

Transcription of Oral History Interview with

EVA S. ORBACH

September 28, 1998

This oral history interview is being conducted on Monday, September 28, 1998, in Hinderaker Hall with Eva S. Orbach. Eva is the wife of Chancellor Raymond L. Orbach.

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

Erickson: Eva, would you begin please by telling us where you were born and a little about your mother and father and any brothers and sisters you have?

Orbach: Well, I was born in Vienna, Austria. I am an only child. My father was born in Slovakia, which was part of the Austria-Hungary Empire. My mother was born in Vienna. And my mother was a dentist in Vienna.

Erickson: Oh, she was?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: Isn't that unusual?

Orbach: Yes, it's very unusual. She was a dentist. She was an apprentice when she was 14.

Erickson: My goodness.

Orbach: That's how she learned to be a dentist. She didn't want to be. She wanted to be a teacher. She wanted to go to school.

Erickson: Oh really. Was there somebody else in your family who was a dentist.

Orbach: No.

Erickson: How did that happen?

Orbach: I have no idea. (laughter)

Erickson: That's so interesting.

Orbach: I have no idea. She wanted to go to school, and her parents said no, her brother was the one who was going to get the education.

Erickson: So she didn't have to get an advanced degree?

Orbach: No.

Erickson: It was just her training. Was it sort of a vocational kind of thing?

Orbach: Yes. She learned I guess by being an apprentice to a dentist. She was a very good one actually.

Erickson: Did she work on your teeth too?

Orbach: No, no.

Erickson: How did she do that?

Orbach: She did that ... she came to this country ... we came in December, '38, and of course, she couldn't practice here, because she didn't have a license.

Erickson: I see.

Orbach: And she could not afford to go back to school, so she became a dental technician. She did that until she retired.

Erickson: Was that hard for her to do, having been the dentist?

Orbach: Yes. I think it was. The dentist she used to work for looked at her very suspiciously, because she was always handing him the instruments long before they ever asked her for them.

Erickson: Oh.

Orbach: So she clearly knew what she was doing.

Erickson: How interesting.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: But she wanted to be an elementary school teacher.

Orbach: Probably, probably. What she wanted was to go to school and get an education.

Erickson: That's too bad.

Orbach: But she couldn't do that. And my uncle who was given the opportunity could care less.

Erickson: Of course. Did you say what your father did?

Orbach: My father was basically a commercial artist.

Erickson: What did he do?

Orbach: Well, he worked, he did many jobs in Europe. When he came to this country he worked as a graphic artist. I guess you would call him a graphic artist now, a commercial artist for

Montgomery Ward until we moved to California. And then he couldn't get a job. That was right after the war. There were no jobs basically.

Erickson: Was that '38?

Orbach: We came to Chicago.

Erickson: Chicago in '38.

Orbach: And then we moved to California, right after World War II.

Erickson: And why did you decide to come to the U.S? Well, you were a young girl then.

Orbach: I was a baby.

Erickson: You really didn't know why then.

Orbach: Well, it was Hitler. We were refugees. My father ... that was after the Anchas, after Hitler invaded Austria. My father was taken and spent two years in a concentration camp.

Erickson: Oh, Eva, did he talk to you about that?

Orbach: A little, a little.

Erickson: Gosh.

Orbach: So my mother and I came by ourselves. We were able to get out.

Erickson: How old was he when he was in the camp?

Orbach: He was in his 40's.

Erickson: Oh, wow.

Orbach: And he was one of the rare survivors at that age.

Erickson: And so they were married, he and your mother were married at that time?

Orbach: Oh yes, they were married. I was 22 months old when we came. So I was a baby.

Erickson: Did they just come to the house and get him, or how did he go to the camp?

Orbach: Yes, he was just arrested.

Erickson: Arrested.

Orbach: I think they rounded up ... not for any particular reason ... just because he was a Jew. They were just rounding them all up.

Erickson: Well, how did he get out?

Orbach: We don't know for sure. It's a long story. My mother went to the Gestapo. She had gotten passage for him to go to India. She had a ticket. She gave it to the Gestapo. They never used it. He was simply released. And the only reason we think is that the Red Cross was able to engineer a release at that particular time because Germany was marching over Europe so fast that they had filled up the camps, and at that time they were only killing you with guns, they were not exterminating you with gas. And they couldn't kill people fast enough.

Erickson: Is that right?

Orbach: So he was one of the lucky ones to get out.

Erickson: Oh, I'll say.

Orbach: Yes, it's a miracle.

Erickson: When he got out, did you leave immediately?

Orbach: We had left, my mother and I had left before. My mother and I left before, she not knowing whether she would ever see him again.

Erickson: Do you remember how she was informed that he was out of the camp? Did he telephone her?

Orbach: No, it would have been by letter, by post.

Erickson: My goodness.

Orbach: And then he went to England. He had to go to England to a refugee camp for a year, until he could get the papers to come to this country.

Erickson: He must have been a happy man.

Orbach: Yes, indeed.

Erickson: Gosh, and then he came when you were still in Chicago?

Orbach: Yes, and then we moved to LA along with everybody else in the United States after World War II.

Erickson: What was the dream about California, do you know?

Orbach: My uncle had come here ahead of time and sent for my grandmother and great aunt. That was the extent of our family. We were all in Chicago, and he said California is the “land of opportunity,” this is where it’s all at. Well, you lived in Illinois.

Erickson: In Illinois, right.

Orbach: And you know what that’s like without air conditioning.

Erickson: Yes. (laughter)

Orbach: So it wasn’t the winters that drove them away, it was the summers.

