

**Transcription of Oral History Interview with
JUDITH ANDERSON FIELD BAKER**

March 30, 1998

This oral history interview is being taped on Monday, March 30, 1998, with Judith Anderson Field Baker, a student in the first graduating class at UCR in 1958. Today, she is an accomplished artist who has made the UCR Sweeney Art Gallery the repository for her entire collection.

My name is Jan Erickson. I work in Chancellor Raymond L. Orbach's office. He is the eighth chief administrative officer of the campus.

Erickson: Judy, I wonder if we could start by talking about where you were born and tell us a little about your mother and father and any brothers and sisters you have.

Baker: Ok, I was born on September 11, 1936, here in Riverside at the Brockton Osteopathic Hospital. Two years later my mother had identical twins born in the same place. We were raised in San Bernardino. My father was an employee of Pacific Telephone. I think it was called Pacific Bell then.

My mother had gone to two years of college at then-Riverside City College prior to marrying my father. Anyway, it was what is now RCC, but she had never gotten her BA. When the war came along, they were very desperate for teachers at all levels, and my mother was asked to start teaching a first grade class at the elementary school I was attending in North San Bernardino. She started teaching when I was seven, so it was 1945. No, my figures are wrong. She must have started teaching in 1943, because I was seven. At any rate, you can do the math!

(chuckle)

Baker: She started going to the University of Redlands soon afterward to get her BA so that she could get a teaching credential. She spent summers and lots of evenings in Redlands attending school to get her BA, which she received in February of 1955, after I had already started UC Riverside. So my brothers and I went to Marshall School where my mother taught, and then we went to Arrowview Junior High School which was the school where Jack Kramer, the famous tennis player, went to school. That was Arrowview's claim to fame. And then we all three went to San Bernardino High School which was called Cardinal City.

I graduated from SBHS in 1954, where I had taken a lot of high school art and had won some awards in some shows. I met with some local commercial artists, which is what I thought I wanted to be. And frankly, I still do want to be a commercial artist when I grow up.

They encouraged me to go to UCLA, but my mother was concerned (and rightly so in retrospect) that UCLA would have been a terrible shock to me because I had grown up in a fairly rural area in San Bernardino and had always gone to school where I knew everyone. She just thought I would get lost there, so she suggested that since UCR was about to open we start there, and if we then wanted to go on and transfer to UCLA, we could do that for art courses. So, I applied to UC Riverside and was accepted and started school. I absolutely could not believe how difficult the classes were.

Erickson: Oh?

Baker: Well, I had been a straight A student in high school. In fact, I have my report cards somewhere which I am going to submit to the Gallery. I had never experienced anything like this. I was telling my boys the other day that the one thing that stands out in my mind when I first started coming to orientation and to some early lectures here was from a professor who stood up and

Baker: said, “If we teach you nothing in four years, we are going to teach you how to think for yourselves.”

Erickson: So, you think the expectations were more than another school would have been?

Baker: Much higher. In fact, rumor had it that we were to be the “little Harvard of the west,” that kind of thing. That really was rampant, and we all knew that this was a very tough school with very good professors. And, of course, it was very small. The biggest class I was in as a freshman and sophomore was a Humanities lecture class. There probably were somewhere between fifty and one hundred of us there. The reason it was that big was that everyone had to take Humanities. Poly Sci and Science majors, everyone, had to take this general curriculum, which I still think is a great idea. So, those were large classes, but then we had discussion groups and they were only six, eight or ten of us and a professor.

Erickson: And a professor? You didn’t have a TA?

Baker: Never. I didn’t even know what a TA was. There were no TAs here except maybe in the lab classes. I don’t know. But being the first full four year class, there weren’t many people above us who could be TAs. The people who had started graduated or weren’t here that long afterwards. So, our discussion sections, which is what we called our Humanities groups, were very small. All my classes were small. I don’t think I was in a class that had more than fifteen or twenty people in it. English, Math, everything.

Erickson: How did these professors try to get you to think for yourself? Do you remember any specific examples? Did they bring you out in class?

Baker: Oh, my yes. You couldn’t sit through a discussion class and not participate. It wasn’t possible because there were so few of us. And actually in those discussion groups, the professor would ask a question and we would all discuss it. It wasn’t a lecture situation, because the lecture hall would be where we

Baker: had gotten the general information. Then we had reading to do, and we had our discussion groups. You couldn't just sit through one. If you just sat through one and never contributed, it was going to affect your grade. No doubt about it. We wrote lots of papers, not term papers. They were weekly papers and things like that so that they could be sure that we were actually getting the information. There was a great deal of reading, a great deal. When I was in high school, if you had a reading assignment, it might be twenty to thirty pages. Here we are talking a number of chapters. I just wasn't used to it. When I started, I was a very slow reader.

Erickson: How long did it take you to adjust to that more rigorous schedule?

Baker: I was living at home, commuting with two or three of my friends from San Bernardino. By the end of the first two or three weeks, I was begging my mother to let me quit and go to San Bernardino Valley College, because I didn't think I could do it. I didn't think I was going to pass my classes.

I didn't think I was absorbing the information. It was like something was absolutely overwhelming me all of a sudden. I had always been at the top of the class grade-wise, so it was a terrible blow. As it turned out, she said, "All right, you have to finish one whole semester. You have to give me two sets of grades, quarter and semester grades." We were on the semester system. "If you still are unhappy, at the end of the semester, I will let you transfer." So, I got my quarter grades, and they are somewhere here. I brought them. I got Cs and Bs, which to me was a very pleasant surprise.

Then I began to dig in and think, "Well, I guess I can do this." And I got a little bit of confidence and finished the semester. Well, of course, by then you know what happens. You have friends that you don't want to leave, and you have adjusted to a routine. So, of course, there was no more mention of quitting and transferring to Valley College.

Erickson: You said you were commuting. Did you ever live on campus?

Baker: Yup. The first two years we commuted and then junior and senior year all of us lived on campus in student housing which was the old March Air Force Base enlisted officers or non comm officers housing that the University had bought.

Dean Loda Mae Davis, Dean of Women, had gone to a conference on student housing, and one school had tried an experiment where they had married and unmarried students living in individual houses unsupervised--that is, not in a dorm situation—not in an apartment-type situation. These were individual buildings with single students living in them who were under 21, and it was working. So, she came back and said she wanted to try it.

She was severely criticized by many, many people in the university administration, but they gave her permission to try it. What she did was, each...I can't remember exactly how it was broken up, but it seems to me...each block or street had what they called a house mother. Ours happened to be Joanna Mercereau, who is currently a very prominent artist in Riverside. She was married recently to Don O'Neill, another prominent artist, I read in the paper.

Erickson: Oh, yes. I did, too.

Baker: Joanna and her then-husband...I think he was a scientist...lived in student housing. In order to pay their rent, I suppose, she became the house mother which meant that you never knew what she was going to do or when. She would walk up and down the street and knock on your door to see how you were doing.

Once a week or twice a month, we had inspection to make sure we were keeping our houses clean. Joanna Mercereau usually brought a student assistant with her. I think maybe she had someone who was kind of a sidekick who helped her and probably got paid a minimum amount of money just to keep an eye on us.

Baker: At any rate, we seriously disliked Joanna Mercereau ...

(laughter)

because she would catch us every now and then with men in the house. We weren't supposed to have men in the house after certain hours. And, of course, there wasn't ever supposed to be any beer and that sort of thing. And we all had cars.

Erickson: What was the curfew? Probably 10:00 p.m.

Baker: For men in the house it was earlier than that. I think it was 8:00 p.m. or something like that during the week. And then on weekends, it was a little bit later, but not very much. I mean, you were not supposed to come home from a date and take your date into the house. Consequently, there was a lot of parking being done.

But, at any rate, Ina AmStein, who then became Ina AmStein Richter, whom I had gone to school with since the fourth grade at Marshall and Janet McMillan, who then became Janet McMillan Otterman and I lived at 3416 Florida Street.

And I never got caught with Charles Field, but Janet got caught with Dennis Weeks a number of times. *Denny became Student Body President our senior year.* And when you got caught, you were restricted. You could not leave on weekends to go anywhere. Janet used to go home sometimes on weekends to Arlington. She was raised in Arlington. Her father was born in the oldest house in town. I would go home occasionally on weekends.

Janet, if she were here now would say, "I am still mad at you, Field, because you never got caught." So, Joanna Mercereau would make these rounds and there really were very few problems.

We had some wonderful parties in those houses. But, it was very innocent partying—drink a few beers and go home, usually after football games or basketball games or a dance.

Baker: That was where we lived our junior and senior years, 1957 and 1958.

Erickson: Describe a typical day. What time would you get up in the morning?

Baker: Janet was a procrastinator. *She started studying late at night and usually stayed up until 2 or 3 a.m. I was always in bed by midnight except during finals.* If I got an assignment, I started early. I went straight to the library if I needed to do a paper or whatever. So, I usually studied when I got home in the afternoon.

Classes were 9:00 to 3:00 or something like that. Our discussion sections for Humanities were always two hours, so that was kind of like a lab. But the rest of the classes were fifty minutes, just very standard. We normally took a full load. I took sixteen units every quarter except maybe my senior year when I had more than I needed. I might have taken twelve. Oh, I know I did, because senior year we had to take comprehensive exams to graduate.

We had to take nine-hour comprehensives or write a thesis. The Art History Department decided we should do comprehensives. So, our senior year, we took lighter loads so we could study for the comprehensive all year.

I would get to campus around 8:00 a.m. because we would have coffee in the Barn. I should back track. When we first started, the basement of the gymnasium was the Coffee Shop and the Bookstore. That was where we all congregated.

And that was where Tom Broadbent, who was the Dean of Men—there were two flights of marble stairs. You would come down to a landing, and then you would go down another flight, and that was where the Coffee Shop was. Tom Broadbent, smarting off one day, jumped on the top banister. It was a marble slab that came down, (he) jumped on it to slide down, fell down and lit on his head on the bottom step and was hospitalized for weeks. He had plastic surgery. We thought he

Baker: wasn't going to live for a while. It was an awful accident. He did recover and lived a long, long time. He died not too long ago, right?

Erickson: Right.

Baker: So, anyway, we used to congregate in the Bookstore and the Coffee Shop down underneath the gymnasium. And then they opened the Barn. I cannot exactly remember when the Barn opened. It might be in here someplace (scrapbook).

Erickson: Was it in the present location?

Baker: Yes. I think it was probably when we were juniors, but it might have been sooner. They may have opened it our sophomore year. No, they did open it our sophomore year, because I remember Gordon Watkins as I was coming out, he was going in the Barn. I think that was his last year as Provost. That would have been my sophomore year. He knew every single one of us on the campus. He was a great guy!

