



Smithsonian  
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Oral history interview with Edgar and Joyce  
Anderson, 2002 September 17-19

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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Edgar and Joyce Anderson on September 17 and 19, 2002. The interview took place in Harding Township and Morriswood, New Jersey, and was conducted by Donna Gold for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project For Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

Donna Gold has reviewed the transcript. Her corrections and emendations appear below in brackets with initials. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

[The interview with Edgar and Joyce Anderson begins with a visit to the house of Sandra and Lou Grotta. The Grottas are craft collectors and longtime clients of the Andersons. Their house is designed by Richard Meier. This portion of the interview takes place during a tour of the house. The recorder is turned on and off frequently, according to the conversation, in an attempt to capture comments, mostly the Andersons' conversation about their own pieces -DG.]

DONNA GOLD: We're now visiting the house of Sandra and Lou—

EDGAR ANDERSON: Grotta: G-r-o-t-t-a.

MS. GOLD: Grotta, and they have a lot of work of Edgar and Joyce Anderson, as well as other people, right?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, a beautiful collection of people in all different fields, silver and so on. We've worked for them a great number of years, and they are good clients and have become good friends.

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

[We are at the segmented round table the Andersons made for the Grottas, built so that the segments will expand towards each other or contract away, depending on the humidity of the environment -DG.]

MR. ANDERSON: Over the years we had always wanted to do a round table that had segments going in like that. But the problem—

MRS. ANDERSON: We'll probably talk about that somewhere. We're not, you know, taping now.

MS. GOLD: Well, I am taping now, but I don't have to be. I just—

MR. ANDERSON: It doesn't matter. I'll go into it in more depth—

MRS. ANDERSON: Whatever.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. I may erase this.

MR. ANDERSON: All right, I'll just be very brief on it.

MS. GOLD: Or do you want to talk about it now?

MR. ANDERSON: No, I want to talk about it later, but I'll show you what we're talking about. Wood expands and contracts only in this direction, not in this direction. So wood, as it goes through additional humidity changes, this is constantly moving back and forth. And what we did here was deliberately build this crack in, and then the spline joint allows this to move.

MS. GOLD: So this will give it—this will expand?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

MRS. ANDERSON: It moves with the humidity, but this house is so well controlled it hasn't moved in this house as much as it does in other houses.

MR. ANDERSON: And this is the—

MS. GOLD: That's fascinating.

MRS. ANDERSON: We calculated that and we were—we were quite right.

MR. ANDERSON: We calculated it exactly.

MRS. ANDERSON: This was in the traveling show that I guess the Smithsonian actually—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, right.

MRS. ANDERSON: And it went from, like, Colorado to Florida. So it was subject to all the things we designed into it.

MR. ANDERSON: Very extreme, and we designed just the right amount of give in it.

MS. GOLD: And so it will give to—

MRS. ANDERSON: This is where it'll happen. [Pointing to separations in the wood segments in the round table - DG.] It'll happen here. These will all be held, and here's where the change will happen.

MS. GOLD: But it will push out this—or it's not just this that's giving, it's—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah—no, all of it here.

MRS. ANDERSON: The whole piece—[inaudible].

MR. ANDERSON: And it's designed so it can close down to a little more than a ninth of an inch, which it actually has done one time.

MS. GOLD: Now, you talked about the forestry manual on moisture—

MR. ANDERSON: Oh right, yeah.

MS. GOLD: —and expansion.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: And I thought that was fascinating that you would—

MR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Yep, that's—that that's what this is about.

MRS. ANDERSON: It's too bad this has been bleached, though, because this is teak.

MR. ANDERSON: That's very good teak.

MRS. ANDERSON: Before they controlled their sun problem, it got awfully bleached.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MRS. ANDERSON: [Moving on to another part of the room -DG.] These are other Wegner chairs like our bigger ones.

MR. ANDERSON: These are Hans Wegner. They're the same chairs that—same Bauhaus architect, the one that we have in our living room, like those.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MRS. ANDERSON: We used him [The architect -DG] a lot with our tables.

MR. ANDERSON: This is an interesting—by Richard Meier, likes to do some little piece of furniture in his houses. And what he wanted was a table here on focus with the fireplace, using the porcelain enamel steel. And what he wanted was that if you walk up the stairs here, or down the stairs, either way, the fireplace is right on line up the stairway, through this archway, through the doors up there, all the way up to the door there. So there's this constant view. If you're standing out on the little bridge you see everything perfectly lined up.

And he wanted a table here like that, and this is the one point that I think the Grottas won that part. They felt that it was too architectural here so they wanted us to do a slab here and they were willing to go along with the concept of continuing this line; it worked in perfectly. And we had this spectacular piece of walnut that had the carpenter ants in it here. So the top is perfectly clean and then down here you have this wonderful waterfall—eroded area of the carpenter ants. Then we decided we didn't want to have an obvious dovetail joint. The normal

dovetail joint comes way out to here. So we did a backwards dovetail joint. We made it as a through-pin joint with dovetails on the backside, but the table top itself going way out to the edge.

MS. GOLD: Did you do it to be in harmony with the fireplace grate?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, we didn't take any of the dimensions or anything else, and not particularly measuring anything. It's just what we felt would contribute to—

MRS. ANDERSON: Would go with the—

MR. ANDERSON: —the architect's concept—the architect's concept—

MRS. ANDERSON: —the sofa and the chairs.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, that's another whole other—this is even more fascinating. [We are in an anteroom to the living room, with a black leather couch by Mies van der Rohe and an Andersons coffee table -DG.] These are—

MRS. ANDERSON: Mies van der—

MR. ANDERSON: Mies van der Rohe. He made a very limited production of these things for a—a hotel in Canada?

I don't know what it was. And Sandy [Grotta] is well known in her field, so that she could get the factory to get out the old designs and make these. The thing—this is beautiful long lengths of really supple leather. So these she had in her old house, and these were the major things, and she wanted a coffee table, and we decided that we'd take our clue, because it's going to be from these, to be a combination of softness and hard lines like those. And let's show you what—

MRS. ANDERSON: We also had a neat looking stump we put in the fireplace, which they tried and they finally gave up. We thought it needed that too.

MR. ANDERSON: [Inaudible.]

MRS. ANDERSON: You can't win them all.

MS. GOLD: Are those your—

MRS. ANDERSON: [Inaudible.]

MR. ANDERSON: So here's what we did to go with the Mies van der Rohe couch. We had this hard outline of the whole coffee table and then we had this band of wood, three-dimensional softness of the wood.

MS. GOLD: This is your contour lines again.

MR. ANDERSON: It's the contour lines, yes. In fact, in a sense, not in a deliberate attempt to make it, but this is a map treatment.

MS. GOLD: Sure. I mean, it seems so to me, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: And what happens there is that we have this playful table, so why not make it into an executive toy? So what we did—hidden underneath is this elaborate passageway where you put a marble in here, the marble goes through there and hits the little gong and then comes out here. But—

MS. GOLD: Oh, how wonderful. [Laughs.]

MR. ANDERSON: The Siamese cats discovered that they could always get it, and we just went through marble after marble, and it's hidden here someplace.

MRS. ANDERSON: We're supposed to find another marble.

MR. ANDERSON: So this was really another contour thing and then, from this, like, we did develop a couple of other things.

Now, what came after this? This was a great thing—commissions. This was terrific. We had—one of the Northern New Jersey schools had a PTA association and they had a student art association, sort of grade school, that we—and they collected good art for hanging in the school, but it couldn't be too expensive, from local craftsmen and artists. And the artists would be artists in residence for a day. So what we did was we took a section—we had all our templates and patterns and things, and so it was all designed. We took a section of this and we put it up on a pedestal, and that's the sculpture that you run into when you come into the school.

MS. GOLD: So this is a—can I sit down? This is a coffee table that has three sections?

MRS. ANDERSON: Essentially.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, they don't come apart.

MS. GOLD: And they don't come apart.

MR. ANDERSON: We had planned to do that, but there's no need to in this situation. So it was better to keep it a little more disciplined and kept together.

MS. GOLD: And so the center part is this contour and the rest is—

MR. ANDERSON: Right.

MS. GOLD: —is a hollow box?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: And then you have—does the piece at the school have the marble maze?

MR. ANDERSON: No. No, it was just [laughs] it was just standing up on edge with a curved-like back. And everybody loved it, and the art teacher was just a spectacular teacher. And, of course, the next budget cut—

[Cross talk.]

MR. ANDERSON: It's incredible.

MRS. ANDERSON: What I enjoyed so much were the students were so responsive and listening. We made theirs out of sassafras, and we went in and we talked about what the tree was. We got them to smell sassafras, and they really all got involved. And the next thing I knew I was talking to a totally deaf student who had a special hearing device in his ear, and he was just as responsive as all the rest of them.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, we had microphones around our necks—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, the little boy was listening in a special microphone. It was—

MR. ANDERSON: So some of his friends came up and grabbed the microphone and yelled. [Laughs.] Kids are kids.

MRS. ANDERSON: It was a nice experience for us.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, that's neat.

And so tell me—and this is the famous clock. [We are at the "grandfather" clock designed as a watch wrapped around the wrist of a scale model of Edgar Anderson's hand, wrist, and arm in wood -DG.]

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, this is—

MS. GOLD: I was wondering how tall it was—and it's your height.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, it's about 6'4", something like that. And it's exactly—here's this vein coming down here, these two coming down here along my fingers, except this—I made a casting of my arm and then enlarged—had to make separate templates for each piece here to be able to—it had to be hollow because it's so big and also because of shrinkage. If that were one solid piece, it would be all—

MRS. ANDERSON: It would be all cracked.

MR. ANDERSON: Cracks all over it. So I had to—

MS. GOLD: Because it's glue.

MR. ANDERSON: Because of its huge mass, again, its expansion and contraction would be uneven here.

MS. GOLD: Is it glued or is it—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, they're all glued together in separate pieces. It's laminated is what we call it.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, it isn't really laminated; it's block construction.

MS. GOLD: And the works for the clock?

MR. ANDERSON: The works for the clock's inside here, the little winder. It's just simply a latch to open it up, and there's an ordinary electric punch.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: And the fun thing about it is—I don't know how much this has cost, but of course it's multi-something [laughs] and we were making quite a few watches and—or clocks, rather, and the company we were getting them from had a six-pack sale for the mechanism; six of them for \$6. So this is a dollar a watch.

MS. GOLD: A dollar a watch.

MR. ANDERSON: A dollar Movado watch.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: Oh, wow.

MRS. ANDERSON: Except you signed your name there [on the watch -DG] instead of Movado.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, Anderson.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. So does this have—it doesn't have your lifeline carved in on the—no?

MR. ANDERSON: No. They're facing away. But it's got my fingernail and everything. It was complicated.

MS. GOLD: Do you—have you made one for your hands?

MRS. ANDERSON: He never did my hands. I had really good-looking hands once upon a time.

MR. ANDERSON: That's Joyce's bench over there, the piano bench.

MS. GOLD: So you do separate from time to time in saying whose is whose and whose is—

MR. ANDERSON: I mean, it's her design but we both built it.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: And that replaces one that I had done out of bronze; a bronze tripod thing that just wasn't too appropriate for in here.

MS. GOLD: It's a very comfortable bench.

MRS. ANDERSON: Hmm?

MS. GOLD: It's comfortable to sit in.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I like it. I like the lines of it. I've done a lot of things with those lines.

MS. GOLD: Do you—so you both work in metal as well as in wood?

MR. ANDERSON: I do most of the welding.

[Cross talk.]

MR. ANDERSON: But I do more of the heavy work and she does more of the exacting work, though either can do either. So metalwork is generally the pounding and hammering and so on.

MRS. ANDERSON: Except that I did all the stonecutting.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, she did all the stonecutting, yeah. Well, and places most of them too, and she still does it.

Let's see what else we've got around here. This was made—

MRS. ANDERSON: For the old house.

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, for the old house.

MS. GOLD: This is their dining table?

MRS. ANDERSON: See, this is what I said. We made kind of stripes that are like where the place setting would be so that they kind of establish each setting, and then your plates are in this—[Mrs. Anderson is speaking about the grain of the wood, and matching the grains in the planks to create something of a stripe down each side at the upper end of where a place setting would go -DG].

MS. GOLD: And so you just—do you do that by—

MRS. ANDERSON: By matching—

MS. GOLD: —just choosing where you're going to—

MRS. ANDERSON: Matching, like, a color.

MR. ANDERSON: The two boards—we spend a lot of time on all our work to get a very close frame match on here. This has been in the sun for too long and it's bleached, so it changed the relationships a little bit. But it really does give the whole idea.

MS. GOLD: It does.

MRS. ANDERSON: That we did for this house.

MS. GOLD: Let's see, what do you call that?

MR. ANDERSON: A server?

MRS. ANDERSON: Serving table or a server.

MR. ANDERSON: These are all Wymans here, aren't they? That one, that one, that one and that one. I'm sure.

MRS. ANDERSON: These are all Wyman, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: I don't think the Wyman—Bill Wyman. And everything else, even their—their store bought stuff.

MRS. ANDERSON: We made these [speaking of the sideboard -DG] so impracticably shallow. We wanted it to look so—

MS. GOLD: Horizontal?

MRS. ANDERSON: So slender, I guess you would say. The old one we did for their other house had deeper drawers.

MR. ANDERSON: They [the Grottas -DG] have a big undertaking in their work in helping out the crafts. They are on all sorts of different committees, and one of them—there is a friends committee of some sort, which is part of ACC [American Craft Council], and these are a collectors group. And every year they go to another group of houses and they go back and forth across the country to look at the latest collections of—they've been here a couple of times, I think.

MRS. ANDERSON: We had to design this whole wall and where the various support structures went while it was going up, and actually everybody came along and ruined what we did. Each next person came in and did something different, so when it was time to put this in, half the things we had specified weren't right there.

MR. ANDERSON: So we developed this rather tricky technique of hanging this thing without any apparent braces underneath.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: And it consists of very carefully drilling a hole into the two-by-four or the two-by-six and then matching that hole to go in—

MRS. ANDERSON: Part of the framework.

MR. ANDERSON: But the problem here was that we couldn't do that while it was under construction, because she—like, I'd be bumping into them all the time and somebody finally took a torch and cut a hole, probably. So we designed a deep-hole fixture that was a metal plate in there, and the metal plate has a nut that we screw these

rods into. And that's where [inaudible] and simultaneously the air conditioner guy comes, "Well, you know, you can't really do that there." And then the plumber, "Well, I can't do that where you were doing it." So there were four of us fighting over this. So we had them rip down the whole partition, and enough of that happened on the job so that the contractor started putting critical walls like this where a lot of stuff could go in, because it's kitchen stuff in there. The studs in there are eight inches or something like that. He put them in—but them together with sheet rock screws so he could back out the sheet rock screws and pull the studs. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: So is this a double—

MRS. ANDERSON: That's through mortise.

MS. GOLD: That's through—and these lines here—

MR. ANDERSON: Those are little wedges to—

MRS. ANDERSON: They're the little wedges.

MR. ANDERSON: —to expand it, like on a hammer handle, to expand it out, then they hold it.

MRS. ANDERSON: There's one more piece in here, and that's like—

MS. GOLD: Oh. Oh, I didn't see this. This is the—

MR. ANDERSON: That's Sandy's—

MS. GOLD: They've written about—[Looking at the high chair with a lifesize model of her arms in wood as the sides of the chair holding up the eating tray -DG.]

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, we made a platter of Sandy's arm. This is exactly her arm and hand, and then this comes out somehow. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: The tray—

MRS. ANDERSON: It used to come out somehow.

MR. ANDERSON: It's a little stiff. It slides back and out. But those are her arms.

MS. GOLD: And so does she have many grandchildren?

MRS. ANDERSON: She does now. She started with one and now—

MS. GOLD: Do they use it?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, they did. I don't know if they still do.

MS. GOLD: Oh, they may not, yeah.

What is it like to see your hand in wood? And this is her size.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: Actually, we wanted to do the child's mother—the first child's mother, and she thought—she was superstitious. She thought there was something she wouldn't like about having her hands there. So Sandy didn't mind, so we—it was going to be in her house anyway, so we used Sandy's hands.

MS. GOLD: And since it's going to be in her house and she's having many more children—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. So now it's actually made better sense [because there are a] lot of children by the other son.

MS. GOLD: I can understand a little bit. Now, do you feel odd having your hand up like that?

MR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MRS. ANDERSON: You do?

MR. ANDERSON: What?

MRS. ANDERSON: Feel odd having your hand—



MR. ANDERSON: Oh, no, no.

MRS. ANDERSON: I didn't think so.

MS. GOLD: No? Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh [negative], no. Well, if we're going to talk in depth about hands, because we've done a lot of hands, and hands are the—one of the main things that separate us from the other animals. Again, this thing I was talking about, the visual being affected—visual capabilities being affected by the hands, it's a back and forth street. As we developed our hands, it helped us develop our intellect. So we've got some good things going on there.

MS. GOLD: Okay, good.

MRS. ANDERSON: In fact, I had a great hand book in relation to my hand surgery, and it went into the whole development of human beings and traced evolution in relation to what hands were doing throughout evolution, and it's fascinating.

MR. ANDERSON: [Inaudible.]

MS. GOLD: These are your stools?

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

MS. GOLD: These are like—can I take one down?

MRS. ANDERSON: Sure. I did different sizes and then we piled them up—wood-ceramic, wood-ceramic sometimes for a dinner party.

MR. ANDERSON: They're all identified on the back what kind of wood they are.

MS. GOLD: So each—so it's sort of another sample, a wood sample?

[Cross talk.]

MS. GOLD: What does that say?

MRS. ANDERSON: That probably says—[inaudible].

[Cross talk.]

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the few items that—

MS. GOLD: The stool?

MR. ANDERSON: —yeah, we do in a multiplicity, but we don't really mass produce them at all. As a matter of fact, you can see each one is a little different there, and they're specific, like with the height. But Joyce has made lots and lots and lots of them over the years [inaudible] and these, of course, were custom designed. But I guess you'd say custom ordered for them anyhow, for better size—

MS. GOLD: But they're—and they're all turned?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

MS. GOLD: These are made—the—

MR. ANDERSON: This is the same kind of stool as [Joyce] has in the Smithsonian show.

[... -DG]

MS. GOLD: Oh, these are walking sticks, and [Sandy Grotta] has one of—

MRS. ANDERSON: She's commissioned—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, they're Sam Maloof and—

MRS. ANDERSON: —for all the different woodworkers, Bob Stocksdale—

MR. ANDERSON: —Bob Stocksdale and all the woodworkers, and she wants us to do a castle one, which I definitely want to do, but I haven't quite gotten around—

MS. GOLD: You haven't done it?

MR. ANDERSON: —to it in the last 10 years [laughs]. Oh, well, sometime.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

Oh, this is the headboard with the house plan?

MR. ANDERSON: Right, yeah. This is—

[... -DG]

MRS. ANDERSON: The most impractical headboard in the world.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, absolutely.

MRS. ANDERSON: You can't use it for leaning against.

MS. GOLD: Oh, I bet you can't. And this looks like—is it for a—is this a kid's room?

MRS. ANDERSON: This is a guest room.

MS. GOLD: A guest room?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, actually what isn't very well known is that when guests are in here, the bed is pulled forward and we made a couple of foot—sculptured foot shapes—

MRS. ANDERSON: They're probably there.

MR. ANDERSON: —to keep the bed from—

MRS. ANDERSON: We keep the bed from going back.

MS. GOLD: Oh. Oh, oh, I see. I see one there.

MR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] And this is about—this is a complete—

MRS. ANDERSON: I made the feet.

MR. ANDERSON: —model of the house. What I have done is I've taken the house and made it into a perspective. I've made a model of the perspective, but it isn't a model of the house; it's a model of a perspective of the house. For instance, that oval thing, that's the circular unit, and all these others are all comparisons. The room we were in out there is a circle and that oval is the circle. So this is a model of a perspective. But then to see what it really looks like as a model, you come around over here and down here, and somewhere you have to—

MS. GOLD: Oh, you have to see—you find a spot—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, just—

MS. GOLD: —and that's where—

MR. ANDERSON: Just about here, then that circular element gets into a big circle.

MS. GOLD: Oh, I see. That is an overview?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

MS. GOLD: I'm looking at it as if somebody were flying over it—

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, correct.

MS. GOLD: —when I look at it head on. But if I look at it from underneath it—

MR. ANDERSON: It then comes—goes into its true perspective. This is a warped perspective of the overview.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think about two people have been able to see it.

MS. GOLD: How long did that take you to figure out?

MR. ANDERSON: I haven't quite figured it out yet. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: I can't believe it.

MR. ANDERSON: This is a wonderful example of what we—the time to talk about—we were talking about periodicals—

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON:—how they're great and good, and *American Craft* and so on. But one of the evil sides of the periodicals is that they only are pictures, and those pictures aren't necessarily anything more than that's all there is, but the object itself might not ever be seen.

MS. GOLD: Yes.

MR. ANDERSON: And there's a whole group of woodworking—more recent ones, that don't have a three-dimensional scale, that when you really see the object, aside from in a picture, why, it falls apart. It's—

MS. GOLD: Oh, because it just looks like the—it looks—it has—just has a two-dimensional perspective, yeah.

[... -DG]

MS. GOLD: [Looking at the night table in the guest room, which is in the form of a castle turret, topped by gloves made by Mr. Anderson. -DG] This is the castle with the—

MRS. ANDERSON: With stuff inside.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. That's what we eventually called a "Knight table."

MS. GOLD: A "Knight table?"

MRS. ANDERSON: Somewhere there should be a button to put the light on in front.

MR. ANDERSON: There's a little push button.

MRS. ANDERSON: [Laughs] I don't remember where it was.

MS. GOLD: And inside is a—

MR. ANDERSON: I don't remember where it is. The—

MS. GOLD: Oh, there's a lot of things inside.

MR. ANDERSON: There's the crossbow firing the Redstone missile, which has a little LED lighting it up. A control panel all lights up with little lights in it.

MRS. ANDERSON: She must have put it around to the back some that—

MS. GOLD: That's beautiful.

MRS. ANDERSON:—people wouldn't turn it on.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah—well, maybe.

MS. GOLD: I got it. The light goes on and then [laughs] oh, there's a dragon and a train on the bottom. Is that a train or an engine?

MR. ANDERSON: No, it's a sump pump because you know how messy dragons get, don't you?

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] Oh, wonderful. And the crystal, wow.

MR. ANDERSON: And actually, Leonardo designed a crossbow like that about sixty feet long, and to retract the crossbow he had this threaded thing. So I actually made a tiny little wooden threaded thing there, a little threaded handle the way that Leonardo once had done. I mean, you can see in the side windows there too.

MS. GOLD: And this is a radar screen?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, there's a radar screen.

MS. GOLD: I see. So then when you—through the side windows you see the dragon much clearer, and the crystal.

MRS. ANDERSON: Where did you find the switch?

MS. GOLD: It's towards the back.

MRS. ANDERSON: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MS. GOLD: And this is all made out of blocked pieces of wood?

MR. ANDERSON: Individual pieces. Again, a template made, because to get the wires up there they have to be within the wall of the castle. So I had to, in each layer, drill a hole and going off at an angle around through the whole thing to feed the wires through to get the lights on.

MS. GOLD: When you say a template made, do you mean in wood or—

MR. ANDERSON: Whatever.

MRS. ANDERSON: Cardboard.

MR. ANDERSON: Paper or cardboard, it doesn't matter, but a drawing that I would trace around.

MS. GOLD: To scale do you do it, or—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: [Inaudible.]

MS. GOLD: And then each—so you had to know exactly where the wires were being—and you had to build each staircase?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I'd forgotten sometimes we built extra in case we wanted to do something different.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. For instance, where the revetment of the castle goes back here, why, the wire had to go with that. So here I could drill straight down here and then I had to start going at the angles there to meet the wires going in there.

MS. GOLD: You don't tend to look for the easy way of doing things?

MRS. ANDERSON: We don't ever tend for making the most of our money.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: I was thinking—

MR. ANDERSON: This is why—you know, our total output, our total life output of everything we ever made is probably less than a year's work of what the furniture designers do on production work. We're just very slow and methodical.

MS. GOLD: But look at the thought that goes into each—

MRS. ANDERSON: This has to be what we're about, you know. [Looking at the bed -DG.]

MS. GOLD: On the top—on the underneath—

MRS. ANDERSON: I did these—so that it wasn't glued up. Normally this kind of construction you would have the straight piece and your glue on another piece. I didn't want that so we had to start out with these big wide pieces and then cut it all out.

MS. GOLD: So this is for the bed frame, right, and you had to have—

MR. ANDERSON: What she's saying here—

MRS. ANDERSON: The construction to be—

MR. ANDERSON: —is that normally—well, normally a bed comes apart, the side rails, but almost all our beds, if they fit in the house, are firmly fastened together. But normally this one would come over and would meet a post, and this one would meet the post.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: But then with some commercial designs that want to make a corner like this, so they'd have the corner on the outside but this comes to a point—

MS. GOLD: I see.

MR. ANDERSON: —on the inside, so it doesn't look good. And then on the better commercial furniture they actually have a separate piece there that's rounded on the inside and the outside so both the straight pieces join in. Well, we didn't like that either. We wanted a true finger joint here to support it. So that meant that we had to have these pieces full width—

MS. GOLD: Extra wide, right, the full width of—

MR. ANDERSON: —the full width. So we had a lot of wood to cut off there. And that was difficult. It was a little bit too cumbersome to get it into the band saw and cut it like that and then go into the curve and swinging it around. So we had a friend that had the biggest Skil-saw ever made, 16-inch diameter blade [laughs]. It had an electric brake on it so that it just wouldn't keep running when you'd finish, and when that brake grabbed, the whole thing would pull you forward, and that was a real man-eater.

The other thing, as an object lesson here, is that all of our work that we've ever done, almost 90 percent of all of our important work has either been in an exhibit and published in a magazine or in a book or whatever. And this, which I think is one of our most unique pieces, isn't able to do that, because to display it for itself in a museum it should really be with the beds, and beds are always a problem for museums.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: So this is something that was made just for them and friends and family. See, so it's just never been published out there, but the other side of it is that the house itself is famous enough so the tours that come through, that people have really seen it. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: The other thing is our church work has never been shown either because that can never be borrowed.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. But it's a little easier for people to get to see that. [Laughs.]

[Looking at the wall facing the headboard -DG.]

I guess these were all pictures that Tommy took of the building.

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

MS. GOLD: [In another room looking at a cabinet made as a woman's torso -DG.] So this is the famous chest of drawers?

MR. ANDERSON: This is the lady, and there's a key in the navel, and there's a security key—there's a little other lock here, not for Elsa or anybody like that, but there's always people working in here so there's a double security.

MRS. ANDERSON: Did it lock?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, it's locked.

MRS. ANDERSON: A sense of security—

MR. ANDERSON: We don't even have a storage place—

MRS. ANDERSON: [Looking at an Anderson desk -DG.] We thought we were going to look at this desk to tell them how it should come apart—they were going to move—and it turned out they were moving right then. And they said, "You have to take it apart and help us move." And we looked at the desk—hadn't the slightest idea how we put this darned thing together. [Laughs] It was very complicated. We got underneath it and started removing screws. We discovered we'd written ourselves a whole scenario underneath. We had written, first take out this, then take out that, then remove this. We had the whole construction—

MS. GOLD: Oh, good.

MR. ANDERSON: We had these hanging things and so on in there. How do we open these?

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

MR. ANDERSON: The thing about contour lines [of the chest of drawers -DG], that as I made my cardboard models for each one I had to know whether the wood was going to be cut underneath it or above it, so a template at this point here, if it was going to be above, why, I'd add to it, and if it was going to be below I had to subtract from it in order for it to all fit.

MS. GOLD: And this template, did you make it out—you made it just out of cardboard?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, it doesn't matter, just any solid material. It's a typical thing you do on plotting these.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. But it's so—cardboard is so flimsy. Can it really hold the shape that you're—

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, no, but this will be a flat—it's just to make pencil marks, that's all.

MS. GOLD: Oh, I see.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, now, there's another whole different thing with a router, or you can make a heavy plywood template for cutting this edge with. But that wasn't practical and I prefer to do it by hand.

Now, this is a piece that migrated from—

MRS. ANDERSON: From their former house.

MS. GOLD: It's beautiful—a beautiful plank of wood on the top. Is that walnut?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. There again—

MRS. ANDERSON: Bleached.

MR. ANDERSON: Incredible how the sunlight comes in here.

I try to avoid hardware wherever I can, and here—these drawer slides here.

MRS. ANDERSON: That's empty, my goodness.

MR. ANDERSON: They're all made out of wood instead of commercial—

MS. GOLD: The drawer slides too.

MRS. ANDERSON: We did doubles—we did them double so they would pull out all the way. I wonder why it's empty.

MR. ANDERSON: I don't know. Maybe they don't work. [Laughs.] [Inaudible.]

MS. GOLD: Maybe that's what she took with her.

MRS. ANDERSON: Maybe so. It's a good idea.

MS. GOLD: Look how beautiful it is to see this. This is simply—

MRS. ANDERSON: This was underneath the bark, right immediately under the bark.

MS. GOLD: So did you—this part you've cut, it was wider at that point and—it's really beautiful.

MR. ANDERSON: And this of course had the complications of hanging it up on the wall. And this was one wall that was a little bit out of line. Here again we had to have them add extra studs to get a very straight line because the cabinet is so well made that when we'd start fastening it onto the wall it would pull the wall out, so we didn't want to risk that.

MS. GOLD: Oh, God. And it must be heavy. I mean, this plank of wood must be very heavy.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, what we do when we have these, why, in order to support it temporarily and make little miniature sawhorses to go in under there, just the right size and enough space for a little wedge so we can pull it out later, and that helps a little.

These are bowls—all sorts of bowls.

MRS. ANDERSON: A lot of Stocksdale, I believe.

MR. ANDERSON: I think they're all Stocksdale I guess.

