

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

With
Esther Garate

Conducted By
Tom Miller

December 1993

CITY OF GLENDALE ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
ESTHER GARATE
December 14, 1993

Tom Miller Today is Tuesday, December 14, 1993, it is about 2:20 in the afternoon, my name is Tom Miller, I'm conducting an audio history program for the City of Glendale and we're speaking with Esther May Melman Garate, a long time resident here in Glendale and Good Afternoon, thank you very much for having us come up. Let me start out with one of the easiest questions and that is, when and where were you born.

Esther Garate I was born September 26, 1921 in the Glendale Sanitarium, however the Sanitarium was then located on Broadway and it was used for, actually births and for people that stayed there over a period of time.

Tom Miller That was at Broadway and what cross street?

Esther Garate Actually, I can't remember where it was.

Tom Miller Roughly, it was right about downtown Glendale, is that right?

Esther Garate Probably near where the Post Office is now.

Tom Miller The main Post Office?

Esther Garate Yeah, yes okay, yeah right

Tom Miller Okay that gives us a frame of reference. How would you characterize your family's lifestyle when you were a child.

Esther Garate Of middle income, we owned our home. My grandfather had built the home, my mother was a homemaker, my father was a supervisor in the Post Office and he worked in Los Angeles. He used the Red Car to get to work. I had a sister.

Tom Miller What was her name?

Esther Garate Barbara

Tom Miller Is she still living?

Esther Garate Yes, she lives in Seattle, Washington.

Tom Miller Oh I see. Let me back up to something you just said a second ago, that your grandfather built your family house.

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Where was the house?

Esther Garate It was at 527 East Windsor Road.

Tom Miller Right, just east of downtown Glendale then?

Esther Garate Yes, Windsor off of Glendale Avenue.

Tom Miller And when did your grandparents come to Glendale?

Esther Garate They came, I had two sets of grandparents that came to Glendale. My father's parents came, or father came in 1909 and my mother's parents lived near, on 33rd Street near USC when they came from Kansas, Atchison, Kansas; and my grandfather had built quite a few schools and homes in that area. And my mother met my father through her sisters who also resided down in 33rd Street; and they came somewhat later, about 1912, I think so.

Tom Miller What was the name of your grandfather who resided in Glendale or your grandparents who resided in Glendale.

Esther Garate It was Thomas Wright.

Tom Miller And that was back in 1909?

Esther Garate Well, oh my father's was Alfred, I don't remember what my grandfather's name was, I did not meet him.

Tom Miller It will come to you probably.

Esther Garate Yeah, anyway, he was, they lived on Maple Street. Maple Street in Glendale, when they came from Ohio.

Tom Miller So you are a third generation Glendalian and your daughter Elena is a fourth generation Glendalian.

Esther Garate That's right.

Tom Miller There aren't very many people that have been here that long.

Esther Garate Yeah, that's right, I haven't thought of that.

Tom Miller Any reflections on that, a fourth generation Glendalian.

Esther Garate Glendale's a nice town. I don't plan to leave.

Tom Miller Good, good. Now your grandfather who lived here and built the home in Glendale, his name will come to you, right.

Esther Garate Well, that was Thomas Wright.

Tom Miller Oh that was Thomas Wright?

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Was he a contractor, a builder?

Esther Garate He was a builder.

Tom Miller And he built schools here in Glendale?

Esther Garate Well, in Los Angeles.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate He settled, actually they lived on 33rd Street in Los Angeles near SC. The children, including my mother, went to Los Angeles High School.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate And, but my grandfather Melman, who came from Ohio, they came in 1909 and they lived on Maple Street in Glendale.

Tom Miller I see, and what did he do?

Esther Garate Well I don't know what he did, he was ah, he lived to be about 95 or so and the family, there were eight children in the family, there was some maiden aunts and they took care of grandpa.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate I did not get a chance to meet him cause I was born after he passed away.

Tom Miller I see, and they had, your father, those were your father's parents?

Esther Garate Yes, well actually just grandpa.

Tom Miller I see, okay.

Esther Garate Grandmother had died in Ohio.

Tom Miller Then was your father born in Glendale also?

Esther Garate No he was born in Ohio.

Tom Miller I see so he came out with your, I follow, okay.

Esther Garate Yeah.

Tom Miller And what did your father do?

Esther Garate Well, my father was a supervisor in the Post Office.

Tom Miller Downtown.

Esther Garate In downtown and actually he, he took me to the new building of which is now the Post Office, formerly he was on Alameda in the old building, so there was a transition there for him before he passed away.

Tom Miller All right, now your father worked for a public entity, public service, as the post office; you worked later, but just a sidelight here, you worked for the school district.

Esther Garate That's right.

Tom Miller In your career as a public servant.

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller And your daughter also works for a university as a public servant.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Has ah, do you think your father's interests were somehow passed on through you to Elena to be a public servant? Did you ever think about that?

Esther Garate I never thought about it.

Tom Miller No?

Esther Garate But I have enjoyed my position and my daughter certainly enjoys hers.

Tom Miller Yeah.

Esther Garate So it's ah, it's

Tom Miller Good, okay. So you enjoy living here in Glendale and your family seemed to do well and prosper here in Glendale, your parents and?

Esther Garate Oh yeah

Tom Miller Then you had a sister, you have a sister?

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller And when did she move away, do you recall?

Esther Garate She joined the WAVES during the real war, you know the 41, 1941 war, she joined the WAVES and then she came back, but she was stationed in Gramerton, Washington and that's where she met this husband when he was, they were both in, no I guess he was in the Army and she was in the Navy. And so they made a home up there and she prefers to live there than here.

Tom Miller So after World War II?

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Yeah, okay. What landmarks stand out as significant in your memory as a child especially, schools, parks, movie theaters. Where did you spend a lot of your time as a child?

Esther Garate Well, in those days we actually, our biggest treat probably was to go to the show because it was geared more for family at that time, and I remember we used to go to the Cosmo which was on Brand Boulevard and Windsor cause we could walk to that, and my mother used to like to go in the evening because they gave away dishes and things like that, you know if you were there you had an opportunity to win something.

Tom Miller Oh.

Esther Garate And then they had serials, you know they had, you went on Saturday because you wanted to see the next serial, you know the next episode.

Tom Miller Were these cowboy?

Esther Garate Yeah, most of them were, yeah.

Tom Miller Who were your favorite cowboys?

Esther Garate Well, Roy Rogers and let's see

Tom Miller Tom Mix, Hopalong?

Esther Garate Well yes, I really wasn't into that so much as I was, well all of the movies seemed really glamorous to me because my background was very, not strict, but it was more quiet and we weren't what you call glamorous people we were sort of just homestead people. You know, we had music lessons and you know.

Tom Miller What music lessons did you take?

Esther Garate Piano, my father insisted that both of us play the piano.

Tom Miller How long did you take lessons?

Esther Garate Oh, I guess most of my life, ever since I was five years old.

Tom Miller You still do?

Esther Garate No.

