

Anne MacMAHON

This is an interview with Anne MacMahon, who has worked as a personal assistant to Don Dunstan –

Don Dunstan, yes.

– and the interview's on a rainy Monday, 19th May.

Certainly, yes.

So thank you very much for coming, for letting me come here, Anne, and do this.

Pleasure.

And I was just going to ask, if I could just ask you generally about your sort of work, very briefly your work history, before you – – –.

Before. Immediately before, I was working for Bob Bakewell as his PA, and he was then called the 'Permanent Head' of the Premier's Department, and while I was away on long service leave, I think, in London, where I actually worked with Bob in the Agent General's Office for the odd day, I heard that Zeta Nalty, his previous secretary, had become quite ill so when I came back I didn't go back to Bob Bakewell; I went straight into Don's office, and it was a case of, I think, whether he felt comfortable with me, *et cetera*, but obviously he did because then the job was eventually advertised when Zeta retired and I got the job.

So you'd been in the public service for some time at that point?

Only since 1970, where I left CSIRO¹ out at Glen Osmond and they had a horticultural research section, and I worked for the chief, I think he was called, at that stage, John Possingham, Dr Possingham. Then I decided that I really would like to be in the city so I got a transfer. Most of the stuff was transferred over except I think – I don't know what; I think possibly some of the benefits didn't. But it was virtually the same because the CSIRO is a Commonwealth Government agency. So then I worked in, what was it called, Public Buildings Department and from there,

¹ CSIRO – Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation.

Anne MacMAHON

yes, I saw an advertisement for the job for Bakewell as the Permanent Head and that's how it went from there.

So when you started working for Bob how long had you been in the workforce?

Oh, well, that's a good question.

Or for Don, perhaps, maybe, if we take it for Don.

Yes. I had been in the workforce since I suppose I was about seventeen and I started working for him in '74, so that's a long time, isn't it?

Yes.

Prior to that I'd been overseas and I'd worked at UNESCO,² just a short stint for about four months.

What an interesting lot of work you had.

It was wonderful, yes, loved it. And yes, unfortunately, when I was about to leave and I'd made my bookings and everybody was prepared for me to come home they asked me if I'd like to stay on permanently and of course I couldn't say yes.

That was UNESCO in London?

UNESCO in Paris, this was.

Oh, how fabulous.

Oh, well, okay. (laughs) However. But it was a great experience.

Yes. So I'm delicately not trying to ask your age, Anne.

Oh, my age is seventy-six.

Seventy-six.

Yes.

² UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Anne MacMAHON

So we'll vaguely work that out anyway, so you were quite an experienced person already.

Yes. I'd done a lot of work for all sorts of people and especially in London where I'd done agencies, including advertising agencies and weirdies and funny little places like Dickens – you know, the Dickens era?

Yes – funny little old places and offices, I suppose.

They were, yes. Quite weird.

Okay. So I was going to ask how you got the job and you've told me already, haven't you?

I have, yes. It was just sort of pure luck, I suppose. But obviously Bob Bakewell recommended me and I knew Don because I probably had gone in with Bob Bakewell perhaps to some deputations to take a few notes for him –

Yes.

– and so it was the obvious thing to do, I suppose. I was the next in line, I guess.

Really from like the Permanent Head of the Premier's Department personal assistant.

Department into the – yes.

Up to the Premier's group.

Up to the Premier. And I didn't change, I was always a public servant and there was a certain number of public servants on the Premier's staff and I was one of those.

Yes, right, okay. And so you worked for a while with Zeta Nalty.

Well, I did for a small amount of time, I suppose – only that we became good friends because we'd actually, many years apart, had gone to the same school, to Cabra. We were Dominicans, you see, so that was the big thing. Zeta was very fond of that. (laughs) And so I mean I would help her out occasionally by, I don't know, doing what? Making a few phone calls if we was overloaded. But of course I was pretty busy too working for Bob Bakewell.

Anne MacMAHON

I bet you were, yes.

Yes.

What was it like working for Bob Bakewell, if I could just digress a little?

Oh, yes. It was very exciting, actually, because we had a lot of petrol strikes and all sorts of dramas like that, which entailed a lot of taking notes for hours on end, all over weekends, coming out at weekends and working with the Parliamentary Counsel and people like that. And so it was quite exhausting, I must say, as it was with Don at times because of crises. But it was good, yes.

So how long were you with Bob Bakewell?

I started in 1972 and then I finished towards the end of '74 because that's when I went straight from long service leave to Don.

Okay. And so just to say – what was Zeta Nalty like as a person and a sort of personal assistant?

Personality. She was lovely. She was of the old school. Absolute lady. Charming to everybody, took the beautiful silver tea service in to Executive Council and served the tea at the appropriate time and always the lady, yes, never anything but.

I see.

Charming to everybody.

And did she sort of – you know, when you did the handover, did she brief you?

A little bit. She came in – she'd been ill for quite a while but she did come in and explain various things and showed me where we keep that particular imprint to make on the letterheads and a few things like that, and the little sewing kit if Don lost a button. (laughs) She had the complete overall control of the personal side, too. She was very fond of Don. Just adored him, really.

Yes. And she'd worked with him for some time, I think.

Anne MacMAHON

I think she had. She'd come from Frank Walsh, who was the previous Premier, I'm pretty sure, so she'd had a lot of experience.

And did she sort of tell you things like he likes this or he likes that or, 'Be careful of a Monday morning, he'll be in a bad mood' or something just silly like that.

No, no, I don't think she did, I don't think so. Nothing like bad moods, anyway. No, he was just wonderful. (laughs) But she probably told me, yes, he likes certain sorts of tea and things like that. I can't really remember. But there was nothing big; it was mainly the administrative side of things: 'I keep that here' and 'We only use that once a year but if you're looking for the Christmas card list' and that type of thing, yes.

Oh, yes. And was there anybody that she said, 'Don't let this person in the office' or, you know, 'He's a bit of a pest' or 'She's a bit of a pest', or ---?

Well, no. I don't think she did – well, I probably knew them all by then, anyway, (laughter) having worked with Bob Bakewell. But she didn't as far as I remember. But she was very protective – I mean, I think we all knew you don't just let anybody in. Well, you can't, of course. No, you wouldn't, no.

And your office, when you worked for Bob Bakewell, that was very close adjacent to Don's office or not?

Well, it wasn't. He was on the tenth floor and Don's office was on the eleventh floor – probably still is; and it wasn't until I'd begun to work for Don two years after I started with Bob that the office of the permanent head was on the same floor. It was a bit of a mix-match stuff for a while, but anyway, he got there. But he was always rushing up the stairs, you know.