They had what they called a pit saw—

MS. GOLD: When you were in Honduras they had a—

MR. ANDERSON: Pardon?

MS. GOLD: They had a pit saw?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and what it is, is on the side of a hill they take some logs out and make space underneath. So there's a guy standing down and he's pulling down on the hand saw, and there's a guy standing up on the log and pulling up to cut it for its length, to rip the plank out.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: And I remember seeing that in Italy during the war before—for people who don't have machinery. And it's okay, but it doesn't do a very good job. So in your thinking about hand tools and machines, why, that's an instance where modern circular saws and modern band saws are infinitely better, quicker, do a better job and so on. So there are certain things like that—

MS. GOLD: So there's a certain value to machine work.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, right. Now, this was first a straight plank that had gone through a circular saw, then he band sawed it out into the curve here, and that had the rough saw marks on it, and from there on in it was handwork, but the handwork might have some electric tools or it might not.

MS. GOLD: And this was a rocking chair.

MR. ANDERSON: Traditionally, it's carved, and then instead of doing a lot of heavy sanding we have what we call scrapers, which are what the Japanese used to use on their enamel bowls to scrape a final finish on it. [Moving around the house to look at other artists' work -DG.]

MS. GOLD: This is the rocking chair of Sam Maloof's.

MRS. ANDERSON: And it's a famous one.

MR. ANDERSON: When we were down in Honduras we had Bill Wyman come down there with us, and we were exploring all the ancient temples and going in underground and—

MRS. ANDERSON: In Mexico—

MR. ANDERSON: In Mexico.

MRS. ANDERSON: —mostly.

MR. ANDERSON: And he was very interested in them. And when he came back he started making plywood models of the ceramic—of different kinds of things, perspectives of cathedrals and so on. And then he got into these. And about that time he got brain cancer, and he was still working but he couldn't explain what it was that he was doing. And we went to see him and saw it and recognized it, and we knew what he was doing, so we could tell people what he was doing from his experience in Mexico.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MR. ANDERSON: This is one little place that did have a tiny influence on the architecture. This wall wasn't here; there was just a window up there. And when she got into deciding she wanted those, why, the architect was a little reluctant, and I made some drawings of how it would work out okay.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh [affirmative], to have the window.

MR. ANDERSON: So this can be seen against—when the sun isn't in here, we can see that against the field in the back.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MRS. ANDERSON: These are the—some of the grandchildren.

MS. GOLD: Grandchildren—beautiful photos.

MRS. ANDERSON: Their son is a professional photographer.

MR. ANDERSON: A couple of the European magazines did—

MS. GOLD: Yes, looking on the second story down at the table and—wow.

MR. ANDERSON: They're getting crowded in here.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. And she said she can't buy anything without throwing something away now.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, add on to the house.

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

[We are looking at a door handle Anderson designed which is an overhead scale model of the Meier house -DG.]

MS. GOLD: The door handles?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, the lock—manufactured door, where they were, Yale, would do these for them as a custom item, and they were very expensive to have them done. So they were tossing it over in their minds, Sandy and Lou, so we were going up to the vineyard and they were also going up there. They were staying at different levels of places that we were. And Sandy said, "We're going to have them done. Will you make a model for him so I can give it to him for his birthday?" Well, it's up here. So I made the model and she gave him the model, and then they decided to do it. And the architect saw the model of it and he said, "Well, you know, we need a pattern to test." So I was back in my school days of doing pattern-making, taking what I did and changing it a little.

MS. GOLD: And is that supposed to be a key?

MR. ANDERSON: I don't know if the other ones have a key or not down there.

MS. GOLD: But it is—

MR. ANDERSON: No, that's the shape of the—there's the shape of the house.

MS. GOLD: Oh, that's the shape of the house?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, this is the architectural sculpture. It's an abstraction of it, actually.

MS. GOLD: It also looks like, you know, the top of a key.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, right. Yeah. They're great, and they love the house so much.

[... -DG]

MR. ANDERSON: Their key chain tag is a little model of the house.

[... -DG]

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

MS. GOLD: Okay, I'm just going to make a little statement. [...This ends the trip to the Grotta house - DG.]

[END TAPE 1 SIDE A.]

MS. GOLD: [...It is now September 19. As we prepare to continue our joint discussion with Edgar and Joyce Anderson, Edgar talks a bit about the circular table that was mostly his design. Joyce is making lunch -DG.]

MR. ANDERSON: Right, yeah. Without her we won't get sidetracked. [Laughs.]

But the gaming table, and trying to solve its problem and thinking about it a lot, so we decided to solve the problem by making these wedge-shaped pieces, which I've described about the various ways that they go together to solve the expansion problem. And the jig that we made—a jig is a holding fixture for gluing up—was expandable. And although we don't do multiplicities normally, our intent was, well, we could do some different



sizes and maybe different ones.

One of the people that bought one of these was Doug Dayton, and he saw it because Doug Dayton was the owner of the Monteath Lumber Company, and he had sold us the zebra wood—I'm sorry, the teak wood that we ultimately used for one of these tables. We made one for him, and he picked it up and took it home and put it in his house. And his once-a-week cleaning lady came in and saw our rubbed-oil finish wasn't bright and shiny, so she took what she thought was cleaning polish—and she couldn't read English—and she sprayed urethane lacquer over the whole thing. So I couldn't—I just couldn't take it. "Doug, [inaudible] I'll tell you who to go to to refinish it." [Laughs.]

So that gets us onto another whole link there. Thelma Newman was an old friend and has done a great deal of craft work. She goes all over the world and collects crafts and has books on indigenous wood carving or weaving or baskets, and so on. Occasionally she has asked for one of our pieces to supplement furniture or something, to compare it to what was being done in primitive places. And she got a commission to do a woodwork handbook, which was going to be a combination of technical stuff, somewhat like the technical wood handbook. It was going to go into drawings and it was going to explore each of these worldwide techniques on woodwork.

So she wanted us as consultants on the technical. She saw some of the novel ideas—not novel, but new ideas on handling perspective and drawings specifically for woodworkers, and wanted a chapter on that. And what she wanted most was to have us do a piece for her that would be the contemporary—up-to-the-minute contemporary furniture design. And what she wanted—and also, the whole idea was to take, from beginning to end, pictures of the entire process. So she thought—and then she was going to own it—she'd buy it—she wanted to own it.

And she had a vast jewelry collection from her worldwide travels, and she wanted a jewelry cabinet, unspecified in design. And in brainstorming with this she said, "Well, you know, your jewelry is sort of—in a sense it's your wealth tradition." And she had the feeling she would like to think of a jewelry chest as if she were a refugee. I don't know if in her family background this had some meaning or not, but she wanted sort of a portable jewelry chest, not—

MS. GOLD: That the jewelry chest was a refuge, as in the idea that people take their jewels with them as—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, yeah. Uh-huh [affirmative], yeah.

MS. GOLD: How interesting.

MR. ANDERSON: It was a fascinating concept. So we picked—

MS. GOLD: Was she Jewish?

MR. ANDERSON: Pardon?

MS. GOLD: Was she Jewish?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes. Yeah, uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Yeah. And there must have been some Holocaust relations or something there.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: So we came up with all sorts of ideas, like the old bank safe on wheels, with the combination lock. I designed some of that. As a matter of fact, I acquired a big bank safe just for its metal, and I had a combination lock that I could use as a model with this big dial, or a shopping cart, and just a lot of different things. So she thought that was pretty good, and we're going in that direction. I said, no matter what—as in the story with Mrs. [Vanderbilt] Webb [a.k.a. Aileen Osborne Webb] having Dave Campbell just do what he would do in school, I did one of those.

I said, hey, let me solve this problem. Let's not worry about the portability too much, but I'll design something that is moveable. And I came up with the concept of, it's generally the female that has the jewelry, but I was also interested in the topographic map things, like the little castle and those kind of things. So I designed a female form that was bigger than life-size. It was without a head and down to about the legs, and it was to be made of topographic sections about one-inch thick. So it would be one inch—30 or 40 of them in the height of it, and that would be on a pedestal. And I did that with the—the breasts open up and inside there are hanging racks of jewelry. And from the breasts down there are drawers that are contour shaped that slide out.

And the navel has a key in it to lock the whole thing so you can't get into it. And then I have a real lock on there. There's no security problem there at all, the way they're laid out—they have a permanent housekeeper. Anyhow, there are traipses—there's carpenters going through and so on, so I had another additional ordinary

key lock underneath there, and that was very successful.

MS. GOLD: So she liked that idea?

MR. ANDERSON: She liked the idea.

MS. GOLD: You sold the idea of—

MR. ANDERSON: Oh yeah, I jumped two steps ahead there. Thelma liked the idea. I designed this and Thelma liked it, and the Grottas weren't even in the picture at that time, so Thelma said, go ahead and do it; I'll buy it. And, well, do all the shots and you do the design drawings and so on. So as it got underway, Sandra came over and said, I want one of those too, which was a little unusual. She only wants one-of-a-kind work. So I started to get going on that, and all of a sudden we all realized that the budget on this thing—there was an open budget and no way could Thelma afford this because it has electronics in it and lights in it and populated by an incredible variety of dragons and all sorts of—

MS. GOLD: Inside the chest of drawers? Are we talking about—

MR. ANDERSON: I'm jumping ahead too far. This is the next generation. No, this is the jewelry chest, okay.

MS. GOLD: This jewelry chest of drawers—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, okay. So, anyhow, it was expensive because I had to make all the intricate mechanical hardware for the locks and so on. So that worked out very nicely.

MS. GOLD: So you didn't make two?

MR. ANDERSON: No, I made one.

MS. GOLD: You only made one? And what did Thelma get for her jewelry case ultimately?

MR. ANDERSON: A lot of things happened. The book was supposed to be really from the collectors' and the designers' point of view, and the company kept pushing her. Some of her books were more or less do-it-yourself books. The company kept changing the program, and I think they intended to do this, and kept pushing her into wanting "how to do it" and that kind of thing. And I kept pushing her in the other way, and she went in my direction and she had problems with the publisher. There was no problem with my innovative drawing of things, and I helped her on the technical things and it got hung up on that.

But about this time, Thelma Newman, who was the very first person who ever had a microwave oven—the old fashioned ones that had to have water circulating through it to take care of the heat of the transformer in it—she just loved this. We'd be sitting having a snack there and she'd take the coffee and put it in. And she got brain cancer. No proved link between the two, but all in the same timeframe. And she was getting very sick and there I was harassing her on one side and the publisher harassing her on the other side. So finally I figured, hey, the purity of the book certainly isn't worth further endangering Thelma, so we backed out of it. And it never got completed, so fortunately it wasn't our problem.

But the interesting thing about this, another link here, is that this was the Chilton Company, publisher, and Sam Maloof, early in his career, got a contract to do a job with Chilton, and they paid him a heavy up-front thing. We were working as friends. She was collecting her up-front money on this, and we would wait until it was published to cover the amount of time taking pictures and all of that. We were donating a lot of it anyhow. But Sam got paid money, and Chilton changed his program, and instead of being a book on Sam's designs and his design processes, they wanted a do-it-yourself book. And so he opted out, and he begun—had to refund his deposit on it. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: So we got that done, and—

MS. GOLD: Around what year was that built, the chest of drawers? Do you remember? We can look it up later—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, Joyce would know.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Nineteen-eighties, roughly. I don't know. She could tell you.

So we had—just for fun one day I had a block of walnut and decided to take the lady jewelry chest and to make

it into a fantasy piece of sculpture. I just carved out the block, and it was quite different. It had more or less of the body and it was a great deal—I didn't have any size in mind. That jewelry chest, when you see it in a magazine—the first time that one of my woodworker friends—even Paul Smith, he saw it in a picture and he thought it was a table-sized thing.

So we wanted to do one just as a fantasy piece. And through a friend of a friend, a friend who is a decorator out in California from some very good friends here, she had this really incredible client [Mako Stewart]. He was a Texas oil man, and he was—his family were in the trading of oil wells, and they had decided to sell the company—decided for it to go public so it was on the New York Stock Exchange. And this must have been in the '80s because all of a sudden he had all of this money and the best thing to do with it was to invest overseas. So he had bought an apartment on the Rue de la Seine that he was going to put this in. He also had just bought a villa on the Cote d'Azur and he wanted a piece over there. He wasn't quite sure where this—our friends brought him here, or he came over by himself, and he was so airport oriented that he'd gotten a limo and the limo was here all the time we were discussing.

But he also always travels on these kind of things with his contracts—we don't usually have contracts. He always travels with a lawyer. And when he was here—why, his lawyer was his wife's divorce lawyer from a local area here—so we were kicking this around and he wanted us to design it as unspecified size because he didn't know where it was going to be. And as soon as we would get going on it, he would fly us over there to see the space and we—I didn't really want to take the time to do that. I would get too sidetracked. [Laughs] We wanted to get to work on it.

So he finally—he hadn't even bought the villa. He bought the villa—he'd bought a double apartment and decided the apartment was where the piece was going to be, and he had his architect from Nebraska talking to his architect in France. And we had the architects—we didn't have the drawings yet, no. No, we were designing this thing without a particular site at that time. And I got the commission and I started working on it and I got a deposit. And he was—the dealer, we had an open-ended price, and the check that we got for the deposit, a healthy deposit, had one of these additional tabs on it that when you send it back you have to sign it to show that you—that it was for a particular item. And in the small print it said "For final payment of" [laughs] so we sent it back and said, hey, so then he sent back cash. But there was incredible, exhilarating conversations on this.

So we had preliminary drawings but not anything really to show him. He called up one morning and said—this was 10:00 in the morning; I had a good clean sweep of work ahead of me—"You've got to get out here with the drawings right away. I have my New York architect here talking to the Omaha architect and talking to the Paris architect, and we've got to have you here to mediate all of this talk." I said, "I can't do that. I'm just getting to work here." He said, "You're booked on a plane. It leaves at 10:00"—and, okay.

So I grabbed some brown paper and a felt-tip pen, hoping there would be a delay some place. And very fortunately there was a half-hour delay in the airport. So I went over on the carpeted floor there and did some quick sketches. I had a lot of detail drawings, but I didn't have the whole thing. So I went out there and he took me—he met me at where I was, and I got in his car and we went to his executive whatever they call it, at one of the other airlines. He pulled into a no-parking loading space in the airport zone and "let Tony take care of the car for a while there." He lives in airports.

So his architect, a female architect, was there and here are all these businessmen doing their work. We took over the coffee table and laid out stuff. And when he wanted to know, well, how big and how off the floor would this be, so I had the architect stand up on the coffee table, and so on. They needed some more drawings so he had them faxed from Paris, and they were in metric, and I had a quick—this is just a real hectic thing. And every hour my plane was due to return. He'd call the office and push it an hour ahead. We got down there for the last flight back and a whole line of people waiting there. He said, excuse me, excuse me, this is an emergency, we have to get here, excuse me, excuse me, all the way to the head of the line. So he was wild, and this perfectly charming, normal personality.

So we had to change the size, and the reason being that this became a very important focal point—no televisions in there—in this rather funky arrangement there; a stairway, one of these step-by-step—very contemporary. And when he's entertaining here, why, maybe the girls should go up, and there's this drawbridge that goes across here and into the bedroom. And there's a fireman pole that they can drop down into in the [inaudible]. I said, now, wait a minute [laughs]. He said, oh no, this doesn't have anything to do with—he said, this doesn't happen frequently. I said, yeah, well, let's wait a minute. If they come running through here with wet feet and try to go up this step-by-step, you're going to have a lawsuit on your hands. I said, aside from that, I don't like them. We changed that; we changed the space—we designed the architectural space.

And he, in the interim, had sent us—I'm going to a link here, and we'll get back to the lady—the castle—he had sent us a book that he had written that was "Sex, Money and God," and the equal importance to him. And this is

difficult for us to handle, but he wasn't involving us in the—that aspect of it. And in the book he relates a story about how he was—in an earlier life was with his friend, Jim Pike—

MS. GOLD: Oh—

MR. ANDERSON: —Bishop Pike. And he and his wife—his wife had to go shopping, and he and Pike—and I could see how they started really getting very, very absorbed in what they were talking about. His wife said, check the baby, and they didn't. And very much later on they went to check it and it was an infant crib death. So then he goes on further with Jim Pike, when Bishop Pike was in a desert and heard about his missing by Mako Stewart. It's now Stewart—I think it's Stewart Petroleum on the big board now. He doesn't own it any more. He said that he would gather his resources and send his experts over to hunt in the desert. And he tried to get permission for that and the Israeli quite logically said, well, thank you very much; you may be familiar with the oil of the deserts, but we have a dangerous situation. We have experts here. And he acceded to that.

So, anyhow, we built this whole thing with a lot of—do you want me to describe this now?

MS. GOLD: Sure.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay. Again, it's a segmented thing, but nothing opens. [He is describing another, larger version of the knight's table -DG.] You see through the top it has castle windows within the lady's body there. And you look in the castle's windows or you look down from the glass top at a great variety of things that reminisce to other things. For instance, I have—down over the dungeon it's lit by a piece of plastic that I made to look like a crystal that I call kryptonite. And it's a five-sided crystal. And this is a deliberate pun—for those that know about crystals will see it isn't a real crystal, it looked like a crystal, because nature doesn't make any five-sided crystals. They only make—she only makes six-sided.

And totally apropos of this, I was telling a crystallographer friend, and he said, you know, this has always been a challenge to scientists that in some of these high pressure vacuum things there have been some scientists that have created some five-sided crystals." [Laughs] Nothing to do with me at all.

MS. GOLD: So you built this. How tall is this piece?

MR. ANDERSON: It stands on a pedestal and it is maybe over three feet. I don't know. I've sort of forgotten. And I did a balloon—again, sort of a very intricate spaceship, putting wood together in a checkerboard pattern. But when I put it on the lathe I knew—I had to do a couple of them, I knew how it was going to be. But they make—instead of this checkerboard three-dimensional pattern, they make a very curvilinear pattern there on the balloon.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

And one of the most incredible advances in science is not in Silicon Valley. The invention of the balloon, the Montgolfier brothers invented—they were paper bag manufacturers, and in their rooming house they took a paper bag and put a candle and support under it, and the paper bag floated. Within a year the Montgolfier brothers had the first manned flight. I think it was only a year. This was during the Civil War period actually. And this is just incredible, and it immediately grabbed hold. And the shape of their balloon is a very specific known shape. Everybody knows balloons—because the basket was part of the balloon, and along with this they stormed—barnstorming—I think it was just before the Civil War—barnstorming balloonists went across the United States. And I've forgotten their name, but they're a husband and wife team.

But they took people up in rides. These were hot air balloons; you had to light the fire under them. And it crashed and the husband was killed, and in memory of her, more or less, I had this—under the Montgolfier one I designed this lyrical gondola, and then there's a little miniature of her that they wired up—I had a dragon claw under the dungeon—you could just see the claw—and the dragon is holding an egg. And Joyce knew what I was about but she couldn't understand why at lunchtime I was—

MS. GOLD: Right, you were telling me this yesterday, that the—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, holding my hand and having to go to our local—you want me to tell about the Raptor Center guy?

MS. GOLD: Well, I think we talked about that on tape yesterday.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, we have it on tape? Okay, great. We don't have to do that at all.

So all this symbology and all wired for all sorts of different light things, and the whole mess of electronics—blinking lights, ordinary lights and so on. Anyway, I was getting to finishing this off, about a year's work, and I called the office and I said, "Well now we've got a problem getting this into Paris." I don't know anything about

the Parisian duties, import duty. Should this be a game? Should this be a piece of furniture? Should it be a piece of sculpture? How do you want to do this to ship it to Paris?

They said, oh, didn't Mako tell you? Didn't Mako tell me what? He went bankrupt. He doesn't have any money any more. He can't afford the piece. And I don't know if I came back quickly. [Laughs] I was slightly taken aback there to have a multi, multi-thousand dollar piece—it wasn't that much that back then—it's a \$80,000 piece or something [inaudible]; I have no idea what its market value is. And then in addition to that, it's all right for you to sell it so that we can, both of us, get our money back.

MS. GOLD: And also, what ended up happening with that piece?

MR. ANDERSON: I'm waiting for exactly the right show to exhibit it in.

MS. GOLD: So you have it here?

MR. ANDERSON: I still have it, and I just can't put it in a normal—it has to be a show. I want to sell it and I would like—I don't normally worry about selling but it would be like a major opportunity to sell it. Of course, it would look nice in the living room. [Laughs] But it isn't quite finished, so it is adaptable for having other people's ideas on who populates it, mainly on the stairway and along with the dragon and all of these other things; a little miniature of her in that.

So I got a call after this from Mako's lawyer, and he said, you know, I've been talking to my clients about this and some of them are sort of interested in the kind of things that you do. Would it be all right if I told them about it? And I was talking to a very quiet room here, and I'm talking about an unresolved situation here, and I figure, hey, he's talking lawyer talk here. He wants to know how they can get their money back. So I said, well—and he certainly wouldn't ask permission. He would get somebody and say, I want to come over at such and such a time. So I said, "Well, you know, there's a real problem with my being able to sell this piece." I said, this was specifically designed for a place, and we enlarged its scale from the original design so it's bigger than life-size, but in a museum it relates to life-size.

So it makes it look—it just isn't really nicely displayable except in a very specific situation. So I don't think that I'm going to be able to sell it very well, and so I don't think I'll be able to get the money back and so on. So I think he read the message, and it became my piece. There was no question about it.

MS. GOLD: So he had given you at least some of that money. You didn't lose totally.

MR. ANDERSON: No. He wanted me to sell it to get that money.

MS. GOLD: But—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, he wanted me to sell the piece so I could refund—

MS. GOLD: —him. Right. But you haven't ever—he had given you a down payment, the one that was supposed to be final payment.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. I did get that, right, yeah. So it's a bottom line—why, ultimately Mako died, so there never was any legal question at all, and those kinds of things have to resolve quickly. So it's one of a few major sculptural pieces that we have for sale. We've got a list of Silicon Valley people we might call sometime. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: There isn't a crystal in there yet.

MR. ANDERSON: Can we do one more tiny thing on—no, that'll get me—

MRS. ANDERSON: Besides, when you were talking about Mako, he's about the only client we ever had who didn't like me; who didn't like women. I mean, I didn't know if it was women or me, but he wouldn't have anything to do with me.

MR. ANDERSON: The great cult science fiction writer for young kids, he cut out a section of—maybe this warrior person, this warrior female or something, I don't know. He included that as, I think, something to do with you. I don't know what that was about. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Strange guy, it sounds like. If you have anything more that you want to—

[END TAPE 1 SIDE B.]

MS. GOLD: This is Donna Gold interviewing Edgar and Joyce Anderson together on September 19, 2002, in their

home in Harding Township, New Jersey.

Anyway, I wanted to ask you both what it was like to start a business as a partnership, and what value you found in starting as a partnership, what advantages and what difficulties?

MRS. ANDERSON: I keep saying the advantage was that two people can handle a big piece of wood a lot easier than one person can, and I think a lot of wood shops really need a second hand very frequently. So on the basic level, that's probably the major advantage. The other advantage over developing the business was that we each developed certain skills that we excelled in as against the other one. So we could balance them against each other's skills and have, altogether, more skills at work.

MR. ANDERSON: On the technical level, I'm bigger than she is. She is perfectly capable of cutting out and turning a large, large chunk of wood on the lathe, but for her to get that large chunk—this is a huge, huge plant that has to be cut into smaller pieces. It's again a lot of lugging and tugging and moving things around, and so I can do that. And with the pushing it through a saw, why, you've really got to get your shoulder behind it if it's a big piece.

MRS. ANDERSON: That's not to say there aren't a lot of women out there that can do it.

MR. ANDERSON: Not really.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, really. But anyway, go ahead.

MS. GOLD: You mean that there are a lot of women that do it?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, there are. A lot of the women woodworkers are really doing that kind of work for themselves.

MS. GOLD: On their own?

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] They may not be tackling quite as big as the biggest pieces we've tackled in our—

MS. GOLD: Well, do you tackle unusually big pieces?

MRS. ANDERSON: We have. We've done some very large pieces, especially for crosses and church work.

MS. GOLD: I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that quality of risk that seems to be pervasive in your work, and to begin with is the idea of the two you starting out alone in a field that practically didn't exist, or maybe really didn't exist.

MRS. ANDERSON: One thing we really haven't talked about is that we weren't really out there totally on our own supporting ourselves in the beginning. We started out living with my husband's family, so we didn't have to earn our rent, and we set up a shop in their basement which wasn't being used for anything else. And we were all fairly tolerant people; it worked. We all put up with each other and all enjoyed parts of it and didn't like parts of it, but it was a good support for us in the beginning. So we were financially not much at risk from the beginning.

MS. GOLD: But still, here you are trying to—you're saying you're going to be doing this kind of work—you're not sure that you're going to get work—

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't know if we ever worried about that. We always figured we would get some work. We would start with what we could get and we would do that. So we did a lot of jobs that weren't very glamorous in order to keep doing work and keep having an income coming in, but it didn't take long before the jobs improved a lot.

MS. GOLD: And how did that happen?

MRS. ANDERSON: It just happened. One thing after another—

MR. ANDERSON: Let me backtrack. Originally, the technical aspects of—people have the feeling of the artist's life is so romantic; we can do what we want and when we want and sit around and design things and all that. But in reality, why, it's a heck of a lot of lugging. When we cut a tree we have to stack it outside, leave it out there for a year and then we have to bring it inside and re-stack it, and we have to process it. And then, as we're building a huge, huge thing, we turn it over and over and back and haul it around, and so far as the romanticism of that, well, that's just simply warehouse work.

And then so far as this life that we lead, totally independent, as Joyce was just saying about limited income,

you've got to put in extra hours. So our nice free time consists of getting to work at 7:00 and working to 6:00, and then after dinner, if the project required it, working from 7:00 to 10:00, or whatever; hopefully not all night. So it's—

MS. GOLD: Youthful energy.

MR. ANDERSON: —a lot of work.

MS. GOLD: Well, did you have a sense of like embarking together on an adventure, or did you have a sense of struggling day after day?

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't think we had the feeling we were struggling day after day, and I don't even know if we ever thought of it as an adventure. It was just what we decided to do and we were doing it and that was it.

MS. GOLD: And did you enjoy—I mean, I'm sure you enjoyed parts of it and I was wondering if you could talk about what parts of it you really enjoyed.

MRS. ANDERSON: You mean from the beginning or as it developed?

MS. GOLD: From the beginning.

MRS. ANDERSON: I suppose there were a lot of interesting parts. Very early on there was a radio store in Morristown, and to help out a friend of my husband's who had been hurt during the war, they decided to let him do the designing of all their component radio systems—it's the way people were doing them then—and then we would do the cabinets for anyone who needed them. So the customer would come into the radio store—a very good radio store—and the man wanted to help all of us young people so he didn't take any money from any of us.

So we started doing radio cabinets in some of the major estates in the area, and it was not the kind of designs we wanted to do—we were designing them in the feeling of the rooms where it was going—but it was challenging kind of work, and it was work. Actually, as a footnote, these wealthy people paid us more slowly than anyone else in our whole working life.

What else do you think about—

MR. ANDERSON: Of course, this just went on for a very brief period of time. In the meantime we were developing the woodturning thing and, as I think I mentioned yesterday, there was period of time when Joyce was earning more total income by her woodturning than I was with the furniture. But in addition to that, we had a very lucky happenstance. It happened when Joyce was in her baby carriage and Joyce's mother and the mother of Herb Noyes would be pushing the baby carriages, and they went through high school with us, and after they were married and we were married we redeveloped the association and—

MRS. ANDERSON: You mean the child that was in the baby carriage was married and—after I was married, okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: Are you saying you had these friends?

MR. ANDERSON: Herb was a Yale architect, and he's done some very great work.

MS. GOLD: Herb?

MR. ANDERSON: Herb Noyes and Marje Noyes.

MRS. ANDERSON: His wife is a graphic designer and equally accomplished in her field.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and they're the ones I mentioned yesterday vis-à-vis the Frank Lloyd Wright Pleasantville thing, those houses out there. Herb was on the—we're getting a little sidetracked here, but Herb was on that Pleasantville job, and when Frank Lloyd—when the Guggenheim was first proposed, they cleared the space and Frank Lloyd Wright built one of his prairie houses there as a demonstration. And it wasn't a complete house; it was a structure of a house, but where the log walls or cabinets would be, where the doors wouldn't open, it was just scored cuts in the wood.

So after that show was over that house had to come down, and the Heinekens [sic] had them and they didn't want it to be destroyed. So, through Herb, they wanted to know if we wanted that house, and we were just

building here, we hadn't started building yet, but it was totally inappropriate for—this was a prairie house flat-out and not designed for a hillside. And then the incredible problems of getting it out of there, all the permits you need and everything, so we didn't get that Frank Lloyd house.

MRS. ANDERSON: We reluctantly said no.

MS. GOLD: I bet.

[They laugh.]

MRS. ANDERSON: We would have loved it.

MR. ANDERSON: So what happened was that Heineken [sic]—

MRS. ANDERSON: Henken, I think.

MR. ANDERSON: Henken, it is.

MRS. ANDERSON: Henken, I believe. He was the contractor/builder of some of those houses.

MR. ANDERSON: He just packed it up and stored it out in his yard, and it started deteriorating over the years. But then about 30 years later, why, Sotheby's, or one of the big auction houses, auctioned it off.

MRS. ANDERSON: Because Frank Lloyd [Wright] buildings had become so valuable and so scarce.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: So it really was a Frank Lloyd Wright building, but they had to totally reconstruct it. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Do you remember what the value of it was when it was auctioned off?

MRS. ANDERSON: It wasn't very much. I've forgotten what it was. They bought it just to be able to say that this is a Frank Lloyd Wright house. Essentially they didn't have any of it; they just build a house by the plans of that house, I think.

MR. ANDERSON: So Marje, with her graphics, was art director for *Architectural Record*, and one of the people that worked with her was Ruth Martin, and Ruth Martin was a cousin of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Never mind. That's not part of it.

MR. ANDERSON: Huh?

