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Oral Interview of Susan Bradford by Marli Werner and Mazie Hough for the Feminist Oral History Project (Part #3)

Ann Schonberger

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Oral Interviews for the Feminist Oral History Project.

Interviewer: Ann Schonberger (AS)

Interviewee: Susan Bradford (SB)

Date: 10/09/2001

Recording number: MF223-BradfordS-T2a

Length of recording: 46:05

[Transcript begins]

AS: This is Suzanne Schonberger, who is interviewing Sue Bradford at the Spruce Run Office building in Bangor. It's about 5 of 12 on October 9th and I'm wanting to ask Sue some follow up questions. This is her second interview and I just wanted to check with Sue that the conditions we did this under the first time what was going to happen to the tape etc. Were all OK with you. This is your informed consent in other words.

SB: Yes, I have been informed in my consent.

AS: OK. Now let's go ahead then and ask some of the questions, and I'd like you to tell me, I'm writing the chapter on financial concerns of a mature organization, and I'd like you to tell me who Marilyn Byrd was and how did the Marilyn Byrd Fund get started?

SB: Marilyn Byrd was an extraordinary human being who was a resident along with her son in the shelter. Before we had our shelter actually, I think she was in the Bangor City welfare shelter and several years after she left the shelter and reshaped her life, she came back and wanted to volunteer for us and so she went through the hotline training and was a hotline volunteer for quite a while. She developed phlebitis and a couple of other circulatory problems and, was in the process of trying to get Social Security for those problems 'cause she really couldn't work. She couldn't do what she had been doing before most of her life. And so, while she was waiting for that process to happen, she came and volunteered here for us. Worked in the office for a while, as she could, and uhm. It's particularly poignant for me. I knew. Marilyn Byrd, I was a person who worked with her when she was in the shelter, and I liked her a great deal and she was a wonderful hotline worker.

She just adored this organization and I really adore her. And what happened was that the Social Security Administration decided that if she could spend time volunteering for this organization, then she could go and get a job. So they took away her Social Security that they had started and she then was kind of forced into the position of starting a daycare, which is the only other thing she could figure out how to do, so that's what she did. The pace of that and the work involved in that was too much for her, and so she died from circulatory problems. Her family knew of how much she felt attached to this organization, and so they put in the newspaper that donations could be made to Spruce Run when she died. And we wanted to honor those donations by creating a special fund for her in her name. And we did so and thought that she would have liked it and we liked the idea to love having that goal essentially for small amounts of money that women and families couldn't get any other way security deposits, for instance, or first month's rent when they were looking for new apartments. Those kinds of things. So that's what I know about the Marilyn Byrd Funding and who Marilyn was.

AS: Do you remember how much money was given by people, you know in response to that request at her death?

SB: I don't remember the exact amount it was. I think several hundred dollars, it wasn't a huge amount of money. She didn't travel in those kinds of circles and neither did her family, but it was enough to start a little fund that was good for security deposits and things like that.

AS: In the steering committee minutes, it's recorded that the Unitarian Universalist Church matched those monies from its Griswold fund. Do you remember anything about that?

SB: I don't. I have a vague recollection that, Yep, that's true. A lot of this happened, I think, when Francine was the administrative coordinator, and so she had a lot of knowledge about that, that I don't necessarily have. I have a lot of knowledge about Marilyn Byrd.

AS: Well, we can also ask Francine, or we can find it. I think in the records I'm seeing that actually we're getting better results, when this is closer to you, so you talk now just say hello testing.

SB: OK, we're testing that.

AS: That's better now. It must be only going in through this. What I'd like to ask you about, I think you're the person who knows the most about, and that is where the money for the endowment, the original money for the endowment trust came from?

SB: Well, you're unfortunately speaking to a person whose memory is not all of that good, but I do have this vague recollection of being one of the signatures on the safe deposit box and going into that box for some reason and finding the Exxon stock shares in the safe deposit box. They've been donated by the agents as we refer to them.

AS: The anonymous donors.

SB: The anonymous donors yes. And so, we looked at that and we had our shelter, and we had our dreams and thought. I guess we should start an endowment, trust 'cause really we would like somebody that's that we're not beholden to anybody for. I don't know what else you were looking for out of that question, but it was an odd moment I have to say.

