

**ORAL HISTORY
DOLORES CHAPMAN AND NEPHEW MICHAEL DRYSDALE**

This is Jerry Wasser. It is now approximately five minutes after 2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 26, 1999. I am at the home of Dolores Chapman. Ms. Chapman has agreed to participate in the City of Glendale Planning Division's Oral History Program and this interview will now commence. Her nephew, Michael Drysdale, will arrive shortly and he will also interview.

Jerry: Ms. Chapman, you know I usually begin these interviews by asking people when they were born, and how long they lived in Glendale. But I usually do that with men because my mother told me never to ask a lady her age and by asking the year that you were born, I can do that. And I know from speaking with you on the phone and with your nephew, Michael Drysdale that you arrived in Glendale in the '40's and perhaps you can tell me which specific year you arrived and what the circumstances were for you coming to Glendale and from where?

Dolores: I was born in 1923. I came to Glendale from Nebraska in 1943. I came out, because at that time I was engaged to a fellow that worked in the Defense Plant. So I went to work and I lived in Glendale in a house with another girl. At that time, you couldn't get apartments or anything, you just had a room. I worked at Lockheed during the war and until the War was over. And then I got married and we lived there until 1950 and had two children there. They were both born, my daughter was born in the Glendale, what was called The Glendale Sanatarium at that time, and she was born there in 1947 and then later we moved.

Jerry: You said that your fiancée' and then your husband had worked at a Defense Plant? Was that Lockheed as well or was that one of the plants in Glendale?

Dolores: No, he worked at one of the others, I don't remember the name.

Jerry: Okay. The reason I asked is because there was an airplane manufacturing plant near Brand Central Terminal in Glendale called the Curtis Flying School and Curtis Motors.

Dolores: But I don't remember. And I lived at several different places in Glendale, if you could only get a room at that time, and so I moved to different places and one family I lived was the Racines which had four children, one boy was in the Air Force and one in the Navy and Dr. Racines became a dentist and still lives in Glendale, I think. The family, part of them had died but that's all.....when I gave you her.....

Jerry: What street did you live on when you first moved to Glendale?

Dolores: On Doran and I lived on Myrtle and I lived on Harvard.

Jerry: Were these all close to the downtown area, close to Brand Boulevard?

Dolores: They were all walking distance. We walked and we took the Red Car. If we wanted to go to Los Angeles, we got the Red Car. It took us right into the

Subway Terminal in Los Angeles. Or if we wanted to go to Hollywood, there was a bus that took us to Hollywood. That was our transportation, we didn't have cars. Nobody had a car. A few people had a car. I had a fellow that picked me up that lived in Monrovia that came by and picked me up in Glendale and took me to Burbank, to Lockheed to work.

Jerry: I know there gas rationing during the World War and that sounds like a fairly long trip especially during those years for that fellow who picked you up from Monrovia. Were there special circumstances for people who worked in the defense plants?

Dolores: I suppose they gave him extra gas coupons because everybody carpooled in those days. That was just part of other than they set that up over at Lockheed so you didn't now who you were going ride with because whoever happen to be going your direction.

Jerry: You know, I'm kind of fascinated because I always have an image of during those World War II years that there were probably more women seen on the streets in this area than there were men because they were probably overseas, other than those men who were working in the defense-related industries.

Dolores: There were quite a few military around, you know, that came in, soldiers, sailors, marines. So, there were quite a few. But as far as like churches and so forth, I think there was a kind of dearth of young men. I went to the Presbyterian Church for a couple of years in Glendale.

Jerry: Do you remember where that was located?

Dolores: Yes. It was on Harvard. Now I'm not sure where the library is now, but it was not far from the library.

Jerry: Probably Louise or Kenwood.

Dolores: I lived on the corner of Harvard and it's right across the street almost from the library and the Presbyterian Church.

Jerry: Probably near where the Chamber of Commerce building is now.

Dolores: Well the Presbyterian Church, I think, is still in the same place, but it's been rebuilt because of the earthquake. I have a picture of ... well..., in the background you can see a little bit of it. I went through the old photos and got out some pictures here. That's a picture of the old Presbyterian Church.

Jerry: And this is on Harvard, probably looking north?

Dolores: No it is looking south.

Jerry: Looking south? And this is Harvard.

Dolores: This is Harvard going north.

Jerry: Harvard goes east and west.

Dolores: Yes and that's on the north.

Jerry: I don't know if you know there is a mortuary building that's been on Harvard, Kiefer and Eyerick, and that's on the south side of the street.

