

Interview with Henry Halsey Sales

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Interviewer: Bonnie Habel

Bonnie: We are now talking to Hank Sales, and we're going to explore a little bit his remembering things that have happened in the UU Church in Asheville.

Hank: I can remember when you've been a greeter at church, and you've known an awful lot of the people who used to come to the church.

Hank: Quite awhile.

Bonnie: Quite awhile. And we'd like to hear some of your comments about when you first joined the UU Church in Asheville. Tell me some of the things you remember about that? I think it was back in 1977.

Hank: I had just arrived in town, and some people were very friendly and accepting as new members in the Unitarian Church.

Bonnie: You had to drive up from Etowah.

Hank: Yes.

Bonnie: Did that seem like a long drive?

Hank: Well, it was worth it to me to get to a Unitarian Church.

Bonnie: And you had gone to a small Unitarian Church in Corning, New York? Is that your first introduction to Unitarianism?

Hank: Yes, I had a little bit -- not much.

Bonnie: Not much experience before that?

Hank: No.

Bonnie: Tell me some of the people that you worked with and were leaders in the church, some of the ones who were the most helpful or the most

understanding, or the most dynamic.

Hank: Everybody seemed to be helpful to us when we first moved here.

Bonnie: The times that the church was being added onto, the church got bigger and bigger. How did you feel about those times, either the building being enlarged or the membership being greatly enlarged?

Hank: I went along with that. I could get along with it smaller, but if the other people wanted it larger that was OK with me.

Bonnie: Did you serve on committees, did you work on any long range planning committees.

Hank: I was a trustee fairly early in the time when I first belonged to the church.

Bonnie: Do you remember who was the president of the church.

Hank: I don't remember.

Bonnie: We were thinking that Patsy Keever, Ross . . .

Hank: She was there.

Bonnie: Some of those were president about that time. I didn't know if those were the ones you had worked with.

Hank: May have been. I was good friends with Patsy.

Bonnie: You were a lawyer when you worked with Corning?

Hank: Yes.

Bonnie: Negotiations and a lot of things that you needed to do with that job? Do you want to explore that any at all as far as some of the highlights?

Hank: I was trying to keep their nose clean, so to speak, and didn't have much difficulty in doing that.

Bonnie: They were a good company. Are there any other comments that you'd like to make about the UU church, any of the history or anything in the present?

Hank: They are very accepting of new members. We felt right at home right away.

Bonnie: Good. OK. We're back with Ginny and Hank Sayles. They have some additional comments that they might like to make about Unitarian churches they've known or about ours.

Ginny, when we last talked you said that you'd tell the name of a sermon that you liked in the Arlington church.

Ginny: On Easter Sunday. It wouldn't have been half as important had it not been Easter Sunday. I don't like to say I'm quoting because I'm not. I didn't write it down. But the gist of it was the freedom from the belief in immortality. Isn't that something? Everybody else was talking about the Easter bunny, and I thought that was wonderful.

Bonnie: So that has stayed with you a long time?

Ginny: It has. I guess I feel Unitarians are a more searching people than a being told people.

Bonnie: Yes, I think a lot of us are. You also mentioned that you would tell about a time when you were on the committee that had to find some more space for the religious education program.

Ginny: Well, you brought up the subject. I don't remember whether Hank remembers or not, but we were meeting there for ideas to find the answer to more space. At that meeting the subject came up, what about the house next door? Do you remember that?

Hank: No. But it was very possible, I'm sure.

Ginny: We took pictures so they'd have them, and first thing you know that was what they were working on.

Bonnie: I bet you felt proud.

Ginny: Well, I felt it was a good idea really. It turned out.

Bonnie: Yes, sometimes we sit in committees and wonder if it's ever going to come to fruition, but that seemed to happen fairly fast.

Ginny: Yes, it did.

Bonnie: That was a Larry Holt kind of time, and he got things happening. Were there other things that came to your mind when you were thinking about comments about your involvement, or about needs that we have? If not, we'll pause for a minute and perhaps we can just have fun talking about it.

Ginny: Yes, Sandburg Hall, and all the space underneath. Of course there was a story about what was Langley's contemporary, I'm trying to think of who it is.

Bonnie: Gus Schmidt.

Ginny: Yes, Gus Schmidt. I think I read this in the Cornell News. But I had not known that he could play the bells in the steeple -- did you know that?

Bonnie: Yes.

Ginny: I never thought of Gus -- well, I guess he did sing.

Bonnie: Yes, he did.

Ginny: Well apparently when he was at Cornell that's one of the jobs he had, playing chimes, and it said that after he had graduated and would come back he would always get permission to go in there and play.