretty badly. His daughter and children hadn't come to Penland yet, but he still was interested because of John Neely. And so Roger Stevens came and dedicated the Sanford Center Barn out on that hillside, with all the rolling hills behind it.

JANE KESSLER: That's great.

JANE BROWN: And Roger was never a great speaker but he gave a pretty darn good talk that night, too, [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, he liked that.

JANE KESSLER: Let me—I want to—I want to make sure we clarify Philip and Gordon here—

JANE BROWN: Alright.

JANE KESSLER: —and how Philip is—how they're related to each other, and when—

JANE BROWN: Cousins.

JANE KESSLER: They're cousins.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, because their fathers—

JANE KESSLER: But Philip got Gordon—

JANE BROWN: Their fathers were brothers, and so Philip is the younger, and Gordon, Gordon is born of the other brother, and they just were always good buddies, and both very interested in the arts. Gordon became a Senator at one point. Philip was supposed to be running, because each Haynes—let's see—Gordon's father was the runner of a stocking company, and Philip's was the—

JERRY BROWN: Dyeing.

JANE BROWN: —dyeing and finishing company. And so Philip decided quite quickly in his career that he was bored to death of what he had to do, and finally when he came to see us in about '65 he said he had a secretary who now would get on a phone and say, "Hello, Mr. Brown. Will you tell me: are you involved in the arts or in the dye and finishing?" Because by then he was giving so much time—he liked to think of himself as a facilitator. That was what he was. In the '70s he said, "I know what I am. I'm a facilitator. That's what I should do with that term."

JANE KESSLER: He did at that time.

JERRY BROWN: He had—to show how involved he'd gotten, they—well, I don't guess we've talked about the Fops House yet, but one of the houses that you'll find out about, he and the Haynes and Rails all got together on the first time kind of thing and bought this house for the school, a stone house called—

JANE BROWN: Morgan Hall—Morgan House.

JERRY BROWN: Morgan House, and it was—

JANE BROWN: It became Fops.

JERRY BROWN: —became Fops House. And one day we were at the house, at our house, and sitting around, talking, and Philip was a little hyperactive, or used to be, but—and he said to me, "Let's go mow the lawn." So we went over and borrowed my brother's lawnmower, and he cut his toes off—

JANE BROWN: One big toe off.

JERRY BROWN: —wrapped his full lawnmower on his foot.

JANE BROWN: He was carrying it back.

JANE KESSLER: So he lost a toe to Penland. That's a pretty [laughs]—

JERRY BROWN: Seven thousand dollars and a toe is what Philip's got.

WILLIAM BROWN: He got [inaudible] all the way to—

JANE BROWN: That's right, you bet. We had to drive them to the funeral home people.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, then they flew him into Winston or Charlotte or somewhere.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. No, they had to drive. That was the pity. They couldn't fly then. If we had a flight now he might have made it. Yeah. But Jerry Brown was the key person there, because he was helping him, and he saw it go, and he raced for us, all the way from the Fops over to our house, this little 12-year-old kid racing—

JERRY BROWN: And I remember his wife—what was her name?

JANE BROWN: Joan.

JERRY BROWN: Joan.

WILLIAM BROWN: Joan.

JERRY BROWN: I went up in the air and I said, "Philip's cut his foot real badly with the lawnmower." He was just like, "Well—"

WILLIAM BROWN: "Yeah? Which one?"

JERRY BROWN: You know, "That's Philip for you." [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: So you'd come just to play for the weekend, and he just couldn't sit. He could not sit at noontime. He just had to do something. "Jerry, get your lawnmower. Let's go. The path needs to be cut up to Fops House we've just bought."

JERRY BROWN: So Dad carved him a—looked like a Madonna, but it was a toe. [They laugh.] And they made him a cane with a toe on it for—the end of the handle was a big toe. But—

JANE BROWN: It caused him a lot of pain, because he was a great—

JANE KESSLER: I'm sure.

JANE BROWN: —walker and fisher, and he'd get so cold. His feet would just be in terrible shape from it, and walking must have felt—

JANE KESSLER: That's quite a sacrifice.

JANE BROWN: You bet, yeah. So he was in love with the whole dream.

JANE KESSLER: But they were both, then, real strong—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —supporters—

JERRY BROWN: And Gordon actually came and took wood once or twice, didn't he? Came and took a couple classes.

JANE KESSLER: Took classes, actually.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, Philip never did. And they always wanted Joan to go on the board, but Joan and John Neely

and Philip all said no, they'd be the kitchen cabinet. They never wanted to get on the board.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, okay. That's a good thing to know, too. Now, I wanted to go back to the barns. And now those were—so those were built. They were re—or, rather, they were renovated. They were made into studios for the residents, and apartments for the residents?

JANE BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE KESSLER: And that was in approximately when?

JANE BROWN: Well, it has to have been about '68 that that thing was dedicated now. We probably have it somewhere on that plaque down there, I presume, but it must have been about '68—

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: —when it was done.

JANE KESSLER: And then the residents used those while they were here, but they were also open to the public, for people to come in and—was that part of that—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, I didn't—it wasn't—these—you—people could come in and go in the big place.

JANE BROWN: But not into their apartments.

WILLIAM BROWN: But not—

JANE KESSLER: Oh, right, not into the apartments, but—

JANE BROWN: But, Bill, also, do you remember that a residence we had—remember, it was Tom Silverline and Janey Peiser by then, and Mark. We'd built a building behind, too, which was the glass studio. The one at the bottom of the driveway, which Mark built later, was not there. It was one behind, the one behind. They all decided—see, people would get so involved, wanting to help the school. They said, "You know, we ought to—we'd like to sell our stuff anyway, but we ought to have a show. And on the second floor of the barns, we're going to open the barns to the public from two o'clock to six o'clock on the afternoons, and we'll kind of man the store." He said, "All right." So that was their first sort of public—

WILLIAM BROWN: Where is that?

JANE BROWN: —business. Where is it? We have some wonderful photographs of it. I'll show her some photographs later. They're just beauties.

WILLIAM BROWN: I forgot we did that.

JANE BROWN: They all got into it, and, of course, one summer of that and they never wanted to do it again—

WILLIAM BROWN: No. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: —because it took a lot of their time.

WILLIAM BROWN: It took a lot of—

JERRY BROWN: So they said they were gonna do it—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —once every session or something.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, then they shifted it to doing it once every session, because Bill would never tell, even the residents, anybody, what they should do. When they instigated that project, I think he right away thought, wow, what a project, what a job, but they wanted to do it so let them sink in it, if they wanted to, or succeed, one or the other. And they succeeded, and they loved it, but took too much of their time. So later on, in the '70s, and into the '80s, the residents decided to open Wednesday afternoon an open house for all the students of the school.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's a pain in the ass.

JANE BROWN: That was a pain in the ass, too, but not as much.

WILLIAM BROWN: But they did it.

JANE BROWN: But they did it.

WILLIAM BROWN: They did it.

JANE BROWN: See, they did it on their own.

JANE KESSLER: It was their choice.

JANE BROWN: It was their choice.

JANE KESSLER: So this was—

JANE BROWN: He would never—then they would say they wanted to close it off to the public, and he never told them they couldn't, but you could tell he didn't like the idea. So they never totally closed it off, which also happened about visitors. The—from the start there was always the problem, should visitors be allowed or not? And Bill Fay walked his dog. And Bill felt that he—that as to visitors, you never knew who might want to come as students later, or be faculty members, and it just seemed wrong to him to cut people out, so—

JANE KESSLER: But he encouraged visitors?

JANE BROWN: He didn't encourage them, but he never told them they couldn't come.

JANE KESSLER: Never say no.

JANE BROWN: But if a teacher would say, "You know, I don't want to teach with visitors coming through," Bill would say, "All right, there are little pieces of metal, what do you call them, gadgets on both sides of your doorway, and you can put a rope across, as far as I'm concerned." So that went in and out, waved in and out. When the board later was fussing with us about not doing enough publicity, we decided to keep a record of how many people visited and put a guestbook out. It was stunning, the number of people that came through. It was overwhelming. But at the barns, there was a couple of years where people were just—just didn't want to share. And so he never told them, "Doggone it, you have to."

JANE KESSLER: The residents themselves—

JANE BROWN: The residents.

JANE KESSLER: —who didn't want to be—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And he didn't fuss with them. He never forced them—

JERRY BROWN: Well, one thing, too, that's interesting about visitors is that I think—I mean, it kind of, oddly enough, ran on the same kind of planet as everything else. Most of the time, visitors would come in and there was not an organized tour that took them out. They had to use their own judgment and go where they want, and figure it out for themselves. And, you know, every once in a while you'd get someone who was a pain in the ass or would bother you, but for the most part everybody was probably much more polite than they would have been had they been with a big group of people, with some organized thing, you know. So people—

JANE KESSLER: It's sort of expecting the best of people—

JERRY BROWN: Of people.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —is what all of this is about.

JANE BROWN: Encouraging them to be—

JANE KESSLER: It's like that you just leave them to their own devices, they'll be better off than if you—

JERRY BROWN: Right.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —set the rules, or—

JERRY BROWN: Right.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: It always seemed to work.

JANE BROWN: And sometimes a student would just say, "You know, Saturday afternoon in the fall there are so many visitors, I think I'd love to sort of man the store downstairs, and kind of watch over, and do it for you, if you'd like me to." And it wasn't about any repayment. The girl from Australia did it a lot. She instigated it. So, Bill, we were just talking about tourism, the tour part of it. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Not your favorite part.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. But he always liked to meet the people, basically, in the end.

JERRY BROWN: Well, it's fun to meet people on an individual basis. The idea of a bus—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —coming out with—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, we just have to—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —those stupid people—

JERRY BROWN: That's the one thing he didn't like was the bus tours.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] had no—

JERRY BROWN: A tour bus.

WILLIAM BROWN: But I could do it—

JANE BROWN: They're a hassle with one man.

WILLIAM BROWN: —but it's—I've got a lot—

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible] unplugged there, okay. There was a hornet—

JERRY BROWN: Hornet.

JANE BROWN: —hornet over here.

JANE KESSLER: Wow.

JERRY BROWN: [Inaudible] they think you're a bee's nest.

JANE KESSLER: It's that yellow sweatshirt.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, those—well, also, I have on these notes that we wrote, just as far as keeping up timewise with where we are, that in '68 there was the iron—they did the iron thing, right? The iron man showed up.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: Yeah, yeah, big iron—

JERRY BROWN: They poured iron, which is—which is a pretty major event.

JANE KESSLER: Okay. Who was responsible for that?

JANE BROWN: Dan Bailey.

JANE KESSLER: Dan—

JANE BROWN: Dan Bailey.

JERRY BROWN: Daley.

JANE BROWN: Dan Daley.

JANE KESSLER: Dan Daley.

JANE BROWN: And a man who became very famous later, Kubic, Paul Kubic, came from Greensboro. They were both very famous.

JERRY BROWN: So they built an iron furnace, and we got into that.

JANE BROWN: It was the wildest session you ever saw. Very knowledgeable people, and very wild and excited, and got the whole school excited with them.

JERRY BROWN: And almost burned the place down—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —but—and also, you all had mentioned the clogging team.

JANE BROWN: Yeah—

JERRY BROWN: So that's something I wrote down.

JANE BROWN: —I wanted to do this. In 1970-74, Jerry was the leader of a clogging team that I was running, and it was with the public school. But a neat thing happened: the—in about '66, Brother Bruno LaVerdiere, who was also another faculty member, had met Sophie—

JANE KESSLER: Now, what did he teach—

JANE BROWN: Ceramics, still. He's the one who's—the big blue pot outside, and there are big pots, and the horns at Penland still. Those were quite brilliant—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, that's—

JANE BROWN: —which became—see, when you ask us, by the way, to mention faculty, I hope you've never heard [inaudible] the list of them that we haven't mentioned today—

JANE KESSLER: Of course.