Erickson: And there were, as I read, 130 students? Is that what you remember, too?

Baker: Yes. So, we would have coffee in the morning and then go off to class. If you had an hour off, you just went down to the Coffee Shop. There wasn't any point in going home, because we were far enough away on Florida Street, by the time you got home, it was almost time to come back to class. We just stayed on campus all day and would go home at 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon. We did our own cooking because these houses had little kitchens. I mean, they were full-blown houses. It was great.

Erickson: Let's give a little clarification. You were in the class of 1958 which was the first full four year, but there were other students. You came in September of 1954, but there were some students who had come in February of 1954.

Baker: Correct. I think there were—I'm not sure how many. *They were the charter students.* Most of them (names) are in the cement out there.

Erickson: And those are the students who signed their names in the concrete?

Baker: Right. None of those people, to my knowledge, were full four year students. They all transferred from junior colleges or they came back from the Korean War having had their educations interrupted or something. Most of them were quite a bit older. They would not fit into the first full four year category, because they graduated a year or a semester or two later.

Erickson: Do you remember if there were Commencement ceremonies?

Baker: Oh, yes, there were. I don't think I went to any of them to tell you the truth because they were so small. They were so much older, they were not the people that we socialized with. Some of the guys, though, played football. But I don't remember going to any commencements other than my own.

Erickson: Let's back track a little more. Can you remember what it was like when you arrived at campus that first day? Did your mother and father drive you over in their car? Oh, I am sorry, you were commuting, weren't you.

Baker: *Yes, my parents bought me a 1949 Ford 2 door sedan. There were four of us who commuted together from San Bernardino.* The campus was just mud. There were no lawns, there were no trees. It was just brick buildings and walkways. A lot of them were just boards. They were just barely ready for us.

Erickson: No trees.

Baker: What trees there were were little bitty guys, and they are now wonderful.

Erickson: Yes.

Baker: The campus has undergone a great transformation. There is a great picture in here of the way the campus looked.

Erickson: We are referring to a scrapbook that Judy has compiled that is probably about three or four inches thick. She will give this to the UCR Sweeney Art Gallery and to the Alumni Association so that if anyone is interested, they could browse through that and come up with some nice memories.

Judy, I know you have two sons. Would you tell us a little about them?

Baker: I married Charles Field July 6, of 1958 after we graduated in June. We have two sons. Our older son is Robert, who was born March 27, 1964, and our younger son is John, who was born April 2, 1966. *They both graduated from John W. North High School in the early '80s.*

John was a member of the Blue Star Regiment which appeared in the Rose Parade and in the Macy's thanksgiving Day Parade while he was a member. He played the French Horn.

Rob was a member of the newspaper staff and played Varsity Basketball. He was named the "first white boy" to slam dunk the ball at North High. Robert went to UCLA for a brief period of time and ultimately ended up graduating from UC Riverside in History and is now an Environmental Specialist with the water engineering firm, Krieger and Stewart, here in Riverside.

John graduated from Cal Poly Pomona three or four years ago, so it would have been 1994. Almost immediately, he did some work with the City of Riverside in their Planning Department. In fact, he mapped the entire city on a computer, all the zoning. Every inch of the city of Riverside, John Field put on a computer for the Planning Department. He then went to work for the Economic Development Agency in Riverside County, and he is now a Level II or Level III Planner. He is doing very, very well and loves his job. They are both in serious

Baker: relationships with women, but I do not know if those are going to come to anything. So we won't talk about that.

Erickson: But did either of the boys inherit your artistic ability?

Baker: Well, I think so, but neither has had much chance to use it. John probably has a little more of a bent in that direction than Rob does. But when John was in school, he had a chance to use some of his artistic ability because he was taking planning classes, and they had to do drawings and things like that. I have seen some of the things he has done, and I see some talent there. But neither has an interest in doing the kind of thing I have done. But they are certainly interested in acquiring the things I have done!

Erickson: (laughter) Which is very nice. It is a nice compliment.

Baker: Thank you.

Erickson: When you were a student, Judy, how much interaction did you have with faculty members? You mentioned about classes being so small. In particular, what contact did you have with the Art faculty?

Baker: I don't want to use the word family, because I am sure the faculty didn't feel we were like family; however, we interacted on an almost constant basis. Faculty would have us over for dinners sometime or wine and fireside chats on Sunday evenings. They would eat lunch with us if we were at the Barn together. They felt no hesitation to come and just sit down and chat with us.

Most of those faculty had been carefully recruited by Gordon Watkins and Dean Nisbet and Dean Olmsted and Arthur Turner and others. They were hand picked because they were bright and they were ambitious. They wanted to show this system that they could put UC Riverside on the map with really good students. So, they were very proud of us when we did well. And they saw to it that we did well. They just couldn't do enough for us.

Erickson: And you could recognize right away that you were a special group?

Baker: Absolutely. They kind of indicated that to us a lot. You know this was a very unique situation. I don't know if there was another college in the nation that was as small as we were. I mean, how in the world could you get this kind of education today? It is just mind boggling when I think back on how lucky we were to have such small classes. So, then opportunities would come along (and that is in this scrapbook, too).

One of the examples of faculty and student interaction was the founding of a group called the Order of Golden Thistle by Dean Nisbet who was the Dean of the College. He founded the society in 1954 as an honor society devoted to the enhancement of UCR and all its aspects. I am reading a little from my letter of invitation. Membership was limited to twenty five students, twelve members of the faculty, so it was a 2:1 ratio even in that group. Election was based on good scholarship and demonstrated regard for the welfare of UCR. We met on Sunday evenings, I believe once a month. We sat around the fire at Watkins House and talked about intellectual matters.

Erickson: Who came up with the topics? Could you interject something, as a student, or was the agenda already set?

Baker: I don't remember. I think that the twelve faculty members took turns bringing a topic each time. We had one topic an evening. I do remember that.

Erickson: Quite an experience.

Baker: Umm.

Erickson: It is obvious that the UCR education you received really did make a difference.

Baker: Absolutely. I use something of my education every day of my life. I don't regret one minute of the time I spent here.

Erickson: You talked about the early professors. Do you remember their names?

Baker: Yes. I remember almost all of the professors names. Owen Ulph was my first Humanities discussion leader. He graduated from a small college in Oregon, private school... *He looked and dressed like Randolph Scott, the western movie actor.*

Erickson: Lewis and Clark?

Baker: No, not Lewis and Clark, *Reed College*. At any rate, he was a real renegade. He had some very interesting thoughts to share with us. And they were shocking to us. We were so young, but he made us think.

Jack Beatty was a lecturer on many occasions, and I had an English professor one year, I think it was my sophomore year, whom I absolutely adored. His name escapes me right now, but they were outstanding people. They were just incredible people. My Art History Professors were Jean Boggs, Bates Lowry and Don Goodall who came in and did a special class for us from USC on Frank Lloyd Wright.

Erickson: Oh, nice.

Baker: *The English professor's name was Eugene Purpus. He was very tall, thin and dramatic looking. He drove a yellow Cadillac convertible, lived in Claremont and was the subject of many rumors regarding his sexual orientation. I was spellbound by his lectures, because he had such a love of his subject. Sadly, he only stayed at UCR for a year or two.*

I was taking Education classes (as a minor) at the behest of my Mother. The Professors were Frank Laycock, Irv Balow and Arden Ruddell. Frank was sort of a "generalist, " taught Ed Psych, Statistics and Methods classes. Irv was our Reading Specialist, and Arden taught Arithmetic Methods. Tragically, he was killed while commuting in a helicopter to LAX in the early '60s.

Baker: I think that's it in terms of professors, Jean Boggs and Bates Lowry. Yes. Then, we had to declare a major at the end of our sophomore year. I really was at sea. I didn't know what to do. I loved English, I loved History and I loved Art. But we didn't have practical application type art classes. You couldn't take a painting class or a drawing class. They didn't have the facilities or the professors. I still decided to stay with art. My friend Ina AmStein and I decided to major in Art. I guess it was sometime during our junior year that William Bradshaw was hired to give us some practical art instruction. He was wonderful. I think he is still around.

Erickson: I believe so.

Baker: Yes. He is in Riverside, but he is retired. I would love to see him some time. They set up a place for us in the gymnasium basement where we could leave our easels up, and I think we got to paint two or three times a week. It was the most wonderful thing, because it was the end of the day, and we would go down and just paint and paint and paint and have a wonderful time. There were about six of us in that class. I have a picture of all of us painting in the scrapbook.

Erickson: What kinds of things did you paint? Landscapes?

Baker: Yes, we did still lifes, landscapes, all kinds of things. He had shows. I did a copy of a beautiful painting of Toledo, and of course, the name of the artist escapes me—*El Greco*. I entered it in a show here at school and it was stolen. I never saw it again. It made me sick because I would love to have kept it. At any rate, we did all manner of things, mostly watercolors and oils. I still have some of the pictures I did then. They are going to go to the Gallery, of course. That was our hands-on experience. That was the end of our junior year and all of our senior year. We really loved that, and we felt it would have been nice if we had been able to have Mr. Bradshaw sooner. That was part of the growth of the campus. They added things

Baker: as the need arose and as they could afford to, so we were all part of that, too.

Erickson: When graduation time came, you said you were studying for your qualifying exams. What was that experience like? Did you go before a panel?

Baker: No, we had a nine hour test that was given to us in a darkened classroom. I have that test. I didn't bring it with me today, but I have it. Jean Boggs gave us unknowns that we were supposed to identify. Each one would be flashed on the screen for say two minutes and there were maybe fifty of those or a hundred of those.

Then they would give us essay questions. They would show us things they knew we had never seen and see how close we could come to identifying the artist and the period. Then, of course, we would have to explain why we had come to that decision. We had to defend our answers. No, none of it was oral. It was all written. And it was done in two days: six hours the first day and three hours the second.

It was absolutely exhausting. We had a box of prints they suggested we buy at the Bookstore. There must have been easily 500 black and white pictures in it that we reviewed all the time. We had to know the artist and the date and the medium and so on. I just had that box memorized before I went to take the comprehensive, as did everyone else.

There were five of us who took the comprehensive. We all passed. I got a B. I was just grateful as heck. I would have licked Jean Boggs' shoes for anything passing.

(laughter)

I have the letter that I passed in here somewhere. But we all passed. I have no idea what the other's grades were. To tell you the truth, we really felt kind of put upon to have to do that comprehensive because we knew that other UC campuses were not demanding that for graduation. And, had we been given a

Baker: choice, I would love to have written a thesis, because I had wonderful grades on my term papers. I knew I could do well on a thesis, because I loved doing research. But we never had a chance to choose.

Erickson: So, the next step then was graduation, the Commencement ceremony. Can you remember what that was like and where it was held?