Erickson: It's so humid.

Orbach: Yes. That's really what drove them. They came with absolutely nothing. And there was nothing to get at that time. We got this little dinky house which my parents had to pay a fortune for, I think. And we had to live in the back of it and rent the front.

Erickson: Just to survive.

Orbach: Just to survive. And we got a little bit better off, so we lived in the front and rented the back. And we eventually lived in the whole house.

Erickson: Was that in LA?

Orbach: In LA.

Erickson: Yes, there must have been extreme shortages.

Orbach: Yes, yes. We had an ice box. We didn't have a refrigerator. I can remember the ice man coming.

Erickson: I remember that, too. So your father worked at Montgomery Ward.

Orbach: And when we came to LA, he became self-employed, in graphic arts, in painting and sign painting. He developed into

Orbach: a real craftsman. He became a cabinet maker and furniture refinisher.

Erickson: Do you have any of his art, or any of his drawings?

Orbach: Yes. You've been in our house. I don't know if you've noticed. As a hobby, he did pictures out of stamps. Next time you come, I'll have to show you.

Erickson: I can't wait to see them.

Orbach: He was a stamp collector and that turned into a hobby of making pictures out of stamps, using the stamps, using the post marks and being very, very creative.

Erickson: I'll say. And do you have any of his furniture that he made, cabinets or anything?

Orbach: No, no.

Erickson: Those were all made for other people.

Orbach: Yes, right.

Erickson: How interesting. And then how did you and Ray meet?

Orbach: We went to high school together.

Erickson: Oh, that's right.

Orbach: And I knew who he was, because I was in the tenth grade, and he was in the twelfth grade, and he was student body president, and of course I knew him.

Then my senior year when I graduated, we were invited to a party at his house. It was an honor's society, and it was a party, and that's where we met. That summer I'd graduated high school.

Erickson: How nice.

Orbach: He was at Cal Tech then.

Erickson: And then you went off to ... was it Berkeley?

Orbach: UCLA, my first two years, and Ray was a graduate of Cal Tech. We got married, and we went up to Berkeley, where he got his Ph.D., and I finished my last two years from Berkeley.

Erickson: Good for you. And then somewhere through there you started having your children?

Orbach: Right. I graduated in June, and David was born in July.

Erickson: No kidding. So you were in class, very pregnant.

Orbach: I was wondering if I could get out of finals, but it didn't work, no, they didn't cooperate.

Erickson: Well, that's pretty good timing.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: And then, I may have this wrong, I think you went to Oxford first?

Orbach: That's correct, after he got his Ph.D.

Erickson: What was that experience like?

Orbach: That was absolutely fabulous, a wonderful experience.

Erickson: And how long were you there?

Orbach: We were there almost two years, a year and two-thirds. My daughter was born there. We had a marvelous time.

Erickson: And was the medical care as good as here, would you say?

Orbach: It was terrific. In fact, those were the old days when you stayed in the hospital for five days.

Erickson: Yes, the good old days.

Orbach: The good old days.

Erickson: What did you do with your son while you were in the hospital with Debbie?

Orbach: Well, boy.

Erickson: I can't think of your first son's name.

Orbach: David.

Erickson: David. I'm sorry.

Orbach: He was in nursery school, and I had help. We could afford to have help which was absolutely marvelous. So I had full-time help. We had no income at all, you know, what you would think of compared to what you have here.

Erickson: It's just quite different.

Orbach: But it was so inexpensive in those days.

Erickson: Isn't that nice, as you look back on those days?

Orbach: Oh boy.

Erickson: And when was your other son born?

Orbach: Randy was born in Boston.

Erickson: Okay.

Orbach: From Oxford, we went to Harvard. And we were there for about a year and a half.

Erickson: Two wonderful schools.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: You were so busy, you couldn't take classes probably.

Orbach: No, I didn't. I was much too busy, but of course you soak up a lot of that.

Erickson: You sure do.

Orbach: Intellectual life.

Erickson: Even though you had the little ones, were you able to sight see when you were in England?

Orbach: We did a lot of traveling.

Erickson: Did you take your help with you?

Orbach: With kids, without kids.

Erickson: Oh that's nice.

Orbach: We would either take them, or we would leave them home with the Nanny.

Erickson: You did call her a Nanny?

Orbach: I don't know if I called her a Nanny, but I guess that's what she was.

Erickson: That's sounds like a nice experience.

Orbach: That was wonderful, yes.

Erickson: Then you were at Harvard for a little more than a year.

Orbach: Yes, about a year and a half, I think it was. And then we came to UCLA and stayed there for almost 30 years, taking sabbaticals during that time.

Erickson: Did you ever think you would be at a school for 30 years when you were first talking about going?

Orbach: No, because we were such gypsies. For something like seven years, we were gypsies basically—or it seemed like it. But all of

a sudden here we were, back where we started, back with our family.

Erickson: Oh, that's right.

Orbach: And that was wonderful.

Erickson: Was it?

Orbach: It was wonderful.

Erickson: They were happy to have you back.

Orbach: And we were delighted. It was wonderful for the children to be raised in this big family. So that was really wonderful.

Erickson: All those traditions.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: That is nice. Well, what were you involved in at UCLA? What kinds of things did you like to participate in?

Orbach: I was very involved with the Faculty Women's Club with what we call Campus Club here.

Erickson: Now was that campuswide, or was it within a unit?

Orbach: No, that was the whole campus.

Erickson: It was. So you met a lot of people?

Orbach: I met lots of people, yeh, which was wonderful, because in a big place like that, that is really a good way of meeting people. Otherwise you tend to meet people only in your husband's department.

