

1 **Speaker moderates a conversation between several Women's Overseas Service League**  
2 **members gathered for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the organization's**  
3 **Milwaukee Unit**  
4  
5

6Jane Piatt: ...[inaudible 0:01] the 60th anniversary [inaudible 0:04] Milwaukee Unit of the  
7 WOSL. Many of the women are here, uh, from the local unit, uh, but, uh, some of  
8 them are here from, fr-, from Chicago. [Inaudible 0:16] is one of our World War I  
9 members from Chicago and also, uh, Mary [Haney 0:23] who is the area director.  
10 We are going to be celebrating in just a few minutes, so I'll pick this up at a later  
11 date. Mary, Mary [Haney 0:34] is from Battle Creek. I made a mistake on that.  
12 Betty [Brett 0:38] is also here from Chicago. I'm, uh, the one who is recording, is  
13 Name Piatt. I am the National, uh, Oral History Chairman, and I'm from the  
14 Lansing Unit in Michigan.

15

16 [laughter]

17

18Speaker 1: And we laughed and the tears ran down our cheeks. Oh, it's so funny.

19

20Speaker 2: One thing about [inaudible 1:01] I liked the routine because, you know, I had to  
21 use the facilities quite frequently, so, uh, uh, knowing that, if I've got to go buy  
22 one, I'm sure to use it whether I need to or not [inaudible 1:16].

23

24Speaker 3: [Inaudible 1:16].

25

26Speaker 4: [Inaudible 1:17]. Yeah, just like [inaudible 1:19].

27

28Speaker 1: I never miss an opportunity to find relief.

29

30 [laughter]

31

32Speaker 3: [What is that 1:24], huh?

33

34Speaker 1: So I find it very inappropriate [inaudible 1:29].

35

36Speaker: Thank you. Oh, look [inaudible 1:32].

37

38Speaker: [Inaudible 1:37].

39

40Speaker: Well I got so that I could talk.

41

42Speaker: Yep. [I was] [inaudible 1:40].

43

1 Speaker: I got so I could talk in, uh, talk their dialect, you know, with the Aussies. I would  
2 listen to them, and then I'd go – when I'd go back to my room, I would repeat, you  
3 know, try to get it just right. So once when I was there, oh long afterward, years  
4 afterward, I was at a club, and a man came in from Australia, and, uh, we were  
5 introduced and, uh, eh, they wanted him to meet me because I had been in  
6 Australia. And I began talking with him in the dialect...  
7

8 Speaker: Mmm.  
9

10 Speaker: ...and using the terms [inaudible 2:18]. Well that's hot dogs, you know. [laughter]  
11 And such thing-, things that really people wouldn't know. And, uh, he was  
12 determined that I'm Australian. I couldn't tell him. I, I couldn't get it across to  
13 him that after all I really was an American, you know, [inaudible 2:43]. [laughter]  
14 It was so funny. [Inaudible 2:47]. [laughter] Oh, I thought that was so funny.  
15

16 Speaker: [Inaudible 2:53] when I was in Japan and I was stationed in Tokyo and then, then  
17 I was sent to Fifth Air Force, you know, MASH Fifth Air Force. So I got there,  
18 and after a couple weeks, maybe about 2 months I would say, um, the boss called  
19 me in, and he said, [Inaudible 3:16]...  
20

21 Jane Piatt: [] Speaker a little louder, [Inaudible 3:19].  
22

23 Speaker: He said, [Inaudible 3:20], you are our transportation officer. [laughter] I said, Sir,  
24 transportation officer of the Fifth Air Force. He says yes. I've observed the way  
25 you dig in and do research. He said we need a good transportation officer, and  
26 you better be a damn good one.  
27

28 [laughter]  
29

30 Speaker: Isn't that great.  
31

32 Speaker: I thought that was [inaudible 3:47].  
33

34 Speaker: Mmm.  
35

36 Speaker: Uh, and I, I think I was... [laughter]  
37

38 Jane Piatt: [Inaudible 3:52].  
39

40 Speaker: ...because at the time of the Korean Conflict, it was my department there. We had  
41 to move [inaudible 3:59] and material into Korea from Okinawa, from the islands  
42 from Japan [and from 4:05] U.S. [inaudible 4:06] Air Force [inaudible 4:07]. That  
43 was their [inaudible 4:09].  
44

