

*Let's talk about some of those activities in the '50s. You have said a little bit about the garden shows and the garden parties. Can you describe some of the more memorable ones?*

Well, the parties that were really the memorable ones were the ones that we did for Chris's birthday, which was the week before Christmas. And I did that every year. I started out by doing a stag party for him. And I did all the cooking myself and had a man come in and tend bar for them. When it got to be twenty-five men — and I would meet them on the street the month before in November or something and they would tell me they were looking forward to Chris's stag party — I reached a place where I said, "Chris, I can't handle it anymore." So I turned it into an open house kind of Christmas thing. We have pictures of some of those events.

There was always music. We moved our grand piano down between the bunks and rented a Hammond organ, and then we got this man to come in. He played the organ with one hand and the piano with the other, and he played jazz and dance stuff, and then there was always music in the background, that type of thing. And that was done every year the week before Christmas. Those were big ones.

Then I would have a summer brunch, Sunday brunch. And that was a big deal, probably a hundred to a hundred-fifty people. Both of these parties were big like that. And the brunch was in the summertime. I would rent tables from Abbey Rents, get the umbrella tables and chairs, and they would be all over the lawn out there on the point and stuff. And we'd set up the food out off of the back area there in front of the fireplace and the brick wall. And just great brunch food. And then we had boats — friends would bring boats in, or if anybody wanted to go swimming, they went swimming or had a boat ride. But just fun, drinking and eating and drinking and eating.

Tape II, Side 2 (15 minutes)

*I don't think I asked you how many acres there were or the size of the property.*

Well, the actual size, I don't know. It was a point that went out into the lake. And we had four hundred feet of waterfront. It was small on the road side, but had a lot of waterfront. And, of course, you are taxed on the waterfront footage, so the taxes got pretty heavy there.

The address was Lake Grove in the early years. There was no South Shore Boulevard, nothing then. Ours was the last house on that side of the lake. There was no bus service, no nothing. Then they opened up that area and put South Shore Boulevard through there running from Blue Heron up to McVey. McVey ended where Stafford Road starts now. And those streets were there. But once that was opened up, then this east end of the lake was just called Oswego, not Lake Oswego but Oswego, and the other end was Lake Grove. Then it became all one area, and it

became Lake Oswego. Now the Lake Grove end is referred to as the Lake Grove area, but it's still Lake Oswego, you see. It's all Lake Oswego now. But in those early days, there was that distinction in there.

*Since you didn't have much road access, where did all these cars park?*

Oh, well, that was a difficulty because I would have to have some auxiliary police come in and shuttle, and they'd have to go up or out on South Shore Boulevard or something, because there was no parking area there.

*In 1955 the world was watching your home on "The Home Show." That was a huge commitment.*

Oh, yes. I didn't realize how bad it was until after I got into it. And the funny part of it was that at the beginning it was my bridge club day that day, and normally I was always at home by the time Chris got home. But this time he was home from golf when I got home. And he said, "NBC. wants to talk to you. They want you to call them." And I said, "Oh, sure. Yes. Fine." We had friends that were always doing these practical jokes. I thought, here they go again; it's a Frank Cutler. I said, "Oh, sure. I'll call them." I thought it was Frank Cutler again. Frank was a good friend. He was always pulling some kind of a shenanigan on us.

I never called NBC. back. So then when it started again, they said, "Miss Kisky, you have not called us." And I said, "Well, I'm sorry. I didn't believe it. I thought it was somebody playing a joke on me." They really called from New York. And so then I talked to them. I apologized and said I was sorry.

They wanted to show our home on the national "Home Show," with Arlene Francis and Hugh Downs. I said, "Oh, you must be mistaken. You've got the wrong house." And, well, they went around in a boat on the lake and they chose our home. And I said, "Oh, you don't want our home. I can tell you about this and that and the other home that is better than ours, you know." One of them was this Frank Cutler who had a beautiful big home down at this end of the lake, Jantzen Island. And I said, "You don't want ours." "Miss Kisky, we want to feature water and wood, and your home is the only one that is wood." So I said, "Okay. We'll talk."

So they sent people out. Well, they didn't tell me how miserable it was going to be. It was six weeks preparation for that show. For six weeks you couldn't go to the bathroom and be sure that there wouldn't be some camera looking through the window or something. We had cables going in and out of the doors so that you couldn't lock up your house at night. And just no privacy, no nothing. And all these people coming and going. We had United Press and people from New York. We had NBC.. We had KPTV here in Portland, and *The Oregonian*, and all these people.

It was just miserable really. We had had the awning put up on the terrace. They didn't want that there. And I said, well then, you'll have to call Fishel's and have the awning taken down and replaced after you get through, because it covered the big window in the living room, and they didn't want that, of course. So they had to have the big awning taken down and then replaced after their show was all over with. And all this organization because they wanted to do water skiing and they wanted a fashion show, a Jantzen's fashion show, and all this stuff. So I was once again trying to be a good sport about things. And it worked out, but it was very hair-raising.