Erickson: Right.

Orbach: And that's about it, so this was wonderful. And I was on the board for many years. I was President for one year.

Erickson: What was their mission? Was it a social group?

Orbach: Yes, like it is here, with various interest groups. We had three or four general meetings during the year with wider topics. And it was basically a way of making a cohesive unit out of a huge university.

Erickson: Good. Were you involved ... You said you knew Ray's colleagues. Did you know the wives or the husbands of his colleagues?

Orbach: Yes, yes.

Erickson: Did you entertain them?

Orbach: A lot.

Erickson: Was he a chair at that time?

Orbach: No, he was never a department chair. But he was Chair of the Academic Senate. He was an Assistant Vice Chancellor ... I don't know ... for a few years.

Erickson: You did a lot of entertaining ...

Orbach: We did a lot of entertaining. We started entertaining when we were students at Berkeley. And we entertained a lot at Oxford, so we always enjoyed it. We always had fun.

Erickson: In your home mostly?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: Well, that is easier to become familiar with people, I think, in that kind of setting.

Orbach: Oh yes.

Erickson: Well, when did you know ... when did you get an inkling about UCR?

Orbach: Well, I'll have to think about that. We came ... I guess Ray was named in March ... so it must have been the prior winter, I think, that David Gardner spoke to Ray and asked him if he would consider being a candidate for Chancellor.

Erickson: Were you even aware that there was an opening?

Orbach: Not really, I don't think so.

Erickson: No, I wouldn't think so.

Orbach: No, no.

Erickson: You wouldn't even think about that?

Orbach: We didn't. We didn't, so it was a wonderful surprise.

Erickson: Do you remember what Ray said to you?

Orbach: Well, he said ... of course, he wanted to know how I felt about it. And I said, "Riverside, like where's Riverside?"

(laughter)

No, I knew where Riverside was, and I said, "Yes." That sounded ... after all, any University of California campus was very exciting and was an honor.

Erickson: What did you know about Riverside?

Orbach: I had been here once when the Faculty Women's Club had a meeting out here. I have forgotten the organization. It's the Southern California organization of women's clubs of all the

campuses, and they have an annual meeting and each of the campuses takes turns hosting it.

And one year it was Riverside. And so we went as a delegation from UCLA to the campus. And I can remember going to the University Club and thinking what a great place it was and what a beautiful campus.

Erickson: Who would have been Chancellor then, do you remember?

Orbach: It was the 70's. Would that have been Ivan?

Erickson: Hinderaker.

Orbach: I think it probably was. So that was the last time I think I had been on the campus. That was a long time ago.

Erickson: Well, what did you say to Ray? Did you say "I want to go and visit the campus?"

Orbach: Well, he had been invited to visit.

Erickson: Well, did you want to see for yourself before you made this decision?

Orbach: Oh sure. Oh sure. Yes.

Erickson: What were you interested in learning about first?

Orbach: Just to see the campus and meet the people really.

Erickson: So how long would you say you thought about this before you ... did Ray ask for your opinion, yes or no? Did you talk it over for any length of time?

Orbach: Not for a long time. My feeling always was if that was something Ray wanted to do, I was very happy to go and do it.

Erickson: So you said in March he was named.

Orbach: Yes, that was when he was officially named at a Regents' meeting.

Erickson: And did you go to that?

Orbach: Yes, I did.

Erickson: Can you remember how that happened ...the events of that day?

Orbach: I don't. I remember just sitting there as they went through all of their business, and, of course, I was on pins and needles waiting for this announcement. I think they had other announcements of other appointments at that time, none of which I remember.

And we were invited out after. Rosemary Schraer had invited us to dinner. That's where I met you guys for the first time. And I remember it was pouring rain.

Erickson: It was. I remember that, too. It was cold, too.

Orbach: Cold and pouring with rain. And we dashed out as fast as we could. Before that, there was the assembly in the gym.

Erickson: Yes, yes.

Orbach: We had to get to that and then to the dinner. And I remember Sue Johnson who never made it, because I think it took her four hours to get to Riverside. She was a Regent then, and she had to stay for the whole meeting.

Erickson: Oh I see what you are saying.

Orbach: And she couldn't get out. And so she got stuck on the freeway.

Erickson: Oh, dear.

Orbach: And then I remember the dinner, of course, and this bewildering array of people.

Erickson: Were they all a sea of faces at that point?

Orbach: Yes, the first time.

Erickson: But the house was very crowded that night.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: Well, let's go back a little bit, because you mentioned the assembly. That was in the gymnasium, right?

Orbach: Right.

Erickson: I'm trying to remember how that was put together. Marv Nachman had been the chair of the search committee?

Orbach: Oh, he was?

Erickson: Oh, I don't know. I'm sort of asking you to ...

Orbach: I don't even know. That, I have no idea.

Erickson: I remember he was a big part of it.

Orbach: He was, because when we visited the campus, he and Sue took us around the campus and showed us all around. And then there was the assembly. The gym was packed, and there was a podium, and there were various dignitaries up there, including Ray. And he basically just opened it up for questions.

Erickson: It was a very well-welcomed reception, wouldn't you say?

Orbach: It was, it was wonderful.

Erickson: And the biggest applause of the day I think was ... please, you say.

Orbach: Yes. When Ray was asked the question, “Where were you going to live?” And he said, “Well, we plan to live in the Chancellor’s Residence.” That’s all he said, and the place erupted into applause.

Erickson: And were you aware of the sensitivities over that?

Orbach: No, none. Had no idea.

Erickson: You just assumed that you would live there?