1 Speaker: [Inaudible 4:09]. Great. That's great.  
2  
3 Speaker: Isn't that nice?  
4  
5 Speaker: Mmm.  
6  
7 Speaker: Yeah. When, when I think of, you know, [women's] [inaudible 4:19] everything,  
8 [chuckle] and I thought well I, I know when, when he asked me to do that and I  
9 realized you know that's the air force.  
10  
11 Speaker: [Inaudible 4:27].  
12  
13 [laughter]  
14  
15 Speaker: Mm-hm.  
16  
17 Speaker: [Inaudible 4:30].  
18  
19 [laughter]  
20  
21 Speaker: And she was a major when she retired.  
22  
23 Speaker: Well [I was too 4:36], and if, if, uh, if they had done the same to me as they did to  
24 the men at the time of the Korean Conflict, I would have gotten when, when I,  
25 you know, retired and got my [other one 4:47] I'd have been a lieutenant colonel.  
26  
27 Jane Piatt: My lieutenant colonel [inaudible 4:50] came through 3 months after I retired.  
28  
29 Speaker: Yes, this is, this is what they do.  
30  
31 Speaker: Mmm.  
32  
33 Speaker: A lot of [inaudible 4:58].  
34  
35 Speaker: [Inaudible 5:00] and I, I wanted to try something [inaudible 5:04].  
36  
37 Jane Piatt: [5:09]What did you say, [Inaudible 5:10]? I, I missed it. What did you just say?  
38  
39 Speaker: [stuttering] Mary said that she was sent 5 of the original Carry Ons, and in the  
40 Carry Ons was about...  
41  
42 Speaker: I had 5 years of it.  
43

1 Speaker: [Inaudible 5:21], and, uh, and, uh, [inaudible 5:25], and, uh, something about  
2 [inaudible 5:29].  
3  
4 Speaker: [Inaudible 5:30] came back from Florida. [laughter]  
5  
6 Speaker: Yeah.  
7  
8 [laughter]  
9  
10 Jane Piatt: We don't find much in our present day goings on about [inaudible 5:40], do we?  
11  
12 Speaker: Not [inaudible 5:41].  
13  
14 [laughter]  
15  
16 Speaker: Or even [inaudible 5:43].  
17  
18 Speaker: I think, uh, one of our members [inaudible 5:50] married.  
19  
20 Speaker: [Inaudible 5:52] marriage [was a] [inaudible 5:44].  
21  
22 Speaker: Was it?  
23  
24 Speaker: [Inaudible 5:55].  
25  
26 Speaker: No, it [inaudible 5:58].  
27  
28 Speaker: [Inaudible 5:59] unit.  
29  
30 Speaker: [Inaudible 6:00] says you were married.  
31  
32 Speaker: [Inaudible 6:01] nature's way of telling us to wear a little looser underwear.  
33 [laughter]  
34  
35 Speaker: [Inaudible 6:06] and I said to [inaudible 6:09] you better take half the money and  
36 I'll take half the money if one of us lose it. And he was sitting on a bench down at  
37 [inaudible 6:17] looking out over the Mediterranean, and he kept wondering why  
38 this Frenchman kept [inaudible 6:21] on the other side of the street, and, um, he  
39 [inaudible 6:25], and he kept thinking why is that Frenchman walking up and  
40 down [inaudible 6:32] had a portfolio and, I think they call it a portfolio in those  
41 days, had fallen out of his pants pocket on the ground.  
42  
43 Jane Piatt: Oh, no.  
44

1 Speaker: And this fellow had seen it, so Pat came back to the hotel [inaudible 6:46]. I said  
2 being a businesswoman and I might lose it or you might lose it, so g-, I'll take half  
3 and you'll take half, and we [inaudible 6:57].  
4  
5 [laughter]  
6  
7 [background speakers]  
8  
9 Speaker: What was it they called the, the wide, uh, the wide pocketbook for men [inaudible  
10 7:09] and put in their pants.  
11  
12 Speaker: [7:12] Wallet?  
13  
14 Speaker: No, it wasn't a wallet. It was a port-, not portfolio but something like that. I  
15 forgot.  
16  
17 Speaker: [Inaudible 7:18].  
18  
19 Speaker: [Inaudible 7:20].  
20  
21 Speaker: [7:20] Pouch? No?  
22  
23 Speaker: No. No. I don't remember. But it was, it, it was [long 7:25] you see, and it could  
24 very easily be pushed [inaudible 7:27].  
25  
26 Speaker: [7:30] Did it get back to the owner?  
27  
28 Speaker: I beg your pardon?  
29  
30 Speaker: [7:32] Did it ever get back to the owner?  
31  
32 Speaker: Oh, no. Oh, no.  
33  
34 Speaker: [Inaudible 7:35] husband saw it.  
35  
36 Speaker: [Inaudible 7:35] and he was going to stay there and get it when, when this man  
37 [inaudible 7:40] across the street, and when my husband left the bag, he came  
38 over and picked it up.  
39  
40 Speaker: [Inaudible 7:46].  
41  
42 Speaker: That quick it disappears. That quick.  
43  
44 [background speakers]