Dolores: And I lived in the house next door to it.

Jerry: Oh, to the east or to the west?

Dolores: To the east of it.

Jerry: Okay, to the east, there is now an architecture office. There was a house and there was also a four-unit apartment building and both of those are gone now. And they were removed about two years ago for the construction of a fairly modern architecture office and they are immediately next door to the mortuary building, which is an old

Dolores: Is the mortuary building still there?

Jerry: Oh, yes!

Dolores: Well now, it didn't seem like it when we were over there.

Jerry: I notice the area that this photograph that you are describing that includes the old Presbyterian Church, almost look like a park. Was that a park area?

Dolores: Yes, it was a park there. When we were over there, it was so changed. I hardly could recognize where we were. I lived in this big white house. It was right next to the mortuary. When they'd have cremations, maybe I shouldn't say....

Jerry: Oh, sure please, please!

Dolores: When they have cremations, they didn't have anything to do with flowers, so they'd throw them over the back fence. So living next door, we went over and took the flowers and brought them in and we had beautiful flowers.

Jerry: Oh my gosh, what a great story!

Dolores: In back of this big white house where we lived, there was a small building that was actually they made into a kind of what we call a rumpus room or they had a bar and a nickelodeon and all that out there. So we had parties out there. They had a nice backyard. And, of course, that's all gone. If we met a service man, we just invited him over. You know, you

Jerry: Quite a bit different then how you probably feel nowadays.

Dolores: There was one girl that lived in the south with us. She had a car. And so if we met somebody in the street, got acquainted, we would take them home, you know. Never thought anything of it, never had a problem at all.

Jerry: It will probably be so wonderful if we felt that comfortable and safe nowadays.

Dolores: We just..., you know, they were boys away from home.

Jerry: In those years, I know that part of Glendale now seems to have fairly heavy concentrations of immigrants, people who come from other countries and settle in Glendale. There are a lot of Armenians in that area, a lot of Hispanics in that area. During the years that you spent in Glendale, did you notice any heavy concentrations of immigrants?

Dolores: No. In fact, there were not; Black people were not allowed to stay overnight. I don't know if you knew that.

Jerry: Can you tell me about that?

Dolores: Well, you just never saw a Black person on the streets. I understand that a few people had servants that were Black, but they had to leave at night. And, of course, here again, you can't do that.

Jerry: They actually could not stay within the city limits?

Dolores: That's what I understood.

Jerry: Were there any Black service men that you ever saw that came through Glendale?

Dolores: No. I don't remember.

Jerry: They would have probably been treated the same way?

Dolores: I imagine. My mother-in-law owned the hotel, The Isabel Hotel, that was right across the street. Well there is an apartment house there now.

Jerry: On the 100 block of North Isabel?

Dolores: This is 133-135 North Isabel, right across from the Police Department.

Jerry: And it was called The Isabel Hotel?

Dolores: It was called The Isabel Hotel? I think Michael..... This is a picture of it.

Jerry: Oh!

Dolores: And then these are some pictures of the little building that is just north when they were building that.

Jerry: Okay.

Dolores: And I lived in that..... Here's where I lived when I first got married. There were garages behind this hotel.

Jerry: What a wonderful picture. Just for the tape, this a picture of Mrs. Chapman at a house and what is the address?

Dolores: This is at 135 North Isabel. This is the garage behind the hotel. I think there were three or four attached, they were just single garages.

Jerry: And these were demolished when the apartment building was built?

Dolores: No. Actually they were there a while after this apartment house were built. These are just the front steps of this apartment house. That's my daughter when she was little. I don't have any real...

Jerry: What wonderful pictures.

Dolores: This apartment house had three single apartments downstairs and a double apartment with bedrooms in the front and we lived in the back one.

Jerry: Is that one of the apartments that exists today?

Dolores: It's still there and the Police Department, now, wants to take this property and the property that the hotel was. There's apartment buildings on this property now where this hotel was torn down and the Police Department now wants to take all that property 133, 135 to extend the Police Department.

Jerry: When you lived on Isabel, was the sanitarium also on Isabel?

Dolores: This was originally, as I understand, the nursing home or belonged to the Seven-Day Adventist that owned that property.

Jerry: So is Jenson okayed? And the restroom was upstairs, as well?

[Several minutes of the original tape are unintelligible due to tape recorder malfunction. Michael Dysdale joined the interview during this time.]