Orbach: We wanted to. We had looked at other places because, at that time, since the residence had not been lived in as a home for a long time, it was a pretty sad looking place. But the more we looked, the more we decided that, no, this would be our home, and we would make a home out of it.

Orbach: And we always felt very strongly that we wanted to live on the campus and be part of the campus.

Erickson: What was your impression of the campus at first?

Orbach: Well, of course how pretty it is. It’s a beautiful place and the location. That was the whole picture of Riverside, because we really didn’t know the town, and it is a lovely, lovely town. It’s full of trees, very verdant. I know Ray gets these questions all the time when he goes to these welcomes for students, and they say, “Well, isn’t it a desert out in Riverside?”

Erickson: It is a lot greener than people expect.

Orbach: Oh, it’s beautiful, yes. And so we were very impressed with that, the beauty of the campus.

Erickson: And how about the city? When did you first see the downtown area and that kind of thing?

Orbach: Very soon after we arrived Knox Mellon took us for a tour of the Mission Inn.

Erickson: We should say on the tape, “Knox Mellon” ... what was his title? He was the head of the ...

Orbach: The Mission Inn Foundation, I believe. He was Executive Director ...

Erickson: Probably. The Executive Director.

Orbach: ... of the Mission Inn Foundation. His specialty is historic preservation. At that time the Mission Inn had a chain fence around it. It was totally shuttered.

Erickson: It was when we came, too.

Orbach: And that was our first visit practically to downtown.

Erickson: So Knox called you, and did he invite you down?

Orbach: He invited us for a tour of the Inn, because at that time it was on the verge of being reopened by somebody from New York whose name I can't remember.

Erickson: His name was David Carley actually. He was the first developer, and that wasn't successful.

Orbach: Right.

Erickson: And then it went to a bank.

Orbach: Oh?

Erickson: I can't remember that name.

Orbach: And then the bank, they were supposed to make a payment, and they never did, and the whole thing sort of fell through. And luckily for us, it did fall through, because Duane Roberts took it over.

Erickson: And he was a Riverside resident, interestingly enough.

Orbach: Right.

Erickson: I wonder if he was just waiting?

Orbach: I don't know (laughter) I don't think his accountants think so.

Erickson: But we were glad to get it.

Orbach: Oh, and how.

Erickson: So you saw the Mission Inn before it even opened.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: That must have been wonderful.

Orbach: Well, it wasn't really, because it was all shrouded. Dust covers over all the furniture. It was a ghost town, really eerie. And there were all of these little shops on the mall on Main Street, just kind of hanging on by their finger nails.

Erickson: And that was in? We should say on the tape.

Orbach: 1992. And what a transformation.

Erickson: I'll say. Could you compare some of the community involvement that we have here in Riverside to that of UCLA?

Orbach: Oh, I think I'm much more involved in the community here.

Erickson: Are they the same kinds of organizations?

Orbach: Oh yes. Are you talking about campus or the general community.

Erickson: I guess maybe both.

Orbach: Well, the campus, of course ... There are always very many parallel organizations that I was involved with at UCLA and here as well. But I never was involved in the community of Los Angeles as I am here, because first of all, it is so big.

Erickson: It's so big.

Orbach: Here you have an opportunity to become involved in the things that interest you and to take part in them, some wonderful ... One of the great assets in being in a town the size of Riverside, I think.

Erickson: And what are some of those organizations?

Orbach: Well, I first joined the Board of the Ballet, and now I am on the Board of the Riverside Arts, and so my interests are in the arts. That was one of the things that absolutely enthralled me about Riverside was to advance cultural life that we have here with the museums we have, with the ballet, an absolutely first rate symphony. But, of course, all of these organizations are always in great need of financial assistance.

Erickson: And you were involved in the opera too, weren't you, in the Opera Association?

Orbach: No, I never was.

Erickson: Then I'm confused.

Orbach: We're opera buffs, so that's probably why you felt that.

Erickson: Maybe that's it. Well, back to when you first arrived here. Did you meet with any of the former spouses to determine what was expected of the spouse of the Chancellor?

Orbach: No, never. When we came here, Concha Rivera took me out for lunch, and I was able to meet her which was a pleasure.

Erickson: But that was already after you had been named.

Orbach: Chancellor's spouses get absolutely no training. It's all on the job.

Erickson: It's just hit the ground and start.

Orbach: And do it, right? Right. (laughter)

Erickson: And Harald Schraer. Did he meet with you or talk with you?

Orbach: We spoke with Harald and Rosemary, but tragically Rosemary died, and Harald immediately left. He sold their house and moved back to Pennsylvania. So really I didn't even get that opportunity to get any type of help at all in that sense.

Erickson: Explain when you did move here because of Rosemary's dying.

Orbach: Because she died so suddenly. Ray became Chancellor in April rather than July when he would normally have taken over July 1.

He came to the campus in April, and more less commuted, because I had to stay home and clean out the house that we lived in for 25 years and get it rented and moved. I moved out here in June.

Erickson: And your children, were they all married by that time?

Orbach: Ah, yes, I'm trying to think, in '92, yes they were.

Erickson: We should talk about your grandchildren, too. How many grandchildren do you have?

Orbach: I have seven.

Erickson: Oh, my goodness.

Orbach: From eleven to almost five.

Erickson: That's great.

Orbach: Several of them are the same age.

(laughter)

Several different children, three children and seven grandchildren.

Erickson: And do they come and visit?

Orbach: Not often enough.

Erickson: But you have a place where you get together, don't you?

Orbach: We have a house in the mountains at Mammoth.

Erickson: That's family time?