1  
2Speaker: [Inaudible 7:56].  
3  
4Speaker: That quick it disappears.  
5  
6Speaker: Yeah. [laughter]  
7  
8 [background speakers]  
9  
10Speaker: [Inaudible 8:04].  
11  
12Speaker: [Inaudible 8:06]  
13  
14 [background speakers]  
15  
16Speaker: It's too bad. I don't guess anybody [inaudible 8:13]. Don't guess anybody [did  
17 8:16].  
18  
19Speaker: Oh, my. [Inaudible 8:19].  
20  
21Jane Piatt: [8:20] How about telling your story about [inaudible 8:22]?  
22  
23Speaker: Oh, the time we were going on leave and we wanted to get to Brussels, and, uh,  
24 uh, Brussels was forbidden.  
25  
26Speaker: [8:35] Why? This was after [inaudible 8:38] after the war wasn't it?  
27  
28Speaker: Yes. We [inaudible 8:40] they had so many Americans going in there, [we'd take  
29 8:46] care of them. And, um, our, uh, object in going there was to, uh, interview a  
30 banker, an American banker who was president of the bank there, and we thought  
31 maybe we could get a, uh, a job in Brussels. [laughter] Well the Signal Corps said  
32 you can't go to Brussels [inaudible 9:15].  
33  
34Speaker: [Inaudible 9:15].  
35  
36Speaker: So [chuckle] uh, we had friends in the – another department that could give us a  
37 pass, and we told them that we wanted to go to Brussels, and they said, uh, well,  
38 we'll arrange it, so they gave us each passes that read to [Inaudible 9:45] and  
39 vicinity. You changed trains at [Inaudible 9:49] for a, for a Brussels train.  
40  
41Speaker: So, I hear some of the [inaudible 9:55].  
42  
43Speaker: [Inaudible 9:57] not going.  
44

1 Speaker: Arrived at [Inaudible 10:00], and we were just stepping onto the train to Brussels,  
2 and the American MP there said you can't take that train. And we said why not.  
3 And he said, uh, no Americans can take it. And I said but we're on our way to  
4 vicinity, and he looked at me, so I handed my pass, and he said oh, okay, get on.  
5 [laughter]  
6  
7 Jane Piatt: [10:30] You went – you said you were going to Versailles? Is that what you said?  
8  
9 Speaker: To Brussels.  
10  
11 Speaker: [10:35] Yeah, but when he said that you're on your way to where?  
12  
13 Speaker: Brussels.  
14  
15 Speaker: Yeah.  
16  
17 Jane Piatt: And he let you get by with it.  
18  
19 Speaker: Yes. Oh, oh, we said were, uh, on our way, did I say Versailles?  
20  
21 Jane Piatt: [10:50] What did you mean?  
22  
23 Speaker: On our way to vicinity.  
24  
25 Jane Piatt: [10:56] Oh, to vicinity? [Inaudible 10:57].  
26  
27 Speaker: He wasn't sure where vicinity was. [laughter]  
28  
29 Speaker: [Right 10:59].  
30  
31 [laughter]  
32  
33 Jane Piatt: If I hang around you long enough, I'll get all your stories.  
34  
35 [laughter]  
36  
37 [background speakers]  
38  
39 Speaker: [Inaudible 11:21].  
40  
41 Speaker: [Inaudible 11:23].  
42  
43 [background speakers]  
44

1 Speaker: [Inaudible] [Red Cross 11:26].  
2  
3 Speaker: Yes.  
4  
5 Speaker: [Inaudible] [need it 11:30].  
6  
7 Speaker: Yes.  
8  
9 Jane Piatt: [Inaudible 11:34].  
10  
11 [laughter]  
12  
13 [background speakers]  
14  
15 Speaker: We should all walk home.  
16  
17 Jane Piatt: Yeah, we should do what we did yesterday. We did the, we did the, uh...  
18  
19 Speaker: [Inaudible 11:46] gardens.  
20  
21 Speaker: The gardens.  
22  
23 Speaker: Oh.  
24  
25 Speaker: The gardens.  
26  
27 Speaker: We [inaudible 11:48]. [laughter]  
28  
29 Jane Piatt: Don't do it today. I don't have the right walking shoes on.  
30  
31 Speaker: [11:54] Did you go to the [inaudible 11:55] yesterday.  
32  
33 Speaker: Yes, [inaudible 11:56].  
34  
35 Speaker: I haven't been there since, since they...  
36  
37 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:01].  
38  
39 Speaker: About 15 years maybe.  
40  
41 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:04].  
42  
43 Speaker: I was there when they had only 1.  
44



1 Jane Piatt: And now they have 3.  
2  
3 Speaker: And I was there [inaudible 12:10] 3 [inaudible 12:12].  
4  
5 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:12].  
6  
7 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:13].  
8  
9 Speaker: [12:18] Do they have – what do they have? What are they [inaudible 12:20] right  
10 now? Still Easter?  
11  
12 Speaker: No.  
13  
14 Speaker: No.  
15  
16 Speaker: No.  
17  
18 Speaker: Spring. Spring.  
19  
20 Speaker: Spring.  
21  
22 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:27] dome.  
23  
24 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:27] domes.  
25  
26 Speaker: [12:29] What?  
27  
28 Speaker: They are domes.  
29  
30 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:30] 3 big domes, um...  
31  
32 Speaker: [12:34] Are they glass?  
33  
34 Speaker: Plastic or glass. I'm not sure.  
35  
36 Speaker: I think they're glass.  
37  
38 Speaker: I think they're glass [inaudible 12:39].  
39  
40 Speaker: Oh, they're beautiful.  
41  
42 Speaker: [Inaudible 12:40].  
43  
44 Speaker: And, uh...

