

SD: ...your name and where you were born?

DB: Daisy Brown, born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

SD: And, when did you come to B.C.?

DB: In 1944 I believe it was.

SD: Why did you come here?

DB: During the war years my husband was not able to go into the services, so he came here and worked in the shipyards, and I didn't attempt to work at that time but found it was pretty long days for me, and so I took a part-time job in March '45 with the Union. I worked four hours a day which stood me quite well in those years back. [And so since then,] I've been on full time for many years now of course and I've been on my own now for many years now too so it has been a necessity to have eight hours a day.

[SD: Had you worked before you got...

DB: Yes, I worked with the Department of Education in Regina and following that I worked with the Workmen's Compensation Board in Regina for eight years before I came to V^{ancouver}.

SD: How was it that you became interested in getting a job with the Union?

DB: It wasn't necessarily with the Union because [I had never experienced much of union affairs in Saskatchewan but

it was just that I went to the Selective Service, [I believe they called it in those years, the war years,] and two jobs were available, One in a telegraph office, [They wanted someone who wouldn't be interested in working steadily because they would want to give the jobs to the fellows when they came back from overseas] and then the other four hour job, which I preferred having, was at the Hotel Restaurant Union. [So that I went in and I started to work and they left the office in about an hour and that's about the way I got started. There was no complication about it so I just worked from twelve to four, I think it was, I worked in those years.

SD: What kind of work did you do for the union?]

DB: All the office work, all the office procedure.

Books and whatever, any typing, anything that was to be done. [I'd Try to look after members when they came in, eventually being like an office business agent as well as an office secretary and bookkeeper and payroll clerk, as the years went by. [In those first years, Emily and me were the only two, and Barbara Stewart was President but she was no longer working out of the union office and Emily and me were the business agents at that time. And so] they were out pretty well all day, either scrounging dues or trying to sign up new members because there were so few of the places organized in these earlier years, 1945-46.

And then, I think it must be 1946-47 that they made a dent into the organizing of the hotel employees, and that was done jointly with the Building Services Union and they had great success. They went sweeping through the hotels. They would be standing at the employees entrances at all shift changes and pass out applications and leaflets I guess too. So they had overwhelming success and so within a very short time they had pretty all the hotels organized. There were very few of them that stood away from the union.

SD: What years would this be?

DB: It would be '47 I think when most of them come in, 46, 47 I think it was; towards the end of '46, '47.

SD: What kind of places were organized before that?

DB: *Before that* Just strictly the front end of the restaurants. *were organized* [And so]

often, they'd have a different crew in the kitchen, a different nationality, and in those years the Department of Labour would give you certification for the unit which would be just the front end, but in latter years they would no longer do that. You had to have [all, like] a majority, of all the people in the unit before they would give you certification to give you your bargaining rights, but in those years they were able to certify just the front end, which meant that they would have maybe half a dozen waitresses for, you know, depending upon the size of the restaurant, and a cashier and possibly a hostess, but they

had no cooks at all in those years back.

[SD: Had there been organizing in the 1930's?

DB: [Oh yes, I'm sure there must have been because it was Barbara Stewart, it was her husband Bill Stewart he was active with Local 28, the Local I was with, and prior to it was the days that I was there and/prior to those days that there was a strike in the Vancouver Hotel and then those employees were lost through that strike. They then went to the Railroad Union. But I would say, before the days that I was there, you know, the few restaurants that were organized while, when I started, /they had been organized I think for

/ quite a few years back. I don't know just how early, but our charter, the Local 28 charter, was granted [to Local 28] in July of 1900. [It's the oldest charter, you know, so there must have been some organizing before I was around.]

-use in intro.

SD: What was the union jurisdiction, was it waitresses?

DB: (All the restaurant employees and all the hotel employees from basement to roof) I guess, more or less, and we had the jurisdiction for hotel and restaurant employees in those years back, [well for quite a few years,] there was the Beverage Dispenser's Union in Vancouver so they had all the bar area of the hotel. They didn't have bars in the hotels in those days anyways, they just had private clubs, so they had the private club members actually in those years. [Then] as time went on, [well then] the club employees ^{they} broke away, well they didn't break away, but they formed their own club

history

employees union, so then that meant there were three unions within the City of Vancouver, the Hotel and Restaurant Local 28, the Beverage Dispensers Local 676 and the Club Employees Union Local 740.

SD: [When was that?

DB: That was in the very early years because...when I first worked at the office in 1945 we were at 413 Granville which was right at the corner of Granville and Hastings where the United Building is, whatever they call it, the United Nations Building and it was during the time we were there that I typed up the charter for the CLUB about Local and we were there, I think, until/possibly '48 '49, something like that. So [it would be between '45, and '47 or '48 when the CLub Local was formed and then following that the Beverage Dispensers Union bought a building at 440 West Pender. We moved there and it was then that the Alumunium Company started at Kitimat, you know the production thing, and so then the camp employees had to be considered and Local 740 then took in all the camp employees all the catering industry, kitchens, bullcooks who looked after the bunkhouse and all that type. [And so gradually, it went along that] they then amalgamated with Local 835 which covered the Lower Mainland, ^{New} Westminster local, we used to term that

so Local 740 and Local 835 became one as local 835.

[and just as a matter of...when would that be...1972...

I'm losing track of the years, anyway ⁱⁿ 1972 that Local 676 and Local 28 became one ^{and} were then Local 16. [and] its

now ^{several} [two years or three] years past that Local 16 and

Local 835 became one and ^{one} now Local 40. [But those dates

I think I might have... could be checked out because/I've lost track of

just what the exact dates are.]

SD: [what happened where...

DB: yes..laughter...after all that period of time.

SD: . Do you remember what restuarants were organized before the big organizing drive,

DB: There was ^{the only fish} [the Trocadero, the Golden Gate, and the Melrose,

and Love's, ^{were organized} [Love's was a very important one; and

the one that Pappa Leeches" as they always called him,

can't remember the name of his now.] And the Zenith.

