

## **Lou Harshaw**

### **Side 1:**

[1/6] She has had a long ancestry in the area, from Scotch-Irish and English ancestors. She attended Asheville schools and Biltmore College. [Morgan Family]

[1/15] She enjoyed working on radio WSKY, writing stories and commercials. Programs were uninhibited - she took many parts. Her husband was with WISE. [Richard Harshaw]

[1/29] She had a show "For Women Only" which was ahead of its time. She interviewed women in all occupations and had experts give information in various areas - legal, real estate, the mechanics of a car, etc. The station WISE, which became WLOS, was owned by Britt. Everything, even commercials, was live. Children put on programs with simple scripts. There were many visitors on programs and lots of letters and phone calls came from the public. She has visited the present studio at Battle house but broadcasted from Battery Park Hotel when she was active. [Charles Britt]

[1/117] When she was on the radio program a "swap shop" interchange was popular. The Farmer's Federation gave local farming information.

[1/130] She was taught photography by Ball while with the Chamber of Commerce. She used this skill illustrating her books. Her husband, who studied in the University of North Carolina, helped her. [Ewart M. Ball III (now with the Asheville Citizen Times)]

[1/134] For 8 years she worked as Publicity Director at the Chamber of Commerce (see enclosure). Prior to her joining the organization two professionally trained executives were brought in. Degenhardt, vice president, was brilliant, and served 17 years. [Richard K. Degenhardt]

[1/160] The Chamber was active in many projects planned to increase per capita income by increasing industrial growth and tourism. The board of Directors was active in promoting the development of the air park, the Asheville cut, I-40 and a retirement program started by Barfield. Money was raised to build the Chamber offices which had in the past been housed in many locations - the last being by the water department in the city hall. [Manley Wright, Jack Barfield]

[1/190] The development of the agricultural arm was important. [Morris L. McGough]

[1/210] She helped pioneer the policy of promoting the entire WNC area. She was free to publicize the whole area as she saw fit and great effort was given the Blue Ridge Parkway - from Virginia to Cherokee. The Chamber was active in fighting against having lodges located on the parkway and bypassing Asheville. The fight went to the Department of the Interior and when toll charges were suggested they went to battle again - and won. [Hugh Morton]

[1/271] The Chamber worked with the Director of the Parkway and encouraged the building of the free-flying bridge - the Lynn Cove viaduct - which was built so Grandfather Mountain would

not be disturbed (see enclosure). This in itself is a tourist attraction and there is now a visitors center there. [Sam P. Weems]

[1/319] In the early 50's when she saw in a big metropolitan newspaper that MGM Studios was looking for a castle to film The Swan she contacted the studio who sent a director to look at Biltmore House. Cecil agreed to the terms, the house was closed for 2 1/2 months, and the crew moved in. Bunn helped round up old hacks and carriages (see his tape). [Grace Kelly, George Cecil, Robert Bunn]

[1/369] There were no problems in filming. Jane (on her tape) talks about filming at the Manor. [Jane Matthews]

[1/388] The stars flew into the military airport in Greenville (the largest in the area at that time) and the press went to meet them. She was in a car with the photographers and, when she saw the stars in their limo pull into a beer place so Grace could have a beer, she had to phone the officials, who were waiting to greet them, to say there would be a delay. There was a big reception - Grace was reserved but gracious. [Grace Kelly, Louis Jourdan, Alec Guinness]

[1/434] During a press conference with Grace, the swan which had been imported from Charlotte, bit her. Bunn saved her from a swarm of bees! [Robert Bunn]

[1/463] Because of union rules the studio had to hire NY crew to stand by - they did nothing.

[1/483] One of the extras was directed to throw water over one of the lions in front of the house as he was scrubbing it - the man drenched the director.

[1/507] There were strict rules about not driving or walking on the grass. Cecil, coming to watch, found equipment in the drive and - not knowing the rule - did the unthinkable - but was forgiven. [George Cecil]

[1/532] She was the trouble shooter for the Asheville area. Not liking the reflection on the pool, water lilies were requested. The mayor of Weaverville made a deal - he would deliver a truck full of lilies between 5 and 6 a.m. the next day if he could meet Grace. When the main camera broke she called Ball at home. He worked most of the night at the Battery Park on it and got it working. [Mr. Choat, Ewart Ball III]

## **Side 2:**

[2/1] Weem's office [National Park Service] made the tours of travel editors possible. She worked with agents and tour groups in a bus holding 44 people - rangers in patrol cars escorted the group. There were 1-2 tours a year and tours with Gatlinburg, TN and Chattanooga, TN were exchanged. These tours, she believes, are still being run. [Sam P. Weems]

[2/55] "Poteen" is the Scotch-Irish word for whisky. When the settlers came to "empty lands" they brought 3 beliefs with them - freedom of religion, government by representation, and the

right to make and sell whisky - this was a God-given right - and from this comes the revenue stories.