Baker: Well, it was here on the campus, and you know, I don't remember it very well. I remember putting on caps and gowns over at the PE building. I don't remember who our speaker was. I probably have it in here somewhere.

Erickson: Was it an outdoor ceremony?

Baker: Yes. And of course our parents, Charlie's parents and my parents, came. I don't remember how many of the original 132 graduated, but it was less than half who made it all the way through. Either that or there were 300 of us who started and 132 of us graduated. I am not sure about those figures.

Erickson: I think there were about 130 who started.

Baker: In our class?

Erickson: Yes.

Baker: Well, then I think it was a small graduation. Not that many of us made it. People dropped out because they simply didn't want to work that hard. You could go to UCLA and you knew it and work half as hard and do just fine.

Erickson: Was it as difficult to get into UCLA and some of the other campuses as it is today?

Baker: Probably not. But it was the same as it is now in that--I think I am speaking correctly--in that you could transfer once you had been accepted to the UC system. Once you had gone to any

Baker: one of the schools, you could switch to another one. It wasn't a big thing, and you did not lose any credits.

Santa Barbara had a reputation then for being a party school, and a lot of our people went there to finish. Duane Lewis, who became a coach here and I think head of the department for a while, finished at Santa Barbara. So did Judy Ford whom he was dating at the time. There were a number of people who went there just because they didn't want to work this hard. And it was very hard for us when they would leave, because we all felt like we were slugging through this together.

Erickson: You were all in this together.

Baker: Right. Right.

Erickson: So, you graduated in June. And then in July you were married?

Baker: Right.

Erickson: You must have had a very busy time.

Baker: Yes. And the worst of it was that Charlie had to write a thesis. He was a Sociology/Psychology major. An inter-departmental major, that is what they called him. He had written his thesis under the Anthropology Professor, John Goins. Charlie had put off submitting his thesis for approval as long as he could. It was the day before graduation that his thesis was accepted.

Erickson: Oh, my.

Baker: Scary. I told him if he didn't graduate, we were not getting married.

(laughter)

And we had invitations we needed to get out.

Erickson: Obviously, everything went all right.

Baker: Yeah.

After a year of marriage (during which I worked as “Adult Program director” at the YWCA in Riverside and Charlie sold shoes at “Leed’s” in the Plaza because he was 1A in the draft, and no one would hire him), I decided to go back to UCR and get my credential.

I called the Education Department and spoke to Arden Ruddell who said he couldn’t help me because they didn’t have a credential program. I was not about to take “no” for an answer, so I called Dean Nisbet and whined that it was easier to get out of UCR than back in.

About an hour later, Dr. Ruddell called me back and said I should come out and talk to the Education Department, so I became UCR’s first practice teacher with three professors visiting my classrooms at once (very scary).

After I got my credential they made me a Master teacher with practice teachers in my classroom. Later, I returned briefly (after John was born) to supervise interns in the practice teaching program. So, I’m an historic monument, in that I received the first teaching credential ever issued at UCR!

Erickson: Well, let’s switch subjects a little bit and go into your art. I would say that you have covered Riverside history through your art with your pictures of the Courthouse, the Mission Inn, Heritage House and several of the UCR drawings. What is it that you look at? Do you like to capture the historical events and the people who made this structure a reality? Or what is it in your thought process for choosing a subject?

Baker: I wish I were that much of a purist. I draw pictures because I like the subject. I like detail, so I look for things where there is a lot of detail to reproduce. I really am not ... I have always considered myself more of a technician than a creative artist, because I don’t come up with original ideas when I am working. As you know, I draw from photographs, and I mostly

Baker: commit to paper what I see. And I try to make it as realistic as possible. Your question doesn't apply to me very well, because I don't select things except for aesthetic reasons. In other words, I look for an angle on a building that is pleasing that might be interesting. And, as I said, I look for detail. I really don't draw out of inspiration. I am kind of at a loss for words. I knew you were going to ask me this, and I am sorry I don't have a better answer. But I am just not very creative. I am a technician. I can see line and I can sketch without rulers, and all that, but I am not a creative artist.

Erickson: So, when you look at a building, you see the shape of it...

Baker: Shadows.

Erickson: Shadows, colors...

Baker: Colors. Color isn't that much of a thing. I never used to put color in anything. I really only recently started with that in the last six years. And the only reason I did that was because we had moved to Orcas Island in Washington, and immediately I was asked to join a Gallery. The comment had been made to the Gallery owner that it would be nice if there was some color in these local drawings. They were drawings of Orcas Island subject matter. So I started putting in little touches of color. I didn't color anything totally ever, because I don't want to take away from the pen and ink effect.

Erickson: What do you think about the buildings and aesthetics of the UCR campus? Is that pleasing to you? Do you think we have done a good job? Are there things you would like to see different?

Baker: Well, I am so used to the buildings being the way they were when we first started here. And, of course, the landscaping has been incredibly enhancing. I think they look pretty much like institutional buildings, but I don't think they are very inspirational. The Bell Tower is nice, very nice. Rivera Library is very nice. If I had my druthers, I would not allow much of a departure from an already established concept of

Baker: these buildings. In other words, I am not real thrilled with what I see in the new buildings that have been proposed by some of the architects who have been hired by the school that are coming on line.

I think too often we let architects make a statement at the expense of whatever institution it is that is trying to put up a new building. I think maybe architect's statements ought to be made outside of...

In other words, if the city of Riverside wants to put up a new library, fine. Let that architect make a statement, and it's just going to stand alone.

But when you come onto the campus and make a statement there that is some far-fetched really wild design, it might be very pleasing to the architectural community. As far as this campus is concerned, I don't know that it is necessarily in tune with anything else. You know, Richard Carrott, who was a wonderful Art History professor here said and I have never forgotten, "I am totally and unalterably opposed to change." I think there is a lot to be said for that. Change isn't always necessarily better.

I really feel that if you are going to have an institution that is going to have a lot of integrity and respect, you want to stay within the boundaries. Now, I know that the architectural community would land on me with both feet and say, "You have no creativity. You don't appreciate the finer things." But that is the way I feel. Some of these things I have seen, I am not real thrilled with those that are coming down.

Erickson: You have done... is the correct term a collage?...of the UCR buildings.

Baker: Montage.

Erickson: Were those original buildings that you chose?

Baker: No. I think Hinderaker Hall was one of those, and that is certainly not an original.

Erickson: It was not?

Baker: No. SSH 1000, Social Sciences and Humanities 1000, which is a little lecture hall and the wall has round holes in it, that was one of the original buildings, and I didn't draw that one. And of course, the Carillon wasn't here.

Erickson: That's right. That came in the 60s, didn't it?

Baker: Yes. I don't know that I have ever paid any attention to the original buildings.

Erickson: What is it about the UCR buildings? Why did you...

Baker: Why did I choose the ones I chose?

Erickson: Yes.

Baker: Because I was trying to give a feel for the different buildings and trying to capture them from their more interesting aspects such as entrances or maybe some window treatment or something like that. I was trying to give a feel for the whole campus not just the Ad building or the original buildings which, by the way were very similar. You know, the old buildings were brick and mortar, period. (chuckle) Not very interesting boxes is what they were, but they certainly served the purpose.

Erickson: When you make an original and decide to make copies, what kind of a decision process is that?

Baker: Well, you know I used to think that everything I did was going to sell in huge volumes, and I was going to run out. So, I always printed 200 of everything. Now that I have several boxes full of 150 of most of those left, I've gotten a little more realistic. Now I run pretty small editions, between 30 and 75, at the most, because I want them to get sold out. I want people to enjoy them, and I don't want them to hang around. So now I

Baker: just do very small editions. Of course, I charge a lot more now than I used to. When I first started selling... Well, do you want to know the story of the very first picture I ever drew?

Erickson: Absolutely.

Baker: When Charlie graduated from law school at UCLA, he got an appointment to the law firm of Best, Best and Krieger. We had very little money, and we had just had a little boy. In fact, we just had Rob. Charlie started work at Best, Best and Krieger one week before John Kennedy was assassinated. So, his first weekend at BBK was a long one, because as you know, many businesses were closed. It was just awful.

At any rate, we didn't have any money, and the following Christmas, I had to do something for him. I drew a picture of the Mission Inn Chapel and had it framed and gave it to him for his office at Best, Best and Krieger. Some time later that year, the then-President of the Riverside County Bar Association... I think it was one James D. Ward, but I am not sure. James D. Ward is now an Appellate Court judge...came into Charlie's office and said that the Bar Association has really admired that picture and wondered if you would let us unframe it and have a print made so that we could hang it in the association office. Charlie said, "Well, let me check with Judy." He talked to me about it and said, "You know, if they are going to run one print, why don't we have them run a number of prints, and we will see if anybody else wants to buy them." So, we ran forty.

I will never forget. We ran them at Rubidoux Printing, and I went down to get them. I had a number of errands to do that day—this was in 1964—and I started home and everywhere I stopped, I showed people these pictures. I sold fourteen of them at \$10.00 a piece. They were not signed and they were not numbered. Most of them still exist. When Charlie got home that night, I had \$140.00 in my wallet. He said, "I think we've got something here." And he went out and bought me a drawing table.

(chuckle) So that is how it all began.

Erickson: With the Mission Inn.

Baker: Right. Mission Inn, St. Francis Chapel.

Erickson: When did you do the Courthouse?

Baker: The first time I did the Courthouse, it was a little bitty drawing. I don't know for sure, but I think that the Gallery has one. The problem with the Courthouse is that it is a very boring building. Once you have gotten past, I mean it is just columns all across. Don't get me wrong, it is a lovely building but boring to draw because it is just columns and more columns. Even the statuary is a repeat if you look at it closely. The Justice is surrounded by the people who are doing the same things on both sides of the building so that they are just repeat statues. Probably they were cast.

Erickson: So something like the Mission Inn would have been much more interesting for you.

Baker: Infinitely more interesting. I probably did the Courthouse, the little bitty one, at the request of the Bar Association. Or maybe Charlie said, "Do one, and I'll give it to friends or something." Then I drew it again fairly recently actually. I drew a good-sized drawing from an angle and that was extremely popular. That was probably about fifteen years ago, and those are all gone.

Then I did it again, because I'm now doing some work for the United Way of Riverside and every year they select a subject, a building, that they want reproduced or they want me to draw. Then I run as many prints as they have \$1000+ donors. I sign and number them, and they have them framed. They give them to their big donors as gifts of appreciation. So, I did another drawing of the Courthouse this year: one for the County of Riverside, and then I drew it again for the City of Riverside. There is a smaller version of the one I did some years ago now. So, I have done it three times, and I am never going to do it again! It's very boring.

Erickson: You have captured it!

Baker: I've done it! (laughing)

Erickson: How about Heritage House? I have seen that one, and it is nice.