[SD: were there any ... no, go on...

DB: No, it's ok, I can't think of any others at the moment.

SD: Were any of those organized in the 40's or were they all...

DB: Well those were organized when I went into the union.

You know,] those were the standing members of the union

when I went in. [There were probably a few more restaurants

there that I can't think of just at the moment. But I

couldn't really tell you when they were first organized.

I think, Marian Sarich, when you're talking to her, she

worked in the restuarants in the 1930's and she would I think be able to give you that information more correctly.

SD: Have you ever worked as a waitress at all?

DB: [No I've never other than eating in restaurants, I'd never had . . . any experience in the hotel restaurant industry at all. But I thoroughly enjoyed it though. I learned a great deal in both the industries working in. I will always say that] the hotel restaurant industry is unique and we still have, [I think a matter of a day or two ago, a woman phoned in and said she didn't get her coffee break and her husband belongs to the IBEW and you know her father-in-law belongs to some other union, and they said well, you shouldn't show up for shift if they don't give you your breaks. Well, you know, and I said that's a good way to be fired because our union just doesn't operate like that. You know, the IBEW might be able to pull out all their men but we wouldn't be able to. And it's very true that it is a different type of industry entirely that] you have to deal with [and] different departments of the hotel ^{that} are so much stronger in some respects than others. In years gone by the [chamber maids department, the] housekeeping deparment wouldn't be nearly as adamaⁿt about their rights or their rates or their breaks/as well, ^{whatever it might be} say kitchen staff. There would be different crews who would be [you know] more

knowledgeable [I guess] as to what they should have and what they shouldn't have. [But I think too] in those years back there were a lot of women who were just working, [well,] because their husbands, [possibly] were not earning as much as they would like to be earning, but they weren't as dependent upon work as a lot of women are as to-day, [that] many are single parents, they are bringing up the families; [as well as men too of course.] There didn't seem to be the same type of younger girl working in those departments. They were no doubt in the waitresses' end of it. [But I did think] I got so interested in the industry because there were many waitresses who were hard working girls and who had children and they had to be cared for, [with,] [not] with ^{out} the daycare services they have today, so it was quite a struggle [and you know] the wages in those years back were not any ^{where} near [you know] what they are today. [By far] they were much less and I suppose the tipping was much less too [in those days back] that's one secret you never really know too much ^{about}. They keep that information to themselves pretty much at the time.

SD: [When you talk about the industry being different from, for example, the electrical workers can you talk a bit more that in terms of some of a bout/the implications...

DB: I think in some ways that when, ...] I believe in one way that where there's a group of men working, like say the

Beverage Dispensers Union, the group of men working in a beer parlour would be together whereas in our departments, we had so many departments...we had a few people at the front desk who were totally alienated from the chambermaid or from the kitchen staff and they each in their own way were not strong enough units within the one big unit. Like the chambermaids they'd each be assigned a floor and at lunch time they would see each other but other than that they wouldn't have the same association as say the IBEW or the Ironworkers or some of these people who are working within one factory or plant or whatever the place might be. *Although* a lot of construction workers are not working away together but I still think it's a little different than one individual desk clerk who might be on shift and like say, one individual barman on shift in those years maybe, and maybe, well whatever the size of the kitchen might be depending on that, there would be just small little groups but not any one big strong group that would you know take the same stand on things and would be I think be more inclined to let things slide along and not worry too much about/ *you know*, living up to the letter of the agreement.

They were abusing it one way as much as the employer might to try to abuse or skirt it whenever they could, *which they still do I guess, if they can.*

SD: So that isolation was a problem...

DB: Oh I think so, a great deal of it would be that. As I say, I think in some cases where there was a solid group

it would be where, well maybe all the waitresses in the dining room, there might^{just}/be a good strong group there but they may not be a...go along with the kitchen staff because they probably didn't get the best service from the chef that they thought they should, or any number of things because these are all, I would say, very unique to this industry. The chefs are screaming and hollering at the waitress and the waitress in turn figures that she should get her orders or she maybe not getting along too well with the hostess, because the hostess doesn't seat the best-tipping patrons at her table, so you know it's all different so whereas in any construction industry or I would think in any of the clothing outlets or that type of thing that they have their work assigned to them; they sit down and do it, or they stand up and do it, whichever the case might be but in ours they're meeting the public and its a different entirely type of industry/ I think too the fact that our industry they work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, there's never any break where other industries they are all working Monday to Friday, 9 to 5, whatever the case might be, where ours are coming and going and they don't stand together like as a whole union the same way as some of these other outlets.

SD: What kind of measures has the union taken over the years to try and combat some of that, those problems?

DB: Well I think that there's always that apathy/^{that}the members are just not going to be too interested or concerned and it's pretty difficult to get them to turn out to meetings. We used to send out a monthly meeting letter and give them, you know, more or less a little bit of a run down on what's happening around the union and then we found out that if we did too much of that well then they didn't really have to attend meetings because they were getting all the news anyway. And I think all the unions, or at least we've certainly discussed it over a period of years, that all unions have a very difficult time getting a good percentage of their membership out to a meeting. Possibly at the time negotiations are going on they'll be more interested then and surprisingly even then, you know, there's not many who'll at times vote on the contract when they are, you know, the offer's presented to them. So they keep struggling to try to interest them more. We have a little newspaper that's issued now prior to each meeting but it's just difficult/^{I guess just}to interest them. They're all in various walks of like in this industry it's a more type of transient trade, although there's certainly a number of people who are not transient by

any means; but there are more people who come and go and work part-time or university students who are not really that concerned about the industry because it you know helps them through schooling and also like at this time of the year now we'll have all kinds of students working in the summer months. Well you don't find that I don't believe you find that so much in other industries.

SD: Has that *always been* the case...