JANE BROWN: —like Brother Bruno comes to my mind right away. Didn't think of it earlier, but every one of them was important. Anyway, he came. Here, my mind slipped again. What were we talking about?

JERRY BROWN: So the wedding [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Oh, okay. They had a wedding that took three days, and she was a Park Avenue princess, really, and he was an ex-monk, Benedictine monk, and they decided—they'd met here, so they got married here. And it was a three-day absolute lovefest for everybody, and even her family from Park Avenue kind of got used to what was going on, and she was married—they were married down at a little church, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: And so—[inaudible]—

JERRY BROWN: The Toe River Valley Boys.

JANE BROWN: Oh, they had the Toe River Valley Boys playing for their wedding. No, it wasn't clogging then, you see, but it was bluegrass music. So from that time on Bill said, "Would the Toe River Valley Boys come and play at Penland?" And then we became more structured in that, and sort of somewhat set in the pattern of how many week sessions we had. So every Friday night, the beginning of a two- or three-week session, the Toe River Valley Boys were here. And Bill would say it wouldn't make any difference what happened during that week; people would get used to the school, and they would always make it over the hurdle of being nervous and so forth by Friday night, because the Toe River Valley Boys would break their—

JANE KESSLER: They would do this—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, they'd flip it over.

JANE KESSLER: Let—since we're talking about the length of sessions and when they were, you said things had gotten—you'd gotten a kind of schedule.

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible] camera. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: You're on film.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, you're on *Candid Camera*, Bill. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, it's definitely *Candid Camera*. So by that time, you're—I wanted to clarify that you were talking about the sessions having a sort of set—you had come to a certain schedule—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —with them. I mean, they were two weeks, or they were three weeks, or you had a—

JANE BROWN: And we—

JANE KESSLER: —pretty consistent program—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —in terms of length of sessions, and—

JANE BROWN: Bill—yeah. And if I may, let me finish on the clogging.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, sorry.

JANE BROWN: First of all, this clogging team from Spruce Pine then always came up to dance with the Toe River Valley Boys on Friday nights, and Jerry was the leader, usually, of the whole system, you see. So for that four years, the children of Spruce Pine were sort of deeply involved with Penland School. It couldn't have been deeper. When people talk about the fact that Penland and the community wasn't together, there's one of the ridiculous reasons, I mean, that that was a ridiculous statement, because those four years the children—there were 24 kids, and they really wanted to call it the Penland Cloggers, but we felt better stay Harris High School. So we sort of wove it in and out, but they felt very, very linked with Penland, and they brought the country environment in to the students, and the students to this day would—I mean, right to the end up in the '80s were asking, you know, isn't there another clogging team going on? Well, I gave it up after Jerry's group graduated, because 12 or 24 of them were all graduating at the same time. But it was a wonderful high dance time for—and community connection in those years.

JANE KESSLER: Well, but that does remind me that when you talk about that community connection—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —that you—on the one hand, though, you were apart from that community, because they were a little nervous about—I mean, you were—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —sort of making reference to that.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah. I mean, I'd go to school there and came home here, you know, which was a pretty bizarre —

JANE KESSLER: I'm sure it was. [Laughs.]

JERRY BROWN: —double life, you know. I mean, this was Hippie Hill. You know, it was—if someone with long hair showed up in Spruce Pine, it was for sure they were from Penland, or—and, you know, which was—

JANE BROWN: And three years later the Penland group was cleaning up some, and the town was getting the long hair—

JERRY BROWN: Right.

JANE BROWN: —so that's really the time—

JANE KESSLER: So it evolved, and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —evolved into it.

JERRY BROWN: Well, there—yeah, I mean, it's—there was just a different—

JANE BROWN: Different time.

JERRY BROWN: —different kind of people.

JANE BROWN: And another way we stayed tremendously close to the community all the way through was we bought so much through the community, which later I think had stopped when Verne took it over, and the board was pushing us in that direction. One lady was saying, "Why don't you dropship everything in here?" And we just said, "Wait a minute. What do you do, then, when your refrigerators break?"

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: You know, so—I mean, goodness, we were so close to the community, and all the stores, and the repair shops, and I bought more refrigerators from Lee Helms furniture on Second or Third—I mean, very low prices, and then all the repairs were done for us. We had an incredibly close connection with the people of the town, so when we left—

JANE KESSLER: Well, economically, you were a really—

JANE BROWN: Very important to the community.

JANE KESSLER: —important—you—

JERRY BROWN: Well, I think anyone who really knew—I mean, like the people that we directly worked with, or knew us, I think, all—there was a real close thing going on. But, of course, there was a lot of the community—the part that didn't get along with us was the part that didn't really understand what was going on, which is always the way it is.

JANE BROWN: Think how important it was to the banks—

JERRY BROWN: Sure.

JANE BROWN: —that we were here. I mean, all those grants we were getting—

JERRY BROWN: Well, to anyone who ever worked with the school or with the people involved, I think, were our good friends, and the ones who didn't understand it—it was an amazing thing. I mean, it was like another world up here to them. And so in that respect—

JANE KESSLER: But once you made friends, they stayed—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. When we did leave, I was told by the cleaners that they were so sorry that we were no longer there. And they said, "You know, when Miss Lucy was there, God love her, she was so wonderful, but we just never knew we'd get paid."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: "But when you all came, from that day on, we never, ever had to worry about payment from you." I don't know whether you realize, but when Miss Lucy ran the school every year they did not have enough money—let's see, how did it work, Bill? They'd make the money in the summer, and they'd pay the bill back, but then all through the winter they didn't have the money to pay the grocery store, which was Malen's Grocery Store, run by the Philips, who later—

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JANE KESSLER: —and we may be repeating, but we want to make clear the relationship that Penland had with the community in terms of the services and goods—

JANE BROWN: And that—

JANE KESSLER: —before and after Miss Lucy.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right. And that was that Bonnie and Miss Lucy always paid their bills in the end, but they were not able to pay them on time, and the wonderful part of the community—what do you call them—the salesmen of the community was that they didn't charge them any interest, and they always knew that Miss Lucy would finally pay them. And then when we got here, they found that wasn't necessary anymore, and that we were able to pay, and they were very pleased about it.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, good.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: Great. Okay, we were going to talk about the schedule, the—how the schedule was set up. And you said that Bill had a very specific reason for setting up the closest—the one you did with the schedule?

JERRY BROWN: Well, now, one thing that confuses me hearing that is there always were sessions, I mean, starting from—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JERRY BROWN: —when we got here. I mean, it wasn't like it was just like a free run of the summer.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: It was—there were sessions set up, but then they got re—

JANE BROWN: Well, he did—

JERRY BROWN: —penned in as the years went along.

JANE BROWN: Well, for instance, we wanted them all three-weekers at first, because you said, "Darn it, no one could learn enough in less than three weeks, so we're not going to have anything shorter than three."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, right.

JANE BROWN: But then there were some people who said, "You know, Bill, we just can't come if it's only—if it's three, but we could do it for two." And Bill was much stricter in this area than it had been before in Miss Lucy's time. If you signed up for a session, you really came to it, and you didn't wander to other classes, which had been allowed prior to Bill taking over Penland. So if you signed up for ceramics, you stayed in ceramics. You wouldn't wander—

WILLIAM BROWN: We hope. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: —off and do a few days in another group, right? And then you said, "Alright, we better have some two-weekers." So at first we had a two-weeker in the beginning and a two-weeker at the end, and we found as the people that were cleaning it and running it and stuff, that it was a nightmare, that last two-week session. So we asked you—oh, no, we did some shifting. It's funny, I can't really remember the way it shifted now, but we did stay with either two- or three-week sessions all the way—you'd never go—you would never go lower than a two-weeker, because you felt that that was—

WILLIAM BROWN: That's right.

JANE BROWN: —detrimental to the students, and to learning, the educational—which is what you felt you were: you were an educational endeavor, right?

JANE KESSLER: You had at least—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —two.

JANE BROWN: At least two-weekers, no lower than that, and the two-weekers were terribly difficult for the teachers as well as the students, but it was done in kindness to those who couldn't come otherwise.

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: Let me ask something about that, though, because there's also—you know, you just said that you wanted the people to come to the session, and they stayed in their area, but then there's other thing about Penland which is also true is that you also encouraged all of this exchange between classes.

JANE BROWN: Good comment.

JANE KESSLER: So—

JERRY BROWN: What it was is that in the prior years people were allowed or encouraged to go and, say, take ceramics for five days, and then suddenly go take five days in weaving.

JANE BROWN: Or, worse than that—

JERRY BROWN: Or—

JANE BROWN: —one day. They would come down—

JERRY BROWN: —you know, they would go—

JANE BROWN: —from Michigan to Florida and stay for a day in enameling and leave.

JERRY BROWN: So the idea was you were welcome to work within all the studios that you wanted to get—I mean, sometimes someone in wood would want to get involved with someone that was doing something in weaving, and they'd work together, or they would integrate one thing with the other, but the idea wasn't that you came and took five classes in two weeks.

JANE KESSLER: Okay, that clarifies it, because that—the other—the other idea is a real important part of Penland, too, was that the movement among the studios and the sort of exchange—

JANE BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —and sort of cross-pollination—

JANE BROWN: And a respect for education, yeah, exactly, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And that people were free to experiment within the studios, to try things out, to—if a ceramic artist wanted to go, and—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —find out about glass he could, but it was a totally different thing from just coming in and sort of [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Dabbling.

JANE KESSLER: —dabbling.

JANE BROWN: Dabbling from one to another, which is really what sometimes was happening prior to that.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: As student numbers had gotten lower in Miss Lucy's later years of running the school. This fits right—very well in here. In 1970 Bill decided to do something which, again, was gotten from a grant, probably from NEA but I'm not absolutely sure. He was able to invite 50 craftspeople to Penland, and he did this as a gift to them, because he felt they all worked so hard with students, he wanted to see them have the joy of working without students, and working on the grounds in midwinter. So we—and we later called this the Nifty Fifty, so that's the term you're going to hear me using. His original idea was that he would ask all his faculty members that summer and other ones that knew to send in—I guess you sent a letter to everybody in your faculty.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: "Give us ten names, and we will throw those ten names in this pot, and then we will pull the names out, and 50 people will be invited to come." And it ended up being two weeks before Christmas, in December of 1970. And it was interesting that all the people who came except for one, maybe, had all been here, so that we found people had not come really didn't come. It went—it was before Christmas, which was one of the big problems, so they didn't—they'd think, well, I've never been there and I'd like to be there someday, but they just didn't come. So it ended up all faculty members who had taught at Penland before.

JANE KESSLER: So—

JANE BROWN: And it was in all the mediums.

JANE KESSLER: And let me clarify: the grant was to pay for them to come here—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yes.

JANE KESSLER: —was to allow them a two-week period of time to just work—

WILLIAM BROWN: Work.

JANE BROWN: Exactly.

JANE KESSLER: —together and on their own work?

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: This was just a two-week, for the craft person—

JANE BROWN: Heaven for them, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —just a—

JERRY BROWN: Do what they wanted to do.

JANE BROWN: Just heaven for them.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: And this is where exchange happened like you couldn't believe, which is what just made me think of it. Only the metal people stayed at their own studios. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, afterwards they'd—weird. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Yeah, why would we do this?

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—they were—

JANE BROWN: Everybody tried glass—talk about dabbling—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —but it was pretty deep dabbling, because they were all pretty knowledgeable people. Arlene Fisch in the metal department went—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —you can put this right here—Arlene Fisch went upstairs into the weaving room, because she was a pretty good weaver, anyway, and that's where she started her—this was—a book evolved from that whole thing, when she went up and developed a laser gun—

JANE KESSLER: Sure.

JANE BROWN: —and got all the [inaudible].

WILLIAM BROWN: Up in the air.

JANE BROWN: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible] didn't know what it was.