Baker: That's another interesting one, because I did Heritage House as Christmas gifts the year after I did the Mission Inn for Charlie. I drew the Heritage House three different times for three different friends. Each of those is an original. In fact, one of those friends is Janet McMillan, who was my roommate in college, and she still has it. She is not going to part with it for the Gallery. I mentioned to her that we were going to ask for some donations. She has some other things she is going to donate, but she will not part with the Heritage House. I frankly don't remember where the other two are.

Then I drew it again for the United Way. The first year I drew for United Way was three years ago. I did the Rotunda at the Mission Inn, and they printed twenty one, because that is how many big donors they had. They had those framed and gave them to their big donors. So that was a very small edition. Then the next year, I did the Heritage House, and there were a number of people who really had wanted that Rotunda drawing, but they couldn't get it because there were no more. But they knew there was going to be a new one, so the second year we did ninety one, because there were that many more major donors partly because they wanted these drawings. Now people are on the band wagon and are collecting. So, this year we did one hundred twenty five, I think. Every year the number of major donors goes up because they want a picture, which is great. Yeah, it's wonderful.

Erickson: Judy, could you tell us what will be housed in the Judy Field Baker Collection? Or tell me how that would be termed at the Sweeney Art Gallery?

Baker: Well, Ok. I think it is called the Judy A. Field Baker Permanent Collection. I want to make one thing very clear. This was not my idea. The Gallery came to me.

Erickson: They did? When was that?

Baker: They came to me a year ago this spring, and they said...

Erickson: Who said?

Baker: This is Judy Lehr and Katherine Warren. They said, "We do not want to hurt your feelings, but we have something to ask you." I said, "Ok." They said, "Would you allow us to establish a permanent collection of your work at the Sweeney Art Gallery?" I was absolutely dumbfounded and flattered down to my shoes, and I said, "Why would that hurt my feelings?" They both just looked at me and then I said, "Oh, I see, because I am getting so old." And they both laughed and said, "Yes!" (laughter)

No, this is absolutely the highest honor that could ever be afforded someone at my level of artistic endeavor, short of going into a major museum. I mean, this stuff will always be preserved for generations to come! Some little art student someday is going to be looking for someone to do a master's or a Ph.D. thesis, and they are going to find my stuff. I mean, this is just an incredible thing to happen, to have everything I have ever done stored in an archive on the campus.

Erickson: It is a nice compliment. What specifically is in this collection?

Baker: Well, they told me when they asked me a year ago... They said, "We want everything you have ever done." So, I have been scouring my own closets and Charlie's closets, and I have talked to lots of people that I knew had my work.

Incidentally, I was told a long, long time ago by Esther Klotz, who is a Riversider who has written a number of histories of this place... I traded her a picture for a book she had written on the history of Riverside. She said, "Now, Judy, do me one big

Baker: favor. Don't ever change your name, no matter what happens to you. Because I, as a historian, have had such a hard time tracing some women in particular who changed their names because they have divorced and remarried, or they have divorced, and they have taken back their maiden names. Without explanation, they simply start using the other name." She said, "I can't find them, you see, to put in the history books. So, whatever you do, don't change your professional name." After Charlie and I were divorced, I kept drawing under the name J. Field.

So, anyway, I have been trying to warn people that we were going to be asking for loans and gifts of my pictures to the Gallery. In the meanwhile, I have managed to come up with prints of almost everything and some originals. In fact, I have a whole lot of originals in my house on Orcas Island that I am going to give to my children who will hold them in trust for the Gallery. The Gallery doesn't really have a facility where they can store framed pictures of mine. What I have given them already are in special drawers that are at a certain temperature with no humidity, or controlled humidity, locked. When I take them something, they have white gloves that they handle it with, and this absolutely blows me away. White gloves! I mean, this is great.

So, anyway, I have written two children's books and I found an original one of those.

Erickson: Do you remember when you did that?

Baker: Sure. It was when Rob was a baby. I was, of course, staying home taking care of him. I wrote the first one, which was about an ant colony. Then I got all inspired because I sent that away to Addison and Wesley, and they said, "Well, this doesn't really fit with our program, but we would like to see anything in the future that you do." I thought this was much better than an out-and-out rejection.

Erickson: Absolutely.

Baker: So, I wrote another book, and this one was on perspective. I never got around to sending it to Addison and Wesley. So, I have no idea if they would have been interested. But anyway, my mother, who was an elementary school teacher asked... She was taking a course in developmentally disabled education and how to handle developmentally disabled children.

When I wrote this perspective book, she had asked me to come try it out on her first grade class, and I did. We wanted to see at what level it would work. This was a very basic perspective book. I took it and taught the class. We were very pleased. Well over one half the children were able to draw a picture with proper perspective after I finished that hour with them. That was great.

Now, these were not mentally disabled children, but then later she was taking this class, and she said, "You know, I think maybe that book of yours could be my term paper, because it is so basic and so simple that it probably would work on children who have disabilities. So, I gave her the original to put in her notebook, and she put a cover sheet with it never telling the professor, of course, that it wasn't her work, and turned it in. We got an A ...

(laughter)

and some very nice comments. Anyway, it's been in this folder that she submitted to the University of Redlands, and it has Margaret Anderson on the front. I thought all along that it was a term paper that she had written for something, and I've just stored it all these years. Last week, I was going through things and I was sorting and throwing things out getting things ready to bring down here. I opened that thing, and there's my book! Full color, everything. I thought it was gone.

Erickson: That was quite a discovery.

Baker: Yeah. So, I am thrilled to death about that. Anyway, I have done lots of commercial stuff and some other stuff, and I am just collecting it all for them.

Erickson: Could you put a number to that?

Baker: Well, I think that Katherine Warren said that up to when I was here in December there were 175 different pieces of art. After this visit, they are going to have a lot more than that! I've come up with a bunch more. I would think it will be near 250 by the time we are through. And if I keep drawing, of course, it will grow.

Erickson: And you will.

Baker: Well, yes, my health permitting. My arthritis is getting pretty bad.

Erickson: What kind of interaction do you foresee with the Gallery? Will you come down from Orcas Island once a year maybe to give presentations?

Baker: I will do whatever they want. I mean, I think it's fun to do what we're doing, frankly. It's wonderful for the Gallery to have as much information about people that they are collecting as possible. And if they want me to just appear at events, I'll do it. I am supposed to be one of the first exhibits when the new building opens, the Alumni and Art Center.

See attached.

Erickson: Which is scheduled for...?

Baker: I don't know. They are raising the money, and I don't know how soon that's supposed to be built, to tell you the truth, Jan. I thought it was about two years away. Does that sound about right?

Erickson: I think so.

Baker: Yeah. I, of course, will be here for that.

Erickson: So that will be the first exhibit in the new Art Gallery?

Baker: Right, right.

Erickson: How nice.

Baker: I am very excited about that.

Erickson: Absolutely.

Judy, let's regress just a little bit and go back to your early days in San Bernardino. Tell me a little bit about... Well, I know you are an accomplished tennis player. When did you start playing tennis?

Baker: I was at Arrowview High School. As I mentioned earlier, Jack Kramer had graduated from there. I had a wonderful PE teacher who introduced me to a man, who was a tennis coach at Arrowview, and he watched me play a few times.

He said that I should take lessons, so my father took me to Overton Pratt who was an accomplished tournament player who had a sporting goods store in Redlands and San Bernardino called Pratt Brothers. Overton Pratt took me under his wing and began giving me lessons. Every Saturday morning my father would drive me over to Redlands, and we would play tennis for a couple of hours.

I played tournament tennis all the way through high school until I discovered boys, and then I realized that the two don't mix. I had a serious case of mononucleosis because I was going out on dates Friday and Saturday nights and trying to play tennis tournaments on Saturday and Sunday mornings and I just couldn't do it. I was in bed for about three weeks during my senior year with mononucleosis.

After that I never really got back into tournament tennis very much, although I was still playing enough of it to be able to apply for a scholarship to UC Riverside in tennis, but it was given to a gal whose financial need was more severe than mine. Her name was Beth Gregory. She had played tournament

Baker: tennis, too, in San Bernardino. She went on to play here and graduated from UC Riverside. I don't know what happened to Beth after that. She was a good player.

Charlie and I played Beth Gregory and another guy, Joe Winkler, in the dedication of the tennis courts at UC Riverside. J. D Morgan, the Athletic Director at UCLA, and other notables from around here came to this match. We were only supposed to play one set, thank goodness.

My mother was there, my father was there, Charlie's parents were there and his brothers from Los Angeles. They lived in Brentwood. We warmed up and then we started the set. I served probably ten double faults in a row. It got to be a joke. Charlie was so furious at me. I couldn't hit my hat. I couldn't hit that service court to save myself. We lost the set 6 Love. Poor Charlie.

But my mother was sitting with my about-to-be in laws in the stands and she said, "She's playing like a wooden Indian," and my father-in-law to be laughed. *Every time Charlie's dad had the opportunity to tell the "Wooden Indian" story, he'd laugh until tears came into his eyes.* I could hear him from out on the court. But J. D. Morgan said a very nice thing. He said, "She has the most natural service motion I have ever seen on a woman. Of course, she can't hit her hat, but she's got great motion."

(laughter)

Erickson: But you looked good.

Baker: Right. It was awful. I played some matches against U of R and we played San Diego State once, I think. All those things are here in the scrapbook. Charlie and I played mixed doubles, tennis, badminton and ping pong in some intramurals, and we were the champs for a couple of years. But then I kind of quit playing except for social purposes. Because I really wasn't very good after that.

Erickson: You talked about your mother being a grade school teacher and your father working for the telephone company. Did your grandparents live in the area? Did you spend much time with them?

Baker: I certainly did, thank goodness. I mentioned my twin brothers who were born in 1938. They were identical and they were very, very charming looking, and they got a lot of attention. I was two years older, and of course, I wanted a lot of attention, too, but I didn't get it. So, my mother, who was a very wise lady, realized that I should probably spend time with my maternal grandparents here in Riverside as often as possible in order to get some attention.

So, she would bring me over on weekends, and I would stay with my grandmother and my grandfather. My grandmother worked for McDermott Fruit Company sorting and packing fruit for I think forty years. She never did anything else.

And my grandfather started as a Printer's Devil at age 14 with The Press-Enterprise before the turn of the century and worked until he was no longer able to stand and set type. I used to tease him when he would come home from work because I knew he had already read the paper, but, of course, he had to set type upside down and backwards. So he had read the whole paper upside down and backwards. I guess not upside down, but backwards. Yeah. Because he had set the whole thing. And so I would say before the paper even came to the house, "Well, Gramps, what's in the news today?"