Orbach: That's family time, whenever we can. Their lives are busy, ours are busy.

Erickson: Do they realize that their grandfather and grandmother have the positions that you do?

Orbach: Yes. The grandchildren? Well, the older ones, yes. They're not exactly sure what it is, but it sounds terrific. I think they tell their friends.

What they really are impressed with is our house, of course, because it's so big.

Erickson: Of course, Did they count the rooms? (laughter)

Orbach: They loved it and the orchard, the grove, that we have behind the house. I think they like that the best.

Erickson: And how much of that is yours? I mean the flower garden is yours.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: And some of the ...

Orbach: The groves, they belong to the University. They're experimental, but we can go in there, and the kids love to walk around in there.

Erickson: And on the back side of that is the Botanic Gardens?

Orbach: Yes, and you can get through there from the back.

Erickson: Do you ever do that?

Orbach: Oh, yes.

Erickson: That would be nice.

Orbach: We take the kids through there. So they love the campus.

Erickson: Well, let's get back to the house, the University House. Now you have renamed that, right?

Orbach: Well, it was called University House. And we named it the Chancellor's Residence just to describe it as a residence—also to differentiate it from Watkins House. We were always getting people coming to our house by mistake.

Erickson: Oh, sure. That would be natural.

Orbach: I remember having an argument with the Postman, who insisted that he knew that this was University House. And we had to tell him "No, no, you have the wrong place." So that was one of the reasons also we wanted to change it.

Erickson: Well, I may revert here, but I will try to remember Chancellor's Residence.

Orbach: That's okay.

Erickson: How does it feel though to live in a home that is your private residence but is also a public building?

Orbach: Well, there are times you kind of wish you had some kind of privacy. But most of the time it's fine. For us, actually, it's wonderful. There are only Ray and I—and the cat.

Erickson: Um hmm.

Orbach: If we had children in the house, it would be difficult, because there are no private quarters really.

Erickson: No, it's just the back area where the bedrooms are.

Orbach: Right, right.

Erickson: And then do you use the upstairs at all?

Orbach: We use it as a spare bedroom. We use it for the kids (the grandchildren) when they come, as a playroom. But most of the time no.

One of these days for the next chancellor, that would be ideal for living quarters because it would be away from everything else and separate.

Erickson: You mentioned that nobody had lived in the house when you and Ray came. I mean, it had been used for receptions.

Orbach: Oh, it had been used, of course.

Erickson: But nobody had physically lived there for a while. What was that like? Were there things that you wanted to change immediately or ...?

Orbach: I just did it gradually. It was very institutional. The upstairs was a board room ...

Erickson: Oh, that's right.

Orbach: with all kinds of tables and chairs and all kinds of audio/visual things.

Erickson: The Foundation Board had held meetings up there.

Orbach: And there were other meetings held up there. The downstairs had bedrooms that were turned into offices with office lighting and desks and so on. People had their offices there, so of course, they moved onto the campus, and we turned those into basically domestic quarters rather than offices.

Erickson: If you want to go and read a book, where do you go?

Orbach: I go in the back, way in the back. Yes.

Erickson: You found a nice, small area?

Orbach: In a little room. That's where my computer is, the tv is, where the cat is. That's where I hide.

Erickson: That's understandable. Let's talk about the policy that's been created for the use of the residence.

Orbach: Um hmm.

Erickson: Was there an existing policy when you came?

Orbach: I don't think there was anything existing when we came.

Erickson: Nothing in writing?

Orbach: No, it's just whatever people have tended to want to do.

Erickson: Well, when did you realize that you should have a policy?

Orbach: Well, I don't know if I really have a policy. My only policy is that I don't like to get into a rut and do things just because it's always been done. I would say that's my only policy.

Orbach: I am open to anything. I love to entertain. We do a lot of entertaining there. But just because we did it last year and the year before is not necessarily a good reason to continue doing it.

If people like to come to that event fine, but if you see people dropping off, maybe it's time to look at it and say no, let's leave it alone for a while. So, no, I don't think I have a policy.

Erickson: Well, do you allow the house to be used by outside groups as well as campus functions?

Orbach: No, we limit it to the university. It's really for the benefit of the university.

Erickson: Well, there are a lot of people going through there from the campus, and that would take its toll.

Orbach: Yes, yes.

Erickson: Have you ever counted to ... say through a month or through a year how many people pass through?

Orbach: Well, we have ... it gets bigger every year, but we have between 1,500 and 2,000 people a year.

Erickson: Goodness that's a lot.

Orbach: (chuckle) Yes, that's a lot.

Erickson: What do you notice the most from wear and tear from all those people? Is it the carpet that wears out first or is it the chairs?

Orbach: Oh, gosh, probably the carpet, because the ... yes, I would say the carpet. That's probably the biggest wear and tear--and the dishwasher.

(laughter)

Erickson: Well, you ...

Orbach: Well actually the biggest wear and tear is the breakage.

Erickson: Oh, is it?

Orbach: Dishes and glasses, that kind of thing.

Erickson: Oh.

Orbach: Not by our guests. Our guests are very polite but by the caterers. It's unavoidable.

Erickson: Eva, do you have a budget that you work from for the year?

Orbach: Oh, yes. The Office of the President gives us ...

Erickson: Well, you certainly don't have to mention the amount, but you were given some amount of money that you need to make last for the entire year?

Orbach: For the year. That is correct.

Erickson: So how do you do that?

Orbach: Well, you watch your pennies. I'm a great shopper.

Erickson: Are you?

Orbach: Yes, I'm a great shopper. I buy everything at Home Depot, at K-Mart, at Sears.