JANE BROWN: And the ceramic people went up to glass. Everybody, everybody probably went to glass at one point or another. But what a two-week time. A lot of new—so many new, innovative ideas got going in those faculty members in that two-week time, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. And the—

JANE BROWN: Tom—I was thinking of Tom O'Connor and Franny—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, no, go down—the people that were in—well, I'll figure—

JANE BROWN: In another studio, or—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, you could go anywhere. The—

JANE BROWN: The road was closed off? No.

WILLIAM BROWN: No. What's people—

JANE BROWN: Jewelry?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Jewelers.

WILLIAM BROWN: They didn't get off their ass [they laugh], the whole bunch.

JANE BROWN: They stayed right there, pretty close.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, yeah, because they were talking to each other.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, uh-huh.

JANE BROWN: And inspiring each—oh, the inspiration that came in that two weeks.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, but I—"Get off your ass!"

JANE BROWN: Well, we didn't even notice it much at the time, did we?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: It was just later—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I did. I—

JANE BROWN: Did you?

WILLIAM BROWN: Because they're talking, and then they're—now, then, what'd you say?

JANE BROWN: Sharing?

WILLIAM BROWN: How much? [Laughs.] Good, that's great. See, it was four, five, six of them.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, Freddy Fenster, and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, all the—

JANE BROWN: —and Mary Ann Scherr, and—yeah, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: But the one upstairs—

JANE BROWN: The weavers?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And they got—

JANE BROWN: Mel was doing weaving—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —down in metal, wasn't he?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah—

JANE BROWN: That's when he started his—

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] he'd—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: —do it and go to work. You know, got—and then, like, they know enough, enough to know to

watch your minute—for about a minute, and they can say, uh-oh, oh, that's right. You gotta put this—oh, yeah, yeah, I'm going upstairs.

JANE KESSLER: Oh.

JANE BROWN: Right. It was wonderful interchange.

JANE KESSLER: So this was—

WILLIAM BROWN: Now, because I'm gonna get this—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it was a knockout.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then we had a [inaudible], or a—

JANE BROWN: Mood?

WILLIAM BROWN: No. You eat it, you know.

JANE BROWN: Oh, the food?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: The wonderful—

WILLIAM BROWN: And we got—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, Mel Dave , you remember that? He had been in that—

WILLIAM BROWN: And whether that was—[laughs].

JANE BROWN: —in Sikkim, and so he knew about Sikkim foods, and we wove mats for the floor—

JANE KESSLER: Mel Somerosky?

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: He was one of our early ones, too, that was constantly with us, yeah. So that was one of the ways you used a grant in 1970, and prior to that, I forgot about a grant—

JANE KESSLER: Was that a one-time thing, and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, it was just a one-time thing. Then there was another grant that Bill got, and I think it started at about '68, probably, and it was supposedly to be—we built—the structure of it was for two years, and it was to allow people who had just gotten burned out in educational—the educational world to come and spend time in their medium at Penland, using all kinds of different facilities. [Laughs.] You figured out—one of them was Jonathan Williams, the poet. Bill was on his board, anyway. He was a great friend of Philip Haynes, and so forth. So it was wonderful to bring a poet in to stay four months. Paula Swearinson came in in clay for a lengthy time. Chris Reisbeck came in as a glassblower, and George Stevis and Geraldine Scalone in weaving. And you see now it was not done in just two years, but it was done really—the money was never misused; it was just saved and pocketed. And in about a five- or six-year period it was finally used up in all these very worthy ways.

JANE KESSLER: To bring in—and that one was to bring in people who were—who were burned out in their area, but it was to give them, again, like a respite?

JANE BROWN: Yeah, exactly.

JANE KESSLER: A place to—

JANE BROWN: And start them again, kind of.

JANE KESSLER: To regenerate.

JANE BROWN: Nine months was the longest. Yeah, to regen—that's a great name for it: regeneration.

WILLIAM BROWN: But they could sit down.

JANE BROWN: They could sit down if they wanted, you see. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: They could do anything they wanted to do.

JERRY BROWN: Including nothing.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: Including nothing.

JANE BROWN: Okay, but nine months was the longest one the grant could be, and he did stick with that. And then if somebody like Hollis wanted to stay longer, he figured out a different way to keep him.

JANE KESSLER: Was—yeah, how was that—how was that written? How did you describe that in a grant? How did you—

JANE BROWN: Mm, boy. We have to go back—

JANE KESSLER: Well, that's—

JANE BROWN: —because they haven't filled that out since [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: But that was clearly understood in the grant that it was for people who had burned out, I mean, however you said it.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: It was like—the intent of it was—

JANE BROWN: Was to—

JANE KESSLER: —clearly said to get you through—

JANE BROWN: —regenerate them.

JANE KESSLER: —or regenerate.

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And—

JANE KESSLER: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: And I could say this right now, that Bill Brown never in his 21 years of directing the school ever wrote a grant that was just made up because it might bring some money into the school. There would be—anybody trying to push him into writing a grant when he didn't have a reason for it, where there was a true need, he was not going to do it. It was absolutely wrong.

WILLIAM BROWN: I might need it, but I didn't know how to tell them.

JANE BROWN: But you always did it—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—well, no.

JERRY BROWN: Don't write grants for things you don't need.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, well—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, just to get money.

WILLIAM BROWN: —if somebody was here and needed it—because sometimes they don't have any money. So—

JANE BROWN: You do it anyway. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: —trying to get—yeah. And tell the guy that's going to help me get, you know, the money, "Thanks a lot. You've done—you didn't even know you were going to do it, did you?"

JANE BROWN: Which is kind of another reason why Bill in the '70s, now that the money was coming in from students, and we had now bought many new buildings all around the school—I mean, there was a—see, before we came, all these women had built houses around Penland, and now they were all up for sale. So we had bought what we called later the Fops House in the '60s. We bought Pat Young's house, which is up behind the glass studio. We bought the Wyatt House, which is down in the field. We bought the Smead House, which was

the one we lived in from 1969-83, was the—and it was the house that Verne later lived in. It was the ideal home for a director, I think, on the hillside, because of its position. And the house next to it, the Long House, and the house next to that was the Lear House. And so we bought the 250 acres via the Appalachian School, but then we bought—what, would you say that was ten houses I just listed?

JERRY BROWN: Costa's and Ebner's.

JANE BROWN: And Costa's and Ebner's, where the trailer is, so—and all those, we had to get individual money for those houses, usually. We never did those on grants. And they came from different Haynes people, and different Reynolds people, and all kinds of ways. So that it was—

JANE KESSLER: So [inaudible] individual—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, individual acquisitions.

JANE KESSLER: — piece of property—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —you could have a different way of getting the money.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: So it was sort of—

JANE BROWN: It was individual acquisitions, but then we'd get the grants for the bigger programs, and those Bill wanted to fit a need. So then the '70s start, and constant—

JERRY BROWN: But money had amassed. There was enough money in the bank at that point to keep the boat afloat. I mean, there wasn't a million dollars in the bank, but there was—maybe I'm all off base here, but I thought there was, like, a couple hundred thousand bucks in the bank or something by then.

WILLIAM BROWN: Sometimes. [Laughs.] Sometimes—

JANE BROWN: Oh, always, I think, at that point.

JERRY BROWN: That was—at that point, it was taking the pressure off of extreme fundraising prospects that no longer were something that was always pressing down on you. So a lot of the grant-writing and stuff at that point wasn't really necessary. The programs were working, the land was bought, and if something needed to be purchased then something was done to deal with that one thing, and there wasn't a tremendous amount of—

JANE BROWN: Continual repair was going on—

JERRY BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and rebuilding of the buildings, right.

JERRY BROWN: But this—they were, you know, as I said—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —turning away students, turning away faculty. Everything was the machine—the oiled part of—the finance part of the machine was—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —surviving [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: And he also felt in that early '70s, the NEA now was giving him money in different directions, and he didn't really want to bother with it, and he sure wasn't going to get involved with the government for moneys, and that the Haynes and the Reynolds and stuff had done an awful lot for us. So you really gave them a respite on purpose. And when Phil called him one time in the mid-'70s and said, "I feel kind of badly, I haven't come up to see you lately and I haven't helped or anything," Bill would say, "That's alright. You did your share, you know." And he said to me, "I just think that it's time to give them a break. They don't need to be involved for a while. We're hanging in alright." And by then concentration was going, because in 1970 Bill and I were talking with the faculty members all the time who'd come from the universities, and they were just going through this hell of a time of the '60s, and they were so worn out, they were so discouraged by all they were buffeting and their administrative problems, and when they were at Penland they felt good. So we thought, okay, let's say we're

going to have an eight-week session, and it was for two major reasons. It was not just made up to make money. It was made because faculty members were sick of their work, and the students didn't want to go to school anymore in the manner in which it was being run. So the reasons they were unhappy was they were having meetings all the time. They could come to Penland as faculty members and wouldn't have to have a meeting. They could do their own work, because we wouldn't give them too many students. He would let them work for eight weeks, with students, which they're terribly good at, and gained from. But then they would have all December, January, February to do their own work and rebuild as they had been doing with this grant money we'd gotten earlier. They had the four months, if they chose to, to use their time effectively, and then by mid-March they'd be teaching again for eight weeks, and they would have—

JERRY BROWN: The studios were all open to them, and they were given a house, and—

JANE KESSLER: So they would—but it was—so they had a full—

JANE BROWN: They taught for eight straight weeks—

JANE KESSLER: Eight weeks.

WILLIAM BROWN: You're doing that [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: —and then they had four whole months off, [laughs] they had four whole months off—

JANE KESSLER: And then they'd do eight weeks again.

JANE BROWN: —and they had eight at the end.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: And one of the prime, I think, examples of how beautifully this was done was—this went on all through the '70s, but one teacher came, and he really loved teaching, and he was a ceramist, and he taught for eight straight weeks, and when the class was over he cleaned up the shop, and he got going, and he didn't go away at Christmas, he continued to work, and by January 20th he was on the road to D.C. with a whole new line of work that he had got going with. He went to D.C., and he got—and he did some selling, but he got so turned on seeing the shows that he hadn't been able to see from his job, which was up in New Hampshire, way up in—

JANE KESSLER: Who was it?

JANE BROWN: It was Steve Howell.

JANE KESSLER: Steve—okay.

JANE BROWN: It was way up in the hinterlands where he could—he'd hardly get out of the snow in the winter. And so that idea was peaceful, too: he didn't have to fight snow and fight the elements all winter. So he then went to D.C., and New York, and got more orders, and more ideas from elegant shows he saw, and then he worked right up until school started, and he was always very neat about getting the shop right back into our hands again. He let us clean it well, gave us enough time. And by then, he left for that last week before school started to sell again, and he had a whole new line of things going. Then he was very eager to teach the eight weeks. In fact, he liked it so much he came back another year, a couple more years doing it. But then other faculty members—and it was their right; obviously they were adults; [laughs] Bill wasn't going to get them—you know, they'd be exhausted by the end of the eight weeks, and then they'd go off and play for all of December, and I think they were getting back by New Year's but not quite make it, and then be there by the 15th of January, and then work until the 15th of February, and maybe into March, and suddenly the time was gone, and they maybe didn't use it as well. But that was their problem, or their decision. They could sit and do what they wished.

JANE KESSLER: Well, all of these programs were set up so that it was the individual who structured it, and you—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —you all provided the sort of basic thing, and then they used it however they wanted to.

JANE BROWN: Right, you betcha. Now, the students—Bill found parents all the time coming to him, saying, "What are you doing here?", in the '60s. "My kid won't go to school anymore, and September's coming and I

don't know what to do with him. He won't go back to school," or they've thrown him out because he was on drugs or something, too. And Bill would—and—remember, there was one kid that came that had been tremendously on drugs, and the man handed him over to us, and we weren't sure we were going to make it, because it was one thing—if he got on drugs here, he knew he would be thrown out. And so we watched him sort of in the corner of our eye all the time. And one night he was at the Toe River Valley Boys, and you were leading the dancing—it was before we—we opened up the Craft House, which was just a small room. Verne later, unfortunately, put it back to smallness, but Bill opened it up because these Toe River Valley Boy dance nights were so much fun. That guy was there early enough, and the wall was still there, and he was leaning against the wall, and his cynicism seemed to be just fading away, and Bill was really able to talk to him. And the father was saying later, "Bill, you've finally gotten my kid out of what seemed like a hell. What did you do? What is it you're doing here that they're not doing in universities?" That kid later went to the Rhode Island School of Design and got himself on his feet.