MRS. ANDERSON: That's not part of it.

MR. ANDERSON: She was a cousin of the guy that—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, right.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay. So we did some work for the Martins and—

MRS. ANDERSON: Quite a bit of furniture.

MR. ANDERSON: And I think that Ruth had gotten on to something else and she was a friend of Betty Pepis, who was the—

MRS. ANDERSON: Decorative design writer for the *New York Times*.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. This was a job that—

MRS. ANDERSON: Whatever they called it in those days.

MR. ANDERSON: They never had a—well, there was no crafts back then so there wasn't a craft editor. When Betty Pepis resigned, why Pat Malarcher—Patricia Malarcher—

MRS. ANDERSON: Pat was really a New Jersey writer. It wasn't the same job as Betty Pepis.

MR. ANDERSON: And she had—and then I think they abandoned it. They only had it for a few years.

So Betty did an article on us, and this is the one—I don't know, you may have seen—it was the linseed oil and



sandpaper one—

MRS. ANDERSON: The article says I'm probably the only woman in the world who carries linseed oil and sandpaper in her handbag [laughs], so that's what I got known for, for a while.

MS. GOLD: And is that correct, you would have it in your handbag?

MRS. ANDERSON: I probably had that in my bag from time to time. The Martins probably told them that's the way I arrived.

[They laugh.]

MR. ANDERSON: So that got in the national *New York Times*, and Reverend John Mason of the Episcopal Chapel up in the University of Maine, and his wife, saw it. And here I've been talking about links and right off we have a link here. She was Elizabeth Mason, and she was one of the very early-on people that were doing interviews for oral history at Columbia University, which is where your link started, actually.

MRS. ANDERSON: In fact, she took over Allan Nevins' whole department when he didn't do it anymore.

MR. ANDERSON: And when they retired, why, Jack Mason did the same thing when he retired for the Naval Academy. And we could go on for five hours with the interesting links there, but what—

MRS. ANDERSON: They had read the *New York Times* article and they had some tiles from Mexico, where Betty had been brought up, and they thought it would be nice to make them into a coffee table. And the *New York Times* article had a coffee table with some tiles inset, so that seemed as though we were the logical people to make the table. So he wrote us on this really striking stationery he had from the chapel, so we were interested because here's a guy who has a sense of design, we think. Anyway, would we do this table with the Mexican tiles? And we said, yes, we would do that. In fact, we'll make it with some Mexican wood.

MR. ANDERSON: Cocobolo, I think.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we did use cocobolo.

MR. ANDERSON: The color was just the same.

MRS. ANDERSON: So we designed them a table, and they brought us the tiles, and we met each other probably in New York for the first of maybe 10 years worth of getting together in New York or in Maine or somewhere. And we did that job, and then not too long after that he wrote again and said, would we like to come to Maine and do the chancel furniture for the chapel at the University of Maine? So that started our whole career in churches.

MS. GOLD: So at what point was this? You had already been living in Morristown—

MRS. ANDERSON: We were living in West Orange up to a certain point, and we started building this house in 1951, '52, and we were really working on clearing the land and getting preliminaries going for a couple of years because we did it on weekends and a couple of weeks in the summer, but never full-time for a while. And so we were just slowly starting in on our house-building during the period of time.

MR. ANDERSON: Let me backtrack a little bit here. Actually, when Betty Mason was doing interviews, they weren't—she wasn't, like you, doing [inaudible]—here, she was interviewing Theodore Roosevelt's Cabinet.

MRS. ANDERSON: Franklin Roosevelt's Cabinet.

MR. ANDERSON: Franklin, right, not Theodore. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: But that was later in her life. When we met her she was a professor at the University of Maine. She was a very good speaker and she was something in the Episcopal Church, so she had a lot of interesting jobs while we knew her.

MS. GOLD: I wanted to ask you, what pieces were shown in the *New York Times* article? [The Andersons have brought out a binder with articles about them –DG.]

MRS. ANDERSON: It's over there. A tile inset coffee table; I think maybe the round stool. They used the photographs of us that John Geraci had taken, so it was me with the turning tools, I think.

What else is in there? You've got it now. It has our portrait picture.

MR. ANDERSON: This wasn't—that's the one—

MS. GOLD: So it has portraits of you and the tiles and—

MRS. ANDERSON: And the round stool.

MS. GOLD: —and the round stool. The round stool is, then, an early creation.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. In fact, I had to use that to figure out when the heck I started making them.

MS. GOLD: And the walnut stool was all of \$25, and the coffee table at \$95. That's pretty costly.

MRS. ANDERSON: Wow.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, that Nakashima chair in the other room—

MRS. ANDERSON: Was \$50.

MR. ANDERSON: Fifty—\$75. He did it specially for—

MRS. ANDERSON: Fifty—yeah, it was \$50.

MR. ANDERSON: And now it's multi-thousands. The photographs were done by John Geraci, a photographer friend—

MRS. ANDERSON: We had a photographer friend who came up here and took photographs as we started building. He was an exhibiting photographer and he used our photographs quite a bit.

MR. ANDERSON: The one where your thumb is—

MS. GOLD: They're wonderful photographs.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, other people thought so too. It's me here working with a stubble of beard and dirty hands and holding a T-square.

MS. GOLD: Holding a T-square right up to your shin.

MR. ANDERSON: And this was in a photography contest. Somebody sent us a story in that glossy Palm Beach weekly newspaper, and that picture with my untrimmed mustache and so on was one of the two photographs, and the other photograph was of Ernest Hemingway with a neatly trimmed beard.

MRS. ANDERSON: But the heavy face and the very, very contrasting photographs—

MS. GOLD: And then your picture is so wonderful—

MR. ANDERSON: Well, that's got to—

MS. GOLD: —your face between—I don't even know what those tools are. What are they?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, they're lathe tools.

MR. ANDERSON: Those are lathe tools, and that long one there—we make our own tools. That long one, and all of those, from our constant use, I have it—it's like six inches long, and I have this little two-inch—

MRS. ANDERSON: Little stub.

MR. ANDERSON: —piece that's let over from the amount of sharpening of the years and years and year of use, sort of an index of how much wood—

MS. GOLD: So it's, like, six inches in 1956; it's now two inches?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, and I stopped using those tools a long time ago and switched to a different kind of tool.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, we use carbide tools that I make now. But the other link—we're talking about links—with the photograph there, and we mentioned the other day about this group of collectors, a collectors group, the people that are associated with the American Craft Council, and they—we were at one of those events over at a penthouse over in New York—

MRS. ANDERSON: In New York City.

MR. ANDERSON: —and the host at the party had that Ernest Hemingway photograph there. And I told him the

story and he wanted a copy of mine. And he said that was his very first adventure into art of any kind at all, that when he was a freshman in college he saw it and he liked it. And then he started thinking in these terms and he brought other photographs and branched out, and so on, and now he has this huge, huge collection of crafts. He has a fascinating collection.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, nice things.

MR. ANDERSON: But I also like to—Joyce didn't quite get into the discussion on our meeting place for meeting the Masons over the—

MRS. ANDERSON: That goes on, and that's where church work comes in, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. Well, that—we would meet them in the resident's house at Saint John the Divine, and the reason we were there was that Bishop Pike was—James Pike was—

MRS. ANDERSON: Is a very good friend of Jack Mason's.

MR. ANDERSON: They both went into the seminary at the same time.

MRS. ANDERSON: They both decided to become Episcopal ministers at the same time after working for a legal department in Washington, I believe.

MR. ANDERSON: And he's—well, I don't know if the name means anything to you, but he's the very charismatic one that was in defense of the right of the movies to show, not really hardcore pornography, but to show movies that the general community didn't—that people have the right to make up their own minds whether to go there or not, and he became bishop of the whole—of San Francisco.

MRS. ANDERSON: California.

MR. ANDERSON: And he's the one that went out in the desert in Israel, and he was driving with his wife and he said, well, let me just see what's out there, because he was curious. He was never seen again after. He just disappeared. And this is another link that's going to wind around and come back. It's going to go through the castle. You were asking about—and I told you wrong. I want to correct you on how that started. So that's how that all moves around.

In the meeting place was a dormitory up at the top of this residence for visitors, and that's the friends of the Masons met. And our talking area was this huge, huge six-foot diameter gaming table, because they had a great collection of all sorts of antiquities; wonderful early Spanish chests in the whole building, and this was sort of something that is a little out of context.

MRS. ANDERSON: It was very interesting. It was a very interesting piece.

MR. ANDERSON: And laid of incredibly elaborate veneer. And this is where I started thinking about circular tables. And I think I mentioned before that wood shrinks, and a circular table, with all these inlays, is really a veneer on top of something else. Nowadays it's generally plywood, and I don't what it was on. The problem with putting these ply shaped pieces together, which I'll describe later, was the way that they would expand and contract as much as a whole inch around the periphery.

So that constrains the designer to when he makes the round table, he is putting his boards together in a normal linear pattern as if it were a rectangular table, so you're disturbing the continuity of having nice grain within itself, but within a circle, cut off on the corners in a nice circle, it's disturbed by the grain. So this is where I started thinking about how to do that. And then this will be a link—

MS. GOLD: You're meaning you're staring at this round table and wondering about how to work with the grain?

MR. ANDERSON: Again, in my subconscious—you know, where does the inspiration come? I say it goes in the Mixmaster here and comes out in a different form. So this is a link we're going to look at later on also. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Yes. Yes. But this article by Betty Pepis, that was a real breakthrough for you?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes. That brought a great many responses from people. And I know there were a great many telephone calls and letters, and I can't specifically think of what other important jobs, or what other jobs we got. I can probably think of one other interesting one from some woman in New York. I think this talked about our doing tables or chairs that would accommodate specific people, and I think some woman read about that and came out and said she wanted to buy a chair for her husband and do a table to go beside the chair. And we were trying to get some kind of feeling about what space she lived in and where the beginning of her furniture collection was going to go. And she looked like—

MR. ANDERSON: We sort of looked at her—she was a plainspoken person.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, she was dressed in a very proper way—she was a very proper lady—and we just couldn't get any feeling for it. She described her husband as a guy who reads junk novels and eats jellybeans, and we were going to put a jellybean jar on the table, and we were going to have room for his junk novels. So we start picturing, well, he probably drives a truck or something.

And finally, we're going into New York one day and we said, why don't we come in and look at your penthouse, or whatever it is, and see what this space is? Well, we walked into a guy who was either head of an oil company or something like that, and had a really great art collection, and utterly fascinating man. And he had just been made—oh, after that he became—

MR. ANDERSON: Historic novels, that's what he was reading.

MRS. ANDERSON: After that he became head of Mount Holyoke. [Laughs] Then we got a very distressful letter from the woman and it said, oh, we can't do anything with the furniture. We have to live in this other environment in this president's house and we can't have any contemporary furniture there.

MS. GOLD: Had you already made the furniture?

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't think we'd gotten around to it.

MS. GOLD: Oh dear.

MRS. ANDERSON: But she was one of the fun ones that popped up.

MS. GOLD: So in this article you had—the stool that is pictured here you were still making, or you have been making—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, apparently I started making it then, and over the years I've made it when specific clients had need for such a thing.

MS. GOLD: But the table is something that is very different from the tables—very rectilinear and—

MR. ANDERSON: It wasn't really advanced. This was the state of our art now, and we're doing a lot of innovative things, again, the wood shrinkage sort of thing, solid ceramic stuff. The wood would have to expand, and we had a device, something to put in there, and we worked with other craftsman on it. And it developed into, later on, a more important piece that we did with mosaics. But we did several of these bowls—

MRS. ANDERSON: We did quite a lot of them with the ceramic inserts, yes.

MR. ANDERSON: And we even sort of had it figured out whether it was going to be for a person who was going to be more or less permanently located, and we knew that one of the clients was going to be moving from our 8.5 percent relative humidity in this whole Eastern area—

MRS. ANDERSON: Eight-and-a-half in the wood.

MR. ANDERSON: Hmm?

MRS. ANDERSON: Eight-and-a-half wood.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, wood moisture content.

MRS. ANDERSON: Moisture content.

MR. ANDERSON: —out in to the desert in Arizona where it's about 1 percent humidity, or something like that, or moisture content. So we had to specifically design it so there was more room for the wood to shrink as it moved out there, instead of cracking the wood.

MS. GOLD: So I was asking you both, I think, yesterday about how you came up with your designs. I think we were talking about the look of the wood, and the need to fit in the place, and the design element. I didn't realize how much the humidity, or the technical aspects—

MRS. ANDERSON: The nature of the materials and then the environment where it's going to live.

MS. GOLD: So you look not only to the physical environment of the house that it's going to live in but also the moisture environment and the humidity environment.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think because my husband's very technical-minded he has latched on to that a lot more than a lot of woodworkers have, but it's been something he's taught a lot of people because a lot of people haven't given it an awful lot of thought. In fact, one of the shows in the New York Museum, they discovered the pieces were cracking, and they asked us if we could come in and give some recommendations, and we found the humidity was way off, where there was—in the museum they didn't—

MS. GOLD: Which museum was this?

MRS. ANDERSON: The Museum of Contemporary Crafts, before it became—

MR. ANDERSON: It was their new building.

MRS. ANDERSON: —before it became the American Craft Museum, or maybe it was the New American Craft—but it was midway into their life. They'd been there for a little while, but they didn't have a humidity control. So we checked out the Metropolitan and figured out what they had and what they had advised, and we thought that was probably the standard that the Craft Museum should aim for. And also they had stored some of their pieces, including one of ours, in an area that was very dry—

MR. ANDERSON: We have made pieces for four museums in the whole area.

MRS. ANDERSON: —and that got into trouble and cracked, or something.

MR. ANDERSON: They stored it right next to a steam radiator.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. So, anyway, we worked with the museum to correct that problem.

MS. GOLD: Did you also have to repair the piece?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. I think we probably replaced it.

MR. ANDERSON: Because they were then going to have it in some important show or something.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, it was part of their collection, so we probably replaced it, but I don't remember.

MR. ANDERSON: We did a lot of that kind of technical—even architects don't know that wood often shrinks. And all architects think of themselves as furniture designers, and one quite prestigious architect did a chair and didn't take into consideration it was going to shrink, and *Fine Woodworking* actually did a whole page article on how it had gone wrong.

MRS. ANDERSON: Also in one prestigious house we advised on—you looked at the construction and you looked at the windows and you said, that window's going to crack there, or something like that. You just pinpointed what was going to happen and it exactly happened.

MS. GOLD: And it did?

MRS. ANDERSON: And after it happened, what did they all say? Oh, the contractor must have backed a machine into it. They wouldn't allow us what had really caused it, even though we had pinpointed exactly what was going to happen.

MS. GOLD: So as you started to work together you began to divide your work a little bit? You did part of it and—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. Do you think of it that way?

MR. ANDERSON: I think of it only—designs, no, but in some of these crosses—all of these crosses are done big, big, big, and a 20-foot long piece of mahogany, that's six inches by 12 inches that has to be hand carved, that is a heck of a lot of physical work.

But the other division is—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, we both worked on that one together.

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, we did. It took two of us. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: You worked together on it?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, we also—it wasn't 100 percent handwork. There was some rough cutting that was done with electric tools. But in her thinking process, she is quick to make decisions, which is just wonderful to do this on the lathe. Well, if you had to describe the crafts and what the characteristics are of the person that uses it,

why, you'd say, okay, ceramics is instantaneously making up your mind on changing form, the shape; lathe work is sort of pre-constricted by the size of the work. But then, as you work, why, you bring out different patterns, so it's a changing scene all the time, much quicker than assembling my work or assembling pieces of wood together, gluing up joints and so on. It's more a studious process, and because of that I like to start with a drawing. The drawing may be on a piece of wood, but I start with a drawing because—well, look at all the parts that have to go together in a chair. They've all got to meet somehow or another, so everything has to be moderately exact on sizes and shapes and so on. So I studiously did that.

But Joyce has the accuracy skills, and Joyce, being the lathe expert in the family, she does all the legs and the spindles and all those parts. So we adopted a metal lathe for—I think she would only design a three-legged stool because she'd hate to have to make an extra leg. [Laughs] So we modified a metal lathe, which is powerful and slow in its cutting and woodworking. It rotates at a much greater speed, so you're slicing more than cutting. So we changed that, but it has the advantage of this mechanical carriage that goes back and forth. She flips a lot, the [inaudible] goes to one hand, and she does a roughing on this and then she transfers it to the wood lathe to do the fine tuning on that. This gives her the opportunity to catch up on her reading while this—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I read *Moby Dick* I think.

MS. GOLD: While the—

MRS. ANDERSON: While I was turning spindles for a church job.

MS. GOLD: You mean you didn't have to look at what you were doing?

MRS. ANDERSON: No. It was pre-set, the angles and the distances, but I had to switch it after each rotation. I didn't have a fully automatic lathe—a partially automatic lathe.

MS. GOLD: So every few minutes you had to—you sat there and read *Moby Dick*?

MRS. ANDERSON: Plus I read it out loud I think so we both could have—like the old factory jobs where they had somebody come in and read to the women as they worked.

MR. ANDERSON: Up in New England with this room full of looms, before they got hugely mechanical with all the noise, they would have a reader there. So a lot of these loom operators really got a modern education in literature by the readers reading to them.

MS. GOLD: I hadn't heard that. That's a good story. And so you would read *Moby Dick*. And this was for spindles for a church?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, when there had to be a great many of them.

MR. ANDERSON: She also did them for metalwork too. Our dining room table in the other room there has metal —

MRS. ANDERSON: These were metal ones I was doing.

MR. ANDERSON: For the spindles, right.

MRS. ANDERSON: For that church, yes.

MS. GOLD: And you could read out loud over the metal noise?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, it's not very noisy; not like a router or a table saw or whatever.

MRS. ANDERSON: But the other thing is, when you're gluing up for instance, it takes both of us. It requires fairly quick work and a lot of moving clamps around. So we've always worked together doing our glue-ups. We don't have to talk to each other; we know what each one's supposed to be doing over the years.

MR. ANDERSON: I tried to tell her this yesterday that we're in our cohabited state, but while we're working we have our own little space. And I said, well, we communicate on technical stuff, and so on. But we're not really talking about family kinds of things. And when somebody calls up and wants to discuss something like that, I say, well, I'll have to talk to Joyce about that, and I say, well, you can't talk to her right now, and there she is right across the room. So I think I presented that as—that this was a put-off to shut them up, but really—

MRS. ANDERSON: But we really do—you know, we really just keep to our business when we're doing business

usually.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, we're sitting ducks here for—and we encourage it—those drop-ins all the time.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, there used to be.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, in the—

MRS. ANDERSON: I know there have been recent times when all of a sudden there was an article in the paper and we got another little avalanche, but—

MR. ANDERSON: Avalanche of a woodworker who's just starting out, another person who wanted to be a woodworker, a third person—

MRS. ANDERSON: That wanted our house. [Laughs.]

MR. ANDERSON: —that wanted our house.

MRS. ANDERSON: He wanted us to design a house like ours for him.

MS. GOLD: And you didn't?

MR. ANDERSON: At the other end of town.

MRS. ANDERSON: He just said, "I've been driving by your house for years and I love it, and I'm going to build a house and I want one just like yours. Will you design?"—or first he said, "Who was your architect?" And then we said, "Well, we did it ourselves." He said, "Well, will you do one for me?" I said, "No, we won't do one for you. Come up and we'll tell you where the good architects are."

MR. ANDERSON: And he had actually—he could tell us how many square feet the house had from his driving by it, and he was correct.

MS. GOLD: I didn't realize you could even see the house from the road?

MRS. ANDERSON: In the winter.

MR. ANDERSON: In the wintertime you can see it, yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: I said, you must have been up here—you've been here, and he said, no, I've just been driving by.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MR. ANDERSON: He was interesting, and I hope he gets a nice house. He's a real nice guy.

MS. GOLD: So how did you end up designing this house?

MRS. ANDERSON: It was probably the fifth or sixth one. I think we had a concept of the house we would want that started out shortly after architecture school. But that basically told us the rooms and the space we thought we wanted, but when we started surveying this piece of property we discovered you really couldn't put that house here. The drop-off and the slope was greater than we had originally anticipated. So we had to think again, and somewhat we flipped the design. We had a living room that was on the lower level and a balcony that was on an upper level and—

MR. ANDERSON: And this is something that we do as designers. If it doesn't work that way, try it upside down. And this is—you take risks. You don't get locked into a preconception.

MRS. ANDERSON: But there were a lot of nice things in some of those early designs. We had thought about what we wanted long enough, I think, that it made it easier to find the right one for this particular site after we did all our surveying and knew what the actual terrain was. We were constrained by the fact that there was a spruce forest up above us, and it was standing when we bought the property. And it was a spectacular place where it felt like you were in a cathedral because the sun just came in in a kind of a shaft of purple light. And we decided we wanted to stay a little away from that because it would be a fire hazard. So that determined where the uppermost part of our construction would go.

It turned out before we had a title to the property, a major hurricane had come through and a house of cards went down. Most all of the spruce forest fell down. They had planted it close and they had never thinned it out, and it just took the whole forest down.

MS. GOLD: And that's not very good for—

MR. ANDERSON: Well, it's good for construction.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, we did cut the—

MR. ANDERSON: This was our first experience into [inaudible].

MRS. ANDERSON: The shop framing, the ceiling, the roof is made from some of those timbers. There was a local mill.

MR. ANDERSON: There were six or seven—

MRS. ANDERSON: There were lots of them.

MR. ANDERSON: —sawmills around here at that time.

MRS. ANDERSON: But one of them was less than maybe eight miles away in the swamp, run by an old farmer and his old wife. They operated at a nice leisurely pace. We bought a big old truck and we would take our logs down there and come back with some boards and continue to build our shop.

MR. ANDERSON: But you can't imagine how these—they were planted 10 feet apart by a member of McAlpin family, the hotel McAlpins, who owned all this property here. And they—it was during World War I as a war effort, because paper pulp was getting low—I don't know how planting the trees would help, but that's what he got into then. And then nothing ever happened, so they grew straight up without being thinned out. So in a competition it turned out that all the top-notch—there are a few up there now; you can see these long, bare trunks with—so when that stuff came down, it just was a house of straws that we could get in there and pick stuff out. But it stayed that way for years. We never got all of it out and it gradually settled down. It was a great place for the deer to live. And we were—back then we used handsaws and axes on that, and it was a little dangerous on these things at an angle and so on. And Joyce whacked herself with an axe and got a deep cut in her leg. But, fortunately, it was a very clean cut so—

MRS. ANDERSON: It was a weekend.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, it was a weekend and you never go to the hospital on a weekend.

MS. GOLD: God, so you had to—

MR. ANDERSON: So I took some drafting tape and stuck it together. It held and it was clean, no problem. Later on, in talking to, I think Mike Langan—

MRS. ANDERSON: One of our doctor friends.

MR. ANDERSON: —one of our next doctor friends, he said, well, you know, that's what plastic surgeons do, he said, is masking tape. But where you don't really want to see any stitch scars at all, they have a special adhesive tape that holds. [Laughs.]

Mike Langan was one of our—I'm sidetracking here.

MS. GOLD: Well, we can either go and talk about commissions or keep talking about the house.

MR. ANDERSON: No, let's go around to the—because I think if we want to get into the environment and so on we'll get pretty far away from it.

MS. GOLD: Okay, so—

MR. ANDERSON: Whatever you want.

MS. GOLD: Let's talk about the commissions. We started on talking about your work at the University of Maine, and that led to other church work.

MR. ANDERSON: That led to other church work in great quantity. We were—for a 10-year period we did one church after another after—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, and what we did, we started in 1957 in Maine, and there was '58, '59, '63, '71, '74, '78. So one church came right on top of another, so we were very busy. And they often would want—we would have to work during the concluding part of the structures going up, and we would have to get it in by the date that they wanted to do their initiating ceremony. So it was always very close on timing. It was very frequently Easter



or Christmas that they wanted to move into their new church, so that meant working conditions in our life were rather difficult for a while.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, they also—they, we're going to build a church here, build a church, and then the church is coming along; well, now we need some furniture in it. So we were—

MRS. ANDERSON: But it looks as though the second church happened the year after the one in Maine, and it was the same minister, that minister had been at the Maine chapel left there and came to a church in New Jersey, and he called us and said would we do the—that was just being built when he came and he asked us if we would do the chapel furniture there. And somehow that led—I don't know quite why we got the next church job. It looks as though it was the Lutheran Church in Spotswood. I guess that was a—I guess that was an architect that we got two church jobs from. One in Spartum and one in Spotswood, and somehow long came the Unitarians and somehow along came some Connecticut churches from another architect friend in Connecticut. And it went —

MR. ANDERSON: He would have callbacks to do more work in [inaudible].

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the—

MRS. ANDERSON: This year, I guess.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the continuities in all of these—you know, you're talking about our religiousity and our spiritualism and so on—we are creating spiritual objects. And the University of Maine one that we did—Jack Mason, who became a very good friend—and what they wanted—important on the cross to him was the message that through this church—these are young people—that you are guided by Christ, who has arisen from the grave, rather than being a figure that was crucified; that this is an inspiration, a spiritual inspiration.

So we did a white holly—is it holly trees we were talking about? In Southern Jersey they grow quite big. So as a symbol of purity we did an altar out of white holly. But the cross itself, to show that something or someone was there and no longer is—and then it's up to him to use this as Christ risen from the cross—we carved it with a concavity, you know, all of its surfaces, to indicate that almost this was like a container at one point to hold up—

MS. GOLD: Right, and you were saying yesterday that—the focus on the hollowness of it, yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: Actually, you can see a relationship of this to the dining table that was in our client's house.

MS. GOLD: Yes.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think the idea of this design happened here and then got used quite a bit in tables throughout our career.

MS. GOLD: And let's describe it. That is the—sort of a tapered slab, would you call it?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, that's a slab on the top.

MRS. ANDERSON: Tapered—two slabs and tapered and—

MS. GOLD: As the supports.

MRS. ANDERSON: And then the top has a—is thicker in the middle and curved into a thinner edge on either end. And I like this line. I'd forgotten that that one had this one. It was another—

MS. GOLD: A line—

MR. ANDERSON: Well, both the table that we were looking at the other day and this particular church one, it's—the top is thicker towards the—looking sideways, a profile.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: Very, very skinny out at the edge. It's a very delicate—

MS. GOLD: So on the altar it gives—

MR. ANDERSON: And the reason for doing it this way is—it's not because of, but inspired by the fact that the structural mechanics of a beam requires that it be thicker in the middle in order to support the—

MS. GOLD: Right. But in the altar it also has a quality of soaring. It gives you a sense of moving up.

MR. ANDERSON: That's the—yeah, that's the—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, a lot of our concept is that you do keep that kind of line going. You work with something that is uplifting, and the feeling of, you know, divine—

MR. ANDERSON: This was—there's a high pedestal and a low pedestal, and so on, and this was Jack Mason, the friend of the students—when we were there, why, the student dinner, and so on. So this is more like the Presbyterian feeling of the communion table, I believe. Is that why we made it?

MRS. ANDERSON: I've forgotten what all we thought about that one.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, the other thing that's common in all of the church work that designer craftsmen do is that generally the architect does a drawing of an altar that's really just plain cabinet work. It's just a box, a plywood box with some good veneer on it.

MRS. ANDERSON: Apparently I hadn't done the candleholders yet. [Looking at a photo of a church altar -DG.] Those aren't mine.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: But this I kind of enjoyed. We used bronze wedges. You've seen how we use exposed wedges in some of our—

MS. GOLD: Oh, yes.

MRS. ANDERSON: —to put pieces together. Well, here—

MS. GOLD: And that's—

MRS. ANDERSON: —here we cast them in bronze and we use them. And also we've always used rails, which I suppose people have throughout time, to space people when they come up for communion along the rails. So these are spaced at whatever a comfortable distance would be for each person. And then it has this little bright spot where the legs come through the top and are anchored. And I—

MS. GOLD: I'm sorry, the railing is metal?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, this is all wood. This is wood. And I think they had—I think we had little metal feet on them.

MR. ANDERSON: I don't know. What we generally do is that a commercial church rail has a big plate that is put down on the floor and fastened to the concrete, or whatever, and covered over with carpet and kneelers. But we always liked—

MRS. ANDERSON: We never do that.

MR. ANDERSON: We like it to go into the floor, so you see, there's nothing there. The leg goes into the concrete floor. So we wind up drilling holes in the concrete and so on, and this is where the accuracy of the metal lathe is necessary to—

MRS. ANDERSON: When they're metal, yeah. But this was kind of an innovation. I don't think we ever saw a lectern pulpit built out of a rail. But it was such a simple little chapel that it seemed like a good solution.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, the legs just go through the rail and become this nice—sort of like a dictionary stand.

MS. GOLD: Nice.

MR. ANDERSON: Now, this is where he moved on to his next church, and this is—oh, this is what I described.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, this is the big—

MR. ANDERSON: This is a huge, huge hunk of mahogany that we're carving there. And for this particular congregation, for the same minister, what he felt was that they do want a symbol of Christ, but they're a little nervous about feeling too much like Roman Catholic, and they just wanted a suggestion of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, that was probably our idea.

MR. ANDERSON: It was our idea?

MRS. ANDERSON: That we would turn the cross into—the Christ and cross would be the same.

MR. ANDERSON: So really Christ is coming out of—

MRS. ANDERSON: But it's kind of like a Cubistic suggestion of a figure.

MR. ANDERSON: Now, there's a—you're looking—

MS. GOLD: I see, yes. Carved into a cross that's on top of a larger cross, right?

MRS. ANDERSON: It is the cross. I mean, this is the model that we were using.

MS. GOLD: I see, that's the model. Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes. That's what we were using to work the problem.

MR. ANDERSON: This goes back to our links again.

MRS. ANDERSON: Actually, that model became very popular. We had to make several.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, a similar congregation wanted them. Reverend Mason was a friend of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Bishop Pike.

MR. ANDERSON: —Bishop Pike. We made one exactly like that for him to send out to Bishop Pike out in California.