I have saved some of the more historic presses that he printed: World War I, World War II. He set all those headlines and articles. It's a wonderful thing. Anyway, the Press was very good to my grandfather and let him work as long as he could physically.

Erickson: Would that have been John Gabbert's father who was the owner of the Press at that time?

Baker: He would have been the owner when my grandfather went to work there, but then my grandfather, I think, worked there for sixty years. He started when he was fourteen, and they never forced him to retire. When he did retire, I think he was seventy, maybe older. Anyway, they have never had an employee who worked that long at the Press before or since. He was just a quiet little guy who did his job and went home every night.

Erickson: And you enjoyed spending time with him.

Baker: Loved him. He was German, and he loved working with wood. He had a shop out in his garage, and he would let me help him with things. We had a cabin in the mountains that he had built in the 1920s, and we would go up to Forrest Falls to the cabin and spend weekends together. I absolutely adored those two. They were wonderful. They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1955, when I was a sophomore at UC Riverside. They were great.

Erickson: We have been searching through Judy's scrapbook, and she has found a copy of her comprehensive exam. What is the date on that, Judy?

Baker: May, 1958. I think it might be of interest for future generations to get a feel for the kind of things we were asked to do just to graduate with a bachelor's degree. We were given Part 1 on the first day which was six hours: "Give the artist if known, title, nationality, period and location, 60 slides, 1 minute a piece."

Then there were essay questions which were to take two hours: "Emile Male organizes his study of XIII century Religious Art by using the concept of the four mirrors from Vincent of Beauvais' Speculum Majus. Illustrate the four mirrors: nature, science, morality and history in examples taken from the XIII century French Gothic Art." I don't even remember what this stuff is about.

Let's see. We had a quotation: "From this quotation it may be observed that there was a change in the concept of beauty in Greek Art. In an analysis of two important works of Greek

Baker: sculpture, illustrate the difference between the two concepts.”
“Renaissance Art.” This was to take half an hour. Oh, that question was to take one half hour by the way, so you really had to know what you were talking about. You could choose one of three, one of which was: “What elements in Masaccio’s painting are significant in the development of XV century Florentine painting?” Ho hum.

“Baroque art: Can the Baroque period be said to represent a secularization of religious art, or can the painting of Rococo legitimately be shown to represent affinity with the theatre?”
Ok.

Then we came up to a half hour of a modern art question, and then Part II the next day was three hours.

We were to write three essays each to be an hour long answering questions. It said: “This part of the examination is to be completed in three hours. Budget your time; you must finish the examination, but you will not be allowed to continue working after the three hours are over.”

Must finish the examination implies that you would not pass, that you would not get your BA if you didn’t finish the examination. At least, that was certainly our interpretation. “Read the instructions carefully. No allowance will be made for careless reading or misunderstanding. If you have a question about anything on the examination, ask it of the examination proctors.” So, you know, that was just panic time.

(I should share the following anecdote which happened during day one of the comprehensive. I was writing furiously—an essay question to be done in thirty minutes—when I heard a soft snoring sound coming from across the aisle. It was fellow Art History major Larry Gavin...sound asleep! I whispered loudly, “Larry, why aren’t you writing?” He said, “I don’t know the answer.” zzzzzz Larry went on to become an architect in San Francisco and is now deceased).

Baker: On May 21, 1958, the following missive was sent: “Miss Judith G. Anderson, 3416 Florida. Dear Miss Anderson: On behalf of the Art staff, I am authorized to inform you that your grade for the senior comprehensive examination in Art is B. May I add my congratulations upon your meeting so successfully this important graduation requirement.” Whew!

Erickson: Something to be proud of!

Baker: What a relief. Yes.

Erickson: This interview will continue tomorrow on Tuesday, March 31.

Erickson: Judy, in reviewing your scrapbook, I noted that you were the Treasurer of your class, and then later you ran for the Vice Presidency. With the rigorous schedule that you maintained, how did you and why did you decide to run?

Baker: I guess the political bug bit me in high school, because I ran for Commissioner of Domain at San Bernardino High School and won. The job there was conducting student elections and trying to keep the campus clean and that sort of thing. I enjoyed it a great deal because I liked serving on the student council. So, when I got to UC Riverside, the first chance to run for anything was freshman class treasurer, I believe. And I won. It was either freshman or sophomore class. It may have been sophomore class treasurer. I think it was sophomore class. So, that was in 1955.

I will never forget one of the meetings we had. Of course, I was asked to give a Treasurer’s report. We were looking at our budget trying to decide how much we could afford to do for the class with what money we had. So I gave the report and there was silence around the table. Finally the president of the class

Baker: said, "I could have sworn we had more money than that." I said, "Well, here. Here are my figures." Well, I had subtracted part of the figures when I was supposed to add them. So we had a lot more money than I thought. I wasn't very good at figures then, and I am still not very good, although I can balance my checkbook. I didn't run for treasurer offices any more, but I did run for Commissioner of Organizations as a junior—no, as a senior—no, as a junior, that's right. In that capacity, the main problem we faced was the proposed invasion of fraternities and sororities because they were just discovering that UCR existed and wanted to...what do you call it when they want to do something on a campus?

Correction: Colonize.

Erickson: Have a charter?

Baker: Yes. They wanted to form charters on the campus. I kept taking straw polls of the students and no one seemed very anxious to have fraternities and sororities on campus. We really weren't big enough to support them anyway to any extent, and they seemed kind of selective. We really didn't want to get into a situation where there were haves and have nots.

Instead, we formed a number of other clubs such as a French Club and German Club. And we did invite Prytanean, which was an honor society for women, that had started in Berkeley, to form a chapter on the campus. That worked out well. Then the Order of the Golden Thistle was another. There were all kinds of clubs that began to form and I think probably some of them are still in existence. I know Prytanean no longer exists.

That seemed to satisfy everyone in terms of wanting to belong and finding something to belong to. We got through the year I was in charge of organizations without fraternities and sororities.

Baker: Then the following year, I ran for Vice President against Ed Cowan, who is now my dentist. There is some fun that could be made of that, I suppose.

Anyway, he won and then, I became President of the California Club, which was an organization started by the President of the University, Robert Gordon Sproul, to foster relations between campuses. We met at least once a year on a different campus.

The year I was President we met at President Sproul's office in Berkeley—one of the most incredible experiences of my life, because all the Presidents of the Cal Club met in his office. He had an absolutely incredibly beautiful office on the campus, and he chatted with us for an hour or two. We also met at UC Santa Barbara for one of our joint meetings.

It was a great organization, and it did a lot to foster good relations between the campuses. It no longer exists. I don't know why, except perhaps size is a problem. I think now we have all gotten so big, at least the larger campuses have gotten so big, that there isn't much in the way of interaction between the student leaders on the campuses now.

Erickson: What kinds of things did he encourage as unifying factors?

Baker: Well, primarily communication. Robert Gordon Sproul was a great believer in singing and merriment and partying to get to know people. And the Cal Club was known as a partying group for that reason, because he fostered it.

An aside regarding President Sproul: He had a reputation for remembering Cal Club members' names at the parties. NOT!! He was a name tag peeker! So, we used to cover up our names when we saw him just to watch him squirm. When he caught on, we were treated to one of his more lengthy belly laughs. (His laugh was famous and contagious).

But we were in constant communication with other campuses. We had a newsletter that came out every month. Our chapter met monthly, and one of my jobs was to communicate from the

Baker: President to the chapter members what was happening along university lines. So, we knew what was going on at all the other campuses at all times. Well, we knew most of what was going on. But it came down from the President's office which gave it a lot of prestige and a lot of credibility.

It was a tremendous honor to belong to the Cal Club, and I remember there was a membership limit. I think it was twenty or twenty one from each campus who could belong. I was very honored to be selected as Chairman of the Cal Club. It was a wonderful experience. But, anyway, it was to foster good relations between the campuses and the President saw to it that it happened, because he had a very hands-on role in the organization.

Erickson: I understand that you also worked while you were in school. What did you do?

Baker: Well, I started working in the gymnasium dispensing towels, which may not sound like a very important job, but we had to keep track of our towels because we had an inventory, and when I checked one out, I had to check it back in. We kept track of our towels. My boss' name was Lela Epp, a very nice lady who spent her entire career, as far as I know, in the basement of the gymnasium dispensing towels. Anyway, I loved her.

Then an opportunity came along in the Art Department to start binding slides for use in the classes. The department had ordered hundreds of slides for the Art History classes, and they were just in little cardboard containers. My friend Ina and I were both hired by the Art History Department to start binding slides. You put them in between two pieces of glass and you taped them up. We did that, gosh, I worked for tuition. In those days, I think it was something like \$60.00 a quarter to register. We earned about \$60.00 a month mind you binding slides. We were really in the chips.

Erickson: Wow.

Baker: (chuckle)

Anyway, we worked in the afternoons. What I did was work in the mornings at the gym and the afternoons in the Art History Department. *Prior to that, I worked Monday nights and Saturdays at J.C. Penney Co. in San Bernardino.*

Erickson: About how many hours did you work a week?

Baker: Fifteen, I think.

Erickson: Great. In your scrapbook, I noticed an article that was dated May 27, 1955, of the UCR Cub, which was the student newspaper. Is that the name that the student newspaper started out as?

Baker: Yes, I think we kind of got the unofficial mascot name of the Cub just because we were the newest (*youngest*) UC campus, and they wanted to continue with the bear theme. We didn't think that Cub was a proper mascot name, especially as UCR grew and became more of a size. Almost from the beginning, we were not happy with that appellation.

I notice here there is an article from 1957 of the UCR Highlander spelled the way it is spelled now. I think the paper changed its name probably in 1955 or maybe 1956. We took a vote, and we decided that we wanted to become the Highlanders. We were absolutely appalled when UC Irvine became the Anteaters.

Erickson: Did you ever write for the newspaper?

Baker: No, I was never part of the newspaper staff.

Erickson: Tell me about Provost Watkins, if you would, please? I noticed in your scrapbook that he was very prominently pictured in many of the photos. From your perspective, what was he like?

Baker: He took the job, as I understand it, and I am sure that you know more about this than I do having talked to John Gabbert, but he

Baker: took the job as Provost because of his stellar reputation as an academician and a person who could put together a staff of really top quality professors because people would want to come because Gordon Watkins was here and wanted them.

He knew everyone's name that freshman year. He was very visible, very available. We all loved him, and we loved his wife Anna. They were just a charming pair. They were kind of like grandparents but with such wonderful credentials.

The faculty that he put together, of course, has an incredible reputation to this day. I would have to say that I didn't know Gordon and Anna Watkins well enough to go to their house for dinner, but he knew my name, and he always spoke when I passed him in the hall. I never had much interaction with him that freshman year. And then after my sophomore year, he left.

Erickson: Oh, so that would have been 1995.