(laughter)

So, I'm very careful.

Erickson: You get bargains.

Orbach: Yes, when I go to the market, I use my Ralph's Club Card, my coupons.

Erickson: Well, do you try to get kind of a handle on how many events you might have during the year?

Orbach: You do. I would say after six years that I have an idea, more or less, what it costs. And you try to budget accordingly.

Erickson: Did you ever run out of money?

Orbach: Close. (laughter)

Erickson: Now you have a social secretary.

Orbach: Yes, yes.

Erickson: Why don't you explain about that. Did she have that positions when you came?

Orbach: Yes she did. And she's a great help to me. She helps organize all of our events, does the invitations. Since I've been here, we've organized everything on a computer.

Erickson: Oh, that's interesting.

Orbach: So we do all of our own printing and mailing. So all of the invitations and envelopes are done out of our own computer which saves a great deal of money on printing. And she keeps great records. We have a program for records, for addresses.

Erickson: I was going to say ... What kind of records do you like to keep?

Orbach: I like to keep, of course, names and addresses, titles. And I have a record of what events we have had and who has come. I can always refer to that.

Erickson: And do you list the food you had at one event so you won't have it again?

Orbach: I try not to repeat, although no one has ever told me what I had last time, but I try not to do that. Although I must say I probably make mistakes.

Erickson: That wouldn't be a mistake anyway, but these computers are wonderful.

Orbach: They are. They're great. And Ann acts as hostess when we have an event. She oversees the staff, the caterers. She oversees and helps with the guests. She is absolutely indispensable.

Erickson: And we should give her name, too.

Orbach: Ann Blanton.

Erickson: And how does she work with you, Eva? Describe an event from the start to the finish if you will?

Orbach: All right. We'll say we know we're having a dinner at a certain time. Then the first thing we do is to try to compose an invitation. Then we gather a guest list. We do that by asking the relevant people who their suggestions would be.

We try to invite different people. We always try to have a variety of people at our functions to represent the best part of the University and to bring in the community to show off the University. That's really our main focus.

Erickson: You do try to bring in the community?

Orbach: Always, always, yes. And then we get together and decide who will be the caterer and what the menu should be.

Erickson: And do you decide those things, or does Ann decide?

Orbach: I do, well we both do together.

Erickson: Do you have certain caterers that you like to work with better than others?

Orbach: Yes, we use the campus catering. We have a number in Riverside, and we always try to alternate them to give everybody a chance.

Erickson: There are some specific guidelines, are there not, as far as the amount of insurance?

Orbach: Yes, they must be insured. They must carry a rider. It sounds like a lot. It's a million dollar policy they must have. It's not a terribly expensive thing, but they must be insured. And so now we must have four or five caterers.

Erickson: So you decide on the caterers. Go from there. Does the caterer suggest menus to you?

Orbach: Yes, we ask them please to suggest menus, because that's for them to do. And then we pick a menu, we make up the guest list. This all goes on the computer. Print out the invitations. Send out the invitations.

This is all done a month before the event. Then the RSVPs come in and about a week before the event, Ann usually has to get on the phone and call all the people who haven't RSVPd, find out, in fact, if they are able to attend.

Erickson: And do they usually say yes or no, if they haven't actually responded?

Orbach: Oh, about half and half I would say, maybe a few more no's than yes's. And then the day of the event, of course, we set the table, Ann and I and my housekeeper. So I'm out there setting the table. I do the table arrangements, the seating arrangements.

Erickson: The place cards?

Orbach: The place cards and who sits where. Then the day of the event the caterers will come in and Ann will give them instructions on how to serve and where things go and to make sure that things go smoothly.

And as guests come in, she greets them, so that Ray and I can greet them in the living room usually when they come in.

Erickson: How about the flowers for an event?

Orbach: Well, we order flowers. Ann used to do flowers when I first arrived, and I used to go with her to the wholesale market. But our entertaining has grown to such an extent that I did not think this was a good use of her time or my time.

Erickson: So now you have a central florist?

Orbach: Yes, and we don't have as many floral arrangements as we used to have, but it still looks pretty.

Erickson: It does. It always looks pretty. Oh, I wanted to ask you another thing. When you said that you work with the various offices, depending on the event ...

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: How do you work with the Chancellor's Office? How do you know about all of these events that you and Ray will be involved in?

Orbach: We have a calendar meeting. We try to do it once a week, but it doesn't end up that way, maybe once every other week.

Erickson: And that's in his office?

Orbach: We meet in the Chancellor's Office, and various people who are involved in Ray's calendar go to the meeting. And we all sit

with our calendars and decide what events are coming up and what his schedule is.

Erickson: Do you say no to some things?

Orbach: Um, not very often.

(laughter)

Erickson: It doesn't seem like ever?

(laughter)

Well, the weeks fill up, don't they?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: So you work it that way and with the other offices. How does that happen? Do they telephone you, and say may we hold an event at the residence on such and such a day?

Orbach: Well, by e-mail, we know that something is coming up. For example, we will be holding a dinner next month to welcome our new Dean of Education. And the School of Education asked us if we would do something like this, and we said we would be delighted. And we worked with Jo Dutton, who is their development director, to plan this event.

Erickson: I see. Is there a master calendar for the campus?

Orbach: Is there? Do you know?

Erickson: I don't.

Orbach: I think there is always the talk that there is going to be one, but if there is, I haven't seen it.

Erickson: I don't know if there is either. There should be.

Orbach: There should be, yes. You and I agree on that.

Erickson: Let's talk about Ray's inauguration.

Orbach: Okay.