Tom Miller Oh.

Esther Garate But I mean you know what I mean

Tom Miller As a young child?

Esther Garate As a young child.

Tom Miller So you started music, piano lessons about five.

Esther Garate Um hum, my sister also and

Tom Miller And up through high school?

Esther Garate Well, then I taught for a while when I was in high school, to help my music teacher who was ill, and then, but that was when you could do that without having a license usually and then, you know, so.

Tom Miller What was your music teacher's name?

Esther Garate The first one was Helene Morgan who was a very fine pianist of Glendale. The Morgans lived up on Boynton Street and we used to walk up the hill to take our music lessons and then I had Mable Clemets, and then I had Margarite O'Leary, so I had several. Wonderful teachers.

Tom Miller Was it Miss O'Leary that you filled in for and helped?

Esther Garate No it was Mable Clemets.

Tom Miller You still, I see the piano right there in your living room, do you still play?

Esther Garate For pleasure, you know, when I want to, I don't have to, I think I enjoy every once in awhile, I think wasn't I lucky that my father insisted that I have that because little did I know it was going to be a real, real comfort later. You know, when I want to do it I can sit down and do it, and I think we're lucky if we're given those enrichments.

Tom Miller Were your folks, have a piano at home to practice on?

Esther Garate Oh yeah, we always had a piano.

Tom Miller Oh great, isn't that great? Well you and little girlfriends, back as a child, where else would you go besides the movie theatre, did you go to parks, Maple Park, Brand Park perhaps that's a long ways away?

Esther Garate No we didn't, we didn't really go, my parents didn't really encourage that as much as I think I use to read and I would, I know the playground was open, the school playground was open during the summer then and I would go over to the, my Horace Mann where I went to school and play there during the summer. I was not, I don't know how to explain it, I had lots of friends and I guess I spent most of my time with my friends and doing simple things, there wasn't quite the organized play that there is now.

Tom Miller So you had to kind of make up your own games.

Esther Garate Yeah, we made up our things, you know, to do.

Tom Miller How do you find that difference from many years ago when kids had to create their own distractions and now all the organized and formal programs and so forth; are those programs necessary, do they help kids that much or were you just as happy and just as occupied making up your own games?

Esther Garate Well, that's a good question because I see some good in both. First of all we had, as a child I only had radio and I have to say the imagination that a child has the benefit of making while they're listening to a program, you make your own characters and all, I think that's an advantage, because now I think it's better than T.V. for a child unless it's an educational type thing. However, I have to say that my daughter, she was into many things of which well-rounded her for, since she was an only child. It was the best opportunity for her to meet other people, work with other people and it adapted her for her well-rounded life I think than she was an only child she might not have entered into those things unless they were there to, already organized like Campfire Girls, the church choir, and that sort of thing, you know. And she liked sports, played in sports a lot, so.

Tom Miller Well, were you in sports or involved in those kind of things?

Esther Garate No I wasn't, I really wasn't, I look back and I, when you asked what I did with my time I really don't remember that part.

Tom Miller Did you babysit as a kid?

Esther Garate No, I never did that. I have to say that I think my parents were very, I think we were sheltered, I think that's the word

because there were so many things I found out later in life that, that were not desirable that I didn't even know about, and I think I was brought up that way and my friends were also, all my girlfriends and all. And I think we, we kind of had a sheltered life.

Tom Miller Did it impact how you raised Elena? I'm sure it must have been met somehow, but how might that have impacted, did you give her any

Esther Garate I think I wanted her to express herself more.

Tom Miller And experience?

Esther Garate And experience even defeat. She would always want to run for office and sometimes she'd win, but sometimes she didn't and I was glad that worked out so that she could know that you could lose and still come out fine. And I remember she said, well I'll just try the next time, and I thought that was a gain.

Tom Miller What a lesson?

Esther Garate Yeah, it is a gain for her to yeah.

Tom Miller You mentioned Horace Mann, that was your elementary school?

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller What favorite memories do you have of Horace Mann?

Esther Garate Oh, there was a wonderful principal who would promote Glendale family, May Cornwell, she was a maiden lady.

Tom Miller Related to Glen Cornwell at all?

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller His mother?

Esther Garate His aunt. And because his father is the one that owned Cornwell, but May Cornwell was an outstanding lady and everybody loved her. And well I remember good things about elementary school. Really a nice school.

Tom Miller And any extra-curricular activities, you had piano lessons of course?

Esther Garate No there wasn't anything, you know we didn't have those enrichment things at school. We went, one thing we did have at Horace Mann that the other schools didn't have, and where we in the, from the fourth grade or fifth grade on we would

move from class to class when we had our different subjects and I

Tom Miller So you didn't stay in the same classroom?

Esther Garate It wasn't a self-contained classroom, and it was good because we went to the science room was set up, the art room was set up, the music room was set up, so to me that was quite progressive when I realized the other schools, elementary schools didn't have that and they don't have that now, they don't.

Tom Miller So when you, what junior high school did you go to?

Esther Garate Roosevelt

Tom Miller So when you went to Roosevelt you were already use to going from class to class.

Esther Garate That's right and I think that was probably an easier transition for us who went to Roosevelt for that reason because then we got to know that we weren't afraid to be moving around as much, you know.

Tom Miller I can remember going from Balboa to Toll, I was there, it was a big step.

Esther Garate Yeah, that was a big step, yes.

Tom Miller Very frightening. Okay, junior high school, what favorite memories do you have of Roosevelt?

Esther Garate Well I have to say that just the other night I met with eight girls, most of which I even knew in junior high and there are several that I knew from elementary school. We have remained friends all through school and we even, we even had our 50th anniversary, our reunion from Glendale High School and we all remained friends and we still meet.

Tom Miller What are their names, do you recall all of them?

Esther Garate Oh yes, May Andrews is one of them she lived down on Central; Paula Otto she, now these are the maiden names, do you want the other names?

Tom Miller If you know them.

Esther Garate Yeah, May White, she's now living in Alhambra; Paula Otto Done, she lives now in Escondido but she lived over on Orange Street; they attended Magnolia School but I met them at Roosevelt.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate Helen Grumbley, Helen McNair Grumbley who attended junior high, I met her in the seventh grade; Florence Hoffman Page, lives up north now and she came from John Muir over to Roosevelt; Margaret Ann Davies who I met in high school and she's Margaret Ann Rubes; Ava Lee Durham Nichols lives in Coronado and she I met in high school; Dorothy Hoffman Newton who also is from school and she lives in Del Mar; Jane Mosier Usher is a very good friend of mine and she lives in Glendale; and Barbara Brown Round lives in Burbank and she was the head of Recreation in Burbank not too long ago, she's retired. All of us have retired from our jobs. Marian Simley Johnson who lives San Diego, I went to kindergarten with Marian. So you see we, we have maintained a beautiful friendship. All of us married fellows that we didn't go to school with, I mean we all married fellows we had later.

Tom Miller Later, yeah.

Esther Garate So it, and yet they all got along beautifully when we'd be together, you know, so we

Tom Miller That's wonderful after all these years you still see

Esther Garate Yeah, we feel like this is a wonderful thing.

Tom Miller How often do you get together?

Esther Garate Twice a year.

Tom Miller Twice a year?

Esther Garate Yeah.

Tom Miller Summer and winter.

Esther Garate Well, we're trying that. Actually we went to San Juan Capistrano for lunch and because that was in the middle of San Diego area and ours, and then the other night we were up at Barbara's in Burbank, and of course we have places for them to stay overnight, all of us, so you know we, we could just manage it fine and we just pick up right where we left off. We have a really close relationship.

Tom Miller That's nice, terrific.

Esther Garate I thought that was special.

Tom Miller Any other favorite memories of junior high school before we go on to high school?

Esther Garate Oh, well you know that was the first time I was exposed to culture and different race. Was it, well I actually was exposed to it in elementary school, we had quite a few Asian children, Japanese, and they were good friends of mine. In junior high there were some Mexican children that attended and I was good friends with them. I was, my parents never said anything about this and I always was eager to have friends so I didn't worry about who they were, what they were and that sort of thing. And they were wonderful friends, I, but Roosevelt, see located where it is, you see, was more liable to have the different background.

Tom Miller Is, now it's down on Glendale Avenue and

Esther Garate Chevy Chase

Tom Miller Chevy Chase. Is that where it was then too,.....

Esther Garate Yes, right where it is now.

Tom Miller Oh, it's just been remodeled.

Esther Garate It's remodeled.

Tom Miller Do you see much in this make, so then you went on to Glendale High School, is that right?

Esther Garate Yes, Glendale High School, all of us did.

Tom Miller Oh, so you all went together, terrific.

Esther Garate Yeah.

Tom Miller What favorite thoughts about high school do you have? That must have been a big change, probably?

Esther Garate It was, it was the big change but it was a nice change and of course we had, I think most of us who went to school then preferred the old building to the one they have now. It was a beautiful arcade built building and we had a lot of good times there. We had, in our senior year we had senior glen and this group of girls, all of us would bring our brown bags and we would eat in the senior glen, you know, because it was only a place for seniors.

Tom Miller Oh meadow is that glen as in meadow or grassy area is that what you mean?

Esther Garate Yes, and it was in a like a little courtyard area that you know was grassy though. And so we use to have some good times there.

Tom Miller Now is this on the location of the current Glendale High School?

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Okay, what do you see, yeah what do you see is the difference in the student bodies of then and now? You've already suggested that it was already ethnically diverse to some degree, even back in junior high school and certainly we are today, too. Is there much difference between the kids, what's?

Esther Garate Oh I think so, yes. Now I think that the ethnic diversity now is much higher.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate In the ethnic group, Caucasian is the last although if you're putting Armenian with Caucasian which I think you do.

Tom Miller Right

Esther Garate Then that's no so because I think Armenian is very strong. I know it is over here at our Balboa School so it must be even more so up at the higher levels.

Tom Miller How about the kids? Are kids, kids are kids, or have children in general changed much?

Esther Garate In elementary school I see clear to when I was, before I retired, you can almost anticipate the behavior of children from age to age, elementary. I think the change to the junior high, they assume more sophistication, more, they're liable to, to find their way into a group good or bad.

Tom Miller A little bit more than individual.

Esther Garate That's right because they left more, they meet more people

Tom Miller They're given more independence.

Esther Garate More independence from going from class to class.

Tom Miller Right

Esther Garate And then in high school of course there's even more opportunities, you know for them to choose, you know.

Tom Miller Do you think proportionately that there are just as many good kids now as there ever were? When you hear a lot of problems

with, with high school and junior high school children. For example over at Glendale High, they've recently threatened to close down Glendale High at lunch, have you heard about that?

Esther Garate Yes, yes

Tom Miller Are those problems, same type of problems that were back when you were at Glendale High School?

Esther Garate Well, we never had the opportunity, in fact we were never to leave the school ground unless we had permission from our parents, written permission.

Tom Miller And that was for one specific time, you leave to go to the doctor or something?

Esther Garate That's right, we were not given the freedom that these children are today. I don't know if this is something that is good for a child to be able to make choices, sometimes I think we allow too much freedom and it becomes a license to do things that maybe they didn't think of but the one they are with might think of.

Tom Miller So maybe there's a little too much freedom before they're ready for it?

Esther Garate Little too much I think. I think it is. I, well, I'm older though, maybe.

Tom Miller Well, that's what I, I want your opinion. So we want to know what you think. Now, I'm going to take some of these kind of out of sequence only because I know you and I know what you've done. After high school, then did you go to work right for the school district or what did you do then?

Esther Garate I went to college. I went to junior college, Glendale.

Tom Miller Glendale?

Esther Garate I was in the nursing program and I mainly took science courses in order, to enable me to enter nursing school of which I did. I went to the L.A. County Hospital for my nursing. However, the working, and I had to make a choice between, well I should back up a little bit. I met my future husband and I had to make a choice between marrying him, or, and leaving nursing school, or staying in nursing school and not being married. That was the rule at that time because see nursing was like military.

Tom Miller Really.

Esther Garate It was protocol.

Tom Miller And you could not be married and be a nursing.....

Esther Garate That's right, because you lived on the, at the hospital.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate So you were not allowed to be married and,

Tom Miller Now how did you meet your husband, Louie was his name?

Esther Garate Yes, I met Louie when I lived on Windsor Road but not in the home I was brought up in. We had moved down the street to an apartment. My father had passed on and my sister and I and my mother lived in this apartment. Across the hall was a lady who was boarding three young men, two from Peru and one from Cuba. I did not meet him for quite awhile because I was going to nursing school you see. But I did know Spanish and he of course only spoke Spanish. He came here to go to school and that's why all three boys were here to attend school and then they were going to return to their country.

Tom Miller I see, where were they going to school?

Esther Garate Curtis Wright and at that time you see they were, that was before the 1941 war, that was like, he came here in March of '41 and he was, wanted to be a pilot. In order to go back home and fly their, their family owned a coffee plantation and he wanted to be able to fly the coffee out of the ranch.

Tom Miller (Cough) just all of a sudden tickle.

Esther Garate Can I get something for you?

Tom Miller No I think I just let it.....

Esther Garate And that's why he was here.

Tom Miller I see

Esther Garate Is to attend school. So I did meet him in the hall one day when I was home for the weekend and I had heard about the Spanish so I talked to him in Spanish and he liked that. And then he came over and he wanted to know if I could take him to see some places, you know. Well of course I didn't drive then so we went on, we went on the street car or we went on the bus. So we had sort of a friendship type thing, you know. I was not interested in anything at that time cause I more excited in my nursing, I loved it. So then of course it became more serious.

Tom Miller You, so you escorted him around Glendale, showed him the sites of Glendale or all of

Esther Garate Yes, he used to, well actually he, I had a little job where I was bringing some money, that's right I met him before nursing school because that summer out of college I had a job at Sharp Lunch Diner which was up on North Brand and it was, can you believe 25 cents a lunch and that was a beverage, the salad, the main dish, the muffin and the desert, 25 cents

Tom Miller 25 cents

Esther Garate And that was back in I think

Tom Miller '39, '40 something like that?

Esther Garate Yeah, I would, let's see it was '41 no '40 because yeah it was '40, no '41 when did Pearl Harbor happen, '41?

Tom Miller December 7, 1941.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller The early 40's

Esther Garate Yeah, actually, but I wanted to make a point of that because that might make a difference as to price or something.

Tom Miller Oh I see before the war.

Esther Garate It was 25 cents and I would wait tables and eat and it was kind of funny because it was a family-owned restaurant and of course people loved to come there cause you had choices of pies, things like that, you know they did their own baking. But you know everything to me tasted alike. I was able to eat there too if I wanted for nothing and those were really interesting days, you know.

Tom Miller Did you enjoy that, working?

Esther Garate Well I didn't really, you know, but I did make some money so I could go on to school.

Tom Miller So you became a tour guide, so a friendly little tour guide.

Esther Garate Actually, the first time that he, I knew there was any great interest, was one time I came out of Sharps and there he was. He had found out where I worked and he had come and he walked home with me. And that was from Brand, see we used to walk a lot.

Tom Miller Now you said North Brand, was that 100 North Brand or 700 North Brand?

Esther Garate No it was, okay, it had to be like 4 or 5 hundred block.

Tom Miller So about Lexington some where around that?

Esther Garate Yeah, it was way up there

Tom Miller And you walked all the way down to Windsor?

Esther Garate Yeah, oh, I did that all the time.

Tom Miller It must be two miles.

Esther Garate Yeah, we used to walk to school and that was, Windsor clear over to Broadway. We never thought of not walking because see our generation, very few of the kids had cars to go to school in.

Tom Miller Or even bicycles maybe?

Esther Garate Well, somehow you didn't take a bicycle just to high school. That was one of those funny things where people thought that was strange.

Tom Miller And they still do.

Esther Garate Do they?

Tom Miller I think, they did when I was there but that was over 20 years ago too.

Esther Garate But of course now they mostly have cars, but very few, some of the boys had cars, but actually there were so few of them that they only had the small parking lot for the teachers and then they would fill up the rest. Now it's, they have to have a huge spot for the kids

Tom Miller Right

Esther Garate And then they have a little lot for the teachers.

Tom Miller For the teachers So that was the first time, when he came up to, he found out where you worked and waited for you.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller That was the first time you thought something extra was there.

Esther Garate Yeah, I thought well this is nice, maybe he's lonesome. You know I didn't really, I really wasn't eager for this, I don't think at first. And then, of course, as I grew to know him, then you know I became more

Tom Miller Now how many months after you first met did this happen to be? A year, a couple of months?

Esther Garate Oh, about six months I guess, yeah.

Tom Miller So okay, and did he ask you out on a date?

Esther Garate Oh, well actually, what we'd been doing is going out.

Tom Miller Kind of dating.

Esther Garate But then he would get so he'd say, let's go down, what we, he used to be so nice, I mean he was such a gentleman. He'd bring my mother flowers, he would do it. Well you know this is typically Latin.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate Bring my mother flowers and then he would take me on the street car, the red car into L.A. We would go to, at that time what was it, Paramount or one of those theaters.

Tom Miller It was downtown?

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Million Dollar Theatre or one of those types.

Esther Garate Yeah one of those that had Vaudeville. You know then is when they had good Vaudeville. Good stuff, and then they had the features, two of them. Then we'd come out and we'd got to Clifton's.

Tom Miller sure

Esther Garate You And then I, and then we'd dine, well I'm sure this was kind of low-keyed for most people but for us, for me it was great cause I hadn't been treated important.

Tom Miller And it's downtown Los Angeles.

Esther Garate Yes, we'd come home on the street cars and, of course, he lived just across the way so we, you know, it wasn't hard for me to

Tom Miller Do you remember the first time he held your hand or put his arm around your shoulder or suggested, you know, this is just more than just tour guide?

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Do you remember?

Esther Garate Yes, actually my sister had gone to the WAVES and he, she left the car to him only because he knew a lot about cars and she didn't want to do anything else with the car so she said he can come and pick you up at the hospital. In other words she's very generous with her car and then he would come after me and then it became more romantic cause it was not so public and that sort of thing and you know

Tom Miller Yeah, how nice.

Esther Garate It was, it was a wonderful romance. He was a very romantic guy.

Tom Miller That's good. How long did it take before you got married?

Esther Garate Well we were married in 42' in July so I had stopped nursing, I had left nursing about March or April that year and then we were married in July.

Tom Miller Of 1942?

Esther Garate Yes, then we thought he would be going in the service you see, but he was 4F because of flat feet.

Tom Miller Really, I have flat feet. You know isn't it funny our birthdays are the same day.

Esther Garate Exactly.

Tom Miller And we both have flat feet

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Wow, that Well anyway, now this was 1942 and was he working for Bendix then or

Esther Garate No, no now he was of all things he was also, he could not join, at first when the war started he went down to apply to go in the service, but they rejected him because, before the flat feet, because he was an alien. See he was from Cuba and they said we can take you in the service, but you cannot join. In other words you can't choose to go in the Navy.

Tom Miller Oh they could draft him but he couldn't volunteer.

Esther Garate Yes, that's right cause he was from an alien country.

Tom Miller Isn't that funny?

Esther Garate Isn't funny, you know these are strange things that use to be and they're interesting, really and you wonder why, you know. But anyway then he was drafted.

Tom Miller Oh he was?

Esther Garate And that's when they found out he had the flat feet.

Tom Miller I see

Esther Garate So then we worked, of all things, they allowed him to work at the shipyards and he was a welder in the shipyards and then, actually this was just before we were married and then after we were married I was working for the telephone company in Los Angeles and he was a welder at the shipyards. Only we had different hours.

Tom Miller Completely different?

Esther Garate Yeah, completely different.

Tom Miller Morning and night?

Esther Garate Yeah, right.

Tom Miller Oh that's

Esther Garate Yeah, what a start.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate But he managed all right though.

Tom Miller You didn't get sick of each other.

Esther Garate No, and then as time went on he was given a position at Coldman's over in Burbank.

Tom Miller W hat was that?

Esther Garate Coldman Instrument Company, cause he had been educated in gyro instruments and he had a certificate except they wouldn't hire him because he was an alien. And then he wrote a letter to the President who was President Roosevelt at the time. And, I'm trying to think who was the one, McNaulty, was that the

one, the one who answered his letter and he took it down to Coldman and said, I've written the President, I don't understand why you can't hire me. And the man in charge who ended up being a very good friend, said, anybody who has the ability to figure these things and to go that far deserves to be hired. So, see Louie made his own way that way, he was very

Tom Miller And yet I don't remember him ever being a pushy person ever.

Esther Garate No, never, no, yes but strong. He was, well he was head of the house. I mean he was that type of man and you know, you were aware of his presence but he didn't say, you know he was that kind, I think I admire that part of it.

Tom Miller Now, did he become a naturalized citizen later on?

Esther Garate Oh yes, no he became one after we were married, it took five years and then we were so proud of that, you know that was a wonderful thing.

Tom Miller Sure

Esther Garate And he was, he really always told people, you just don't know what you have here in this country. You have no idea.

Tom Miller And this was before Castro wasn't it?

Esther Garate Yes, it was before Castro.

Tom Miller So, and it became even worse after Castro developed.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller So he got his job?

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller With the Instrument Company?

Esther Garate Yes with the Coldman Instrument Company

Tom Miller And let's see you had left nursing, is that when you went into education?

Esther Garate No, actually during the war I worked at General Controls. I was, well he worked at Coldmans, I worked at General Controls. We worked ten hours a day. We went to work in the dark, came home in the dark. You know it was during the war.

Tom Miller But did you have similar shifts now?

Esther Garate Yes, in fact we went together, you know, ten hours each of us. And then when the war was over we decided we have a family and so that's when I had Elena but I quit when I found out I was pregnant.

Tom Miller Where were you living then?

Esther Garate We were living on Glenoaks, Glenoaks and Pacific.

Tom Miller In an apartment.

Esther Garate In a court. And it was a very nice, but so small. But we had, that's where we had Elena.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate And we were there until she was three years old.

Tom Miller Now she was born in probably '48?

Esther Garate '47

Tom Miller '47 and but and then when did you go to the school district. What prompted that?

Esther Garate Well that was a good thing but what prompted it was not too good. When Elena was, we had planned to have more children and I, we were just planning to have another child when Louis became very ill and he had a heart problem. One that had not appeared to give him any problem but he had a rheumatic heart as a child and we had not of course thought about all this. So the doctor said well, he needs to rest and maybe even a year. And so when Elena was about five years old I took it upon myself to go back to work because I thought we need to really let him know that he can rest if he has to so that I would be working. And that worked out fine because I started at the Glendale Unified School District and I started in purchasing. Then a Mr. Robert Peters came in one day, he was principal up at Fremont School and he was looking for a secretary because his was leaving to go someplace else. And of course I went through the what do you call it, protocol I guess, in applying for the position because I thought that would be perfect because at the time I would be home in the summer when Elena's home in the summer. And it worked out beautifully and I did get the position and I just loved it. That was in 1953, in August I remember. So that's when I started with the District.

Tom Miller So you started in purchasing which would be down at the District headquarters.

Esther Garate Yeah at the headquarters first.

Tom Miller And then were you sent up to what school?

Esther Garate Fremont School.

Tom Miller Oh Fremont School, that's right. And how many schools did you work in?

Esther Garate Well I worked there for seven years. My, Mr. Peters was designated to open the new school which was Lowell School up in, on Lowell Avenue, on that was 1960, 1960 I went with him. He asked me to go with him and be, we did all the buying and preparing for the new school and it was really a fun thing to do.

Tom Miller Now, Lowell School is that the current Chamlian School?

Esther Garate That's right, beautiful school. We took such good care of it. Had wonderful teachers. And then 18 years later they closed the school. He wasn't there but I was and I closed, helped close the school, because of, well the attendance. You see a freeway had come in and taken a lot of the people and well it's just the economy I guess.

Tom Miller And that's the 210 Freeway you're referring to up in the Crescenta Valley?

Esther Garate Yes, well no, it was lower, is that the 210, I thought that's the 2. Isn't that funny I never think of it as a number, it just ran through the area and took out many homes.

Tom Miller Clear through Crescenta Valley, yeah

Esther Garate On Mayfield and all that area, so we lost a lot of people that way.

Tom Miller But then you went from Lowell to?

Esther Garate To Marshall.

Tom Miller Oh Marshall?

Esther Garate Yes, because I asked, that's when I, see I had seniority among the secretaries because I had been the oldest, maybe in years and maybe in time. And so, my wishes could be met easier that was and I said if there is an opening in the Glendale area I need to go back there because I live in Glendale. So Marshall was open and La Crescenta was open. Well I preferred Marshall, so I was there for two and a half years that nice..... Then I went to Franklin and I had my same

principal that I had up at Lowell for awhile which was Diane Holley of whom I liked very much, too. I loved working for her. So she asked me to come down to Franklin. I went down there and she had Balboa and Franklin at the time. So when Betty Bishop, the secretary of Balboa retired, my name was already in adjacent to Balboa School. That's when Louie was very ill and it was such a help to be so close to home, so that's how I've been from one school to another.

Tom Miller So you finished your career at Balboa?

Esther Garate That's right.

Tom Miller When you retired, I see. And that's literally four blocks away.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Four to five blocks away, not very far.

Esther Garate That was 33 years, 33 and a half years in the school district.

Tom Miller How many superintendents did you work for?

Esther Garate Oh, well there's Hayhurst

Tom Miller Normal Hayhurst?

Esther Garate Yes, Normal Hayhurst, well I guess Dr. Taylor

Tom Miller Curtis Taylor?

Esther Garate Taylor and I was under Sanchis, well yes I was, I was under him maybe a year.

Tom Miller Bob Sanchis?

Esther Garate Yeah, Bob Sanchis, I remember him coming to Balboa, so I must have been, yeah

Tom Miller Oh, he was, was he principal at Balboa?

Esther Garate No, no, no

Tom Miller Oh, but he came to Balboa?

Esther Garate Well, he visited, I remember knowing him that well but not like I did

Tom Miller The other two.

Esther Garate Yeah, and of course now I hardly know anybody that's been with Unified anymore, because most everyone, my contemporaries, have all retired. They were all of the same age.

Tom Miller Retired, sure.

Esther Garate Sure

Tom Miller So you are really uniquely qualified to talk about student bodies and kids and how they've changed, if they have at all. Do you see good things in education for the future for kids?

Esther Garate Actually, I know teachers that are teaching now and I say that I think for the most part I think they're doing a good job. They have to know more than they did before. There have to be things like computers and they have to know more about, they have to learn how to entertain the child to get the attention because they're competing with T.V.

Tom Miller T.V. right.

Esther Garate And I think T.V. has made the difference in the attention span of the child. Because we had several families that did not own T.V.'s and those were our honor students.

Tom Miller Is that right?

Esther Garate I have to say that, in school.

Tom Miller Okay, well there's a reason for that.

Esther Garate They were families that could afford T.V. and they said no way are we going to have one. Maybe you knew one of the families, they were Chevets. Did you know the Chevets there were three children. She's a teacher now at Freemont and she said my husband and I just don't believe in children watching T.V. and those three were honor students.

Tom Miller

Esther Garate

Tom Miller You've probably, now you've been retired how many years?

Esther Garate Seven

Tom Miller Seven. You've probably heard the necessity for the teachers today to become bilingual.

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller And in fact they must take bilingual education so that the teachers can speak other languages. Not to get the students to speak English but get the teachers to speak another language. And I just read in the News Press yesterday or the day before so that the, I think it's the teacher union is trying to persuade the school district to make the administrator also speak foreign languages. Did you read about that?

Esther Garate No I didn't.

Tom Miller How does that sit with you, what do you think about that? Is it necessary for all of the administration and the teachers, is practical, is a good idea to get all of the teachers and administrators to speak other languages, or is it, what do you think about that?

Esther Garate Bilingual should be set aside for ESL.

Tom Miller English as a Second Language?

Esther Garate Yes, children brought up in homes with other than English language spoken should learn English and their parents should learn English. I taught ESL classes for, well one class down, of Armenian ladies. The parent will lose out, this child if he does not learn English because the child makes fun of the parent that doesn't learn what he's learning. So that is one thing to think about. When you say teachers and administrators, I don't think that that is so necessary for administrators, however, I guess I have to go back to the fact that in Europe, in Switzerland they know four languages because there's four different kinds of people living there and I've always felt you're so much farther ahead the more that you know. Like they know Italian, French, German and Swiss, well Swiss is much like German. But because we're becoming more diverse culturally another thing that I think is important, I think the family should maintain the native language in the home. But I think if they live in another country and this comes from my daughter who works with International students, you have to choose a cultural. You either choose the one that you were raised with or the new one that you, where you live. You can't have both.

Tom Miller You say culture or language?

Esther Garate Cultural

Tom Miller Cultural

Esther Garate You should maintain your language in the home and learn the new language. But as far as cultural goes you're going to

have to make a choice and where you live is the cultural that you're going to be more comfortable in so perhaps you should learn to adapt yourself to the new cultural.

Tom Miller I suppose to reinforce what you're saying, not only do you have the point of view of your daughter, Elena, but also your husband who was an exact application.

Esther Garate Absolutely, he could not understand how you could live in a country and be a system and speak another language only. Now he learned English right away but of course that's because we spoke English in the home. However, my daughter is bilingual and she, I well, I learned Spanish too, you know. So it's good to know all these things, but I would say for the way things are going for instance when we taught ESL we made a big point out of saying you must know the laws, you must know what is expected from you when you live in another country, even though they want you to keep your cultural in your family. Because its important they feel more secure with their family cultural. But you must adapt to new ways in order to get along. Otherwise they don't mesh, you know if we were in their country we would need to learn their ways.

Tom Miller Right

Esther Garate I mean, you know.

Tom Miller It's and I don't hear what you're saying as being tit for tat but for practical living, everyday living.

Esther Garate Absolutely, and your children will be the first ones it will phase because it's happened in our family. For instance, my nephew Hobie, who was brought here when he was six years old.

Tom Miller From Cuba?

Esther Garate Yes, he does not want any part of his child becoming in a bilingual class or anything. He wants English only, if they speak Spanish in the home that's okay for him, but the child should be secure with English. So you see the young people are gradually not wanting to keep this.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate And the cultural too

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate You know they don't see a need for it.

Tom Miller Yeah, okay. We've run through your career quickly I should say, but not to leave anything out, if there's anything else you'd like to comment on, please do so or else we'll jump to maybe something else. Okay. The clubs, organizations, soroptomists, Tuesday Afternoon Club, or any, any of that kind of activity?

Esther Garate Yes, for fifteen years I was working with Dave Herman with the Oldtimers, you know we have the picnic every year. And so I sort of thought they needed new blood so I took a back seat to that thinking after he passed away, and I thought well they need some new blood here, let's get some more people interested so I have been sort on the fringe of that.

Tom Miller But you worked for many

Esther Garate Fifteen years.

Tom Miller Fifteen years.

Esther Garate We, Dave Herman was instrumatic in, instrumental in making that a bigger opportunity.

Tom Miller That's the Labor Day picnic or Memorial.

Esther Garate Yes, Labor Day picnic. And we sent out correspondence to everyone that we knew that was from Glendale, you know way back. We had quite a nice long list to send to. And it has grown from about 25 to 300 now so we feel, I feel really good about that.

Tom Miller And that's held at the Case de Adobe on Labor Day.

Esther Garate Yes that's right.

Tom Miller And is in general for those people who have been here over thirty years is that what I understand?

Esther Garate Yes, you can come if you've been here less than that, in fact we, it's open to anyone that's interested, but it is mainly to tell everyone how much we think of our city, how happy we are to be in this City.

Tom Miller Good, good, any others?

Esther Garate Oh I, actually, gee I belong to PEO which is a woman's organization.

Tom Miller That is?

Esther Garate It's a philanthropic, educational.

Tom Miller What does PEO stand for?

Esther Garate Its a philanthropic educational

Tom Miller Organization.

Esther Garate Organization, and I'm in Chapter CJ and we do, well it's made up of a lot of women in the area and we got just a big organization, so, but I'm very fond of the people that I've met in that but I did not have time for that until after I retired.

Tom Miller Yeah, what types of activities?

Esther Garate So, of all sorts, we have programs, and we have opportunities to help our various, you know, it's really a wonderful organization.

Tom Miller You've done, you've really done a lot of volunteer work there.

Esther Garate Now I do a lot of volunteer work, of course my church isn't in Glendale, it's in Burbank, but I am, I work in the office there one morning a week. I work at the Norris Cancer Hospital one day a week.

Tom Miller That's down at USC County Medical Center?

Esther Garate Yeah, County, USC Center and I work at the Daisy Shop which is the thrift shop for my organization.

Tom Miller You were saying the Daisy Shop is up in Altadena.

Esther Garate Yes, and that's a thrift shop. And that's, you know, I guess that's about it. However, I, well the, Norris Auxiliary is also connected with the volunteer work I do at Norris Cancer Center. So I belong to that, that's very worthwhile.

Tom Miller Are there any activities or philanthropic or volunteer activities that you would like to get involved with?

Esther Garate Yes I would. I forgot to say that I was teaching ESL to foreign students for awhile too. However, I have found that I'm not as effective, not having a background of education as my major, like my daughter, that the larger the group I'm not as effective so I feel it's better that I go on to something else.

Tom Miller Now the three ESL curriculums that I'm aware of through the college, the YWCA and the library. Were you in one of those three?

Esther Garate Yes I was at the Glendale College one.

Tom Miller The college one?

Esther Garate Yeah, it was up in Montrose School.

Tom Miller Yeah, okay.

Esther Garate And I had a one to one type of opportunity where I'd have just one student and I really enjoyed that, but I think our retired teachers offer a much better way of handling that because they're teachers. Where as I was in nursing and you know

Tom Miller Administration and that kind of. Are there any others that you would like to do?

Esther Garate I would like to, there's something now that, well, I thought of the Red Cross and I thought of Salvation Army, I think I'd like to serve some of those, the meals and

Tom Miller Meals on Wheels?

Esther Garate Things like that. However, I find my time is limited because I am taking care of a house and yard, and I really like my social life with my friends, you know, I really enjoy that. And I have tickets to plays and philharmonics in Los Angeles. You know I enjoy that sort of thing.

Tom Miller Speaking of that, what about the Alex Theatre?

Esther Garate Oh yes.

Tom Miller Is that, now you probably

Esther Garate Oh I'm so excited about that. I don't have tickets to that but I will be thinking about that because I think that's going to be a nice advantage for our city.

Tom Miller You think that was a good thing to spend six million dollars on?

Esther Garate Yeah I think, I don't know, I can't really say yet.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate Except that I think what a perfect thing to bring the Glendale Symphony back.

Tom Miller Yes, yes.

Esther Garate That in itself was good because going to Los Angeles presents not only a traffic problem as one gets older but it's expensive. It's six dollars, I think, to park in the underground.

Tom Miller And safety has got to be a concern.

Esther Garate Yeah it really has.

Tom Miller It always is worse when you go downtown.

Esther Garate Yeah. Of course I do go there for the philharmonic so I can't complain, but I go in the afternoon.

Tom Miller Oh yeah, that's a quite a bit different.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Politics, the city's sample questions here have included some questions about politics. How do you remember politics as a child, as a young adult, currently? How has the political environment changed at all? Is the the mayor still always pretty much the same, the City Council do they always, pretty much do the same kinds of things or does it change much?

Esther Garate I think it's changed a lot.

Tom Miller How?

Esther Garate Well, now my uncle was mayor at one time.

Tom Miller Really, what was his name?

Esther Garate Frank Melman, now let's see, I have down here when he was mayor. He was an attorney and he was mayor for one year, 1919 to 1920, so, and he was one of those well, much like your father, very serious about the right thing for the people type thing. You know he was not, I don't think he was making his own way that way, you know. Those were days when there wasn't a lot of money but his offices were in the City Hall in Los Angeles, he was up in the big building. But I remember that he, his family, he had three children and he wanted the city to be progressive but not at the cost of taxes and all that sort of thing.

Tom Miller Now was Los Angeles mayor or Glendale?

Esther Garate Glendale.

Tom Miller Glendale mayor.

Esther Garate He lived in Glendale but he was an attorney in Los Angeles.

Tom Miller I see.

Esther Garate So I think about how earnest he was about doing the right thing, but then my family was, tended to be a little more that way than

Tom Miller Some others?

Esther Garate Well yes, they were not out to make a name. Well, definitely not cause you probably never heard of him. But to me today over the years I've seen where no one even had to tell me by reading the News Press and all. There are certain people, you just see their names constantly and you think, now what do you think that these people have to be in here all the time, other people are doing better things than they are, now why, you know what I mean. Why are they, it's like, they want to make a place for themselves I guess. Maybe they're all right, maybe they're doing the good things, but there are a lot of people that do good things you don't even hear about, you know. Well you're aware of that.

Tom Miller Yes

Esther Garate Probably, with what, what people leave and

Tom Miller That's right, that's right.

Esther Garate Yeah, it's amazing isn't it?

Tom Miller It is amazing, we just, did you ever hear of a gentleman named Albert Edward Dunford, he worked for the city?

Esther Garate No

Tom Miller Well I'll explain that to you in a little bit then. But that's an example of someone who has very quietly been Any other comments or thoughts about politics, Glendale politics?

Esther Garate I'm concerned about the building of new sites on the hills. I really am, I think we're already suffering a little bit from that and I would like to see that stopped. However, I guess if I owned property there I would look at it with a different idea, but I think there should be a way to handle that so that, that people aren't at risk living in those areas. Because we've seen what happens all over and land fill is just, you know, it's not good.

Tom Miller Yeah, yeah. Controversial issues in the city, in the many years that you've been here what kinds of controversial issues do you remember, the 134 Freeway, the Ventura Freeway going through was probably one?

Esther Garate I don't remember that not really, because I probably wanted it.

Tom Miller Well the 2 Freeway going up, up next to Verdugo.

Esther Garate Yeah, well see I would have wanted that. I probably was not aware because that was going to help me go to my

Tom Miller Go to your office.

Esther Garate I guess we choose what's going to be good for us and then we like that, you know.

Tom Miller Well controversial issues, hillside, hillside development is one of them, so you

Esther Garate Yeah, that's one of them that I'm really against.

Tom Miller We've already touched that. Recreation we talked about. What about you and Elena and Louie as family, what kind of recreational activities, and maybe this is an opportunity for you to comment a little bit more about Elena. Tell us a little more about Elena.

Esther Garate Okay, I would say that because we did not have a lot of fun when Elena was little we did a lot of things that were free. She started out going down to the, to where the train went by, you know the Glendale Station. And that was a big deal, you know. She loved that as a child. We went to the park, we did, ah then of course her father took her a lot on nature trails. He liked to hike and he took her with him and she learned a lot about the outdoors that way. We always went to the beach, maybe for week because we all enjoyed swimming and things like that. So I'm like, clear up to when she was in high school, we always took a friend for her. She had took a girlfriend, you know, so that she would have company. But we'd do quite a bit as a family.

Tom Miller I remember, and this is not an interview of me, but when you just said that about your husband, I remember he took Steve Johnson and me up to Mount Wilson.

Esther Garate Did he, oh?

Tom Miller First time I'd ever been to Mount Wilson.

Esther Garate I didn't know that.

Tom Miller First time I'd ever been in a snow storm.

Esther Garate Really?

Tom Miller And it snowed on our drive up and he told us about the ice crystals and how they land, you know.

Esther Garate See what I mean, how she?

Tom Miller Yeah, that's a, just an example

Esther Garate And she learned a great deal. In fact I have to say she knows how to do many things because he taught her how. He took her into the garage, showed her where the tools were and what they were for, and like if he was fixing something in the house and he said now Elena you go and get a file or something like

Tom Miller 3/16th inch wrench?

Esther Garate Yeah, and she say now in which place is that. And he said one, two, three, then she go out there. You know they had a very good, she was, he really was crazy about Elena. Now not as a baby, in fact he didn't really know what to do with her when she was a baby. But as soon as she could start talking and going with him and places. It was, you know to me that was so great cause I didn't know my father as well as I should have and that's because his working hours were different. But this little girl had a very good feeling about her father

Tom Miller Now your husband was, for all the years that I knew him, I remember he was a precision dye maker.

Esther Garate Yeah, tool

Tom Miller Tool and dye maker and had a whole workshop in the garage

Esther Garate That's right

Tom Miller With lathes and drills, presses and all that stuff.

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Did Elena learn how to use all those too?

Esther Garate No she didn't. There, one thing that was cute though, she used to go out in the garage and she said, when she was older she'd say, what are you making dad, and he said, I'm making the third year university rights. Which was, he did a lot of work on his own, you know, like that. And true we couldn't

have afforded USC if it hadn't been for many things that he did you know. And he wanted her to go there you know. So that's the way he always answered her.

Tom Miller Yeah, does she know, does she remember that.