JANE KESSLER: So—

JANE BROWN: That's what the—

JANE KESSLER: —it was a college-age—we're talking about—

JANE BROWN: This is a college—

JANE KESSLER: —a college-age—yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, because we only had 18 and above anyway. That's right, yeah. I'm sorry, when I say "kids"—

JERRY BROWN: "Kids" can be anything from a year younger—

JANE KESSLER: I'm—yeah—

JANE BROWN: Eighteen to 80, 18 to 80 are kids to me, or 90.

JANE KESSLER: —yeah.

JANE BROWN: Lifetime kids, because everybody was, you know—we had a wonderful son—

JERRY BROWN: Kids [inaudible] students, I think, was—[they laugh].

JANE BROWN: Right, or is it—or remember there was a sign outside of a pot shop saying "Kids At Play," "Children At Play"? So it was, maybe that's why I always said "kids" about everybody. At any rate, you see—

JANE KESSLER: Well, that's an element of this whole thing, too—

JANE BROWN: That's right.

JANE KESSLER: —is the play element, you know, and you hear it when you all talk. It's real clear [laughs] that that's a—that was a—

JANE BROWN: Right. So the students would get classes where they could work night and day, if they wished. They would not be bugged by their faculty members. They could work all weekend if they wished, or they could sleep all week. It's up to them.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, but—

JANE BROWN: They—but they didn't. They got so fired up, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, you didn't—the—all the people, kids and everybody, didn't like what they were doing—

JANE BROWN: In school.

WILLIAM BROWN: —in school—

JANE BROWN: Didn't like the academic stuff. They didn't like the bells ringing.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yes, they wanted—they wanted here—see, when—if they were here in the fall, they would want to go to—stay here, see.

JANE BROWN: And there was no place to put them, because we were closing down.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, [inaudible]. And now they got a mother and a father, don't know what to do with this kid that's—what do you call them? It—

JANE BROWN: Well, he's not a teenager anymore. He's a—

WILLIAM BROWN: No, but he's—

JANE BROWN: He's now college-age, and he's supposed to go to college in September.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and they—all of them don't want to go to school. They put up their hands like this and say "Kiss my ass, and I'm gonna go my own way." Well—so I thought, well, let's see. If you're here—for example , I talked [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Mid-September. [Laughs.]

WILLIAM BROWN: And—

JANE BROWN: Mid-September to Thanksgiving.

WILLIAM BROWN: And then we'll have—yeah—we'll have X number of people in each one, or what have you.

JANE BROWN: You mean not an overload classes, not students, I mean.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and then we get all the—

JANE BROWN: Small student number.

WILLIAM BROWN: —[inaudible] for that. And now they—these people, kids, can do it or don't do it, you know?

JANE BROWN: Their choice.

WILLIAM BROWN: They've heard all [inaudible] and all the terrible things that are going , and we're just saying, well, [inaudible] and go to work. We've got some guys here know something. And then they'd—

JANE BROWN: And they'd be there till Thanksgiving—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: —and then that made it legal. They could go home at Christmastime, see.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and then they could come back, see? And the mothers—

JANE BROWN: But they couldn't come back till March, because [inaudible] snow and heating the buildings was too big a problem.

WILLIAM BROWN: No, no, no. Yeah, but we got two sessions going for us.

JANE BROWN: But see, too, dear, the heating of the buildings wasn't even as important as he wanted to be sure his faculty members had that—those four months in the middle. So he'd—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: People would call us and say, "Could we have a weeklong or a two-week-long workshop in the middle of winter?" And Bill would say, "No, because if I do that then Steve Howells , who's supposed to be working in his studio by himself—

JANE KESSLER: Won't have it.

JANE BROWN: —loses his time.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, and that's—

JANE BROWN: And so to—invaluably important. He would not do it on a little pitzy weeklong this or that. It's—so there was no way. Plus, he wanted the core people—by now, the faculty scholarship students had set themselves up into a pretty good system of core students, and we called them core because they really were the core of the school. They really carried on all the physical labor. They could come and work all summer, and they could work in concentrations, and then they had the four months in the winter, too, to do their own experimentation, which is what the kiddos are talking about on that tape, the slides you saw the last time.

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: That he'd gotten more—one kiddo says he'd gotten more done than he had done at a year at graduate school, or two years of graduate school. So, and then—and then under those core kids were the scholarship students who came in, you know, just for a two-weeker, or a four-week session in the summer, and the core—on the core staff were two kitchen people and one person who helped me direct the 17 kids that came in during the summer. They watched it every day to make sure that the five scholarship students that were going to do the dishes—there were six or seven of them that would do dishes—my head core person would watch that those seven were always doing it. I was always watching, too, but there were many times I wasn't right around—right there with them, so they were basically in charge. [Laughs.] He was one of them one time.

JERRY BROWN: Well, I was laughing at later, a person who came into some power at Penland after we left, one of the famous comments was, "How do you—what kind—" What was it? "What kind of punishment do you do to get these kids to do their jobs? If they don't do their jobs?" Remember that?

JANE BROWN: They asked me that?

JERRY BROWN: No, but—

JANE BROWN: Or a core person later asked me how I do it?

JERRY BROWN: Well, I won't mention the particular name of the person who asked, but there was a comment about, you know, what form of punishment, or what do you do to make these people do their work.

JANE BROWN: Oh. And they just said, "Get Jane Brown"?

JERRY BROWN: No, no, no, this is after you left, this is—

JANE BROWN: Oh, okay. [They laugh.] So what—did they tell you? Or they were just asking me—

JERRY BROWN: The point was you didn't have to torture people into doing their jobs, or punish them for not doing it—

JANE BROWN: I see, because they were—

JERRY BROWN: —because it was a ridiculous—it was stupid that they would ask.

JANE BROWN: I see, okay. They were so turned on.

JERRY BROWN: Right, because the next person in charge said, "How do you—"

JANE BROWN: "How do you—" Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: "You know, what is your means of punishment to make these people do what they're supposed to do?"

JANE BROWN: They just worked their tails off. My heavens, they did. They got to live in extra nice places, like the upstairs of the Fops House, and we—I treasured them. They were just absolutely incredible. One of them was the driver, and had to go to Asheville all the time to pick people up, and one was the head of all the scholarship students, and two or three of them were the kitchen people, and one was in charge of all the linens, and so forth. So that was the way the scholarship system, which had started back in the '60s, evolved into a pretty nice kind of situation, and they were—

JERRY BROWN: It was also a job that Mom did all those things before those four people were appointed. [They laugh.] As far as [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: But I basically ran—

JERRY BROWN: Those jobs that—

JANE BROWN: —the whole kitchen.

JERRY BROWN: Right, you ran the kitchen—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, I ran the kitchen.

JERRY BROWN: —and the scholarships, and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —and drove to Asheville half the time, and so—

JANE BROWN: The physical labor, and so forth, yeah. And then on the cleanup times, you see, the—we had, at the end of each one of these sessions, an incredible cleanup system. At 8:00 in the morning we'd meet at the Pines, and we had worked on Friday afternoon to completely organize how the scholarship students that were just there for the session and still pretty new, and they basically didn't know how many houses were all on the grounds, and the core kids and myself and Bill, and every Saturday at nine o'clock we started with eight vacuums, and buckets, and mops, and everything under the sun. And Bill ran all the men, and I ran all the women, through this duress between 9:00 and 5:00 in the afternoon, and then checking it out was my final job between 4:00 and 5:00. I vacuumed. I was always the best vacuumer. I vacuumed the Craft House. Each core person took on one whole building, and I always had the Craft House, which took four full hours to complete, and remake all the beds and so forth, and get it all in order. So by the end of those days, even the scholarship kids felt like they were now a part of the school. It was vested interest, you know? And when Bill would be out there laughing with them, and pushing mops around with them, and toward the end I would say, "You know, the day we can't work with the scholarships anymore I think we will be told we are ready to leave." Because it was labor beyond belief. Maybe we should have quit before; [they laugh] I don't know. But I always felt that the day we could not work with the scholarships, then we were not any longer really fit to be part of the—to be the leaders of the school. I always felt that was true, because we all became such a family when we—

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: It would be awful to give them orders.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, pushing a mop around with the director and the director's wife had, you know—I mean—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —it did make it a little more of a—

JANE KESSLER: Well, it was a family [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: This all—I mean, it just keeps resurfacing over and over again. That's always something—

JANE BROWN: One real funny thing happened. Dick Cunningham, who's on those slides, the big, fat man with the wispy beard, was a scholarship student, and Bill was having him sweep outside the craft house on the stones, which was always did. And so I didn't know they had already done it, and I come to the back and I see Richard coming down with his big mop—broom, and I said, "Oh, Richard, would you sweep the back?" [They laugh.] And he just began to laugh. He said, "Your husband just did." [They laugh.] So then they could be a little family. It was just so funny. Richard just started laughing. So sometimes we would hit heads, and try not to. I wouldn't have done it for the world if I had known that he'd already [they laugh] swept the back porch. So Bill, you see, with the men, did all the studios, which was really major, major, heavy stuff.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, it must be.

WILLIAM BROWN: They didn't [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: But by the end of it, by that evening, you see, then the buildings were all cleaned, all the toilet paper was back in place. I had learned to tell kids—in the early years—when I said that it all evolved, in the early years I'd say, "Judy, you're in charge of the ashtrays and the wash—the trash buckets." And I'd go back and see that she—or emptying the ashtrays. I'd go back and sure, she had emptied them, but she'd left them dirty. I mean, these were kids that were not trained to be scullery maids, and so I had to learn to be very specific and say, "You will have to wash—empty and wash the ashtrays, and replace them dry." I mean, I had to get better and better at descriptions so that I wouldn't be antagonized and angry with them in the end of a day. I was too tired to—but by that night it was all back in order, quite often. Maybe a fourth of the faculty members and some students would al—scholarships would already be there by Saturday night dinner. Our cooks had pulled off this wonderful hamburger, usually, dinner, and vegetarian stuff. And by the next dinner at 10:00 we had sort of revived, and the new faculty was coming in, and then Bill would ring the bell on Sunday night saying—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JANE BROWN: —"Welcome aboard."

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: And the bell rang, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: But then I talked—I talked to them.

JANE KESSLER: You talked to them.

WILLIAM BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JANE KESSLER: On the Sunday night.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: You remember what you used to say?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, we don't like all this, you know, whatever—what do you call it. Don't stand [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Well, I don't know what you're saying, Bill. I don't remember hearing that.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, well, I mean, I start—

JANE BROWN: We don't like what?

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, we're—oh, God.

JANE BROWN: You'd say—

WILLIAM BROWN: You've got to go down, down, down to the school, and get up on the thing, and—what do you think would—

JANE BROWN: I don't know, okay.

JERRY BROWN: The Sunday night speech was just, you know, "Meals are such-and-such," and that was the only thing that really mattered as far as time. [Laughs.] If you wanted to eat, you had to be here. And if you—saw a fire, put it out. And if—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, but what about all the—

JANE BROWN: And we'll be here—

JERRY BROWN: You would get a bath later, and—

JANE BROWN: And don't waste water. Take a shower with a friend. He was saying that back in the '60s. Later signs came up about that one. Yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: I'd say—

JERRY BROWN: No, he said other things, but I don't know what they were. I heard it 150,000 times.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, I think maybe they'd say that they might—might not do any—

JANE BROWN: Drugs?

WILLIAM BROWN: Drugs.