AS: Tell us how you felt when you did that.

SB: Well, I haven't had much to do with the safe deposit box I was, I was a signer on it and I think Nancy was the other signer on it and she was not available to open the box, and so here I went and opened the box, and I forget even what we were going in for. I think it might have just been to have looked to see what was in there to get another signer on to replace Nancy and so we opened the box and looked in it. There are those excellent shares. I think that we sort of knew they were there, but we weren't sure what we had wanted to do with them, and so we thought the best thing to do was to keep them in a safe place, which we did, but it was clearly time to make plans for what to do with it at that point.

AS: You asked me what was my recollection of what those shares were, that what was going on there, and my recollection is that we had gotten them from the BHS. We had gotten the Continental Corp stock 1st and that's what we sold and used for the down payment on the shelter building. And then next year before we had done any of this, we got the Exxon shares, and we were about ready to start the Capital Funds campaign. And so, we didn't do anything with the Exxon shares except keep them safe. And then the campaign was so successful we didn't need them. But I wonder too, and maybe you can comment. Do you think that by the time you went and rediscovered them had Nancy already left the organization?

SB: I believe so, yeah, that's why I went instead of Nancy.

AS: And so maybe the consciousness that they were there was sort of largely stored with Nancy, and nobody else had thought much about it. But maybe you don't feel that.

SB: Well, I don't think that's my recollection is that we did. It was in our consciousness, but as you said, we didn't need them because the capital Funds campaign was successful and so we didn't know what to do with them. And I think Susan Dunn Nichols used to make the comment. I didn't know what to do with it, so I ignored it. So, I think it was more like that. We kind of ignored it, thinking, well, we're going to make plans for that as soon as we get a chance to do that, and finding there in the safe deposit box, I think the economic climate had changed somewhat too, and so we were thinking maybe it's time to do something with this. I think interest rates and inflation was going up in interest rates were going up and we also just didn't want to have stock sitting there.

AS: Well, as I remember too, when we got them, it was about \$25,000 worth and when we started the endowment trust it was about \$95,000 worth. So there had been some significant economic gain for the oil companies at that at least that oil company in the meantime.

SB: Yep.

AS: And another thing that has to do with Nancy Gentile was Nancy's resignation letter mentioned as one of the reasons for her resignation, Homophobia in the organization, is one reason that she was resigning. Do you remember anything about that or could you? Do you have any idea why she would have said that?

SB: I think that comment sprung out of the Nancy Fritz incident.

AS: But see my recollection is that was later. Nancy resigns in the fall of '83. And I think the Nancy Fritz incident was quite a bit later than that. But you may remember it differently and that actually that was my next question is what do you remember about the Nancy Fritz episode?

SB: Well, you probably have the dates for this, and if that's true then it makes my recollection absolutely worthless. In terms of any kind of historical truth, but what I remember mostly about the Nancy Fritz incident. Personally, is that it was one of the few times that I thought I can't work in this place anymore. I just can't do this. This is too awful. It was an incident; I think that isolated us each. Not only did it isolate the staff from the steering committee, but isolated, I think different steering committee members and different staff members from each other. I think that many people had very different views of that same reality and it was really, really hard to come up with anyone reality that we could even agree to disagree about it. It was really. It was really awful and...

AS: What were the superficial facts? Even if the superficial facts may not really be the reality?

