

Sandy Winters: My name is Sandy Winters and today I'm talking with Lisa Upshaw. Today's date is April 14, 2016 and we're in the Campbell Room of the Salina Public Library.

Lisa Upshaw: So mom, you've lived in Salina for a long time.

SW: I have.

LU: Would you tell me when you first moved to Salina and why?

SW: Uh you're dad and I moved to Salina in 1968 for job opportunities. And we uh had been living in Wichita and it was a fast furious city to small town people. So we wanted to move to a community that was smaller, but not tiny, so Salina was just perfect.

LU: So did you know anybody here when you first moved up?

SW: Uh your dad's uh mother and father lived here and several uh sisters and brothers. so it was kind like just coming back home, felt like.

LU: So when you first moved here did you guys buy a house or where'd you live?

SW: No uh we rented a little house over on...by Indian Rock Park on Missouri Street. We rented that for probably about two months er uh...two years, I'm sorry. And then we wanted to start a family and we knew we needed a bigger house. So we bought a house over on Cherokee Street in Indian Village. You wouldn't believe the amount of houses that were for sale right then. You know Schilling had shut down and there was houses galore. I mean you coulda had your pick of many houses, but we found a little one we could afford, over in Indian Village, and that's what we bought.

LU: Do you remember how much that house cost?

SW: I do, it was \$8,000.

LU: And how long did you stay in that house.

SW: We lived there thirteen years.

LU: And did you work when you moved up to Salina?

SW: Yes, I got a job at Graves Trucklines as a secretary and uh really enjoyed that. Graves was a great place to work. I was there for about two years. Then when I uh became pregnant with your brother I stayed home for about five years.

LU: So where uh did Graves Truckline...which building were you in or?

SW: I was on the one right down on...off of North Ninth it was on...I think probably North Tenth. There were several areas but I was closest to that one.

LU: So they had like several buildings or

SW: Mmm...hmm...mmm...hmm.

LU: And you were like a personal secretary or what did you do?

SW: No, I worked in payroll, helped with that.

LU: I remember you saying that you'd worked at Graves but I didn't know what you did.

SW: Mmm...hmm...mmm...hmm...sure did.

LU: So uh...

SW: Of course during that time uh 81 highway was very busy and we were right off of that. So you heard a lot of traffic and a lot of trucks and stuff coming down there because the interstate wasn't up and going, yet. So...that was a very busy uh highway.

LU: So when you found out you were pregnant with me did they do sonograms or anything back then?

SW: Oh, heavens, no.

LU: So did you not know...

SW: Not that you're that old but...

LU: Well, I am that old.

SW: You know in the early 1970s they just really didn't do a lot of testing. If you got pregnant that was fine you know they might draw some blood, but there wasn't any x-rays or sonograms done.

LU: So you didn't know til you actually had me that you were having a girl?

SW: Absolutely, not. My wishes came true.

LU: So umm...you know I always associate my birthday with the county fair.

SW: Oh absolutely.

LU: Do you want to say anything about that summer and how hot it was?

SW: That summer was a dinger. I tell ya it was so hot and of course we didn't have air conditioning in that little house, it was pretty miserable. But we had gone to the fair on August 10th, it was going on that week, and ugh I was you know nine months pregnant with ya and uh you came the very next day.

LU: So...I know you didn't go to college right after high school, you got married fairly soon after. What made you decide to go back to school?

SW: Well I'd always wanted to be a nurse. When I was five I told my mom I was gonna be a nurse and that was always a dream. It just didn't work out for me right after high school. So ten years later when I was twenty-eight things were getting' into place and I did a little praying and soul searching and went to Kansas Wesleyan for a year and then Asbury School of Nursing and it worked out very well.

LU: So how were you able to afford it I mean things were so tight back then?

SW: They were tight. Your dad didn't make a lot of money, but umm I did get a Kansas State grant which helped a lot. And then if I signed on to stay at the hospital for five years they would help uh defray some of the cost which they did and it was wonderful.

LU: Was it scary? I mean married women...it didn't seem like married women were going to college back then and you were a lot older.

SW: I was. I was twenty-eight and I felt like I stuck out like a sore thumb, but you know people were good and kind and all the teachers were good. I showed up every single class time and did my studies and everything and I think you know it was just a...I knew this was my shot so I wasn't gonna goof around like some of the other kids in the class. So...yea I enjoyed it.

LU: So what was the difference between like, Mary Mount had a school of nursing and Asbury had a school of nursing, what was the difference between the two?