1  
2Speaker: One is desert, and one is tropical, and then one is the [inaudible 12:46] or  
3 whatever [inaudible 12:47].  
4  
5Speaker: [Inaudible 12:48] seasons.  
6  
7Speaker: Seasons.  
8  
9Speaker: [Inaudible 12:50] Easter [inaudible 12:51].  
10  
11Jane Piatt: Or spring or summer or Christmas or whatever it is.  
12  
13Speaker: It is beautiful.  
14  
15Speaker: [laughter] [Inaudible 12:55].  
16  
17 [background speakers]  
18  
19Speaker: [13:01] They, they charge to get in now don't they.  
20  
21Speaker: Mm-hm.  
22  
23Speaker: Yes.  
24  
25Speaker: I haven't been there since [inaudible 13:06].  
26  
27Speaker: Two dollars [inaudible 13:06].  
28  
29Speaker: [13:08] How much?  
30  
31Speaker: Three dollars.  
32  
33Jane Piatt: [13:10] [Inaudible 13:10] senior [inaudible 13:11], isn't it?  
34  
35Speaker: [Inaudible 13:10].  
36  
37Speaker: [13:13] What's that?  
38  
39Speaker: [Inaudible 13:13] senior local pass or is...  
40  
41Speaker: Yeah.  
42  
43Speaker: Have another one.  
44

1 Speaker: A county [inaudible 13:20].  
2  
3 [laughter]  
4  
5 Jane Piatt: [13:21] Did you have another one?  
6  
7 Speaker: No. [laughter]  
8  
9 Jane Piatt: Have another. I'm going to pass them around and let the other people have another  
10 one.  
11  
12 Speaker: She'd like, she'd like to have another probably.  
13  
14 [background speakers]  
15  
16 Speaker: ...quite a lot of money, uh, individually [inaudible 13:44], and so finding out that  
17 she was in charge of it, we asked her to talk, and that's how it started.  
18  
19 Speaker: And she was so delighted to do it.  
20  
21 Speaker: She was [inaudible 13:53]. She's one of the best speakers we've had.  
22  
23 Speaker: Yes.  
24  
25 [background speakers]  
26  
27 Speaker: Quite a girl.  
28  
29 [background speakers]  
30  
31 Speaker: Well [inaudible 14:04].  
32  
33 Speaker: What?  
34  
35 Speaker: [14:07] Got everybody back?  
36  
37 Speaker: [Inaudible 14:08].  
38  
39 Speaker: [Inaudible 14:10] police.  
40  
41 Speaker: Jane, when do you go back?  
42  
43 Speaker: Okay.  
44

1 Speaker: Tomorrow morning, noon.  
2  
3 Speaker: Oh.  
4  
5 Speaker: So we, uh...  
6  
7 Speaker: [Inaudible 14:19] meeting [inaudible 14:19].  
8  
9 Speaker: ...have a very brief meeting. [background speakers] Um, we'll start with the  
10 Pledge of Allegiance. This nice, big flag that they have here for us.  
11  
12 [background speakers]  
13  
14 Speakers: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic  
15 for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for  
16 all.  
17  
18 Speaker: Um, Jan, how about would you read the purpose for us, and everybody can, if you  
19 can, can join in as, as you can.  
20  
21 Speakers: To keep alive and develop the spirit [of 15:02] overseas service. To maintain the  
22 ties of comradeship born of that service, and to assist and further any patriotic  
23 work. To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and  
24 nation. To work for the welfare of the armed services. To assist, in any way in our  
25 power, the men and women who served and were wounded or incapacitated in the  
26 service of their country. To foster and promote friendship and understanding  
27 between the United States and all other nations of the world.  
28  
29 Speaker: [15:40] Well that's a very worthy list, isn't it.  
30  
31 Speaker: Mm-hm.  
32  
33 Speaker: It takes several people to do all that.  
34  
35 Speaker: I'm going to, um, say a little bit. I can't say a great deal. But I did find out a few  
36 little tidbits about the early days of [the 15:59] Milwaukee Unit. Um, Ruth  
37 [Stevens 16:03] sent me a bound copy of the Carry Ons from 1921 through 1927,  
38 and it was more fun to go through them. Uh, in 1921, Carry On was 10 cents a  
39 copy or 50 cents a year; 1920, the price was raised to tw-, 1923, I beg your  
40 pardon, to 20 cents a copy, 75 cents a year. Uh, finally, in 19, um, 26, they  
41 decided to, uh, that it ought to go to everybody, so they were going to give it out  
42 with the dues but not increase the dues, but every unit was supposed to get a \$25  
43 [inaudible 17:01] to cover the expenses of Carry On. Um, that was done for 2  
44 years as a trial. Then in 1928, the dues were increased to \$2! [background

