

I'm Caroline Callery.

Q: When did you become interested in birds?

I first became interested in birds at my mother's feeder in Hunt, Texas. And now I'm having a senior moment, and I'm trying to remember that gorgeous bird that they say is a nonpareil. Oh, it's. It's green and red and blue (*Painted Bunting*). There you are. It came to my mother's feeder, and I couldn't believe my eyes. She happened to have an old original Audubon book, so I leafed through that until I found out what that bird was. That that's what hooked me. That gorgeous creature.

Q: How did you get into fund raising?

I got into fund raising when I was first married, and Miss Ima Hogg asked me to work on the maintenance fund for the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. So I did that, and then we made our goal. So I did it a second year and then they put me on the board and I was active with them for many years.

Q: And you've been doing that ever since?

Well, I quit for a while, but you never know. And then, of course, I saw the bridge and I don't know who early on - the bridge, it goes across the creek in Edith Moore sanctuary has Milton Underwood's name on it. Milton Underwood was married to one of the Fondrens, and I was acquainted with him and so I asked his cousin, Doris Fondren, Allday she was at the time, if she'd come and sit at our table for the fundraiser we had that year where we honored Roger Tory Peterson. And she did. And we had at our table a lovely man whose name escapes me, who did audio for fundraising for us, and he also was employed with one of the TV stations (*Steve Smith*). So we were having our dinner only our dinner didn't come. And then we heard this great crash and it was, of course, our table's dinner. [Laughter]

He finally had to leave, you know, didn't have anything to eat. But the best part was Roger Tory Peterson and Jenny came and PD Hulse, who has a beautiful voice and we thought he'd be just great. Well PD had no skill at all or background in fundraising or organizational work, but he had a great voice. And so we had him pick up the Peterson's and drive them to their hotel, the one that's across from the Galleria on Westheimer. And we had PD doing this because he'd be able to talk about birds to Peterson. Well, the only thing Peterson noticed was these House Sparrows on Westheimer, and it just went on and on about the House Sparrows. [Laughter] So anyhow, that's what I know.

Q: There was the Edith Moore Cabin restoration?

The chimney stood away from the wall, and of course, the roof needed repair. It was, ended up being a big job.

Q: Now, you also helped raise some funds for land purchases I think at High Island back when Ted Eubanks was the president of Houston Audubon.

I just remember going to Ted's house because we had no bylaws at that time. I had been a member of National Audubon for a number of years, but I didn't know they had a chapter in Houston. And then a friend of mine who was a co-docent at the Arboretum with me, so she said, oh, we sell birdseed and told me about Edith Moore's cabin. So I went out there and bought some birdseed. See, that's when I and Edith Moore's dog was still, I think, sort of like a golden retriever. And this lovely couple whose name escapes me lived across Memorial Drive and they took care of that dog even though Edith Moore was gone and did other very helpful things, if I recall about trails. (*Dee Oke and Steve Ross*)

Q: Do you remember your first fallout at High Island?

I do. It was just incredible. I've never seen another like it, and I think I was there. We spent the night in the motel, and I was maybe with another group. And we came out of that hotel and looked across the

street and there were, hmmm they weren't Kingbirds. Oh, I want to say Red Start. I wasn't a Red Start, but they're black and white and they have a red breast, whatever that bird is (*Rose-breasted Grosbeak*). And they were all just all the way down the phone line across the street. We couldn't believe what we were seeing.

Q: Fallouts back then were particularly memorable. And I think the record shows Caroline at one time you established an endowment for office equipment at Houston Audubon, is that correct?

That's right. You know, there wasn't anything there wasn't a printer. There just wasn't anything there. And if I ever called Joy Hester's husband, who maybe worked at NASA and he had an extra old copier, I think that, you know, he brought out and they didn't have any equipment so for three years that's what I did. I worked real hard at that. I'd go in the spring and, you know, see as many as I could. And I had a partner who since died and then I would write a letter to every one of my mother's widowed friends who I thought had any money at all, you know, and try and make it seem like fun and draw a little picture. That's how I raised that money. It took me, I think, three years.

Q: Tell us about some of your fun times birding.