DB: Oh I think so in this industry. And I think that one advantage to this industry that a person could travel possibly across Canada or across Europe and they could probably always find a few hours you know to work as a waitress or whatever and earn a bit of money as they travel along. Where you can't do that if you're a carpenter or an electrician, it doesn't work out quite as well that way.

SD: When you became a business agent, part of your work to was to service...

DB: I wasn't actually a business agent at any time, although I was more ^{or less} like an office business agent because of the fact in those years we didn't have the staff that there is today of course and I ^{would be,} was in the office by myself a good part of the day, well mostly always by myself and so if employees came in or phoned in I then got to the point that I could interpret the agreements well enough

that I was able to try . . . in some way to help them or phone the employer and try to get things you know straightened out a bit for them, or whatever.

SD: What kinds of issues came up regularly...

DB: Well I think chiefly it would be in connection with...

one of their main concerns I think is their shifts.

If they were on a regular shift that they were changed

that they could never have a Sunday off where they always had a midnight shift if they were a desk clerk.

These types of things were...made them most unhappy...

where if they had overtime that wasn't paid to them

well, they would . . . come in and ask about it but

it didn't seem to be of as major importance where

nowadays I think that is more or less of major importance and seniority. But that number of years back

there wasn't that much seniority built up or it wasn't *that much of* the issue as much as it is today.

SD: Was the question of shifts particularly

important for women...

DB: Well, not in some departments; not in the housekeeping department because they pretty well always had ^{just} the one shift and they would *only* have a very skeleton staff for the late checkouts and its been known . . . you know like in some hotels they wouldn't have a late shift maid except that they might have someone for the washrooms or powderrooms whatever they might be termed as and then

they would be required to make up the late checkouts or bellhops would in those years be required; but I hesitate to think that any bellhop nowadays would go up and make up a room. Maybe they do in some of the smaller hotels still but it was rather interesting in that way, you know, you found that people had varied in jobs to do and that was also an issue. In some of the smaller restaurants they might be required to do dishes then they/you know felt that was not the duties of a waitress which is true enough. We don't feel that it is either and in the housekeeping department we would take cases up oftentimes with the compensation board, some of these types of things, where women were required to stand up on top of something and you know wash windows or hang drapes and we felt that those types of jobs should not be the chambermaids job. So we had what we called housemen and their classifications would be the cleaning of the lobby and outside hallwork not duties of the maid assigned in the room. But a lot of those things would be their chief complaints, because I think in those earlier years the hotelmen had not been accustomed to operating under a union agreement and the wage rates I would think in many cases, they would say ^{have} agreed to it, once they've signed a contract, well they paid them; there wasn't ~~too much~~ I don't think, reason for people to complain in

those years. But now when they have double and half times their regular rate of pay for statutory holidays there's certainly going to be all kinds of complaints if they don't get it or that the management will not have as many people on staff naturally, because its costing far too much to have too many on staff at those rates. But when we first got the forty hour week that was a hardship I think in that number of years back for the restuarants we had and I think there, that the employers tried to get more/out of them what, you know, what we wanted them to get out anyways. It was a little too early I think and I remember our International Vice-president in those years saying that we had really jumped the gun sofar as the forty hour week being established in this industry. But it was great when they did of course, it was the starting point of the forty weeks with us and the IWA being first I think in the province.

SD: So you were able to use, I guess, clauses established by stronger unions in this sense, like industrial unions...

DB: Yes, or I think they followed through and tried to write as many of the better things in and of course write it into the agreement even though it might have been in the minimum wage acts and such well it would still be written in; so far as uniforms that was always another complaint like in those years back the girls were required to wear well, chiefly the white starched uniforms

and such that probably aren't worn so much as of today. But they had to have I think it was two changes at least a week and then they had to be laundered. Well that wasn't always lived up to and that would cause some concern to a lot of our girls. And following ^{the days} of those types of uniforms they started wearing the nylon materials and they weren't the best materials to be sending out to laundries so they would have the girls do their own uniforms and then they were supposed to pay them their laundry allowance, well these little things were always cropping up that you know, they would not get their laundry money or you know some such thing as that. And then of course we always had our regular complaints from the staff that they never got proper food served to them you know when they were staff members and then of course we'd get the same complaint from the managements that anything that was supplied to them, well they would be eating steaks instead of having something cheaper on the menu. But those were just kind of beefing problems they were never of a major concern to us.

SD: Were there any particularly militant restaurants do you remember?

DB: Well, I guess that Only Fish it was a restaurant that I forgot to mention earlier, and I think they were and I

think Love's Cafe and I believe they had the co-operation of management more so there than some of the other restaurants. And it seemed as though it was a very strong group. And Flo Allen who you referred to you in your letter, she worked Love's Cafe for many many years and they had waiters in their restaurant, whereas I would think there were very small number of waiters employed in the industry except as a night waiter you know like at the counter or something if there's a restaurant open all night but otherwise there were very, very few waiters in the industry. So I think Love's, they later became the Skillet and it was still you know, union following that.

SD: Was the militancy due in part to there being waiters in the bargaining unit?

DB: Oh, I don't think so, at least didn't seem to me to be so in those years. No I don't think so, I think the girls were, you know, ^{Mind you,} some of the waitresses they could look after themselves pretty good. (laughter) the boys I don't think they needed there to manage their affairs for them.

SD: When there were waiters and waitresses on the same job would there be equal pay?

DB: No, there wasn't in those years, no. And in the latter years of course they had to discontinue those types of things in our agreements and we had busboys and busgirls and waiters and waitresses, but now they are all equal

of course over the last few years. But in those years back, usually the waitress was a little lower paid, somewhat lower paid. I can't just remember exactly how much but it was a little bit lower.

SD: Did the union try to fight that?