Erickson: How was that date determined?

Orbach: I have no idea.

Erickson: But it was when?

Orbach: I believe it was March of '93. Does that sound right to you?

Erickson: I think so. You know, I'll look it up and put it in the transcript.

(editor's note: Actual inauguration at the Theatre was Friday, March 19, 1993, at 2:00pm)

Orbach: I could be wrong. It could be even earlier, but I honestly don't remember how it was determined. I'm sure it had to do with the Regent's meeting. It had to coincide with the Regents' meeting. The Regents met on the campus here, and then we had the inauguration at that time.

Erickson: Right, it would have been all of that coordination. Well, how were you involved in that, Eva?

Orbach: I was involved only as an attendant.

Erickson: Is that right?

Orbach: Well, no, that's not true. We had a lunch at our house. So I was involved in that, too. I had to coordinate that.

Erickson: As part of the Regents' meeting?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: There was a luncheon?

Orbach: We had a luncheon. We had a dinner at the Mission Inn. We inaugurated the Mission Inn, the opening, the first event there.

Erickson: Oh, I forgot that.

Orbach: When they were opened, yes. It was really fun. It was absolute chaos, because we had a lot of people staying there, and it was the first time they had opened it. And they didn't know what they were doing, and we didn't know what we were doing. But it all worked out beautifully. It was an absolutely wonderful event.

Erickson: It was. It really was. What do you remember of the day? What were the special highlights?

Orbach: Well, I remember the inauguration ceremony itself. I was sitting there enjoying every minute of that.

Erickson: Who came from your family?

Orbach: Everybody.

Erickson: Oh great.

Orbach: Everybody, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and so that was very exciting.

Erickson: How nice. And some of them stayed at the Mission Inn?

Orbach: Yes. And our children and grandchildren. Everyone was there. That was wonderful, yes.

Erickson: Do you remember the ceremony?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: Do you remember who was the President then? Was that David ...

Orbach: The President was, oh gosh ...

Erickson: Was it David Gardner?

Orbach: No, wasn't it Jack Peltason? Yes, it had to have been. Now, isn't that awful, here I'm telling you I remember everything. And I don't even remember that.

Erickson: Oh, no, no. I'll check that though. And I'll put that in the transcript too.

Orbach: But I think Jack became President at the same time that Ray became Chancellor.

Erickson: Okay. That makes sense.

(editor's note: J.W. Peltason was President.)

Orbach: I'm almost 100% sure that's true. And John Vasconsellas was the guest speaker.

Erickson: Oh, he was here? Great.

Orbach: We had asked him to do that. And, of course, there were lots of other speakers. And it was a wonderful event.

Erickson: A lot of dignitaries from other universities?

Orbach: Dignitaries. There were community people, students. It was wonderful.

Erickson: And where was it?

Orbach: At the University Theatre. That was a very, very, very nice event.

Erickson: Was that the first thing in the day? No, you said you had a luncheon. Was that on the same day, or was that the next day?

Orbach: Well, let me think. The luncheon had to be the day before or the day after, because it was the inauguration, and then there was the dinner.

Erickson: So those were the two events?

Orbach: Those were the two major events that day.

Erickson: That's a lot to get ready for, isn't it.

Orbach: Yes, and I believe the luncheon ... yes it would have been the next day, now that I know how Regents' meetings are organized. It would have been Thursday for the inauguration dinner. Friday would have been the lunch.

Erickson: And was there anything between that ceremony and the dinner?

Orbach: I can't remember.

Erickson: But no receptions or anything.

Orbach: Not that I remember. No, I don't think so. No, I'm quite sure, because we had to go collect children. The little grandchildren we had to collect from various babysitters. So no, there was no reception. (laughter)

Erickson: Sure. So it was a lovely two days?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: And it's hard to imagine, that that was six years ago.

Orbach: I know. Time goes.

Erickson: Well, it was Sue Young at UCLA who advanced the spouse's position by suggesting that you be named Chancellor's Associates.

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: When was that? Did you know Sue Young when you were at UCLA?

Orbach: Yes I did, I did.

Erickson: Were you friends?

Orbach: Yes.

Erickson: Did you know of that initiative?

Orbach: Yes, I did, because she had spoken quite a bit about it to the Faculty Women's Club.

She felt very, very strongly that there should be some official recognition to the spouse of the Chancellor or the President. So she, with her pushing ... really with her advocacy, the position was created: Associate of the Chancellor.

Erickson: Okay, Associate of the Chancellor. Okay.

Orbach: I don't know whether that gives us, to tell you the truth, if that makes the slightest bit of difference. I have no idea. It looks very official.

Erickson: Yes, it does. As a faculty wife at UCLA though, did you have any special opinion on that. Did you think that that was a good idea?

Orbach: Yes. I really did. I admired her, always admired her tremendously for what she had done. And I thought that certainly she had deserved some kind of recognition.

Erickson: Well, let's continue about your being the Associate of the Chancellor.

Orbach: All right.

Erickson: Were you named that immediately when you came to Riverside?

Orbach: I think I got a letter, a formal letter at some point, giving me that title, a library card.

Erickson: Oh.

Orbach: And a parking permit!

Erickson: Oh, the best.

(laughter)

Orbach: So that put me on the map.

Erickson: Well, what are your obligations and your responsibilities with that title, with that position?

Orbach: I don't believe there are any formal ones, simply what one chooses to do. There are spouses who have full-time jobs, full-time careers, who don't do the kind of entertaining that we do. As far as I know there is no job description that is written down.

Erickson: Is that the trade off? If a spouse has another position, usually there is not as much entertaining in the home?