And when you were his personal assistant you were probably running up and down the stairs a lot.

That's right, yes.

Very good for you.

Anne MacMAHON

A lot of that, yes – or the others were coming down, you know, the Peter Ward and Tony Baker and saying, ‘Where’s this? It must be here’, and I’m saying, ‘Well, it isn’t’, sort of thing. That sort of thing, there was much up-and-down stuff.

Oh, really?

Yes.

So you must have worked quite closely with all those people who were closely with – – –.

Yes. That’s right, with Don. Yes, that’s right. Susan Keenan[?], who now is in Sydney, and yes, Peter Ward.

Susan Keenan, what was her – – –?

Susan was officially the telephonist/receptionist but she was a great hostess, she really was, and she was very good with all the ministers who came in every Monday for their Cabinet meetings and the Exec Council on Thursdays and she really was an exceptional personality – and still is, of course.

Anyway, perhaps we should interview her, actually?

I think you should, yes.

So she’s in Sydney?

She’s in Sydney. She works in the Panthers Club at – where are they? – Parramatta.

Yes, out a bit.

Yes, out a bit, yes. And she I think does marketing for them, she goes and sells boxes and stuff to people, she’s that sort of person.

And so would you have any contact for her I could perhaps get after[wards]?

Yes, I’ve got her phone number, I’ll give you that.

Okay, that’d be lovely. Because we’re really trying to sort of look at the whole thing, really.

Anne MacMAHON

Yes. And she was there before I was there. She wasn't there for many months after I started because her husband got a job with E&WS – now, he was a cameraman in Sydney, I think. I've forgotten the exact details. But yes, she was there in the very early days, she and Zeta. And Nan, now Peterkin[?], who will be here on Thursday, she now lives in Melbourne, Nan was Peter Ward's secretary, also Tony Baker's secretary, so they were the beginning of it all with Zeta. They were the new young girls there.

It would be quite fun to talk to Nan Peterkin, too.

Yes, I can give you her number, too.

Oh, thank you. So she lives in Melbourne?

She does live in Melbourne now with her husband. But she married an Englishman, yes.

Oh, yes. So she's now Mrs but before she was single.

Peterkin, yes, so that was that group.

Lovely. So they worked with Zeta. I'm just writing down –

Yes.

– because I'm always neurotic about whether this'll work, but it's sort of just like also things I need to follow up, it's quite a sort of good thing to do that, but it's (checks recorder) ticking on.

Good.

Goodo. I was just going to ask you – this is a big question, really – what did the job involve?

Yes. I suppose it basically involved being his confidential stenographer, but also there was a lot more to it: obviously trying to protect him, (laughs) and doing anything that he needed. He never demanded or even asked for personal stuff, he was very careful about that; but sometimes if he were desperately busy he'd say, 'Oh, Annie, would you mind perhaps running out and buying me a bit of steak or

Anne MacMAHON

something? I've invited some people for dinner and I just don't see how I could do it'. But I mean he loved to get out himself into the Market if he could

Yes.

So he was very careful about that.

So you would be taking dictation –

Yes.

– and typing it up –

Typing it up for him.

– and then letting him – he would check it, perhaps, and then if necessary – – –.

Yes, that's right. And often he got so far behind because of all the appointments, which were necessary, that I would drive out to Stephen Wright's[?] home – you've probably spoken to Stephen – because Stephen would try and get him out there, wherever Stephen lived, I've forgotten now. Somewhere up in the Hills. And he would do a whole hours and hours of dictation sitting out in the fresh air and that sort of thing.

So why would he be doing dictation, why would he have that all piled up to do? I don't understand.

Ah. Well, because his whole day would be taken up with meetings, crises, Cabinet, Parliament of course – Parliament takes a huge chunk out of every day because it's the full afternoon – and I suppose just a general build-up of Salisbury Affair, you name it, and so things would get behind. And he obviously himself had to do these particular letters –

Yes.

– or speeches or whatever; nobody would do them for him.

So when you took dictation from him, like when he had a whole lot of stuff, would he just do that all from memory?

Anne MacMAHON

Well, he'd have the files with him lined up.

He'd have the papers with him.

Yes. But he had an enormous capacity for understanding and background and – yes, wonderful memory.

Really.

Absolutely, yes. People would come and say, 'Do you think if you get a moment you could ask Don?' and give me *tiny* details and I often wouldn't quite know what, and I would just say a word to Don and he'd say yes. He knew it all in his great, great brain.

Can you give me an example, can you sort of remember something like that?

I don't know at the moment. It might come to me later.

Yes. Well, leave it. If it just pops up – – –.

Yes, it might just pop up. But yes, many, many things that were going on which people would come from various areas of the Department – Economic Intelligence Unit, you know, Milton Smith, or that type of thing. Ross Harding from the other area, all those people whom I vaguely knew what they did and maybe even I typed up bits for them if I had a moment, which was never, hardly ever, usually with Bob Bakewell when I was working – so those sorts of things, you know. 'What's the present situation with the Monarto situation?' perhaps.

And so when you did dictation was he sort of clear –

Yes.

– fully-formed sentences?

Oh, very much so. Yes, yes, very much so.

Was that unusual, when you think of all your other bosses?

When you think of all the others, yes. Possibly, yes, quite.

Anne MacMAHON

Or not, or was it really – – –?

Well, when I think back for many years, yes, very unusual, and of course his intelligence was amazing, really. And he would just talk. Sometimes – and I was pretty fast, I could take very fast dictation – I'd be guessing in the end. I'd think, 'Oh, I won't stop him', because the flow was going. If he was enthusiastic about anything or felt deeply about anything, then he would just go on and on and on. (laughs)

And did you record – like nowadays people record and stuff as well?

No. Didn't know about that, no. Never thought of it.

So how many words of shorthand per minute were you?

Well, I officially passed, I think, a hundred and forty words per minute but I could probably do a bit more, I probably could do about a hundred and fifty – specially if I were doing deputations and there'd be Aboriginal deputations, there'd be a deputation for everything, of course.

Like there'd be people coming in.

People coming in and you'd have to try and remember who they were and I remember saying to Sue, Susan Keenan, when I'd just started there, 'How am I going to remember their names and have time to look up?' And she said, 'Just note the tie'. So I'd put 'blue tie', 'red tie', whatever, (laughter) and then I'd have a quick glance and I'd know then I had the key: that was Mr Cooper or whatever, because they'd be quickly going on.

So you'd be going like this.

Yes, that's right (laughs) and then have to get it all back.

So how many people would you take, how many people would there be in a [dictation]?

Anne MacMAHON

Oh, sometimes there would be five or six or more people there so it was quite difficult. And sometimes people from the Commonwealth: I can remember Bill Hayden with – what was that, the health thing? I was going to say ‘Medicare’.

Medibank.

Medibank, yes. And yes, all of that would be going on and then you’d have to rush and try and type it all back and bring it back while they were having lunch, you see, and could look at it again.

And then you’d remember the bits in between that you’d missed, sort of?

Yes. You’d think, ‘Oh, well, that must’ve been – – –. Mm, yes’. Then they would read it, so this could go on all day, of course.

And when you had Aboriginal people –

Yes.

– coming, was there some times that they spoke English or people spoke English in a different way that was hard to pick up, or – – –?

Very rarely, actually, yes. They didn’t speak a lot and they were not very fast speakers, I suppose, so –

Made it easier.

– that made it easier, yes.

And I imagine that quite a lot of immigrants came –

Yes.

– with their multicultural areas.

Oh, yes, that’s very true. Yes, they were always interesting, of course, yes.

And so let me just say that you were saying that really your job was confidential stenographer and protect him and do what he needed.

Yes.

And I was just going to ask you about the Cabinet process and what that was.

Anne MacMAHON

Yes.

And your role in it.

My role was nil, practically, because the Cabinet process is mainly through the ministers bringing to Cabinet what they wish to discuss, you see. So, really, Don would have nothing to do with that until he actually got into Cabinet – unless he was bringing something himself, of course – but it was all done by the Permanent Head, would come through the Permanent Head, and was prepared by the various sections which wanted to put a proposal forward.

Yes.

So really nothing.

So there was a Cabinet secretary?

Yes, there was, yes.

Who was that?

Who was that? The Under-Treasurer – no, it wasn't the Under-Treasurer. There was a secretary, the Chief Secretary. But there was a Cabinet secretary – – –.

So who made the agenda and –

Who made the agenda.

– took the minutes?

Judy – – –. Well, nobody ever goes in there because of course it's quite secret –

Oh, yes.

– so it's really just that person who has the role of the secretary after Cabinet gets all the files, notes 'approved', 'not approved', that type of thing.

Oh, yes, yes.

Anne MacMAHON

‘Action required.’ And that then makes the list, you see. But she would make the list of what went in to the Premier so he has the full list and she has all the files and wheels them in and that’s the end of that.

Oh, really. So really you didn’t – – –.

No. It was really nothing to do with me, no.

Except when he was getting things ready for Cabinet.

Possibly, yes. I would then no doubt, yes, type that up for him. But mostly that would probably be done by the particular area that he was interested in presenting an approval for.

But when you were with Bob Bakewell, perhaps?

Yes, probably we did it a bit more then, yes. And it was really just the form, you set out the appropriate form, which has probably been done by someone in a lower area, (laughs) as it were, bringing it up till it’s quite finalised and then maybe you have to type it; but not always.

And this were the days of typing and carbon copies and all of that?

Oh, my goodness, yes. When you think about that, yes.

And Tippex or something to – correction fluid.

Oh, yes. Or fourteen copies of like tissue paper, (laughs) you know, and then trying to rub out if you made an error. And fortunately we had electric typewriters, eventually, by the time I’d gone, so that made life a bit easier rather than hitting away with great strength and power at those old, clanging things.

Yes. Well, photocopiers probably were just coming in.

They were in, yes, that was good, yes.

That awful sort of shiny paper back then.

Yes, they were. But they were a great help.

Anne MacMAHON

Oh, yes.

Yes. So eventually only making one copy and sometimes not, just did your original and rushed to the copying machine.

And also the Gestetner, were you using that?

I think that'd gone. Well, I mean, I'd used it, obviously; but I don't think in the days in the Premier's Department, no. I think we'd got rid of them – which was lovely.

Yes, I started work in '70 and I can remember them a bit.

Can you?

They were purple things, the purple stuff.

Oh, yes. Wipe the whole page out and start again. (laughs) Like wax, which dried.

Yes. That's right, yes.

Oh, dear.

Okay. And so did you have like regular meetings with Don? Did he come in at, you know, eight-forty-five every morning and said, 'Today XYZ, we're going to do this'? Or how did it work?

Not really. How did it work? Well, the day before the next day the private secretary would produce the diary, the calendar for the day, and we'd all have copies and then I'd make sure if I was involved I had the file, which Don would need; but normally I'd give that to the Steve Wright and then – – –.

Who was his personal – – –.

Who was his private secretary, yes. So that was it. So you knew the appointments and you'd have all the background and all the files and they would all be on Don's desk when he arrived, and he arrived very early. He could be there –

What time?

– eight o'clock.

And what time would you start?

Anne MacMAHON

I officially started at nine; sometimes I'd be there earlier. But I know Don would be up at at least six reading all the papers, you could ring him at that time if you had problems and wanted to speak to him.

So you'd sometimes ring him at six a.m.

Six a.m. at home for something, yes. Say, 'What about this?'

Yes. And did he ever ring you at six a.m.

I don't think so. Mind you, he had ---.

Or early?

No. Well, I mean he has rung me many, many times at any time, I suppose, yes.

Day or night.

Day or night, yes.

Weekend.

Oh, yes. You know, 'Could you come out?' and 'Just got to do this now'.

So what do you mean, 'Come out'? Where would you be going?

I'd go to his home.

Which home was that?

Norwood. Clara Street, Norwood.

Clara Street, yes.

Yes.

Because I sort of forget the chronology because – were you working for him when he was still married to Gretel or was it after that?

No. When I arrived I think they had just formally divorced, I believe. Yes, because I'd rung her for him just to mention – I don't know what it was, an item that he'd brought in for her to pick up.

Anne MacMAHON

So just about the time you went there he was now separated or divorced, as you said –

Yes.

– and living at Clara Street.

Yes, Clara Street in Norwood, yes.

And so how would you go there if he called you on a Sunday?

Oh, I'd drive there.

Oh, right. So you had to be on call quite a lot?

Well, you did, you did. And often it would be sort of probably not my job to be doing all this because I can remember the Cabinet secretary being a bit upset because she said, 'Well, that's my job. I should have done that'. But of course, because he explained to me, 'Well, you're my confidential secretary. I want you to do everything. I don't want anything done out there'.

Spread out there, yes.

'Spread out there', yes.

And that Cabinet secretary was, you said, Judy somebody?

Judy – oh, I can't think of her name now. It'll come to me.

And so what would happen when you got out there?

Oh! Well – – –.

Would it be, 'Get your pencil out straight away. We're going for this'?

Oh, well, more or less, I suppose, yes. He'd probably have made some coffee or, 'Would you like a drink?' or whatever. So it was all very pleasant and we'd sit out perhaps round the pool if it was a lovely day. So it was all very relaxed, yes.

And so would you be there for a long time?

Oh, I could be there a couple of hours, I suppose, yes.

Anne MacMAHON

Yes.

That's true, yes. Or longer.

How did that work? Did you get time off in lieu? I'm being such a stickybeak here.

Yes. Well, that's right. Not really. Didn't even think of that, I suppose. I probably had this allowance to cover overtime. But again he would say – I remember when my father was ill and I said to him, you know, 'I won't come in today but I'll make out a sick form, would that cover it?' And he'd say, 'Well, you shouldn't – no, don't worry about things like that'. So he would try and cover it but I'd make sure he did because I had so much sick leave it didn't matter, anyway. So yes, 'You've certainly done your duty so don't worry about it'.

Yes. And so when you went to Clara Street, was that when he was – you were there, of course, when he was married to Adele and so forth. Was that – I'm forgetting my chronology.

Yes, that's true. Let me think about that. I suppose she was there occasionally but it was before that, too, well before that, it seemed. So she was there sometimes, not always, because she retained her home, didn't she, I believe, at Maylands, and did her own thing, too. But it was great when she was there. We'd perhaps go out to lunch and she'd do wonderful stir-fries so we'd have lunch first. (laughs)

Oh, lovely. And you'd probably see the garden and all the things coming along.

Oh, yes, that's right. Walk round. He loved that garden, yes, the herbs and everything.

Okay. And what about – were you often staying back late in the evenings?

Well, not really, not really, oddly enough. I mean I did at one stage think, 'I'll just wait around', and Stephen would say, 'Oh, no, that's okay, go home, I don't think it's necessary'. So very rarely did I work longer than the nine to five because he was probably down at Parliament House and had commitments afterwards and in the mornings, of course, he'd get in early and then people like Bruce Guerin and Andrew

Anne MacMAHON

..... and maybe Bob Bakewell would go in and discuss whatever, so it was normally I'd be called in perhaps weekends more. Yes, weekends more: to either go to Stephen's or go to Don's home or, when he retired of course, I had to go in that night sort of all night. I remember that. (laughs)

What, this was at the Calvary Hospital?

Yes, yes. But I didn't go, no. I think Mike said to me, 'I'll go'.

Mike?

Rann.

Oh, yes.

He was the press secretary. So I just stayed back when I did all those forms, I couldn't believe how many forms you had to, do with – what was his name, lovely fellow, who was in the Chief Secretary's office. Kevin. Anyway, we had to spend the whole night typing these forms up.

What were those forms?

Those forms were for resignation and things like that and he had to – – –. I get a bit teary about that.

Oh, it was terrible, wasn't it?

Yes. It was so sad, wasn't it?

Yes. Unbelievable. It just happened like that, didn't it? Yes. Oh, dear.

Yes. But yes, there were forms. They even had books for them, these great tomes, about how to do this and that.

Yes. Not what you were expecting to do at that point.

No, that's right.

Yes, it was terrible. I remember that very clearly.

Yes.

Anne MacMAHON

A bolt from the blue, wasn't it?

It was, wasn't it?

Yes. So you didn't go up to the hospital or anything?

No. Well, I was supposed to, apparently, to take notes but Mike said, 'No, look, I can do all that', which he obviously did, 'and you'd better stay here with Kevin'.

Kevin – whatever his name was.

Yes. That might come back to me.

You must have been quite close to him, really.

Yes, I suppose you do, because you work all the time with him – and he had many, many crises himself then, of course. Adele dying and that going on all the time.

Yes. I think somebody was telling me that she met them in London just when they – someone whose husband was in the public service and they were over there just when it was found out how sick Adele was, how terrible all that was.

Yes.

Did he ever like share that with you, like these sort of personal crises that he went through?

Well, not directly. I mean he just would, if he were perhaps giving me dictation and then the phone would ring and he would take the call because he needed to and then he'd describe what was going on, and then he'd say to me, 'Well, it's getting so bad that – – –.' He would talk about it then, but not much because *he* got so upset.

Oh, dear. So it must have been fairly fraught there in those years.

It was. It was.

How did you sort of relax?

Well, I don't think I did. I think you just kept going, because you had to. You couldn't sort of let go. But I can remember saying to him when he was obviously upset about talking about Adele with someone and he sort of looked at me and I said,

Anne MacMAHON

‘Well, the last sentence was’ – whatever; I thought, ‘I can’t give in now because this is going to be a total – – –.’ (laughs)

Yes. It’s like you kept him on the track.

I kept him on the track. And he said, ‘Oh, yes’, so we went on with what he was dictating.

Could you when he came in sort of feel what his mood was?

Yes, probably.

Or perhaps after a phone call feel that his mood had changed, or – – –?

Oh, yes. I mean you all knew if he was angry.

How did he show that? Did he cut out, did he start yelling and – – –?

Well, yes, probably. He would just be amazed that someone could be so unfair. You know, he was a great man for justice – – –.

And would he sort of carry on a little bit to you or people just nearby?

Probably. He’d just make a few comments and then, ‘Okay, we’ve got to get on with it. That’s how so-and-so is’, yes.

Did he bounce ideas off you, do you feel like that? I mean there you are, a member of the public, a voter –

Probably not.

– a person who had sort of connected to the community in all sorts of ways.

I don’t think so, no. I think Jack Wright would when I worked for him. I went over to Jack Wright after and he’d say, ‘What do you think, Annie? What are people saying?’

They called you ‘Annie’, did they?

Yes, for some reason. But no, Don I don’t think ever did that. He was not a man for small talk or chit-chat, really. He would be fired up and he could talk forever about

Anne MacMAHON

something he loved or was enthusiastic about or wanted to happen: a fair go for everybody, a good life.

Because some people have said that when there was like somebody left to have a baby and there was a little gathering in the office he was – you know, was he very much at ease in those circumstances or do you think perhaps a little awkward?

Yes, he wasn't terribly much at ease, really. No, it wasn't his forte. And yet he loved people. Unfortunately, people thought he was arrogant because he was shy. And he wasn't, he was quite the reverse. You know, you'd hear people talking on buses and the tram. You'd think, 'Oh, God'. Pass along these ridiculous rumours.

But was he a good boss?

Yes.

I mean you were very close to him, but do you think like for other people the sort of boss who remembered that so-and-so's father was sick, or – – –?

I think he did. I mean, he obviously remembered all about us, birthdays and things, but whether that was because Stephen reminded him or everybody was aware of these things in the office. But he was, yes. He was a very concerned man, very compassionate. Totally normal when it came to people's emotions. Oh, yes: very, very caring man.

You must have seen him with his children, too.

I did, though not a lot because of course they were adults and I'd only see them perhaps if we were invited out there for some gathering – I can't think what reason now; perhaps a wedding of someone who was associated with him – and we'd see the children then.

They were really past the age of coming in –

They'd left school.

– coming in after school with their schoolbags or any of that stuff.

Yes, they had left school. They all had their own lives.

Anne MacMAHON

Judy Bennett.

Yes, there you are, it came. Is she living in Adelaide?

She is. She still works for the government, I think she works in the Attorney-General's Department. She was, yes, the Cabinet secretary when I was with Don.

Oh, yes?

But she left when John Bannon came or something, I think she moved, transferred to one of these other departments.

Thinking back over your time working with Don and then your earlier career, there was sort of Deborah McCulloch[?] was the Women's Adviser.

She was.

Did you have much to do with her?

I didn't, really, no. Well, when I was working for Bob Bakewell I used to see more of her then, but I didn't see much of her when I went up to work for Don. I don't know whether by then she'd established what she had to establish and then was safely installed in her little office. (laughs)

Were you aware of changes coming in for women in the public service? Because I think that's one of the things they worked on.

Yes.

You were.

I was.

Can you say anything about what you ---?

Well, I was thrilled, of course, because I thought at long last they're being recognised and the fact that you do shorthand doesn't make you less worthy than the male clerks because we do that as well. (laughs)

Well, it seems that the women almost got penalised for being able to type and take shorthand.

Anne MacMAHON

They did – until it became the thing to do when computers came in and then the men wanted to do typing. Yes, it's so silly, really.

Yes. Funny, isn't it?

But yes, I loved it and I thought at long last. And I was lucky, really, in that the fellow who was – what was he called? John Holland, he's now dead – he was a very good man and he worked under the Permanent Head, Bob Bakewell, and he was very much aware of what was going on and sometimes I'd say to him – I wasn't complaining, I don't know what I was saying to him – he'd say, 'Oh, I think we should look into that. I think you should get an allowance'. I probably was telling him I was working all the weekends as a matter of chatty conversation. So he was like aware that some women probably needed a bit more help. Then, of course, when Don retired I had the opportunity to be like George and Ross and all those lovely boys who used to rush off to university when I worked for Bob Bakewell and say, 'Oh, well, we'll see you later' – and even with Don, Graham Maguire[?], that's right – and I'd be left manning all the phones, practically, because they were university at their lectures.

Oh, yes.

And when I left Don I went to work for Jack Wright and I thought, 'I'm going to go to university, too'. So I did, I went and did a BA, so that was wonderful.

Oh, lovely. So you did that part-time while you were still working?

Yes. I did that, started in 1980 because Don retired in '79 and then I went over to Jack Wright and did a completely different sort of job altogether, looking after electorate offices and secretaries, which was great. I didn't have to do any shorthand and typing. I was another clerk. Much better-paid. (laughs)

So that women clerical officers wouldn't have got study leave, perhaps, earlier?

Well, I couldn't. I never had a moment's time.

No.

Anne MacMAHON

That was the problem; I couldn't possibly have done that. It wouldn't have been worth even trying.

Yes. But do you think was that one of the things that came in in the '70s, perhaps, more opportunities for the clerical women?

I don't know whether it was clerical women or not. I think anybody could apply, even secretaries – 'even' secretaries – possibly; not that they ever had the moment to do any extra. You have to be there because you were the person who did it all and nobody could – till you'd finished it, whatever it was – nothing could go on.

Because I talked to Deborah and I got the feeling that what she thought she was trying to do was to make more opportunities and recognition for women –

Yes.

– who were almost, as I said, discriminated against.

They were, yes.

And there wasn't a different sort of career track. So I'm just sort of wondering if you felt that you or other women working in similar jobs felt any impact of that.

I think we did. I remember when I was with the Department of Labour, Jack Wright was the Minister of Labour, and I can remember Sue Filby and and we got together – and I think she's now in charge of Transport Department, Sue Filby.

Oh, yes, I know Sue Filby.

Sue, yes.

I think so, yes.

And so, yes, it was a lovely feeling. I had the time then, I had much more time on my hands, and we went to conferences. The Minister would approve them, Jack was very happy to do that. So it was a great time. I loved it.

That's interesting. People say they'd bring in the policies and you just sort of wonder what the impact was and what effect they had.

Anne MacMAHON

Yes. Well, it certainly had an effect for me – coupled with the fact that I moved to an area where I had far less work to do and I could do it other times. I didn't have to be on call every minute, and so I could go to – – –.

You could say, 'Well, I am going to this lecture at four o'clock today'.

That's it, yes.

Because it sounds like in your other job crises – – –.

Yes, they just tumbled out of the air, (laughs) crises.

What sort of crises do you remember, which one – can you talk about one in particular that you – – –?

Yes. I suppose the Salisbury Affair was one of the worst ones I remember, because that created the Royal Commission, of course, and just demanded so many deputations. And I remember when the final episode of it occurred I seemed to be the only one left in the office – whether everyone had to go to the Royal Commission that moment – and the phone rang and it was someone ringing from a London newspaper and wanting to know, 'Well, do you have a press release?' And I knew there was on about to be put out that Mike Rann had done and Mike's office was unbelievably untidy. (laughter) I remember running – it was like piles, like mountains – running down to the end of the corridor. Couldn't see a thing that seemed to relate to it, so I just said, (laughs) 'I'm terribly sorry, we'll just have to ring you back'.

Yes – because Mike was the press officer, wasn't he?

Yes, the press secretary.

Press secretary, that was the word, yes. Well, I understand the untidy office; I'm one of those who has one of those.

Yes. Well, we all know where certain corners are, don't we?

Yes. And you said that Don didn't often get you to buy flowers or gifts but do you remember him asking you to do that?

Anne MacMAHON

Yes. Well, occasionally, yes. I know during the Festivals he would have luncheons, little luncheons before he'd go to Parliament House, because of course he knew so many of these international people.

Where would the lunch be?

The lunch would be in the Cabinet Room, that's where all the lunches were held.

And did you have to organise the food, or did -- --?

No, not really. I don't know who chose the food, to tell you the truth. The private secretary would probably do the menus, they must have chosen, they probably had a selection of menus, and then I would have a copy and I'd just check that everything looked good and was set properly and the place names were there. So that was all done by the girl who worked for the private secretary.

Who was that?

Her name was Beverley[?]. But she lives in Perth now, I think. I've completely lost track of Beverley. Bev Sumner, her name was.

So she was Stephen Wright's secretary.

Secretary, yes, at that stage. Yes. But then Don would ask – yes, during the Festival I'd often be ringing up and getting flowers for lovely ladies, yes, I remember.

And who was the loveliest, do you think?

Cleo Laine, of course – Cleo Laine was one of them who he was very fond of – and John Dankworth, they were married. I can't think of this other woman's name. I got flowers for her several times.

So you sort of met quite famous people.

Yes. I mean briefly, you know, about going to lunch and that would be it. 'I'll give you your nametag.'

Must have been quite exciting.

Anne MacMAHON

It was, yes. Of course, he'd have to rush off to Parliament House at two. (laughs)
But he went off with a happy smile on his face.

So he'd walk down to Parliament House, would he?

Well, often he had to be driven because he'd be so late.

Did he find any time in the day to get his physical exercise?

Well, Steve would try and make that happen and I don't know whether he did it very regularly, I'm pretty sure he didn't. I don't know how he ever managed to do anything, probably. I think Stephen would go out there every morning and collect him at quarter to eight or something and maybe he'd try and make him do a few exercises then. I'm not sure about that.

Yes. And so you went home at five o'clock or five-thirty.

Yes.

Occasionally must have been called back in the night.

Oh, yes, just occasionally. Not very often.

But did you get the sense that he worked on?

Yes. I mean he must have, yes. I know he did. You could tell: he was exhausted sometimes.

So in a way your work life was sort of regular in that you more or less started and finished at set times.

Set times, yes – half-past eight to half-past five, but more or less, yes, the normal thing, apart from the weekends and the night crises. (laughs)

What night crises come to mind?

I suppose the famous one when Don retired, was that one. But more with Bob Bakewell on the petrol strikes, they would go on quite late and sometimes weekends those people would have to come in, whoever they were. Suppliers of petrol. (laughs)

Anne MacMAHON

And did you get a lunch break?

Normally, yes, you'd get a break. Sometimes there'd be a nice little luncheon because Don's book would be published and I had a lot to do with that.

That's ---.

Yes, *Felicitas*, I've got a copy in there. And also his cookbook, which I'd type for him at weekends.

Oh, right.

Yes. I mean he'd have a luncheon perhaps to launch it down at Ayers House. But usually you were the one who had to do something to finish off so you'd just rush down there for half an hour (laughs) and rush back again, of course.

Yes. So you ---.

Couldn't really relax much.

Did he ever take you out to dinner or did he ever do any special things like that, it was your birthday or ---?

Yes, he did. Oh, yes, he was very good like that. And he would take you out for lunch ---.

And that would just be you?

Oh, yes – usually Stephen, too. They'd just pop out for the lunch hour and I'd go along with them. They often had working lunches, they'd just get out of the office, go to a quiet little restaurant and do their work.

So what sort of restaurant?

Oh, they used to go quite a bit to Hindley Street and what was that called, it was a French restaurant and it was upstairs. Not there now, of course. 'La' something. 'La Terrace', I think it was called, 'La Terrace'. And I think that was comparatively quiet so they could sit in a corner and he'd go with the big leather cases and go

Anne MacMAHON

through the files as they were waiting for lunch and eating lunch. So sometimes I would go with them if it was a birthday.

Like your birthday?

My birthday. Or else he'd have the staff out to his place and have lovely barbecues.

Was that an annual event, sort of thing?

At least, yes, annual, maybe a couple of times a year.

And that would be he'd cook, would he?

Yes, he would. He was a wonderful cook, of course. And Christmas time, of course, I'd get all the presents for him, he'd present us all with presents and I'd buy them for the girls but he'd go out and buy books for all of us, like Bruce and me and whoever, you know, Graham Maguire[?].

I know all those people – – –.

Yes, of course. What sort of books? Yes, he gave me a book once which was very interesting: Ninette Dutton, because of course he was friendly with all those people, so he'd usually give me something relevant like that; or else he'd buy me a nice piece of glass from the Jam Factory or a beautiful decanter to put the champagne in if you didn't drink it all – which never happened, I don't think. (laughter)

Well, it's there to be drunk, isn't it? It's a pity to waste it.

Absolutely, yes.

And did you get invited out like things like openings to the Jam Factory or was there a sense that once you – then you had a bit of your own time, your own life?

Yes and no. Some things, yes, you'd go along to. I suppose you would be invited. But mostly no, it would be the men of course would go along and there'd be daytime things because you'd be in the office mostly. You usually had to be. Usually everyone else deserted.

Just thinking about the sort of atmosphere of the office there and perhaps your earlier jobs, I don't know if you told me what was your first job?

Anne MacMAHON

My very first job was for a firm called Robert Brinsley and Co and they were in Gawler Place, 52 Gawler Place – well, I don't know, I should go back before that. We lived in Balaklava and my parents had the Terminus Hotel and when I left boarding school my father had obtained a position for me in Eudunda Farmers as the cashier/bookkeeper, and I sat up in this high box – – –.

Was that at Balaklava?

Balaklava, in Eudunda Farmers, and I was in this high box and I had a pulley which sent little containers of change down. I was bored out of my mind. The man who gave me the job said he hoped I'd stay because it was a lot of training to be done. I had to keep little books, people had books that they'd have –

Like their accounts.

– accounts, I suppose, and I mastered that pretty quickly and then I thought, 'Oh, I have to leave here'. (laughs) So my parents then bought a house in the city for them to get away at weekends and so I came down to that house, and then my brother eventually came down and was going to school from there, so I got my first city job at Robert Brinsley and Co and they were manufacturers' agents, representatives or something. Nice little firm.

But when you think about that and also later things like the [CSIRO] –

Yes.

– was the atmosphere in the Dunstan Era really different?

It was, of course, because, for instance, the little formal office I was in [at] Brinsley and Co, Mr Brinsley Senior was 'Mr Brinsley' and then his son 'Mr Max', and I don't ever think you called anybody by their Christian names, you know: 'Miss Kirk' was the secretary and 'Mr Whatever', somebody else. And then going through all the various offices in London I guess it was fairly formal. But then, of course, coming – CSIRO was pretty informal because scientists by then – that was 1960, I suppose – were pretty relaxed people. So yes. And then of course getting to Don

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where everybody called Don 'Don' or whatever, you know. 'Bruce', 'Don'.
(laughs) Though I never called Bob Bakewell anything but 'Mr Bakewell'. I now
call him 'Bob' when we have lunch. (laughs)

So you really weren't there in the Playford Era, in the government.

No.

What about women who were?

Well, Zeta was, of course, and I think Sue may have been, I'm not sure about that.
But I'm pretty sure Zeta would have been.

Did any of them have a sense or did they find it hard to call their boss by their first name, any of that sort of thing?

Well, they didn't because, being younger than me, I suppose they perhaps were more
used to it. Times had changed quite a bit. But I found it hard to ever say 'Bob' to
Bob Bakewell, you know. I got to calling him 'RDB', his three initials, (laughs) in
just notes. 'RDB, did you do that?' So yes, it's the way you're brought up, isn't it?

Well, that's right. The thought of when I was at university calling your university lecturer by their first name was not ---.

No, not the thing.

No.

And yet recently, in recent years, I went to Flinders just to do Italian for a year and I
met the professor and I said – it just came out of my mouth – 'Oh, yes, I'm really
interested to do another year, Bob' or whatever and thought ---. But we're so used
to it now, and I called everybody by their Christian names.

That's right, yes.

All the lecturers this year. Whether I should have done that to the professor ---.

It's all changed.

I thought, 'Well, I'll keep it up now'.

Anne MacMAHON

Well, why not? Why not?

I was probably older than he was.

Was there any interesting incidents or interesting characters that came in that always stick in your memory?

Well, there were. There was a fellow who'd come in – he came in once a week – he'd always come in and he looked quite professional, he walked around with a briefcase and he had a little moustache and he wore a nice suit, and he'd come in to speak to someone in the Premier's Office, and eventually you'd realise he had really nothing to speak about. He had an invention, I think, that was his excuse, and people in the Inquiry Unit might see him; but the only way to cope with him seemed to be to give him a regular appointment, so he had this regular appointment every Monday afternoon or whatever and the people in the Inquiry Unit probably had to see him.
(laughs)

So they saw him.

They saw him.

Not Don.

Oh, no, no, never Don. But of course they were the people who would get all the gist of what these problems were, get all the files and then, if appropriate, then the Premier would look at the files and say, 'Okay, do this' or 'I will see this person or not' – – –.

So what was this Inquiry Unit?

Inquiry Unit was really for the Premier to get the first inkling of what might be real problems, because everybody wants to talk to the Premier. And so they would say, 'Yes, okay, we'll make an appointment' and they would take all the details, they'd follow everything up, they'd get all the files, all the background and then make the decision to show the Premier.

And they must have got a few whackos in there.

Anne MacMAHON

Oh, yes. Eugenia was there, Eugenia Koussidis, she was there. Yes, old fishermen – all sorts of amazing people with problems, I can remember, and they'd bring in lovely stuffed fish to put on the wall. (laughs) All dried out, of course. Yes. But there were many, many hard cases, people who really needed help.

Yes, because he did quite a lot, I think, in the social welfare area.

Yes, I was about to say that, a lot of social welfare stuff, yes. Another day I can remember some fellow insisting to see the Premier and he stood there at the reception desk and we all said, 'Well, he's just not here'. (laughs) Anyway – and the door was locked, but it could be released from the receptionist's desk, I think – and Don got out of the lift and not expected back. The fellow saw him, Sue or somebody clicked the thing, he rushed into his office and I just stood there because my office was next door and managed to slam the door before this madman got in. But he was like raving, I don't know what about. So there was that sort of thing happening all the time.

Yes. And what would you like to talk about? What are your fondest memories of him?

Oh, I don't know, really. I suppose the fact that he really did care about people and unfortunately so many of the public thought quite the opposite – that he didn't care, he was arrogant and proud – and he was quite the reverse; but it was just the way he appeared, I suppose.

Then there were those terrible scandals like around John Ceruto and so forth.

Oh, yes.

Do you remember him at all?

Only vaguely because when I started working with Bob Bakewell in '72 he came down to the tenth floor where we worked and I thought, 'Oh, I wonder who that fellow is? He's rather smart in his white shoes, *et cetera*'. And he must have just been seeing Bob Bakewell for final I-don't-know-what and I said, 'Who was that?'

Anne MacMAHON

And he said, 'Oh, that was John Ceruto'. I never saw him again, so that was early '72, I think.

Yes. I've forgotten all the chronology over that. So you didn't see him coming into the office at all in the period you were there?

No. I'd just started on the tenth floor and he may have been at that time going up to the eleventh floor but I think that was the end of everything, it was just some final signature. Who knows? I don't know what it was. Or returning of some whatever, some files, goodness knows.

Yes. And I was just going to say, too – now, I'm probably making you very tired –

No.

– but you did say like you – I was going to say when he got all these documents and you said he had this incredible memory, but did he take a long time to work through things? Or he must have got huge files like this and things.

Oh, yes. Well, I don't really know, of course, whether he did it at night or what he did, but he seemed to have a great background knowledge of whatever the question was. Whether that was just his great intellect I really don't know. But he obviously would have discussed, he met regularly with the Under-Treasurer, with various ministers – every minister had a weekly appointment – and so he knew exactly what was going on because they would let him know; and he met various heads of departments if necessary.

But he must sometimes have felt sort of ambushed, perhaps, by things coming out in the press –

Oh, yes.

– or a story coming up in the press that he didn't know about.

Oh, yes. I can remember someone telling me – I can't even remember: was it Saffron, some person, some criminal – I never had time to take all this in, to read all the papers – and I said, 'Oh, a friend of mine says he's heard blah-blah-blah about Saffron and you having some connection', and he said, 'What?' And he said, 'Well,

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who is this person?’ And I said, ‘Well, I’m sorry, I couldn’t tell you. It’s a friend of mine, I just thought you’d like to know’. And he said, ‘Oh, really! It’s just devastating when you hear these things. It’s so untrue’. But rumours were going all the time. And those two fellows who wrote a book, who were they? Oh, that was interesting, yes. They were two [Radio] 5DN people, weren’t they? Yes, and I know one day we got a letter from the wife of one of those people saying that she was upset to gather from the conversation that they were planning this book, which I think in her opinion was possibly false. So all that was going on all the time, which he couldn’t do anything about but at least someone had made him aware of it.

Tipped you off.

Yes, and so that was locked away in some cabinet in my room.

What, her letter?

Her letter, yes.

And did you have to keep a few bits of dynamite like that sort of locked away?

Yes, no doubt, yes. I can remember that one in particular. And then of course – – –.

Is that the book that they called – – –.

Grossly improper? No, that was the other guy, wasn’t it. Stewart.

Cockburn, yes.

Wagstaff – no, not Wagstaff; he married Jennifer. The minister.

Yes, I can’t remember. But this book that you were told about did actually come out, did it?

