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Dykstra, Larry and Kay Oral History Interview: Sesquicentennial of Holland, "150 Stories for 150 Years"

Tracy Bednarick

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TB: The first thing is really easy. All I want you to do is state your name and your date of birth and where you were born.

KD: My name is Kay Dykstra and I was born January 5, 1906.

TB: What is your maiden name?

KD: Kay Voss, Kay Voss Dykstra.

TB: Where were you born?

KD: I was born in Holland, Michigan, on 151 W. 13th St.

TB: Have you lived in Holland all your life?

KD: Yes.

TB: Do you want to talk a little bit about what your childhood was like? What were some of the things you did for fun? Where did you go to school?

KD: I went to the Holland Christian School and I had a wonderful home life, a happy home. I went to the Christian Reformed Church and we were brought up to go to church and Sunday school, and catechism and enjoy the family.

LD: I want to add a note or two to that. 151 W. 13th is now in the historical district. It's very close to Maple Ave. Mother told me that they walked to church because they went to Central Ave. and then they would go to River Ave. and then through Centennial Park.

KD: Last year I wanted to walk through it like I did when I was a child, but they changed
it a little bit. But anyway, it was a joy to walk through.

TB: Did you walk to school, too?
KD: Yes.
TB: Do you remember some of the chores you had to do when you were a child? Did you have any chores?
KD: Well, we’d help with dishes just like every normal child. I had four sisters. There were nine in our family.
TB: Wow! A big family! When did you meet your husband?
KD: Well, I was sixteen. I went with him when I was sixteen. I met him before when we went to catechism, we went to the same church. That’s where I met him.
TB: Do you have children? Obviously you have children!
KD: Three. Two sons and a daughter.
TB: What are their names?
KD: Marilyn Grevengood, Larry, and Cal. Cal is a physician.
TB: Is he an oncologist, Calvin Dykstra?
KD: Yes.
TB: He was my doctor! I thought you looked familiar (to Larry)! In Grand Rapids, right?
LD: Yes!
TB: Yes, I had cancer when I was two and he was my doctor!
LD: Is that right?
KD: When you were two? What is your last name?
TB: Tracy Bednarick. He'll know if you say you met Tracy.

LD: We'll be sure to tell him.

TB: He's the one that got me to go to Hope College.

LD: Really?

TB: That's so cool!

KD: That's where he went! That's interesting! Well, I'm glad. You're well now?

TB: I'm very well thanks to him. Let's get back on track here. Did you work at all before you were married?

KD: Yes, I did. I worked at the Holland Furnace Company. I was telephone operator there.

TB: How long did you work there?

KD: Thirteen years.

TB: Do you remember what years that would have been?

LD: Didn't you work at Heinz?

KD: Yes, for the summer.

LD: And then you worked at Holland Shoe Company? And then you started at Michigan Bell, which was over the Vogue Restaurant, that's where Ben Franklin sits on River Ave. You worked there for a short time and that's how you got the job as telephone operator at the Furnace Company.

KD: You're right.

LD: And that was in 1921, as close as we can figure. And she worked there until 1934 when my sister was born.
TB: What was it like working for the Holland Furnace Company?

KD: Wonderful. I had a very good relationship because when you're a telephone operator, they didn't have telephones that you could call out on like you do now. Everything had to go through the switchboard. I did all the calling. I enjoyed it so much.

TB: Did you get to know a lot about the company?

KD: Yes, I did. The manager and the heads of the departments, everybody was so kind to me. I loved everybody there.

TB: Do you remember what it was like when Holland Furnace Company started to go under?

KD: I didn't really know a whole lot about it. I knew the branch managers that came in and they were all friendly to me. I enjoyed every day.

TB: Was there anything that you noticed that Holland Furnace Company did for the community while you were working there? I've heard things that they were involved with the community. Do you remember anything that they did?

KD: Well, they built the Warm Friend Tavern. Mr. A. H. Landwert, who was with Mr. Coolum. Mr. Coolum was the son-in-law of Mr. Landwert. He was a fine man. His son was in a boat accident. You know, he always had a smile on his face.

TB: And then after the accident?

KD: Oh, it was so sad! I went to his funeral. He was a Christian Scientist.

LD: They did some things in parades for the holidays and so forth. They had some cars and floats and some of that stuff.