JERRY BROWN: Oh, that's the second meeting. That was the—

JANE BROWN: That was the second one.

JERRY BROWN: That's the other meeting.

JANE BROWN: You did that at our house.

JERRY BROWN: You didn't say—you didn't say that at the Pines at six o'clock on Friday night, or Sunday night.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, no, [inaudible].

JERRY BROWN: That was the scholarship meeting.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, I know that.

JANE BROWN: Bill never wanted to rev up anything. If people—occasionally something would disappear. He would never build it up, you know, as a big stealing problem. Never, never bring it up, because he'd always think maybe somebody had just lost it, and he was going to really wait it out. And with drugs, he was never going to talk about it openly because it was instigating a negative problem. So—but boy, when you brought those scholarships over to the house at eight in the evening—

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh, yeah.

JANE BROWN: —to get them ready to start off on this project—he would say it to them, and he'd say, "If I catch any of you, in 15 minutes you're going to get thrown out. Spread the word around." So he—

JERRY BROWN: And the point was if I even think you are—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Laughs.] Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —you're gone. And if you're not gone, the sheriff will be here in five minutes, and then you'll be gone.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: So it's not a point of discussion. You're welcome to do it wherever you want. It's against the law. You don't do it here. And that was—

JANE KESSLER: And that was it.

JERRY BROWN: —pretty much it.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Did that—did that pretty much—did that cover the specific programs, then? You wanted to talk about the Nifty Fifty and the core—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JANE KESSLER: —group, scholarships—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —and do we need to move on now to the board and how that was changing?

JANE BROWN: Right, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: And when that began to change, and what that change was?

JANE BROWN: Right, okay.

JANE KESSLER: All right.

JERRY BROWN: Well, actually, that's the right time. I mean, we're talking about the '70s, was about—

JANE BROWN: Concentration was now rolling, so the school was running year-round almost. Yeah, it really basically was, because midwinter—Ridgeway, by the way, was being used by residents for—residents were spread all over the school by then, all of the grounds, really, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: And were living here.

JANE BROWN: And core people were using—we were using all buildings very efficiently, as far as we were concerned. Ridgeway was used for resident photographers, over the years of the '70s, incredible amount, and Bringle was being used for the dance program. Another thing, by the way, we never talked about auctions, and that really ought to brought in. Could I swing a little bit in that, first?

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: Because auctions were pretty important. Way back in the '60s—

WILLIAM BROWN: That's when [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: Well, when Bill was at Haystack he ran the auctions, and he used to collect enormous amounts of money with his wonderful sense of humor. Can't you stay through this one? Because this is your—you want a Coke?

WILLIAM BROWN: No, yes.

JANE BROWN: Get Jerry to get it for you.

JERRY BROWN: I'll get it.

WILLIAM BROWN: I'll get it.

JANE BROWN: Well, I need you on the auction business, because you were the auction man of the world.

WILLIAM BROWN: Let's see.

JANE BROWN: Bill, just stay right here. Let's find out.

WILLIAM BROWN: I forgot.

JANE BROWN: All right, is this—but, Bill, I think you have to sit over there. All right. At Haystack there were auctions, and he was adamant about the fact that they had to be fun. They were not money-oriented kind of things. It was absolutely out of the picture for Bill Brown's thinking. By the way, it was also true of the shop at the school. He never—he felt that it was an educational institution he was running, and if the sales shop could help the craftspeople and help educate people, great, but he was never going to on purpose build it into a big, high-selling design thing. It was not of his interest at all. So then the auctions get going when we come here, and now he, being the director, can't run them anymore. He doesn't feel that's right, because he doesn't want anybody to ever feel penny pinching was going on and stuff. So in the early '60s just wonderful students began to do it, and I can't even tell you who they were in the early years, but then they—

JERRY BROWN: That was Steve Hearn.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, but it was Nick—in '62, ['6]3, ['6]4, it was Nick who lives down at Comfort. Nick and his friend Don. Different—and Don Drum.

WILLIAM BROWN: I couldn't name—

JERRY BROWN: Nick Dean?

JANE BROWN: No, not Nick Dean, but Nick—the little man that lives next door to Comfort in Florida right now. He was at—anyway, they were young students that just—you know, it was just a heartfelt initiation in '62 and '63 and '64. Then Doug Siegler had come in the late '60s, maybe '66 or 7, and he certainly started auctions. And it's funny: those years I can't really remember, but it's—

JERRY BROWN: Everybody did it.

JANE BROWN: Everybody—

JERRY BROWN: [Inaudible] did it, and Skip did it, and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah. And they were in Ridgeway for—

JANE KESSLER: —section—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, and they were in Ridgeway at first.

JANE KESSLER: —I mean, [inaudible] at the end of each session?

JANE BROWN: Yes. And they were in Ridgeway in the '70s, and—

JERRY BROWN: And the money went to help the scholarship fund—

JANE BROWN: Scholarships, right.

JERRY BROWN: —to help be able to get scholarships.

JANE BROWN: And Bill said, "They can never go longer than two hours, and they have to be fun, and otherwise I don't have anything to do—I will not be a part of it, but anything you want to do, great." So some wonderful person would take it over and start getting other faculty members to help them, and a lot of them will say, "Well, no, me, I can't do that," and—but it was playful, and it was fun. And then the students got more and more involved in putting stuff in, and the faculty members did, and finally Doug Siegler took it over, along with Keith Hatcher, especially, and they really pushed it to, in those days, exorbitant amounts of money they'd be taking in, like \$4[000]-6,000. But they—it was just their major interest of the year. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: Sure.

JERRY BROWN: But then they would get up and announce how much they made at dinner, and Dad would never announce it.

JANE BROWN: That's right. He would absolutely have nothing to do with it, and yet everybody knew he honored them for getting involved. But it was still to be playful and fun, and nothing competitive—

JANE KESSLER: And volunteer. That was—

JANE BROWN: And volunteer, exactly, yeah.

JERRY BROWN: And the students and faculty [inaudible] us where the stuff came from the auction was—a lot of the stuff was made during the sessions, or the—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JERRY BROWN: —instructors would give a piece, or whatever. So that's—

JANE BROWN: Such dedication. It was just really exciting to see the love that came through.

JANE KESSLER: So the generosity of the faculty—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, the generosity.

JANE KESSLER: —which has always been a big part of—

JANE BROWN: Exactly. At one point, Don Drum's wife made a wonderful—it's hanging in our room now—a man with alligators hanging from his built. Want to go get it? Or Bill, why don't you get it off?

WILLIAM BROWN: I can get it off.

JANE BROWN: Okay, it's got—well, it's a little catch. Good luck. It's on a nail. He just might rip it off before its own—in the auction, there was this big war over that thing, and Doug Siegler was fighting, apparently, with Hatcher's, in a very loving fight, but they got up higher and higher, and it went up, I don't know, \$50, \$60, \$70, which was a lot in those days, and I think the Hatcher's finally got it, and we came down to the cabin the next week and it was on our bed. [They laugh.] And he—the man that's up to his ass in alligators. That was Bill's favorite saying.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, that's great. [Laughs.] Look at that.

JANE BROWN: I'm up to my ass in alligators.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. I don't know where [inaudible].

JANE KESSLER: Now, who made it?

JANE BROWN: Lisa Drum. That would be Don Drum's wife.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Isn't that marvelous. And that's one of Bill's great sayings.

JANE KESSLER: Wonderful. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: We even, at one auction, Bill—

JANE KESSLER: There's a tin [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: This is another fun thing about Bill, that he, in the '70s, got pretty antsy to start building things. Could you get stuff out of the cabinet?

WILLIAM BROWN: No. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: He got antsy about not making things, and so he decided to make a boat, and the boat was outside. It was during a time we had a plastics—

JERRY BROWN: Outside [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: We had a plastics department going on, and the man who was running the plastics business, Byron, Byron somebody, knew—he had been a boat builder, so he helped Bill building the frame of it. And it was done at fin—it was before somebody was in that final area of the barn. And so we went back there later and said they were sniffing glue, because they were involved in a lot of fiberglass. Then they got it outside, and then Doug and other friends came and helped build some of the structure of it, cabin part. And then they had an auction, and they auctioned off tickets for the first rungs. [They laugh.] I mean, that's how silly sometimes the auctions got. And then a neat thing later happened: Bill finally gave up building on the boat. He didn't do very much on it at all, and—

JERRY BROWN: He didn't give up, just slowed down a lot.

JANE BROWN: He slowed down a lot, [laughs] yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Terry Smith came, teaching wood, and he lived in Wilmington, and he's at the university over there near the water. And he was just in love with the boat. And Bill said, "You want to take it and build it?" And he said he'd just love to. So Bill gave it to Terry to take, and the only thing he kept from it was the trailer underneath it. So he just gave it to Terry, and then about four or five years later Terry Smith ended up marrying Bill's most beloved secretary, named Linda Dougherty. So Linda, who was—Bill was her surrogate father—ended up owning a boat out on the coast, because she already had—of course, he asked for no money from Terry for the thing. So it's just one of the lovely stories of the way giving and taking was always going on at Penland, the way Bill ran it.

JANE KESSLER: That's really cool.

JANE BROWN: [Inaudible] tape, so could we wait for a sec, or you give us the—or—

JANE KESSLER: I think this one's about to run out, too. In fact, why don't we just turn this one off, and that way we won't take the chance of running down.

JANE BROWN: All right.

JANE KESSLER: And then—

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JANE BROWN: Okay. Maybe Bill could—

WILLIAM BROWN: What?

JANE BROWN: She's going to ask you something, okay?

WILLIAM BROWN: Aye. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: You're on again. Okay. We were going to talk about your—how the board changed, Bill, in the last—well, I guess that would be about mid-'70s that we're talking about now, or how the—

JANE BROWN: Or how—or how the board felt in general, how you felt about the running of the school, of the Penland board of directors.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they didn't know what they're doing. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: You mean, they're—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: As long as they knew that, it was okay. [They laugh.]

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that's right. You mean when you first took the school?

WILLIAM BROWN: What?

JANE BROWN: When you first took the school?

WILLIAM BROWN: What? Well, what do you want to know?

JANE BROWN: Well, how do you feel about—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, they threw me out.

JANE BROWN: [Laughs.] They threw you out.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's—

JANE KESSLER: That's the bottom.

JANE BROWN: That's the bottom line, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: That's [inaudible]. Now—

JANE BROWN: But as you were working with Penland School—because we're now back in the '60s and '70s—as you ran the school in the '60s, and the board met how many—how often?

WILLIAM BROWN: Once.

JANE BROWN: Once a year, right?

WILLIAM BROWN: That's too much. [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: And it's a real informal relationship, and you called on them when you needed them, and that's how you felt that they worked, but it was not a formal setup where you had board meetings, and everybody went—

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, you had one.

JANE BROWN: You didn't have that many.

JANE KESSLER: [Inaudible] main board meeting.

JANE BROWN: One a year, and we told them what we had accomplished, and they cheered us on.

JERRY BROWN: Well, they were—it was a whole—I mean, if you looked at it in a short sentence of the whole thing—the simplest way of looking at it all, without getting into the nitty-gritty of how it all worked, is—and stop me if I'm wrong here—when we first got here, the board was made up of local people who perhaps were merchants that were involved with the school, and the lumber company in town, or people who had been to the school and whatever, but it was pretty much a local—

JANE BROWN: Absolutely.

JERRY BROWN: —group of people that was probably put together because legally you had to have a board.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JERRY BROWN: So they thought, well, whatever they're doing up there is great. They didn't—

WILLIAM BROWN: That's why the board—

JANE BROWN: That's your line.