I think it did. Was it a book, or was it that they had planned just perhaps as journalists to get a bit of publicity that way? But it wasn’t true.

So in a way you were there – because you were there on the tram, on the bus, your parents were talking to the person at the butcher, whatever –

Yes.

Anne MacMAHON

– and did you sometimes pick up that sort of stuff and tell him that, you know, even though it wasn't – you know, just to let him know what was going on out there?

What was going on. No, I think that was the only one I told him about because the others I think he knew that people would be talking about and so – what was he called? A 'Malayan bastard' or something – – –. (laughs)

A 'Fijian half-caste'.

Yes, 'Fijian half-caste'.

All that story was around, wasn't it?

All that sort of – yes; as if that mattered, anyway.

Yes. Well, some people seemed to like to hate him, as you said.

That's right, *loved* to hate him, yes.

Did he get sort of – well, perhaps you didn't, would have been more Stephen seen it – but sort of hate mail?

Oh, yes. Which we didn't even bother to show him. Yes. Or people would send in little CDs and rave on. No, Stephen would say, 'Don't bother'.

But he must also have got some things of support, I guess?

Oh, yes, yes. There were some lovely people who'd make him little, I don't know, artefacts out of gum trees because they wanted to show that they liked him, and put 'Dear Don' on in pokerwork on it. (laughs)

And did you have to write them a thank-you letter?

Oh, yes. Yes, he was very concerned that that happened.

Just on the dealing with the federal politicians and the federal scene, of course you were there when they nearly lost the election in was it '75, I think –

Yes.

– around the time of Whitlam, or was it '74, I can't remember?

Anne MacMAHON

I think it was '75.

What do you remember about ---?

Actually, I was lucky, I was away on holidays. (laughs) I was overseas and I remember when I got back – they called the election just as I was about to leave. I couldn't get out of it, anyway. And when I got back, Bob Bakewell said, 'My goodness, I thought you were going to be out of a job'.

So who took your job when you were away?

Who did take my job? I can only remember one, actually. His secretary, Helen Norman, did it for me when I was away.

So she was someone else's secretary.

She was Bob Bakewell's secretary. Obviously the ads were put in and Bob said, 'I want you to be on the panel', and we chose her. We thought, 'She's the one, yes'. So she worked for him from then on, from when I left in '74 she worked until he retired.

Oh, she worked for Bob.

Bob, she was his secretary.

But she acted for you.

She did, she did, yes.

On one occasion, at least.

Yes. One, at least, yes. And I can't remember who would have done it before she came. Probably she was there by the time that I went on long service leave. Yes, because the first time I was working for him and I don't know who he got, Bob. Yes, the next time it was the Premier.

And you must have had quite a reasonable holiday to have gone overseas, or did you just ---?

I did, I took long service leave. I took four months.

Anne MacMAHON

So this was while you were working for Don?

Working for Bob, actually. Then when working for Don I probably just took a month.

Oh, lovely. And you were travelling in Europe, were you, in that month?

Yes. Actually, I went to the States that time, which was different, because a friend of mine, Bob Stigwood – Robert Stigwood, whom you may have heard of, who's an impresario – he actually had said to me – he rang when he heard that Don – oh, that was another time – that Don had resigned, that's right; I went then to the States. But this other time I did go to the States, yes. I went on a camping trip in the Rockies. It was lovely. But the previous time I was always in Europe, for the four months.

And did Don talk to you about his travels or your travels?

Oh, yes, yes, he did. And he gave me addresses in New York, he had something to take for someone who lived on Park Avenue, I think. (laughs)

Who was that?

I can't remember. I don't think it was anybody we would have heard of; just a friend of his.

Oh, how nice.

Yes, that was nice.

So he took a great interest in –

He did, he did.

– in your travels.

Yes. I mean he was often so tired, but he did his very best to realise that other people had lives and what they were doing.

And your parents knew him?

Anne MacMAHON

Well, he met them, yes. We'd been invited when the Queen was here, I think, to go to the reception and he said, 'Yes, invite your parents too'. So we all stood in a line and the Queen and Prince Philip came along. And Adele introduced the Prince to us and Don had the Queen, who was nodding lots.

Well, that was quite something.

That was nice. (laughs)

Well, I think that probably I've asked you all the questions I wanted to, but I was wondering if there was anything else you thought you'd like to say about your time working with Don Dunstan.

It was a time that I didn't really appreciate when it was happening because there was no time. But afterwards, of course, you realise it was great. I mean it was momentous.

Yes.

It really was, what he was doing. Such a vision he had.

And did you keep in touch with him after he left?

Yes, yes, saw him several times and he would meet perhaps with Eugenia, she'd organise that, Christmastime perhaps we'd get together the staff again; and then I helped him a lot if he was having luncheons for fundraisers then for political purposes, and he'd say, 'Oh, well, I'll only do it if Annie can do it with me'. So he didn't really want any new people coming in, he just wanted to feel comfortable.

So what would you do on such an occasion?

Well, they'd send out the invitations for him and get the menu going, we'd get Red Ochre or somebody to do it, to cater, and then come in and get the house ready for all the plates and cutlery and everything.

So this is – what, you'd be retired, were you retired by then?

No. I was working for Greg Crafter then.

Oh, really?

Anne MacMAHON

Yes, I worked for Greg Crafter after Jack Wright retired.

So you worked for Greg when he was a minister?

Minister of Education, yes.

Oh, really. And he was in the Inquiry Unit for a while, was he, or not?

He may have been, actually. He was studying law and he probably was. But that was up on the eleventh floor; I didn't really know what was going on much till I got up there myself and by then he was – I don't know where he'd gone. He probably went to Attorney-General's. Yes, because there was the Norwood connection then, Don being the Member for Norwood.

And then Greg.

And then Greg.

Taking it over.

And then of course when Don was retired Greg would say, 'Oh, well, I'm sure Don will help us out. We can use his house' for a luncheon, so that's how it would all happen.

Oh, yes. Well, that's lovely. Thank you very much, Anne.

Oh, it's a pleasure.

And I'll just pray that that's all worked out and it shows it's got a one hour and a half, so that's very generous of you to do all of that.

Oh!

I don't know why it says one hour and a half because according to me it's one hour and fifteen.

Fifteen minutes, yes.

Oh, no, no, no. It says one hour, six minutes. So there must be something else on it somewhere else.

Ah, there you are, yes.

Anne MacMAHON

Well, thank you very much.

It's a pleasure, Margaret. Probably so many [things] I should have said.

Well, when you think of them do you want to just jot yourself down -- --?

Yes, points here and there.

Yes.

END OF INTERVIEW.