KD: Well, I was on a float for the Holland Furnace Company.
LD: Was it the Cherry Festival or something? It was while you were working there.

KD: In Benton Harbor. I sat in the wooden shoe on the float.

TB: Is there anything else that you’d like to say about when you worked at the Holland Furnace Company that stands out? Did you go to work there shortly after you graduated from high school?

KD: No, I didn’t graduate from high school. The boys did, but I didn’t graduate from high school. I guess it was shortly after that that I worked there.

LD: You were only fifteen.

KD: It was because I was going with dad. Some people criticize the Holland Furnace Company, but as far as I’m concerned, I was told, too, that they did things that weren’t right, but as far as I was concerned, they always treated me wonderful.

TB: Who told you that they did things that weren’t right?

KD: Well, you know, you hear that.

TB: After you working there or while you were working there?

KD: No, after.

TB: Can you think of some qualities that seem to stand out concerning the city of Holland?

KD: No, I really can’t think of anything.

LD: Well, you always enjoyed living here in the community, a great place to be.

KD: Oh, yes! I wouldn’t like to move, I just love Holland.

TB: Have you ever thought about moving at all?

KD: No. I know I said to dad one time, I never lived on a farm and he did. Although, he
didn’t live there long because when he got older he boarded in Holland and worked in Holland. I said, "I hope you never take me to a farm!"

LD: Whenever dad had transfer opportunities out of Holland, he always turned them down.

TB: Where did your husband work?

KD: He worked at Hollaman-De Weerd when we were going together.

LD: That was a Ford dealer.

KD: Then later on, he worked for Metropolitan.

LD: He was with Heinrik Ter Haar after he was at Ford garage and that became Ter Haar Auto Sales and then Ter Haar-Van Huizen and that’s now Crown. So, he worked with them way back in the early years. He started with Metropolitan in 1934, and then headed the Holland office for years until he retired.

TB: Did he enjoy his work there?

LD: Oh, yes.

KD: What I was always glad about, you know, selling insurance, some people frown on that. I didn’t. I thought that was wonderful because I think he stressed insurance for the parents. So that if either one of them would pass away, they would have enough. I remember after he retired, widows would call him. They had so much confidence in him. They’d say, "Jack, what do you think I should do?" He would tell them what he thought would be best in their situation. When I think about that, I think, really, it was wonderful work. It was helping people. I really felt that.

TB: I’m going to jump back a little bit. Do you remember what the Depression was like
in Holland?

KD: Yes. You just had to watch what you bought. It didn’t affect us so much, not like people with a big family. We always got along. Because I don’t remember much of it, is because we didn’t suffer.

TB: I think some people have this idea that everybody suffered, but my family were farmers and they still had to farm. So, they didn’t suffer like other people. What about World War II? I’m going to skip World War I because it doesn’t really cover our time period, but I like to ask about the Depression anyway. What was World War II like in Holland and what was it like when the veterans started to return to the city?

KD: Well, my parents were very concerned. None of my brothers were in the service. They were in the Navy. That was before the war. Then Leonard John, my nephews, and Ozzy, were in the war.

LD: They were both members of National Guard. No, I take that back. Ozzy was a member of the National Guard, Ozzy Voss. Lenny was I think in the infantry and he was first missing in action, and then it turned out that he died shortly after that, so he was one of the first casualties out of Holland, early in 1942.

KD: Italy. And Ozborne was wounded.

LD: Ozburne was wounded, right. But you had a number of nephews that were in World War II.

KD: Yes, Billy Holwinga.

LD: Yes, and Izzy Ashe and George Ashe.
KD: You're right. See how much he helps me?

LD: And then several of the in-law's, too. Jay Peervolt. To be fully accurate, we'd have to do some checking of ages and time periods because a lot of the nephews on mother's side were in the service because they were right at that age. The nephews on dad's side were not. So, a lot of military history on mother's side, but very little on dad's side.

KD: Nobody on dad's side.

TB: Was your husband older or younger or the same age as you?

KD: Three years older.

TB: Do you remember how the war affected the community of Holland?

KD: Well, in churches there was prayer and all that. I don't remember that it had any bad effects on us. Everybody was concerned, especially when you had loved ones there.

LD: The churches had banners in the front with blue stars for persons in the service and gold stars for those who died.

KD: We had one in our window.

LD: In 14th Street.

KD: In our window at home.

LD: Not our window. Aunt Clair had one.