DB: I don't think so much in those days. It seemed to be that there were so few waiters in the earlier years that there wasn't really that much concern. I think possibly that as the hotels were organized...I'm just trying to think, it seemed to me there was one other classification where...it seemed to me there was one other classification where it came into...and bothered us a little bit more than the waiter/waitress situation, but right at the moment I can't think what that was. But I don't think there was never the feeling that there seems to be...well as of this day and age ...

there didn't seem to be that pay for equal rights]

There wasn't that number of men in the ^{hotel} industry either in those years back. [I mean] you'd get men in the kitchen, but we had, (like in the Georgia Hotel kitchens), [we had] a good number of women who were the roast cooks and the vegetable cooks and the ^{you know} men/certainly worked in the kitchen but the women carried a fairly good,

[you know, say, so far as the senior jobs were concerned.

[And then, other than bellmen and a few desk clerks there

well there weren't that many, and janitors of course, housemen, ^{because} they usually had the girl elevator operators, and they just, well the bellmen, as I say, they had their own separate little group.

SD: When the hotels were organized, do you remember how they organized, like what kinds of steps were taken to get the hotels into the union?

DB: Well, I should remember if I can think back because anything that was typed up and I don't think they had the money in those years, the union offices didn't have that much money to have things printed up to hand to the employees. They would have applications cards of course, printed. ~~But~~ I just can't remember the type of material they presented to the employee at the entrance way. And they couldn't/organize on the premises so they had to do it from the outside. And they, as I say, they had good response to it, ^{the hotel org drive,} it was about just the right time and it was during those war years when people were earning more, ^{was} and I think too that the shipyard workers and there ^{was} more militancy [I think] throughout the union movement in British Columbia, that was making the hotel people a little more aware of the fact that they should get a piece of the action too. But even then, the average desk clerk, they had to ^{think,} you know, certainly appear to be very well dressed in the nicer hotels, and I ^{think,} if I remember

correctly the wage rate^{at that time,} was 45 cents an hour and I think when we signed a union agreement, I think the first rate for desk clerk was 68 cents ~~an~~ hour. So, I mean, it wasn't anything to speak of but I guess it was probably better than the minimum wage rate of 45¢, that was it.

SD: [So would they try and find people inside, who worked inside, to help organize?

DB: [Oh, I would think that by all means that] there were always a few who were more keenly interested in getting the thing on the road [as you might say, and] so they would be the first to respond and come into the office and sign application cards or to sign up, [and] then they in turn [no doubt] would talk to their fellow workers, [or] our union staff would [in some way try] to promote the idea that they should do, ^{so} and [you know] get the people to do it, you know on the job, where they couldn't get each and to every person. [But they certainly tried, and as I say, they covered every shift for a few weeks there, but it rolled along so nicely that it was, as I remember it, an overwhelming success. I, you know, they were so pleased about it you know that all their efforts were, you know, well worth it.]

SD: Did that mean that the majority of hotels were organized by the Union in the '40s?

DB: Yes. Pretty well all of them, of course there are many more hotels nowadays than there was in those days, but yes, pretty well all of them. There were a few who stood out, one of them being the Alcazar, but they were very very good to their employees, the Wainwrights were exceptionally good to their employees and people were on staff there for many many years and the same as the Grosvenor. They had people who had still, that still the same situation there, the service areas we called it rather than the bar area. I doubt if they're in the union as of today even because they've been there for so many years and they're well treated and they just feel I guess, that there's no reason, although *our health and welfare and pension plan, dental plan and such would be good reasons for them to be in, but they no doubt have been given some compensation by the management for that. But there are very few of them though that stayed outside of the union, pretty all of them came in. And that would be only the licensed hotels like, there's many hotels in VANcouver that are more or less, well some of them like would be like a glorified rooming house and those hotels were never organized really.*

SD: [Did you get help from the labour movement as a whole in your organizing campaign?

DB: Generally speaking I'm sure we did because we were always

affiliated with the Councils but so far as them participating in an active way I don't remember that they ever did. They might give moral support or try in some way to promote whatever they could so far as organizing but I don't remember that they ever, you know, were out on the job with our people.]

SD: Did any of the hotel workers have to strike or take job action in order to establish...

DB: No, not in those years back we didn't have a strike Side II. until 197__ (end of tape Side I) and Jack Thompson who's now the labour liaison man for the B.C. Hotel Association, he was officer, and President and Secretary Treasurer of Local 835 of Hotel, Restaurant, Bartenders Union. And so they've always had a fairly good relationship over a period of years and I think it's always been pretty tough struggling, but there again we didn't have the support I would say for strike action that you would have in the industrial industries. As I was mentioning earlier, you know, the waitresses, well if they were getting fairly good tips well they'd rather be working you know, than/on strike; or the chambermaids they were just supplementing their income or their husband's income and it wasn't as important to them...at least if their husbands were still working anyway, it wasn't so important to them, so they were not really that concerned with the

going out on strike to gain something better and greater. So I don't think there was...we didn't have the same...whatever, strength behind us. No doubt they used it in negotiations. I'm sure that they probably threatened strike if they couldn't get a little bit more money but they would also know that when they got to a certain point well they probably couldn't bring the people out successfully and they didn't have the money either for strike pay or anything of that nature.

SD: When the waitresses and waiters were establishing their monetary clauses, would they consider *their* tips as part of ...

DB: No. We have always been very adamant about that. *That* No way shall the tips be, you know, taken into consideration when it comes to wage increases. But it always had some mention and I think at times there was always the idea that the non-gratuity employees, and I believe in some negotiations, in some contracts that were signed, I believe that the non-gratuity employees got a little bit more per hour increase than the gratuity employees.

SD: Would you every have to deal with employers who would want a percentage of the tips?

