

An Interview with

Diane Anderson

at *The Historical Society of Missouri* St. Louis
Research Center, St. Louis, Missouri

August 5, 2016

interviewed by Dr. Blanche M. Touhill

transcribed by Valerie Leri and edited by

Josephine Sporleder



Oral History Program

The State Historical Society of Missouri

Collection S1207 Women as Change Agents DVD 102

NOTICE

- 1) This material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code). It may not be cited without acknowledgment to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, a Joint Collection of the University of Missouri and the State Historical Society of Missouri Manuscripts, Columbia, Missouri. Citations should include: [Name of collection] Project, Collection Number C4020, [name of interviewee], [date of interview], Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Columbia, Missouri.

- 2) Reproductions of this transcript are available for reference use only and cannot be reproduced or published in any form (including digital formats) without written permission from the Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

- 3) Use of information or quotations from any [Name of collection] Collection transcript indicates agreement to indemnify and hold harmless the University of Missouri, the State Historical Society of Missouri, their officers, employees, and agents, and the interviewee from and against all claims and actions arising out of the use of this material.

For further information, contact: The State Historical Society of Missouri, St. Louis Research Center, 222 Thomas Jefferson Library, One University Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63121 (314) 516-5119

PREFACE

The interview was taped on a placed on a tripod. There are periodic background sounds but the recording is of generally high quality.

The following transcript represents a rendering of the oral history interview. Stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. The interviewee offered clarifications and suggestions, which the following transcript reflects. Any use of brackets [] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Physical gestures, certain vocal inflections such as imitation, and/or pauses are designated by a combination of italics and brackets []. Any use of parentheses () indicates a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation, or laughter. Quotation marks [""] identify speech depicting dialogue, speech patterns, or the initial use of nicknames. Em dashes [—] are used as a stylistic method to show a meaningful pause or an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech or when indicating a court case title. Particularly animated speech is identified with **bold** lettering. Underlining [] indicates a proper title of a publication. The use of underlining and double question marks in parentheses [(??)] denotes unintelligible phrases. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Josephine Sporleder.

Diane Anderson 8-5-2016

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

WOMEN AS CHANGE AGENTS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

AUGUST 5, 2016

DIANE ANDERSON INTERVIEWED BY DR. BLANCHE M. TOUHILL

Blanche Touhill: Would you talk about your childhood: your parents; your siblings; your cousins, anybody who was in your family circle and how did you play with your friends? Did you have dolls? Did you play with boys and girls, both? Was it structured play or did you just play as you wanted to every day? And was somebody in that circle somebody who really encouraged you, who said, "Oh, you have certain talents and we think that you can do what you want to do," within restrictions, society-controlled to a certain extent. So just talk in general.

Diane Anderson: So, just as far back as I can remember, when I was a little kid, before even starting school, I had a best friend, just one best friend. Her name was Kim, Kim Doitman and she lived just a few houses down. So she was my best friend and, really, that was the only girl that was my age that was in the community that was fun to play with. And so, yes, we would play with the Barbie dolls and Patty Play Pal doll that was maybe about three feet tall and that was the IT doll. So I can remember that, just had a blast. I grew up with three brothers. I am the only daughter so you would think that I could be a spoiled princess. No, I was expected to be just like the guys and do all of the work just like the boys, one of the guys. So there was absolutely no difference between girls and boys in my family. So if it was chores, it was, I cut the grass every third or fourth time and for supper, we always called supper "supper" and one person would set the table, one person would clean off the table, one person would wash the dishes and one person would dry the dishes. My mother had a very tight schedule and we each took turns doing everything.

Blanche Touhill: So you played with the boys and you played with the one friend, particularly, down the street?

Diane Anderson: Right.

Blanche Touhill: So you had both boys activities and girls activities?

Diane Anderson 8-5-2016

Diane Anderson: Right, right. So we were the people on the street that had the only trampoline so that was just great fun and all the kids in the neighborhood would come over. I wouldn't even know half of them but we took turns. Sometimes it was taking turns...because none of us wore watches. What were those, right? And sometimes the way that we would do it was cars would pass by every once in a while so that's how we would take our turns. As soon as a car would pass by, "Oh, your time's up." Sometimes

you didn't have much time; other times you had a while. We couldn't do that today. My dad still lives in the same house that I grew up in and it's just zoom, zoom, zoom, zoom, zoom, like anyplace.

Blanche Touhill: Who encouraged you?

Diane Anderson: I don't know that I had...well, as far as encouragement, when I was younger, my father made every one of us kids read *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. It had a major impact on his life. He said, "I want you kids to read it. I want you to give me a book report on it because I believe in the power of positive thinking. I believe that if you put your mind to it, you can do it," and really, that was a great influence as a child. At the time when I read it, I thought, oh, sure, this...yeah, sure, you think about it and it'll happen? But, after growing older and I actually went through the class and I realized it really is true, kind of like...what was out not too long ago? I think it was called *The Secret* and that's all about that. It's just, you could become whatever reality you want to be and so my dad was very influential that way. And then, of course, my mother who was just a fantastic lady. All throughout my life, she was a housewife but she always longed to do something else and way back...and I think it was about, like, 1960's, she had the opportunity to take the census and so she loved that idea so she drove around in the car. Everybody who didn't return the census questionnaire, then she had to follow up on every single one of those people in the neighborhood and she would drive around and knock on doors and find out about people and their lives and she was so interested in that. That was the spark for my mom to run for office.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness!

Diane Anderson: Yes. She really was interested in people throughout her community and then she thought, well, now I know some of these people and everybody has a very interesting story and I would like to help and make this community better. And you know my mom, Irene Truppler, who was a housewife until...I think it was 1972 when she first ran for state representative and won.

Blanche Touhill: How many years was she in the state house?

Diane Anderson: She was in the state...well, combined...first she was a state representative and I believe that was for 12 years. And then the senate, another 12 years.

Blanche Touhill: Was that a shock to your father and the children, that your mother was going to go to Jefferson City and live for three nights a week or something?

Diane Anderson: Funny you should mention that. My father, very much said, "Irene, if this is something that you want to do, I'm going to support you 100% because I can see that you really have a desire." And us kids were almost out of high school except for my baby brother. He was still in...I think it was junior high so she was a little bit torn about that but really, really, they redistricted the area so it opened up, there was no incumbent so it gave her the opportunity to run and that was the right timing so she did win. But, yes, my father, after...you know, he backed her 100% but it was very hard on him.

Blanche Touhill: Well, it lasted for years. It became a lifestyle.

Diane Anderson: Yes, and he didn't realize, he said, "I never realized how much she would love it," to where she had...well, she was the first female elected senator in the State of Missouri and so she had...I think it was 30 people underneath her saying, "Senator Truppler, can I get you this, can I do this, can I do that?" and she's working Monday through Thursday and then comes back from Jefferson City.

Blanche Touhill: When she came back, she had to work on the constituency too, didn't she?

Diane Anderson: She did, she did. She came back, she played Mrs. Mom doing the ironing, the wash and being Mrs. Mom again and people would call up with complaints and all, she'd be in the middle of dinner and she would take the phone call and they would say, "Oh, Senator Trupler, I can't believe that you would answer the phone." She said, "Why wouldn't I? It's my home. I'm just doing ironing right now." She was a mom and a senator and no matter what, her constituents came first. It kind of aggravated my dad a little bit. It was very difficult on him and difficult playing that, what do you call, the senator's husband.

Blanche Touhill: Well, you're saying she was the first female senator?

Diane Anderson: Right.

Blanche Touhill: So he was the first male consort or whatever you want to call it.

Diane Anderson: Right, they didn't know what to call him, yeah. So he would go on these different trips with her and things like that. Well, he would be out with all the women because she was in with the men, doing her job.

Blanche Touhill: And did he like that?

Diane Anderson: Oh, yeah, he enjoyed that, yes. He got very spoiled rotten, yes. It was very nice. They both loved it.

Blanche Touhill: Now, did you help with your baby brother?

Diane Anderson: Oh, yes, quite a bit.

Blanche Touhill: And your older brothers did too?

Diane Anderson: Oh, yeah, but I was kind of a surrogate mother. I kind of took over that role, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Because if an emergency occurred on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, then you...

Diane Anderson: That was...yeah, my job.

Blanche Touhill: They needed a woman.

Diane Anderson: Yes, exactly, and then I learned how to iron and cook and clean and do all of the things that Mom couldn't do because she was away, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: What were some of her bills that she was very proud of?

Diane Anderson: One that she wasn't so proud of but is the most popular is the Potty Parity Bill and that is, thankfully, when you go to the ballgame, as a woman, you don't have to wait in line because there's more places to go to the bathroom than there are for men.

Blanche Touhill: And how did she accomplish that? It was something to do with, they got state money or something in the legislation or...

Diane Anderson: Well, her belief was that it always takes us women just a little bit longer.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, no, it's great. I'm forever grateful.

- Diane Anderson: Right, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: But, how could she influence that decision?
- Diane Anderson: I don't know how she got that passed. I really don't.
- Blanche Touhill: Maybe she did it for all construction in the State of Missouri or something.
- Diane Anderson: She did from that point forward, yes, for public buildings.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, I think that's wonderful.
- Diane Anderson: Yes, it makes a whole lot of sense. She wasn't really proud of that. She was proud of her...one of her first ones was the Good Samaritan Law where any doctor or professional healthcare provider can stop and help someone on the side of the road.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, because prior to that time, they'd be sued.
- Diane Anderson: Exactly.
- Blanche Touhill: They ran the risk of being sued.
- Diane Anderson: Exactly, yes, for helping out.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, that was a wonderful...well, those two measures are marvelous.
- Diane Anderson: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: Did she help with the ERA?
- Diane Anderson: You know, I should have brought a list. It's a list of bills that she had passed.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, put it in your file some day when you have a moment, in your file because you're the daughter.
- Diane Anderson: Okay, right.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you ever think about running for politics?
- Diane Anderson: Absolutely not. The scrutiny, the putting yourself out for people to vote whether or not they like you, I can't imagine how she did that.
- Blanche Touhill: I don't think it was as rough in those days as it is today.

- Diane Anderson: Right.
- Blanche Touhill: With the social media.
- Diane Anderson: Exactly.
- Blanche Touhill: But it was still difficult and I would think that a woman would have difficulty.
- Diane Anderson: Right. She actually decided to resign after term limits came. She said, "I have term limits. If they don't like me, they can vote me out of office." She didn't even introduce any bills for the first couple of years when she was a state representative because she sat back because she knew it was a man's world. She sat back and she observed: how do you do this? How are the good old boys network, how are they doing this and I don't want to come in and be...because she was very shy and reserved...I don't want to come in and barge in and I don't want to upset the apple cart. I want to find out how things work. So she always said, "I can't imagine nowadays people coming in having term limits because they really don't know how the system works and in order to learn how the system works..." ...
- Blanche Touhill: ...you have to watch it.
- Diane Anderson: Well, and who do you have to watch now except for lobbyists and lobbyists are special interest. They don't have your constituents' interests in mind. They have their own. So, it's a very different world now, very different.
- Blanche Touhill: Did either of your brothers go in...or any of your brothers...
- Diane Anderson: None of them. I think that...we saw how hard my mom worked and we were out there too, at the polling places: "Vote for my mom, please; vote for my mom" but how difficult and it is more difficult now. You're right, much more difficult.
- Blanche Touhill: But then, she had the difficulty of being the first woman.
- Diane Anderson: Yes, she did.
- Blanche Touhill: So, I mean, she had her own little difficulties. I mean, they're not little. She had her own difficulties.

Diane Anderson: Oh, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: But she was a very well thought of legislator.

Diane Anderson: Yes, she was.

Blanche Touhill: I think by both parties and I think by both men and women. I think she was. She did have a remarkable run, as you say.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, she absolutely did.

Blanche Touhill: Is she still alive?

Diane Anderson: No, she passed away in 2012, yeah, but, yes, everybody liked her: Democrats; Republicans, it didn't matter and she said, "We work together. That's how we get stuff done." It wasn't this great divide anymore that's such a big deal. It's all about working together.