Well, they were always fun and but usually fairly grueling. If you went with Victor Emanuel, it was a luxury tour. I once went to California on a Victor short thing. And you went to these good restaurants and ate and it was just unlike anything that I'd ever done with anybody.

And I'm trying to remember the man who wrote the book that I went to Mexico with, Steve, whatever his name is, and also going to going to Attu. One woman slept on the kitchen table and I don't know, you know, it was couldn't have been more primitive. And then there was the porta potty. But it was very interesting to go to Attu and I have I think it's some of the rocks and the other room that I brought back from had to you walked across this unbelievable landscape that was all just rocks.

And I was there was no firm under base. So you look for a tiny little speck of grass. You could maybe head for and then continue walking on. There was water on the floor of this ancient, awful place that we were in. And so you just - this one fellow was there. And he said, Caroline, I just don't get any sleep at night because I feel like I'm just, I don't know what I'm sleeping on. And so we looked the next day, he was there was a bicycle underneath his little mattress. [Laughter]

Q: Were the birds good?

Yes, the birds were goods. And he and I got lost one day. We were out of this place where it supposedly seems like somebody would come by, maybe with an ATV and pick you up after a while and nobody ever came.

And so we started walking. And then this. It was like a tank came and jumped down the middle of the road, waving them down. And they stopped and they were from there was a naval air station up there that was strictly off limits for us. And I said, You just have to take me. You just take me to see your commander.

So they took us and we went in there and I walked down this long hall and went in this office and I said sir, I'm Caroline Callery from Houston, Texas, and I need your help. He was very nice. And so they took us partway home and then we were able to walk the rest of the way to this one little place where all of regulars who these men that came every year would just sit there and play cards all day long.

And then if the wind was right, then they might go outside and see what was flying around.

Q: Well, that sounded like quite a place.

Well, it was. It was.

Q: Have you ever chased birds a little closer to home like at Big Bend, Big Bend Park?

I have birded at Big Bend. Yes, and I went and we decided the thing to do is have a tent.

So about ten and I practiced putting that up in my living room and then went with my friend Carlton Collier and I forget who the other fellow was and pitched my tent far away because Carlton and I had chased this remarkable sea eagle. I can't remember what it's called in Alaska one time. We chartered a plane or helicopter. I guess it was a plane, little plane. And we flew around and we ran around this thing and Carlton was getting sicker and sicker. But anyhow, he and I have birded together quite a bit. And so I went to Big Bend with him, but he snores terribly. So I had my own tent and we saw, you know, a few things.

I didn't climb all the way up to the tiptop, but I went pretty far and this friend of mine had told me there was a, I think a Flammulated Owl up near the top. And I got almost up there and pitched the tent. Oh, I know I made my husband go. And so we hiked up there, just a jar of peanut butter I think and pitched a tent, and he got claustrophobia and climbed down. And I'm thinking the rest of the night, my God, there's snakes all over the place and he's sleeping out there on the ground. He doesn't know that. But he couldn't believe that we would do something like this, you know, And oh, and then there was a big storm. That's right. They had a big storm and a little hail.

Q: Do you want to tell us about the volunteers, Don Gray and whoever?

Yes. And he and I had been docents together and active at the arboretum before then. I don't admire anybody more than admire her him.

And I'm trying to remember the two people. Oh, and there was a wonderful man whose daughter lives down the street from our Edith Moore Sanctuary. I don't remember his name (*Herb Orwig*), but he was there all the time, just up there in this tiny little office that we climbed up those steps and how we squashed into that little space I can't imagined.

I would write grants. Sandy Hoover was active then. And was the one who got me involved. And I said, listen, I'm boarded out and I don't need to do anything like this again. And she said, no, you just have to you have to come on. But she, I couldn't type so I would stand over her shoulder up there and dictate fundraising letters, you know, and she would type them out for me or I'd be downstairs writing it and then take it up to her.

Q: Was this in the log cabin?

Yes.

Q: Was that Herb Orwig, the man you were thinking about?

You know, maybe it was. I think that's who it was. I haven't thought of him in all that time. Yes. He was so nice.

There were some good volunteers and there was Gregg (*Dorothy "Gregg" Mueller*), and she worked every day up there in that office. She wasn't paid, I think it was volunteer job. And that was her daughter. But we had an interesting group of people involved from one time or another.

*[End of Audio]*