DB: Oh, yes, very much so. Not maybe the employer, the top level but the maitre'd and the chef and the wine steward and the so on and so on, the service bar, which is an

established thing. It is very established. But we had a case, when you're talking with Chris Waddell you might, she might mention that to you, I can remember we had a case where a girl phoned into one of the hotlines, I believe she worked for Kenny Stauffer up at the Lulubelle up on West Broadway, and she phoned into the hotlines and it was quite an issue on the radio program and so they in turn then contacted our office and wanting some spokesman and Chris was the one delegated to do it. Al Martin was then the Secretary Treasurer and so he delegated Chris to speak on that radio program but it's an established fact and a lot of people, again outside of the industry, would feel that, you know, it's not a proper thing. You know, They feel that the waitress is serving the food and she's the one who should get the tip, but that's not necessarily so. You know, she has to depend on someone else to provide her with the service in order for her to give service. And if the food is nice and if the people enjoy their meal they are likely to, you know, they'll be a little happier about giving a tip. So there in turn I suppose the chef should get ^{some of the} credit for serving nice meals too.

SD: I have another question which is around the women who worked for the union, were you organized in O^EU.

DB: Yes, I was. When I went into the union office to inquire about the job that they mentioned at Selective Service, they said well you'll have to become a member of the Office Employees Union so that I did then when I started to work there. But I was never a very active office employee member. I lived out in Burnaby and you know, it wasn't really of that much interest or concern because I've never belonged to unions in Saskatchewan and I wasn't really that familiar. But following that I participated a little bit more and I was President of the Office Employees Union for a period of time and well, eventually, I don't know just how much I can say on tape. ^(Break in tape) Because eventually the one person who was then became Secretary Treasurer he in no way would listen to any negotiation talk or have anybody in to our office to suggest what should be paid to the office staff. He would, you know, be the one to decide and that was that, so from that time on, I was not a member of the Office Employees Union because it was (laughter) it just was finalized there and then. And the same thing I think came to pass here in the Local 40 or the Local 835 office I think the same thing came to pass in latter years. Like the Teamster's experience for, some of the girls from 835, they went out on strike

and so following that I think that they just
you know
discontinued/that type of union organization outside
of being a member of our own union.

SD: So does that mean that the women who work here are
members of ...

DB: of the Hotel, Restaurant, Bartenders Union.

SD: OK, so they are unionized?

DB: Yes. Yes, they all pay dues and you know pay their
initiation and participate in the health and welfare
pension, dental, and prescription plan of the Hotel,
Restaurant plans.

SD: Going back to when you were the President of the
Office Employees Union, when was that?

DB: Well, that would be, now...let me see...that would be
in the late 40's or early 50's. I wish I could just
remember now. But I was President for two or three years
but, yes in some ways I used to speak up quite freely
at the Office Employees meetings because we were such
a small group and the only people we had in the office
employees union were people who worked in union offices.
And they felt they should get, you know, more or less
if
to my way of thinking, they worked in the Electrical
Union office well they felt that they should get as much
as the top lineman should get. And I would quite often
speak out and say I don't feel that, you know, we as one
small union should be demanding you know, the great

increases that a lot of the girls seem to feel that they should get. And I still suggest...not now when there's a bigger staff well I guess it's not possible, but I do think in those years that we certainly had many more privileges than any other office staff had ever had. You know, we were not restricted to just a lunch break or coffee break or those type of things that we were, you know, quite free to come and go as long as we got our work done well there wasn't too much restrictions put on our movement. And for that reason, I became a little bit disenchanted with the Office Employees Union because ^{as} I say they weren't organizing and there wasn't anybody on staff, it was just a small as I say, just the union office people that was, only a few people belonging to it.

SD: Did you feel that it was like in contradiction with working for a union to demand high wages because of ...

DB: No, I don't really think...I can't quite understand in some ways when you are working for a union why they would be disenchanted with...not belong to the Office Employees Union you know, like into your own ^{what do you call} it, well, your own classification, but I can't just think of the word right at the moment that I would like to use...But, however, I mean it came to pass in our union and I would say that possibly I don't know what the Teamsters are going to do now because I understand they've hired all new staff and they

may just suggest to that the people become members
of their union...

I think

SD: Yes, /that was one of the issues...

DB: Was that, yea, uhuh...

SD: What other things did the Office Workers Union try and
negotiate other than wages, was it...

DB: Oh yes, they had about a thirty hour week and they had,
but believe me
oh, I can't remember, /it was beautiful. If everybody
could just have, you know, got along with it, it was
great, but that would be way, that's a good number of
years ago. But the business agent and secretary
treasurer at that time was *the top man*.
that was part of the time that Chris Waddell left
the office and so that would fifteen twenty years
ago now I should think.

SDL: And were they able to establish those things in the
contract?

DB: Oh, I think so. They had a beautiful contract written
up.

SD: When you were President do you remembers which unions
were organized into the Office Employees Union?

DB: No. The girls who worked in the *Trades* Council Office,
Bernadette *Guthroe* and she's still works in the
Building Service Employees Union office and I talk
with her on the phone when she phones into the switch
switchboard every once in a while for the Health and

Welfare plan. And the Electrical Workers and...I really can't remember...I remember the Electrical Workers because they were downtown across from the Bus Depot but most of the other ones were in the Trades Council Building which was built during those years and because I worked downtown I didn't know many of the girls. I didn't know...I wasn't that familiar with the offices they worked in, so I can't really tell you how many but there weren't too many and there were certainly very few as ever turned up for a meeting.

SD: When you husband was working during the war was he active in that...

DB: No, he wasn't active. He was a member of the Marineworkers the same one that Bill Stewart, Barbara's husband was at, but he wasn't active at all.

SD: And he did he support you working for a trade union?

DB: Well, he...we weren't really concerned with unions. And I'm still not in some respects you know. I certainly admire them and appreciate them and enjoy this industry but I'm still not one of the real militant people. I'm not going to get out there on a picket line unless I really have to...laughter...and I'm not really going to make about a big issue things but I think that common sense is much better than picket lines. (laughter) I guess as much as people like to be

unionized with all the rest of it...I don't...pardon me,
 I think it's a good idea ^{to be}
 I'll take that back... unionized

but as much as they want to preach trade unionism I
 still say that I still I guess like to be a
 capitalist in some respects because I enjoy the better
 things in life and enjoy taking nice long trips and
 I enjoy having a nice apartment and all these types of
 things, so I guess in some respects I want to earn
 enough that I can enjoy living and through the unions
 I guess we've been able to do that.

side two/tape one ends here

Side 2. Tape II.

SD: Did the issue of child care ever come up?

DB: Not too much.

SD: Did you have any women who were married...

DB: Oh there certainly were. It wasn't though a major
 concern it seemed in those years back. It must have
 been I'm sure for some of the girls who were working
 and had children. But it didn't seem to be as much
 mention made of it or I wasn't as aware of it anyway
 in those years back, that they didn't seem to make
 mention of it in the office whereas today you hear a
 great deal of it. One thing that was a great concern, and
 Emily Watts, when she was with the union had the Night
 Order put into affect through the provincial government,
 and that was following a waitress being murdered down

at English Bay I believe it was. So then she...I
and
remember one statement she made the press printed
it, that she'd go over and push the parliament buildings
over if they didn't put some protection in for women
working those late shifts. And so then they put the
night order in...it's so many years back now following
the war but I believe they had to provide transportation
home or they employee was not allowed to have shifts
where she would be required to leave the premises
between the hours of twelve midnight and six in the
morning I think it was.

SD: Were there any women who were active in the union?

DB: Well there was a fairly good group of them and I don't
know just how much of this information you know I
don't want to dwell on it because it's all past history
but that's what your'e interested in I suppose...In
1947, the latter part of '47 or '48, early '48 I
think it was, that the officers of Local 28 were deposed
from office because of their political leanings and
so there were a group of people, you know, their followers
as you might say, who were quite active. But
following that I would say there were very few of them,
are being known, one or two now, for that Simon Fraser
picket line, I know one or two of our people have been
kind of showing up in that episode. But when they were
deposed from office that seemed to have eliminated any
of the you know, real active ones. They kind of kept

in the background. after the officers were deposed and were, you know, the International Head office wouldn't give them say withdrawal cards so they would never ever become a member again and and they would never be able to hold office again. So for that reason well, Emily and May were the two who were deposed and were you know, no longer then able to become active in the union in this industry.

SD: Was that through the International?

DB: Yes, the International officer put trusteeship in and took over the Local.

SD: Was that because of particular policies of the union?

DB: Well I think because of the views that they were trying to establish.

But-

SD: Did that have an effect, like on the union behaviour or policy?

DB: Oh no, I don't think so. I think that it was just they themselves who were...and I think it was a move in C nada at that time anyway, to have the Communist element removed from office, and so our union, you know, were purged you might say, too. So those were interesting days.

SD: Did that have any affect on the union at all in terms of those leadership people?

DB: Not really, no I don't think so. Emily was a very strong

girl and you know, very strong character and she's a great person. May, she was inclined well, I, I like May, I mean I don't, I'm not trying to be critical or ^{atly} or whatever the woman's saying might be right now, but it's just that she didn't seem to be as forceful and I would think that she probably hadn't had the same union upbringing as Emily nor had she maybe the same education as Emily that she wasn't just quite as competent and able to you know, put forth her views as Emily was.

SD: When they were deposed were there people in the union who left the union because of that?

DB: No, I don't think so. I think there was one member in particular, ...we brought other people up to trial at that time too, and I think two or three of them were not expelled actually but they were given ^{the} files are still here, but you know that's all so long ago now that I've forgotten. But I think they were given some ^{kind} [time] of suspension that they couldn't hold office again...like be an executive board member or something of that nature.

SD: Did the union affiliate with the CCF?

DB: No, never.

SD: So basically the union did not want to be affiliated with any political party?

DB: ..affiliated with any political party, no. And I would say that is still true as of today, and, you know I'm

still on the executive board and I would that think that its a viewpoint that you know, some of our top officers here are very much CCF and you know, they love it, and one of our people here run for Social Credit riding one time, so they all had their own political viewpoints. *But* they don't want the union in anyway to be cracked up, as being known to be a strong supporter of any or a supporter of political party. To the point that we don't really appreciate too much for that reason, the amounts that money that are spent through the labour organizations in the city that we're affiliated with for political fields.

Current

SD: Did the conflicts that went on with the union, in terms of, between the communists and I guess, other people in the union, did that have like a repercussion within the membership at all, or was it mostly *in the leadership?*

DB: I don't think so. As I was saying a little earlier, Emily was a smart enough girl but she was able to keep *May* under control. I think if, May, she would be the one who would be the go-between and wasn't really astute enough about it, so with Emily being in control, well she was able to try, I suppose in her own way, to operate as they often do, in kind of a, behind the scenes *type* of thing, but also getting their point across, because, you know, it was certainly established that they were trying to get people from some of the

membership to join the party or something of that nature? But they didn't, in one way, they didn't come out and publicly/^{make this}known at membership meetings or anything. And they would ask me, you know, if I had any interest in Lenin or Marxism or something like that and I said, well, not really. I said I've read authors and I've read about their community farming and such things over there in Russia but I said I haven't really any great interest in it. And so they never bothered me about it. And at the time they were deposed there was quite a fuss but Emily again, I guess she thought well enough of me, that she phoned me at home and said, "Daisy I'd rather you wouldn't come to the office in the morning because I think there might be a little trouble," or something like that. So, of course, they had been locked out but they in turn, had come through into the building again and in our offices there, there was like an outside big room and then the inside offices, you know, little office where we worked. And so then when we got down there in the morning, well there was quite a number of their supporters, again, no one connected with our union, but our, well then Jimmy Morrison was involved with that and Archie Johnston, who now is deceased. But he was the Vice-President from our International head office for all of Canada, and he was the one who was assigned

to come in and take over the office and you know, the depose the two girls. So, anyways, from that time on then, well, I worked out of the hotel room then you know, where they brought a typewriter and I just worked out of there. As I say, Emily in her own way, was you know, above it all. She was, I would say, very communist but still was a great girl but with May, she was ^{more} /devious about things in my you know, the way I found her. And I would say that, you know, I think that it was quite correct assumption on my part, you know, from the earnings on.