KD: But my dad did. I remember him saying, "If the war was over, I'd like to buy a flag as big as this house." I remember my dad saying that.

TB: Do you remember any shortages after the war? Or what it was like when the veterans came back to the city?
KD: Well, they had parades and that type of thing.

LD: They had a donkey ballgame in Holland, shortly after the war. That was part of the big celebration.

TB: A donkey?

LD: A donkey ballgame. They called it a donkey ballgame. It was softball. All the players had to be on a donkey. So, if someone popped a fly, they had to get the donkey to get under it in order to catch it. Well, if it landed on the ground, they had to get off the donkey, pick up the ball, get on the donkey and then throw it. Then the guy who was catching it was on a donkey and if he missed it then he'd have to bring the donkey over there and get off and pick up the ball. It was a stitch. I was just a little kid, but I remember that. And a lot of horn blowing, and traffic down 8th St., and toilet tissue, and confetti.

KD: Then on the corner, where the public school is now on the corner of 15th or 16th and River Ave., they had a big bonfire. I remember coming home and they were celebrating. My mom had a big fruit salad, I remember it like it was yesterday.

LD: That can't be, mother. Because grandma died in 1928. The war ended in 1945.

TB: Maybe that was after World War I.

KD: Yes, that's right. I'm glad you're helping me!

TB: Too many wars in one person's life, I think. Have you been involved with the church throughout your life and have you always gone to Central Avenue?

KD: I went to Central Avenue and then, I think I was about 16, I went to Fourteenth Street Christian Reformed Church. Now I go to Faith Christian Reformed Church. I
went to three churches, for catechism and Sunday school.

TB: How do you think the church influences the city of Holland? Is it different than other cities that you’ve visited or seen?

KD: Well, I know we have a lot of them. I didn’t go to other churches, mostly Christian Reformed. Although, now I go to Spring Lake once in a while and I enjoy it.

TB: What was it like raising your children in Holland?

KD: Well, it was better than now.

TB: Do you remember any special activities that you did with them? Larry, you can answer this if you remember anything that you did with the family that stands out. Was there a special place that you liked to go in Holland?

KD: Well, when we were children, my dad would rent a surrey. Then mother would make lunch and we’d go to Ottawa Beach and have our dinner there. We enjoyed life. Simple, but happy. Content. Not like now. It would be very difficult to bring up a family now. I wouldn’t like to bring up children now.

LD: Dad was in the insurance business which involved him a lot in the evenings and the weekends because he was active when other people would be home and be available. So, we didn’t get to the beach all that often, but every spring, we drove to Ottawa Beach to get sand and we had a full beach-sand box in the yard as long as I can remember. There’s four years between my sister and myself and my brother was five years younger than I am, so we had a sand box in the yard for a long time. That’s a lot of sand that we got!

KD: Then you know what my husband did? He filled two quarts, what we used to get
milk in, he used to fill them with sand. And he’d give them to different ones to put on ice.

LD: If you got stuck.

KD: Now, what I said about the surrey, that was when I was a child.

TB: Did you mention where you lived after you got married? I don’t remember if you mentioned that or not.

KD: We lived at 125 E. 19th St. We had a bungalow, we rented. Later on we moved to 22nd St. 68 W. 22nd St. That we bought.

LD: The home on 22nd St. was moved out into the park. Toward Castle Park. The house was kept intact with the original architectural design inside. The we moved in 1943 to 311 W. 17th St. We needed more room than we had in the 22nd St. house. In 1951, we moved to 552 Elmdale Court, which is the blue house on the corner. Then in ’55, we moved back to 17th St.

TB: The same house?

LD: Same house. We always kept the house.

KD: We owned that home and we lived there while they were building this.

LD: Then the folks moved here in ’63. By that time, Marilyn was gone and I was gone out of the house.

KD: Cal was here.

TB: Are there any drawbacks to living in Holland or anything negative about the city of Holland? And this would be more current, now than past.

KD: I don’t think so.
LD: Well, it’s unfortunate that we have the crime problem that we have, the drug problem and those kinds of things.

KD: Oh, yes! We didn’t have that then.

LD: We had a nine o’clock curfew when I was a kid. For a while. We weren’t supposed to be out after nine o’clock.

KD: I remember that, too, when I was a kid.

LD: The reason for that, I think, was a little bit of misbehavior. By comparison with what we have today, it wasn’t even a problem.