MRS. ANDERSON: The model, and the model became a welcome to the—

MR. ANDERSON: So our crosses are sort of the continuity.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, there it is inside.

MR. ANDERSON: At that point, like, then we had control over doing the metalwork, and so on. But this is at the point I described before, that we were having our metalwork done by outside contractors, and they just simply didn't do it right. So—and we set up our metal shops for making patterns to have cast and for turning bronze and brass and welding and so on.

MS. GOLD: And so that's for the candles that are on the altar, underneath this carved mahogany cross?

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. GOLD: And this is for which church?

MRS. ANDERSON: This is the Haworth Episcopal Church [St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Haworth, New Jersey].

MR. ANDERSON: Haworth, New Jersey.

MRS. ANDERSON: New Jersey.

MR. ANDERSON: And that's pretty big. And we had—on all of these jobs we've had incredible cooperation with the contractors. To get that huge thing up there, way up on the wall, we couldn't possibly do it with ladders. And the—yeah, I guess it was the electrical contractor—

MRS. ANDERSON: He left us his scaffolding.

MR. ANDERSON: Had his scaffolding there, and they left it for us and moved it over so that we could mount this on the wall.

MRS. ANDERSON: One of the fun parts of working in that church was—my father-in-law was a civil engineer. He told us when we went to work in Bergen County that we'd have a lot of trouble with the unions. It was a heavily unionized area and they wouldn't like having us come in there to start installing furniture on the walls. It turned out to be exactly the opposite. When we got there, the contractor couldn't have been more friendly and more helpful. And the fun part to me was the second day I was there he gave me a present, and the present was a paper bag with a roll of toilet paper inside. He was recognizing that he had a female in the building for the first time.

[They laugh.]

MRS. ANDERSON: I thought that was kind of fun.

MS. GOLD: But he didn't say where you were supposed to use that?

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, there was a ladies—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, there was a bathroom.

MRS. ANDERSON: There was a ladies room there, but I guess it probably hadn't been used up to now.

MR. ANDERSON: And it just went on and on.

Now, this is—

MRS. ANDERSON: That lectern/pulpit, that's a pulpit—I guess we—we probably didn't—we did lecterns and pulpits in some of these churches. That was the pulpit, and that was really inspired by a trip to—the Cloisters? Yeah, Cloisters.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, the circular—

MRS. ANDERSON: We loved—

MR. ANDERSON: —where you mount up to go into the—

MRS. ANDERSON: —loved the high ancient—

MS. GOLD: And that's a circular pulpit that somebody steps on to—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, they walk up into here, and they need a microphone, so we put a microphone in one of these and a light in the other one. So the functions were in these.

MS. GOLD: So almost like two candlesticks?

MR. ANDERSON: The spindles go right on up and through, and just make a nice decorative element there [inaudible] up and through. And one's a light and one is the microphone.

MS. GOLD: And so all along your design is developing—design style is developing. Do you—can you talk about what led you—

MRS. ANDERSON: Do I have the slightest idea what leads you? I think maybe each job leads to something else. You see something, okay, now I could do it this way or I could change that a little bit or—

MR. ANDERSON: It's—

MRS. ANDERSON: And also the buildings themselves tell us something.

MS. GOLD: What are you going for? Do you have a sense of—you know, when you critique—or at that point when you were critiquing work that you had done, what was it that you were moving toward or looking for?

MR. ANDERSON: You mean in the big picture?

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: We were just—we're on auto-pilot. I mean, we aren't saying, "Hey, we want to be noted for our church work." That had absolutely nothing to do with it. It was just something that kind of opened from—but the real inspiration comes with the original talking and drawings and exploring and so on. We used to have a picnic table out here. There were two huge pieces of blackboard slate, and in summertime we'd take our clients out there and we'd reach underneath and there was a piece of chalk, and we'd do chalk drawings on there and brainstorm and—

MS. GOLD: The picnic table was made out of blackboard slate?

MRS. ANDERSON: It was—yeah, it was this, like, very long—very long slate. It was great for doodling.

MR. ANDERSON: And—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think in a lot of these the space helps to determine what we want to do. We'd never done a triangular altar before, but because of the space that one was going into, and because of the wonderful symbology of the three-part face, we did a triangular one. Once again, of course, you can see it's a curved understructure, but a different looking thing. But they related to each other and most of them—or several of them are white holly.

MS. GOLD: Did you—there's a certain sort of—I mean, I keep seeing a certain flow and movements upwards, a sort of a sense of soaring—

MRS. ANDERSON: These kind of pieces seem to say that.

MR. ANDERSON: You would love to have interviewed the architect of that church. The inspiration was this triangular folded roof, which in fact is what we had already done ourselves there, this triangular roof on the house there. And I was asking the architect, well, how did you decide to do that? The same questions you're asking, because I had my reasons for doing it here. He said, well—this was—he was quite something. He said, well, I was sitting in a restaurant and I saw a French pastry. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: What a great—

MR. ANDERSON: So much for ideology.

MS. GOLD: —inspiration for a church.

MRS. ANDERSON: In that church we did an interesting baptismal font. Often it's quite an extraordinary minister who will come to someone like us and say, "I want you to do my furniture."

MS. GOLD: Yes.

MRS. ANDERSON: And in most of these there was quite an extraordinary person.

MR. ANDERSON: And, parenthetically, like, an awful lot of them—we either get a lot of people to join the congregation or get a lot to leave by what we do. And in more than one time the person that we were working with, one of them was a guitar-playing minister, and within a few years after we had finished our work, they had an old naval—Navy guy—

MRS. ANDERSON: The naval officers took over the church and they—

MR. ANDERSON: —was a minister—

MRS. ANDERSON: And they gave up the—they no longer wanted it in the round, and they really gutted what was —

MR. ANDERSON: Not really.

MRS. ANDERSON: We moved back some kind of a massive eagle for the really great-looking pulpit we had done for them. Anyway—

MR. ANDERSON: A big what? But they had it back—in the existing church they had this eagle, which in fact is—

MRS. ANDERSON: God-awful.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, no, it's a symbol of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I know, but it didn't look like that. It looked like war.

MR. ANDERSON: —but it was a threatening looking eagle, so right off, that's got to go, and the guitar playing—yeah, that's got to go. And that was—a hard-line church guy came back.

The font link here, the minister—and he stayed with that congregation. He said well, there's a couple of things here. Baptism's about water, and different branches of the church, Baptists, don't do water. So he said, I want something that is water, but I want—

MRS. ANDERSON: To suggest the running water.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. Well, they wanted the congregation to be reminded of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Of the streams.

MR. ANDERSON: —that baptism is—you're in the church now, and that kind of thing. So they wanted them to have running water even during the normal services. Then the second thing he wanted is the—when we talk about the Baptistry of the Renaissance church, this is the place that only baptisms happen, and then the church itself does the other things. He said he thought he'd like to have the whole congregation participate in this baptism. So what we did was, outside in the narthex area—

MRS. ANDERSON: In the narthex?

MR. ANDERSON: Just on the edge there, we had—this was in an area that was—manufactured bricks, so some of this congregation were brick workers, so we had them build this partial circular wall for the font that we did, and it had a lot of circular elements in it as a background. And we constructed a large basin, a free standing basin on the bottom, which was a pool of water, and then these floating elements that the water came in at the top and dripped from one to the other to the other to the other. And that took care of the running water thing. But then to—

MRS. ANDERSON: It took care of the running water, but we spent weeks getting the right flow of water so it sounded right and didn't splash and didn't make people run to the bathroom, and a lot of other things.

MS. GOLD: And how did you do that?

MRS. ANDERSON: We hung it up out here and we worked with some of the ideas, and then we of course worked in place also.

MR. ANDERSON: But she had mentioned the problem that most families have, the lip on a pouring pitcher, it is a certain specific thing, otherwise it dribbles back or it doesn't pour right, and here we were very much broader forms that we made out of bronze, and we had to control the drip. And this is all welded bronze, but mostly we weren't doing much cutting and welding of the shapes we had, the circular forms that we had that we could cut into the bronze. And in order to have the congregation see the whole service, by the little element that was the next to the last one was a removable triangular curve shape that we made a little softer up on the railing in the front of the church. So the private baptism would happen back there, and then we sort of worked with them on how we could have a little ceremony and march down and then have the final thing—or something like that. I've forgotten the details.

MRS. ANDERSON: They moved the water up to the front when they wanted to do it that way.

MS. GOLD: It's sort of a multi-media design then?

MRS. ANDERSON: We had to spend a lot of time getting the right color in the bronze, so we worked with chemicals for quite a long time getting the right patina we wanted.

MR. ANDERSON: Then when we got into metalwork we found we could combine wood with bronze and—

[Cross talk.]

MR. ANDERSON: The other metalwork things that was great in our church work, an Episcopal church that the minister was a rather elegant person and had a good sense of design, but he wanted to have a gifting area. And this is in a traditional church called [inaudible]. What he wanted was a place where the collection plates for collecting the money during the service would go. Normally they were stacked over some place off on the side, or wherever there's a convenient surface. And he wanted a table for this, but he also wanted it to be a table that when there were—when they're gathering food for the poor, and so on—it had to be a substantial six-foot table. And this was going to be in the entry area, not in the church proper itself. And he said he wanted to represent this diverse congregation. We have engineers and we have plumbers, we've got draftsmen, and it had carpenters and a great diversity of people, and he said, well, I like the idea to have a wooden top and have actually the tools of the trade—

MRS. ANDERSON: Little symbols of the trade.

MR. ANDERSON: Little tools—oh, no, we were going to make little models of it or something implanted in it around there. So we kicked that around a little bit, and I said, well, how about this? We can do it and—we were hedging a little bit on that.

MS. GOLD: And why were you hedging?

MRS. ANDERSON: We didn't like it—we didn't like putting those real symbolic elements into something. We didn't want that kind of exact statement of something.

MR. ANDERSON: And it wouldn't—as a matter of fact, we were treading on his territory. I just didn't think that it

had any meaning. It was a nice symbology—hey, we have this congregation—but what they really wanted to do was—this is something that would encourage giving. So I said, well, now, why don't we do—it developed out on the chalkboard to have some words up here that encourage giving, and why not have—we want low light in there anyhow, we won't use this high-power light up here; we'll make—

MRS. ANDERSON: Tablets.

MR. ANDERSON: —these sculptural tablets. And these are made out of metal, and they're about two feet by three feet—three of them—the Trinity is always an important thing—and cut through, and the thick—out of metal—and we will cut these through so we will have lights inside. So these will be what you'll mostly see when you come into this area. So then we had to figure out what wording we wanted there. So we kicked this back and forth and back and forth, and again we were inputting and he was accepting and we were—

MRS. ANDERSON: Can I interrupt, because I went to work on it and I spent a lot of time reading. I went to religious groups and went to their libraries and talked to them. And nobody came up with anything I liked very much, so I went to the Bible and decided to do one Old Testament and one New Testament, and found two I liked. And then the third one I couldn't find anywhere until I found a Saint Augustine book, which had the third one I was looking for. And I liked the fact that one of these messages is, "First make peace with your brother and only then come back and offer your gifts." Go away! [Laughs] But anyway, they seem to state the things I thought were important, and the minister accepted them.

Recently when I was reading our correspondence with the minister I found that he had gotten more involved than I remembered in this whole—he really had joined us quite well because I read what he had discovered when he started thinking about it more seriously, and he had come up with one of these same ones that I had come up with.

MS. GOLD: Oh—

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I was recommending [inaudible].

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, and that's not what we did.

MS. GOLD: Oh, there's a picture of the tablets.

MR. ANDERSON: Let's—don't you fast-forward, but here we're talking about links, back to this church here.

As you know, we're involved in—we talked about the World Trade Center memorial, and so on, and we talked about the local—we didn't talk about—the local community had this great conflict. One of them had access to some of the skinny I-beams there, which were actually hollow columns, and another group wanted to have a rock or a plaque on. And they were fighting with each other back and forth, so I stepped into the fight. I didn't want the commission at all, I just didn't want to get tied down in that, but I wanted to show them how each one could do something here and—as a mediator—and it worked in the bottom line. But along the way they wanted to just have these columns there and then something on them. I said, well, here's a wonderful opportunity to have the names—very few names, they're a small community—and a message on there that you can cut into those hollow columns.

MS. GOLD: Let me just interrupt you for a moment. This is for a memorial after 9/11, right?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, it is.

MRS. ANDERSON: He thought that they should think about using the structural parts from the World Trade Center in this kind of technique that we had used in that church, and I don't think they could understand that one at all.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I went over and measured them, and I knew where—the secret place that they hide them. [Laughs] They didn't know the County had them. So I said, well, what I could really do, have these messages in there, whether it has light or not. I said, if it goes down to the county library or something like that, you can have light in them. And I brought in a piece of metal that actually was one that I had done that way. And then I brought in pictures of the tablets and showed them how that could be all done.

And, well, they questioned about destroying the sanctity of these columns. I said, look, they've been distressed by fire; they're scheduled to go to the scrap yard. We are rescuing these from going to Japan and becoming a Toyota, and we're not going to destroy the sanctity. Well, I said, you know, the tablets that we made for the church there, the metal that they were made out of, they were made out of the hood of an old car that I had, and it's quite conceivable that that hood, if I bought it in a junkyard, somebody could have died in a crash someplace, so that this isn't interfering with the sanctity of it.

MS. GOLD: That's a good point. It's interesting. So all along at this time you're also working on private commissions for—

MRS. ANDERSON: There might have been some small amount of it, but it looks from the schedule, if we were doing that many churches in that time we would have been doing mostly churches.

MR. ANDERSON: I tried to track that down and I find that the Langans came in during that period. The churches went on into 1975 or—

MRS. ANDERSON: They started in '57?

MS. GOLD: And this would be a considerable portion of your time, working on these pieces?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, yes.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, because if you do everything that's up in the front of the church that's—I mean, some of these churches have clergy seating and acolyte seating, so there are a couple of benches or kneelers, there are credence tables, there are hymn boards, there are—in addition to the major pieces, the rails and the altars and the crosses.

MR. ANDERSON: And we bring in other craftsmen too. One of the churches that we did had these ebony panels across the front, and the minister wanted some symbology of the sacrament, the wine and the bread. And our friend and neighbor, Bob—

[END TAPE 2 SIDE B.]

MS. GOLD: This is disc two of my conversation with Joyce and Edgar Anderson together on September 19, 2002. And we were talking about the work that you were doing in churches.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay. We were talking about our neighbors here, and for no reasons of association or thinking of it as an art community, we—there were only 10 houses in the block up to the park here when we first moved here, but there's always been a very good percentage of artists. Right now we have a professional sculptor; Bob and Teddy MacPhail—Rowena MacPhail—both professional artists. He died. And we have a lot of serious amateurs, ceramists and printmakers. And we have Sterling North, the writer of the books on nature and ecology lived across the street. So it's not that anybody came here because there were artists here, but they came here because of the same thing that inspires us.

MS. GOLD: It's such a beautiful area, yes.

MRS. ANDERSON: And we came here partly because of the Frank Lloyd Wright house that exists on the street—up the street.

MS. GOLD: On the Tempe Wicke Road?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, off Tempe Wicke Road, just beyond the park. And it is part of the reason why we came to this area and wanted to buy a piece of property on the same street where that house is. There are two or three or four good contemporary houses on that street, so it was a very logical place for us to want to come. In fact, we worked for a couple of people on that street.

MR. ANDERSON: One by Frank Lloyd Wright's student too, Tony Smith—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, Frank Lloyd Wright's student, and one by Johansson.

MR. ANDERSON: That was a famous old—way back in the craftsman period, Johansson—

MRS. ANDERSON: There were several very, very, very good houses. So that—

MS. GOLD: Are they on Tempe Wicke Road?

MRS. ANDERSON: It's off Tempe Wicke Road there. I think it's called Jockey Hollow Road there.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] And this is just a tiny bit of history; this is where Washington camped—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, where Jockey Hollow Park now is is where Washington's troops were for two winters



during the Revolutionary War. Washington was camped out in the Ford mansion in Morristown, but his troops were freezing out here.

MS. GOLD: And then you have bullet holes in some of your—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah—

MRS. ANDERSON: Who knows where they came from? We're still looking for other artifacts. In fact, they probably didn't extend as far down as our property, but whenever we see a mound that's kind of an odd place we think, oh, it's a dead soldier in there. We keep expecting something will pop up some day. We have found old glass. We found old glass bottles.

MR. ANDERSON: And I guess I already told you about the possible link of our Revolutionary War relative that conceivably could have been out there.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: The other thing, I guess we're about at the end of it—well, we can go on about religious things forever and ever, but we also had Thelma Newman do some tapestry for—

MRS. ANDERSON: Wait a minute. Zelda Strecker—

MR. ANDERSON: Zelda Strecker.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I already talked about Zelda's on the front of the pulpit in one of the churches.

MS. GOLD: And so, when you walked into a church that you were going to be designing for, usually this was a new church, right?

MRS. ANDERSON: Often what we would get would be the blueprints.

MS. GOLD: You wouldn't be inside the church; you would—

MRS. ANDERSON: Sometimes we would get the blueprints and the church would be under construction at some stage, but we would probably start with what the blueprints were.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, but we'd never start anything without—even if the building wasn't done—

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, sure.

MR. ANDERSON: —we had to get the sense of space.

MRS. ANDERSON: Sure, yeah. But we would probably first see the plans.

MS. GOLD: Can you understand the sense of space then from looking at blueprints?

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, not that much, but certainly in the one that oriented to the prow, we would certainly understand what that kind of space is because we, in a sense, have that kind of space here, but we didn't in those days. That was before we had—

MR. ANDERSON: Now, don't say "we."

MRS. ANDERSON: Hmm?

MR. ANDERSON: Don't say "we" because this is, again, my spatial ability.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, you can maybe better than I.

MR. ANDERSON: I can look at a blueprint and see the whole thing built. And when I'm making my drawing, I may be doing not even a perspective, and I can visually see it in three dimensions. I have a great feeling of space.

MRS. ANDERSON: Which I don't.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, you can read a roadmap.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: Without turning it around? That's always the joke at my house.

Well, you know, actually before we move on to talking about clients, I want to also—I just wanted to ask you—it seems to be coming up—what place arguments have in your—

MR. ANDERSON: What place what?

MRS. ANDERSON: What place arguments have—

MR. ANDERSON: Arguments? We never argue. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: —have in your partnership?

MR. ANDERSON: We positively avoid—there's no reason to ever come to that particular point. But I suppose there may have been times where you walk away from it. It—

MRS. ANDERSON: It depends on what you call an argument. We do argue.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, we argue—

MS. GOLD: I don't know—now, what do you call it? Disagree or stand up for your individual ideas? I'm not talking about acrimony necessarily.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh yeah, dynamic discussions, yeah—strong disagreements, but always each seeing what the other one has in mind; or if not seeing, admitting that it's a valid idea.

MRS. ANDERSON: Or a lousy idea.

MR. ANDERSON: Or a lousy idea, yeah. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: I mean, do you have—do you feel like you can come upon a design discussion without your ego invested in it? You know, I want my idea to win out.

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't know that we call it ego; maybe it is. But if you're absolutely sure you have the right answer and the other one you think has the absolute wrong answer, there is a good strong argument over that.

MS. GOLD: Does that often happen that you feel—

MRS. ANDERSON: Sometimes.

MS. GOLD: —you are absolutely right—

MRS. ANDERSON: Sure, sometimes, yeah.

MS. GOLD: —and he is absolutely wrong?

MRS. ANDERSON: Sometimes, yeah.

MS. GOLD: And you would have the same feeling?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes. Right, yeah. We haven't quite got our bedrooms—or our beds—bedroom designed and now it's been about—four years it's been under discussion.

MS. GOLD: Four years or 40?

MRS. ANDERSON: Four.

MS. GOLD: Oh, okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Not 40, yeah, but it'll get resolved eventually.

MS. GOLD: But how do you then, when you both have such opposing ideas—or maybe they're not even opposing ideas; maybe they are just subtle variations—how do you come to an agreement?

MRS. ANDERSON: We don't always, and that's when the bed doesn't get built for four years, if it's for ourselves. For a client we just submit each one of our designs separately and let the client figure it out.

MR. ANDERSON: We generally think in terms of which is the more positive idea instead of denigrating the other idea. I may not like hers, but I like to examine it from the point of view of—examine it from the point of view of how much better mine is. [Laughs] No.

MS. GOLD: And you have the same feeling?

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, of course. Sometimes his are lousy.

MS. GOLD: Do you feel like you end up with a better design because you have two of you arguing over it?

MR. ANDERSON: I think that—

MRS. ANDERSON: If one of us feels very strongly about it, we usually end up doing that one maybe.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: And just—the other one just dropping out probably.

MS. GOLD: Dropping out of the creation or—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. I mean, not necessarily not helping making it, but dropping out of the designing of it.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't—you know, I don't have a great feeling for the castles and that kind of work that my husband has done, so I don't get too involved in them, except when he needs my help in making them.

MS. GOLD: That's interesting. And so did you come into your marriage, or your partnership, with sort of a sense of that individuality and—and there's an underlying respect in there too, I think, even though you're saying, I think his idea is lousy, you're sort of—I don't know where I'm hearing respect, but I think I am hearing respect there too.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think—

MR. ANDERSON: I think—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think each of us has a strong feeling that people should be respected for what they are, basically, and you shouldn't really try to push them very much.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, that's—we're jumping a couple of decades back from your question here, back to high school.

MRS. ANDERSON: When we were friends and enjoyed each other a lot, but very independent people.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and then developing into our friendship before we were married. And we—that's the thing we liked is that we—I respected everything about her, whether I'd agree with it or not. So—whether it's good or not. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Interesting, interesting. And so there's not a sense of competition between you, or is there?

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't really think there is. Do you?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I'm thinking in full blossom of competition in family life, of just somebody wanting to be more of a friend, as a good example, but that kind of thing.

MRS. ANDERSON: There probably is some—

MR. ANDERSON: I think I mentioned before the danger in university education. Granted, the whole place is together there, but you get the feeling of competition of one against the other, and my criteria is my competition against me, my competition being in ideas. And, again, going back to why I didn't want to remain in the Army or why I wanted to do all those things was that I didn't want to be in the competitive field where I had to think about other people and compete with them, as an administrator, that I really wanted to devote myself to my creativity of me.

So I'm not very competitive. And as a matter of fact, if we had been a little more aggressive—and I hinted strongly that Joyce just doesn't like being out there very much, and she hides her talent. There's probably a lot of things that she hasn't told you about that she's very talented at. And I sort of enjoy the spotlight, and deserve it, but I don't go out and get it. We don't go out and—we've never entered a jury show.

MS. GOLD: Never?

MR. ANDERSON: Never. Maybe I shouldn't say that. Something tells me there was something special there.

MS. GOLD: It must be the movement in Joyce's head as you were saying, I think I remember something.

MR. ANDERSON: We juried Paul Smith—[laughs]—but never—they have to come to us, which we facilitate. If there's pictures in the magazines and so on, we cooperate, but they find us. And if you have to describe yourself in terms of animals, we can describe ourselves in terms of a lot of animals, but more or less one of our characteristics is we're more the spider sitting in the web. I have this Plainter [ph] stained glass window that came out of my grandfather's house of a spider web, but it's hidden there.

[Cross talk.]

MRS. ANDERSON: It's going to be built in the house some day.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. But we're a spider waiting for them to come to us, and—

MS. GOLD: But building the web to attract them.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, right. And in addition to that, it's very rare that we will enter a show where we have to do like we did in the very beginning. We had to set up shows; we had to cart the stuff there and so on. We are more or less inclined to prefer to be in the show where they come and pick up—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, that's just something that happens over the years, and—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, over the years.

MRS. ANDERSON: — if people want you in a show, they'll set it up that way.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. I wonder also whether you continue to surprise each other with either differing designs or—

MR. ANDERSON: Continue to what?

MRS. ANDERSON: Do we surprise each other with designs? I think my husband surprises me all the time with the words that he puts together and designs that he puts together. He's far-out compared to me. It's fun.

MR. ANDERSON: I'm surprised about where her talent extends. We briefly talked about the beautiful table settings and we briefly talked about a lot of other things like that, but—about her—for her hand therapy, playing with the clay to make designs. She's—like I am too, we're full time from top to bottom. We like to be a little bit in control of the physical environment.

MS. GOLD: And so, can you predict when you're going to differ in something? I guess you're not doing that many designs now.

MRS. ANDERSON: We're not right now, no, but could we have? Could we really—

MR. ANDERSON: Predict where there'd be a conflict?

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, sure. The table that is supposed to go here, you have a very definite idea of—

MS. GOLD: [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah. You don't want it and I do want it.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, it goes on and on. And so, yeah, it—

MRS. ANDERSON: The fact we have very little furniture for ourselves, maybe that's partly why.

MS. GOLD: Differing designs and no one to arbitrate.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, maybe that's part of it.

MR. ANDERSON: You're asking a whole big field of questions that I don't think that either of us has sat down and studied out here.

MS. GOLD: That's fine.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, no, I'm saying if our responses seem to be—well, if they're argumentative, that's all right, but if they seem to be a little unsure, why, we're exploring it with you as we go along here.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: But it's fun. I'm glad you're doing it.

MS. GOLD: Those are just some of the questions that I had thought to ask of you, and I think it's a very fruitful discussion because I think there are other people—people are fascinated by the idea of—

MRS. ANDERSON: People—

MS. GOLD: —of couples—

MRS. ANDERSON: Couples, yeah.

MS. GOLD: —working together and what—how the partnership works.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we've probably collaborated more than a lot of the couples. A lot of the couples we know have had really fairly separate spheres that they design and work in. I think we've been more collaborative.

MS. GOLD: Right, and the fact that you're two both very strong individuals and have these definite ideas, and yet you successfully collaborated for so many years together is just fascinating, I think.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, it's also a matter that we've created our own sense of community right here. We are a community. In addition to that, we're involved in a vast assortment of environmental groups and just all sorts of people within our local community, and we have friends and all sorts of different things. But they are more or less—perhaps even they themselves might sense this, that they're within temporary communities. Our neighbor is in the church group, or our neighbor, she's in the garden club or in the library and so on. And these are different, separate groups, but they're important communities to her. And our association with these things is more to be of assistance wherever—on any of these groups, rather than to really be a part of it. And we've had a heck of a lot of influence on zoning ordinances in the township, but it's sort of—

MRS. ANDERSON: As an outsider.

MR. ANDERSON: As an outsider, as a—they have a name for the friendly enemy, but I've forgotten what it is.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. So your sense is that this—the two of you create—are in your essential community.

MR. ANDERSON: Right. Into which, again as spiders, this is where people come.

MS. GOLD: [Inaudible.]

MR. ANDERSON: Come into us.

MS. GOLD: Well, that was a quick diversion from talking about your other clients and commissioned work. And I don't mean to—

MR. ANDERSON: The clients thing—

MRS. ANDERSON: I thought of the early clients, which we hadn't gotten into.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: I thought of something like the family where we worked for four generations and the fact that two of the people were really quite poor, and one of them paid us \$50 a month, or something like that, after he had ordered quite a few pieces of furniture. But the family had a history that made custom-made—made furniture kind of normal. The senior woman in the family that we worked for had been brought up in Denmark and had been brought up in some kind of craft school kind of thing, I think, where she felt quite sympathetic to people like us. And after her husband divorced her, when she had three children to raise—well, he actually worked for the United—

MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

MS. GOLD: Keep going.

MR. ANDERSON: Whatever preceded the—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, he worked for the League of—

MR. ANDERSON: League of Nations.

MS. GOLD: League of Nations, oh.

MRS. ANDERSON: —and therefore she had that cosmopolitan upbringing when she was married to him. And then they were divorced and so she had to raise her children, so she got the job she could get which was managing community houses.

MR. ANDERSON: This wasn't just a community house.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, I mean she went from one to another.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, in West Orange, right, there's this enclave of old wealth.

MRS. ANDERSON: That support the community.

MR. ANDERSON: Llewellyn Park, a guarded enclave. Actually, we did one piece of sculpture in a house there. And they had one of the old mansions. It was on the border and it was a small mansion, and this got converted into a community house, which was for the kids in the neighborhood and so on. So she was in a nice environment there.

MRS. ANDERSON: But, anyway, she wanted furniture built for when she left there and went into her own apartment, and so we built most of her furniture: a bed and bedside table and a dining—little dining table and a plant table, all kinds of little furniture, including quite a lot of coffee tables because she had marble from her father's bank and she wanted to keep it going in the family. So she asked us to build a piece in coffee tables for herself and for her stepmother.

So here we went to the next generation before her by building for her stepmother. And then after we built a lot of furniture for this woman—or at the same time we were building furniture for her son, who was about—a little younger than we, and he was bringing up three little—two children in a very small house. But it seemed, I guess, normal for him to order custom-made furniture, so he did. And this is the one who paid us by the month. And when his daughter grew up and got married, we did something for her. So that turned out, we had four generations of the family.

MR. ANDERSON: I think it's about time for another one.

MS. GOLD: That's wonderful.

MR. ANDERSON: But one of the fascinating things, talking about our—the poverty of our life, or lack of money—we weren't impoverished at all—but she was clearing out the basement in this community house and she came across a woven tapestry that was split right down the center, about a three-foot or four-foot thing. And it was so interesting, and did we want it? Well, yeah, we collect everything. And it was a picture of a group of obviously French 18th century gentlemen gathering around a weaving loom. And it says Monsieur—what's his name? The famous—I'm ruining the whole thing. I can't—anyway, it's a time capsule, and this was the inventor of the punch card loom.

And it showed these individual pieces of wood that had the little holes in them, like the early IBM computer did, and which in fact when we were working in Honduras we actually saw one of these looms in use. The same kind of thing, the wooden punch cards to set the pedals on it. And we didn't know what to do with it and didn't really want it, and didn't really appreciate the significance of it with this big split in it. So the firemen here have an annual auction and we donated it to the auction. But in retrospect, this was done by that method. It was a very, very elaborate tapestry done by that.

MS. GOLD: Oh, it was done by—

[Cross talk.]