SD: In terms of the union history, have there been any specific attempts to encourage women to get active with the union? Is there a fairly large female membership in the union?

DB: Oh, yes. There's a good majority of...I would say the majority are...well not now, that we're all one. You see I still refer back to those days when I was with just the service employees, service part of the hotel, not the bartenders and the outlets. Where as now there are so many more waiters in the dining rooms than there used to be and there's so many more, even to the point that we have chambermen now, you know, that they train them, we have a training centre, and, I was quite surprised because I had never been to countries where the men worked as chambermen. And, it was brought quite

to my attention. one day when a fellow came in looking for work and so I said, well we haven't anything better than a chambermaid's job and I'm sure you wouldn't want to be a chambermaid, and he said, "Well, why not." He said, "It's certainly a custom in our country for men to work as chambermen," I don't know what they call them in language their own but that's what we call them here anyway. So now we offer training for chamberpersons. laughter. So there could be a fair percentage ^{of men} over and above what there used to be...

SD: Did kthe union try and get women ^{involved} within it?

DB: Well, I don't know just how your're thinking of them becoming involved. I mean, they've always wanted them to become interested enough to attend meetings. And Chris Waddell following the time she worked at the Aristocratic restaurant, and then, when she came in to try and get the Aristocratic organized, then that's when she continued on following that. They were organized then and that was a big victory for us and so following that she then continued working in the office rather than returning to her waitress work in the Aristocratic. So she was involved in that respect, but there weren't, see there were no positions for them to hold, except on the executive board and we had just as many women on the executive board I think as men.

What about other once org'd shops?

SD: Did you have a steward structure?

DB: Oh yes. At one time they had a fairly good steward structure going and they had meetings of shop stewards and had little booklets that our head office used to publish for them. I think they still do. And, they had a fairly good system working, but again, it would depend a great deal on who their stewards would be as to how effective they could be. And even now its pretty well established that our business agent can't be fired and so, ^{you know} these shop stewards find it too difficult to settle a problem, well it's much better that the business agent handle it. Well, I think like with the ...some of the things you read in the newspapers, like if a fellow working out in a mountain camp or a fellow working in an electrical area, if something happens to them, well they all walk off the job, well you won't find that in our industry. They just don't do that, and they wouldn't do it. Of course, we wouldn't want them to either, it would break our agreements...laughter...but however the fact remains that they're not, you know, that strong little group that you find...

SD: And there were women who were in the leadership of the union, were those both elected and appointed positions?

DB: The...all of the positions are elected and all the

executive positions are elected. I don't think there are any of them appointed, except, well the business agent could be hired just as staff, they're not elected, the business agents, so...

SD: So you've held both staff office and elected...

DB: Umhum. Yes, I've been on the executive board as recording secretary for many years for Local 28 and when Local 676 and 28 became 16 well I discontinued then as the recording secretary. And the same as Chris Waddell, she was appointed as you might say, or hired, or put on staff and it was then following that she would run for office and became you know, as an executive board member.

SD: Do you think the responsibilities that like women waitresses and othr workers of outside of their work places like families, child care, that those kinds of things affected their ability to get active within the union, or the desire to become active?

DB: Yes, I don't really think that I'm qualified to answer because personalities are such that if they are interested they are and if they're not, they're not. With me, I would be a poor one to try to preach to anyone that they should try to become active if they don't wish to. At least I don't think that they would be genuinely active or interested in that way.

SD: Were there any issues or contract demands which ^{women} in particular

kept raising more than lets say men, anything that women *tended to focus on? Do you remember?*

DB: I don't really think so unless as I think back, and only because I'm remembering the negative response to it, that when we would be negotiating CPA contracts which were federal negotiations at that time, one of the bones of contention was the more sick leave that was given in the agreement if we could establish a day or two days or whatever; that women were more inclined to take it. Now I'm not suggesting that that would be true but I'm only remembering that particular issue because of the negative response from management area. I can't just particularly remember the women making any great push to have more days of sick days, they probably did, or probably the union negotiating committee, you know, when they were. because I didn't sit in on the negotiations. I used to go to some of them and take notes and minutes but I didn't sit on all of the negotiations. So it could very easily be when they were going to get their demands together they might have had people pushing more for those types of things. *Gen*, he could tell you, he does our negotiations pretty much *of* all *of* the negotiations right now. The one who comes into the office here.

SD: And, did the men who were active in the union feel positively about women active as well, was there ever any discrimination at all?

DB: I...I don't know whether you would term this discrimination, but I think that the almost every day I think this matter comes up; but I lways say there's more to a hotel than just the bar because it seems as you know, though/a certain group of people, they feel as though the chambermaids ought, I'll give you a for instance, the July the 1st holiday fell on Sunday and some of the men were really up on arms because of the fact that they thought Monday should be the premium paid day. But we said no, July the 1st is July the 1st and through our agreements that is the day and that will be paid at double time and a half. But they couldn't seem to understand that. And I said, But yes, but you forget that we have a whole kitchen crew and the dining room staff and the desk clerk and the chambermaids, I said if everybody thinks in terms of the bar only....I think in that way they're kind of pushed aside and...I shouldn't say it because I don't know, but I think that even our business agents/ who go into the hotels, they kind of forget too that there are chambermaids that would be interested to maybe air a little bit of a beef once in/while. But they always find it a little difficult to talk to chambermaids about their duties. They're not interested too much in the women's housely affairs, and you know, the bedroom affairs of cleaning under the bed, and, whether they dust

properly or ~~with~~ they don't dust properly because all these things the maids have to, you know, be very careful about because, you know, the inspectresses go in or the housekeeper goes in after the chambermaid's been through the room. And if there is a feather or well, you know if there's a little bit of the dust/they can be, criticised and given warning they they will lose their job and all these type of things but the men, they don't think, and rightfully so, so far's I'm concerned anyways, they are not that concerned about a little bit of dust or a little bit of something the chambermaid has to worry about.