JERRY BROWN: They said, "Gosh, it seems to work. I've got my job. I'll do it. You do yours." Once a year they got together, they came up here, and Bonnie typed up one sheet of paper that had the entire year's summary in it, and they all sat around and said, "Good to see you," and talked about what was happening, and looked over what little paperwork there was there. One piece of paper. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: Bonnie Ford was the treasurer, and Bonnie was the treasurer and the secretary the entire time, and the same president was Nils Larson, who lived in Winston-Salem, was a very gentle man, whose father had been a very bigtime architect, and had brought the—he had done that architectural change for Wake Forest. So his father was a bigtime Reynolds-Babcock person, and Nils was sort of connected with them, but he was not a hyper-driven kind of guy at all. He was just very willing to do what Bill wanted to do.

JERRY BROWN: And then I think what happened is in the '70s, it went for—as—I think as Penland originally started—I don't think most of the people that were on the board, are on the board now, would probably have been interested in being on the board at the time when Penland was hitting the early '70s, and was obviously showing to be the real hotspot and an exciting thing that was going on. The board kind of take—started taking a change toward trying to be run like a—the big money people in Winston or wherever that were in the first generation of people who were really helping Penland, when they stepped aside, I think they wanted to have other people that they could recommend to come in and take over and do a good job for the school, and those people honestly believed that they were going to do a good job, and how they were going to do a good job was to get involved and straighten out this goofy system that was going on up here, where people did everything for no money, and for heart and stuff. You ran—you needed to run this thing like a bank and make a lot of money and get more students, do some advertising, do all the things that you do to make a—the NCNB Bank the most successful bank in the country. And this—

JANE KESSLER: So it took on a business mentality?

JERRY BROWN: So all of a sudden they're disappointed, and they're—

WILLIAM BROWN: They don't know how to do it. I mean, just—

JANE BROWN: Came—

JANE KESSLER: That way. That's how they knew to do.

JERRY BROWN: They just don't understand it.

JANE BROWN: And it came slowly, but—

JERRY BROWN: So with all good intention, and more—each one of them grabbing their next buddy onto the board, it grew more and more into the corporate style, big school style board of directors that, in good intention in their own hearts, they thought that they were going to make things better by changing things—

JANE KESSLER: By putting a system in place.

JERRY BROWN: —and really making them work.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right, right.

JERRY BROWN: You know, it's like this school works, but think of how much better it could work if you had a board of directors that did what they were supposed to do. And—

JANE KESSLER: So the—

JERRY BROWN: —so I think it changed—the whole feeling of the board changed, and—

JANE BROWN: And it moved very slowly.

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, it was a slow progression.

JANE BROWN: It was an insidious growth.

JERRY BROWN: More and more the local folks fell off, and more and more of the—

JANE KESSLER: That's what I was going to ask.

JERRY BROWN: —big dogs came in.

JANE BROWN: And really the first one was—and they were all appointed, basically, by the Haynes, by either Philip—primarily Philip or Gordon. Doug Lewis, who was the head of the Summit School in Winston-Salem, seemed like a logical one to come on, and they always asked Bill first. And Doug was a nice guy, and—but he was kind of appalled, probably, what we were doing, from what I could tell. [They laugh.] Then they decided Gordon's son Jim had now graduated from school and so forth, and they wanted him to get involved in the arts,

and I would presume—

JERRY BROWN: Needed a project.

JANE BROWN: He needed a project, and they wanted him to feel important in the arts, and I don't think he really cared very much about the arts, but he joined three different boards. All three of those boards finally—two of them went down the drain, and with Penland I used to think baby, if you ever—if any big trouble comes with us—his remark about those two boards was, "Well, I don't think the people cared," and I thought, "Baby, if that ever happened around here you'd find out we care." But Jimmy got on, I think, in about '72, and he kept trying to understand the school, but I really doubt that he ever understood what the school was about. He came to classes, but he was always critical. It was always an under-grade criticism. And then in '75 he gave Bill the idea we ought to get fundraisers. And so Bill said—

JANE KESSLER: Jim Haynes did.

JANE BROWN: Jim Haynes, would now be in his thirties.

JANE KESSLER: Now, was he president then, or was he just on the board?

JANE BROWN: He—no, because Nils Larson was president all the way up to '83, I guess.

JANE KESSLER: He remained on the—he continued, okay.

JANE BROWN: Yes. I think he was still the head of the board—if he wasn't the head of the time of the board by the time we left—no, he wasn't. In 1980, probably, he dropped out of the board—

JANE KESSLER: Okay, but so—

JANE BROWN: —by some pressure.

JANE KESSLER: —Jim Haynes was the one who was really pushing for—

JANE BROWN: For the new—

JANE KESSLER: —the sort of—

JANE BROWN: —corporate way of looking at things is well said, I think, by Jerry. And then he asked this fundraising group to come in, and Bill said, "Go ahead. You know, you can bring them in, but, you know, the way I—" Bill consistently said, "The way I think this school gets more famous, we've already proven it, it's student talking to student. Sending out massive numbers of catalogues and stuff to people that we don't even know I don't think will work." But Jim didn't like that idea, so Bill said, "Okay, bring them in." So the two guys come in, racing in at quarter to 12:00. We eat lunch. They go over and talk to the board for 30 minutes, and then they say they have to leave at 3:00. So I then take them on an absolute tear through the school, 45 minutes, which—it takes three hours to see Penland.

JANE KESSLER: Right. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: By then it's 45 minutes.

JANE KESSLER: You're talking about just land, just—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, just the buildings, and the programs, to show them what even was happening. And then they got on their planes and flew away, and a few months later, luckily, we heard they'd gone bankrupt. So Jim sort of backed off for a while, and didn't feel have—the people had picked it up. Then, in the meantime, John Neely and Philip and Gordon still would not be a member of the board, but they suggest that Sophie Cody, who's a real estate person in Winston, and a darling lady, a friend that we had partied with a lot and had good times with, she joined it. But she really—never really wanted to get involved, I'm pretty sure. She was just kind of doing it because her friends asked her to, so—

JANE KESSLER: Did you feel like—excuse me, but it sounds like, especially when you say that again, it sounds like you had—in the beginning, you had people who had a deepfelt interest and understanding of the place, who tried to pull other people in but never quite got the heart in it. I mean—

JERRY BROWN: Right. Well, I think that the first generation of Philip and Gordon and those people were sincerely interested in the school. I think everybody—I don't think anybody did anything that—in malice intent. I think it was more—

JANE BROWN: I—yeah, right.

JERRY BROWN: —a feeling that they were—

JANE BROWN: They knew better. They knew better.

JERRY BROWN: —trying to do a good job, and trying to do something better for the operation, but not knowing enough about it. I think Philip and Gordon and those people, they came up here and lived up here. They came up here and went to school here.

JANE BROWN: They had the spirit up in the minds.

JERRY BROWN: They dug it. They dug it because they were in on the thing, you know, and it was an exciting thing. And these other people got put on as extras after the fact.

JANE BROWN: Tell her—yeah. Just tell her not to come in, go the other way.

JERRY BROWN: So I think, you know, they got involved secondhand, and they weren't—I think they felt that they were being asked to be on the board due to their great knowledge, or what they could do to change things and make it better, when, in fact, kind of the spirit of things was changed by that, and more and more stuff was—they're suggesting more and more stuff be taken away from Dad and Mom in the—or away from the school, in fact, in their way of doing it, and bring in somebody to do the advertising, bring somebody in to do this, have someone go out and raise money—have somebody go out and write the grants. And that's not how the system worked.

JANE BROWN: And have somebody dropship the equipment in that you need for the school; don't buy it from the community. Those ideas all began to come in from these outsiders, who were—certainly they were kind people and nice people, but they didn't know what the real need was.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well, but they—if you don't buy the—

JANE BROWN: Equipment, or—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, the—

JANE BROWN: Supplies?

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—what do you—

JERRY BROWN: Refrigerator.

WILLIAM BROWN: —over there—

JANE BROWN: Refrigerators.

WILLIAM BROWN: —then what do you—if it runs down, what are you going to do? You've got to take it to—all the way to—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, up to—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. I said—I told them that, that one, [inaudible] that kind of stuff around here, because now you can just get one guy, and bang, he'll get it for you.

JERRY BROWN: And the one thing, too, that was—

WILLIAM BROWN: They think they're big, see. [Inaudible] off—what is it? Off what, you call—

JANE KESSLER: Off ship, or off—

JANE BROWN: Dropship.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, drop it or something.

JANE BROWN: Dropship it.

WILLIAM BROWN: Well—

JERRY BROWN: But I think you—

WILLIAM BROWN: —you're not never, ever getting it back.

JANE BROWN: No, I—

JERRY BROWN: And Dad became the biggest—Dad was fighting—it came to a point where it was fighting between the board and Dad.

JANE BROWN: But it was—

JERRY BROWN: There was a—

JANE BROWN: —under cover, you see.

JERRY BROWN: Right, I mean, it was calm—it was them suggesting something, and him saying, "No, that won't work." So, to me, what ended up happening is the only way that they were ever going to prove whether they were right or wrong was to get rid of him—

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —and they did.

JANE KESSLER: Gotcha. That's—

JANE BROWN: But it came in very slowly. Like, it was before Bonnie was dead, and she died in '77, that—

JANE KESSLER: And Bonnie—this is Bonnie Ford.

JANE BROWN: Bonnie Ford, who was the Secretary and Treasurer of the school all the years.

JANE KESSLER: All the time that Bill was there, too.

JANE BROWN: And all the time while Lucy was there.

JANE KESSLER: Lucy was there.

JANE BROWN: Right. She would have this one page of financial business, and she's the same lady that the IRS came to check in the '60s and found that 41 years' worth of being unchecked she had not made a mistake. So—

WILLIAM BROWN: She had a perfect—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, so—but the first time I knew something was wrong was at a board meeting—

WILLIAM BROWN: She—

JANE BROWN: —at a board meeting, Bill, she handed out this one page, and I saw Jim Haynes look over at Doug Lewis and go, you know, "Can you believe it?" They were just putting her down. I was incensed, because this woman had given her life to Penland School, and they were literally putting her down. And I could start a fighting outright, right then, but I thought maybe I was imagining it. But now that I look back on it, it was very clear. They were—as Jerry said, they were not doing it in the corporate columns, and Bill would say towards '79—which would be, by the way, the anniversary we ought to bring in, too, the Penland anniversary—towards '79, he would say to them, "You can have all the columns you want. I don't care. Have the columns you want, but please save one for heart." And that was probably a sassy remark to say to them. Then, in '79, he wrote them a letter saying, "You all I know have been interested in the school, and I know you want to get more involved in it, but if you're going to do that I think you ought to come on the grounds as often as you can, and I'm sending to each one of you a calendar, and I'm putting red dots on the days that would be best to come or this—to not come." I guess red would mean stop, don't come at all. Those are the changeover cleanup weekends. Unless they want to clean and mop with us, which we doubted that they were going to want to do. [Laughs.] And then the green days were the best days to come, and so forth. And, of course, nobody replied to that. Maybe two people came, out of the whole board. But he said, you know, "If you're going to work with me, please work all the way or don't come at all. Leave me alone, you know, and I will decide whether I want to work with you," is really what he said, and it was pretty kind of sassy—

JANE KESSLER: But it was also saying that you can't—you can't come up here and say how to run the place without being involved in an ongoing—

JERRY BROWN: Right, come up once, one weekend a year and tell me how to run this business.

JANE KESSLER: —barely knowing—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that's right.

JANE KESSLER: —yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: But they thought it was preposterous that it ran as it did. At one point, one suggestion was—to save more money would be to cut the—down the salary of the instructors. [They laugh.]

WILLIAM BROWN: They don't even get—

JERRY BROWN: So—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —you know, it's like, they get \$30 a week, you know? Well, okay, let's give them 15!

JANE BROWN: You're taking away their beer money!

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah. They were all home.

JERRY BROWN: And these guys make, you know, \$2,000 a week to be somewhere else, and they make \$30—

JANE BROWN: Bill constantly mentioned to everyone—I don't think anyone ever listened, but he said, "The biggest grant we have ever gotten in this school is the yearly contribution of the faculty members for free teaching to the school."

JANE KESSLER: That is absolutely true.