SW: Well part of it was cost, Mary Mount was a private uh university and it was very expensive at it was a four year program, and I was looking at cost and the amount of time. Asbury School of Nursing was a three year program and umm emphasized clinical skills a little bit more I felt like at that time. So that was one reason I went there.

LU: So it was considered a diploma program?

SW: Right.

LU: So then you didn't have your bachelor's degree?

SW: I did not. Uh uh.

LU: So when did you get your...

SW: Bachelor's degree? Well...I went back to Kansas Wesleyan probably in about oh...1990 and it took me several years of taking little classes through Cloud County and Barton County. We even took a few together, didn't we?

LU: Mmmhmm.

SW: But uh finally in 2005 I got my BSN from Kansas Wesleyan. And I'm really glad I did it just opens your eyes to a lot of different areas that you...when you're in nursing it's like that's about all you think about you know...sometimes, but this opened up many other areas. I loved it.

LU: So when you first started nursing do you remember what area or what floor that you began your career on?

SW: Well I loved OB. So I went to Labor and Delivery in OB. Back then it was differentiated Labor and Delivery/OB, now it's just all Mother/Baby, which is fine. It's all about the same thing anyway. So..

LU: So uh what was the difference? You said they kept it separated. Why...why was it different?

SW: Well the labor and delivery nurse kinda was umm oh it sounds like a caste system kinda but we were a little bit higher on the rungs than just an average OB nurse. You know we were there when that baby was delivered if there were problems we had to take care of it. We had to really listen to the doctor...we gave a lot of meds. On OB they were just more resting and recuperating. And of course back then we kept them for 4, 5, 6 days sometimes. It was...now when I think back I think 'Wow!' cuz now it's pretty much in and out. Have your baby and you're home the next day.

LU: So what's the average stay now?

SW: About a day. Two days if you're a C-Section.

LU: Did you do many inductions back then?

SW: Not really. We really didn't. The doctors let you just go to that due date and sometimes over a little bit.

LU: And you know how like now they get the pit drip, did they do much of that back then?

SW: The only time we did that was if they got into trouble and maybe the contraction slowed down or went away and they were ready to go so we would start a little pit. But no, we didn't do any of the inductions like they do nowadays.

LU: And what about the like uh blocks?

SW: No there weren't very many blocks. I mean you gave a lot of pain medicine because they would... as they progressed in their labor they would hurt more. But no, blocks were pretty much unheard of and this was like 1978, is when I got out of school so...

LU: Do you remember what your wage...when you first started?

SW: Oh absolutely. I got this letter and it said, "Congratulations! You're an employee of Asbury Hospital." \$4.25 I was gonna make an hour. I couldn't believe it!

LU: Kind of exciting, huh?

SW: And then if you worked night shift though you got 50 cents more. So..

LU: And how did that compare to what you earned at Graves?

SW: Well it was higher than what I earned at Graves. So I thought it was great.

LU: Yea...

SW: Mmmhmm.

LU: Umm...do you remember uh when you changed from OB, what your next area you went to?

SW: Well I went from OB to the Emergency Room and uh did some Intensive Care and did a lot of Med. Surg. I just wanted a well-rounded area. I stayed probably...the longest I stayed anyplace at the hospital was seven years in OB. And seven years of screaming moms pretty much did me in. So...

LU: My clearest memory of going up to visit you when I was a little girl. I thought you worked in the Mental Health Unit because I would hear the screaming women and I thought they must be crazy and they scared me. But they...you know they didn't have the same kind of pain medicine back then and it scared the tar outta me. I thought they all must be nuts.

SW: And there wasn't a big emphasis on taking uh pre-natal classes like there is now; which is great because so many would just come in fresh. I mean they were just in labor and scared to death and would scream and you'd try to talk 'em down and give 'em a little medicine, but til they had the baby it could be rough.

LU: Yeah.

SW: Pretty rough.

LU: Do you remember when they started building so much expansion on to the hospital?

SW: When I was a student they were just starting to build...gosh what is now umm...that middle section there, it was called 3 South at the time. They were just starting to build it. And then when I graduated from school they had finished that. So we were up to a certain part and then of course expansion came more and then the big towers came. So it has really grown.

LU: Because now like where you worked with Labor and Delivery and OB that's all completely moved, isn't it?

SW: Yes uh huh...it's over on the sixth floor. The nursery everything's combined. When I worked Labor and Delivery we were on the fourth at the north end of the hospital. You had to go down to third with the baby and the mothers.

