

## Augusta "Gus" Young

### Tape I, Side 1:

[I/1/1] 23 August, 1993: Claudette was friend of daughter Ann (at age 12). With Diane and William Poultney, studied Abraham in a Beacon book. [Ann Young, Claudette [Reed Upton], Diane Poultney, William Poultney]

[I/1/13] Born in Memphis, Tenn. Stayed until college. College at Randolph-Macon in Virginia.

[I/1/16] Life in Memphis as a child. Flood of river. Father wiped out in 1929 crash, first car salesman in Memphis. Went to work with New Deal.

[I/1/59] Mother insisted on Gus going to college during the forties. Major in psychology.

[I/1/75] Met Paul Young in Baltimore in medical school. [Paul Young]

[I/1/78] Foster care homes.

[I/1/85] Development of adoption law.

[I/1/90] Guardian ad litem program.

[I/1/127] Became Unitarians through Gus' interest in evolution after a Presbyterian childhood. Had a Unitarian neighbor, fascinated with college work, especially a Presbyterian nun teacher. First church in Asheville was Grace Presbyterian, where pastor objected to Paul missing church on Sunday. That minister is now gone In 1956 I was grieving for my father when Rev. Daniel M. (Dan) Welch came and Paul was sold on him in the Unitarian Fellowship. [Dan Welch]

[I/1/190] Involvement in theatre as designer, costumer, since adolescence in Memphis. Gus had taught Sunday School at Grace Covenant.

[I/1/220] Inducted by father in Bible stories.

[I/1/225] Did costumes for Tempest in College.

[I/1/230] Did costumes for Greek drama and dances in college.

[I/1/240] Has worked in drama ever since: directs and costuming. Much work with children's theatre. Directed The Hobbit and J B on Second Stage. Directed at Reed Center on Livingston Street.

[I/1/265] Gus involved in UU since 1957. Involved with Welch. Describes this coal miner's son who got a doctorate from Harvard. Grace, whom he married though she came from the FFV (First Families of Virginia). She always thought herself superior to Dan in origins. She sat in

back of the room muttering during the sermon. I knew her a little better because Paul was her physician. She had been a grand weaver in the past, but was becoming senile. Ministry gave him contact with humans. He didn't want to work in Sunday School, fund raising. He would preach, visit and make pastoral calls gladly. The congregation wanted him in the pulpit; they didn't realize what a builder he would be. He was a short little man with a twinkle in his eye. He had a wonderful, dry sense of humor, a wide ranging mind. He had not stopped working. He had great sermons. When he retired again, he was 76. He had a wide-ranging theology, open. He wasn't as connected as we now are to such as Zen Buddhists. Had feeling for science as well as theology. Paul was very interested in him as a person. He was the one minister all of our children were fond of...up to Maureen. Once a month he told a story for kids sitting in the front row. They loved him. But he wanted nothing to do with RE. The next minister [Gross] had more Penn. Dutch than the people wanted. It was linked to the speech pattern of making a question of each sentence by raising your voice pitch. "Was ist los?" [Daniel M. Welch, Grace P. Welch, Richard Gross]

[I/1/435] Did Grace get involved? No. She never combed her hair and she wore those hats! They were dark with birds or cherries on the top front. It was just a bad marriage that had gone on for a long time. She openly said, "I'm a Methodist!" Newcomers did not know what to think of her mutterings in the back! [Grace P. Welch]

[I/1/478] Welch was good at getting to know parishioners and they needed to pay for that house on Vermont. Furnace burnout in winter. People had to come up with the money. They did! Welch visited fellowships nearby. He was the "Bishop of the Mountain" at Blue Ridge, at Black Mountain (YMCA, YWCA). A VP of Blue Ridge helped found Highland Farms. That was before we got thrown out...over a cursing out by a minister and drinks and drugs. The road-house across the road then opened up for Unitarians.

## **Tape 1, Side 2:**

[I/2/21] Weekday classes for children at Blue Ridge. Sunday School teachers could observe these classes. The era of the 60's drew interest away from Sunday School. Painting at Jefferson House fall, 1994.

[I/2/40] Memorial Garden started by the Blue Ridge Memorial Society in the year Paul died, 1983. He had cancer for two years prior to his death. Garden was designed by Bill Moore. It is too small.

[I/2/90] Gus wants more garden, less wall. The stone should be moved.

[I/2/120] Stop for the day.

## **Second Session, August 30, 1993:**

[I/2/130] The Sunday School teacher integrated a swimming pool in Asheville. Gus was involved in a lunch counter integration by League of Women Voters, Unitarians, and Episcopalians. It was at Woolworths on Patton Ave. A man sat between Gus and the Black woman who came with her

to integrate the counter. He was a mountain style man and he offered the Black woman his ice cream. That was all that happened...just shocked faces while Gus was there. [Barb Kiely]

[I/2/184] Did you know her? Gus knew Mary in Sunday School. She was very bright, a gardener. She taught people how. Knew gardening in this area. Not a character. [Ruth Melchior]

[I/2/212] Next minister, Richard Gross. Gus Sunday School superintendent. George Cornell worked in Sunday School. [Richard Gross, George Cornell]

[I/2/230] Gus hired Lillian Lindsey, who rocked the huge baby we had. Got along with all babies. About 1963. Jr. High likes cushions for sitting. [Lillian Lindsey]

[I/2/270] Some dissatisfaction with Gross' preaching. Good administrator. [Richard Gross]

[I/2/328] Hal Reed played Socrates in Gus' Greek play. Brooks bred rhododendrons. Patton's were long standing members. Norm Poultney did whatever needed to be done on Virginia Ave. [Haldee Reed, Joe Brooks, Norman Poultney, Pattons]

[I/2/398] Tracy Pullman's era. He married Gus' son, christened Fred, her grandson. Gus was busy at home and in Paul's office. Young families join? When Hammond came. [Tracy Pullman]

[I/2/430] Departure of Gross led to a decline when the fellowship was leaderless. They decided to raise money to bring Pullman.