And for the show itself, when it finally got down to the time, they wanted to take out the window over my kitchen sink in the keeping room because they wanted to show the kitchen. And I said, "No, you're not taking that out." This was a specially built house. You just don't rip it apart and put it back together again, because you don't have the same workmen doing it."

They never could show the upstairs master bedroom, which Arlene Francis made her headquarters. She loved it up there. Not that she slept there or anything, but that's where she spent her time, at my desk up there, lounging around or if she wanted to lie down. So there were problems there.

They had five cameras, I think, that day. And they had to put plywood all over the lawn where they could run the cameras on it, because they couldn't do it on the grass. It wouldn't go with the grass. And they started shooting the tape at 7 o'clock in the morning because the show ran on east coast time. 7:00, 8:00, 9:00, 10:00. It was 10 o'clock eastern time; the show went on 7 o'clock our time here. So everybody is out there at 3 o'clock in the morning. We're up at 3 o'clock in the morning.

This was summertime. I have got a big fifty-gallon thing of coffee on. I had coffee cake and stuff for them. All this coffee and coffee cake for these people. And they started doing it at 7 o'clock in the morning and did the whole thing. It taped for an hour. And then there was a parade downtown and a big luncheon and stuff down at the Multnomah Hotel. And I was so tired. The picture of me — I look like my eyes are shrunken back in my head. It was very wearing and tearing. And it was for Chris, too, but more so for me because he could escape to the office. And I couldn't. I was stuck with it.

*How many days was Arlene Francis actually out here? I realize the crew was out here for six weeks.*

She and Hugh Downs both were here for a week.

They were very charming people. I don't quite know — she was a little snobby, but I thought she was entitled to be that. She was on all these shows. I didn't resent it, but I just felt that she was a little snobby. But she was charming. She was having a

terrible time with allergies, and I had allergies, so I was giving her my medication to help her with her allergies. I even made a special trip in to the Multnomah Hotel to take her some one day. I didn't feel that she was too appreciative of what I tried to do for her to make her more comfortable. I didn't think she was appreciative. She never said that she was, anyway. You know, you say "Oh, thank you so much. This was so nice of you." No. She just took it like she was entitled to this. But I'm sure that she wasn't that way.

But that was it, and then it was over with. I didn't see Hugh Downs that much. He was in a separate part of the show, see. She was there all of the time.

*Any spin-off from that experience? That is to say, as a consequence of your being involved with "The Home Show," which was broadcast nationally, did you then get drawn into other local television shows or radio shows?*

No. No. No. I did that for the Red Cross; I was on radio quite a bit. That was before television. I did the publicity for the Red Cross, for Barney Keep on KEX and stuff like that. I was there on that. But no television.

*Moving on, I gather that you also were active with the Columbia River Yacht Club. Was that something that you got involved in organizationally, or just enjoyed the membership?*

Well, Chris was voted commodore one year. I think that was probably 1949. And, of course, as the wife of the commodore, you are involved — you are in charge of all the ladies' luncheons that come once a month, and a lot of committee work and opening day of the yacht club where you would get the boats all lined up and get them out. But it was because Chris became commodore that I had to do it. I would have probably worked on some committees or something, but otherwise not this much, if he hadn't held office.

*So, obviously, you were strong as an organizational person.*

I was a great organizer. I'm still a great organizer.

*And how about at the Oswego Lake Country Club?*

Well, I put in my stint there, too. I was fifty years old before I took up golf. I had walked the course with Chris and the men on Thursday afternoons. I knew what it looked like, but I had never played golf. So I took lessons. By this time I have

children in school so that I have a little time on my own, I thought. So I took lessons from the pro there, Bob McKendrick. I took six lessons, and in my way I usually do things, I had to go into the background of golf. I bought golf magazines. I read everything about golf. I listened to everything about golf. And in this one golf magazine it says anyone over fifty years old who has never been an athlete has no business taking up golf.

I went to Bob McKendrick and I showed him this, and I said, "Why didn't you tell me I was too old to take up golf? Here you've taken my money for these lessons, and I'll never be a golfer." And he said "Now, cool it, Dorothy. I figured you would be the one that would disprove the point . . . you are going to be a good golfer. Now, don't worry about it. You know, you will be fine." Well, I did turn out to be — not a great golfer but a good golfer. I was elected nine-hole captain as a nine-hole golfer. When I became better and became an eighteen-hole golfer, I became the eighteen-hole golf captain, on the board of directors and all this stuff. I worked on tournaments and all that stuff. Yes. I was involved at the country club, too. That was my own fault.

I was the one that proved the point that you could be over fifty and still become a golfer.