TB: I think there’s an eleven o’clock curfew now. Eleven o’clock is much later than nine o’clock.

LD: The whistle blew at five minutes to nine. You had five minutes to get home. So, if you were caught out on the streets after nine o’clock, we were more worried about what would happen than we were knowledgeable about what did happen. I don’t know anybody that was ever caught being out after curfew. But that’s when we were in regular daylight time, so we didn’t have light until quarter to ten at night as we do now. That’s why it was nine o’clock because by that time the sun had set.

KD: I don’t think we have the snow now like we did then. I remember when we lived on 13th St. when I was a child and you’d have a hard time getting to church because there was so much snow. I remember, too, that when I was working at the Holland Furnace Company, which was quite a distance from my home, 13th to 24th.

TB: And you walked?

KD: I walked. Later on a friend, she never married, she had a car. She lived next to the
City Hall. I walked to her house and then I’d ride with her. She was a dear friend.

TB: What are some of the biggest changes that you’ve seen in Holland in the past fifty years? Since after World War II what has changed in the city? That’s a big question.

KD: It is! Well, one thing, I think now that they have that mall. For those merchants in Holland, I guess it’s sad for them. Mr. Prince and what he did made it so much more comfortable for people walking on the streets in the winter time. I love my city and I think that the mall, of course, it’s good for some people, but I do think it would be nice if some of our people would patronize our downtown.

TB: What about changes in the amount of industry in Holland? Have you noticed that that has changed?

KD: Yes. It has. They used to have Limberts, a furniture company, and West Michigan.

LD: Bayview. There were a lot of smaller businesses. There were more lumber yards because there were smaller businesses, also. The trades weren’t as combined as they are now. You hired these guys because they’re small crews of three, four, five guys that got together and they did this work together.

KD: My father, he peddled oil. He had a horse and a wagon. The wagon had two tanks on it. Then he would have to measure out the oil and in the winter he had a sleigh. The kids would run after him and ride the sleigh.

LD: We probably should say something about kerosene because it was used for lighting and cooking as opposed to . . . they didn’t have big tanks like people did in years later. This was all much smaller quantities.

KD: They had kerosene stoves then, and lamps.
TB: So, did people buy so much every few days or something?

KD: Every week.

TB: More like what a milk man would do only with oil.

KD: You’re right. When I think of it, they wouldn’t do that now. But in our backyard, my dad had oil. Gas! The tanks were right in the barn. I know when we’d had an electric storm, we all had to get downstairs right away because you never know.

TB: If something hit the barn then . . .

LD: It’d really go!

KD: They looked for my dad, of course, they had to. They were always happy when he came. My dad had a lot of friends, too, in doing that. That was his livelihood. And we went to the Christian school.

(telephone rings, tape paused)

TB: Do you want to talk about Tulip Time? How has Tulip Time changed and what was it like when you first started being involved with it and how is it different now?

KD: Well, I think there are more bands than what there were at that time. They used to disband in Centennial Park when our children were small, but now, of course, they go that longer route. It was a time of happiness and joy and I just thought everybody was happy with it. There were a lot of visitors. When our bands would come through, I’d always get a lump in my throat. I saw my little guys marching, Larry and . . .

LD: Well, dad was a member of the Exchange Club and generally involved with the street scrubbing day, so he had a Dutch costume with the wooden shoes and he always did
that. Then when we were kids in grade school, we would be in the Children’s Day parade with costumes and we always had decorated bikes with crepe paper. I was in the band from fifth grade on, so I marched for a long time. I remember my first year in college, I was just out of sync all spring because I hadn’t gotten out on the street and marched and been involved in Tulip Time.

TB: Did you go to the Christian schools, too?

LD: Yes. My brother was a band member after me so we were involved. I was at Holland Christian when Henry Vander Linde came.

TB: I interviewed him yesterday.

LD: Did you really? Oh, he’s great. He was single at the time he came to Holland. So, we had a nice relationship with him. We always marched from Holland Christian High School, where Evergreen Commons is now, to the beginning of the parade. We always met at school, got all our gear and then we marched. Then we would do the parade and then after the parade we’d make our own way back to school. Sometimes Van would go back with us and he’d show us some of the military routines he had learned in the service.

KD: Then they had band reviews and those were nice.

LD: Saturday was much different then. We started in the morning at nine o’clock with baton twirling and that was a well known contest and many states would send people over here.

TB: So, there’s more contests?

LD: Yes, and then the band review started at twelve thirty and they would have their
division rankings. This was all at Riverview Park. Then when the band review ended at about three thirty, we would assemble for the parade. Of course, all those streets back then were gravel. They're paved now, but they used to be gravel roads. We'd be there in our uniforms with white spats and white gloves and try and stay clean, particularly when the days were really hot. It'd be really hard because you were sweating, those were heavy wool uniforms that we had.

TB: We had some band uniforms donated to the archives and I can't even believe people wore those! They look so heavy.

LD: Oh, yes. And they were military style and we felt like a million bucks.

KD: They were great. I was so proud of our band. Cal, he played a cornet. But then he had to wear something for his teeth and he couldn't play anymore. So, he played the drum. The drum was so big you could hardly see him above it, could you, Larry?

LD: No. Cal was real small until he got out of high school. He got all his growth after that, so when he was drummer, why, he had all he could do to see over the top. He had to watch around the side.

TB: To make sure he knew where he was going!

KD: Now he's taller.

LD: Well, we'd have the parade at four o'clock and this was in standard time and so the parade would get over around five thirty or six. So, you were into the evening already. I remember the years when they first extended it to Kollen Park. That was just the Saturday parade. Otherwise it always got out from Centennial Park. The parade was always headed by Holland Police Department on Harley Davidson
motorcycles. They were silver motorcycles with black trim. Looked like a million bucks and the officers would ride to keep the crowd back. One year in front of the Park Theater, which is just across from Centennial Park . . .

TB: It’s closed now.

LD: . . . one of those motorcycles caught on fire. Now, the fire trucks are at the end of the parade and these policemen were at the beginning. The officer who was riding it, I think it was Jerry Vander Vee who was sheriff at the time, wisely got this thing into the middle of the street away from the crowd on both sides and got off before he got on fire. There was a lot of excitement and how the firetrucks got around there so quick, I don’t know, but they were there in a flash. I remember that because dad’s insurance office was over the A & P store, which is now ____ building. We could see out of the office window, we could look down on the parade. For some reason, I had just come down that stairway the same time that motorcycle caught fire, so I was there when it happened. I saw it.

TB: Do you remember any other exciting Tulip Time things or something that stands out as a special one?

LD: Being in the band, we were involved with different regulations from year to year. The bands did their performing at the band review and then they were concerned about how long the parade was taking. It was a two and a half hour parade sometimes. It got really long. They then made a prohibition against doing anything other than a straight march. But since Holland Christian, as part of a Holland hosting town, we alternated with Holland Public schools doing the Star Spangled Banner at
the flag raising ceremony at the beginning of the band review. We never got a chance to do anything. So, one year did some figures while we were marching down 8th St. Well, then other bands started to do that and that began to take too much time. Then they had to cut that out. Then we had to figure out how to do this special stuff without slowing down.

TB: Did your sister Dutch dance?

LD: The Dutch dancing was limited to the Holland High girls. It's only in recent years that they got Holland Christian. Of course, West Ottawa wasn't in existence at that time. Then they opened it up to Zeeland, too, which was great because now it's a much closer community. When we were kids, Zeeland, why, that was four or five miles east of here!

TB: Now they just kind of run together. Is there anything else you want to add about Tulip Time?

KD: No, not particularly. I do know that when we'd have prayer meeting that prayer was for the people that came in from out of town and that no accidents would occur. Then they passed out tracts, too.

TB: During Tulip Time?

KD: Yes.

LD: They had a lot of involvement from National Guard for traffic help. Then the police department recruited some volunteers for traffic control.

TB: So, traffic control was still problem back then?

LD: Oh, yes. Of course, we didn't have any expressways at all around town. The
Kollen Park parking lot ended up being the area for the buses for all these out of town bands. I remember one year when I was in college that I worked for the police department. My job was to control the bus parking in that big parking lot, which was unpaved at that time. I forget how many buses we put in there, but we really had them packed in there and all off set so they could be very close and yet their doors would be accessible.

TB: Did you go to Hope College, too?

LD: Yes. I went to Hope and I went to Calvin both. I was always in the area.

TB: Have there ever been any controversies in Holland that stand out that you remember?

KD: No, not that I recall.

LD: Oh, there was always discussion of issues. When we had the Civic Center, some question about whether that was the right thing to do just like they wonder about the art center now. The political races for mayor and city offices didn’t really revolve on heartbreaking issues. There were issues involved, but not anything of major import that I can think of.

KD: We’ve always had good mayors, I think, don’t you?

LD: Yes, generally.

KD: I think we’ve got an excellent one right now. I like him.

TB: I interviewed him. He’s a really nice gentleman. Okay, how has Hope College changed and how has the community reacted to that?

(phone rings)

KD: Well, I think that this year that Nykerk used to be professor there and was quite
outstanding.

LD: That’s before my time.

KD: And Dimnent.

TB: There’s a music building named after Nykerk.

KD: Yes. I think we’ve had some real good professors there.

LD: Well, the college has grown so immensely in recent years. I think of what the campus was like when I was on it and it was all contained in that one block. At that time, they were using some of the homes across the street for fraternity housing and I think one of those across from the chapel where the science building is now was the psych. department office. They used the classrooms in the basement of the chapel, but all the offices were in this residence. So, they were starting to move across the street just for office space. But the Van Raalte house was still standing where the soccer field is now. There’s been a tremendous expansion since I was in school.

TB: Do you think the Dutch heritage still influences the city of Holland?

KD: I think somewhat, don’t you, Larry?

LD: Yes.

KD: Not a whole lot.

TB: How has that changed? Did it have more of an influence earlier? And what kind of influence did it have on the city?

LD: Well, Holland’s a lot more cosmopolitan now than it was back then. There was a strong Dutch background for many years and the relationship with the Netherlands during the second World War and the after the war there was a lot of immigration
from Europe and a lot of Dutch people came to this community because of its Dutch background. So, we retained a lot of that close tie to the Netherlands for a number of years after the war. Then with the development of the fruit business, we drew more workers from Mexico and the southern United States to come up here and harvest. More and more of them decided to stay here because this was a nice place to be. Then when G.E. moved a plant in from Fort Wayne, they moved a lot of people in from another area and then that drew people from other nationalities in. As industry expanded, people from other backgrounds came in. So, now it's amazing. You look around how you can get a group together and you've got to look hard to find a Hollander.

TB: Oh, yes.

KD: And there's so many churches. Many, many more churches than when we were young.

TB: When you were young, was it mostly either Christian Reformed or Reformed Church?

KD: Yes, I think so.

TB: Now there's all different.

KD: Yes, so many different.

LD: We had one Catholic church, St. Francis, has been in Holland for many years. But that was the Catholic church. The next nearest one was in Grand Rapids. We had ______ church and Lutheran church, but it was only one and both of those were quite small. The United Methodist church has been in Holland for years. The Presbyterian
church . . .

(side 2)

TB: How do you think the role of women has changed in the community?

KD: Well, I think there are so many more feminists now, don’t you, than what there used to be? Years ago you didn’t hear that.

LD: I think they have as much opportunity here as they do anywhere else. Now, anyway. Although, there are some glass ceilings in some of Holland’s older businesses.

TB: Can you tell me what you’ve heard other people outside of Holland say when they come to the community - such as friends or family that come and visit?

KD: My friends think Holland is pretty nice. Of course, they would, coming here. I mean, they know how I feel. I think the women of today do more in politics and all that and they know more. Years ago we weren’t interested in that. I know when my children were small I didn’t listen to, of course, we didn’t have TV then, either. Being alone as I am, I have time to listen every night. Last week it was eleven thirty, twelve o’clock and I just didn’t want to go to bed. It seems I wanted to hear everything there was to be heard.

TB: With the convention?

KD: Yes. What I mean to say is, I think women are much more in politics than what they were then.

LD: Fifty years ago, very few women drove. It was unusual and most of them didn’t have cars. Very few two car families. That’s a big change. There were a lot of women who were home with the children and very few mothers worked.
KD: Yes, I never worked when my children were small, like Larry said. I was home evenings a lot. I went to meetings in the church and I went out with my sisters, but ordinarily mothers were home. They weren’t running around.

LD: There were no daycare facilities at all. Mothers that worked had people either come in or brought their children somewhere or a babysitter, but they didn’t have the groups and facilities that we have now.

TB: Did you work anywhere after your children grew up or did you stay . . .

KD: I was always thankful for that because Jack was busy often evenings selling insurance because that’s the time when the husbands are home. So, I was home a lot of the time. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed my family and bringing them up.

TB: It sounds like you were involved with the church quite a bit, too.

KD: I was, yes.

TB: Was there anything that you really enjoyed doing with the church that you can recall?

KD: Well, when I was younger, we had our Christian school and we would have a Christian school circle. I was secretary at one time and things like that. Then we would try to earn money for our school. We called that a school circle. I was interested in that, but as I say, I was home a lot of the time.

TB: Is there anything that either of you wanted to add about either your personal history or the history of Holland? I’ve gone through most of my questions.

KD: Another thing is school. Our school tried to raise money. They would serve dinners, weddings and all that type of thing. We would have to work and get workers, and so, as mothers we were active in that.
LD: Well, it was interesting to see the growth of Holland. One of my disappointments was the failure of the community to plan traffic handling. I remember when the bypass went around Holland, United Motor Sales was perched right in between the two highways. In order to expand the project, they had to move it across the street west of where it is now and that's now where Greener auto sales is, I think. I remember at the time, this was in the late fifties, because I had purchased a car at the old location in 1958 so that would be right around the 1960 mark. It seemed strange to me that they had this area that they took for the bypass, but they didn't take enough of it to make an expressway. A bypass was considered big enough at that time. Well, what happened is here we are 30 years later and it's not big enough.

TB: Right, and it doesn't really bypass much, either.

LD: No, and the other thing is that we have never handled traffic from the lakeshore on either the north or the south side. Lansing ran into a problem, they had to buy up all these houses in order to get an expressway to serve the center of town. There's never been any provision to adequately handle traffic in this area. The disappointing thing is that even now, we read about they're trying to find money to do 16th St. Well, it was obvious ten years ago that 16th St. was going to have to be a four lane entrance into the city. Why do we wait all this time to have it happen? We're behind now and we don't even have 16th St. paved yet. That was always a disappointment to me that in this area we never gave adequate thought to how we were going to handle traffic.

KD: Tracy, do you live at home now?
TB: Well, I lived here for the summer. I still go home quite often to visit and everything.

KD: I was thinking otherwise sometime maybe we could go out to lunch together.

TB: Oh, yes, that would be nice!

KD: Maybe you would join us?

LD: We’ll see how the schedule goes.

TB: It’s hard to pin you guys down!

KD: Would you have noon hours free?

TB: It depends on what days I have classes and everything.

KD: I see. Well, we’ll try to do that.

TB: Tuesdays and Thursdays are good for me because I only have one class.

KD: When do you start school again?

TB: Next week Tuesday. I’m excited, though.

KD: Are you? How many years are you?

TB: I have two more years. After this year, I’ll be a senior and I’ll do my student teaching the last semester of school my senior year. I want to do it in Philadelphia because I want to see what it’s like to teach in a larger city to see if that’s something I want to do because I really feel a calling to minister to inner-city kids for a while. Not for the rest of my life, but for a little bit.

LD: The head of the Psych. Department who had his office in that office across from the chapel was the one initiated the Philadelphia program. That was Dr. Bob De Haan.

TB: Are you going into psychiatry?

TB: No, English education.
KD: I see.

TB: Okay, I don’t really have any more questions and I know it’s getting close to twelve o’clock. What I’ll do is, after I type this up and I send it back to you, if there’s anything that you think of that you want to add, just write it down and then we’ll see about getting back together to interview or if you just even want to write it out and I can add it to the interview. Thank you very much!

KD: I hope it helped a little bit!

TB: Yes! It was interesting. I’ve learned so much about the city of Holland by doing these interviews. You really gain a respect for the town. When I came here, I looked at these things and I judged the town right away. I didn’t really take time to see what the town is.

KD: Now, what is this for?

TB: The Holland sesquicentennial is coming up in ’97 and Holland will be 150 years old. So, what they’re trying to do is get 150 people to do interviews with and have these 150 interviews to show all the different impressions and history that is in Holland. I’ll be doing 21 or 22 interviews and then HASP, which is a retired professional organization, will be taking over the project and doing more interviews after that. Then there’ll be another student next summer doing more interviews.

KD: Well, you leave your telephone number and then sometime maybe this fall or so . . .

TB: Sure. Here, I have your pen, I don’t know if I have a piece of paper.

LD: We’ve got plenty. If you need that one take it.