Michael: Yeah. You went down underneath and they had a little snack bar/hamburger stand with a half dozen of stools. And they had some characters there that played pool and they were timers. They had billiards and stuff like that. You would keep score by sliding wooden tallies along the wires, they tell us to tally it. They had some characters. A friend of mine, I remember a couple of them, a guy named Johnny or San Diego or they have names..... I give them names like "hobos" or something that they like. That was kind of fun and I had a few other...

Jerry: It kind of sounds like "Minnesota Fats."

Michael: Yeah. Like the "Minnesota Fats." They had names you know where they came from like you know... And they hung out there and...

Jerry: So Jensen's in those years probably wasn't the highest class hangout for people?

Michael: Just retired men that would play pool and some of them probably stayed at Grandma's and then walked down there with their little stick.

Jerry: Was there a bowling alley at Jensen's as well?

Michael: No. They had a bowling alley down on Glendale Avenue that was pretty good, and then one up in Eagle Rock on Figueroa. But the Glen Bowl, they had that on Colorado down towards Bob's, the big drive-in. There was a bowling alley south of Broadway, towards City Hall or Jewel City Bowl something like that. And there was a club next to it that had bands that played jazz and swing dance up until the late 70's.

Jerry: A night club, sort of?

Michael: Yeah. And I would sit in and play bass. And I would bring my dad and my mom and dad were wonderful swing dancers because they grew up in the early '30s.

Jerry: Were there lots of opportunity to do swing dancing in Glendale during those days?

Michael: Yeah. There was a lot of dancers and you could find a variety. There was the Forge and there were some country places where they were actually doing a lot of partner dancing.

Jerry: You mentioned the Forge?

Michael: South. Yeah, South Brand.

Jerry: Do you recall the address at all?

Michael: No. I was going there for swing dancing up to a couple of months ago, they discontinued it.

Jerry: So it was fairly recently?

Michael: Its there just by Windsor. InCahoots has changed names a lot of times. They had started out as Carlos O'Brian something like that, The Bandbex.

Jerry: Right. All of those things. Even during my time in Glendale in the last years. Now it is completely gone.

Michael: I think it went into foreclosure. Friends that we had worked on that. Where the Grinder is at Jackson and Wilson that was a vacant lot. And behind the Hotel where the Glendale Board of Realtors was an old brick hotel.

Jerry: Another hotel?

Michael: It was actually a part where the vacant lot and the Glendale Board of Realtors, it was red brick. My brother and I didn't want to walk to close to it. It looked like something might fall off of it.

Jerry: And what year was that?

Michael: That was in the 40's, early 50's. And out back my grandmother made her own soap for people that lived in the hotel.

Jerry: Oh, really?

Michael: She had this thing, like a big barrel.

Jerry: Did she make other things that were used in the hotel, as well, like that?

Michael: Yeah. She had clotheslines. Grandma put things out on the clotheslines but she made soap.

Dolores: Oh yes. I got the soap.

Michael: She has the soap. That's good.

Jerry: You know Mike, I see that you have some notes. What I'd like you to do is feel free to talk about whatever you like.

Michael: In Glendale, the Jackson Bowl and A&W Root Beer, that was across from the High School. There was another restaurant.

Jerry: That was a restaurant?

Michael: When my grandfather was still alive, I was a little kid. I thought that was Van De Kamp's but it might have been Bob's. I used to drive him nuts blowing in my soda, you blow in the straw, that drove him nuts.

Jerry: When you'd get all the bubbles?

Michael: Yeah. The bakery, I think it was Sunshine or something like that. My brother.

Jerry: That was the bakery on Wilson and Isabel?

Michael: Wilson, Isabel between Isabel and Glendale Avenue.

Jerry: Was it a commercial bakery that they just sell form that corner or did they supply other...?

Michael: Oh. I think they supplied a lot of people. It was big. You could smell the cookies. And that was something. Do you remember the bakery?

Dolores: I don't remember. We didn't have much money. We probably didn't go to the bakery.

Michael: Then there was, was it the Mormon, Temple. The Temple Theatre which they had a place under the ice house and they had live music. It was a big ice house.

Jerry: Where was that?

Michael: Northeast corner of Colorado and Brand. I think it was the Temple Theatre.

Jerry: There was a Masonic Temple and at Harvard and Brand. That was probably maybe I thinking it was Famous Department Store. Or the Huntley-Evans Building. And I think that the Penderoy Department Store was at the same structure as well.

Dolores: Was that Department Building about three stories?

Jerry: Yes. That's exactly what it is, about three stories. Now, one of the offices on the third story is occupied by Assemblyman Wildman who represents that district.