SD: How about attitudes towards women officers in the union?

DB: Well, we don't have any women officers you see, So this way I would find it a little difficult.....there was a period of time though when Chris Waddell was at the office, she wasn't actually the President or Secretary but facts remain she was the only other one to work out around the hotels, the only business agent, and I was in the office. And then Al Morgan was our top boss at that time. And she was accepted in a sense. I would say just as readily and could have been elected to the top offices very easily. So she was accepted very well. But apart from her we haven't had any women officers at all.

SD: Did the union ever have an auxiliary or any organization

like that?

DB: No. No. They did get a credit union going at one time but ^{we} eventually had to give that up which we hoped it certainly was going to be a benefit to our members but when we found out it was too much of a burden for...well first I was trying to manage the books of that as well as, you know, the office work, and then Chris Waddell tried to look after it and it was pretty difficult to operate on the basis of trying to decide who would be able to get a loan because, you know, some of them would turn sour and we wouldn't get the payments made and so on and so on, so eventually that was discontinued. Apart from that we didn't have any outside things for the union.

SD: Is there any specific legislation like minimum wage laws that have been important to the union in establishing standards?

DB: Well, I think the...I think the uniforms for instance, That was one that was always helpful and then I think the overtime, because at one time we didn't have the good overtime rates we have today and I don't think the holiday... I don't ...well, the annual holidays with pay act came in later on but I think by that time we had pretty well established our own, you know, standards. I can't recall now what other clauses are in the minimum wage act. I'm trying to think back. You see

I used to deal with all these things so much of the time and now that I'm not doing it, well, I've kind of lost track of it all.

SD: And when did the union establish training?

DB: The training centre?

SD: Yes.

DB: That would be I guess...well, pardon me. We had training for bartenders many years back. That would like date back 676, /the Beverage Dispensers they first operated it. Then it was operated under the Local joint executive board which was a board of the three unions at that time, 835, 28 and 676. They operated it for a period of time and it was just strictly the bartender's training at that time. And in the past four or five years, they had a beautiful training centre for the bar set-up. We used to rent a hotel, you know, meeting room or something like that, just put a portable bar in or something of that nature for training but now they've got one of the most modern bars and beautiful, you know, lounge kind of arrangement at the training centre, 1945 East Hastings and they have chamber maid training and they have front office NCR training and they just recently started waitress/waiter banquet service training. And it's exceptionally nice. Actually if you're interested in anything on the line of training it would be worth your time to make an
to see

supervisor of the training centre and the training classes and he...it costs a great deal and through our training chamberpersons pretty much always we're able to get them placed in employment right away which is most important. And our housekeepers. And he does a lot of legwork, as you might say, by going and out/talking with housekeepers to promote the training classes so that they can be assured that, you know, during the summer months particularly, when they need extra staff that they have someone come in who, you know, familiar with, being able to go ahead and do the work.

SD: Does that mean that the union office acts as a hiring hall?

DB: Yes, we do have a dispatch or hiring hall. It's at the same address as the, 1945, as the training centre.

SD: And is that um, do you think that's important in terms the industry, in terms of the kinds of conditions that people face in the industry that they can have some around flexibility changing jobs?

DB: Yes, I think so and I think that the members appreciate the fact that if they come out and, you know, follow the work that they can phone the dispatch office and hope to find employment. We can't always, can't guarantee employment but well...and in our agreements at one time, especially the beverage dispensers, it was strictly through the dispatch office only; they could

not hire for beer partours or cocktail lounges after ~~the cocktail lounges~~ started. They couldn't hire unless they went through the dispatch office and they had it really tied up tight. But with our service area, it was more difficult to try to find...it's always been established that a good waiter or good waitress has never failed employment, you know, they are always working. And in the summer months when tourist season is, you know, here and they demand so many more people to look after the tourists, well it is almost impossible to find chamberpersons or waiters or waitresses. So for that reason, if we can get people interested enough to leave their names with us; or desk clerks, and especially if you get, like these certain shifts. Like a lot of girls are not interested or prepared to work the 4 to 12 shift. Like, ^{say} in some of those hotels, its not just the nicest spot to be working in, or the graveyard shift, but somebody has to work it. So, it's not always easy to find people and if they can leave their names and addresses, you know, with the dispatch office well it's helpful to the employer and its helpful to the person too if we can help them in any way.

SD: Is there anything else that you can think of that you think is important ...

DB: I don't really know...I wish I could think

back...am I on tape now? laughter...mumbling away here...I can't just remember the year. But this particular person who was then our top person, it was a lady, she was taken from office because of her conduct. And then she set up a Local under the CLC and was reasonably successful for a little period of time and however, it was nipped in the bud early enough that we were able to maintain our, you know, Local 28 without a split in it. And while I think about that split, I might then mention that a few years prior to that Local 244 who jointly organized all the hotel workers along with Local 28 officers they then, at a latter date, and I can't recall the year, they more or less raided our industry and were very successful to pick up a good number of people. So the government held a vote and so in turn, the buildingservices employees kunion held some of the hotels, but they have a number of smaller hotels, like the Empress, the Columbia, the Europe and you know, a good number of the smaller ones. So that was two different episodes that were n rather not the best for Local 28 and we did lose, as I say, some members through that latter way.

End of tape.

Daisy Brown

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