Orbach: It seems like it.

Erickson: On other campuses?

Orbach: I would say so, from what I've seen. But I don't know for sure. But this is my guess, because what I do is basically a full-time

job. If you have a career, you can't possibly do all that as well. I don't think so.

Erickson: Do you meet with other spouses of the other campuses?

Orbach: Occasionally. Not a great deal. There are Regents' meetings when we get together. But we don't do it formally.

Erickson: That is what I was going to ask. So it's basically social?

Orbach: Yes, it is. We don't have a professional organization.

Erickson: Well, what are some of the dual responsibilities that you and the Chancellor share?

Orbach: Well, I don't think I have any responsibilities other than what I choose to do. No one has ever told me I have to do anything.

Erickson: Well, let's see. How do you decide what you would like to be involved in and what you wouldn't like to be involved in?

Orbach: Well my goal is to do anything that furthers the well being of the campus. So that is my only goal. And any way that I can help, that's what I look on as my responsibility and what I like to do. So that is how I look at it.

Erickson: Well, there are a number of activities or events that you both attend, and one of those would be donor cultivation.

Orbach: Yes indeed.

Erickson: That's a big part of the University.

Orbach: Yes, as we learned. You and Jim are great mentors in this.

Erickson: Well, no.

Orbach: You can cut that out if you want to. (laughter)

Erickson: And in social entertaining, do you have a chance to do a lot of things in the community, too, separate from the University?

Orbach: I don't think anything we do is separate from the University.

Erickson: It's all connected?

Orbach: Certainly, I don't look at it as being separate. We feel a part of the University. We feel a part of the community. So everything is all one whole.

Erickson: Do you become involved in any of the discussions about the future of the University, about the possibility of the new law school, or the possibility of ...

Orbach: Of course, I hear about all of this naturally, and it's all very exciting.

Erickson: But you're not part of ... you don't get to listen to ...

Orbach: I'm not part of the planning process. No.

Erickson: That's what I was getting at. Oh, that's too bad.

Orbach: But I get to hear it. I certainly can put in my own two cents. Whether that goes for anything, I don't know. But it's wonderful to be part of such an exciting university where so much is going on.

Erickson: Oh, there is a lot going on.

Orbach: That's very exciting.

Erickson: It's just amazing how many changes there are now with the beginning of this new academic year, how many changes there are on campus right now.

Orbach: Yes, yes, you have to rethink your whole driving route.

Erickson: That's right.

Orbach: Just because of the new buildings that are going up.

Erickson: They tore down the police building.

Orbach: Yes, and they're building a new one. And of course the Fine Arts (building) is now going up.

Erickson: Oh, that's right. That's a huge construction.

Orbach: A huge construction. And the new Science Library has just opened. There will be a new addition to Pierce Hall, I believe.

The containment facility, whenever that gets going. So it's going to be fun. We're going to have a challenge driving on this campus.

(laughter)

Erickson: That we are. Well, Eva how do you just relax and sort of get away from the pressure?

Orbach: Well, I'm a tennis bum. So as much as I can, I try to get on the tennis court and play tennis.

Erickson: The fact that you live right here on campus, do you feel that you can get away?

Orbach: Oh yes. Oh yes. When I say I have a full-time job, that's a big exaggeration.

Erickson: No, no.

Orbach: I have lots of free time to do what I enjoy doing. So I can certainly play tennis, go shopping, see friends.

Erickson: But then your full-time job is still there when you get home.

Orbach: Oh yes, yes, that's true. That's true, you're right. It doesn't end at 5:00 p.m.

Erickson: You mentioned sabbaticals earlier. Where have you gone that you've enjoyed especially?

Orbach: Oh, I've enjoyed them all. We spent a year in London in 1967-68 with the children.

We spent a year in Israel in '73-74 with the children.

And then Ray and I, after the kids had left and all had gone to college, we spent two months in Belgium and two months in Holland.

And we spent eight months in Paris on sabbatical.

Erickson: Those were wonderful sabbaticals.

Orbach: So they were wonderful, yes.

Erickson: Are they usually tied to some physics meeting?

Orbach: No, they are tied to Ray's research. We went to Israel when Ray had a Guggenheim Fellowship, and we were in London on a National Science Foundation Post Doctoral Fellow. That was a Senior Post Doctoral Fellow.

And Ray was invited to these other places as a visiting professor, so that's how it is all physics.

Erickson: Is it hard to find accommodations, especially when you had the children, when you go to some places?

Orbach: Well, when we were in Israel and in London both, we lived in the homes of faculty who themselves were away on sabbatical, so that actually was quite easy.

Erickson: That works out nicely. And you always have your passport updated, right?

Orbach: Oh yes.

(laughter)

Definitely, I'm ready.

Erickson: Well, do you have plans after Riverside?

Orbach: We don't. We don't. We say we've got to talk about it. We are going to have to retire at some point. What are we going to do? And neither of us can face the decision of what we are going to do.

Erickson: Sure.

Orbach: So, we really don't have any plans.

Erickson: Well, we want you to stay here for a nice long period.

Orbach: Well, thank you. Thank you. We love it here, so I guess that is probably why we don't want to think about it, life after Riverside.

Erickson: Is there anything else that we didn't bring up that you would like to talk about?

Orbach: Oh gosh. I don't think there is anything else left, Jan. I think you covered it very well. And I have to say how much I've enjoyed doing this.

Erickson: Oh, thank you. Thank you for participating. This is wonderful, and it is wonderful for the UCR history. And it was good to interview you.

Orbach: Well, thank you, thank you again.

Erickson: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW