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Vander Burgh, John Oral History Interview: Class Projects

Terri Robinson

Randy VandenBerg

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Interview with John VanderBurgh in his studio located at 370 Woodward Avenue, Zeeland, Michigan.

Terri: Did you come over here to Holland with your parents?
Mr. VanderBurgh: No, I came with my family, my wife and three children, 25 years ago, December 51.

Randy: Did you start doing this kind of work over in Holland before you came over here?
Mr. VB: Yea, I was in the Netherlands, in the Hague.
R: The Hague, is that a town?
Mr. VB: Your in college and you don't know what the Hague is? That's the seat of the Dutch government. That was where I was born and where I lived. Then I moved to Zeeland and then I worked in Grand Rapids for 5 years. And then I started out here in Zeeland.

R: Do you have like regular people that come here that buy paintings from you, like, could somebody walk in here like us and then buy one of these off the wall, or do you have to have them made?
Mr. VB: No, I make sketches of windows right now, ya know, my product is stained glass windows or medallions and they are all custom made.
Mr. VB: They tell me what they want and I make a sketch, 2 scale. They O. K. it and then I make a window or whatever they want.

T: Does it take you along time to finish one then?

Mr. VB: That all depend on how big it is and how much detail goes in the painting and if it has to be fired in the kiln.

T: Oh, I didn't know that it has to be fired.

Mr. VB: I make lanterns and lampshades.

T: Are your classes very big classes, or are they smaller classes.

Mr. VB: No, not more than 6.

T: What do you start off making?

Mr. VB: Well, just, I'm not making anything they have to make something, so some of them have cut glass before otherwise I let them cut glass on some other pieces of glass and if that goes then usually they look around and they select a thing that they see that they want to make and they cut the paper patterns and the colored glass and cut each piece according to the pattern.

R: What made you decide to start when you were in Holland in the Netherlands, what made you decide to start doing the stained glass. Is that what you did for a living?

Mr. VB: That was in 93, well, before the war, during the war I worked in a government office. After the war I had a chance to come here and so we did.
Mr. VB: I came from high school, a brother of my mother had a studio and that's where I learned. An uncle of mine.

R: Do you like it here in Zeeland?

Mr. VB: Yea, it's real nice. The Hague is a big city and we have three little kids, sometimes it's hard. Here it's so open and so much room, you don't have to worry about anything, they can stay outside without everytime checking on them. It's nice.

R: Have you seen quite a big change in Zeeland from when you first got here?

Mr. VB: Yea, it's expanded you know, in Zeeland there's quite a few industries for a little town. Howard Miller Corp., Colonial Clock, oh there's many. We have quite a number of industries for a little town. But all I have done is work with stain glass.

T: Beautiful work. What now, o.k. what all goes into making, when you make something, like, o.k. if I come in and say I want a window done or something like that and then I tell you generally what I want.

Mr. VB: Yea, what you want and the type of window, or what picture you want. Last time I had a stairway window with a windmill and a tulip field, other windows I made were of the Holland lighthouse with a sailboat and a seagull. I've made windows with old sailing ships.

R: How much would a window like that cost? That depends on the size?
Mr. VB: That depends on the size. For this about $450.

T: Really?

Mr. VB: So there are plenty of possibilities, unlimited possibilities.

T: So you do that and then they o.k. it and then you just, you cut the glass, what do you do now? You cut the glass and...

Mr. VB: When they like the sketch I make the layout, the drawing, the picture size of the window. Then cut the paper pattern with a double blade sissor to allow for the lead that goes inbetween. See? Otherwise, if cut with the regular sissor, when you put it together with the lead inbetween it would be too wide on the lines.

R: Do you have any tools that you used in Holland? Over in the Netherlands?

Mr. VB: Well, when I started I bought my own tools. I only brought one, the (sleeter?). That is the only Dutch tool. They don't have them here. You can put your glass down and cut the different widths like that. When I worked in Grand Rapids, I told them about it but they...we do it this way so...but this is much handier.

T: Is this all scrap?

Mr. VB: Yea, all scrap.

T: You can use it over again thought can't you?

Mr. VB: Oh, only small pieces, usually they pick it up for mosaics or they make something small, candelholders.
T: This stuff has to be fired? I didn't realize it had to be fired.

Mr. VB: When there is painting on, like school house window, I show you? Paint the school house, it has to be fired in the kiln.

R: So you do alot of art work then, too?

Mr. VB: Yea

R: Like those over there?

Mr. VB: These are all painted, see?

T: You've done that?

Mr. VB: Yea.

R: How long do you work a day on, like today, did you work today regular hours?

Mr. VB: Yea, go out for coffee, take a break, ya know.

R: When you worked for the government, in the Hague did you do alot of paintings for windows around, in the buildings there?

Mr. VB: No, no I was not in the stained glass business. I worked for the information post, checking people who were deported, sent to concentration camps, to try find out when they died. The date of death, estate and so on.

R: You did that during the war?

Mr. VB: No, after the war. Very few came back and the rest were declared dead, I reconstructed the transports, the trains, to find date of death.

R: When they figure out the date of death, on a person did they ever find out how they died?
Mr. VB: Oh, yea.

R: Or ever find them?

Mr. VB: No, they wouldn't find them, they were all cremated, ya know. You have heard about how they cremated millions of people if you're Jewish.

R: Were you in the Hague when the Germans came through?

Mr. VB: Oh, yea.

R: On a march or something?

Mr. VB: May 1940, I woke up early in the morning because I heard shooting, I thought they were exercises, ya know? I looked in between the Hague and Rotterdam where there was an airport and saw parachutes coming. We looked closer and it was the Germans occupying the airport, they tried to capture the seat of the government.

R: Did you go into hiding then?

Mr. VB: No, we didn't go into hiding. German planes were shot down and some landed right in the middle of the city. We were all excited.

T: How old were you then?

Mr. VB: 24. Yea, I just received my call, I would have to go down there and on Wednesday the Netherlands capitulated and they bombed Rotterdam. And then after that on Thursday, then finally they could march into the Hague. And then the queen. That was the set-up on Thursday, they landed all around the Hague to capture the government and the queen. That didn't
Mr. VB: materialize, it took them 5 days and then bombing Rotterdam, it was no use, the government had left for London, no use going on fighting, you know. In the north, there's a big dyke, they closed that off. Here is Amsterdam, that's the capitol, but the seat was in the Hague. That's why they wanted to encircle it but they couldn't. They couldn't get in, and then they tried to move their troops over and capture Amsterdam see, but here is one bunker and they kept bombing and bombing but that thing was made so good it just broke off little pieces, that's all. They kept them away for 5 days so that's when they decided to bomb Rotterdam.

R: What's the government like over there compared to, like, over here? To the president and the queen?

Mr. VB: Well the queen is just a figure head, but she is a uniting force, just like Great Britain and you know, they don't have much power but they are a symbol of national unity. Of course some young people who shouted away with queen. But you know there are crazy people all over the world. And then the government is a socialistic government, they take good care of older people. In that respect America is way, way behind, cause people have to live with social security, just in a poor miserable state. In the Netherlands older people are making trips over here, their real comfortable. They can afford it. Many come back, checks are waiting for the months
Mr. VB: that they are here, and they have a free day they can ride on the trains. It is a small country, transportation is real good. The trains they go every 10 minutes. They have free days and they can ride free, Senior Citizens. So, there is quite a bit of difference with here.

T: Do you ever think of going back there to live?

Mr. VB: No, not to live, we like to visit.

T: Do you visit quite often?

Mr. VB: No, not as often as we would like. The last time was in 1970. But it has changed so much. Oh, the Hague and little towns around there are big, big cities. And Amsterdam is the same thing. Ya, its an interesting country, alot of history. All the small towns here are all the same, there's nothing especially here in Michigan, nothing like Zeeland. There's nothing interesting here and you know, if you go to Grand Rapids there's not too much here. Oh, the smallest towns they have city halls dating from 1300, 1400 ya know, all a different style. It's really enjoyable to see that. And usually these cities were all planned see, so you usually get a market place, a city hall at least one church.

R: Do they have an open market?

Mr. VB: Yea

R: Out in the streets?

Mr. VB: Yea, its very interesting. Worthwhile to visit.
R: Yea, I'd like to go there once.

Mr. VB: Then they have find museums. In Amsterdam the Reichs Museum. With the painting of Rembrandt. They have a big museum for Vincent Vangogh. Beautiful. Then in Cawdor they have the famous St. John's Cathedral. Well, quite famous for stained glass windows in the 1500's.

R: You never went to a school to learn how to do this, you just learned it from your mother and your uncle?

Mr. VB: Not my mother, from my uncle.

T: From your uncle.

Mr. VB: Yea, later on I went to the Academy. Night courses in drawing, that's what I enjoy.

R: Are there many people in this kind of work?

Mr. VB: Oh, there are quite a few young people starting, you know, starting on their own. Some are doing pretty good. Especially on the California, on that side, you know. There seem to be quite a few people with a lot of money so they like experimenting with new ideas, but around here there are not too many.

R: When you cut a piece of glass, like this piece here, is this glass hot or cold when you cut it?

Mr. VB: No. See? That's how ya do it. Now you have all your pieces together, you start at the corner, go around, another piece there, you start with your glass, ya know another piece of lead, another piece of glass, so you build it up. You sodder all the joints and turn it over and sodder the other side.
Mr. VB: To make an outside window you have to fill this up otherwise the rain will seep through, make it water-proof see? That's the way you do it. It's all hand work and hand work takes time.

T: I have a question, lately, the little suncatchers that are in the window, like those, well when you buy them in the store they are so expensive, what makes them so expensive?

Mr. VB: They take time to make. This is all hand work, that's what makes it expensive, of course you buy it in the store and they add a percent to it, they have to make a living.

T: They are just so pretty, so expensive. I imagine you'd have to have a lot of money to have a whole window done, like you said, ya know, people that are having those windows done.

Mr. VB: Yea, it depends how big the window is, ya know, $200, $300, smaller windows too, similiar. Those that I showed you was all pattern work. Straight windows are much cheaper of course.

T: Did you draw, like this one right here, did you draw those?

Mr. VB: Yea, still life, see?

FINISH SIDE A OF TAPE

R: Have you ever done any work out of state?

Mr. VB: Yea, Pella, Iowa.

R: Did somebody refer you?

Mr. VB: Yea, There was a Reformed Church there.

I did this for the Hatch. Have you been in the
Mr. VB: Hatch?
T: Yes, I'll have to look for it.
Mr. VB: Have you seen the big window with the sailboat?
T: I don't really remember.
Mr. VB: It's between the bar and the dining room. The bar is here, the window is here, you come in but you don't see it because you're looking at it this way, you know? And if you have a drink you go to the bar and you can look at that side and if you go to the dining room and sit there you can see it.
R: Some painters, they insure their hands and piano players insure their hands, do you insure your hands?
Mr. VB: (Laughs) No, No.
T: Who is this?
Mr. VB: This is my grandson.
T: You do a lot of work for church's?
Mr. VB: Yea.
T: Do you have anything in Point West?
Mr. VB: No, No, I don't think there's any stained glass.
They build this in the, you know, its built by the same people.
T: Yea, that's why I asked.
Mr. VB: I made a window for Central Avenue Reformed Church.
T: I don't know where that's at.
Mr. VB: There is a, well they build the old science center right up to the church right on the corner, the same street the VanZoren Library is, Central Avenue, that church.
R: We should get pictures.
R: How long did it take you to do that right there?
Mr. VB: Quite a while, there are quite alot of pieces.
R: Do you have stained glass in your house?
Mr. VB: Yea.
R: Do people ever stop when driving by your house to look at the windows?
Mr. VB: Oh, they have, specially at night, ya know, when the lights are on. It shows up. Often they slow down and come to the door to look.
T: How often do you teach classes?
Mr. VB: Once a week. From about 7 o'clock to 9 o'clock.
T: What age group do you usually get?
Mr. VB: All ages. Majority of them are women but I get some men too. They pay for the glass they use. The class is run through the Holland Community Education and it costs $10.00 but they have to pay for the materials they use too.
setting: studio, not very organized, many tables and drawings.

Mr. VanderBurgh: this is a color sketch and scale. Then you make the drawings the full size of the window. Then I start cutting the paper, using a double blade scissors so I have room for the lead.

Barbara: A double blade scissors? What is... 

Mr. VB: (uses scissors on a large scale drawing with thick marker lines. The scissors have two blades so when he cut the paper a 1/4 inch strip of paper comes out.) For the lead.

B: These are for a private home?

Mr. VB: Yes. Correct.

Mr. H: Here in the area?

Mr. VB: In Douglas.

(Now we are looking at his layout table. It has a large drawing of a church window waiting to be cut.) This is just the picture part you see here. They will get ten feet high. And they start ten feet from the floor.

Chuck: Do you start out with a small drawing?

Mr. VB: Yes. Then a full size drawing, a color cartoon of the layout, then you cut your paper patterns with your double blade scissors, select your colors,

B: Do they give you the ideas for the pictures?

Mr. VB: Ya. (refering to some color drawings for a private home) He's some kind of a broker or something.
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Mr. VB: Dealing in pine trees, douglas firs (the paintis very detailed, color of bright green and blue about 3"x 7".) and wheat, and the Navy, so I made some ships. (each of these is painted on an individual matting.)

I have here some old symbols. Painted on. (circular pieces, about 10".)

B: Those are glass?

Mr. VB: Ya. Painted on. They wanted to make windows to fit in.

Mr. H: They were used as medalions.

Mr. VB: Ya. They found them in the attic. Some years ago they had taken them out, they didn't like them anymore and now they want to use them again.

Mr. H: One of them is broken.

Mr. VB: Ya. I am have to make a new one. Not a nice one any way. These were all clear glass. Then they were painted on and then fired.

B: The grapes on there are painted too? Do you have to use a special kind of paint?

Mr. VB: Ya. Transparent. With a glass base so that when it's fired it is stretched out. Then I have to put it in the kiln, 1150 degrees f, then the paint fuses into the glass. So

C: After you draw the sketch and then make the drawing, what would you do next? What would be the next step?
under the glass, then cut the pattern. (we walked into another room of his studio, this room had many paintings of windows on one wall and a work table on the other. This table is where he did his cutting.) See these people have an apple orchard so have some apples and some blossoms (4 1/2' x 1 1/2') select the colors then cut the shapes, put the blade around the glass and cut around it.

B: What kind of tool do you use to cut the glass?

Mr. VB: A regular glass cutter.

B: Are there certain angles that you can't cut?

Mr. VB: (Draws a diagram) It is hard to cut, this way or that, if you have this in a drawing it is a bad design.

Mr. H: That's a concave figure.

Mr. VB: Ya. When you design a window you always have to keep in mind that you draw lines that are practical to cut.

B: Are these lines that we see through, are those painted on?

Mr. VB: No, I have to paint that yet.

B: Oh, that's from the lines on the paper underneith. How do you put the, is it lead that you use between the pieces?

Mr. VB: Yes. (we move into another room of the studio with large work tables and vertical shelves with sheets of glass in them) It is lead in all different sizes and lengths. See this is some narrow and flexible.
When you start putting them together, you start in the corner, like that. You see. Put a piece of glass, then a piece of lead then another piece of glass, like a whole puzzle. Then you sodder all the joints with a sodder iron. Raul was going to fix that, I thought he would be here already and he isn't here yet. Use that to keep an even heat...)

Mr. H: Did you say Raul will fix that, I didn't realize that he had that skill.

Mr. VB: Ya. He fixed the coil and then tried the plug in, the thing a broke down. You know if you send it away it takes six to eight weeks you know. Oh he'll fix it tomorrow. He's handy you know.

Mr. H: That's his son. He was a student at Hope.

B: Do you have to fire the glass before or after you put the leading on?

Mr. VB: Well if you stain it you fire it before, it goes in the kiln like I said at 1150 degree F.. Lead melts at 300. That won't work. Do small pieces at a time. (he showed us a circular window with a painted bible on it)

B: Did you paint that yourself then? How do you get the design on to it? Do you do it on top of the drawing so that you can see what you're doing?

Mr. VB: Well no, you have this glass, you put the light under the drawing then the glass then you paint
the lines, then you fire it then you shade it.

B: Do you trace it or is it free-hand?

Mr. VB: That is free-hand. Put the light underneath.

(then he showed us) Ya, you see the black lines then you turn the other light off so that you don't have a shadow. You brush and paint on and then Shade it. when it is fired. Then you let it dry and then you can brush the light spots out. Then you fire it again, then put colors. Now the gold is put on the back. It is silver stain. When you fire silver into glass it gives a gold color. The silver is mixed with raw amber and you mix that before and put it on with a brush. Then when it is fired you take a steel brush and brush the amber off. The gold will show. this is a little burned in, not to nice. Often you see the rough stain on the out side. Spots like that are silver stain.

Mr. H: Why do you do it like that? On th inside.

Mr. VB: Ya, I don't really know why but that's. Usually you have the same time top side with design or other wise you have to fire it again. You see. So this has to be burned then you turn it over and then you put the gold on. You never could put it on the same side or it would erase all the shad- ings. If that's the reason I don't know. I think it's cause it always gives a kind of mark.

(We went into his studio room where he does the small water paintings. These paintings are used as illustration
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2:30 p.m.
Barbara Brondyke
Chuck Brooks
Professor Hutter

Here is where I work on my water color sketches.
Then they approve that. Then I have to make a
cartoon layout sketch.

B: Is this like an order a church put in?
Mr. VB: Ya, They want Christ as Lord and Redeemer that is
taken from Revelations. John ... (mumbled)
you have the seven candles, the seven stars, Alpha
and Omega; the First and the Last, who was dead; the
cross, and alive; lamb, the seven candles are the
seven churches to show the church -- has to do with
symbol of the church. And the seven stars are the
seven angles of the of the churches, the angles are
the servants so put that in there so that -?- , Then
we have the VDN ( ) Minister
the word of God, then I have to color everything.

C: They came to you and explained to you what they
wanted and then you drew it up.

Mr. VB: They said, they wanted depicted in their Christ as
Lord and Redeemer.

Mr. H: But then you decided on the text.

Mr. VB: Ya, I decide how to express that in picture form.
They have eight windows yet, side windows.

Mr. H: So this is the main window of course. Is ther a
pictoral symbolic scheme for the others?

Mr. VB: Ya, all symbols on different windows.

Adam and Eve, -?- , Noah, not very clear but I try
to come up with something.
What church is this for?

Bethel

This is here in town, Christian Reformed Church.

They have all the amber glass, now they want all new glass. I think they have gotten some money.

So on the one side they had the major figures before Christ, Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and David. They have four different covenants. Then on the other side they have since Christ, Pentecost, Peter's vision and Covenant of the Gentiles and the Missionary Church and the Second Covenant.

See that will go in the center front of the church.

How high will that be?

13' high. The side windows are high windows, longer, close to the bottom will be the section with the sign in. They have the design in them.

How long will it take from the time they come to you with that idea till you're finished?

Well tomorrow afternoon we have a meeting. Then I would say it is up to them. I say, ok you want to go ahead I want one third down payment. You know. Then I can go ahead and order glass. And I can start working out the big drawings.

They would want to know what time, what date you would be finished.

Well, I never set a specific date. At least three or four months.

For all those sets of windows?

Well the side windows there is only one part with symbol. The rest is all straight panels more or
less. There is some decoration.

Mr. H: Now my wife did the painted glass that you showed us. Is that strictly called stained glass?

Mr. VB: The panels you mean the circles. The colored glass they call that stained glass because the color is added when it is made. And then a, it's funny you don't have special wording in English. It is all just stained glass windows if it is colored or leaded or painted with scenes.

Mr. H: The painting is done on clear glass.

Mr. VB: You start with colored glass. You shade it you know. In Dutch they have a special word for painted windows. ( ) Painted, burnt in glass.

But here it is all stained glass.

Mr. H: What is the name for stained glass?

Mr. VB: ( ) Glass in lead windows.

and it can be colored or clear.

C: I see you have a lot of colors, do you use all those colors in making of glass?

Mr. VB: Well, I primarily give them an idea of what it will look like. You never can take every piece of glass and get it on paper it would takemuch to long. You never. And the glass will look more brilliant than the color on paper. So it is just so they have an idea of what it will look like. Now when I enlarge this of course every square inch won't be the same.
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Chuck Brooks
Professor Huttar

as the design. The overall impression will be the same. I am no so much for exactness, so much form the edge or you know. I make the drawing, I see it is all right.

B: How do large windows like that support themselves?
Mr. VB: I have to make it in sections or something. For strength there are bars soddered on.

C: How much will a big window like that weigh?
Mr. VB: I am bad in estimating weights. Heavier than my money.

Mr. H: Is it part of your job to install them?
Mr. VB: Ya, but then I have the glass shop you know and they help.

B: How do you go about ordering your colored glass?
Mr. VB: From samples.

B: Is it hard to get?
Mr. VB: You have to wait.

B: Are there big companies that deal in stained glass supplies?
Mr. VB: Oh ya, Cocomo in Indiana, -?=-- in W. Virginia, and then the imported glass from Europe.

B: What's the difference between the type of glass in Europe and the type of glass that's here.
Mr. VB: Well the European antique glass has a special quality a special color. It is hard to match. Well if they could they would make antique glass here too. It depends to on the environment where they make it. W. Virginia has more glass companies so a their
sand must be very good. I don’t know to much about all of the technical stuff. They melt the silicone and a -?

B: Someone who is starting out in a business now, would they have to go through an apprenticeship?
How do they get started in a business? How did you get started?

Mr. VB: They don’t have to. A lot of guys start on there own. They last as long as their money runs out. Then fold up again. But a the American Stained Glass Association has an apprenticeship. That is four years. I started out through a brother of my mothers was in stained glass windows. Then I went through high school and then he asked me to a do drawings and join him. Well that’s how I got started. Then after the war there was not much doing in Europe, all stayed poor and we had a chance to come over here. Came over here.

Mr. H: Have you ever had an apprentice?

Mr. VB: Raulf, he wants to do things.

B: Is it a good business right now to go into or?

Mr. VB: Well...

B: Do you have to publicize yourself?

Mr. VB: Well no I don’t have to publicize myself anymore. They come from quite a few ways to me now. Young people now want to make a fast buck. And they don’t have to go into this business. This is all hand work, a lot of patience, and a lot of dedication. Love for your work. Art work usually
doesn't pay that high. Unless you be like Andrew Wyeth, you know. You can make a living. You get a lot of satisfaction from your work. Quite a bit. Like I say if you could trade satisfaction with monetary front I would be a millionaire maybe a billionaire. Thats not the way it works though. So, but the main thing is that your work is good quality. Obviously people are coming back so and several people have said to me, we like your work so. Which compared to the other ones they still come back to me. That feels good too. But like now you go to a big company and there is all the fringe benefits and pay vacation maybe profit sharing. I can't take on that. I don't want to work in a factory like that anyway. But that's the difference really and you can make a living and enjoy it. What you are doing and that is very important. Because money you need it but it is not everything. These are drawings here of mine. Did you notice here the nativity scene? Shepherds, the shepher boy, some lambs.

Mr. H: Now is that something that has been asked for or are you just?

Mr. VB: Well I just made it then some people wanted it. Some people are buying it this and that maybe Mary and then Joseph. The way this is now it is $140.00 they are $15.00 a piece. Now here I have the kiln that I was talking about. Now the painted glass
you put the glass on the asbestos, to keep it from
when the glass gets soft from sticking against the
asbestos. This is a big one, you don't need it
this big now days anymore. You can fill it up real
full?

B: Did you have to buy this when you first started
business?

Mr. VB: Ya, when I started.

B: That's a really big expenditure isn't it?

Mr. VB: Ya, at that time it was about $2260.00. It was the
biggest expense. You don't need it that big. It
was about twenty years ago ther was a lot of paint­
done for churches. It's a little bit more modern
and you don't need it for that.

Mr. H: How many comissions like that did you have in the
course of a year?

Mr. VB: Oh I don't know. The church jobs are low. That
the first job church job in this year. Except some
panels, for a long time. But I've been busy with
some windows for homes. Quite a bit. I'll show
you some here. (side 2 on tape) (we're looking
at different kinds of glass. We missed the part
on tape when Mr. VB was showing us his sample
paintings for homes) That's the antique glass.

Mr. H: How old is it?

Mr. VB: It is just made. They call it antique because it
is an antique method. That is blown allblown.
Then cut into sheets.

B: Do you have a sheet of the regular stained glass?
Mr. VB: Ya, The ruby. In England you know there is almost no red glass. Now this is from Blancos. This is blown. He was an Englishman, when he came over, all his relatives were here. When got going here He went to his customers and they want from it was rough. Hewanted to go back. He couldn't the Old Country. make a go of it. So the second time he tried it then the depression came. Then they started making the vases and bottles. Now they have a good business. They blow it let me show you.

Mr. H: And then they flatten it out.

Mr. VB: They blow it in cylinders and then they cut the bottom out. Then flatten it out, put it in the kiln. It gets a high temperature that the color gets a hold on it. This is a different color now. If I cut this out to use it then put it in the kiln it would come out a brilliant ruby. This is alter- vesent it is from Cocomo. Here are some others, it comes in big sheets like that. And here we have -?- on the table, it has all different color patterns. (the pieces of glass hitting each other muffled Mr. VB voice.) These here have a different texture and there are many different colors.

B: Is the glass that you can get here in the U.S. is that less expensive?

Mr. VB: Ya, than the European antique. Now everything is expensive. This is French antique. Oh is somebody at the door? Now here you can see the streaks in
here that is the trademark of the European antiques.

B: Because that was not rolled.

Mr. VB: No, it was blown. See the streaks in here, that is the trade mark of the European antiques. So, that is about it. (we walked into the long narrow studio room with the many pictures) These are some I've made, quite a bit for homes too. A lady wanted some like that for five windows in her home. A lot of people like them in their homes. I still have quite a few to go yet. Now these were made for two windows by the door. She wanted grapes. This lady liked flowers.

B: Now if they wanted to could they tell you what colors they wanted?

Mr. VB: Ya, they can say what colors. Now this is for a house in PawPaw. She wanted grapes in there and flowers.

Mr. H: Has the kind of design you make changed and developed over the years?

Mr. VB: Well, I like the semi abstract. But a, if they want the traditional I can make thes too. I've made several, like in Grand Rapids (Mr. VB referred to a painting. Modern abstract)

Mr. H: That's very different, that's unusual.

Mr. VB: They said they wanted something that showed the power of the name of Jesus. The Holy name of Jesus,
then I thought about the Pentecost, then the dove. The fish.

Mr. H: But those sweeping curves are unusual in your design.

Mr. VB: Ya, well that expresses something of the power. This is the windows in Christ Memorial, it's a little bit faded.

B: Yesterday we went and looked in the Central Reformed Church. Which windows did you do in there?

Mr. VB: Central Christian Reformed. I did all those.

C: What are some of the other places in the area that you have done things?

Mr. VB: Christian Reform Church, I still like that. It is on Maple and oh 16th. The Faith Christian Reformed Church on 26th. That's all blanco glass, that's all quite a bit more modern. This is a family window. They had three kids. Subdue cross they're all subdue. You have to look real close. The parents and the three kids. And then (looking at a different painting,) a girl bought a school house. She was remodeling it and she wanted to have a picture with the school house the way it was. Here, these are the windows in the Hatch. In the bar and the dinningroom there are six feet windows. Then on the back patio there's a six feet window. The Holland light house. Then this is for a fellow in Kalamazoo who played the organ, He was adding a room for the organ, with the pipes and wanted something for there.
Now this is for another church, on one side it has Jubileeation of Christ and on the othe the Exiltation. Then there's the Apostles Creed. That is on 33nd St. Then this is the cross. It is effective.

B: Now the water from rain won't come in.

Mr. VB: No, these are inside windows. (Mr. VB refered to some panels which were made.) But the other windows they are cemented. Put them flat on the table and brush it in, then you press the lead down. Then you clean it off. Let it dry then do the other side. That is the dirtiest work.

Well are there any other questions?

B: This machine is that for sharpening tools?

Mr. VB: Ya, that is just an old do-hicky. I don't have a grinding wheel for glass. Usually I cut pretty good so I don't need that. (Chuck was attempting to take some pictures) Maybe I could cut a piece of glass.

B: Do many pieces get broken when you're trying to cut designs?

Mr. VB: Well it always happens that it breaks the wrong way. Not to often. Sometimes ya. When a glass cutter gets old I keep using it. I'm stingy, when I should throw it away I keep using it and then things get broken. Finally I throw it away.

B: Is there a limit to the size of pieces, can they get really small?

Mr. VB: Ya, you can but if you get them to small it is hard to break. But you cando it. This is the Fourth
Reformed Church. On 15th St. Right between the old building and the new. It is a big one, 12' long.

B: Could you kind of tell us step by step what you have to do? I think I kind of have an idea of what you have to do.

Mr. VB: You start with the drawing. The people tell you what they want. More or less. Otherwise I suggest it. Then I make a drawing usually on scale. When they approve that then I have to make the real size drawing. You make the drawing full size. The color cartoon or the layout. Then you cut your patterns with the double blade scissors which allow for the room of the lead between the pieces of glass. So then you have a big picture with all pieces of pattern paper. So then you select the colors of glass that you want to use. Then each piece you cut at a time according to the pattern paper. So then you end up with a puzzle of the color pieces of glass. Then when there has to be painting or shading done, you do that. Then when that is done you start assembling it. The outside lead and then start building it up. Then each section where the lead ends meet is soddered. I use a 60-40 sodder, that's 60 percent tin and 40 percent lead. Then when that is done you turn it over and sodder the other side. Then when it is an outside window you start making it waterproof, cementing...
it. Rubbing the kind of putty between the lead and the glass. Then clean it up and let it dry and harden. If you have a big section you know then you sodder bars onto it. Galvanized iron bars sodder for strength.

B: How long do you have to fire the glass in the kiln?

Mr. VB: It takes three and a half hours. Then stays ther for fifteen minutes. Then the cooling off period is the longest. 36-48 hours.

B: They're all cut in the little pieces.

Mr. VB: Ya

B: Do you teach any classes?

Mr. VB: Ya; Holland education and Zeeland they're starting now.

B: Here in your studio.

Mr. VB: Ya, it's hard to lug everything along. They come here Wednesday for Holland and Thursday nights for Zeeland. Well that is the story in short.

B: I remember you said something about the American Stained glass Association. What is that? Are you a member of that?

Mr. VB: No I am not a member. It is so expensive. It is made up of stained glass studios. The big studios are all in that. Then you have the associate members.

Mr. H: Is it common to find big studios where there would be several employees working at different projects
at once?

Mr. VB: Ya, I think so, the bigger ones sure otherwise they couldn't make a go. Philadelphia thats the largest in the U.S. But most of them are fairly small. in comparison to larger industries.

Mr. H: What is the heat loss through a stained glass window?

Mr. VB: I don't know there is not much. In my home in the front we always had double you know storm windows. Knocked the whole thing out and put the stained glass in there. Still through storm windows you felt the wind come with a storm. They are all sealed up. I think there is no heat loss. Now days when they want a stained glass window for the home and they have to make a frame I suggest that they make it double you know. One side a groove for the storm glass and the other side a groove for the leaded glass. So then it's just like a thermal pae.

B: Do you get up early every morning and then stay here basically untill you're tired.

Mr. VB: 8:00 something like that. Once and a while I sneak out for coffee. Go home for lunch.

B: Then sometimes do you come back after dinner.

Mr. VB: Oh ya, to much. Ask my wife.