LU: And what about like pediatrics? Has all of that moved, too?

SW: Yes, pediatrics is where...what used to be the 2 South area. They have moved over there. There is absolutely no nursing on that north end anymore, at all. And that had at one time been a very busy section.

LU: So the mental health is that even on the Santa Fe Campus anymore?

SW: Yes, it's up on the third floor.

LU: Okay

SW: Kinda where 3 Center 3 South used to be.

LU: Wow.

SW: Mmmhmm.

LU: So when did the school of nursing close down?

SW: You know I was trying to think about that the other day. I think it was in about umm maybe...90...92...somewhere in there. It...the three year programs just phased out you either went two years and got an associate or went four years and got your BSN. But the three year cl...school of nursing's just...they closed down all over America. So...

LU: Well, I remember when we were younger they used to have a fairly active alumni association because you would have us help you put together the newsletters.

SW: Oh yeah.

LU: And they would have reunions and that kind of thing when did that kinda phase out?

SW: Well I think a lot of that phased out when uh the school closed down. There is still an alumni that gets together maybe once a year, but umm I haven't been real active in it. So...

LU: Do you remember when our next move came...from Cherokee?

SW: Yes. We moved over to 725 W. Walnut. I loved that house. It belonged to some friends of ours and every time I'd be in there I just really liked it. And one day we drove by, I'm sure you remember, and

there was a 'For Sale' sign. I squealed on the breaks and ran in there and talked to 'em and ended up buying it.

LU: And how long were we at that house?

SW: We were there about twelve...twelve years. Mmmhmm. That's where you went to Whittier and then junior high and senior high. So...

LU: And do you know what happened to that house?

SW: Well, yeah, it got demolished because uh Whittier school, which is now Cottonwood, needed that extra room. So that whole block that we lived on...all those houses are gone.

LU: Do you have any particular memories of that house?

SW: Quite a few. One is when you scared me half to death one night. Do you remember that? I've told that story to a lot of people. I was working that darn three to eleven shift and I came home and tried to be quiet and not turn on any lights and went in to the bathroom and reached for the handle and your hand was there. I must a screamed and woke up the whole block.

LU: I don't know what is was about that house, but we loved to scare each other in it.

SW: Well, yeah, it was a spooky old house is what it was.

LU: It was and it had really bad wiring.

SW: Mmmhmm...

LU: I can't believe we didn't have a major fire.

SW: Yup...had that fire place downstairs that threw out all those sparks on the carpet I don't know how we didn't have a fire from that.

LU: Well we had a lot of flooding.

SW: Yea...yea.

LU: Probably a good thing they tore that house down.

SW: Yea, but it was a pretty house.

LU: You loved it.

SW: I did.

LU: So where was our next house at?

SW: Well then we lived...moved over to...by Sunset Park which was so pretty back then it still is a nice park. Umm...and I'm tryin' to think was it 348 W. Beloit...I think it was?

LU: I think it was like 340.

SW: 340? Coulda been. I can't remember that address we were only there about three years so...

LU: Yea...

SW: Yea...

LU: It had some flooding issues, too.

SW: Yes.

LU: The thing I remember most about that house...that was the summer there was flooding all over Salina and I thought that Ricky had left the toilet running or something because it just sounded like a major water leak or something. And when we saw water actually coming in those basement windows I thought, "Not again, not another house." And I think it was that same evening that you flooded your car trying to get home....

SW: Yea...trying to get home.

LU: ...from the hospital.

SW: That was the summer of '96 it was terrible long. The whole East Republic...or West Republic would just would flood real easy and so would Broadway. I shoulda never the left the hospital. I shoulda stayed there, but gosh I'd worked a twelve hour shift and I was tired and wanted to get home so...

LU: Was that the year you met Cliff?

SW: No, didn't meet him til the summer of '97. So that had happened the year before.

LU: Then you got married and moved out to East Borough?

SW: East Borough...mmmhmm...yep.

LU: That was a pretty house but the thing I remember about the East Borough house was poison ivy.

SW: Oh, yes, lots of poison ivy.

LU: So you didn't live out there very long?

SW: Three years...mmmhmm...yea.

LU: You moved back into town?

SW: Yep. Yea that felt like you were living out in the country. 'Cuz it was way out there it felt like to me you know I was a city girl. It took more than five minutes to get somewhere I didn't like that.

LU: Yea...it's hard to get Chinese delivered out there.

SW: Yep... it was...mmmhmm.

LU: So your current house...I have really good memoires about it with that swimming pool and all the grandkids coming over.

SW: Oh we had many parties in that pool, didn't we?

LU: Yea.

SW: Yep, someday maybe I can replace it, I don't know?

LU: How long have you been in that house now?

SW: Uhh...this summer it'd be eleven years

LU: Wow.

SW: And we had that pool for nine.

LU: That's really long term for you.

SW: It is.

LU: You old army brat.

SW: Travelin's in my blood.

LU: So uh I know people ask you all the time when you're gonna retire.

SW: They do. I wish they'd quit.

LU: Do you think you'll ever really retire?

SW: Probably not. I love my job. I love being a nurse. It's really hard to stay home and not do that you know. So when I can I like to go I have cut back I just work probably twenty/thirty hours a week now. It's not like full-time.

LU: I think you're employed by more places now than when you were technically full-time though.

SW: Probably.

LU: Is there a place that you would consider your favorite of all through the years? Where was your favorite place that you worked at?

SW: Oh I'd prolly have to say Labor and Delivery. Those women love you. You get them through a hard, tough time and they remember you forever. It doesn't happen often now but you can remember years ago people'd come up to us in the store, "You were a hero when I had Andrew!" And I know the look would come on your face "Oh here we go again!"

LU: Yea.

SW: And often I wouldn't remember them, but they always remember their nurse...their Labor and Delivery nurse. So...that was probably...

LU: Yea...there were many years that or then it became that it was the grandkid or...

SW: Yea...yea.

LU: Yea. There was a time where we couldn't go anywhere without people recognizing you. We'd always hear that same phrase, "Your mom is sooo nice!"

SW: You knew me better though, didn't ya?

LU: A lot of people recognize you from E.R., too.

SW: Yes...uh huh... yea because I uh would take care of 'em in E.R. Just coming into the library today there was a lady that stopped me. I had taken care of her last year...she'd had some type of surgery and

she says, "Oh you helped me so much with my hand!" and I said, "Well good!" Course I don't remember 'em there's been too many patients to remember names, but she looked a little familiar...

LU: Yea.

SW: That's what's neat about Salina, it's not so big that you don't know people. You know like if I lived in Wichita when we did...we never saw anybody we knew. It was just too wide spread and too big, but Salina is just a nice size.

LU: With being at the hospital for so many years, have you seen some departments that either consolidated or some jobs that are no longer there?

SW: Oh absolutely, the computer changed everything when it came into the hospital setting. People that would note orders or take care of different lab things...it was all done by the computer, they were out of a job. The ward secretary their job diminished greatly, didn't need 'em you know, so a lot of them either became nurse aids or did something different. The thing at the hospital probably two big things the computers...but the merger in 1996. That was...almost overwhelming. You know...we needed the crew from St. John's and it was great to get all this extra help, but they felt bad. You know they were leaving their hospital, their home. So there was several years where we just really tried to work things out and even...even things out a little bit because there was charge nurses there coming over wanting to be charge nurses at Asbury you know so. It was...it was a tough time for everybody.

LU: Yea.

SW: Yea, but we got through it. Got through it great. I've got some good good friends that came over from St. John's and so you know it's...it's worked out. But a merger is always hard, I think.

LU: A lot of tension or?

SW: Well change and change is good, I've always believed that, but it is hard. It's hard on people. So...yea.

LU: Well one position I was thinking about that you held at one time that I don't know that they still have is as we used to call it "house mama", but it's technically what house supervisor?

SW: It' the nursing supervisor, uh huh.

LU: And do they still have that?

SW: They do on the weekends and they do on the evening shift and the night shift, but the day shift uh does not.

LU: And why did they do away with that?

SW: Well a lot of it was consolidation...you know shuffling of jobs. And I think administration felt like that the different charge nurses on the floors could take care of a lot of the stuff coming in. 'Cuz the house supervisor just kinda kept a eye over everything. You know bed placements, uh incoming patients, outgoing patients, emergencies, that type of thing. And so I think it's working out there's still times you kinda "oh I wish I could call a supervisor about this" but a it's working out.

LU: It saves some money in the long run.

SW: They did...uh huh. Because that was a higher paying job and it was a lot of responsibilities.

LU: Mmmhmm...

SW: Now I did that off and on for about ten years.

LU: Yea.

SW: Mmmhmm...

LU: I remember it being fairly stressful.

SW: It was. It really was.

LU: Had to answer to a lot of different people.

SW: Mmmhmm... Yea your phone rang almost all the time.

LU: Yea.

SW: So...

LU: Yea. So what kind of jobs are you doing now?

SW: Well, presently, I still work at the hospital two to three days a week or maybe some weeks one day a week. Umm...I do pick up some time at Stat Care. It's right in my back yard. It's real easy just walk across that little field. I enjoy Stat Care it's...it's a fun place to work. I am the paramedic...umm liaison for Hutchinson Community College and Barton College. So when I have paramedic students I'm kind of there for them. Let's see what else do I do? Oh tomorrow I get to work for the KU Med people. I'm a standardized patient, which I'm tellin' you that is fun!

LU: And when did the KU Med Center uh become associated with the hospital?

SW: I think it was about 2011? I think so. At least that's when my part started with the standardized patients. So they might of started in 2010, I'm not sure? But uh...yea...that's fun.

LU: So what are you doing with the hospital currently?

SW: Currently I work about a day a week in the Recovery Room. And I do pick up some time on Cardiac Rehab, I like that, too. Cardiac's always been a kind of passion of mine, too, so.

LU: And uh the uh Recovery Room was that your last full-time position?

SW: Yes...uh huh...it sure was.

LU: And how long had you worked in that area?

SW: About seven...eight years.

LU: So you've worked in almost all of the departments?

SW: I have. I have. I haven't worked in surgery. I never thought I would like that because the patient's basically asleep and I like to talk to my patients as you can probably tell. So...

LU: Yea.

SW: So I have enjoyed that though.

LU: Yea. We kinda have that in common. Well good deal.

SW: Yea.

LU: Anything else you'd like to add about the hospital?

SW: Oh...uh...it keeps growing which is good and we've definitely become a medical center you know from...for a lot of the north uh east and western areas. So it's uh quite something. It's great to be a part of it.

LU: Did you...do you recall always pulling patients from such a large area?

SW: No, it's really increased since we became you know like our E.R. has definitely grown. We have neurosurgeons on-call all the time now so we can take care of head injuries. Uh...we're just becoming big.

LU: You know, maybe it's just being so unaware when you're younger, but as I've become older I have such an awareness of how far our reach is and I know some of that has to do with having so many specialists...

SW: Right...

LU: ...but seeing people coming in from like Belleville and...

SW: We get a lot of Belleville, Concordia, uh Lincoln, Beloit, Washington...a lot of 'em come down.

LU: Yea...

SW: Now stuff east of us usually goes to Topeka, like Junction City and Manhattan if they have something traumatic come up they'll send to Topeka. But yea we get a lot of stuff and we still send stuff to Wichita. Sometimes uh a multi-trauma we'll have to send. But a lot of things we can take care of.

LU: Yea.

SW: We just started a new stroke protocol at the hospital, which is pretty exciting. You know we'll be able to jump right on those stroke patients and get them taken care of fast, quickly. So that's good.

LU: Yea one other thing that I was thinking about...where you live now...

SW: Mmmhmm...

LU: Uh back by Stat Care. As a little kid I remember that all being wheat fields.

SW: Oh absolutely...everything east of Ohio...I mean there just wasn't houses there wasn't anything there and south also. When we first moved to Salina in 1968 south of Cloud Street there was that Well's Department Store and after that I mean there was just nothing. And you can still see that sign of 'Welcome to Salina' that was believe me or not...

LU: The city limits

SW: That was the city limits as you came in. So yea... it's kinda neat.

LU: Do you want to tell the story of me walking?

SW: No, I don't think we need to do that.

LU: You know I remember going out to the skating rink...

SW: Uh huh...

LU: ...and thinking that was like going out to the country.

SW: Yea, cuz...

LU: It seemed so far out there.

SW: ...look what's grown up even more south of that.

LU: Yea.

SW: Yea, a lot of expansion and I see a lot of expansion going out east, too, off of umm further down south and east....

LU: Yea.

SW: ...there's a lot of houses going up. So yea..

LU: So do you know how old your house is? When it was built?

SW: It was built in 1993...so.

LU: Yea, I didn't think it was that old.

SW: Huh uh...

LU: Yea.

SW: And that pool back there was built in '95 is what the girls have told me that lived there before. So...

LU: Yea.

SW: That's kinda neat.

LU: It just seems so strange.

SW: Mmmhmm...

LU: Well is there anything else you'd like add?

SW: Well we've had a nice little talk here you and I.

LU: Yes, we have.