SB: Well, I'm a little bit hesitant, I want to go back and look at what gets written down out of this. I am a little bit hesitant to speak about this particular thing because some of the people are still sort of part of what goes on in this state around domestic violence and I wouldn't want to reopen things that would hurt people currently and at the same time I want to be truthful, but so I'll go ahead and say that, but I want to reserve the right to think about how that plays itself out afterwards. Nancy Fritz was a volunteer, or we may have been contracting with her to do some hotline work and she had been a long term and experienced volunteer for us for a little bit and she had worked with a caller, whose name I'm not going to give, and had after that caller had found herself to not be in crisis anymore, Nancy found herself to be, Nancy Fritz found herself to be attracted to this woman and vice versa. And so, Nancy came to the rest of the staff and said, I'm attracted to this person she's attracted to me. We'd like to explore the possibility of what that might mean and I want to know what the right way to go about that is, and clearly I can't be a part of any hotline call with her anymore. Or perhaps she can't even use Spruce Run services. And if that's the case I'm not sure she needs to now, but if she were to want to in the future, she just wanted to sort all of that stuff out so we had conversations about what might be ethical ways of dealing with that very human kind of a situation and tried to map out what we thought was the best thing to do? And we, being the staff and Nancy Fritz, and I forget how it all played itself out to tell you the truth, but at some point or another those, it didn't strike us as being a big deal at the time. It had been an ongoing conversation in the movement from day one about what is our relationship with the women who call us. Is it are we helpers and they are the helpers? Is this a social service organization? Do we do counseling or are we all women helping women? And were peers and what we're doing is peer kinds of activities. And so if you looked at that as being something that was a peer activity, then the power difference between the two individuals is not that of therapist-Client, which is how I think it got seen by some steering committee folks. And so, as I said, we didn't think it was a particularly big deal. We thought we'd thought out ethical ways of dealing with it. And a steering committee person found out about it and I don't know how that happened. I don't know if we announced it or if somebody just kind of knew each other or how that happened, but it happened and from my perspective. Things at that point exploded and the Steering Committee was very angry at the staff, and certain members of the steering committee in particular we're outraged, just outraged seeing it very much I think as being a therapist, client, kind of a relationship, and a violation of trust and an abuse of power and just something that was the most horrible thing that we could ever have possibly have done and. So there's those were the facts and...

AS: Do you remember that Nancy Fritz was about to be hired, though for a job?

SB: Yeah

AS: And that it came up at the time when she was going to be hired for a job?

SB: Yeah that that may have been.

AS: Do you think that other volunteers had any reaction? 'cause that's my memory as a steering committee member at the time. That the volunteers were the ones who were outraged, or at least some of those volunteers were the ones that were outraged. Now my memory, probably, you know, could be not accurate either.

SB: That may have been. That's not my recollection. I'm not saying that didn't happen, I don't think there was a huge human and cry from the volunteers. I think there may have been individuals who were concerned about that, and that makes sense to me too. It's the process by which we, how we treated each other through that is what troubled me the most and we're not the only organization to have gone through that little piece of process and we probably won't be the last. As I said, it was an issue of, I think nationally it was a bit of a controversy. It kind of depended on how you wanted to view yourself. You know where you or grassroots organization or were you not those that was the way it was kind of being put. I just know it ripped my heart out and shredded it and I wouldn't go back there for anything I could still weep about that, but it was just awful. And I think it had had long lasting implications for myself and for Nancy Gentile and certainly for a lot of steering committee people as well.

AS: Excuse me. Do you remember anything about a German woman named Cornelia Eding? Who may have come here in the late 70s?

SB: I don't. I seem to I remember hearing about her, but I think that she might have been just before my time. Either that or I just have lost all memory ever.

AS: Yeah, alright then my second question was, did you ever read anything that she wrote?

SB: Not that I recall.

AS: OK, I mean we have something in German but nothing in English. We'll go on to the next question then. We want to know more about how Spruce Run dealt with the rural lives that many of our

clients lived. Nancy apparently gave a paper at the NCADV meeting in Milwaukee in 1982. Did you go? What do you remember about how that paper was received?

SB: I went to that conference. I don't believe that I went to the to the reading that Nancy did of that paper. Nancy was a founding mother of the NCADV Rural Caucus, and the folks in that caucus. Regarded her and her work very highly as far as domestic violence, and what happens in the lives of rural women. So I don't know what you mean by how does Spruce Run deal with whatever that sentence was, it said.

AS: How do they deal with... I'm just trying to say we've made a point over the years that one of the factors that we have to consider that the movement is it hold doesn't take into account as much is how this situation is different and the solutions may be different from for women in rural situations than from women in city situations.