JANE BROWN: It is the absolute fact that we have gotten all these years—if you count up all that money, you will never believe it.

JERRY BROWN: But you don't count that way in a bank.

JANE BROWN: That's right. It's a money in mindset, it's a money—

JERRY BROWN: That doesn't count that.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Well, I imagine that for those people in that, you know—and if you take other boards, and how boards for other institutions work—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —you know, that to view this, and being able to view it as something that was working the way it worked would have been very difficult for them.

JANE BROWN: Right.

JERRY BROWN: Well, and as the past—

JANE KESSLER: And to participate.

JANE BROWN: I think—

JERRY BROWN: —decade has showed, throughout many experiences that I've seen going on since we left here, towards eventually removing anyone who didn't play the system—I mean, boards are—it's a classic—it's a classic problem, what happened, and it happened at the University of North Carolina system. Bill Friday got his—I mean, you know, it's a common, commonplace thing.

JANE KESSLER: It is common. It's not—

JERRY BROWN: Boards are really trying to do something good, and they end up choke—dragging the heart out, whatever the carcass was that they were working on.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, I know, and I think for art, arts boards in particular, that's been—and we don't need to get into this as a sort of discussion about boards in general, but it is that, you know, in order to try to bring these

arts institutions up to some working level, you know, they got all these corporate people in, and then, you know, just, you know, took the heart out of them. And that's—

JANE BROWN: Yeah,—, yeah.

JERRY BROWN: It's natural progression at this stage of—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Okay, now '79 was coming, and now it was our anniversary, and this—

JANE KESSLER: Your anniversary—

JANE BROWN: The 50th anniversary of—

JANE KESSLER: Fiftieth anniversary.

JANE BROWN: —Penland School's—

JERRY BROWN: Of the school.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: The school.

JANE BROWN: And so Bill, again, with heart, decided, let's see, if we're going to have a—we knew that the actual signing the papers was on a certain date in August, but he thought that's not fair just to have a celebration in August, so we asked Debra Frasier, who had been a student of ours and a delight, if she would want to do anything towards a pageant for us. So that rascal up in Delaware, where she was then teaching, got busy and made a pageant that you could not believe, and it was repeated in every session, every two-week session or three-week session. The entire pageant was done out on a field, and it's all recorded on a film, and many photographs, which if you haven't seen we'll show you. And to instigate the thing, what she did was she made costumes that were as long as this room, 30 feet long, and put people in them.

JANE KESSLER: Oh, was this the—

JERRY BROWN: Dragon.

JANE BROWN: And she trained all the people.

JANE KESSLER: The dragon, yeah.

JANE BROWN: She trained all the people to do it, yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So she—when you say she made the—

JANE BROWN: She made them herself.

JANE KESSLER: She made the costumes—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —she put the—she—

JANE BROWN: Sewed them.

JERRY BROWN: Wrote the show.

JANE KESSLER: —choreographed it, she directed it—

JANE BROWN: Sewed them, she did the whole works. Prior to this, by the way, when she was a core student a couple of years earlier, she had asked Bill if she could do some experimental theater things, and he said, "Of course," and he gave her 500 bucks. She made the most incredible, like, paper bag—or the red paper—bread and butter players, puppets.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah.

JANE BROWN: Well, she was sort of doing them when they were doing it, and I don't think they knew each other

at all, or knew of each other. So these were these wonderful experiments that then when people came, by the way, to see the school, they'd say, "We ought to do this at our school, and we ought to get a grant for it." Bill hadn't waited to get a grant. He had just said, "Go ahead and do it." So now he gave her \$1,000 to do this incredible 1979 thing.

JERRY BROWN: Well, that's just one part of it.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, wonderful.

JANE BROWN: Have you ever seen the quest, the whole movie?

JANE KESSLER: Oh, the color. No, I haven't.

JANE BROWN: Because we've got to get a copy of it. I've got to call Dan—

JANE KESSLER: Who has—oh, Dan Bailey?

JANE BROWN: Dan has them, and I thought they left one at the school, but so many things have taken off and I haven't seen it since, so—but at any rate, Bill was always willing to take a gamble, and earlier, in about '76, he gave Debra the chance, and just kept encouraging her. "Yeah, I'll give you a few hundred dollars to pull this off." She did performances that she invited the community to come to. They were advertised in the newspaper, which we didn't do very often in those days. Then, in '79, she pulls off this project, which every session was held, and at the end there's a cake that people pop out of, and finally in the last September one they decide it's going to be everybody over 60 doing it, and Mary Cannon, who hasn't been talked about yet, took care—she was one of the—she was a major one, other than Bonnie, who stayed from Miss Lucy's era to ours and directed the giftshop. She was an absolute monster sometimes, but the most amazing chatty Cathy, older lady, with hyper energy, and watched over everything and everybody, and collected Coke bottles at 6:00 a.m. every morning to keep us clean. She became the center of the cake that time. She came out. She had to crawl on the ground for five minutes to get there, and she had to put pants on and then jump up on Peter Adams' shoulders, an 85-year-old woman. It was so neat.

JERRY BROWN: She was something'.

JANE BROWN: Oh, Mary Cannon was something.

JERRY BROWN: She taught public school for 50 years or something.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right. So she was an incredible lady who, at any rate, was one of the cake poppers. She popped out of the cake. So on that '79 business, we were doing all the fun and joy and showing films and so forth, but—

JANE KESSLER: Okay, that was 1979.

JANE BROWN: '79, because that was the—

JANE KESSLER: It was the 50th anniversary.

JANE BROWN: —Fiftieth anniversary, because 1929 was the actual signing of papers. And Miss Lucy had run the school prior to that with Bonnie, but—

JANE KESSLER: That was the official—

JANE BROWN: —that was the signing date. So it was a big year, and in that year we also decided to make a major fundraising again. And so we had a \$300,000 challenge grant thing going, and the NEA came through again with about \$100,000. The Smith-Reynolds came through with a lot, and Babcock came through. So they were the three major ones, and then we tipped over a foundation—the Reese Foundation, Bill, was the name of it? I think it was the Reese Foundation. And this was a neat man that came. He only came one afternoon, and—

JANE KESSLER: Where was the Reese Foundation?

JANE BROWN: The Reese Foundation was in New York City, as I remember, and John Neely kind of found them, I believe. And so with all the money that came from the students, too, which always—that was a third letter Bill wrote in his entire year [inaudible] money from the students. They came in with enormous quantities of money for it, and—

JANE KESSLER: Just wrote individual request—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: —letters.

JANE BROWN: Well, he just wrote one letter to all of them—

JANE KESSLER: One letter to—

JANE BROWN: —saying that we have the Challenge Grant, and it would help us. My brother-in-law, who's now the Librarian of Congress, was then the head of the Smithsonian's Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, and he had a diner at his house, inviting—this was to help us for the NEA grant. It was inviting the head of the arts people in Congress to all have dinner with Joe Mondale and Roger Stevens and so forth, so this was a big shindig. We did a lot of things that year, in every direction, to get the money, and it all came through. So by 1980 we had this big amount of money, again. But, again, Bill always said, "I will not ask for it for just nothing." So we had real reasons that I can't tell you now what they were, but I think they were more physical plant problems in 1980.

JERRY BROWN: [Inaudible] the water system, and—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, which we haven't mentioned. The water system was the bane of Bill's existence, from beginning to end. That would be a whole story. It would take another half hour to tell about the water system, wouldn't it?

JERRY BROWN: See in part two of the Brown story.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, the water system was—and we had—when we got the new land, we had the seven springs that came in beautifully, and one day the inspectors came and they said, "We've checked your water and it's not safe enough, and you have—" See, along the way, each of these houses, Miss Lucy had allowed water to be given to the houses, so now when they were sold we had the problem of would you sell the Penland water with the house, which was getting us into some problems. And then they—then these big inspectors came in and said, "You will have to make a whole new system." And we spent—

JERRY BROWN: Well—

JANE KESSLER: —Eighty thousand dollars on it, changing it—

JERRY BROWN: The problem was that it wasn't water that was being taken from X number of feet—

JANE BROWN: Natural.

JERRY BROWN: —from under the ground.

JANE BROWN: Oh, spring.

JERRY BROWN: But, of course, we owned all the land that the—above. I mean, when you're sitting on top of a mountain there's nobody above you, so we owned all the water from the top of the Brown—I mean, top of the mountain down. [Laughs.] So it wasn't a matter that there was a chemical plant up above; the law said it had to be from over 60 feet under the ground, and we had—

JANE BROWN: And so we had the big wells, which never worked, but we know basically where they are. I don't think anyone else, maybe, does, [inaudible] where the wells were. They didn't work. So then we were allowed to go back to the springs—

JANE KESSLER: The springs, yeah, right.

JANE BROWN: —then we had to Chlorox them, and that was an \$85,000 project at least right there. So we did a couple of major water supply situations in our 21 years, and Bill was always out with the pumps in the middle of the night, when the electrical storms would break them, and so forth. At any rate, '79 was a biggie, and the board was, I guess, by then just putting up with us, though we didn't realize how much tension they were feeling, I guess. Then, in the early '80s, Debra Frasier was back on the grounds now as a resident, and Dan Bailey was here as a resident, doing his photo work down at Ridgeway, and they decided to offer—we didn't ask them, but we—they just—as far as I remember, we never asked them to do that, did we, Bill?

WILLIAM BROWN: No.

JANE BROWN: They just decided it would be good—

JANE KESSLER: Slideshows.

JANE BROWN: —to do a slideshow. So they went ahead then. You're about halfway through.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, we got 20 more minutes.

JANE BROWN: All right, thanks. They offered to and instigated the idea of writing to all the residents and finding out how they felt about what they had done at Penland, because they wanted the resident program to prosper. It was from their heart they did it. And then they thought they ought to also do a program for the whole school, and that was when we devised the idea that we'd get these machines in which the carousel could sit, and the carousel photographs would all be set up, and that they would write the script for it. And they did it all with no money in mind, and finally we went to the board in probably '82 and said, "You know, these two young people have just done yeomen's duty. Would you consider paying them?" And they said, "What would you suggest?" And Bill said, "Well, I've already discussed it with them, and they said they both have bills of \$2[000] or \$3,000 for food, eating at the school, and buying the materials and stuff, and they would love to be able to pay that off," so that it just ended up not being given to them in cash but a payoff of their bills. Which, by the way, we never talked about: the residents and core people and faculty, in many ways, they could bill the school, but then they would pay it back when they could. So Bill never put the iron hammer on anybody on their bill paying.

JANE KESSLER: Well, that—I mean, that is something that I think we ought to spend a few minutes on, as far as the residents went, as far as the residents program, because they really—you know, they came to the school, they lived here for a sort of—a not specifically set—

JANE BROWN: Right.

JANE KESSLER: —period of time. They were here to do their work, and they were—

JANE BROWN: Paying 25—

JANE KESSLER: —supported by the school.

JANE BROWN: They were paying 25—the earliest ones were paying \$25 a month for rent for their house, and 25 for the studio.

JANE KESSLER: And they ate at the school—

JANE BROWN: And we—yeah, we allowed them to buy food. They could eat in their own homes in those early days, because the whole winter was out, you see.

JANE KESSLER: Right.

JANE BROWN: They could eat in their homes, and the school would pay the bills. Now, this was Malen's Market, you see. They'd already allowed the school to pay at any time they could anyway, but luckily we were able to keep up with it because we'd gotten some grants to help us do it for the residents. Then, by about the late '60s, we realized that that was getting out of hand, that now that—if nothing else, the grocery stores were now opening up to sell diapers and kitchen supplies and everything else, not just foods. And so it just kind of got—yeah, too complicated, so we asked them to take over their own foods. They still—

JANE KESSLER: But these studios were supplied. The studios were—did they—but then they bought their own—

JANE BROWN: Supplies in the studios—

JANE KESSLER: In the studios.

JANE BROWN: —but sometimes they would buy a major—\$400 worth of paints or something, or clay, that the school would be billed for, and they would pay the school back.