Baker: Yes, 1955. And then in 1956, or 55, Herman Spieth was the next Chancellor and again a very hands-on person, a very different person from Gordon Watkins.

Herman Spieth and his wife Evelyn were good friends of Charlie's parents. *The Spieths often had us over for a glass of wine or dinner when Charlie's parents came out to see us. Charlie's father was Associate Dean of the Medical School at UCLA, and they lived in Brentwood. He was the only Medical School dean in the country who was not an M.D. He had his doctorate in Physiology from Stanford.*

The Spieth's had a Doberman Pincher, who was a really vicious dog. They lived over on Third Street near Fairmont Park in a lovely home. The first time we all went to visit, the four of us, Charlie and I and his parents, the dog was lying in front of the fireplace in the living room. Evelyn served us all tea or something and Charlie's father said, "Tell us about the dog." Herman said, "This is a wonderful watchdog. We never have to worry about anyone breaking in our house. She is very, very gentle if you don't make any fast moves." Well, you can

Baker: imagine, the four of us sat very still the whole time. And we didn't stay long!

Erickson: Angels.

Baker: There were no fast moves. So, anyway, we knew Herman and Evelyn quite well and their son Phil.

Erickson: You mentioned that they lived on Third Street.

Baker: Right.

Erickson: Was this while he... Was he a professor here before he became Provost?

Baker: Yes, he was in the ...*life sciences department*.

Erickson: Biology?

Baker: Yes, he was a Biologist, right. One of the sciences, anyway. That's where his appointment was. I guess he was Provost at first. I don't know when it changed from Provost to Chancellor in terms of the title.

Erickson: I believe it was when they changed to a general campus that he became the Chancellor. Did he live at University House? Was that constructed at that time? I am talking about Provost Watkins and then Provost Spieth.

Baker: University House was not built while I was here. I don't know, I think Hinderaker's were the residents of University House because they came after Spieth. No, I guess the Spieth's did live there briefly before he retired. Hinderaker's were the ones I remember seeing there for meetings. I don't remember seeing the Spieth's there when he was Chancellor, but that isn't necessarily... Do you know when University House was built?

Erickson: I don't, except that I do think... Actually, I remember the son, Philip, talking about having wandered through there. I don't think he lived there. I think he was away at school. I mean, he

Baker: certainly would have been there for vacations and that kind of thing. I am fairly certain that it was constructed then.

Baker: Ok. And then, we used to have reunions periodically, and I remember meeting Ivan Hinderaker the first time at an alumni luncheon of some sort specifically designed to meet the Chancellor-designate. It was very interesting, because we were products of ... Do you know when Ivan was appointed?

Erickson: No, I don't know.

Baker: We hadn't been out of school very long. I think we were out of law school at the time. Charlie had graduated, I think. At any rate, we came to this luncheon because, of course, we wanted to meet the new chancellor.

And he stood up and talked about how he was going to put a golf course at the base of Box Springs Mountain, and he was going to do all these other things. Those of us who had gone here as undergrads just thought he was awful. We were scared to death he was going to turn this into a play school, because of the things he said. He wasn't talking about serious academics, he was talking about loosening the place up and football teams and all this stuff that we thought were just terrible. We hadn't had anything like that when we were here.

So, we were not very impressed with Ivan Hinderaker to begin with. Of course, that changed dramatically over time as we got to know Birk and Ivan better. That was our first impression. Interesting. We came away thinking "Oh, boy, this is a real loser."

Erickson: Was that transition from Watkins to Spieth an easy one? As a student, did you even notice?

Baker: Well, we all hated to see Gordon Watkins go. And Herman Spieth was a very nice man, but there was a very different personality there. He was much more aloof toward the general student body. He wasn't that aloof toward Charlie and me, but he knew us because of Charlie's parents. He wasn't as warm

Baker: and fuzzy so to speak as Gordon Watkins had been. So, it was a little bit tough. Yeah, it was. The whole campus changed. You see, we hadn't had Gordon Watkins for long. We only had him for a little over a year, and it wasn't long enough. Well, we all just loved him, and we were very sorry he left as soon as he did. We would have wanted him to stay.

Erickson: I believe he retired.

Baker: He did retire, that's right. They moved to Santa Barbara soon after.

Erickson: Let's move on just a little bit. I was going to ask about your experiences when you were married to Charlie. He was an Alumni Regent for the University. What was that experience like being the spouse of a Regent?

Baker: Well, it was great because we got to rub elbows with Norton Simon and Katherine Hearst and some really big name folks.

Erickson: Did you go to some of the meetings?

Baker: You bet I did. Because I just wanted to watch The Regents in action. It was a wonderful experience. The first year, of course, he was not voting which is still the case, but I was very impressed with the amount of reading he had to do and his preparation for the meetings. Even though he was not voting, he was very conscientious about doing all the reading and contributing to the discussion which he was entitled to do.

Erickson: Do you remember anything at the time that was controversial?

Baker: You know I really can't. Charlie received a huge honor as a member of the Board the year he was voting. They had never done this before. They made him the Chairman of the Audit Committee. They had never before asked an alumni regent to chair any of the committees because they are just there one year and there can't be any carry over. He was absolutely thrilled as was I that they thought enough of him to ask him to do that. But in terms of controversy, there wasn't a lot.

Baker: Katherine Hearst was an interesting lady and she took a real shine to Charlie. At one Regents' meeting we were in San Francisco, and she wanted to take us to lunch. We were staying at the ... gosh, really famous hotel in San Francisco right downtown.

Erilckson: The Fairmont.

Baker: Yes, we were staying at the Fairmont. So, he and Katherine had gone to The Regents meeting that morning and she was going to pick us up. He came back to the hotel and said she would pick us up and take us to lunch. I was sitting in the lobby with--it was spring—with my white heels and my little lightweight dress on, nearly frozen because San Francisco is so cold.

The limo pulled up and Katherine got out, and we walked to the door and got into the limousine, and she said, "You know, I can always spot a Southern Californian because they are always sitting in the lobbies of hotels shivering with their white heels on.

(laughter)

They don't know how to dress in San Francisco." She was really a nice lady. That was kind of nice, too.

And then we were invited during his Regency to a lovely party at the home of Norton Simon and Jennifer Jones, who was his wife, the actress, on the beach at Malibu. We drove down there in our Volkswagen convertible from Riverside, and when we pulled up, the then-Superintendent of State of California Schools, Wilson Riles, lovely, handsome, big, very impressive black man was standing there. Wilson Riles, with a big booming voice, was also a member of the Board of Regents. The State Superintendent is a member by fiat. Anyway, when we got out of that car, I will never forget, Wilson Riles had just gotten out of one of those big limousines, and turned around, pointed at our VW and said, "What a car. I love it." And you

Baker: could hear him all over the beach. Oh, we were so pleased. That really made our day.

Anyway, Norton Simon had an enormous art collection, and Jennifer Jones, having heard that I was an Art History major, was just charming. She took me around and showed me Van Gogh's and all kinds of...her collection. She took me down and showed me all of it. And we were supposed to be sitting down to eat dinner. There was Jennifer taking me around to see the art.

Erickson: How nice.

Baker: It was great. They were real people. They couldn't have been nicer to us even though we were temporary types.

Erickson: That is wonderful. You are a member of the UCR Foundation Board. Are you enjoying that experience?

Baker: I am very proud of that.

Erickson: When were you named, Judy?

Baker: I was named the year after I was Chairman of the Citizen's University Committee. (pause) That was before we moved to the island, so it would have been in the mid to late eighties. Right. I really appreciate that appointment.

Erickson: Are there other women on the board also?

Baker: Quite a few actually. I think there are eight or ten of us, including, of course, Regent Johnson. The thing I am sad about is that I can't make it to more meetings. But I do get the minutes and I do read them faithfully. I am pleased still to be a member. I hope someday they will make me emeritus or something.

Erickson: I think they want to keep you in the active status.

Baker: We'll see.

Erickson: You and your now-husband Jim Baker. You might want to explain how you and Jim met, and then tell me how it was that the two of you made a decision to endow two chairs to the University in two separate departments.

Baker: Well, to skip ahead. That is largely due to your husband, James Erickson, because we were going to endow one chair. And then we went to dinner at Christina's on the island with the two of you, and we came out having endowed two chairs. And I am still not sure how that happened unless it was the wine.
(laughter)

Erickson: What made you think though of even one chair?

Baker: Oh, well. Jim is a Berkeley graduate. He was kind of taken under our wings here by other alums who knew us as a couple. He was very impressed with the fact that people from Riverside liked him and wanted to associate with him. Frankly, his own school had ignored him totally, hadn't even asked him for a donation for years. And, oddly enough, after the chairs were announced, he began getting regular mail from Berkeley...
(chuckle)...soliciting all kinds of things. Of course, he is not giving them anything.

This place gets under your skin, and if you really appreciate what it has done for you and you appreciate what it's going to do in the future, and you want to maintain the integrity and the quality of professorship and the kind of education that can be obtained when the schools gets larger, you need to be sure you still have the professors.

And this school has gotten a lot larger, and we—I, in particular, in the beginning—was very concerned that it maintain its reputation that UCR always will be a place where people ...when you graduate from here you have an incredible education that you could not have gotten elsewhere in the system.

Baker: So, that is how we started talking. Jim got so excited about the idea of a chair, that when we went to dinner with you, he was very agreeable to a chair for himself, too.

Now, the Art History Department would never have gotten any attention in terms of chairs because of its size. I know it's bigger now than it was, but it still needed something to focus that department which is now and always has been a very high caliber group of people. So, that is why I wanted to do that.

I did toy with the idea of an education chair because of my mother who struggled so hard to get her degree as we were growing up after World War II. And, frankly, it's still in my mind. If I win the lottery, I am going to endow a scholarship in the Education Department in memory of my mother. We just decided that this was a wonderful place to put our money.

Erickson: You are investing in the future.

Baker: That's right. We are investing in the future and making sure that this place maintains its reputation for excellence. At least, we are doing as much as we can toward that.

Erickson: Absolutely. Which Chancellors have you been acquainted with?

Baker: All of them. The only one I really didn't know was Ted Hullar.

Erickson: Have you seen that each of them has left his own legacy, something different each time?

Baker: I can't really speak to that, Jan, because I haven't personally been that involved except when I went on the Board of Trustees. Since I have been on the Board, Rosemary was Chancellor when I came on, so I can't speak to that. They each have their own style, of course.

- Baker: Ivan Hinderaker, my goodness, did a wonderful job during the Berkeley uprisings. He and Charlie came out here and actually spent the night in Ivan's office.
- Erickson: Oh, Charlie did?
- Baker: Yes. He and Ivan were soul mates. When Ivan needed any help of any sort, he always called Charlie. Ivan and Charlie were very, very close. So, Charlie came out and was in Ivan's office when the students were doing their sit in. He managed to keep a lid on it here, and I was very proud of him, and Charlie helped him.
- Erickson: As I recall, the story is that they invited the students to come in, and they gave them coffee and doughnuts and encouraged some dialogue.
- Baker: That's right. That's what did it.

Rosemary (Schraer) and I were soul mates. She called me into here office soon after she became Chancellor and said she wanted me to do a drawing of a UCR building for their Holiday card. I was very flattered. I think I did four cards for her and Harald. She also has the distinction of being the first person to ever reject one of my drawings!

It was a warm sunny April afternoon when Art Pick called to say that "My Chancellor" (Rosemary) had passed away. I walked out on the deck in tears and looked up to see an eagle soaring low toward the west. He dipped his wings once as he passed by, and I knew it was Rosemary saying goodbye.

I dreamt about her one night this week. She was managing a retirement facility for elderly alumnae. She knocked on the door of my room on Easter Sunday and said my boys were there to visit. They each had an Easter basket for me, and she kissed them both on the forehead for being such good sons!

Erickson: Let's move on to another topic now, and that is politics. In Jerry Brown's tenure in the 1970s there was speculation that UCR would downsize or even close. Do you remember that time? Well, you were involved in politics. What kinds of things did you see happening and what kinds of things were being attempted.

Baker: Well, I probably ought to go back to running for the Assembly in 1982. Jim and I have known each other as social friends since our children were very small.

When I made the decision to run for the Assembly in 1982, the first thing I did was go to Ethel Silver, who is Mrs. Republican in Riverside County to see if I could get her support. She was obviously quite thrilled with the thought of having a candidate, someone without a lot of baggage and who could give the party a fresh face. She said, "I think that if you can get Jim Baker to be your campaign manager"...She would be the chair, and he would be the manager. She said "You are going to be money ahead, because he is a wonderful fundraiser."

Erickson: What kind of funds did it take in the 80s to run for office?

Baker: My campaign committee and I raised \$38,000 which for a virtual unknown was considered just incredible. We ran the race on that, and we had some money left over at the end, which, believe it or not, we returned to some of the PACs.

The medical PAC was one that got some money back. They didn't know what to do with it. They had never gotten money back from a candidate. I think we had something like \$5,000 or \$6,000 left over after the campaign. We did everything we could. We spent it as fast as we could.

But anyway, we did lose the primary. That's how Jim and I got together because we made lots and lots of appearances together. It's a huge county. We had to drive clear to Blythe. We flew down twice and drove to Blythe once.

Erickson: Could you describe a typical day in your campaign. Did you get up early in the morning and go until late at night?

Baker: Yes. I had a wonderful committee, and usually my coffee ladies would have set up a neighborhood coffee for me. So, I would get up and get my children off to school and then I would go down to headquarters.

Erickson: What ages were the boys?

Baker: Let's see. They were both in high school. I think John was a freshman and Rob was a junior or something like that. So, I would go to the office first. Ethel would always be there. She always got there at 7:30 or 8:00 a.m. and checked in with her and then looked over the day's schedule. She would give me a printout of where I was supposed to go.

I would go to a coffee and speak and then if I had time, I would walk the neighborhood, which I did not like. And then I would go to a luncheon usually and speak again. We spent a lot of time with Republican Women Federated and other groups that we knew. It was kind of like singing to the choir, but you've got to keep the horses in the corral.

You have to keep your ducks in order so to speak. You have got to keep the Republicans in line behind you. And, of course, that was one reason we did not win, because my opponent in the primary was a very conservative person who loved guns, and I did not. Republicans seem to like guns. He was anti abortion, and I am pro choice.

Oh, and he pulled a real fast ... Reagan was Governor when we ran in '82, because he had a picture of himself shaking hands with Reagan who, at the time the handshake took place, was not Governor, resurrected this old picture that he got from somewhere and just flooded the county with that piece the day before the election. It was too late for us to do anything to tell the people that this was a fraud, that it was not a picture of Reagan as Governor, but Reagan as an actor at some point earlier. And Reagan did not endorse John Stanton, who was

Baker: this person, now deceased. But it was too late, the damage was done.

I can't remember how much we lost by. But then in the afternoon I usually was back at headquarters.

You have to remember there was a lot of travelling because this is such a big county. A lot of times, we were just on the road. It seems like a waste of time. It was. It's terrible to have to campaign in a county that's such a strange size. You know, we are long and skinny.

But we had Bill Johnson, who was one of my principal sponsors who was Jim Baker's boss at Johnson Tractor, who was very generous with his airplane. When we had to go long distances like to Blythe, he would fly us down there. He flew us down there twice. I think he flew us to Indio once, too. So, I would go back in and check in in the afternoon, and, of course, in the evening there were always things to do in terms of the campaign—dinners and things like that. We had signs to put up, and well, we just worked very, very hard.

It was a great education. I was very disappointed about losing. It took me a long time to get over it, but I wouldn't trade the experience for anything. It was very maturing, very sobering.

Erickson: Do you remember what was the reason you got involved initially?

Baker: Well, I was on the City Planning Commission at the time I decided to run. Again, this old political bug bites you sometimes kind of early, and I just really liked being on the Planning Commission. Even though that's just an advisory board, it was a lot of fun.

I toyed with running for the City Council and Board of Supervisors, and then I thought I really would like to be in Sacramento. I had been there a few times, and I just thought the Capitol was impressive, and it would be a wonderful place to start making, you know, some kind of a difference.

Erickson: You would not want to do that again?

Baker: You know, when you are in the Junior League, which I was, the idea is to train people to make a difference in the community, to become volunteers who really are effective volunteers.

So, when I got out of the League, my choice was to go political because I felt that I could make more of a widespread difference if I was on a political body than as a one-on-one volunteer in another kind of a setting. Most Leaguers went on to become members of boards and things, the Community Settlement Association, that kind of thing where they could do things in neighborhoods.

I just decided to opt for more widespread kinds of efforts, and so I went on the Planning Commission almost immediately and was there for seven years. I learned a lot, and I felt that that experience qualified me to go on to a broader political base.

Erickson: Let's talk about your alumni experiences. You have been a member of the Alumni Association. Did you serve a position there?

Baker: On the Board.

Erickson: What has kept you involved in that Association?

Baker: Well, now of course, I am not any more because I am so far away. Kyle gets ...

Erickson: Kyle Hoffman.

Baker: Kyle Hoffman gets most of the credit because he kind of pulled me back into the fold and urged me to go on the board, and I did. He is such a good person to work with in terms of getting people to perform that I just really enjoyed my association on the Alumni Board. If I were still in town, I would probably still be a member.

Erickson: There is a special comradery that all of you in those first classes have been able to sustain, isn't there.

Baker: That's right. And I was on the Alumni Board after we graduated, too. When Charlie and I came back from UCLA Law School, I went on the board again. But then we started having children, so it got to the point where I couldn't do it anymore.

Erickson: Well, speaking of old friends, do you still see your old friends?

Baker: You bet. My old friends are very important to me. In fact, the older I get the more I think that is what I have left.

Erickson: They do become more important, don't they?

Baker: They certainly do.

Erickson: Your roommate, Janet McMillan, you said was an attorney. What did Ina do?

Baker: Ina became a teacher, an elementary school teacher in the county. I think Mira Linn School. But Ina had a very unfortunate thing happen. Before she became a teacher, she was married to Ron Richter, who was employed at Security Pacific National Bank and a graduate of UCR. She married him while they were still in school. They spent their senior year as a married couple. She got her teaching credential, and then they had a baby. And the baby was born with one eye, and that eye had no vision. So, it was an absolute...All of us who had gone to school together were just dumbfounded. First of all, most of us had never heard of any such thing.

So, we all kind of rallied around Ina and Rick for a while. In fact, Charlie's father got them an appointment at UCLA Medical School to make sure that there was no hope that Katherine would ever be able to see. So, she went back to teaching when Kathy got old enough to go to school and then they had another child. Anyway, then Ina got tired of teaching and she went on to become a social worker. She worked for

Baker: DPSS here for a number of years. I don't see her any more. She still lives in Riverside. They divorced, she never remarried as far as I know.

But Janet went to Boalt Hall Law School at the same time Charlie was at UCLA. Janet displayed a lot of courage, left Riverside. She could have gone to UCLA Law. She was accepted everywhere, of course. Women in law school in those days were pretty rare, and she decided to go up north to Boalt Hall, which I thought took a lot of courage. Did very, very well, but then, of course, the question of where to work emerged when she graduated.

She actually was going to interview at Best, Best & Krieger, but two of the attorneys there who were partners at the time said there will be no women in this law firm, so they wouldn't even talk to her. And Jim Krieger, who was the senior member of the firm at the time, thought Janet McMillan was absolutely special and would have loved to have had her in the firm. But these two guys said, "We are not even going to interview her." Well, it was a terrible blow to all of us because we wanted Janet to be in Riverside.

So, she went to the state and got a job with the Board of Equalization and worked her way up to...she would have become head of the department had it not been for the fact that her husband became ill with cancer and died. He was lead attorney for the Board when they met and was much older than she when they were married And after he died, she retired. She decided she did not want to be a member of the Board staff any more. So, she hasn't worked since. She still lives in Sacramento, and we talk on the phone an average of two or three times a month. We are very, very close. She is one of my six great pals.

Erickson: That's great.

Baker: Yeah.

Erickson: I know that you were involved early with the Mission Inn. It's not possible now with your living on Orcas Island, but what was that involvement?

Baker: Oh, gosh. For a while, Jim was actually the manager of the Mission Inn believe it or not. That was in its real decline, and that's not a reflection of him. We were faced with it being torn down. It was just awful. It was running in the red.

Erickson: That would have been in the '80s?

Baker: Yes. I think it was '84 or something. It was after I had run for the Assembly, I know. Anyway, there was this thing called the Mission Inn Foundation, and I joined. A number of really important Riversiders were on the Foundation, all of us with one common goal—to save the place. We met monthly, and we tried to run the place as a volunteer board—that didn't work. And we had a huge party when it closed, because we thought the Carley Group was going to take it over and renovate it.

Before it closed, I donated, I am not sure, but I think eight or ten drawings, prints, that I had done of various Mission Inn vistas. They were framed by a volunteer and hung in one of the meeting rooms, and I have no idea what happened to them after Duane bought the Inn. They may have disappeared with the Carley Group. I don't know.