SB: Yeah, well, it's certainly true, and I think Nancy. That's one of the things that Nancy said in her paper, although I mean you must have a, I hope you have a copy of the paper, so I probably should have done some homework and looked at it to refresh my memory, but typically what we tended to talk about to try to describe that was is the isolation is the lack of resources, is the lack of access to transportation. Often no telephones. The economy is different. Sometimes your access to cash and that kind of resource is frequently limited if you're in a rural setting, I think we tended to talk too about the strengths of rural communities and how that could be not only a hindrance but a help, but isolation is certainly fostered in some ways by ruralness, and if isolation is a key to battering then the batterer kind of knew how to manipulate the surroundings. Typically, when they're surrounded by his family and cut off from access from her family, which is a large part of how you can get help when you're in a rural setting.

AS: Is there anything in the hotline training or any way that you personally would respond if a woman said hello, I'm calling from Brewer, which is a small city or a large town. Or if she said I'm calling from Bradford?

SB: Oh yeah, and we still do that in the hotline training. It's one of the things that we do, for instance, is to hand out a copy of the telephone prefixes. It's in the front of the telephone book so that you know when you return the call to that woman you know where she is and if we're answering the phone in the in the hotline room during the day, then we asked pretty early on in the call where she's calling from. Because it really does affect whether or not a protective order would be useful to

her. You know she doesn't have a police force that will get there within 20 minutes. There's what's the point really of having a protective order if she has no phone or if she has limited access, all of those kinds of things I was talking about makes a big difference in the kinds of problem solving that you might do.

AS: So, it seems like those principles or conditions that were identified as early as when Nancy gave that paper and maybe earlier, are still operational in the organization today?

SB: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. And how people access services and their attitude towards services are really different from if you're in the greater Bangor area, I think you're more likely to think about reaching out to social services and using that kind of help, whereas if you are in a smaller town in northern Penobscot County you look to your neighbors for help and you think you know Bangor can be very far away. Moving, going to a shelter requires a different kind of investment, emotional and otherwise.

AS: Moving on to another question, what about Spruce Run do you think made people get deeply involved quickly? It appears that some, I mean when we hear from other people, they some people took one look at the organization and jumped in with both feet, so to speak and stayed or maybe that's not an accurate reflection?

SB: Well, I think it's certainly an accurate reflection of some people's participation, including my own. I think some of the things that make people want to do that are, we all want to feel useful, and you sure do feel useful, I think when you when you try and work with this organization. I think it's the type of work that we do is kind of unique in that when you work with this organization you have a rather direct connection to the problem and to the solution. We're going to wait for that beeping to stop. It'll stop any minute now. Excuse me. OK. So, you know, particularly if you're a hotline worker, there's the problem. Women are being battered; kids are being hurt. What can I do? I can answer this phone and give people information. I mean, that's, uh. That's a really powerful piece of work, I think to a lot of people. I also think that there's a lovely sort of consonance or harmony if you will, between what we do. Why we do it and how we do it. And Spruce Run as an organization has tried to pay attention to that, as is reflected in a whole lot of documents throughout the organization and people I think experience that we still get folks who say, gosh, you people do that active listening thing with each other as well as with people who call so, I think all of those things are things that

draw people to the issue. Certainly, there are individuals who just plain feel passionately about the issue itself and doesn't matter where they're going to do it, they're going to work with it.

AS: I agree with you about the active listening. I know sometimes when I've never been on hotline but or trained for hotline. But I know sometimes when I'm having some interaction with a staff member, I'm saying to myself. She's treating me like a hotline girl.

SB: There are different components, there's crisis intervention. Then there's the active listening part at the end. The active listening part, it's only the first couple of steps.

AS: Right. It's the active listening part. This question is about feminism. Were early members conscious self-defined feminists do you think?

SB: Absolutely.

AS: Certainly, later members were, and I'm wondering how much we can say about feminism shaping the early years?

SB: I think feminism shaped the early years quite a bit, I don't know how to describe exactly how that happened, but I think that this whole organization is a remarkable blend of people who've had the experience of having been battered, and people who are feminists and, I don't think there's a clash there, and I don't think there ever was a clash there. I think we tried to be careful about how we combine those things. And I think that's part of feminism.

AS: The reason I was saying that is it sometimes didn't appear to us that in the very beginning, say with Kay Lucas and Lou Chamberlain that they were as tuned in or self-identified as feminists. They're certainly very strong in a social justice tradition that came out of the 60s, but we weren't as sure. And maybe it's just not a way of looking at it. Whether at that time they would have self-identified as feminist. But...

SB: I think you know I remember a thing that Nancy said in one of my it might have been a volunteer interview, I don't remember which she said, so do you consider yourself a feminist? And this of course was in the late 70s so we didn't even go along for quite a while, but I got the sense that that was a question that was frequently asked. She said so do you consider yourself a feminist? And I said, well that depends on how you define it. And I think there was a lot of that going on throughout the 70s. You know everybody was looking for what kind of definition you were going to pin to that label? I certainly had a lot of debates about it with friends of mine about what was the definition of

a feminist? How narrow, how broad was that definition? And so, and I bet that if we had defined it the way Nancy did when I asked her, what do you mean by that? She said, well, women and men have different experiences in this culture. I said no problem with a capital F and I think that I bet both K and, you could ask Louis yourself, but I suspect that we could have come to agreement on that we probably could have come to consensus on feminism.

AS: And in your own case, besides just agreeing with Nancy when you first got involved with Spruce Run, what would have defined being a feminist in your own case? I mean, if someone to ask you at that time, are you a feminist and you before Nancy asked you a question? The question what in someone to ask you, what would your definition have been? You know for yourself.

SB: Oh I think just exactly that. I mean, it was the perfect answer that she gave for me. I had a woman friend that I was friends with in junior high school in high school who went off and started the Women Studies program at SUNY Buffalo and throughout our relationship starting in junior high school, we'd have debates back and forth about, women lot in the world and girls lot. And when the feminism word first hit the scenes, we'd go back and forth and debate what, exactly the definition of that was, so I always considered myself to be some kind of feminist, but I was really kind of picky about which kind and picky about labels being put on me and I think a lot of us work where.

AS: When you mentioned when you were in high school, what years would that have been that you were having those discussions?

SB: The 60s.

AS: Early 60s or later on?

SB: Well, in junior high was the early 60s in the mid 60s and I well I didn't really graduate from that high school. I graduated from one in France, but that was in 68.

AS: OK, I get the time frames, good. Another thing, this is completely on a different track. What do you remember about dividing the state appropriations in the late 70s and early 80s? It appeared to us that dividing the money forced the coalition to make compromises that put them more in the Social Service agency role than they wanted to be and created tension.

SB: Well, I think there was always a tension between what do we have to do to get this money and is there something we have to give up, and are we willing to give it up and what would it be? I mean, sort of how politic do we need to be, and I guess that's what heads you towards social service and

the other dynamic that was going on. Obviously at the same time was that some projects had started out as shelters, and we had not. We had started out as a hotline, and community education was always, I mean, we've heard all this before. I was a part of our mission, where it was not necessarily of projects who had started at a shelter, so I'm not sure that it was the money that that sent us that way I think that those kinds of tensions already existed. An example that you mentioned there, if you read it...

AS: Yeah, for example, Spruce Run was chastised for not opening its shelter as quickly as other members thought they should, and the Spruce Run allocation for that particular year was based on having a shelter. I mean we opened the building to use it as an office in August of '82 and we didn't open for shelter until August of '83 and so there was a whole year that the building was at least one floor of the building was being used. So that must mean we bought, I think we bought it in the spring of '82 was when we signed the papers and took possession of the building. Did some renovation on the 1st floor and then started using it for office space. The 1st floor for Office space in about August of '82 and I know for sure it was August of '83 that we started actually sheltering our first family.

SB: I remember being a part of that conversation at a coalition meeting. In terms of that, OK, we're going to have to write a letter to Spruce Run and it made a lot of sense to those of us who were representing Spruce Run. We really did want to start sheltering people and from shelter projects perspective, the fact that we hadn't opened our doors was just crazy that it didn't have anything to do with the allocation. I mean that was another sort of piece of leverage I think the folks who are writing the letter felt it mostly had to do with open your doors. What's wrong with you? There are women out there that need shelter. Get on it. And so, I think that was more the attitude of the coalition that I don't think it had so much to do with allocation. I'm sure that the shelter projects can appreciate having allocations go to a project that wasn't providing sheltering, 'cause sheltering is expensive. But that wasn't the major issue. The major issue was open those doors, quit messing around.

AS: What do you remember about the reasons for quote messing around? I mean what? What were we doing in that year that wasn't done yet or that was preventing us from opening for shelter?

SB: I think in some ways we were being our Spruce Run careful self's. And we were trying to think things out really carefully. We were going to be a shelter project than we had before, and we just wanted to make sure that we had looked at all the unintended consequences and thought things out really

well in terms of programming and budgeting and staffing and all the rest of that kind of stuff and I think also there was a little bit of resistance. I know Nancy, for instance, frequently had said that she didn't want to be a part of a shelter project and so I think there was some leftover resistance there. There were renovations certainly to have done, and people were a little tired. I mean, we've gone through all of this, get the building and do some renovations on the on the 1st floor and there was a whole lot more figuring to do and a whole lot more negotiations to do with the city and codes and how did we want the building to be? And we were just being careful. But I think we were also a little bit resistant.

AS: I remember that what I was consumed with was the Capital Funds campaign, which was going on during that time precisely during that time and the other thing I'm remembering is that that was also a time of some staff conflict and so I'm wondering if that also had some kind of impeding effect as well. Do you have any opinions about that?

SB: Well, it certainly was an energy drain. But in other ways, you know, whenever we had staff conflict, one of the things that we could all agree on was to focus on services so. I mean, I think we kind of we thought about that and did some work about that when we got tired of dealing with the staff conflict, I mean we would rather do that. We tried to pay a lot of attention to that, so I think it was again I think was a bunch of combinations of reasons. But as far as the coalition was concerned, I don't think that was an example of turning social services or trying to bargain with the funds or funding or any interest in that kind of stuff.

AS: Do you remember anything else in particular about that whole allocation within the coalition and how that process worked? And what were the stresses around that, or what were the things that work well and that you were proud of the way the coalition functioned?

SB: I think you all have access, I think to the tapes, the interview tapes and...

AS: The one where Nancy and Lisa Poland and one other person.

SB: Jackie Clark, I think.

AS: Yeah, I think talked to at some length about the coalition. Yeah, yeah.

SB: And I think most of what they said about it was quite true. I thought that those times were just astounding and what we created and the kinds of things we tried to take into account were truly

amazing. I think it speaks a lot of feminism and a lot about the issue, and a lot about the good heartedness and brilliance of the women who were on the coalition that board at that time.

AS: Who do you remember that being?

SB: I think it was Lois Racket and Jackie Clark and Nancy Gentile and Oh, I can't remember her name. The woman from Caring Unlimited in Sanford, Mary Beth maybe?

AS: And how did Lisa Poulin feel of fitting into this? Or wasn't there at the time?

SB: She I think was later. Yeah, she didn't really lay the foundation there. She certainly worked with it afterwards. And I know I'm leaving people out and I don't mean to.

AS: Right, that's OK.

SB: But it was an amazing process, and you know people. We were extremely honest with each other. I think the discussions that I participated in anyhow in the minutes that I read and the discussions that we had back here at Spruce Run about what had happened. It was definitely a we're all in this together and, what's fair and what do we balance? And we tried to balance the rural nature of some projects and the more urban natures of others, and whether folks had a shelter or whether they didn't, and what the population was that they had to serve. And then how far, what, again, what was the geography that they had to serve and tried to weigh all of those things and also try to weigh what the resources in the community were for other kinds of funds and it was just a very open, honest kind of a process that and we challenged each other at the same time. For instance, if you're going to have a shelter opening. So it continues to this day to be something that of course gets struggled with and will just see how that plays itself out in this in this climate of competitive grant making. But it's a very strong foundation that we operate out of, and it's was created in that time frame. I don't know what else I'd say about that other that it was really brilliant and people continue to be amazed at about it, and people on all different kinds of levels where they were state government or politicians or other states. We were a model for a whole bunch of other states. I guess not a model 'cause other states couldn't emulate us, but folks were awfully impressed that we had the amount of control that we did over who got what money.

AS: So that's one thing that's continued. That's still a really a path breaking characteristic is that the state allocates the money according to the way that the coalition feels it ought to be allocated. More or less at any rate, that's still the general operational principle.

SB: Yes, according to the formulas that get, have evolved from that basic formula.

AS: If there's anything else about money in particular that you have thought of that you'd want to share with me, since that's what I'm writing the chapter on, and that's what's real immediate in my mind right at the moment.

SB: Well, you know, money is central to any organization. That's a hot topic. It's always money and personnel. I've said that before, I think, and I think that we've found creative and consensual ways of dealing with it. And we continue to do that. We're continuing to do it now. You know as we grow, and the critical mass of individuals, not only money, but individuals grows. It becomes harder and harder to have everybody have the same understanding of the finances. It's just really difficult, and so you have to continually strive to figure out how much is too much information and what's the best. What is important information for everybody to have so we keep doing that. I think we're brilliant. I really do, I think we are brilliant. Now we use our money as a tool. We continue to see it as a tool and not the be all and end all of existence and I just think we're really good at it. I think a lot of other people do too.

AS: I have always thought that myself, uh, let me just back up to the Marilyn Byrd Fund again. It occurred to me I wanted to ask another question about it and that was. The point was that women were supposed to borrow this money and pay it back right? wasn't that the original plan that they would borrow the money for a security deposit or the first month rent or whatever, all those extraordinary expenses, but that they would pay it back. Do you remember that that happened?

SB: Occasionally it did. We were fairly realistic. We called it a revolving loan fund and we really hope to have it continue to revolve. But we were also realistic. In thinking that the folks that we were going to ask to pay this back. Maybe they could, maybe they couldn't, and so we asked folks to sign contracts and say and make whatever payment arrangements they could, whether that was \$5 a year or whatever. Mostly to keep in touch, and if they couldn't tell, let us know that too. Sometimes we'd say to them well, if you find yourself in better circumstances in a few years, remember us and try and pay it back, OK?

AS: But it did get depleted down to zero as I recall.

SB: Yes.

AS: But then recently we've just put some more money in it as I recall?

SB: yes, we've used the concept, and in my mind, the memory of Marilyn as well too, to inspire that kind of donation. It's a very direct kind of donation, and if somebody gives money to that fund, it goes directly to women who need money, so... I lost my focus on my question.

AS: I was wondering, do you remember whose money it was that recently got put into it? I don't remember myself, but I mean probably could look it up, but...

SB: Well, one thing we did was to ask the staff, the staff wanted a pile of money that we didn't have to go through all kinds of hoops to give directly to women, and so we put out a little request to staff if they wanted to donate to it. And I think we all did. So we all donated to it. And then I think that Tina wrote a grant to Maine Realtors Association?

AS: That was it, I think And they gave some money, right?

SB: Yes. And then in the earlier fund that there were Spruce Runners too. I think people who are on the steering committee who had the means to donate several hundred dollars a piece to that fund, and so they did as well. So I may have underestimated what the fund actually had initially.

AS: Actually we could go back and look in the financial records if we could remember about when Marilyn Byrd died about when this started?

SB: Boy, you are better, it was somewhere in the 80s there. We were still in the office in the shelter.

AS: OK, I think I did see note about this contribution to the by the Griswold Fund in Steering Committee member minutes. So that could be dated pretty much. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about? Any stories you wish you told that have come up for you since we had the first interview?

SB: Oh, probably but I can't remember anything now anyhow, so if I think of them, I'll write them down and send them to you and you can do whatever you want with them. I would say that back to that rural paper in the Milwaukee Conference, NCAD conference. That was, of course, the conference where we got the yellow binders from and it's really important to note that in every interview.

AS: Well, we've used your story about the yellow binders in the script and I think it's in the book already somewhere, but yeah we're not going to forget about the yellow binders, that's for sure. Well, thank you very much Sue for taking your time out this morning and I appreciate that a lot.

SB: Thank you very much Ann and all the rest of the FOHP I dearly love you people. The thing that you're doing is wonderful.

AS: Thank you very much.

[End of transcript]