[2/72] She said that the Pisgah is the most visited national park in the U.S. It is against the law to pick any flowers, bushes, or disturb trees. When the National Geographic Magazine came to photograph Mt. Mitchell they found the spot they wanted but wanted a rhododendron in the foreground. A bush was found and planted in the desired spot (no law against planting) and a plaque saying "Planted by the Asheville Chamber of Commerce" was added to the spot.

[2/104] She wanted to do a story on Parkway activities and had a wrecked car hauled up for a photograph. Rangers were there in beautiful uniforms and the story was published in a metropolitan newspaper.

[2/120] She tells of a controversy when she was working for the Chamber, then housed in the city hall. Jay, of the paper, decided to do a story about gambling joints, which were illegal. Sheriff Brown didn't want it printed but the paper was determined to go ahead. Late in the afternoon on a trumped-up charge Jay was hauled off the court house. The Junior Chamber of Commerce was strong in the city and turned the people against Brown. When the J.C.'s hosted a big dance in the city auditorium everyone, following the prevailing custom, brought liquor in paper bags. Brown arrested everyone - local and state members. And this is the way we got the Republican sheriff Clark. [Harry Clark]

[2/184] When her husband had a heart attack she decided to go into real estate and worked with Town and Country 8 years. There was a recession in 1983 but Asheville never suffered as did Texas and California, which were overbuilt, and there was a market for new houses.

[2/211] People move to Asheville after having come on a vacation using the city as a starting place for day trips, decide to stay. Their reasons vary but seem to center around the climate, scenery, cosmopolitan atmosphere and price range. She knows of only one couple who were unhappy. The wife wanted to finish college but the husband was unable to find a job.

[2/238] She teaches courses at UNCA - history and culture of the Cherokee, building of the southern railroad and the history of the Southern Appalachians.

[2/261] In the late 50's Barfield developed a program for the Chamber to bring retired people to the city. Facilities to take care of these people have been growing. [Jack Barfield]

[2/275] She also teaches at Mars Hill. People come every year to spend a week during the Thomas Wolfe convention and she gives a talk. She was asked to teach 2 classes - one on the Vanderbilts and one on mansions, manor houses and mountain cabins. She talks in the morning and tours the class in the afternoon. She highlights the houses saved by the Preservation Society (see Mathews).

[2/353] She mentions her published travel series (see enclosure). Publishing rights are vested with Bright. [Eric Bright]

[2/342] Since her office was in the city hall she knew the politicians and city employees well. Weir's term and her period of employment - 1951-1968 were the same. Weir ran the city and to some extent the county. He had an "open door" policy with a large waiting room where people saw him in order of their arrival. No one got ahead of another. He acted as lawyer, judge and jury and disposed of problems quickly - most of the time he would just pick up the phone and give an order. [Weldon Weir, Greer Johnson, Charles Dermid]

[2/395] She had been living in her present house 2 years when, following a storm, her front yard blew out. A storm drain ended under her drive and had become stopped up. She went to Weir's office, told him of her problem and he said, "If you buy the pipe, I'll furnish the crew." The hole was so large the city supervisor fell in and broke his leg.

[2/436] Weir had an affinity for little old ladies. One lady told him that she needed a street light for safety - she got one and told her friends. Pretty soon street lights were going up everywhere. Her mother was one of the little old ladies. [Weldon Weir, Shirley Penland Morgan]

[2/470] Between 1940 and 1955 three men had power in the city - Brown the sheriff and mediator between Elias of the paper and Weir, the politician. Due to age the structure began to break down and today we have a group of new young men who have come into power. [Lawrence Brown, Don Elias, Weldon Weir]

[2/510] She joined the Carolina Press Photo Association. Since she was photographing for the Chamber she qualified as having earned half her living through photography - only one other woman is a member. She entered her picture of a horse and colt and won top honors. She is the first woman to win this prize.

[2/545] Her son works for Southern Bell, her daughter-in-law works for a group of doctors at the Kidney Center. After her husband died they finished off living quarters in her house where, with separate entrances, they live independent lives but are close together. [Moses Richard Harshaw III, Nancy Sawyer Harshaw]