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah. *Antiques Road Show*, even with the split in it—we were very generous in our gift that we didn't realize. Yeah, early on—

MRS. ANDERSON: And there were other people during that period of time who were just starting out in their business and they were struggling and paid us probably that way. Like, if we got paid by some of the other people on a monthly basis.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, yes. Some of our very—a couple of our very wealthy ones—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I know. They were the worst—

MRS. ANDERSON: They were just slow. They were just slow in paying.

MR. ANDERSON: —dividend time before—

MS. GOLD: But was that, on the hand, sort of nice to know that you were having money coming in every month?

MRS. ANDERSON: If we could wait for it. I don't remember whether it was difficult. I know some of the big jobs that we did quite well for these wealthy people, we kept sending them bills and we really didn't like waiting for our money.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, you know, we don't really have any—we don't have to set up a college fund, we don't have kids, we don't have income, we don't have output that is finite. We pay total cash. We don't have a mortgage on this house—100 percent cash as we went along. As we got the money, then we had the demand. It's not like now you have the credit card so, hey, you go out and buy everything you want and then you're delinquent and you're paying your 18 percent interest on it. So we adjusted our demand according to our supply. So there wasn't any—we just—we'd upgrade the quality of the groceries.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: —and you always had—you didn't freeze, except when you were working on the house and living in the shop behind the house.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, we lived in the shop for quite a few years. That was fairly minimal living. We partitioned off one part of it and turned it into a living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, and the space was pretty minimal. And we even had people in for dinner. And we climbed a ladder to come up and sleep in a balcony.

MR. ANDERSON: And our cats had to learn—

MRS. ANDERSON: And I washed—

MR. ANDERSON: —to climb the ladder, which they did.

MRS. ANDERSON: I washed dishes in a bathroom sink that was, like, less than a foot by a foot, and we rinsed them there and then put them on a stool in the shower stall to drain. So it wasn't the greatest living.

MS. GOLD: And then at dinner parties, washing—[laughs]—

MRS. ANDERSON: My mother felt sorry for me. She gave me a dishwasher.

MS. GOLD: That you had in the—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, I put a dishwasher in and I'd hook it up to the bathroom sink and have it drain into the bathroom sink.

MR. ANDERSON: In the architectural reference things there's a graphic standard all the architects use for—they predetermine how the fixtures go together or—

MRS. ANDERSON: Make a bathroom.

MR. ANDERSON: So I looked at the very, very minimal one.

MRS. ANDERSON: No, I think we measured my fattest aunt and figured out how big a space she needed to get in and sit on the toilet.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: I actually did that. We installed a fish tank right next to the toilet entrance and so we had to sort of like figure out our heaviest friend, whether she would have room. [Laughs] I wonder how many people actually do that.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. I think I shot myself in the foot on that one. It is a wee bit tight.

MS. GOLD: And that was for your studio?

MR. ANDERSON: For the studio.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: Well, you both are so slender that you could fit almost anywhere.

So how many years were you living in the studio?

MRS. ANDERSON: The trouble is we have no idea how long—when we started moving in or how long we moved in. We can only find a couple of dates that say it must have been in this neighborhood, because we oozed in. We didn't have permission to live there. They didn't think we should live in that kind of space, so we started putting our furniture there just to have a place—what furniture we owned—just to have a place to put it and to have a place to eat when we came up.

MR. ANDERSON: We did get special permission. He did sign the certificate of occupancy or whatever it was, but he wanted us to get on with it.

MS. GOLD: Was this for the town?

MR. ANDERSON: I've got to leave for a minute.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, okay.

Whatever happened, but anyway, it—

MS. GOLD: Do you want us to—do you want to take a break?

MRS. ANDERSON: What time is it?

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

MS. GOLD: Okay, so as you're doing this church work—your church work was your first major work, right?

MRS. ANDERSON: Probably.

MS. GOLD: And then you started to get private clients?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, apparently along the same time we were exhibiting in various local places and each exhibit probably would help pick up another client. We got a couple of pharmaceutical company people and did quite a bit of furniture for them, and they had good contemporary houses.

MS. GOLD: And this is—you're exhibiting in what kinds of shows?

MRS. ANDERSON: It started with the New Jersey Designer Craftsmen and its yearly show, and then the Newark Museum and its yearly show, and then some special shows at the Newark Museum and the Montclair Art Museum that were more furniture than the Christmas show, which was all kinds of things.

MS. GOLD: So there were exhibits of—that would encompass you? You weren't—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we would be part of a New Jersey group, or we would be part of some other selected group of people that would be exhibited—exhibiting at that time. And I suppose each one of those shows probably picked up some decent sales and a few more clients. And then each client might lead to another client. So it really didn't take very long before we had more work than we could do in a reasonable amount of time. We were getting years behind and some people didn't like that, but that was where we were for a while.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] That must be hard when it's—when you're furnishing their house.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, the house was kind of a secondary thing. If we—we kept the business going no matter what.

MS. GOLD: Oh, I meant for the clients when you're furnishing their house and they're living without—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, yeah.

MS. GOLD: —a couch and a dining room table.



MRS. ANDERSON: They put up with us and we put up with them.

MS. GOLD: And so you had a few clients that were extremely influential. But actually, before we talk about that, I just wanted to ask you, were you making your—were you making speculative work then for the shows?

MRS. ANDERSON: Some pieces usually for every show.

MS. GOLD: So you were—

MR. ANDERSON: It was specific—doing something just for that particular show.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: The only one at all—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, that one wasn't. I thought so too, but really that was—that started with Mike Langan but then we did put it in some shows.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, why did we make for the great expansion and contraction? This was a museum that at the time wasn't air-conditioned, so stuff was moving around.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I got into that one before. No, we did—I mean, all the little stuff was done for shows. And some of those—like those tile inset tables were done for shows. The hand was done for a show.

MR. ANDERSON: It was?

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] It was bought before it got out of the shop, but it was done for a show.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, I told her it was custom—

MRS. ANDERSON: And there were—the—you have a wrong memory of something. And there were some very good jewelry holding boxes were done for that show.

MR. ANDERSON: What show was that?

MRS. ANDERSON: Trenton.

MR. ANDERSON: The Trenton show?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. So—

MR. ANDERSON: A big comprehensive—

MRS. ANDERSON: But I think actually the round "Knight table" was done for ACC Auction in the World Trade Center.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, okay, you asked me and I mentioned—you said, was that designed—

MRS. ANDERSON: You did that one wrong.

MR. ANDERSON: —and I said, they wanted a table. Well, that—I was completely wrong there. This was designed—was it designed specifically for that?

MRS. ANDERSON: For that auction to raise money for the American Craft—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: And what we would do would be guarantee so many dollars and they would sell it for twice that.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, we weren't donating this.

MS. GOLD: So you got some—

[Cross talk.]

MRS. ANDERSON: We got half of whatever—

MR. ANDERSON: Now, this was up at the top of the towers of the World Trade Center, and this was the—Sandy Grotta was involved in a lot of the activities there, and she had set up the show. She was responsible for organizing the show. And we had the piece there. And I think I probably mentioned the other day, this was about our 10th previous visit to the World Trade Center. I mean, this is about—we've only been to New York 10 times since then, and for—I mean, we passed through, and this was 1980 I think; something like that. And it was fun to go up the top of the World Trade Center. We could look out and actually see the hills there, because you go up to the top of our property here and you could see the World Trade Center site there. So this was—

MS. GOLD: So you did your “Knight table” for that?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, this was the “Knight”—

MS. GOLD: The castle.

MR. ANDERSON: —“Knight table” there. And this was one of the—yeah, talking about Joyce being a meticulous dresser, this—

MRS. ANDERSON: You don't have to tell that story.

MR. ANDERSON: I shouldn't have to tell that story. [Laughs] We agree on everything. We agree to not tell it. So as the piece that was being auctioned off, getting off—and there was a closed-circuit television with about 50 television sets—monitors. And as we got out, Joyce got out first, and she was fancy dressed and her half-slip—

MS. GOLD: Oh, dear.

MRS. ANDERSON: I had a dress that had a super-suede skirt, and apparently the suede grabbed the material of the slip and kind of pushed it down, and there it was coming down around my feet. And my husband picks it up like a scarf and puts it in his pocket. And all is well.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, instead of getting up immediately when she kicked it off—

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: Now, that's why you need a partnership.

MR. ANDERSON: This happened a second time.

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: We were being honored at the governor's party—

MRS. ANDERSON: He did an art thing every year and we would always be invited, and then there would be a dinner or something.

MR. ANDERSON: A reception and so on, and so—

MS. GOLD: Which governor?

MRS. ANDERSON: New Jersey.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, the governor of New Jersey. And—

MRS. ANDERSON: That was a long time ago.

MR. ANDERSON: We were in the reception line. Some of our little works, why, they used as gifts.

MRS. ANDERSON: State gifts.

MR. ANDERSON: So we were in the reception line and Joyce had a cape that she had made—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, it was the lightweight two-sided coat that zippered up the front, black on one side and tan on the other.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, was this one of Phyllis Flarny's?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, it was—Marianna gave it to me.

MR. ANDERSON: Right. So it was reversible.

MRS. ANDERSON: I didn't intend to keep my coat on for this dinner, and I couldn't get the zipper undone.

MR. ANDERSON: And I couldn't get the zipper undone. So here we were in this reception line. We got there at peak time, so the reception line extended out to where the cloak—coat collector was. So here we had to simultaneously hold Joyce's skirt down with one hand and—

MRS. ANDERSON: Open it enough to pull it up over my head.

MS. GOLD: Oh dear. [Laughs.]

So we were talking about your clients, and I just—I mean, you had some—over the years some very important essential clients that really—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we've mentioned people by the name of Langan who lived in Greenwich. He's an obstetrician—or was; he's retired now. And she, when she wasn't bringing up her seven children, was writing trade books. They bought a very large house, very formal house, and they didn't like any furniture they saw in the stores and they didn't know what else to do about furniture, so they left the house unfurnished for—I think she said five years, but I'm not sure. And they got some kind of wicker type furniture, or something like that, and put it in an enclosed porch off the living room, and that became the living room.

So they went to the American Craft—or the Museum of Contemporary Crafts and saw the furniture show that was there in 1957.

MR. ANDERSON: This is the one that—it was the founding members of New Jersey Design Craftsmen. Joyce decided on her own to bring Tom Tibbs, who was director of the museum very, very early on there, and we had him to dinner. Some of the members were a little bit peeved that hadn't been in on the decision. And he had an opportunity to come here and see what we were doing. So he then saw that we were among the very few woodworkers, so he started having things in small exhibits there, summertime exhibits, when we were first starting out. And we were invited to that show, the very first furniture craft show in the Museum of Contemporary Crafts.

MRS. ANDERSON: There were several little shows before the first major one.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. Right, yeah, but this was the major one. And they searched out every designer woodworker craftsman in the United States, and there were 72 of us.

MS. GOLD: Seventy-two?

MR. ANDERSON: Only 72 of us, which was—

MRS. ANDERSON: There really were that many?

MR. ANDERSON: I counted them—

MRS. ANDERSON: All right.

MR. ANDERSON: I counted them. And they—I mean, it takes only two schools, three schools to graduate that many every year. And Sam Maloof and Joyce and I were the only ones that—Walker Weed was in there.

MRS. ANDERSON: Was he?

MR. ANDERSON: But he wasn't included in the next one several years later, another definitive one. Joyce and Sam and I were the only ones that were in that one. So the—Sam had a chair like that [referring to their Sam Maloof chair -DG]—not only like that, he had made two of them, and my mother liked it and wanted to buy the one in the museum, but Mrs. Webb had already bought it, so Sam shipped us this one.

MRS. ANDERSON: The other one—actually, I wanted it. Your mother—

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, you wanted it?

MRS. ANDERSON: Your mother bought it to make me happy, but then she kept it.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, okay. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Is that true?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, right. Yeah.

MS. GOLD: But you ended up with it?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and Mrs. Webb had it—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, and I'm not sure—we got it before she died, but I had to have it reupholstered by that time because it was a mess. She had—her cats had destroyed it.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] It's very comfortable. I've been enjoying sitting in it.

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, good. I keep sliding out of it for some reason. You're not doing—well, you've got your—you're braced better.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: We don't have to fill you in on who Mrs. Webb is? You've—

MRS. ANDERSON: Do you know? Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb who established America House and—

MS. GOLD: Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: —American Craft Museum, and her money and her efforts really spearheaded the whole Craft Museum and Craft Council in New York City, and she—

MR. ANDERSON: And all the craft—

MRS. ANDERSON: —was a devoted woman. She really was devoted to the crafts.

MR. ANDERSON: It was a family tradition. It was the Vanderbilt family, and the sisters had other ones. But she totally supported the Craft Museum: the magazine, the conferences.

MRS. ANDERSON: And she knew it was—it had to make its own way, and so she got herself out of the financial support so it would find its own way and make it self- support—

MR. ANDERSON: She was, early on in our dealings—

MRS. ANDERSON: She was a lovely woman.

MR. ANDERSON: Why she—

MRS. ANDERSON: She was a lovely lady.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. She—we—had lots of contacts with us. And we were over in her penthouse apartment—I think she owned the whole building. And she was a ceramist—most people don't know this—and she had to have a little ceramic studio built there for her. David Campbell, who was the first executive secretary, he was with the New Hampshire League of Craftsmen, David Campbell, and he was her full-time sidekick there. So she had him over and she said, "Dave, imagine you're back in architectural school—I don't like the apartment here—imagine you're back in architectural school without any concerns of practicality, how would you redesign this?" So he did some sketches. She said, "Okay, we'll do it then." Do it—meant that, for instance, to get the plumbing into this new little area they had to go down through the entire apartment.

MRS. ANDERSON: She—they'd moved bathrooms, they'd moved a lot of the plumbing, a lot of the utilities, and it meant going down through the whole building. But it was a great space.

MR. ANDERSON: When she died—and this is equally spectacular in how these things happen—when she died they had a memorial service by invitation at this little—

MRS. ANDERSON: St. Peter's Chapel in the Citicorp Building.

MR. ANDERSON: The one that Louise Nevelson—

MS. GOLD: That's a beautiful chapel, yes.

MR. ANDERSON: Wonderful ceremony there. So the presiding minister—and there were all sorts of things. There was music from India and some performance, a great variety of ethnicity and so on. But a definite

straightforward—Episcopal minister?

MRS. ANDERSON: Probably.

MR. ANDERSON: And so I went up afterwards—wonderful; how did he know all these things about her? So I was talking to Paul Smith afterwards, how did he—was he a very good friend?

MRS. ANDERSON: It was such an excellent job.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. And he said, her regular minister at the last minute had to cancel out, and when this minister arrived here for the ceremony, he asked me about her.

MRS. ANDERSON: He didn't know anything.

MR. ANDERSON: He just did this absolutely personal and just incredible—and we took that opportunity—we had Paul back here—and our friend Bill Wyman was dying of brain cancer and had just done some very creative work that nobody had ever seen. I said, Paul, you've got to have a show for this—for Wyman. He said, well, we're scheduled ahead for a couple of years. So he said, "We'll see what we can do in *Craft Horizons*." So the gal whose name I could not remember and still can't, our good friend, the editor of *Craft*—

MRS. ANDERSON: Lois Moran.

MR. ANDERSON: —Lois Moran, all time, all purpose but primary editor, she managed to get in an article I think before he died, of his work there.

But we're back to—

MS. GOLD: So the Langans found you at this show with the American Craft—

MRS. ANDERSON: They had found us from the work they saw there, and they came out to our property where we were not yet living, I don't believe, and we talked about what it was that they wanted. And I don't know what kind of an impression they made. I don't think we were frightfully excited. And they brought along an architect friend who talked about a project he had, and whichever one of us talked to him, we were not too excited by his —

MR. ANDERSON: We were the wrong people. If she had had him and I had had them, why we would have been more compatible.

MRS. ANDERSON: But it turned out that the architect's job probably we would have loved if we had known who the client was, and that was a job in South America to design some prototype furniture for a large establishment, and local craftsmen would be building the furniture.

MR. ANDERSON: A whole bunch of individual houses and—

MRS. ANDERSON: But we misunderstood the project when he came. And the other client, the client from Greenwich, I'm not sure why we didn't get excited, but somehow over the next little course of time we probably communicated by letter, maybe, and gradually got to know each other and they started ordering pieces of furniture. It turned out that we worked for them for a great many years and did most of the wood pieces for their living room and some major pieces for their dining room and a few pieces for the rest of the house. And Sam Maloof did a few other pieces for the living room and chairs for the dining room.

MR. ANDERSON: We did a rosewood desk in some sort of rare rosewood. We sent pieces to Sam to do a chair for that—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, so he could have the same batch of wood for his furniture.

MS. GOLD: Oh, you sent—

MR. ANDERSON: You didn't tell her about who the client was, the other guy, the one whose stuff we didn't do in Central America—South America.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think I went through that before.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Nelson Rockefeller.

MRS. ANDERSON: Nelson Rockefeller.

MS. GOLD: We talked about that at lunch, but I don't think we—

MRS. ANDERSON: We didn't get it on the tape, no.

MS. GOLD: No, but—

MR. ANDERSON: It was Nelson Rockefeller.

MS. GOLD: —it could have been Nelson Rockefeller.

MR. ANDERSON: And we certainly would have been very compatible and we certainly—and this architect was very close to him, to the extent that—

MRS. ANDERSON: He was his private architect.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, if Rockefeller couldn't hang a picture right, he'd call him over. This happens to all of us all the time.

MRS. ANDERSON: But we didn't read the newspapers enough to know that that guy's name was really Rockefeller.

MR. ANDERSON: But the *déjà vu* on this—did Joyce tell you about in her—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I told her. Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: —about applying for a job to work private for the Foundation?

MS. GOLD: Yes, yes.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, she certainly didn't tell you that probably the person that got that job—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, she didn't.

MR. ANDERSON: —or a very similar job later was Henry Kissinger's wife. She's shaking her head that she doesn't agree with that.

MS. GOLD: Okay. So—

MR. ANDERSON: This—

MS. GOLD: I'm sorry, go ahead.

MR. ANDERSON: This is probably the point at which the Grottas came in, because they also saw the show and there were some other pieces in there, a piece that was done for someone that—

MRS. ANDERSON: For a friend of theirs.

MR. ANDERSON: For a friend of theirs.

MRS. ANDERSON: Or someone they thought had superior stuff and they were quite impressed we had done a piece that was in that show, but we had done that piece for this other person.

MR. ANDERSON: And he was chairman of the Port Authority.

MRS. ANDERSON: That client.

MR. ANDERSON: These are the people I'm taking to task, talking about how they absolutely want to make the Trade Center memorial so commercial. But they were nice people to work for.

So anyhow, they saw our stuff and we started working for them back in their older house here in New Jersey.

MRS. ANDERSON: The Grottas, this is.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, the Grottas. And they arrived up here at our studio. They weren't freshly married; I think they had a kid on the way. In fact, they may have even had a child.

MRS. ANDERSON: They might have because they ordered a bed for their—the daughter she was pregnant with. They said—somehow—

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: But that must have been a little later because they knew how slow we were, so they ordered their daughter's bed while she was still pregnant with—

[Cross talk.]

MS. GOLD: —a crib?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, this was a full bed.

[Laughs.]

MR. ANDERSON: But they came to us and said, this is a little confidential—the family doesn't even know this—I'm pregnant. [Laughs] Well, what they were doing—they quickly latched on to this. And her good design sense—and she later studied to be a decorator. They had all these ornate silver wedding presents and all this expensive but pedestrian commercial furniture, and they just wanted to unload it. So we were very quickly put to work on doing—

MS. GOLD: They began as people with strong design sense and—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, I think it was just developing. I don't think they had any knowledge of the craft world, but they knew they didn't like what they were living with and they were looking for whatever it was they were going to replace it with. And they were slowly learning because we took them a lot of—through a lot of our craft friends, introduced them to them, and they started collecting a lot of our friends, and then became good friends with these other craftspeople.

So—but it wasn't—they were just starting to learn. And it was a fairly slow process for them. You didn't really have to get in and do a whole house full of furniture. They had a house full of furniture and we just really started replacing it.

MS. GOLD: And you—

MR. ANDERSON: And some architectural work too. She started—

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, yes.

MR. ANDERSON: She started ripping the house apart as she got the furniture. It was just a typical suburban house with heavy moldings and so on, and room by room—we'd do a complete room. We'd do the furniture, then she'd move it out as it got finished and they'd put up plastic and have the contractors go in room after room over a period of—

MRS. ANDERSON: We would change where the windows were. We would change the floor sometimes.

MR. ANDERSON: We'd change the molding design, like no molding here, and do the architectural work.

MRS. ANDERSON: Change the fireplace.

MR. ANDERSON: We didn't do any of the physical work.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, but we designed a lot of things in the house.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, that's interesting. I was just going to ask you how you choose your designs according to the house—the environment that it is going to go in, and here you're talking about how you're altering—

MRS. ANDERSON: You're changing it.

MS. GOLD: —the environment.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes. Well, that house was a bit impossible. We would never have worked for it if it had continued to look the way it did when we went in, but with the idea that it was being changed into a contemporary kind of space.

MR. ANDERSON: We talk about not judging our clients on their income or anything, but when you're in an ongoing relationship with a very lot of pieces, it's just awful nice that they can afford to do whatever is necessary to create this whole total—the outside of the house, except with a few changes in lights, is just like the rest of the houses. It didn't block—[inaudible]—substantial, but inside is photographic. We have a lot of our pictures here within—in that house.

MRS. ANDERSON: But they, like quite a few of our clients, had parents who set them up. One parent—one family

of one of the partners bought the house and the other family bought the furniture. So we were being paid by one of the families—one of their families, one of their predecessors.

MR. ANDERSON: Hmm?

MRS. ANDERSON: We were being paid by the next generation.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah. They both came from substantial—

MRS. ANDERSON: So it allowed them to really invest quite a bit of money in furniture.

MR. ANDERSON: And he's very, very successful.

MRS. ANDERSON: He's successful, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: Incredibly successful. He's built an entire business and he's got to where, well, he's tired of making all these decisions and he sold it to the employees. And after about a year the employees hired him back to be the head of the company again, and by then, why, they had taken over all but the nitty gritty things. And he's such a fantastic salesman that he increased the sales even beyond what they were when he owned the company.

MRS. ANDERSON: We had never been there, and recently they wanted us to come down and see it. And they had really done a great design job, making a place that's sells industrial wire, making the reception area and the private offices great design jobs—graphics all over. It was a really good design.

We also—that reminds me, we also worked for a business located in the airport, and that was a think-tank kind of business. And it was fun working with that one because they wanted us to bring nature into this fairly sterile environment. And they had hired Sandy Grotta to do the graphics and the layout, to make their offices good-looking places. And with all our—with all our sessions trying to figure out what it is they should have, we all decided to take some great big logs and hollow them out, logs with hollows in them and cavities in them, and really huge ones, and use them for coffee tables, and then build like a little forest of littler logs that could be stools that people could sit on.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, now there is—I've got to interrupt you here because there was an odd kind of reason for doing this. Sandy—we don't work for decorators at all, but she makes references—and this was another powerful think-tank person that would sit out on the picnic table and design these things. And his concept was—he was really in the think-tank business. His business was to train corporate executives to loosen up their thinking a little bit. And he felt that he—he'd located right at the airport so he could just hop off of a plane and be there. And he said, you know, what I've done here is gone out of their sterile corporate environment into the sterile corporate environment of the airplane and the airport and into my building here. And it was beautifully designed a little bit towards the efficiency end and a little bit in the—sort of the Italian, a little bit slick design.

But it was a beautifully designed thing. He wanted something to get them to thinking, so this is where these coffee tables came in. We had access to a tree that, from dating its annual rings, it was here during the time that George Washington was here. It was a huge, huge oak tree.

MS. GOLD: And you're spreading your arms about four feet?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, about four feet.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think one of them was four feet.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. And the owner, a very good friend, said we could have it, and they were nice in doing so. We made an outdoor table, same thing for them. And technically it was a real, real challenge because, again, this wood-shrinking thing when there's a big bulk. And simply to get it into that building without having to bring a crane in to bring it in through the window—there were cracks in it but we really deliberately split it apart, then we hollowed the whole thing out so it would be lighter-weight, and joined it back together again.

And the concept here was that the corporate executives are getting into this creativity and loosening things up, and here we have an example of nature here, and we're going to make for them a —what we would call a dendrochronometer. We were counting the dendro—we were counting the rings, and we could tell when the pond next to this tree dried up by the rings. And it was all the way back to the Revolutionary War, the whole history of this tree. And we never got to do it, but he knew what it was and he used that as examples of free thinking for creativity.

MS. GOLD: So this coffee table was simply the log with its bark taken off?



MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: —and not a—

MR. ANDERSON: No, the bark was—I think we managed to salvage the bark.

MRS. ANDERSON: It's been mostly taken off.

MR. ANDERSON: We had to take it off and glue it back—yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't think we left much on.

MR. ANDERSON: Very smooth—

MRS. ANDERSON: We did several of them, yeah.

MS. GOLD: And the top was sanded?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah.

MS. GOLD: It was the top of the—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, yeah, the table. But the crack that was in the tree itself was very, very wide, so what we did—sometimes in cracks—when we were working for the Langans, for instance—a beautiful pattern, it was a crack that was too visible to look into it, so we took strips of ebony and worked them into the cracks so you could still see that there was a crack there. Well, this one we put a dark colored material under the crack so you could still see the crack.

MS. GOLD: So for you the cracks and the damage and the trouble that a piece of wood has endured is essential to its—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, it was part of the history of—yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, part of the specific purpose of the piece. We talked of, for instance, since this was a little more disciplined environment I had access to huge coils of sheet metal, so that you looked at it and it looked like a tree ring. I could get them this big and I could have them cut off, so I'd have them light enough weight—but still they still were about a ton, or something like that—so that there would be coils simulating the tree rings. And it's just an idea we looked at and threw out. It wasn't what we were going to do. But then—

MRS. ANDERSON: And we also made plates for the—for that business, wooden plates with rims that would hold a specific plasticized paper plate. And that was so people who—there were a little refrigerator so that the people who worked there could help themselves to food, and people who came in could help themselves to something to eat or drink, and they could use wooden plates and they could use aesthetically interesting spoons and forks.

MR. ANDERSON: Everything was beautifully designed.

MRS. ANDERSON: Bowls—they made bowls and—where they had put the snacks, people could help themselves.

MR. ANDERSON: Sandy designed trash containers, returnable trash and so on. But then it came to the main lobby and they had a completely different idea. We had a show down in the State Museum in Trenton, and we made a piece—it was sort of understood that it was going to be a piece that the committee was going to buy.

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't know that we knew that when we made the piece.

MR. ANDERSON: You don't think so?

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't think we knew that.

MR. ANDERSON: Then why did we make it? We just wanted—

MRS. ANDERSON: For the show.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, we made it for the show, okay, thinking maybe we'd want it? Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: No, we just made for the show.

MR. ANDERSON: And what this was was a library stepstool, but the library stepstool was wooden books. The bottom one was about three feet by three feet, and they're thick enough so that it would be comfortable to step

up on them. And using different colored woods, quite an elegant piece, and they now have that in their permanent collection. So the client with the think tank saw that and he wanted one of those for his main—

MRS. ANDERSON: Lobby.

MR. ANDERSON: Lobby there. And, again, this is an elegant operation. They had a—[inaudible]—little container for the Times—not the *New York Times*, the *London Times*. [Laughs] So that got underway, and I made a cardboard model of a much huger—only three books the size of a four-foot square coffee table. And it was going to take time, and he knew it was going to take time, and he was a very impatient person. And finally, just as we were about—no, he substituted—he had his—

MRS. ANDERSON: His carpenter.

MR. ANDERSON: —his kitchen cabinetmaker made them out of colored Formica, sort of to get the essence of the space and so on. And that was very acceptable, but wasn't us. So finally he—

MRS. ANDERSON: He lost patience.

MR. ANDERSON: He lost patience so we didn't do that. But what we could do for him quite quickly was to take these little stools, these little logs, and again carving them all out, and create a forest of them. They were different sizes and so on and some of them useful as coffee tables and some of them—or did we do another coffee table? No, I guess they—

MRS. ANDERSON: We did some of those for the room with the big—

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, right, we did the room—

MRS. ANDERSON: —where the big coffee tables were, but they were the same height.

MS. GOLD: Well, that's interesting because when I think of your designs, I think of something that's very graceful and light—delicate.

MRS. ANDERSON: This is the opposite: big and chunky and—

MS. GOLD: So you can incorporate—it's not uncommon for you to incorporate different aesthetic—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, it was a client we liked working for, there were concepts we liked, and those seemed like logical answers so we've done them. I don't think physically we would want to do those—we might like to decide to do them and have somebody else—we actually did have someone else do the little ones. It wasn't something we wanted to get into doing a lot of.

MR. ANDERSON: It's just a general sense of the general forms. We thought of them so we were thinking this goes together in our head. But we absolutely definitely have no hang up as people buying conventional furniture: oh, we have a cherry something or another here so we have to have cherry over there, or whatever, because look around here; you'll see a zillion different woods.

MS. GOLD: But when you design for a space—I don't know, maybe you want to—I don't know if this is appropriate, but I just wanted to say maybe you want to fast forward and talk about designing for the Grottas' space now.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, okay.

MS. GOLD: Or did you have other things that you wanted to—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, all right. We got into that—Richard Meier is, as I think we mentioned before, a world-renowned architect who, for instance, did the Getty Museum, a huge 10-year project out on the West Coast. And he—

MRS. ANDERSON: And a lot of museums all over the world.

MR. ANDERSON: Museums all over the world, doing a little chapel for the Vatican. And he had done another little chapel for a cathedral in a little town that we had visited in Germany at one time. He also has done a very limited number of houses, and the clients that get those houses are just totally inundated with people wanting—he's so important that he has a contract person who is in control of the publicity, to see that the publicity comes out in—

MRS. ANDERSON: In a totally controlled—

MR. ANDERSON: —the proper number of magazines all at the same time. So anyhow, the Grottas—

MRS. ANDERSON: They were personal friends.

MR. ANDERSON: They were personal friends.

MRS. ANDERSON: They had grown up together with Richard Meier.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. Just totally by coincidence and nothing else, Lou's grandfather owned a house down the block from us and they went to public—they didn't go to public school I don't think, but they lived—the family came from the area and Richard Meier came from South Orange, right next to West Orange. So totally—this isn't one of my major link things here.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: So they were—so he designed a house with the intent that it was—as a museum, and on his drawings he had spaces allocated that this is where the Anderson furniture that exists goes, and that over here there will be where other additional pieces that he had laid out—

MS. GOLD: So once again you're having a space designed for your furniture?

MRS. ANDERSON: Not designed for it, but designed with it in mind.

MR. ANDERSON: In no way would I say that Richard Meier was—that we were forcing a design on it. But the Grottas needed space for—

MRS. ANDERSON: And he had seen the pieces.

MR. ANDERSON: He was acting a little bit like the decorator to decide—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think they had specified which pieces in the old house were definitely going to go in the new house, and so he had that information and had seen them. And so that would have gone into his thinking when he created the spaces, I suspect. Of course, they were very firm—she was very firm that these particular pieces are going to go in the new house.

MS. GOLD: And that was the dining table that—

MRS. ANDERSON: The dining table and the coffee table that's in the den. What else moved? Oh, the chest up in the bedroom.

MR. ANDERSON: The bedroom chest, the other chest.

MRS. ANDERSON: But with some of the other pieces, we designed new ones that fulfilled the same function as the old ones and changed design somewhat. But they replaced—because of size or new space they changed a little bit when they went in the new house.

MR. ANDERSON: I wonder if in fact—you know, this stuff sounds horrible on the tape—well, it was this bed and that bed, but I wonder if we didn't do the round table for their little dining room in the old house?

MRS. ANDERSON: In that house? No, we did the round table for the Berlins.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, but—

MRS. ANDERSON: A game table for the Berlins. They had asked us to replace that little table in the breakfast room—

MR. ANDERSON: And we started thinking—

MRS. ANDERSON: —and we didn't really want to do anything quite like that. So they—whatever they did, they found something that was acceptable there.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay. And now we're relating in our links back to the round table in the—

MRS. ANDERSON: The Grottas have that round table because we put the other round table, the Berlins' round table, in a show in New York, and they did not want it to travel and that show was going to travel. So we said we would make another one, and so the Grottas asked if they could have the other one and they would be willing to let that travel. So we did one for them.

MS. GOLD: But, you know, maybe we can talk—and I was actually hoping that—just to talk—for you to talk about how you think about a design for a specific space. And I guess the examples that I chose are kind of wrong because those are the spaces that actually changed as you made them. The Grottas' space has changed as you made them, and then your—

MRS. ANDERSON: Actually, they were fairly locked into how they were living and wanted to live, so that they were recreating a lot of the spaces from the old house in the new house.

MS. GOLD: In the new house, right.

MRS. ANDERSON: The total aesthetics, the look of the building was absolutely opposite what the original house was. But they knew they liked to eat, and a big state—table that stayed in place. They knew they liked a slender sideboard mounted on whatever the wall was where it should be in the dining room, and so we did design a new sideboard to go there, but in some ways it related to the old one and in some ways it had changed quite a bit with the new space. We designed a new coffee table for the new living room, and the older coffee table was put in the study off the living room where—

MR. ANDERSON: It was a small living room.

MRS. ANDERSON: —where the space is quite different and doesn't make too many statements. The living room was the one you had to think about.

MS. GOLD: So that coffee table was designed—that's the coffee table with the contours there.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: And that was the one you designed—

MR. ANDERSON: Because that lived—

MRS. ANDERSON: That was from the old house.

MR. ANDERSON: That lived with the Hans Wegner—Hans Wegner? Who did the couches?

MRS. ANDERSON: Did they have the Mies couches?

MR. ANDERSON: They had the Mies van der Rohe. They had the Mies—

MRS. ANDERSON: In the old house?

MR. ANDERSON: In the old house, yeah. That was all that was in the living room basically, these two massive—Mies van der Rohe had designed them as a special contract job for a hotel in Canada, or something like that. And Sandy, being knowledgeable about all these things, found out about it and she had them made—copies of them made for her. And what they were, very beautiful smooth leather in big pieces, and the softness of the leather—like the couch here. And—but the outline was very rectangular, a severe rectangle. So we decided to—since that's all in the room basically, and our coffee table, we decided the coffee table had to be compatible with those. So we designed a coffee table that was hard and soft at the same time. So what it was was a rather disciplined cube. It was made of three pieces—

MRS. ANDERSON: Rectangle.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I suppose it was cubic wasn't it? It wasn't rectangular in profile; it was square. She never likes to make exact squares. It—

MRS. ANDERSON: It's not a square coffee table, if that's what you mean. Which one are you talking about?

MR. ANDERSON: We're talking about the one that went with the couches.

MRS. ANDERSON: Are you talking about the one that's in the study now?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, not the one that now goes with the couches. That's kind of an ambiguous statement.

MR. ANDERSON: That's the one you were asking about, wasn't it, the one that goes with the couch? Yeah. So it's physically three pieces but we decided to join them together because there's no reason to move them around. And the outside, with exposed dovetail joints, just nicely rectangle, but this narrow band going off center across it is a flowing topographic concept, looking from above, again, as a topographic map turned sideways. You look

at all these—each separate little half-inch piece is a little different contour for the overall contour, as if a contour map. And then on the side—we go around the side and on one side there's one with an overhanging cliff, which was rather deliberately made to look somewhat like a map, it container with a lip. But none of this is realistic.

So it was sort of—that was where the softness came in, and as we were designing it and started building it we decided, well, this is sort of playful. It's a little bit toy-like even though it's doing the job with the leather. So we drilled a hole into one of the cavities up on the top, and a complicated pathway going over in the mouth, and we made a—like a tunnel for a marble to go down and hit a little bell on the way down as it goes in there.

MRS. ANDERSON: Actually, now it lives with four Eames chairs, and we designed another coffee table to go with —

MR. ANDERSON: Correct.

MRS. ANDERSON: —with the Mies [van der Rohe] couch.

MR. ANDERSON: And the other coffee table is to fit into this architectural space. If you go up to the door going out to the fridge, it goes to the swimming pool. If you look down through the second floor, you look down the stairwell and down through several other openings and down at the fireplace. And everything, all these line up absolutely perfectly. You sight down there and you see all these even lines. So we wanted to fit into that concept, so we wanted it long and narrow directly in front of the fireplace. That's been moved, you know? They moved it off center a little bit. But—

MRS. ANDERSON: They're learning. Maybe they'll get less geometric after a while.

MR. ANDERSON: And we had a walnut tree that we cut that had carpenter ants in it, so it had these tunnel-like things exposed and part of it eaten away. But on either end of the log it was perfectly straight, clear walnut with the dark heartwood and the light sapwood. And the ends went around and we had these irregular forms. This was two-inch thick, and we wanted exposed dovetail joints, but two inches is sort of a hefty amount to look at. In addition to that, a two-inch dovetail would be subject to shrinking and opening up to a tiny bit. So we did a reverse dovetail, so instead of having all these fingers and pins right at the corner, you look at the top and you see a perfectly rectangular table. And then set back in about three-quarters of an inch you see the top of the dovetail pins coming in there, with the little wedges and so on. So it's a very subtle relation to the cabinetry, more or less, of this exotic design.

MS. GOLD: And actually, when I think of your work I think of this contrast of using your joints as a contrast. Do you—which makes me wonder whether you think of that as being a signature item, or how you describe your work to people who don't know it?

MRS. ANDERSON: The exposed joints, which has been used on and off throughout crafted furniture through history, some of us like it and some of us don't. We happen to like kind of the additional interest that it creates in a piece, and we like the structure of it. We might use it in many places, expose it even where it's hardly ever—where it's not really seen.

MR. ANDERSON: Like we were talking about the little triangular stool there with the little wedges in it and so on. We don't—[inaudible]—in an aggressive manner; it's just sort of—as a matter of fact—

MRS. ANDERSON: These shelves are put in that way, and it's not done as any major element; you don't look at the side of a bookcase very often. But it's just kind of an interesting—

MR. ANDERSON: A tiny little wedge in there.

MRS. ANDERSON: —interesting addition.

MS. GOLD: And there's also sometimes a sense of humor in your work. And I guess I don't want to pass off—pass over the chest of drawers. Was that a commission or was that a—

MR. ANDERSON: I think that sort of works into the time-wise, and how it happened works in a little bit to the round table. Do you want me to backtrack a little bit?

MRS. ANDERSON: We did the round table enough I think.

MR. ANDERSON: No, we didn't do anything at all about the round table.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, we have. Yes, we have, haven't we?

MR. ANDERSON: No, we haven't. We haven't given the link of the genesis of the round table. Here we were with

the circular gaming table, trying to figure out how to make it, and finally came to the conclusion—and working this and wanted to work it out when we got a client that wanted one, making this jig to hold these four segmented pieces, and what the segmented pieces are for are to allow the wood to expand and contract, and it moves a great deal.

And so, instead of fighting it, I joined it, left a gap between these four segments and had a free floating tenon in there to keep them able to move back and forth but not up and down. And once having made that jig, I made it for different sizes. And although we don't normally repeat another piece that we have done previously—

[END TAPE 3 SIDE B.]

MS. GOLD: Okay. This is Donna Gold interviewing Edgar and Joyce Anderson. This is tape—disc four, September 19, 2002—and we are continuing our conversation. And we'll be talking about your journey to Honduras. But I actually wanted to—I realize I have two questions I wanted to finish up with in terms of—on your design discussion. What was—what place does accidents have to play in your work?

MRS. ANDERSON: You mean the accidental thing that happens—

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: —in a piece of wood, or do you mean a physical accident to someone?

MS. GOLD: No, not physical, but I'm sure that is something that has happened. But, no, the accidental things that happen in your work. Do you use it?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, frequently I think we think that's a fortuitous detour or opening up some new area of thinking about it. If suddenly we saw something very interesting in a piece of wood that we didn't know was there before, we would probably switch gears a little bit to use that particular piece of wood. What other kind of accidental thing would happen?

Think of anything?

MR. ANDERSON: I can think of lots of accidental things day by day, trees falling in the wrong place and so on. You're talking in reference to the ceramist who—the cracks and so on. Yeah, as they happen, but accidents that we made is what I'm thinking about.

MRS. ANDERSON: We go back and correct them.

MR. ANDERSON: Hmm?

MRS. ANDERSON: We usually go back and redo that, whatever that might be.

MR. ANDERSON: Like the greatest serendipitous accident. Our bathroom, the tub is filled with fish mounted on the wall; that's the tub filler. And our ceramist friend, Ed Chandless, had an exhibit that he wanted to have a fish sculpture, and he did two of them, and one of them the entire backside of the fish blew out and he said, "Can you use this?" And we said, yes, we can use this as a tub filler in the bathroom. The problem was that the backside was the wrong backside, so we had to take our whole tub and turn it in the other direction so it could kind of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, we hadn't put it in place yet but we had to change how we thought we were going to do the tub.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] All right. Well, I don't want to keep us from Honduras too long, so do you want to talk about Honduras, how you got there?

MRS. ANDERSON: You want to start with how we got there?

MR. ANDERSON: Sure. How we got there, we had this ongoing relationship with the American Craft Council. And at the first World Craft Council at Columbia University we had an opportunity to see our old friend, Sam Maloof, and Bob Stocksdale, the bowl turner, Toshiko Takaezu, the ceramist, and the Finnish sculptor, Tapio Wirkkala. Should I sidetrack onto Tapio? That's a fascinating—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, we'll keep going.

MR. ANDERSON: We'll get back to that. So we had an opportunity to meet somebody there, but the background on the foreign aid first, so you know what was happening—Jack Lenor Larsen, world-famous weaver, and one of the prime movers on the American Craft Council, he's a textile designer. In fact, the couch in the other room has

got some of his fabric on, but it was cut off one of our clients'—and he also manufactures—he's got a lot of looms working.

He was, more or less independently, or with small group financing or something, going around the world, into the backwoods of India, for instance, where everything is done by hand, all the looms are done by hand, and to try to increase their design skills using the equipment they had there and to try and get them into a little bit of more equipment. He may have been in the USAID program too, I don't know, but he started the concept there, and the show, the United States Friendship, was enlarged by the State Department into the USAID, which was foreign aid. They're the same people that provide all sorts of things, including weapons and so on. And this particular part of AID was called the—translated into—

MRS. ANDERSON: Small Industry.

MR. ANDERSON: No, it was—

MRS. ANDERSON: Small Industry?

MR. ANDERSON: —Alliance for Progress.

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, okay. We were in the Small Industry section.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, but that's because the government couldn't—it wouldn't be good to—

MRS. ANDERSON: You didn't want to call it crafts.

MR. ANDERSON: They didn't want to call crafts, so what they—it really was a craft program, but it was called Small Industry. And the idea was to develop these local craftsmen, some of which have very good skills. And it got from Jack Larsen the beginning the person could actually do it, but the small industry person was to get non-government, non-organized into big skills people for their flexible hand—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think the main idea was to put more labor into the raw materials so that, for instance, a country like Honduras, instead of shipping out a lot of mahogany they could be shipping out some products made with that mahogany, and therefore would add value to what it was that they were shipping out.

MS. GOLD: And they didn't have their own indigenous industries at that point?

MRS. ANDERSON: In Honduras there were a lot of little woodshops, but it wasn't an exporting—it hadn't gotten to the point where they were exporting into the international world or even the North American world, and they weren't even exporting much into the Central American world, where they very much could have been doing, with their large number of woodshops, but it hadn't gotten to that point. And the other crafts were not very well developed either.

MR. ANDERSON: Now, what this needed was two types of persons. It needed a hands-on person, but then since the objective was to develop the local market, whatever they called the common market in Central America, but also for shipment to the United States—

MRS. ANDERSON: As an ultimate aim, but that was only the ultimate—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, right. So they needed somebody. Jack Larsen had all of these skills so he could do it there, but all the people we were talking about today, even the people with the larger shops, aren't really into merchandising as such.

MRS. ANDERSON: No, they needed the marketing ability and the research abilities and financial ability.

MR. ANDERSON: So this would be the industrial designer, and the industrial designer, at the same time, he knows how things are made, but he doesn't have in his organization the hands-on skill people; they're more or less drawing-board people. Dave Chapman of Dave Chapman, Goldsmith and Yamasaki, which were at the time the world's biggest industrial designers—

MRS. ANDERSON: In Chicago.

MR. ANDERSON: In Chicago. And they did design trunks and motors.

MRS. ANDERSON: And Parker pens.

MR. ANDERSON: Parker pens.

MRS. ANDERSON: And a lot of other stuff that you don't realize they were designers of. Anyway, he got the contract for several of these countries. And I think as we got to know him personally it must have been kind of a do-good task he'd given himself: go live like the poor people do and learn that part of the world and contribute his bit to that part of the world.

MR. ANDERSON: There have periodically been editorials on these starving nations over here and we can't—we're overfed even to the extent that the starving nations are designing cans for cat food for the United States. But Dave Chapman was very, very good at it.

Now, the reason I went back to that ACC World Conference was that Sam Maloof had been with Chapman on a program in—

MRS. ANDERSON: Salvador.

MR. ANDERSON: No, well, before that, Middle East.

MRS. ANDERSON: I think he'd probably been to maybe Lebanon.

MR. ANDERSON: Lebanon. And then he'd been to Salvador. And, again, as an individual craftsman, both places. [Inaudible.] Roy Ginstrom—Roy was an independent design consultant, but he traveled around the world getting existing shops going marketing United States-acceptable products, and he worked for one of the importers, the catalogue-type importers out on the West Coast where there would be weavers that could be doing coarse fabrics in a certain country and he'd get them to do like floor mats with his colors and so on.

So anyhow, Sam Maloof set it up, and Dave Chapman liked us, and so we—

MRS. ANDERSON: He offered you the job of going to Honduras and being kind of the leader, whatever they called it, of a group of craftspeople. And soon he asked for our recommendations for a ceramist and a—

MR. ANDERSON: Weaving.

MRS. ANDERSON: I'm not sure; we didn't know about weaving at that point. It was a ceramist, and we decided along the way that it was another woodworker we needed more than many other things that they might have had.

MR. ANDERSON: We were the executive on-site, executive director, Joyce and I.

MRS. ANDERSON: And I think he—

MR. ANDERSON: And it was a little bit open-ended. We had just—

MRS. ANDERSON: I was not hired until—

MR. ANDERSON: No.

MRS. ANDERSON: They only hired—they would not hire a couple. They'd had bad experiences with couples so they only hired Edgar, and I was allowed to go along and get my travel expenses paid.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, we did that. It was a counterpart agency. Whenever they go into a country there has to be an organization within the country that will carry it on, so it's called a counterpart organization. So we got Joyce listed as a contractor working for the company.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, sure, that happened halfway after we were there and after I worked full-time because there was so much work. So I worked for nothing for half the time we were there, but they paid for my travel around the country—

MR. ANDERSON: Which was good.

MRS. ANDERSON: —and then the counterpart agency discovered they had enough money, so they offered to hire me on the same kind of basic salary that you were being paid.

MS. GOLD: [To Mrs. Anderson -DG] Was there any question about you going or—I mean, was it a decision that you made or—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, I probably thought about it a couple of times but finally decided I'd much rather go down there than sit here and carry on by myself. And anyway, it seemed like a real interesting experience.

MS. GOLD: [To Mr. Anderson -DG] And was there a question for you about going, or—



MR. ANDERSON: No.

MS. GOLD: —or once you were asked you really wanted to?

MR. ANDERSON: No, I probably said, well, wait a minute, I've got to think about that; okay, let's do it. [They laugh.] Because we're not really tourists. We've been all over, but we'd much prefer to go with some relationship to the country—and we haven't done too many of these—so we get a much, much better feel. Instead of the tourist traps, we have entrée into all the back doors and see what it really is like to be there. So, no, there was no hesitation at all. We were sent off with Dave Chapman.

Dave Chapman's doctor knew what pills were necessary, so he would prescribe the whole traveling kit of water purification stuff and so on. So we were definitely not a Peace Corps kind of thing. We'd worked with the Peace Corps, and they do admirable work, one-on-one, which is valuable, and all sorts of stuff, and an incredible learning experience for the volunteers of whatever age. And so we had all of that in what we were doing, but we had a budget, and we had—we were experts, so we weren't amateur woodworkers and ceramists and so on; we were professionals.

And the budget was that we had a rotating purchase fund. So instead of going into a shop and saying, hey, we're these great American experts here and we'll tell you what to do here and you're going to make a lot of money on the products, we go into the shop and say, well, we're conducting a program here from which you will benefit, and we will show you how you can benefit, and we're going to buy some products from you, show you how to sell them, and we are going to—in return we're going to hire your very best craftsmen to work with us.

And there was a great amount of political stuff, and Joyce was correcting me the other day that I had this wrong. I was saying that they had an economic system that was developed by a European country that devised this, but what it was was that the local larger businesses, there was a woodworking establishment with 10 people in the back, quite a bit outside of town, and it was structured so that they had to pay a tax on their employees.

Is that right?

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't think so. I just think you'd better not get too much into that.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay. Well, anyhow, to pay for school and so on. But in any event, the structure was such that the people that worked for them were on a contract basis, so to speak, with the particular clients. The customer would come in and one person would be assigned this and the others would work when necessary. So this is the relationship we had.

MRS. ANDERSON: That might work in some shops, but we worked with quite a lot of wood shops, and they ranged from two people to maybe—a two-person shop to maybe a 10 or 15—a 10-person shop. And the equipment for the most part was quite primitive or small, and only one or two shops had fairly sophisticated machinery. But the hand skills were good and there were some carving skills. So it looked as though there were real possibilities in woodworking to get them some products that could go further than they'd gone up to that point. So we quickly decided to add another woodworker to the program, brought in our wood-carving friend, and with him we got a new cooperative going.

We happened to meet a Franciscan monk on Christmas Eve when nobody was working, and we got talking, and it turned out he had been running a shoemaking cooperative which wasn't doing well at all, and it was sort of trying to help an area that looked like all the other slums, but somehow this one wasn't like slums. These were people who wanted to work and were really willing to work, and they had gotten themselves a little shop, and instead of just being a hillside slum they were guys with a business. They were going to create, but shoemaking wasn't going well. So he heard about us and he asked if we'd be interested in working with his cooperative and getting the woodworking thing going.

MR. ANDERSON: This was totally outside of the—

MRS. ANDERSON: We'd been told, don't work with the Peace Corps and don't work with the Catholic Church.

MR. ANDERSON: And also, we wanted experienced people, but their experience was—I mean, shoemaking has certain tactile skills, and so on.

MRS. ANDERSON: So, anyway, it was a great opportunity. So we did do it, and those people, with our friend who came down—our friend never learned to speak a word of Spanish, but he was a friendly, happy person—

MR. ANDERSON: Great big teddy bear.

MRS. ANDERSON: —who people loved. And by his gestures and by his showing them what he could do and what they could do, they very quickly became pole carvers and they did some wonderful work. Pretty soon it wasn't

just the men; pretty soon it was their wives and then pretty soon it was their children, and people were working day and night. And Emil, who was a bachelor and a fairly lonely person, was quite willing to spend day and night. He was quite willing to buy balls for the little kids to play with. And it was a very, very good set up.

MR. ANDERSON: And he—

MS. GOLD: Emil is the carver?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, Emil Milan.

MR. ANDERSON: He's a sculptor/carver, and he's exhibited.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, he has since died. But he was a good friend of ours.

MR. ANDERSON: We've got him into the Newark Museum briefly later. He exhibited—

MRS. ANDERSON: We kind of had seen a lot of the carving that was being done in the country, and it was mostly a copy of what was in Copan. And though we thought Copan was actually wonderful, we didn't see any reason why wood carvers should be just copying Copan. So we would get an oak leaf or we would get a pineapple or we would get some local product and take them stepwise and say, okay, let's carve this one now and let's carve that one now, hope to take them step by step.

MR. ANDERSON: But these were very abstract, very contemporary looking things, and Emil was guiding them throughout that.

MRS. ANDERSON: And we decided the bowls should be more than just bowls, so somehow or other, with a whole bunch of us, we decided to put bird heads and animal heads on them. So they became really very interesting bowls.

MR. ANDERSON: Now, again, we're not—

MS. GOLD: So these ideas didn't generate from the carvers themselves?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, they were—

MR. ANDERSON: Emil.

MRS. ANDERSON: We had—I mean, maybe eventually they would get to that, but they didn't—they weren't there yet.

MR. ANDERSON: But you've got to definitely say that these were contemporary forms that Emil, in his skill, and Joyce pushing him—the bowls had feet on so they—or bowls that could mount on a wall and be a decorative thing.

MRS. ANDERSON: But sometimes we had the backside making a mess, so we hung it up on the wall on the backside.

MR. ANDERSON: They would be definitely saleable in Emil's—

MRS. ANDERSON: They were great bowls.

MR. ANDERSON: They should have gotten catalogued.

MRS. ANDERSON: We have since seen them copied on the islands, and people got those and really mass-produced them for somewhere else.

MR. ANDERSON: But each person signed his name on it, and Joyce would come in at the end of the day and keep track of their time, because we were paying them for it. And Joyce got all the business organization on this. It was a real, real going thing. It was a great thing.

MRS. ANDERSON: They really needed to be paid every day or so because they just didn't have anything to eat.

MS. GOLD: So you paid them by the day, you didn't pay them by the bowl.

MR. ANDERSON: We paid them—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, I mean I paid them each day, but by whatever they had made, and I really didn't pay them probably by the hour. I apparently judged what the products were. Sometimes you would feel very bad

that you weren't going to give them more money, but you knew that it was part of what had to be developed, and they're getting a business going.

At one point they had a meeting in the major office, and they were—they sent their top guys to talk with the U.S. government people, and they had come to ask us to buy the machinery. And Emil had already bought them a couple of simple drills, and we could have probably gotten them some equipment. And I had to say, no, we're not going to—that's really not our role here, and you guys are going to be accumulating a little money—more money than you're used to making, and you're just going to have to start figuring out some way to save that money and buy yourself some equipment.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the guys was—excuse me.

MRS. ANDERSON: Go ahead.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the guys that wasn't a shoemaker, was just a friend of theirs, was an airline mechanic, and so he volunteered to get some spare airplane parts to make a lathe, make some carving equipment for them.

MRS. ANDERSON: One of them was an excellent upholsterer, he did airline upholstering, and we had him get into it by upholstering some of the other furniture that we did.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the things that we've done in all our—we do it ourselves—there's an awful lot of junk out there that is fine tool steel; truck springs, for instance. They're very hardened and they can be turned into carving chisels. So in our regular program we had a big blacksmithing shop working for us, so Emil had them make up extra carving chisels.

MS. GOLD: I see. How long were you there?

MR. ANDERSON: A little less than a year.

MRS. ANDERSON: Eight or nine months.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. It was a normal practice to pay cash. And so far as we were concerned, we had the very, very top craftsmen with even perhaps better manual skills than I, and we were paying them \$6 a day.

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't imagine it was that much, but—the top one in the country was ridiculously low paid. Some of them were making caskets, so they had those woodworking skills, and we were just delighted to have them make something besides caskets.

MS. GOLD: So finding people to work was not difficult?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, there were so many shops. There had been a preliminary survey of Honduras and it had been decided that we would—there would be a ceramics program and there would be a woodworking program, and probably some peripheral thing like dolls and toys or that kind of thing. And the survey—it's awful hard to find this kind of information. Actually, there was no ceramic program there at all. There wasn't anything to build on in ceramics. So even though we had a ceramist, because it was decided there was going to be a program, he had to work in the art school with the art school ceramist. And we could demonstrate what could be done and what could be used in Honduras materials. And he could work with that art school guy, who had some ambition, and maybe he would actually want to go on and be a ceramic—creating a shop.

But it was awful hard. There was no—not one weaver in Honduras, and I think Salvador had 50, or whatever. Salvador had a lot of them. And these countries are so close, you just can't figure why it stops on the border. So the program brought in a Salvadorian weaver and a loom or two and started working with the shop that made the hats. And that guy had ambition, so after a while there were several looms. The guy—the hat factory man had made or found or bought more looms, and they were working with his fibers.

MR. ANDERSON: Which were like the Panama hat fiber. Hennacon [ph] was a very wonderful cloth.

MRS. ANDERSON: So weaving started at least in Honduras. But the best hope was still furniture and woodworking and wood bowls, wood carving things. We also had carving done on some of the furniture, more than we would here. We would have a border carved on a desk we designed and we would have something carved into a coffee table top.

MS. GOLD: So you also worked with—you had people build furniture also?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, a lot of them.

MRS. ANDERSON: That's what we were mostly doing. We were mostly working—

MR. ANDERSON: That's what we were doing. We had—there are furniture shops all over because that's how they got their furniture. There was a very high import duty that the wealthier people didn't have to pay.

MRS. ANDERSON: Or they worked around it somehow.

MR. ANDERSON: They worked around it. And so it was a country that was trying to produce a lot of stuff by itself. And it had great natural raw materials and [inaudible]—just had to pull all of this together.

MS. GOLD: [Looking at one of the Anderson chairs -DG.] Is this one of the chairs that—

MR. ANDERSON: This is a—

MRS. ANDERSON: That's what the schoolchildren sat on. They were made in the country for some of the schools.

MS. GOLD: And that's a—

MRS. ANDERSON: Cowhide.

MS. GOLD: That's a leather—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, a very primitive cloth. These hybrid animals they had there, we almost thought they'd crossed goats with sheep. They were quite—

MRS. ANDERSON: The cows were more—more interesting marks than here.

[We are looking at an album of images from Honduras -DG.] This is a church. We made a block church based on one of the churches that existed there. That was the other—one of the other people that we were working with, she did that.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, that was to be—that was to be a kid's toy.

MRS. ANDERSON: And we worked with the school for—what was it? Probably young pregnant girls to make dolls, and there were a whole bunch of dolls that came out of that school.

MR. ANDERSON: So we had a woodworking shop making the frames for the dolls and the girls were sewing them. And then as an identifying piece, as a souvenir to show that it came from Honduras, they had a one-lempira or a 10-lempira, their local coin, the lowest denomination, and it was worth half a cent, and it was about the size of a dime. So we had our metal worker solder a little loop on so all the dolls were wearing this—

MRS. ANDERSON: And all the products would have that as an identifying thing. So we did desks, some chairs and tables, and this was to used, the cowhides, to make a rug. When we set up the exhibit we had them bring in all these rough bricks to create all our platforms.

MS. GOLD: So is that the—

MRS. ANDERSON: That's one, and we have a copy of it.

MS. GOLD: Is that an indigenous design?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, we designed it. It was—

MS. GOLD: You designed that?

MRS. ANDERSON: They had the traditional square cut one that came from the Middle East, and we thought it would be nice to design a—

MR. ANDERSON: Did we—

MRS. ANDERSON: —a different one.

MR. ANDERSON: Did we tell you about—I think we told about the history about that, how we were trying to work with indigenous designs. It's a country that didn't really have a continuum. It had this vast gap from when the Mayan Indians were there, and then nothing, and not a great deal of self-esteem. So they didn't really—weren't really creating anything. So one of the embassy wives came and showed us this local thing she'd found, and in reality it later turned out it was from one of the Koran cultures, that she'd picked up when she was in the embassy in the Middle East. And this is a foldable stool that collapses for carry-on luggage, and it can go in

different configurations for holding firewood and so on.

MS. GOLD: Right.

MR. ANDERSON: That got carved—that little carving on it is because where it folded it would make marks, and Emil came over to one of my shops and said, well, if it's going to make marks—

MRS. ANDERSON: Let's pre-mark it. We pre-marked it.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, let's pre-mark it.

MS. GOLD: What do you think the success of the program was?

MR. ANDERSON: The success was in financial matters. We left them the value of the designs. These were all our designs.

MRS. ANDERSON: If they had continued.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, no, if we—in our normal business—

MRS. ANDERSON: Or if they just were—

MR. ANDERSON: —if we were selling designs in the United States. We left them with the designs worth many times the total cost of the program. But one of the indices of how it sort of fell down in the end was one of the big projects that Dave Chapman wanted us to do, and we weren't particularly interested in it, was to take the local sleeping mat, the petate back there—there's a picture on the desk—[inaudible].

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MRS. ANDERSON: And the screen.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: And beautifully woven out of a beautiful fiber, and these were done in all the little houses out in the boondocks. And the mother would be sitting on the floor taking care of these things while—

MRS. ANDERSON: Taking care of the children.

MS. GOLD: The children, and sitting on them, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: So it was really, really truly a cottage industry, and there also happened to be a small plywood factory. And so, Dave Chapman had seen these or heard about them and he wanted to combine these to make this mat, which we call a petate—that was the fiber but they called it something else, so we called it "petate-ply". And we did some experiments in the plywood factory and it worked out beautifully. And there was really great potential. Dave Chapman went back to the United States. He got in touch with one of the big plywood manufacturers, or selling outfits, and said, hey, we have this product. And they said, good, can you—

MRS. ANDERSON: A hundred and fifty thousand.

MR. ANDERSON: —deliver us \$200,000 worth in the next month or so?—which of course we couldn't. And this—I was glad that was done. Then we sort of terminated that out of our main program into more of what we were doing. And we turned it over to the counterpart agency. So the first thing they did was—

MRS. ANDERSON: Stop every—[inaudible]—got research where the reed is grown, see how much of it is, which they would have to do anyway.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, but they've got to have good working space or get these—

MRS. ANDERSON: We've got to move them into a factory.

MR. ANDERSON: Get a factory and using them and so on, so—

MRS. ANDERSON: We got disenchanted.

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, we lost interest in that.

MS. GOLD: In that part of it?

MRS. ANDERSON: Whether someone took it any further, I don't know. It's a good material. We've brought back some and we would have used it.

MS. GOLD: So you sound like there were—it wasn't only a success—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think you needed to give a lot more time to those programs. You demonstrate—it wasn't what we demonstrated that could be done. Dave Chapman, in his final statement, said there just wasn't enough initiative to carry on all of this kind of thing. We thought it could be done with someone staying on for a much longer period of time. The government was willing to do that. The church that was working with our cooperative would have sponsored. We found somebody who would come who had a lot of skills.

MR. ANDERSON: Somebody that we knew well.

MRS. ANDERSON: And we signed her up and it turned out she suddenly let us know she had the job of designing all the graphics for the Canadian World's Fair.

MR. ANDERSON: For Expo.

MS. GOLD: Oh.

MRS. ANDERSON: She couldn't come.

MR. ANDERSON: She couldn't come, and here we had it structured and funded, and this was a very good lesson to us that you don't build a program around one person.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, yeah. Well, I was going to ask you what you learned from it, as people and as designers.

MRS. ANDERSON: As people we sure learned that you don't put people in categories. This is from a small, undeveloped country and they're not equal to me in some ways. We came with the idea these people were every bit our equals, and especially the ones that we knew the best, which were the woodworkers and the young men whom the government had assigned to work with us, to be our interpreters and drivers, and probably to keep tabs on what we were doing to make sure we were friendly to their country. But—

MR. ANDERSON: One of them wound up in the United Nations. They were our drivers. We had—we could drive also, but it—

MRS. ANDERSON: It was a nice system. It would help them to learn what it was that went into a program like ours, and they were very helpful to us.

MS. GOLD: Oh, the drivers really stay with you and—

MRS. ANDERSON: They were our interpreters, yeah.

MS. GOLD: —learn—

MRS. ANDERSON: And they were with us all day.

MS. GOLD: —learn how to do the programs. But they didn't have anybody in place to take over once you—

MRS. ANDERSON: They didn't, no.

MS. GOLD: —were done?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, it would have had to have been set up by this program, or the Honduras counterpart would have had to take it over, and they didn't in any way seem as if that was something they would do. The man who was head of it was a political appointee kind of person. He probably knew very little about it. And the engineer working with us probably didn't have administration skills either.

MR. ANDERSON: But we got—

MRS. ANDERSON: The individual shops probably learned something. And before we left, one of the shops that seemed to be the most able kind of people had asked if he could come to the United States and we could get him some kind of funding so he could learn some kind of design. He'd never thought about that. But that seemed like a positive.

MS. GOLD: Did you?

MRS. ANDERSON: We couldn't get it together, but I guess we must have gotten him in touch with whatever part

of government could have done it. And we just don't know what happened to it after we left. Occasionally somebody would say, "I've seen a lot of your baskets or a lot of your stools somewhere." We don't know if they did or not, but they claim they saw them somewhere.

MR. ANDERSON: They had great basket-weaving skills way off in an upper peninsula. And they were very skillful but very poor designs, and they didn't use the different colors they had a choice of.

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, they had come from Belize and they had brought what they knew from Belize, so that was—they didn't have anything that took it beyond that.

MR. ANDERSON: So we had an opportunity to do great things. And this was a very inaccessible place. If you ever saw the movie "The Night of the Iguana," well, that little beachfront hotel is what—where we—

MRS. ANDERSON: Where we left to get there.

MR. ANDERSON: We'd be sitting in the dining room, well, would you like fish? Well, what do you have? Well—

MRS. ANDERSON: We'll go down and fish; we'll get you a fish.

MR. ANDERSON: They went out and caught the fish and brought it back. And the hotel we stayed in was not exactly a family type of hotel.

[They laugh.]

MRS. ANDERSON: A sailors' hotel.

MR. ANDERSON: And we got to know—

MRS. ANDERSON: But they were Caribbean black people who had come over from—probably from the Caribbean Islands, and they had everything they needed. They had fish in the ocean. They had whatever the substitute for bread was—the cassava, was it?—that they—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: —just picked—pick it up and put it on the fire and drain it and create their own little bread. And they hadn't much need of things that money would buy.

MR. ANDERSON: But they—

MRS. ANDERSON: So it was hard to get them to work.

MS. GOLD: Did that have any influence on your design?

MRS. ANDERSON: It didn't. There really wasn't much that we did. We really took what the baskets were that they were used to making, and Roy Ginstrom worked with them a little bit and changed the size of the products. Actually, he never—he didn't come up with a very practical other size, but he came up with a sewing basket that was a very good one. It was a—took fabric and lined the basket and had all kinds of little pockets inside, and turned it into a good sewing basket. So that would have a great market if people wanted to make it, but it was very hard to motivate those people to keep making things.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, they had the standard skills in the baskets there. Really what United States basket weavers do, we have to heat the fiber on a corner to make that tight a corner on a basket. And they were heating them to do that, and this is why on baskets you see little darkened areas.

MRS. ANDERSON: Actually they didn't. That was one of the places that we had to help them, and we didn't know anything about it either. We'd never worked with baskets.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: But I'd looked at enough Japanese baskets to see that little burnt spot. So I said, okay, what have we got? Where they lived there was no electricity, but they had a candle.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: So we put it over the candle and we played with it and we got it to bend without cracking. So they thought that was pretty great.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. But then they did develop this inter-craft thing that in a totally different city we had—we

made stacking stools, and the woodworker made the legs and the people—this was a very, very inaccessible place and we could drive in the dry season through the swamp. Occasionally you'd have to build a little bridge or something.

MRS. ANDERSON: They had to build several bridges.

MR. ANDERSON: But in the wet season we had to go by boat along the coast. So I think the very first time we went there we had our local counterpart and—I don't know, there were several of us. And we went out in this dugout canoe, and as I approached it I said there was a lot of us, two or three canoe people and several more. And everybody said, no, it's perfectly fine. And we got out into the choppy water and we got flooded and the canoe went down. And that's all right, we were all good swimmers. Stayed around to help—

MRS. ANDERSON: Except we had cameras.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. I was holding that in bags. I was holding my camera up like that, and I saw everything was under control and I start swimming to shore, which wasn't too far away. So they all helped turned the canoe up—

MRS. ANDERSON: And then they took off.

MR. ANDERSON: —then they took off. The canoe people left us there. And what I had totally also forgotten again, once more, was Joyce's bad back, and she was out there struggling, and she refused to take her skirt off to be able to swim better because we had to get back on the airplane to go back to the airport that night, or something. So we almost lost Joyce on that one. But finally—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think I was lucky there was a Honduras guy with us that remembered that I needed some help.

MS. GOLD: Oh, because you had a hard time swimming?

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, yes. I locked. At that time my back was locked.

MS. GOLD: That's scary.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, it was scary. I thought I was gone.

MR. ANDERSON: This is real, real primitive.

MRS. ANDERSON: And then, so, what do you have to do? Right away we had to get another boat. This time I think we got a sailboat?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: And it was the craziest sailboat.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, yeah. The sailboat, instead of having a keel in the center for it, why, they just took some old engine parts and put them in the bilge of the sailboat to keep it upright. So instead of like a sailboat with the keel that rocked back and forth gently, this would rock slowly to a certain point and then go faster. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: And they let you off in the surf, way out in the surf, and you had to struggle in to shore.

MR. ANDERSON: A long shallow beach, so we had to—

MS. GOLD: At least the water was warm.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes.

MR. ANDERSON: But this little beach house, we met real characters. One time we were there, why, some guy—there were very few people—after dinner came over and he had a bottle, do we want to drink with him? We said, okay, we'll join him. He said, "I heard you talking about exporting things back to the United States." He said, "I think I can help you." He says, "There's always a little bit of space in my forward bulkhead to be able to get things past customs." [Inaudible.] [They laugh.]

MRS. ANDERSON: Some people came up—

MS. GOLD: Not really what—[inaudible].

MRS. ANDERSON: Somebody came up and offered to sell us some teakwood—all kinds of weird things.



MS. GOLD: Oh, sure, sure.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, he also—he had already had too much to drink and he—“Hey, you guys like to play cards?” And I said, “No, thank you.” Well, whoever else was there, why, he said, “Yeah, well, maybe.” And I said, “You know, I had a funny happening in the Army,” I said. A bunch of officers—we didn’t know each other—were gathering around and playing cards and I was just watching. One guy was particularly good and made a lot of money. And I was just sitting there and looking at the cards. And I had this good eyesight and pattern recognition. From across the table I could see the pattern on the cards was slightly different on them. And I looked up and I said, “Hey, what do you think about this and what do you think about this?” And everybody knew that the guy was cheating at cards, so nobody wanted to make a fuss; they just lost the game.

MS. GOLD: So as designers, did you take anything back from Honduras? Did it have an influence on you?

MRS. ANDERSON: We developed a chair, which could have—if we wanted to take it further. It was one we had never tried before. I mean, kind of ideas—no, a chair. And that folding stool was something we thought probably led to some other furniture ideas in the future. We were trying hard when we went down there to say we’re relating to your culture, not bringing our designs, but there was so little to say we were relating to. There didn’t seem to be much that said Honduras. So, like all of us, we ended up—like most of the other designers that go down, we did end up doing a lot of things that were the way we would have done them here.

MS. GOLD: So you gave them a little bit of your design—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: And what do you—it’s probably—as a designer, probably a lot of questions were raised. Do you go to the Spanish Colonial, do you go to the—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we really wanted to go and relate, but when we saw that there was so little to relate to, that kind of changed our concept.

But one of the other things that we were to do and did do was to take photographs the whole time of the raw materials, of the people working. And it was thought that our exhibit would be a way of increasing the impact of the products and the work in the shops. So when the work people, who hadn’t really seen photographs of themselves much in the past, they saw all these big blowups of themselves working, in their shops working, they were all quite impressed and they all—yeah, they kind of got all dressed up to come to the show. And they had a feeling of pride in the exhibit because they had not seen their work treated that way before—that and the fact that nobody had seen a lot of these products before, and they were all gotten together in the art school, and the show went on for quite a while and it was publicized well. So it became a way for people to see what could be done in Honduras.

MS. GOLD: And did you go—how long afterwards did you go to Antigua?

MRS. ANDERSON: It must have been almost 10 years later.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, right. Some of the other interchanges here, using the Spanish influence a little bit, was beyond that, taking the technical things that they did and modifying them to make them more useful design elements. For instance, I was talking about the flat-frame construction as sculpture in relation to taking photographs in the magazines. And they did have some moderately large equipment, and they had a shaper that has a cutter for cutting around corners. So you take this flat frame line and run it around on the shaper and the corner comes out with a very big radius. So in order to get that to go into the corner to insert the panel that makes a panel door, they had to chisel that all out. So I showed them, by changing the cutter and using a much smaller cutter, you could get this rather neat little internal curve there that would be perfectly acceptable. And a lot of things like that.

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: For one of the desks that we did, they did 100 percent swivel chair that had like some rubber bumpers from the Volkswagen store, and that kind of thing. But we used molded plywood there, and that led us to consider molded plywood and we abandoned it. But it gave me a feeling of using laminated wood strips for coffee legs and—for table legs and for church furniture and things.

I sidetracked you on—

MRS. ANDERSON: And you also got into metal. There was a pretty decent metal shop that made all the usual—and one of the big operations was hats. USA had had a bad experience with, I think, Ecuador when they got into hats because they discovered they were so much of a fashion item that what was good this year would only last

for a couple of years and then you would have to change them. In this culture you couldn't keep changing them, so they didn't know what to do about that.

So the person they sent down with the kind of skills to work with them, all she mostly did was change the colors in the hats. And they became wonderful hats, and our kind of colors were not the kind they liked in Honduras, so we were creating hats for a wider market really. And when they wanted to give me a great present, they gave me one of their colored hats, and I hated it. But our colored hats, Gere and I would wear them around town and everybody would want to buy them. They were wonderful.

MR. ANDERSON: After we came back, immediately after, we had a friend that was working in Indo American stuff, and the next country down, Nicaragua, wanted some help.

MRS. ANDERSON: It was one of the men in Honduras, one of the people who was employed in Honduras, and he was working in the agricultural program.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: And he had a—he moved from there to Nicaragua, and he asked us if we would come to Nicaragua and set up a program. And we said we would love to, but they had no mechanism; they had no fund for us. They said, just come down and teach people how to finish their wood products. And we said, it won't work. We can't walk into a shop and say, I'm going to show you how to finish your work. You have to have some way to get these things going. So you have to set up something that—

MS. GOLD: So in the end, was that the case wherever these programs—did any of these programs stay working?

MRS. ANDERSON: I don't know if they ever really intended them to. I don't know.

MR. ANDERSON: We left enough objects behind.

MRS. ANDERSON: But we don't know whether any of them continued. But none of these programs continued very long. They were mostly demonstration programs. And I used to think they were just set up during the Kennedy era when his kind of thing was you want to win friends in other parts of the country [world -DG] and it doesn't too much matter what you do.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: But some of the things—this bench that I had them make is really almost identical to benches that I—much more crude, but almost identical to seating benches I did for the Montclair Museum. So that was a direct import there.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: And one of our valuable people was Bill Wyman, the ceramist there, and his program. And when we terminated our program down there, we all went up through Mexico and went through—

MRS. ANDERSON: You've already told that—not on the tape?

MS. GOLD: No, I don't think so. You went to Mexico and—

MRS. ANDERSON: Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: So we built—we spent a lot of time going in the old ruins there. And so there would always be a little local vendor selling antiquities, and the kids would come over in the shadow of the ruins and want to sell you antiquities. And Bill said, in no way are these antiquities. These are—

MRS. ANDERSON: What we would say to the kids was, "Oh, they're wonderful. Did you make that?" And pretty soon they were saying, "Yeah." And we're saying, "That's great, that's great."

MR. ANDERSON: Great. So we'd pay them less than the tourist price and got some really very nice, well-made things. They weren't bad at all.

So Bill was quite entranced with the religious buildings there, the ancient ruins in Copan where we spent a lot of time.

MS. GOLD: Oh, maybe we did talk about this on—you talked about—

MRS. ANDERSON: It might have been at the Grottas' house.

MS. GOLD: At the Grottas' house you talked about his—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, about the—

MS. GOLD: —his pyramid shapes.

MRS. ANDERSON: Pyramids, hmm.

MR. ANDERSON: Right.

MRS. ANDERSON: Did you get that, do you think? That would include the window. That wouldn't be some parts that you wouldn't want to include.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. So, in any event, we ultimately—when we were visiting and he had terminal brain cancer, he had these great variety of them.

MRS. ANDERSON: What he had done was—what it seemed to me was he had built all these simplified versions of wherever people thought the spirit dwelled. Like, there was a very simple church form and there were very simple, like, Greek temple forms and there were the pyramids. And he had done quite a series that all seemed to represent the religious buildings of that culture.

MR. ANDERSON: Because—

MRS. ANDERSON: But they were so simplified that people had no idea what he was doing, for some reason, and he wasn't explaining it to them.

MS. GOLD: I wonder if we can talk a little bit about that house. I would just—or—

MRS. ANDERSON: Do you want to do Antigua in five minutes?

MS. GOLD: Sure, let's do Antigua.

MRS. ANDERSON: Antigua happened because our next-door neighbors had a contact with a man who had a business in Antigua. And for his own personal reasons, we discovered later, he thought it would be nice to help the government of Antigua develop some products they could sell to tourists. So we asked our next-door neighbor, as a craft teacher, would they come to Antigua and work? And he talked to the premier of Antigua and he said he'd do a demonstration program with a couple of U.S. people. And they asked us if we'd go, knowing that we had worked in Honduras and had some knowledge of how to do these kind of things.

So our next-door-neighbor and we were hired to go to Antigua, thinking that we were it. We were to work with the native population and see what kind of raw materials they had, what kind of skills they had that could turn out some products that could be sold so they wouldn't be importing things from other parts of the Caribbean to sell as if they were made in Honduras.

MS. GOLD: In Antigua?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, these would be made and designed by Antigua. Well, we got there and it wasn't that easy. There wasn't anybody making anything except the U.S. people, or the other white people. There wasn't much desire to make things. There were some clay pots that fell apart and fire pots that fell apart easily. Okay, we'll make them hold up so we'll build better kilns. Well, you have to think twice about that one. Do you want those things to last forever and the women have no more business? If they don't fall apart they're not going to sell any more fire pots. You run into that kind of dilemma.

MR. ANDERSON: But, again, we're looking at a tourist industry. The government wanted us to have a high profile, and to make it easy for us they wanted us to move our headquarters into Nelson's Dockyard, which is a

MRS. ANDERSON: No, excuse me—

MR. ANDERSON: —white enclave which—

MRS. ANDERSON: —they didn't. No, those people wanted—what the government wanted is to go to the Fort James, or whatever it was.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, right.

MRS. ANDERSON: They didn't want us in Nelson's Dockyard.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, okay. But we did good; we did—

MRS. ANDERSON: But there was little to do and no one to work with. We found interesting shells. We were in Barbuda, the companion island, and so we designed whatever we could using the shells. But the wood was only like five inches wide, so anything you made had to be very tiny, and there wasn't much of it. You had to go beg and borrow it. Our friends who were skilled in jewelry making discovered there was some electric wire left over from radar when the U.S. was down there, I guess, or somebody was there, and they made jewelry, which was wonderful. But I don't think they found anybody in Antigua that wanted to start making the jewelry. And when I wanted to get somebody turning, because the Canadians had set up a nice wood shop with good equipment— [phone rings].

I suppose that we'd better answer that.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: —there wasn't anyone who had ever worked it. So the only way I could find—get any products was to start teaching children. Well, now, that kind of program would take five years. I did work with the children, but it would take forever.

MR. ANDERSON: We were working in funny places too. They had a small amount of mahogany that grew there and they had a lot of cut mahogany trees for the lumber they didn't quite know what to do with. And the mahogany trees were stored in the prison, and we had to go to the prison guard, and it's exactly like looking at an old British film. They have a uniformed man in charge there, sitting at his desk, and we were escorted in with rifles. And I go up to shake hands and I'm taken back. There's a line on the floor there that I can't go across. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: Really actually Gilbert and Sullivan.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MR. ANDERSON: So they were cooperative and we got the permission to use the mahogany.

MRS. ANDERSON: The government was very cooperative; they were very friendly. The people we worked with we liked a lot. I made—I got little boys making tops after a little while. But that would take a long time, and it would—with that one you'd never get anywhere. I think they really should have said, let's work with the white people in their own business here and let them work together and let them find—kind of build some of the native people into their world.

MR. ANDERSON: We worked very—we reported weekly to the premier of the country. I can remember Joyce just came up with some new tops, some small tops and [inaudible] and spin the—

MRS. ANDERSON: One of the fun parts of the job. But what—I only have a little bit more time. What was it we were going to tell her?

MS. GOLD: I do want you to talk about building this house and designing the house, because I think that—I mean, to begin with the studio. What is it that—talk about the shape of the studio and the shape of the house.

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. GOLD: What went into the decisions?

MRS. ANDERSON: The studio probably started with our love of Frank Lloyd Wright and for some of his hexagonal buildings. And it was also our idea that the kind of ideal space that we would work in, in a shop, would be sort of circular, but that the equipment and the wood would be straight, so therefore taking a circle and putting some facets on it might turn it into a hexagon or an octagon. Hexagon seemed like the friendlier of the shapes, so that became the hexagon shop. And functionally that did work very well when it wasn't full of junk.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, when it wasn't full of people and we lived in it too. What we did was take a one-inch-to-the-foot scale model, and little models of the machinery, which I still loan out to friends who want to organize their shop, and we played chess games with it to get the location of everything, starting in the center as the center of activity and things spreading out in order of unimportance, and so on. But then when we built—closed in to have the living quarters there. Why, that lost a lot of that space, but we lived in there. And the whole balcony upstairs, you don't even know it's there when you go in, you have to go up the ladder—that we had a huge king-sized bed on the floor up there, and then that's where the office space was up there also.

Then we started getting more and more equipment. I think I mentioned somewhere along the way our solution to not hiring people is to get more equipment, as long as we are in charge of the equipment. So we got a little

bit overcrowded there.

MRS. ANDERSON: It would have been all right if we hadn't filled it up with lumber.

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: So we had—where you're sitting now, can you imagine a pile of lumber all the way to the roof here? It was that way for a great number of years.

MS. GOLD: So you built this house and then stored your lumber here because you didn't have any room for it there?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, up in the studio there.

MS. GOLD: But you didn't have this floor in?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, no. No, no.

MRS. ANDERSON: We built this when I started coughing, and we very quickly—I mean, we had started building it, but we very quickly finished the bedroom at that time as just a way of getting me out of sawdust.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MRS. ANDERSON: And then we gradually finished the rest of it up to the wall behind us, and that's where we stopped because this was full of furniture wood, and downstairs was all full of redwood, the redwood that finished the outside of the building. So we never would have ever gotten into this half of the house if one day one of my—one of our good friends, I corralled him and said, my husband will never get anywhere; we have to solve this problem. I put a deadline on when we were going to get all this stuff out and we decided we had to have a barn. So we ordered a barn.

MR. ANDERSON: No, we did not order a barn. So, fine, another new challenge. I designed a barn, a handmade mortise-and-tendon joint—a real, real barn, barn, and in my usual process: 15 different versions, one with a silo-like thing to store lumber on that, and one available right off the driveway and up above—and some real, real nice designs.

MRS. ANDERSON: But we realized that that would be another 15 years. [Laughs.]

MR. ANDERSON: Maybe about 10. So what we did there was—there are a lot of assembling barns, commercial barns, and there was one particular company that has a very good reputation, the Norton Company.

MRS. ANDERSON: Morton.

MR. ANDERSON: Morton, and I restyled their barn so that the siding on it, which was actually metal but from a distance here it looks the same as the wood siding down here, and I changed the gutters on the roof and so on. We build quite a large barn to store our wood.

MS. GOLD: So this house was built—was that section built first or—

MRS. ANDERSON: We actually framed the whole house, but we didn't finish this part, so there was no final siding in this section.

MS. GOLD: But—

MR. ANDERSON: There was no siding, there was cardboard on the windows here.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: And we actually—

MRS. ANDERSON: There weren't windows—

MR. ANDERSON: —had to move quicker than we wanted to. Joyce's lung problem—the doctor said, get out of the shop. So we had what is the bedroom almost done. We had the bathroom about—the plumbing was working, so we moved down in here just temporarily, that whole upper end of the shop, a dirt floor where the dining room is. And year by year we expanded out to here. And then this was all at one time here.

MS. GOLD: And so can you describe the shape for the tape?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. Well, in general—

MRS. ANDERSON: It's an arrow for the most part.

MR. ANDERSON: An arrow. In fact, some of our pilot friends say that when we had the aluminum gutter up on the roof, this building, why—

MRS. ANDERSON: On the hexagon.

MR. ANDERSON: —they used it as a landmark aiming at LaGuardia Field. It was aimed accidentally right at LaGuardia Field.

MS. GOLD: LaGuardia? Oh, how interesting.

MR. ANDERSON: So the reason for the arrow is my love of the natural figure of a hexagon, of the love of Frank Lloyd Wright, which certainly affected me. So this is not a hexagon, but that's two sides of a hexagon—that's two sides, and we just eliminated the other four sides.

MS. GOLD: And why did you do that?

MR. ANDERSON: Our—well, sort of our special requirements. We had a grand piano that was inclined to go over there, and the concept here was to have intimate space there, and we'd have a furniture grouping there and bigger space for bigger parties and bigger space for—

MRS. ANDERSON: Then it would just kind of expand out. But this wouldn't be here—there would be more space here.

MR. ANDERSON: And this—here, where this wall is, was going to be a through fireplace into the other room where the wood stove is.

MS. GOLD: Right, right.

MR. ANDERSON: But then with the energy crunch, well, we closed this off to do the wood stove. But the great opportunities we had here was we had this rough frame with two-by-fours—full two-by-fours that we made ourselves. And we—it enabled us, energy-wise, to get twice as much space for insulation, to have them being a structural unit, and build another two-by-four wall inside of that. So this wall, this exterior wall is extra thick by the thickness of the whole wood casing that I made. And then that enabled us to do this whole—I don't know, I don't think I told the tape about the concept of what we're looking at is a wall into which we punched holes that are the window. And we didn't want a lot of difficult window framing things and so on to interfere with the view, because the view is so fantastic here.

MS. GOLD: Yes, it's a view over the woods.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. Well, actually, in a little sense, the termination of this building was an incredibly beautiful dogwood tree out there that was right at the windows, but the building grew and the dogwood got shaded and the dogwood finally died. So we found these heating units—we didn't find them, we had to search hard for them; we knew they were out there—that are like baseboards—not like baseboard heating, but just baseboards, and we inset them into the wall to make this whole—

MRS. ANDERSON: Flush.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: Right. What—and so you have right angles in your bedroom, right?

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. GOLD: But otherwise there aren't too many.

MRS. ANDERSON: No.

MS. GOLD: And I wonder whether you can talk about the feeling of being inside a building without—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, I kind of appreciate it most in the kitchen, where I haven't created any difficulty to get into cabinetry. I can open up what goes under the stove and what—the door that goes next to the dishwasher, and the doors don't hit each other because of the fact that the angles are much more wide-open angles. You know, I can get into all the space inside much more easily than you can into a 90-degree angle. Out here I enjoy

the feeling of openness and the part where it's another 120-degree angle. It creates a lot of nice open corners. But then, of course, the counterpart is some quite closed corners. But they're where you kind of want to be enclosed. It works fine too.

MR. ANDERSON: But one of the things about having space like this is that when you're in an ordinary rectangular space, it's so boring that you don't really look around. But here in this room where everything is at an angle, you begin to see that you just move your head the slightest little bit around, looking through this long vista to the wall overhead here, where you're seeing another new composition and a new viewscape into the other room. It becomes like an interesting kind of thing.

MRS. ANDERSON: Since we had gotten more conservation minded, this room is so easy to heat. We keep saying we could probably heat it with a couple of candles. The insulation is so thick on the roof and in the walls that it heats—there's very little input from the furnace.

MS. GOLD: It's such a striking room and that ceiling is—what is it, redwood?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, actually this one is fir.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, this is fir. And in the other room it's pine. And part of it—when we didn't have any money, we got an abandoned silo, and used the roofing boards, because that was nice with linseed oil inside there.

MS. GOLD: And there's a beam that goes across.

MRS. ANDERSON: But it's essentially framed with walnut, which was a walnut tree that was growing down on the corner where the church now stands. And when the church bought it they had no use for the tree—in fact, the tree had to come down. So they didn't want it, so we took our little bulldozer down there and brought it up here.

MS. GOLD: Oh, really?

MR. ANDERSON: Not quite. We were working very late at night and coming up with the bulldozer and we decided to take a shortcut through the swamp, and the bulldozer sank in the mud, and just luckily they had a bulldozer on the job and the guy was—

MRS. ANDERSON: A bigger bulldozer than ours.

MR. ANDERSON: He was very cooperative. To get it out, he straightened out—he pulled the links on the log chain, it was so much effort to get it out.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MRS. ANDERSON: But we would never have probably invested in walnut, but that was a free trade.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. And there are windows on all sides—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: —of this room, because it's—

MRS. ANDERSON: We changed our windows when we finished this room. Before we had—when we originally designed it there was no traffic on Tempe Wicke Road. Now it lines up for about a mile in the morning and during commuting hours, so it's very different.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MRS. ANDERSON: So the wall originally had a big window, and it closed up and we moved the window where the view was not going to be obstructed with traffic.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: We reversed them. The bigger windows were in—actually, on Sunday mornings the uniformed horseback riders will go by. Now, these windows that you see here are continuously in line with all the windows downstairs, so you get the feeling of them being a continuous strip. And that one there is—it's Thermopane, so we had to get manufactured windows. All these others, we cut the glass ourselves. So that's the absolute tallest Thermopane window that the Anderson Window Corporation makes, the one in the stairwell there.

MS. GOLD: And then the outside is—the outside of the house is faced with stone?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, it's redwood and stone. Luckily we had bought the redwood when we first designed the

house, so we were able to buy it at a price that we would never be able to pay now. And we were able to get the quality of redwood, which was the top quality. It was still easily available in those days.

MR. ANDERSON: Did we get on there someplace about Joyce being the stonecutter and so on? Joyce cut all the slabs of the stone floor—

[END TAPE 4 SIDE B.]

MS. GOLD: This is tape five, Edgar and Joyce Anderson.

So you did all the stonecutting of this—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, he started doing the stonework, which is essentially the little pieces under the wood or block walls, just little kind of perimeter pieces. And I thought he was a very poor stonemason. He was slopping mortar all over them. So I decided to try it, and I started doing it and thought I was a better stonemason than he was. So eventually I learned to be a stonemason.

MR. ANDERSON: We got her the regular stonemason's—what they call a pitch tool. It's a flat-bladed—heavy, flat chisel, and we then decided to get air hammers because that wouldn't degrade the work. It really made a better cut and much faster. And then we got carbide saws and diamond saws and we took the air hammers and modified them later on into carving tools. And we did this equipment thing. We got the bulldozer, as was also mentioned.

Again, we got the equipment—we're not equipment freaks. We use equipment as an adjunct, but we're still able to do everything.

MS. GOLD: Now, I wanted to ask you, and spend a moment just sort of reflecting on your lives and work together and talking about what you really appreciate from the choices that you've made.

MR. ANDERSON: Appreciate from what?

MS. GOLD: The choices that you've made, in terms of choosing this life and—

MRS. ANDERSON: This profession? Or this—

MS. GOLD: This profession, the lifestyle that you've chosen, the profession, the togetherness you've chosen.

MR. ANDERSON: In other words—

MS. GOLD: Not only what you appreciate, but reflect upon the difficulties, if you want, and the joys of it.

MR. ANDERSON: So if we had to do it all over again? Not really.

A lot of things I'd change, but I'm [inaudible]. The practical side, perhaps if I had been a little more interested in making money, a little bit more interested in putting up with some of the things necessary to make more money, this would enable me to perhaps unload some of the things that someone else could do without hurting the quality of the work, and then getting on to the more experimental things that we've been into for the last 10 years and explore them more. But I don't regret that, it just would have been nicer.

And have you got answers in a different direction?

MRS. ANDERSON: Just a lot of plusses and minuses. I did achieve a life without being bored, which I said is what I wanted to do. I'm not happy with the damage I've done to my health over the years. I would like to be healthier right now, which would have enabled me to do a lot of the things I'm not able to do.

MR. ANDERSON: We don't know how much of the—her breathing problem is from sawdust, but I imagine it's considerable. So we should have gotten a dust collector in earlier, and that kind of thing. And we surely—probably from that point of view should have had a permanent helper to do more of the lugging and that kind of thing.

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, I think we should have built about five houses. What we've learned from this house I would like to take and build another house, and then I'd like to build another house.

MS. GOLD: Well, when I think of this house I think of you two and your original idea of building—being the people who would design and build small houses. And I think what a—what joys of houses you would have built.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, but you learn so much. You know, you have to do one to learn what it is you could do



differently. You have to live with it for a while to learn. And it would kind of be nice—for all of these people with a lot of money who can, okay, now I've done that one; now I can go do another one. That would be kind of nice to be able to do that, and if you had that kind of money, that would have been kind of fun.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, now neither one of us has ceased thinking in that direction. I've got 15 different schemes that I'd like to enlarge here and change. I'd like to build a gazebo; I might like to have a tower to look down—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we've always—we're going to do a bell tower. We've got plans for a thousand things we haven't done.

MR. ANDERSON: And even the wood projects that we never, never would do, and even though Macintosh Computer has that cute little iMac out there, it's not really a full powered professional machine, and I would like to design a piece of furniture that can really have it accessible and out of sight—have a sculpture, a computer cabinet to keep it hidden. I've got designs for something like that that I'll never do. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: It's always the next thing—that's the fun part.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: We occasionally even lose track—why, we got one of our clients, one time we were having dinner at the table and I was—

MRS. ANDERSON: We were both—

MR. ANDERSON: —reaching around underneath.

MRS. ANDERSON: —which is what we always do.

MR. ANDERSON: —to see what the construction is and looking at it, and this was somebody that knew us and she burst out laughing, you made that table. [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: We always want to do that in the museums. We always want to get underneath them and check out some of the details you don't see when you're looking at them from a distance.

MR. ANDERSON: One of the things we've been awful lucky with is in our environmental considerations, that they relate so well. Our working environment—you can't say, what is your working environment? Our working environment is our living environment, and our living environment is our total environment. What used to be called ecology is that environment out there, and we live quite close with nature.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, and you've—and I did want to say just that the house is surrounded by a forest, and in the forest, especially as you drive up, there are little spots of felled trees and stacked wood, and it looks as if you're preparing wood for—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. The first pile you meet is a pile of firewood down— right at the head of the first part of the driveway. We had a stack there for many years, just because it was the most convenient place to put it when we were cutting down there.

MR. ANDERSON: It also made a visual barrier. As you came up, you knew you had to turn some place—

MRS. ANDERSON: Well, we hadn't really thought much about it. We just piled it up there. That's the place we take the mice when we catch them in our traps in the winter, so they'll have shelter when we put them out in the outdoors. So that pile—

MS. GOLD: Well, most people try to drive them across the bridge—

[They laugh.]

MRS. ANDERSON: If they come back too soon, we do do that, but that's the easiest place to take them. So anyway, we had that and pretty soon it was kind of falling apart and getting pretty—it was decrepit. So the Columbian guy that's worked for us for many years knows that aesthetics are important to us, but it's nothing he ever thought about. So we asked him if he would rebuild it with the latest cuttings down there, and he built such a pretty looking pile. We couldn't believe it, and he was really proud of himself that he had created something that was fun to look at. And that was fun for us to know that he had kind of picked up that kind of feeling and maybe started thinking about what things look like.

MR. ANDERSON: But I've got to change it.

MS. GOLD: Yeah, it is—

MRS. ANDERSON: That's the first pile. Some of the other ones—a huge tree halfway up is an ash tree that was growing across the street, and Tree Tech, that works in this area, the tree cutting company, had taken that down, and they often ask us if they have a tree that they think might have some interesting lumber, whether we would like it. And they told us they had this great big ash tree and would we like it? And, sure, we'd love it. So they hauled it over here, and once we got it over here, we looked at it and it was much too rotten to create anything with it. So it's going to sit there until it falls apart. But right now it has a pine tree growing out of it. A little pine tree got seeded and is growing out of the side of that old log. So last Christmas I decided I needed a Christmas tree. I needed to decorate that little pine tree. So I couldn't think of anything that you could put on a little pine tree halfway down the driveway, so my husband went out and cut out of a red plastic—

MR. ANDERSON: A Clorox box or something. I punched out one-inch diameter pieces of plastic and tied it on the tree there, so—

MRS. ANDERSON: Those are our Christmas ornaments. They're still sitting up there.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, it's all ready for next Christmas.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: I photographed it and if it's good enough, I'm going to use it for my Christmas card.

MS. GOLD: That's great.

Is there more that you want to talk about in terms of the environment and—

MRS. ANDERSON: I'm going to have to leave. You can go on.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay, sure.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

[Tape stops, re-starts.]

MS. GOLD: [...After a break for the interview with Edgar and Joyce Anderson, Joyce Anderson has had to go off and I am talking to Edgar Anderson alone. It is still September 19, 2002.

You wanted to talk a little bit about the international—[inaudible].

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: I was just going to ask—

MR. ANDERSON: You would think it would be quite logical that being Norwegian, and shipbuilding Norwegians and so on, for me to have a Norwegian feeling. And, again, in the whole total philosophy I don't really consider race and gender and all those things as a defining kind of thing. So, no, I don't really know what international—well, I'll have to say I did refer to Italian style design a little while ago, but thinking of plastic and so on.

But in general I don't even concern myself with whether I'm national or not, and I don't think I think much furniture is national. Now, all of us, all we young woodworkers, when we first started out, why, certainly there were art magazines out there, and the Scandinavians, the Finn Juhl, and the Germans, Hans Wegner and all of those people, we were aware of, and my very, very earliest pieces of furniture certainly had relationship to them personally. Occasionally when I'm doing some of these carved things I'll think of some of the nice carved portholes on the ancient Scandinavian boats. But it's not a big thing in—except for the fact we seem to be, perhaps in our lack of education, all our reference points is American craft. But I don't think that I can really put a label on all the craft as being American craft. So it's sort of a non-question.

MS. GOLD: A non-question for you, yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: And actually so far as sex making any difference, well, we certainly explored the physical differences between Joyce and I. But there are other—there are female woodworkers out there that are perfectly as strong as I am. So that doesn't make much difference. And I'm constantly trying to catch myself up and talk

about craft persons instead of craftsmen, so I don't have a problem there. So far as the nationalistic thing, yeah, very definitely, the indigenous art that comes from Italy is absolutely different than what comes from Central America or South America. When we were working in Honduras we were knowledgeable enough and toured the local markets enough, we could tell the difference between baskets that were made in Salvador only a few miles over the border, from—so there are those kind of differences.

And so far as how it affects on my internal feeling, people are different. No matter how hard we try to make them the same, they are different. So I think, for instance, if I had a need for a psychiatrist, for instance, I don't think that I would go to a physician that had just come from India, because no matter how much of the textbook he's studied, he wouldn't really have the feeling in my psyche in relationship to the value of human life and of all sorts of things like that. In the same manner that just practically speaking, I wouldn't out of hand refuse to go to a female urologist. I'm sure they're perfectly competent, but always that little question mark is that I've got something she has and she has something I have and we can't quite totally understand it, or something. So there's built into us all that kind of thing. But I also try to absorb whatever cultures I can, in food and music and so on.

MS. GOLD: Do you—I wanted to also ask you—I'm sorry, did I interrupt you?

MR. ANDERSON: No, no.

MS. GOLD: But I wanted to also ask you if you could talk a little bit about writers. I know you've talked a little bit about the importance of—earlier we talked about how having articles in newspapers have been essential to the development of your business.

MR. ANDERSON: Right.

MS. GOLD: But when you talk about—and you talked about the problem with photography and craft magazines, but I don't think we ever talked about critique. And do you take that seriously? Is that important to you?

MR. ANDERSON: So far as the relation to my work, or—

MS. GOLD: Or the craft world in general.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I've always got a favorable press. [Laughs] But I think, again, we had such great knowledge and great—influenced by everything that's out there, the magazines and the periodicals and so on. So writers, as artist writers, to have an art person write about a craftsperson's work is perfectly valid if the craftsperson is so totally into art that when it comes into my particular field, why, it's not—not necessarily skilled as describers of objects. And, hey, if you're going to write an article about objects, because you can only have one picture and several thousand words, then you really have to be very good at that.

And the books and the magazines and everything that generated out of Joyce's recent Bard show [Bard College exhibition, "Women Designers of the 20th Century"], and the one in the Smithsonian too, one of the writers was Edward Cooke from Yale and he is head of the—whatever they call the department that includes all the craftsmen there. And he's very observant and a very excellent writer on that. And Michael Stone several years ago did a very observant one on us on lifestyle and so on. And Lois Moran—she mostly is an editor there, but she sure picked very good people to do that.

And we've had some really super newspaper writers that—they all make errors but, hey, they're stretching into—I mean, general press, they're into an area that they don't 100 percent understand, but they listen enough—and television reporters. So they're out of their water but they do better than you think they would. But what's missing I think are two things. I'm going to tell you what we don't have as writers. John McPhee, incredible writer.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: Do you know his work? He writes about the trout streams and trout fishing and levees on the Mississippi and Alaska. He wrote all sorts of things. But his descriptions to a person who's attuned to it, looking for this—his descriptions are better than everything I've ever seen. For instance, he did an article on the revival of the dirigible, which is a little group down in Princeton, of reviving this—it's different than the blimps, you see. It's a rigid structure, or the Hindenburg.

And he described—he found an old German working in a garage that carved these dirigibles. Well, I have seen these in the museum. And his verbal description created a perfect, perfect image of exactly that. He described in a book on making a birch bark canoe—which is about as close as he ever got to craft—it was about a French Canadian—I don't know where he learned it or whether he was an Indian or not, his name was Henri [Vaillancourt]—in complete detail how the Indians made the canoes and described the shape of the bark and

how it was woven together and the tar that they used to cover it. And absolutely this whole thing had a totally complete image.

And in this book he said that Henri had made one smaller version for an older female in New Jersey. And about a year later I went over to an acquaintance, Dot Blanchard, and she said, "You've never seen what I've got." It was a long time coming. She said she had gotten this recently. And we worked through the loggia and I was behind her. She opened the door in the three-car garage. So I was across from the object about five car widths. As the door cracked open I said, "That's an Henri canoe." She said, "Yes." And in detail, the whole thing—

MS. GOLD: You knew it, huh?

MR. ANDERSON: I knew it, though.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MR. ANDERSON: And the other great writer of description I think—I don't know whether we talked about it on tape, but I think we mentioned about Umberto Eco.

MS. GOLD: I think you did talk about him on tape.

MR. ANDERSON: We did? Okay, yeah.

MS. GOLD: Which reminds me—I'm sorry, I don't want to interrupt you, but you wrote in your notes you used to talk about Oreos and problem solving, and I definitely want to get that.

[They laugh.]

MR. ANDERSON: We had a friend who is a manufacturer and he's very creative. He actually is an M.B.A. and he has a small business, and he had this business group that had monthly meetings, and about 10 or 15 different small-business people. And he is always looking for some creative things to do when it's his turn. So it was his turn and he invited two of us—myself and my friend who is the Nobel physicist—and we just talk about what inspires us, very roughly what we're talking about here, and at the end—oh, and he didn't tell who was who. Didn't tell what our names were, who we were and so on. And we'd both picked up a little of each other's language, but we didn't intentionally do it. So they really didn't know. So they said, "You know, what's strange about you guys is that you're describing everything in terms of problem solving"—

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: —which is what we are, his field and ours. And they said, "We always thought that that was our problem, the businessmen solving problems. But here you look on problem solving as if it's great fun and so on." Of course, some of it is to them, too. So this was sort of an interesting observation.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] Fascinating. Well, then a lot of creative work then comes—is really involved with problem solving.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: But where do the Oreos come into it?

MR. ANDERSON: Pardon? Oh, the Oreos. Well, the same friend, he had a fight between his design engineer and his sales engineer over a particular new process that they were going to do on machines that extrude stuff out, like the things on the side of the car. And as it's coming out, just after its molten stage, it has to be chopped off. So this has to be very accurately controlled so that what's coming out doesn't clog up going up there, and they wanted a whole new technique. So he said, "Will you come? Can I take two hours of your time and I want you to get in the middle here and give them some ideas. We're never going to—but give them some ideas to get them thinking." So as one of the things that I thought of how to count—the measuring out there is about the way that they do it with a barcode in a store. This light reads these markers on here, which would be put on this extruded thing, and make a—give a signal to the machine.

Well, I had just recently read an article exactly what that barcode means. Those numbers are indicated by the width and the spacing of the bar and they're designed so it can be backwards and upside down when it's read, and so on. So I said as an example—I'd stopped at the supermarket on the way and my friend Jim is a great lover of Oreo cookies. I bought three packages of Oreo cookies—vanilla and chocolate and something else—to show them how the barcode changed for that one little thing there. And I made my point very nicely. So when James—I gave him my bill and I put on the bill three packages of Oreo cookies. [Laughs.]

You can't do that; the accountant will be driven through the roof. I'll pay it out of my own pocket. [Laughs] But

the bottom line there was that, yes, it did mediate between the two of them because, indeed, that wasn't—I gave them a lot of other ideas and that wasn't exactly what they did, but they did absorb some of my ideas, both of which were different than what they had done. [Laughs] So that—it's a lot of fun doing that stuff. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Yeah. Do you have any other?

MR. ANDERSON: Just odds and ends?

MS. GOLD: Finishing up kind of things, things like that?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, this is a fun thing. We're—we've do all—we've done all these photos ourselves here, and I'm looking at, again, the circular table.

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: And it's—we try to do them—I'm not really into the printing process, but they like to have a bleed photo, and this is before Photoshop programs. In other words, they want white space coming off onto the page so that they don't have to crop in close with a [inaudible]—or put a frame—a line around it. So we wanted a picture of this table absolutely floating, but it can't because even on the white paper and even very evenly distributed light, you still see little shadows here and there.

So what we did was put it over on its side so that the top of the table was facing sideways and then propped it up where it couldn't be seen. And then just to make sure that there wasn't some little mistake in there that people would see it was on its side, we put a coffee cup on it. And the way we put the coffee cup on it was that we had a ladder with a two-by-four sticking out overhead with a string that absolutely lined up with one of the cracks in here so you couldn't see the string, and had the coffee cup sitting there as if it were—

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] So it sounds like you like to create problems in order to solve them?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. [Laughs] A couple of loose, no reference at all kind of things. We talked about—earlier about not being awed by—[laughs]—I guess I'm free to say not being awed by other than Frank Lloyd Wright at the time.

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: But also not really wanting to push our connections. We like to talk about them, but we don't use these connections really to further ourselves very much. But one of the great fun things was that when we would have our meetings in Honduras in the USAID office, in which I had a picture of President Kennedy and a picture of David Bell, who he later became the Ford Foundation, but David Bell was in charge of USAID.

MS. GOLD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative]

MR. ANDERSON: And it just turns out that he was a nephew of my uncle and he didn't know me and I didn't know him. But it's one of those things there was certainly a connection that I could use to personal benefit if I had to, but I really wanted to be down there, Joyce and I, on our own on what we were doing. Not to—

Not what we were. I want to give a little note on—we didn't talk—oh, you're off? Okay.

MS. GOLD: This is on. That is my backup tape.

MR. ANDERSON: Just a little bit on all our museums and things and the history of the craft movement. One of the very earliest on things in this whole movement was just as we were forming—just before we formed New Jersey Designer Craftsmen, the Newark Museum had Christmas shows. These Christmas shows were actually an outgrowth of—Newark Museum was a part of the Newark Library. And John Cotton Dana? Something Cotton Dana was the great intellectual. He started the Newark Museum. And way, way, way, way back, well before the Museum of Modern Art was even thought of, why he started having useful-objects-as-art shows.

MS. GOLD: How interesting.

MR. ANDERSON: And this is more or less how in this Newark Museum had the [Alexander] Calder show, the Circus show from Paris. So this is how they got into it with their Christmas shows. And we had things for sale there. And the cute thing on that was that Chet Newkirk, their curator, was used to putting all the little labels on every item that came in. So every one of the things that sold there had to have its own individual label.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: He later became the head of the Morris Museum here in Morristown—Chet Newkirk.

MS. GOLD: [Mrs. Anderson enters the room for a moment - DG.] Are we—are you here with us again?

MRS. ANDERSON: For a few minutes.

MS. GOLD: Oh, good. What we were just doing was talking about anything that—odds and ends things that we haven't talked about. Is there anything that you had wanted to talk about that—

MRS. ANDERSON: I think I might. I thought there were a couple of other things. What were they? You go ahead and I'll—

MR. ANDERSON: I already did. I'll just give you a little quickie. We were talking about having a program in a prison. In Honduras poor people can't educate their children, so they put them in the prison—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yes, some of them do.

MR. ANDERSON: —where they have a prison program on sewing machines and so on.

MRS. ANDERSON: There was a ceramist we met who worked in a prison. Not a savory character, but he was an interesting character.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and we got some of his indigenous milk pots, soft clay, so as the water evaporated out of the milk it would keep it cold. With grape—

MRS. ANDERSON: Probably wasn't milk.

MR. ANDERSON: No, or maybe it was wine. Grape—yeah, it must've been wine. Yeah, great garlands of grapes on it. But we would go visiting there and we'd find one of the kids in a tank, sitting in a tank of water. Well, what's going on here? He's only been there for a couple of hours and it's cold water. Well, he had misbehaved.

MRS. ANDERSON: There were a lot of things—

MR. ANDERSON: A lot of things that—

MRS. ANDERSON: —that we didn't see.

MS. GOLD: Wow.

MR. ANDERSON: That a tourist doesn't see.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: But the program was good. And wives could come in during lunch and it was—

MRS. ANDERSON: They had to. If you were in the hospital they'd better come in and take care of you, because nobody else would.

MS. GOLD: So you didn't have a—

MRS. ANDERSON: You'd never want to go in those hospitals.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: She had a lot of high fevers and we had to find a private hospital.

MRS. ANDERSON: I didn't go in the hospital.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, we didn't? Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: I couldn't go in one of their hospitals. But I was awfully sick in Honduras and it's just one of those things that you eat locally—the kids said they get sick too, but—

MR. ANDERSON: What happened was—

MRS. ANDERSON: —we were fresh to the country and we got sicker.

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MR. ANDERSON: They gave her Chloromycetin [a.k.a. Chloramphenicol], which is this incredibly powerful—back then, knocked out everything and it was over the counter down there. So she had these fevers twice a month, so we'd just go out and buy it over the counter. And we ultimately found out it's very, very dangerous. It depleted her red blood cells and this made problems so she had to recuperate a lot when she got back.

MS. GOLD: But that's not what you wanted to talk about, though. Did you have—did you think of—

MRS. ANDERSON: I have a—I know there were a few things I thought of now and then, but I'm still searching my brain for them.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I'll fill in some more.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Let's see, what does this say? Woven fiber in Antigua. That doesn't make any sense. Oh, dagger. This is great. They have one of the fibers that grows and they call it a dagger plant. It's a sharp fiber. And you squeeze out—the local people do it, they take their machete and squeeze out the better stuff from the outside and then they have this very, very nice weaving fiber that they pleat into making things.

And we found a dock worker who took old hawser rope and made these into these braided things. But—

MRS. ANDERSON: They were making rope. What they were making was rope.

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: He took—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: Since there wasn't any local rope being made, he would take the little pieces from the boats and he would unravel them and then re-put them together into longer lengths.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, no, they made the string—that's it. They made string and they made string bags and so on. And we wanted to make it into—

MRS. ANDERSON: But since they had the fibers there, there was no reason they shouldn't have been making the—making it from their own plants.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. So anyhow we—oh, we knew how to do it from Honduras.

MRS. ANDERSON: We had worked with him in Honduras on this same stuff.

MR. ANDERSON: So it's just a matter of letting your hands deal with it and after you get single strands, well, then you make them into three parts. And we devised a machine out of some old parts there, a really simple machine that would—that made a shuttle action that would throw one side to the other. But there'd still have to be a worker on there to feed it through. And we made that and then this braiding thing is very tedious, so we wanted to make something that really—or the wrapping of three single strands in—separately and they would wrap it. So we made a wheel thing that they would hook over it and the apprentice would turn the wheel and the fiber would be fed through. And the guy—this massive big dock worker and I had this incredible argument that, no, it goes in the other direction. I said, look, it goes in this direction and you have to do it this way. And his wife and his good alcoholic buddy—maybe Joyce finally came up and said, "Hey"—

MRS. ANDERSON: And his wife was the one that was always pushing for him to work well with us.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. And she said, "Well, he's looking at it from that end and you're looking at it from the other end. You're both right."

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: Now, Joyce, were you as much into making machines and getting machines—

MRS. ANDERSON: No, I'm not into making machines.

MS. GOLD: You're not into machines?

MRS. ANDERSON: No.

MS. GOLD: [To Mr. Anderson -DG.] So when you say we are very into machines, you're talking about yourself right?

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Joyce, do you have a preference to working with your hands? I mean, is it—

MRS. ANDERSON: Oh, I don't mean I won't work with machines. I'm not into creating machines.

MS. GOLD: Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah. I work with all the machines.

MS. GOLD: Right. Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: One of the other skills you have to develop along the way, and we haven't much talked about, and that's photography.

MS. GOLD: Well, we talked about it just a little.

MRS. ANDERSON: Did we?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I talked about hanging the cup on this, but we had to do some more photographs.

MRS. ANDERSON: I just mean in general it's one of the skills you have to acquire, or else you have to have enough money to hire a decent photographer, because it turned out in the long run it's the photographs that get you into a show or get you into a piece of publicity.

MS. GOLD: It's very interesting—

MR. ANDERSON: We did—

MS. GOLD: —isn't it, the way photographs are so important—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: —in all the arts?

MRS. ANDERSON: They're much more important than we might wish they are, but they—

MR. ANDERSON: And our slideshows too. We had complete details, step by step, on the special tools made, for instance, for the round table.

MRS. ANDERSON: Did you talk about the workshops you did on the round table and—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, we do these a lot. We—

MRS. ANDERSON: Did you talk about that one in California and Georgia and

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, we did a real media thing. I have—I made transparencies for the transparency machine, but they didn't have [inaudible] so I'd have two slide projectors going and I'd have a chalkboard and I'd have drawing paper. And this was a wonderful really three-ring circus going on. And this is where I think I mentioned that you have to have some sort of break in a long slideshow, both to wake up those that are going to sleep and also to remind me—here I'm going into another subject. So very briefly we had these orphaned raccoons and the orphaned raccoons were very young and at the stage that we really had to go about and show them how to circle the edge of a field in daylight and that out in the open, how to turn over a—

MRS. ANDERSON: A lot of things we thought we had to treat them—teach them they instinctively knew, though.

MR. ANDERSON: So they weren't pets. They lived outside. They'd come in and watch television occasionally, but they lived outside. But this was a period of time we were working outside mixing concrete and so on, and they just love water. They love to make paw prints in the mud. And they'd get into the watering can and their head sticking out. We shot hundreds of—not—a lot of rolls of film with a raccoon head out, and Joyce sold some of them and had them published, I guess. So we decided—I decided, and she was fighting me, "Hey, we're bringing them up here and when the kids graduate they can support us." So I started taking pictures to do this [inaudible] kind of thing. And we talked a long time ago about the slots in a tabletop, like on a drafting table. And I wanted to turn that over with a screwdriver to accentuate it. So I got the raccoon, I welded the screwdriver to the screw so it was standing up and I put some peanut butter on the top, so the raccoon would get it with both paws and



we did it several times and very, very convincing.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] That's great.

MR. ANDERSON: And we'd do a little bit—we didn't cover this, but we'd do a little bit of logging courses. We used to up at Peters Valley, and that includes knots. And one of the favorite knots of seamen and loggers and everything else is called the bowline—B-O-W-L-I-N-E—a bowline. And the way they teach the bowline in every knot book is the sequence is that the rabbit comes out of the hole and goes over the loop, and makes a turn and goes back down into the hole, which just perfectly describes the way it goes. So I got some big rope, I supported it in the three and took a whole roll of film. But I finally got the raccoon doing the rabbit. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: [Laughs] That's great. That's great. Well, you know what, that brings up a question I have been meaning to ask you, and that is just the amount of time you spend on doing things.

MRS. ANDERSON: We were also talking before about humor and I had forgotten that a lot of that really happens with our apprentices and our good friends when we make toys or games for each other, or puzzles for each other.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MRS. ANDERSON: And for a long time after an apprentice has been here, we start getting puzzles in the mail, things that are difficult to figure out how to get them apart. And we send back and forth the kind of puzzle thing. And you spend a lot of time doing those things. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: I bet you do. [Laughs.]

MR. ANDERSON: They'd send us an intricate mechanism you had to slide this first and that first, and then I'd send them one with push buttons on top, white holly and walnut push buttons on top. They could never ever open the box because it was a solid piece of wood.

[They laugh.]

MS. GOLD: So this is when you have this huge backlog of clients waiting for you—eating off of cardboard boxes?

MRS. ANDERSON: Somebody else is watching television. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Oh, okay. [Laughs.]

MS. GOLD: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: Keeps your sense of proportion in your life.

MS. GOLD: Yeah. So anything I—you really do have a sense of joy in your work, I think.

MRS. ANDERSON: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. GOLD: You seem to have a good time with what you do.

MRS. ANDERSON: Sometimes, yes.

MS. GOLD: Sometimes. [Laughs] But you haven't gotten to the point of throwing tools at each other?

MRS. ANDERSON: No, I don't think—you'll never find us doing that. Although, he was practicing throwing screwdrivers for a while as a preparation for acquiring a skill that other people—not everybody else had, and that was knife throwing or—

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, did I cover that? That this community has great—

MRS. ANDERSON: Everybody—

MR. ANDERSON: —winning tennis players and swimmers and horseback riders and so on, and I never had any great sports skill. So I decided I'm going to be the top of the class in this on my sports field, logically, so I wanted to be a knife thrower. And then I learned you could throw screwdrivers exactly the same and have them go into the wood. But I only learned it to the point at a certain mark on the floor.

MS. GOLD: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MR. ANDERSON: So I didn't really know—

MRS. ANDERSON: You'd better practice. I don't you're quite up on your skill.

MS. GOLD: Anything else that we need to cover?

MRS. ANDERSON: We'll think of 10 things when you leave.

MS. GOLD: I'm sure you will. I'm sure you will, although we have—and there is always the phone, I suppose. But I think that—yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: We've done enough to—

MS. GOLD: We've done a lot. I don't know if we can get entire lives.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MS. GOLD: [Laughs.]

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, we've probably done enough.

MS. GOLD: [Inaudible.]

MRS. ANDERSON: I think probably one thing I think right now is one of the great pleasures of our business has been the people we've met, the clients we've had and the relationships we've developed along the way with a lot of these jobs. A very, very happy one.

MS. GOLD: Yes. And the—you have—that seems to be this larger community that you're operating in. I mean, it's not necessarily only this community that you live in, but there's a large community of—

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, and our community really is all—is out there somewhere else. It's in a wider area, yeah. Because we haven't really worked much in this community.

MS. GOLD: And that you've also had these connections with the artists—with artists and crafts people that live around here, right?

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] But our closer ones really were people who lived elsewhere. An awful lot of them are dead.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah.

MRS. ANDERSON: I am going to have to go.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

MRS. ANDERSON: I have enjoyed knowing you and I appreciate your patience and your skills.

MS. GOLD: Oh, thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]