JANE KESSLER: When they could.

JANE BROWN: When they could, right, yeah. And then we had to get tougher with them about kind of keeping up with it. But it was sort of a messy financial system for Bonnie to have to keep up with it all, but as far as we were concerned—

JANE KESSLER: But you felt like it worked, and they—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that's right, and look at all they were giving. Besides, even if they didn't, it would be all kinds of—

JANE KESSLER: Well, and they contributed, yeah. I mean, they still—[laughs].

JANE BROWN: They did, absolutely. Right, you betcha. Yeah, you bet. And they advertised—every time Mark Peiser puts an advertisement out on himself and says he lives at Penland School, he's giving an advertisement right there. Right, so it's very hard to ever add up. If anybody walked in the school thinking, "I'm going to this two weeks to get," you know, with their blinders on, "this, this, and this," they were pretty silly, because they would get the blinders off. They would get all kinds of gifts and experiences and chances that they would never have had if they'd not come.

JANE KESSLER: And then the school got all that back, too.

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: So it was—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right. Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Okay.

JANE BROWN: I think [inaudible]. What do you think?

JERRY BROWN: About what?

JANE BROWN: As you—have you been watching what we've been up to?

JERRY BROWN: Today, or in life? [They laugh.]

JANE KESSLER: In the business.

JANE BROWN: Start at Penland School.

JERRY BROWN: I honestly—

JANE BROWN: Because you live now in Chapel Hill, and—

JERRY BROWN: I don't—I mean, it's just a pretty major impact on a lot of people's lives. I mean, I run into it everywhere.

JANE KESSLER: Penland School, mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRY BROWN: I go all over the world—I mean, we travel all over the world now. I run into people everywhere that know the school, or know Mom and Dad.

JANE BROWN: Magic Mountain, it's very often—you've heard people call it, right?

JANE KESSLER: Magic Mountain.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, peopled called it Magic Mountain all the time.

JANE KESSLER: And it really has had—and I would like to hear kind of, like, your—how you feel it affected the crafts in general, you know, craftspeople in general. I mean, I feel like Penland School has been a place for the regenerating. I mean, when people come back here, it's like going to the well again, you know, that as much as anything, that's been what Penland School has given to the crafts. Could you—do you feel that way, or what would you feel—

JERRY BROWN: Or it's a place where they go back to their own well, you know, [laughs] I mean, is more like it. You know, I mean, it's their—it's—

JANE BROWN: With no competition but themselves, right.

JANE KESSLER: That's—yeah, that's one, and that's one that Bill, when he says you're not compete—you're competing with the best when you're competing with yourself—I can't say it like he says it either—

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JANE KESSLER: —but that element of competition has never been part of this school.

JANE BROWN: Right. And the power thing that I was speaking about earlier—I even get an interesting point out of this: as the board took over the school more and more—it was very typical of Bill—if the faculty members needed to do something, they felt it was necessary; if the students did, they felt it was necessary; if the board

felt that they needed to go in this direction, it was a necessary thing for them to do. It would not be like Bill to start running and fighting and shouting at them, "You're doing wrong," but to let it evolve in the natural kind of way, because what he found out through the whole 21 years was that the more delegation he gave out, this amazing thing happened, the more power he gave. And I don't think he was even doing it on purpose, but that is what he found out by the time we were asked to leave in the basically cruel manner in which it was done, the unkind, cruel—especially to the school, as well as cruel to us as a family. But it was—he realized then after it was a tremendous power that he had developed, so it had happened by non-direction, even to the board members. You know, and that's kind of a fascinating end to it, to me, that they had—

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, and that would be in 1983.

JANE BROWN: Eighty-three.

JERRY BROWN: And they wanted to—

JANE BROWN: October 13th.

JERRY BROWN: You know, I mean, the difference was for all those first years Dad ran the school, and the board was involved, and then the board wanted to run the school, and it didn't work that—I mean, at numerous times during their history, Dad would say, "Well, I'll quit before I'll do that," you know. I mean, it happened early. I don't remember what the first—

JANE BROWN: With the black—allowing the blacks—

JERRY BROWN: Yeah, with the blacks to come in. There were numerous times where it was just, "Well, then, you know, take it." And I think that that was probably a big point for the board. They wanted to feel like they were running the school, and the only way they could run the school was to get—for Dad not to be involved with it, because otherwise they still had him over their head, saying, "Well, when it comes right down to it, you're not going to do it." So I think that was the thing—

JANE BROWN: And I would wager that after we left that they were stunned at the amount of power Bill had. They must have been absolutely overwhelmed.

JERRY BROWN: A little shocked when they suddenly started running the school and telling people what they could do and what they couldn't do.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JERRY BROWN: And most of those people had to abandon—

JANE BROWN: Ship, yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —ship, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Yeah right. So—and when you were talking about the impact all over the nation, there has to have been ways in which this affected many people. Like, Don Wrights has written to us a couple of times, and he sends us tapes saying, you know, "There has to—there are no mountains left. There are no magic mountain places left. I've got to build a new one." He hasn't done it yet, and we hope for his sake he won't try. [Laughs.] But—

JANE KESSLER: Do you feel like Penland still has some of that? Do you feel—

JANE BROWN: We're not there enough to know. We've had—you know, we were asked to stay away, and we didn't—we weren't invited back for five whole years, so we lost a whole five years—

JANE KESSLER: You were asked to stay away?

JANE BROWN: Yes, the head of the board spoke to us as the final decisions were made about what we would be given as any compensation, came outside of the board meeting room and said, "We would—we have decided you can do this, this, and this, and we would ask that you stay away from the school as much as possible and leave as quickly as possible." So we accomplished a feat of 21 years of life; in ten days we moved, absolutely in grief, grief-stricken, all of our friends trying to help us pull it together and get us out. And so we moved down here. And other than when the dog ran back because it was still home to him, we did not go back on the grounds. And when I went back on about the fourth year—we came and told Bill about it—I went back because somebody asked me to see them, and before I knew it I was in the Young House, and one of the studio places, and I told him, you know, everything looked kind of the same, and he said, "You've just gone against the law." And I said, "What are you talking about?" And he said, "Boards are made," even though he hates boards [laughs]

—or he doesn't respect boards, the concept of it—he said, "They are a United States identity, and the government sets them up, and if they ask us to stay off the grounds, you have literally gone against the law to have gone on this ground not invited."

JANE KESSLER: Who told you?

JANE BROWN: My husband. Oh, you mean who told us? The head of the board at that point.

JERRY BROWN: That was Mike Paige is who it was.

JANE BROWN: Because he—

JERRY BROWN: And as far as I was told at that point, it was if you went that you would no longer be paid the—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: —the setup of what little—

JANE BROWN: That they had set us up for.

JERRY BROWN: —severance pay that they were set up for would be taken out, if they came back.

JANE BROWN: So in five years of hiatus, we call it, where we weren't there, and then hearing the tales that came back to us, which, of course, were not happy tales of all, of the violent change that was going on—an administrator seemed to be involved in his own ego trip, and it was just too grief—it was more grief on us. It was harder to see it, so—and now we don't go back very often, because Bill doesn't feel well, and I go back sometimes to the dances, and it seems like a lot of fun, and Hunter has been as kind to us, and invites us as often as he can, but it never—

JANE KESSLER: And you still—my goodness, that community that you were a part of still—

JERRY BROWN: Exists. Well, the big thing about that—

JANE KESSLER: —it still exists.

JERRY BROWN: —is it exists all over the world now. It doesn't just exist up there, and probably—I mean, I've been back twice since I left, and it's—I just—I mean, not—I just have had no reason to go back. But, you know, it's—I don't know what's happening. I have no idea. Hunter's in an awful tough situation, as I can see it. It's the new director. I think Verne, the other director, was the kind of man the board wanted, which was definitely not what Penland needed, or this is my feeling that I got in the interim from the rest of the world that I heard, and it didn't really work out. And it would be—so then Hunter came in, who I think is a real Penland person, and would do all in his power to make it great, and—but he's got a hell of a job. You know, he's got to live in the shadow of my parents' regime, and then to have then had everything stirred up in the five or six years of real disa—

JANE BROWN: Problems that Verne—

JERRY BROWN: I mean—

JANE BROWN: —cooked up for him. He's—yeah.

JERRY BROWN: A lot of problems that he's facing now, and a top-heavy ship. You know, I don't—so, I mean—

JANE BROWN: And to have [inaudible]—

JERRY BROWN: —the only thing that'll keep it alive is the—

JANE BROWN: —incredible.

JERRY BROWN: —is the world that exists from that time period, and when that world can no longer deal with it, then—or whatever; maybe they can or they can't. If they ever come to the point where they can't, it won't survive, I don't think.

JANE BROWN: No, Bill's—of course, Bill's feeling about administration was if he had—and that's written up in this Glass collection book, but the administration is the least important part of the school, that the faculty—

JANE KESSLER: That's the way [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that's right, okay. And so to have seen it turn into an administrative area of about 15, 16

people, with everybody doing their own little part job, and many of them not living on the grounds night and day, and participating in it, makes it a very different kind of scene. It has to. And that's what Hunter was bequeathed. He surely wouldn't fire all that group, but I don't know how else he could have done it. He now had all those new cubicles, like the—even Doug Lewis came and said, "Oh, I don't even like to walk into the Loom House anymore, because it's just like a—" What is it that—a warren. And I said, "What's a warren?" And he said, "It's where rabbits live." I mean, all those little units, where everybody's got their own little bailiwick, to do their own little thing with their little cubic is just not what Bill ever wanted it to be. So as Bill says, it is different. Bill, you're in the camera again, dear. Would you—you're in the camera, in the—you're—would you come here, darling?

JERRY BROWN: No, you're standing in front of the camera.

WILLIAM BROWN: Oh.

JERRY BROWN: I think that it would be much—I mean, Hunter's job at this point is much harder than Mom and Dad's job was in 1962. [Laughs.]

JANE BROWN: Yeah, that's right.

JANE KESSLER: That's true, yeah, turn this thing into—

JANE BROWN: Yeah.

JERRY BROWN: I mean, so he's—it's tough for him [inaudible].

JANE BROWN: We lived in—yeah, we lived in an era of heroes. You could have heroes. And it was incredible that we lasted for 21 years with a hero that people basically believed in. But, you know, the hero worship went the other way around, Bill. You worshipped and made heroic the people that did the work, so it wasn't just a one-way hero trip at all. It wasn't. Yeah.

JANE KESSLER: That's a good thing to—

JANE BROWN: Bill Brown, come over here, please. Okay.

JANE KESSLER: That's a good one to end on, too.

JANE BROWN: Yeah, right.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, that's really [inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: But it wasn't—yeah.

JANE KESSLER: Yeah, that he gave that—

JANE BROWN: But he was a hero, but that they were heroes. You gave the feeling to the people that they were heroes. The faculty, the cooks, the maintenance men, the people in the office: we were all heroes, working with you as a hero—

WILLIAM BROWN: You had to—

JANE BROWN: —and we all did it together, yeah.

WILLIAM BROWN: Yeah, sure.

JANE BROWN: So it was an era that was an incredibly blessed time for all of us.

JANE KESSLER: Vital and—

WILLIAM BROWN: Sure, yeah.

JANE BROWN: Right.

WILLIAM BROWN: But somebody will do it another time.

JANE BROWN: He's always said we should not try to write it down because no one would believe it, and that it would be silly to try, but—

WILLIAM BROWN: [Inaudible]—

JANE BROWN: She has seen this, yeah. She's got one on—

JANE KESSLER: I've got one. I treasure it.

JANE BROWN: Right. [They laugh.] So thank you, Bill Brown.

JANE KESSLER: Thank you—

JANE BROWN: Right? [Laughs.]

JANE KESSLER: —yes, Bill Brown and Jane Brown and Jerry Brown.

JANE BROWN: And Bill Brown, Jr. Bill Brown, Jr. is the only one missing out of this group.

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]