[I/2/477] Pullman's wife was too ill to move when he arrived.

[I/2/530] Mrs. Sandburg was a dear member, enjoying church service. Her enjoyment led to her gift to build Sandburg Hall. She always sat down in front with Reuben Robertson. Phone calls to raise money were resented...143 members. [Mrs. Sandburg, Reuben Robertson]

## **Tape 2, Side 1:**

[II/1/1] Logan Robertson, M.D. owned a building across the street, an industrial practice. Few of that kind of practice at the time. Lived on Sunset Mountain. Family had the estate which they gave to the church.[Logan Robertson]

[II/1/40] Sunday School began to grow. Who gave the new organ? Doesn't Know. [Kenfield Bailey, in memory of his wife, Grecia C. Bailey] Arguments about color of the carpet. Moore proposed a purple, many said no.

[II/1/70] Separation of early teens for educational purposes.

[II/1/90] Gus taught Junior High boys. They made their own commandments, taking six weeks. Children respond to Biblical materials if taken seriously. Sunday School was in an old house on Edwin Place. Sandburg Hall was built in two stages.

[II/1/125] Gus teaching these years. She likes substantive material - evolutionary content. Sunday schooling should include scientific theory for UU's.

[II/1/180] Gus did not think Pullman was more important than Welch, but that he continued what Welch had begun after a short hiatus during Gross period.

[II/1/199] Tracy Pullman picked up where Welch had left off. Many young families joined and then had to leave when their work took them away. Do you want to talk about Hammond? What did he introduce? (Silence). [Rev. Tracy Pullman, Rev. Daniel (Dan) Welch, Rev. William D. Hammond]

[II/1/240] Charles Nixon was very active in the church. We adopted a Vietnamese family, as Trinity Episcopal had done already. Their family was primitive, mountain people. Not accustomed to beds. Ours was bright and learned quickly and moved from Asheville soon. [Charles Nixon]

[II/1/340] The embezzler strikes as treasurer. He kept and showed no books. Mr. Turbett noted this and thought it wrong. Gus Young kept the first books. Steve Studebaker set up a bookkeeping system. He now audits only. [Steven R. Studebaker]

[II/1/364] Members of the finance committee were impressed with the need for well-kept books. Gus Young gave the church a computer in 1983. Are Care Rings useful? They can be, but it can be a burden when the neighborhood is big. It works for brief crisis situations. Co-chairs would be better. Care Ring meetings don't include children in meetings or potlucks. Houses too small.

## **Tape 2, Side 2, 14 September, 1993:**

[II/2/1] Gus Young discussing involvement in Asheville affairs. How she got appointed to the Planning and Zoning Board of the city. A developer tried to build a huge apartment complex, called Sugartree. Paul and Gus pushed a petition against it.

[II/2/19] Chicanery in the zoning on Beaucatcher. Kenilworth had been an incorporated town. Gus and Paul made up a map of Kenilworth ownership. The land against the mountain on Kenilworth remained R3.

[II/2/58] Debates with the builders from Roanoke. Fights went on for months. The builders did not seem to realize the difficulties, with mountain sites and igneous soils.

[II/2/93] Kenilworth escaped because the developer was a fake. Gus preferred good mobile homes to apartments.

[II/2/110] In three years on the zoning board one takes much criticism.

[II/2/140] Gus ran for County School Board unsuccessfully, in 1966. Most of my work has been in theatre and children's theatre.

[II/2/185] Solid rock construction is unusual. Gus served on the sign ordinance committee. Spent two years writing the ordinance. CIBO [Council of Independent Business Owners] got organized and sent a lawyer to every meeting. She chaired a committee of the Unified Development Ordinance, one dealing with mobile housing. It still hasn't been passed.

[II/2/238] There has been speculative grading behind the Grove Park Inn which will be unused. Gus worked in the Livingston Street Community Center, turning the auditorium into a theatre. Electrical inspector made the crew replace all the porcelain receptacles at Livingston with new ones.

[II/2/300] Campaign for fluoride in the water. Hendersonville coup involved. Eisenberg came to a meeting with an alternate slate. [Eisenberg]

[II/2/369] A small group left for Hendersonville. It had little effect on this church. The treasurer who embezzled was able to put people off. It was years before the congregation improved the accounting.

[II/2/402] Gus was not involved in the church then, she was raising Fred. Mary Ann Turbett may know some of this. John Keever was treasurer but account books were not being kept. [Mary Ann Turbett, John Keever]

[II/2/440] Gus was treasurer for couple of years. She gave the computer in Paul's name and set out to make an accounting system with no experience, and Steve Studebaker's help. [Steven R. Studebaker]

[II/2/494] Gus had some accounting at UNCA, but never finished it. Did the books for many years.

[II/2/570] School Bond issue of 1961. It was a fire trap.

[II/2/630] She mentioned Lipinsky, a local businessman, but I did not understand the story.