Esther Garate Yes, oh sure, yeah she remembers, she knows. And she said, you know, she's really been, if, what she wanted to do before her father died, you know, she got her doctorate and she wanted him to know how much she appreciated her education and she really, it meant a great deal to her. And whenever I say anything she says, well mom, remember you and dad really worked hard for me to get this so, you know. And now, you know

Tom Miller Did she have the opportunity to tell him?

Esther Garate Oh yes, oh yes, he knew that, oh yeah.

Tom Miller Now how many years has he been gone?

Esther Garate Eight.

Tom Miller Eight years.

Esther Garate Yeah. But she had her doctorate before he passed away.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate And she knew it, he knew about it.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate He was, she was married to David before he passed away and David and her were married.

Tom Miller Now did she get all three of her degrees from USC, didn't she?

Esther Garate Yes she did.

Tom Miller Yeah, and then she was also a professor at USC?

Esther Garate Well she was, actually she was a tutor

Tom Miller An administrator in the foreign language department wasn't she, that's right?

Esther Garate Yeah, right.

Tom Miller Now language keeps coming back, foreign language you notice

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller And tutoring and teaching people

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Keep coming back up in this conversation.

Esther Garate She taught a lot of different people at SC.

Tom Miller You've taught ESL, it's not something you're doing now but you've done it, she's tutored people in foreign languages, she speaks two languages and you speak, the whole family speaks two languages.

Esther Garate Yes

Tom Miller Is that, is that unusual do you think, or does it just fit with Louie from Cuba and you from here?

Esther Garate No, I, I think that Elena developed a very strong feeling about what she saw in our family as people were coming as refugees and how they had to find their way here and the changes they had to make. She was old enough to be compassionate about her cousins and all about what they went through, you know. Because it wasn't easy for them, they came with a dollar that's all they

Tom Miller This is Javier's parents, one dollar?

Esther Garate One dollar is all that they were allowed to take out of Cuba if they were allowed to get on the boat to come. And those were refugees. Well of course Louis' family they right away went to work. My brother-in-law went to Bob's. Walked to Bob's every day.

Tom Miller Big Boy, Bob's Big Boy, the restaurant?

Esther Garate Yeah, and washed dishes for ten hours a day and walked home. And that was his job he did not take welfare. And the church we were in, North Glendale Methodist, they did subsidize a little apartment over in Burbank for them to move into and of course with everybody giving little pieces, you know, bits of furniture and things and you know that when Louis' brother-in-law could, he paid back any money that the church paid because they were definitely wanting to be on their own. See these were wealthy business people in Cuba and they had to give up everything.

Tom Miller Everything?

Esther Garate Their business, everything, their clothes, they walked right out and

Tom Miller Their home, had one dollar, got on the boat then left.

Esther Garate Yeah, that's it. So Elena remembers all that and of course her, well I guess, her area is foreign people because she's traveled a lot and of course she married, she worked with David and he's a professor in linguistics.

Tom Miller And what does he teach?

Esther Garate SC

Tom Miller USC English

Esther Garate Yeah, he's a director of ALI, American Language Institute.

Tom Miller And she is now out at Cal Lutheran.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Cal Lutheran College, USC

Esther Garate Yeah, university.

Tom Miller I, most of the remaining questions that I have here you've already answered, but I noticed that you have several notes over there. Is there anything that you haven't covered that you'd like obviously kind of open it up to you and let you talk about whatever memories you particularly have.

Esther Garate I, nothing, I just made some little notes but I think I've already covered them.

Tom Miller You have a frisky little kitty there.

Esther Garate Yes, she's an indoor cat, I don't ever let her out, see. I got her when she was six weeks old and I'm not allowing her to go out at all. Of course she requires more attention because of that.

Tom Miller Yeah

Esther Garate You see, and she's trying to get it now.

Tom Miller What's her name?

Esther Garate Misty

Tom Miller Misty

Esther Garate Well I decided I had to have something to talk to, you know, I'm so home. I think

Tom Miller Okay, well let me ask a timely question. It's Christmas, it's New Years what favorite family Christmas memory do you have. Time when the three of you were here and maybe Javier and the family were here or what favorite Christmas memory do you have?

Esther Garate Well I guess the first year that they all came and we had a big celebration here. And it was, it was very hard because they did not know any English and I played, I remember we played carols and all but their, being Catholic and being from their Country, you see, it was their first time away from their people. Cause many left, in fact I have a picture of and probably never will come. She has a son over there that, ah well he's a professor in the University of Havana. And that's why he doesn't leave, she doesn't leave, because he's there and he has children that would you believe, are married to communists. Because you go back three or four generations and they didn't know anything else. You know, it's a whole, we can't understand it, like that. And so, it's kind of sad, it was a sad year and yet it was a happy year and for awhile, in fact every year, we always found some people that were from somewhere as refugees to have Christmas with us because of that.

Tom Miller That's great

Esther Garate And of course I was in the schools, so I could easily find them as you know, that. And I think this is where Elena developed her compassion for people for other countries and

Tom Miller Cause she was around them.

Esther Garate All around them and she understood what they gave up and she works in that capacity now and they have about 300, no they have a 100, they have 3,000 students but about a hundred from other countries there. And of course most of theirs are from Scandinavian countries because you know it's a Lutheran and they're, they're the Scandinavian people and she, it's wonderful though. Elena is enjoying it so much, they're wonderful people and they like her so much and she likes them and

Tom Miller Even though she was a Methodist. Oh well.

Esther Garate Well now David and Elena were married by the Lutheran minister at SC. They were married in the little chapel there.

Tom Miller Oh really, on campus, oh how nice.

Esther Garate Yes. So ah, and of course Elena fell heir to three young ladies you know when she married David. One, the youngest one was just married.

Tom Miller Oh, so they're all out of the house now?

Esther Garate Yes, they're all out now, one is 30, going to be 33, that just seems impossible but they are all educated and Elena has played a good role. She hasn't been mother but she's been a friend and

Tom Miller Confidante an adult confidante, good, good

Esther Garate Yeah, right, so I think she's had the best of two worlds because she a career person and

Tom Miller Good. Well that it's extends, exhausts all my questions. Any final thoughts, any final words, words of wisdom, words of hope, you like Glendale, you're not planning on moving?

Esther Garate Oh, I often think how blessed I am that my parents chose Glendale to bring, to rear a family because, of course my sister's gone but she also has found another place that isn't really as nice, but I just think Glendale has a lot of hope. I would hope that other people, that all of us would learn to get along. I don't like the racist problems. I'd like to think there isn't one, but I know not everybody likes everything about everybody and I'm prejudice in some ways myself so I can't say I'm you know. But I, I think we have a wonderful city and I would like to see it kept that way.

Tom Miller Sure. Thank you very much, I've really enjoyed this.

Esther Garate Oh I have too.

Tom Miller And although I've known you for 20 some years, almost 30 years

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller Jeepers, it is 30 years, I've learned things today.

Esther Garate Yeah

Tom Miller As I figured I would.

Esther Garate Oh good.

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