1 speakers] But that was to include a subscription to Carry On. Um, that's just a  
2 word about that. In, uh, 1923 July 14th, uh, uh, let me see [inaudible 17:40] in  
3 1923, the report of the [extension] [inaudible] [national 17:43] stated that new  
4 units were being found, listing 14 new ones, including one in Milwaukee.  
5 [coughing] On July 14, 1923, on Bastille Day, [inaudible 18:01] duty in France  
6 [inaudible 18:05], a luncheon was held at the City Club by the, uh, so called  
7 Wisconsin Unit, it was called that at first.

8  
9 And they had had 5 new members since convention, which was only about 3  
10 months back, and more were expected. Early in 1924, the first president of the  
11 Milwaukee Unit – Wisconsin Unit, Jessica Anderson made a survey of [estate  
12 18:37]. Uh, [coughing] 308 letters were sent out to postmasters, YWCA, and  
13 ARC secretaries, ex-servicewomen, newspapers, and hospitals, uh, and, eh, was  
14 already in articles on the front page with pictures and name of the secretary of the  
15 unit, so we got a little publicity out of it. Uh, they also discovered a hundred and  
16 s- or had answers from 172 women in the state who had served overseas. Uh, 11  
17 were, um, [inaudible 19:25] or disabled servicewomen who [inaudible 19:28] as  
18 needed and 39 new members only 6 months after the unit was organized. Uh, on  
19 March 4, 1924, they had their first annual meeting of the Wisconsin Unit at the  
20 Hotel Asterisk. Two guests from Chicago came. Uh, unfortunately, [Inaudible  
21 20:03] was in Paris. [laughter] Uh, also 2 guests from Minneapolis. Uh, that's  
22 Major General Haan, the commander of the 32nd Division and [inaudible 20:17],  
23 and it was primarily an informal, uh, pleasant meeting. Uh, in 1924, well, this is  
24 just a beside the point, which doesn't concern our unit particularly, but the  
25 convention was in San Francisco at the Fairmont Hotel. Rooms were \$5 for a  
26 single with bath, [background speakers] \$7 for a double, [background speakers]  
27 and the roundtrip airfare from Chicago to San Francisco was \$86. [background  
28 speakers] That did not include [inaudible 21:04], however.

29  
30 Um, uh, many, um, in – on November 24th, uh, [inaudible 21:20], eh, um,  
31 [decided 21:25] as Defense Day by the [National 21:27] and, a disaster relief team  
32 was to be set up. The entire Wisconsin Unit was indexed as to the service in  
33 emergency that they could help with, and also as a skeleton organization in case  
34 of military necessity. This report was turned over to the ARC, and the Wisconsin  
35 Unit was praised for a good job done by the President of the – by the National  
36 President. Some of the early members as listed in various parts of Carry On here.  
37 Uh, I'm gonna read the names, and some of you may have had some contact, um,  
38 and heard something, knew something about them. Jessica Anderson was the first  
39 Unit President, and Barb as Sixth Corps Area Vice President, which is the same as  
40 our Sixth Corps Area [inaudible 22:40]. [coughing] Um, and she held that  
41 position for 1925 and '26. Helen [Patton 22:50], and I remember Helen [Patton  
42 22:52]. Helen [Patton 22:54], uh, went with us to one of the first area conferences  
43 that I went to. Um, I don't know whether you remember, Helen?  
44

1Helen: Yeah, I remember her.  
2  
3Speaker: [23:05] Remember her? And, um, [coughing] she was the National [Inaudible  
4 23:12] Chairman from 1924 and '25. She had that job when, uh, new, little pin  
5 was, was, uh, designed and made, which was like the center of this one but just  
6 the round, small round pin for every member. Uh, she was also Unit Pres-, the  
7 Second Unit President from 1925 to '26. Um, [Jeanette 23:42] Spencer who was  
8 President '27 to '28. [Madge Hilton 23:46], and there's another one I'm sure some  
9 of you remember. Um, she was Chairman of the Charter Investigation Committee  
10 when they were trying to get charter from [inaudible 23:59]. Uh, that didn't  
11 develop, and, uh, she also was involved in the [work for 24:09] incorporation in  
12 the State of Indiana, which, eh, uh, well, we are incorporated now. Uh, [Kathryn  
13 Darling 24:19]. I know I've heard many people speak of [Kathryn Darling 24:22].  
14 I don't know too much about her, and I didn't find too much about her, except just  
15 her name. [throat clearing] So if anybody knows anything interesting speak up.  
16  
17Speaker: [Inaudible 24:32].  
18  
19Speaker: Yeah. Um, the officers of the unit in 1925 were Cornelia [Inaudible 24:46], Vice  
20 Pres-, first Vice President; Rebecca Plant second Vice President; Matilda  
21 [Inaudible 24:53], Corresponding Secretary; Elizabeth [Inaudible 24:55],  
22 Recording Secretary; [Amy] [Inaudible 24:58], Treasurer. I didn't say, didn't say  
23 anything about any of those. I've never heard their names, [coughing] [just listed  
24 them 25:07]. [25:09] Anybody heard of ever...  
25  
26Speaker: No.  
27  
28Speaker: ...had any contact? Um, Anna Heil, H-E-I-L, was Directress of the Wisconsin  
29 Nurses' Club, and they had their second... Hm.  
30  
31 [chime]  
32  
33Speaker: [Inaudible 25:24].  
34  
35Speaker: Yeah. Uh, and she, uh, hosted the second annual meeting at the Nurses' Club.  
36 Agnes [Inaudible 25:37]. I'm sure all of us or some of us remember. [laughter]  
37 Agnes [Inaudible 25:43] was in, um, Milwaukee from '28 or in Milwaukee from  
38 '26 to '28 and moved to Madison and remained in Madison. However, she kept  
39 her ties with the Milwaukee Unit from the Madison Unit [inaudible 26:01].  
40 [Inaudible 26:03] was in Madison. Uh, we remember her because she left us a,  
41 um...  
42  
43Speaker: Legacy.  
44

1 Speaker: [laughter] Legacy. [laughter] Thank you, [Barbara 26:17]. [laughter] It's  
2 [wonderful] [inaudible 26:19].  
3  
4 Speaker: [Inaudible 26:21].  
5  
6 Speaker: Somebody [inaudible 26:22] find the word when you can. Um...  
7  
8 Speaker: [Inaudible 26:26].  
9  
10 Speaker: ...and then there were 3 members who were, um, one was Recreation Director at  
11 Westhaven, which had become U.S. Veterans Hospital 37, and one who was a  
12 dietitian there and one who was an [LT 26:44] there. [coughing] Westhaven, by  
13 the way, was in Waukesha, but our unit was active and w- working [inaudible  
14 26:53]. In '24 and '25, they decided it would be nice to exchange visits with  
15 Chicago officers and get to know each other. So we still try to do that. Um,  
16 October 24, October and t-, Oc-, yeah, October 24th in 1925, the Sixth Corps  
17 Area, um, had a conference, the first conference, at, uh, in Milwaukee at the Oscar  
18 Hotel. Um, dinner, um, had Colonel [Inaudible 27:36], representative of Major  
19 General [W.T. Graves 27:40], the commander of the Sixth Corps Area. He  
20 emphasized the necessity of National Defense. Comparatively small – I  
21 mentioned that a comparatively small percentage of our national income was  
22 spent here on, uh, defense as compared with European countries, including  
23 Russia. Um, at this same meeting, we had the location report made up by Dr.  
24 Frank [Richmond 28:18] and Dr. W.F. [Lawrence 28:21] of Madison. Uh, [so  
25 they'd work 28:23], uh, in Washington. Uh, made a survey of the work in  
26 Wisconsin and prepared it especially for WOSL. Uh, Mrs. [Patton 28:40] who  
27 was our President at that t-, eh, or I guess it was Miss [Patton 28:44] isn't it.  
28 Anyway, Helen [Patton 28:47], uh, hopes that the conference will become an  
29 annual affair and other areas will follow suit. So we were the beginning...  
30  
31 Speaker: [Wow 28:56].  
32  
33 Speaker: ...[inaudible 28:57] or something. Uh, they got good publicity in the papers.  
34 There were people – president from many areas in Wisconsin, from St. Louis, one  
35 from Syracuse, New York, and a very large group from Illinois, especially  
36 Chicago. [giggling] In 1926, a unit f-, was formed in Madison, and the Wisconsin  
37 Unit became the Milwaukee Unit. Uh, Theo Bird at that time was Vice President  
38 of the Unit. The Milwaukee Unit entertained the 9th National YWCA convention,  
39 uh, at an overseas lunch with foreign delegates at the College Women's Club, and  
40 also a second luncheon at the City Club for the members. Mrs. Welthy Fisher, the  
41 wife of Bis-, Bishop Fisher, of Calcutta, India, spoke on occupations that had  
42 been opened up to women [coughing] in India, specifically weaving. [30:17] Did  
43 you ever think about weaving being open to women? [laughter] It had been  
44 handed down father to son apparently [chuckle] or until this time. Our [Janette

1 30:30] Spencer who would serve as Chairman of the Milwaukee Unit. Um, eh,  
2 [inaudible 30:38], uh, there was a tornado followed by fire in Murphysboro,  
3 Illinois. ARC set up a hospital, and [Jeanette 30:48] Spencer established a canteen  
4 there, which was open for 18 days, often 48 hours without sleep, the value of 18  
5 months overseas [inaudible 31:03] of overseas war experience really was a help,  
6 she says. Uh, let's see. I guess that's all I had on those. And that took us pretty  
7 well up to the end of '27, and that was as far as I got any material. [laughter] Uh,  
8 they are, uh – let's see. There were 2 articles in one of the 23rd or 23 Carry Ons,  
9 one by the American Legion. In the aftermath of the war, U.S. is threatened by  
10 forces of radicalism, bolshevism, sovietism, and anarchy. Washington-based  
11 organization was getting pledges from boys 12 to 15 never to go to war no matter  
12 what the issues. [32:05] Does that sound familiar?  
13  
14Speakers: [Affirmations]  
15  
16Speaker: At the s-, in the same issue there was an article by Mary Roberts Rinehart. Um,  
17 there's an attack on existing former govern-, government furthered largely by  
18 women. Astounding amount of propaganda for disarmament. Initial imp-, impulse  
19 from the Soviet Russia – It behooves every woman to [what 32:34] organization  
20 she belongs to and what her children are being taught in school. [laughter] [32:42]  
21 Does that sound familiar?  
22  
23Speaker: [Inaudible 32:43].  
24  
25Speaker: [Inaudible 32:44], doesn't it?  
26  
27Speaker: [Inaudible 32:46].  
28  
29 [background speakers]  
30  
31Speaker: Um, there are also, and I couldn't find [laughter] – we found a little tiny  
32 paragraph, a sentence really, uh, last night, and I couldn't find it again to get the  
33 exact wording, but it was by Nikita Khrushchev and he's stating that and I don't  
34 know the basis for this. I don't have any proof of it being accurate and. But he  
35 stated that it wouldn't be possible to turn the Americans in from, uh, s-, from...  
36  
37Speaker: Capitalism.  
38  
39Speaker: ...capitalism to socialism all at once.  
40  
41Speaker: Not socialism. Communism.  
42  
43Speaker: Communism. Okay. Communism. Uh, that they could get all at once, but if they  
44 could get their workers working with our young people, it wouldn't take very long



1 before the country would begin to think socialism and pretty soon be communist,  
2 so.  
3  
4Speaker: [Inaudible 33:58].  
5  
6Jane Piatt: How smart.  
7  
8Speaker: Yeah.  
9  
10Jane Piatt: That's exactly what they're doing.  
11  
12Speaker: Yeah.  
13  
14Speaker: [Inaudible 34:04].  
15  
16Speaker: Uh, the main thing I found about the service of the groups was service to overseas  
17 women in the hospitals and, uh, apparently a very big effort to locate people that  
18 needed help and so on. There were – soon after the unit was af-, established, there  
19 was a new government, uh, hospital for TB women in Milwaukee, and, um, the  
20 Wisconsin Milwaukee Unit was very active in working with them, um, decorating  
21 their hospital and ornaments and cookies and the regular type of service that we  
22 was given. Uh, when there were 11 nurses in the TB home, the unit managed to  
23 get a set of dishes so that the patients didn't have to eat off institution china.  
24 [laughter] [background speakers] They also helped, uh, at the, uh, citizens  
25 military training camps in the, in – at Fort Sheridan and, and, uh, [inaudible  
26 35:38] similar type of, of service. Now there might have been other things in  
27 there. I didn't have time to really cover [inaudible 35:46], but that's as much as I  
28 got out of it. [applause] [35:50] Does anybody have any... [laughter]  
29  
30Speaker: That was excellent.  
31  
32Speaker: That was [inaudible 35:55].  
33  
34Speaker: Very [inaudible 35:56].  
35  
36Speaker: [Inaudible 35:56].  
37  
38Speaker: [Inaudible 35:59].  
39  
40Speaker: Uh, now Jane is, uh, let's go from the past now to the future, and Jane is going to  
41 tell us a little bit about the oral history project, which became a national project  
42 last year at convention. Uh, Jane.  
43

1 Jane Piatt: You know, if you'll open your mouth wide enough, somebody's gonna put their  
2 foot in it, and last year, it was I who put my foot in my own mouth by, uh,  
3 proposing the idea of oral history to the WOSL, and consequently, I became the  
4 National Chairman. Automatically, I think that happened. [chuckle] Anyhow, this  
5 year has been very interesting because it took a while to get it going. I, uh, I  
6 wasn't too familiar with how to do it, and I had a, a friend who helped me be the  
7 speaker last year, who lives in Lansing and is very well versed in historical and  
8 archives and this sort of thing, and she has been working on oral history for quite  
9 a long time and is, uh, just aghast at the amount of, of history of, of women that's  
10 just gone down the drain because nobody's ever recorded it, and this way, it, uh,  
11 will become verbal history. It will be recorded. And our, uh, tapes are going to be  
12 r-, uh, stored in the, uh, Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe where they have a big or  
13 have started a library on women, and so [Geneva 37:24] wrote to them and asked  
14 if they would be interested, and we got a very nice letter back saying yes, they  
15 would very much be interested, and they would appreciate anything that we could  
16 get together and send to them, and they'd be waiting to hear from us.

17  
18 And then, uh, at the Board meeting in, um, January, the National Board decided to  
19 [throat clearing] uh, join the Schlesinger Library as members, and so they put it in  
20 under my name, so I immediately got a very nice letter from the President of  
21 Radcliffe, uh, accepting our membership and congratulating us on the work we  
22 were doing and telling us that, uh, they would be waiting with open arms for our,  
23 our work. And nothing has been sent [inaudible 38:02] to them yet because it –  
24 we really haven't gotten that far with it. But, um, uh, I've had not an exciting  
25 amount of materials back from many of the units. In fact, we have 47 units in, uh,  
26 WOSL, and I've heard from 20 of them out of the 47. They, they got their reports  
27 back to me by – well tomorrow is supposed to be the last day, but I had to have  
28 my report into National before that, so I sent my report in on Friday, and I told  
29 them at that time that I had 19 reports back but that – and while some units had  
30 indicated absolutely no interest, that they weren't planning on doing anything.  
31 They didn't want to do anything. That was the end of it. Twelve or fourteen of the  
32 nineteen had definitely indicated that they either were doing or had done or would  
33 be doing in the future some tapes. And then some of them mentioned people that  
34 they were definitely planning and wanted to get tapes on because of their age and  
35 the importance of their background.

36  
37 But [throat clearing] I want to tell you there isn't a single gal who's a member of  
38 WOSL who doesn't have some interesting history to give. And I, I s-, keep having  
39 people, uh, trying to explain to people that everybody's history is interesting. It  
40 doesn't make any difference who you are. Uh, your, your very life is going to be  
41 of interest sometime in the future to somebody who's doing research and pulls out  
42 one of these tapes and listens to it. And will say can you imagine, uh, having to  
43 ask, uh, uh, someone's mother if they could have a date because a, a couple of  
44 the, of the people that have been recorded have told about before they went into

1 service how, uh, they had been very carefully watched by their family and in  
2 order to go on a date had to get permission from their families and the families  
3 had to meet them, and you know how our lifestyle for the young people is now.  
4 Uh, and so imagine what it's liable to be 50 years or a hundred years from now.  
5 But, uh, [throat clearing] I think that [chiming] this is turning out to be one of the  
6 most interesting kinds of, of, uh, projects that we could have, and we're gonna  
7 have some very interesting history deposited in our name. And it isn't something  
8 that's just gonna happen this year or next year, it'll go on because no, no unit is  
9 gonna get all of their people in one time.

10  
11 Although the Chairman of Lansing History of the Lansing Unit, and this is very  
12 funny because the Lansing Unit is not a, not a unit that's been very interested in  
13 doing much of anything from the standpoint of national or anything like, like that,  
14 but the chairman of this unit has gotten very much interested in it, and she has  
15 announced to them that they will have seen her by the, uh, end of October. All 25  
16 of us will have had our histories recorded by that time. Well, she has actually  
17 done about 6, and, uh, she said I'm not going to worry too much about it during  
18 the summer, but in the fall, I'll get everybody lined up. And, you know, they've  
19 done it. And this is very surprising. Some of the people that are the – had been the  
20 least interested have, have when they've come to do their history discovered that  
21 they had some rather interesting things. And many people who have given their  
22 histories, one of the gals in Detroit, a World War I veteran, whose tape was  
23 played at their 60th anniversary in December, when she listened to it, she said,  
24 you know, I told you things that I don't think my family ever even heard before.  
25 And, um, all of us who have done any of these tapes have had the, the fun of  
26 learning about people that we've known for a long time and things that we never  
27 knew about them. I never knew before that [Laurie Burnham 41:25] had 3 tours in  
28 Europe or in, uh, overseas, one in, uh, Guadalcanal.

29  
30 Speaker: [Inaudible 41:33].

31  
32 Jane Piatt: [Inaudible 41:33] and one in India and one in Japan. And, uh, a lot of the things  
33 that she told in her history, I'd never known about it. I guess there wouldn't have  
34 been any particular reason to have known it, but it was fun finding it out. And I  
35 had a delightful afternoon yesterday with this young lady right here who gave me  
36 a fascinating, uh, tape. The only problem was that so many of the really good  
37 things that she told me were told to me before we started doing the tape [inaudible  
38 41:59] having lunch, you know. [laughter] [Inaudible 42:02] never did get them  
39 back to the tape. But, uh, uh, people seem to think this is such a, a bugabear, but  
40 I'd just like to have you know that while we've all been sitting here talking, I've  
41 been taping, and I'm gonna hear – let you hear what's going on.

42  
43  
44/lo