The Carley people, before they bailed out on us, had a countywide art contest. They sent out a flyer asking any residents of Riverside County to submit art to the Mission Inn because they wanted to buy a certain number of pieces and that those pieces... All artists had to sign a contract saying that they didn't mind if those pieces were used as stationery and post cards and that sort of thing. They were going to hang the art, they were going to reproduce all of them and hang them in the rooms. And they bought one of mine that I submitted. They paid me \$1,000. I still have the contract somewhere. Then they walked away from the project, and I never saw that picture again. I would love to have it back. I have a photograph of it

Baker: and that's all. I have just always loved the Mission Inn. I am so grateful to Duane Roberts. He is doing a wonderful thing.

Erickson: Did you attend the gala when it reopened?

Baker: No, because we weren't here.

Erickson: Oh, you were on Orcas Island.

Baker: We did stay there this Christmas, Christmas of '97 for a week, and it was absolutely spectacular. Every room is perfect. He has just done a complete job. It's incredible. Wonderful place to stay. So, we are lucky.

Erickson: Good. Yes. And the Mission Inn Foundation is thriving, I believe.

Baker: Yes, I am sure it is, but now they are in charge of artifacts and the museum. Before, we were trying to run the whole building. And now their focus is certainly more logical.

Erickson: I see. Well, that brings us up to the present time. We have commented that you are living on Orcas Island now. What was it that took you there, you and Jim?

Baker: Well, when our sons Rob and John were very young, Charlie and I...Charlie had a secretary at Best, Best & Krieger who was from the state of Washington, and she and her husband came over for dinner one night and said, "You must take these children up to Orcas Island, because it is one of the most beautiful places in the world. Tow your boat." We had a seventeen foot Boston Whaler. "Tow your boat, take your children and plan on staying about three weeks, and just enjoy." So, we did. And we met all kinds of wonderful people up there, and just had a great time. We are still in touch with one of the people we met on that trip.

Anyway, that was when John was about five, so that would have been in about 1971 approximately. Then, in '82 we went to the island with Art and Patty Miller and Jim and Betty Baker.

Baker: The three couples went up and spent a week at the cabin of one of the people we had met when we were there in '71. And we went back the next year and did the same thing.

Then subsequent to that, Charlie and I were divorced in '84, I guess, and Jim and I were married that year. We went to Alaska for three weeks. We took a duffel bag and just kind of bummed around the state of Alaska in August and got back to Orcas Island just kind of by accident. We weren't planning to, we were going to stay in Seattle on the way home. We had a duffel bag full of three weeks worth of filthy dirty clothes and decided we would go to Orcas and see if we could get a room. It was Labor Day weekend, and it was the Friday of the weekend, as a matter of fact.

At the time, Jim had a Century 21 franchise in Moreno Valley. The only reason I mention that is because when we got to Orcas we found what we now know must have been the last available room to rent on the whole island for that weekend because Labor Day is the end of the season up there. It's really crowded. Got this condo that, believe it or not, had a washer and dryer in it. I was never so glad to see two machines in my life. The condo was two story and had a fireplace. It was great. It was out by the airport. So, we moved in, of course, for the weekend and started the laundry immediately.

And Jim said, "I think I am going to look up the Century 21 guy here and see if there is anything for sale that we would like." I said, "That's a good idea." So Saturday morning, we started out and met this C21 guy, and he took us to...

We asked him if he had any property available on the water, and he said yes. He took us down to Dolphin Bay and showed us this little ramshackled place which was for sale for \$130,000, and we said that it's got to be totally torn down. He said you can tear it down, but you can't move it any closer to the water because of local restrictions and zoning regulations. But, he said, you could tear it down to the corner that is closest to the water, and if you don't tear that down, you haven't done anything wrong. You could rebuild the rest of the structure.

Baker: So, we bought it on the spot and started going up on a regular basis and remodeling the house and eventually moved into it. And we have been on Orcas ever since.

We have owned several pieces of property, and we raised alpacas for a while.

Erickson: Tell us about that. That's quite a story.

Baker: Well, yeah. Read an article in the paper that was put out in the San Juan Journal one day about this man on San Juan who had alpacas. He had a huge herd, 100 or so that he had brought in from Australia and Peru. We were both kind of fascinated by that. But at the time, Jim had a permit processing business, and I was just getting started drawing pictures. I had been accepted in a gallery, and I was excited about that. We were pretty busy, and one day out of the blue, Jim said, "You know, I think I would like to quit doing permit processing and raise alpacas for a living." And, I said, "That sounds wonderful." They are supposed to be a good retirement investment, which they undoubtedly are for people who know how to do it.

(chuckle)

Baker: So, we took an agricultural loan from the local bank and bought two females, fenced a good share of our five acres that we had at the time, and began the alpaca business. The catch in the alpaca business is you have to have female babies so that you can sell them, because if you have little boy babies, you are stuck, because they aren't worth much. At any rate, we had ten little boy babies in a row, and then we had a little girl, and then we started having little boys again. So, we put the place up for sale and sold it just about a year ago now.

Erickson: Now, you helped with the birthing of those babies.

Baker: Oh, yes. I birthed every single one of them.

Erickson: Every one!

Baker: Every one, and I had never even seen kittens born before. It was an incredible experience. One of our best females died in my arms. I had never seen anything die before either. It was a real growth experience.

Anyway, we sold it lock, stock and barrel—literally, stock and barrel to a very nice lady from Los Altos who is also retired. And we still go visit them, of course. They are our grandchildren, but we don't have the fiscal responsibility any more.

We have a lovely home just about a mile from town, and Jim is now looking at going to work for Microsoft at home doing some programming. And my art career has really just been booming this year. I just finished a sign commission for a local residential development that entailed seventy two signs that had to be painted.

Erickson: What kinds of signs?

Baker: Umm, Directional signs, some of them. Lot number signs. Road signs. This is supposed to sustain its rural character and so they didn't want commercial type signs. It's a huge development. It needs all kinds of directional help in terms of signs so people can find their way around. They are just selling these lots so in order for people to find their way from where they are to where they need to be, (I have also done maps for them in the past), they needed these signs. They had a huge open house for the realtors on the island March 11. I had three weeks to do seventy two signs. That was when Jim learned to cook.

Erickson: chuckle.

Baker: (chuckle) He did the cooking and I did the painting. And now they have come back and want twenty seven more which I have to finish when I go back up north. That's a wonderful change from doing pen and inks. And I just got a commission yesterday here to do a pen and ink of a big home here in town for Tony Culver.

Erickson: Oh.

Baker: The home he just bought, I am going to draw, because the gallery would like to give him something because he has been very good to the gallery.

Erickson: He's on the Board of the Gallery, right? And also involved in the Museum of Photography, is he not?

Baker: Right. Right.

Erickson: Is it an older home?

Baker: Yes. You know where Ladera Lane is?

Erickson: Yes.

Baker: Overlooking the river bottom almost. But this used to be the Smith home. It has a big circular drive with a beautiful big fountain, and you look up the road. It's on the right hand side as you go around the first curve. Lovely, big home.

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Erickson: So you have gone to look at that home?

Baker: Well, the interesting thing is that I just drew it. Fleetwood commissioned me to draw that house because the man who lived there before who sold it was a Fleetwood executive. So, Glenn Kummer commissioned me to draw that house as a gift to the people who left Riverside and moved to Oregon, I believe. Or maybe its Washington—somewhere up north, as a gift from Fleetwood. So, I just finished drawing it. I think I still have the photographs. If I do, we are way ahead of the game. And now Tony owns it and Katherine said yesterday—we went up there and she said— “This is it.” And I said, “My gosh, what a coincidence.”

Erickson: Isn't that amazing.

Baker: So, I am going to draw it again. There aren't any prints of it so it won't make any difference if I draw it again. (chuckle)

Erickson: That's quite a story.

Baker: Yeah, it's great.

Erickson: What were some of the other commissions that you had for Orcas Island? Didn't you do some in homes?

Baker: I have done homes. Well, I started out doing just buildings that everyone would know about like the Orcas Island Hotel, the first thing you see when you land on the island.

And I have done the church which is the only real little old kind of picturesque church in town that is right on the water. Episcopalian Church. I've done that twice now. In fact, I just drew it for the second time because the minister has changed. The sign in front of the church is part of the charm of the building, and so the former minister's name is on the sign of the first drawing I did.

The Gallery said, "You know we really need another drawing and prints because we have a new rector." And I said ok, so I drew it again, but I drew it from a different angle. And there is a big, old beautiful tree in front of it, and I concentrated on the tree. The church is almost secondary. I had some prints run, and I took the original to have it matted and shrink wrapped, and it sold within three hours. I never saw it again.

Erickson: Oh, my goodness.

Baker: (laughter)

So we did need a new church, that's for sure. And the prints are starting to sell. So, that was great. And then I had some signs in town, a liquor store sign and a local tavern sign and a local clothing store sign. I probably have twenty different

Baker: subjects of buildings I have drawn, old odd buildings, things like that on the island that are for sale at the gallery.

Erickson: Didn't you do something inside? Wasn't there a kitchen you were commissioned by someone to do?

Baker: Kitchen. (pause) The local ReMax realtor called me in one day and she said, "We have just finished building a house, and we have a huge built-in freezer and refrigerator, and we want you to paint panels for the front of them that have fruit and flowers and things like that on them. And I was absolutely astounded.

So, I said, "Fine." I submitted some sketches to her, and she picked out what she wanted. She said, "Now, I don't think I want the two doors the same." So, I said fine. That was too bad, because when she saw the first one finished, she said, "Well, I think that I want them to match." And, of course, I had not written down paint mixes or anything. So, I had to mix and try to match the paint that was on the first door to do the second door. It took me a lot longer than I expected it to. But that was a wonderful commission.

Baker: Now, with this collection at the Sweeney Gallery, you see, everything has gone up in value exponentially, almost, because the insurance company told Katherine that I, the artist, am to appraise everything that I have done and come up with a value for everything so that insurance can cover what it needs to cover. I am not exactly clear what the lines of demarcation are. At any rate, those two doors are easily worth about \$5,000 because there are no others and there never will be.

All of my originals range from \$5 to 15 to \$20,000 depending on how old they are and whether there are any prints. I now sell, all of my prints are no less than \$50. They started at \$10, then I sold them for \$25, then \$35 for a long time. They are all \$50 now, minimum. My commission price is a lot higher than it used to be because, you see, if people don't pay a lot, they don't think they are getting much. And so now, I charge \$500 usually for a commission, minimum.

Baker: So, it's an interesting thing, because, you see, everything now has become much more valuable since I am in a permanent collection in the gallery. It's one of the most astounding things that I have ever experienced in my life. I am just thrilled down to my shoes.

Erickson: Well, UCR is thrilled to have the collection, too.

Baker: Thanks. My privilege, believe me. My privilege!

Ericksn: Judy, is there anything else that you can think of that we might have left out?

Baker: Why don't we take a moment and let me look.

END OF INTERVIEW

Text printed in *italics* has been edited by JFB.