Michael: Did Galbraith's Sporting Goods...

Jerry: There was a Cornwell and Kely Sporting Goods as well. Do you remember that, also?

Michael: No.

Dolores: There was a Safeway store down on Broadway that was just a couple of blocks west of Isabel within walking distance where I would go to buy my groceries. I don't know what that is now.

Jerry: Mike, when you would stay with your grandmother in Glendale, did you also play at any of the parks in the area? Do you recall what those were like? For instance, Central Park on Colorado?

Michael: No. There was a park north of us. A little park and a school. We would go to the YMCA and play there and. It was at Louise and Wilson. We loved that place. And then venture a little further over. They had a lot of old churches. My grandmother was affiliated with I think a Methodist church. She also attended the Seventh Day Adventist which was up the street.

Dolores: Of course, the Seven-Day Adventist was the one that settled Glendale. They made Brand real wide, which you don't see cities make their streets as wide as Glendale's. Of course they had the Red Car that went down Brand. And I think they have made now they put things out in the streets a little further.

Jerry: The sidewalk?

Dolores: Yes. The streets were unusually wide.

Jerry: And they still are.

Michael: It's hard to get across. You one thing I noticed the new policy if you don't stop for pedestrian in the crosswalk, which is what people in L.A. do, is rude. I worked

downtown and I had to be a little more careful after 2:00 in some of the areas where people had to turn their head lights on and they don't have as much respect for people in the crosswalks as they do in Glendale. Somebody got hit so they motor officers set up a thing where they would send a guy out and the were surprised how many people who would zoom around there. And I remember we walk over to Brand, take the Red Car. A bus ran over a little girl and her grandmother. It turned..... I am a little sleepy because I normally.... It's like the middle of the night for me. I always loved Glendale. I've been here for quite a bit. I miss the InCahoots.

Dolores: I always thought Glendale was a really nice town.

Jerry: You know, usually these interviews last for about an hour or so. And I like to keep talking with you. But there is a question that I usually end interviews with and I really like to ask it of both of you. Often people will give me more than a one-word answer. But I ask the question in this way: if you can describe Glendale, using one word, what would that word be? You can use more than one work although I try to get people to use one, you can expand on it.

Michael: Safe and progressive and high quality of life. There is a lot of it has everything here you know, the symphony orchestra plays, you have everything in this city. It has a variety of housing, you know you can go up and find them. If you want a big house, they got them if you want affordable houses. It has a well-run government. It's managed well. The department you work in I've seen a lot of progress. While I worked on the theatre complex on Maryland and other things. I seem to try to do something that... I know Old Town Pasadena was kind of a fluke but it was actually skid row of the city. And I know Glendale doesn't really have one that they put money into it. That part has taken off in one city like 3rd Street Promenade in Santa Monica and Old Town Pasadena. It could happen in Glendale on Brand, but it's the only city that still has high riser office buildings.

Jerry: I don't think the city is proud of that but it got its own financial office and district. You make me feel good also by telling me that it's a well-run city. And I am glad to be a part of the Government, now.

Michael: It was on Brand, the Cigna Health thing that's where I did the electrical on that. And the Glendale Galleria, Phase I, when I look back, Phase II. You could spend, its like Disney Land, you can spend two days in there and not see everything. It actually is the finest shopping mall in L.A. County.

Jerry: The Galleria?

Michael: Yes.

Dolores: It seems like a very high class, overgrown small town but a small town atmosphere only it had everything. You know.

Jerry: And you think that continued even through today?

Dolores: As far as I can tell. I haven't been there as much as I wanted. It is a smaller place, you know that it's got everything you need.

Jerry: I know I've taken a lot of your time. What I'd like to do is perhaps bring this interview to a close, but to kind of intrude on you. If there are things after we transcribe the interview from the tape, if I might do follow-up and give you a call back and ask you some more questions. And also, Mike, you brought a lot photos and maps and newspaper articles and if you don't mind, at some point today or in the near future, to take these and make copies of them.

Michael: No. I made copies for you.

Jerry: Oh, you did? That would be great.

Michael: I was kind of rushed last night. I was at Kinko's trying to figure out how to enlarge these things.

Jerry: I'm sorry you had to do that. We would have done that for you.

Michael: I got them to where they zoomed them up pretty good on the color copier but they actually came out pretty well.

Jerry: I'll tell you what I'm going to do is end the formal part of the interview. It is now about 3:10 in the afternoon and I like to thank you both very much.