Blanche Touhill: What did she want for you?

Diane Anderson: Well, I think basically to be happy but during the teenage years, I didn't see a whole lot of her so that's a good question. I think she wanted me to do what she did, settle down, get married, have children so she could have grand babies which is what I did but at the same time, I always wanted to work because, I don't know, there's just something about a woman's sense of self-worth. You don't get that by changing diapers, you know? You get that after the kids are grown, out of the house. But I still had to do something else besides raising babies.

Blanche Touhill: Let's go back to grade school: How was grade school?

Diane Anderson: Grade school, kind of non-eventful. I went to Washington grade school, the same grade school that my mother went to, the same grade school that her mother went to. And that's in South St. Louis County, or used to be anyway. So I can't really remember a whole bunch about it except, did the baton lessons and went to Brownies and had a great childhood, really, very nice childhood.

Blanche Touhill: Was the childhood such that you could go out and play and then come back when it got dark?

Diane Anderson: Oh, yes, absolutely. Well, not only that, if I missed the bus, I'd have to walk to school. Something could have happened to me? No. "If you miss

the bus, you're walking, just so you know." And that's what you would do and, of course, we would play and play and play until dark. That was the time to come home and so many fun things like I remember my dad would come out and he would play with us and we would get a neighborhood softball or baseball game going and he taught us how to improvise. If you have two or three people, you could still play. You don't have anybody covering bases. Somebody's got to be out there catching and if you can throw the ball home before you get home, then you're out; if you're can't, you're safe. It's just, make up the rules...so much fun.

Blanche Touhill: So, in grade school, were you a leader or anything?

Diane Anderson: I don't think I was a leader.

Blanche Touhill: Did the little girl next door or down the street, did she go to the same grade school you went to?

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And were you in the same grade?

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have a school picnic?

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Where did you go? Did you go to the Highlands?

Diane Anderson: No, our school picnic, because my dad was involved in the PTA, he actually said, "Why don't we get rides."

Blanche Touhill: Oh, so you brought them to the school?

Diane Anderson: He brought them to the school and this is amazing, so back then...he started that where you go to the...you get rides and they'll come to the school and he actually had them selling beer and raising money back then. It just wasn't the taboo thing. I think they still sell beer at different places like Catholic school picnics. So he saw that as a money maker and they made more money than ever. So, yeah, we would have those picnics.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have a favorite teacher?

Diane Anderson: I can't really remember a favorite teacher but a favorite principal was Mr. Trotwein and later on, I went to Trotwein Grade School because they named a school after him.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how nice.

Diane Anderson: And he was my mom's principal and he went to school with my grandmother.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness, how nice.

Diane Anderson: Yes. He was fabulous. He knew every single student, yes. That's just the way it was.

Blanche Touhill: Where did you grow up?

Diane Anderson: In South St. Louis County.

Blanche Touhill: Where?

Diane Anderson: Off of Ames or Ambs Road, A-m-b-s. It's Fuchs Road, F-u-c-h-s, just a little bitty lane down off of Ambs Road.

Blanche Touhill: Is it near Gravois?

Diane Anderson: It's near Tesson Ferry and Madis Road, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: So you were really sort of in the country, weren't you, in a way?

Diane Anderson: At the time, I guess I was, yeah. We would have little parades before our picnic and we would walk along Butler Hill Road.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Diane Anderson: Can you imagine walking along Butler Hill Road now?

Blanche Touhill: I cannot.

Diane Anderson: No, you couldn't.

Blanche Touhill: I think even funeral processions have problems going down Butler Hill Road.

Diane Anderson: Isn't that the truth. That's Grand Central Station.

Blanche Touhill: With the side streets coming in.

- Diane Anderson: Yes, yes. So we would have our little parade. It was fun times.
- Blanche Touhill: How was high school?
- Diane Anderson: High school was...there again, I was just an average student, ran for student council though in 1972, I think it was, same year my mom got elected. So I ran for secretary and won.
- Blanche Touhill: So you were both going the political route.
- Diane Anderson: At the time, I guess so. I never thought of it that way but, yeah. So that's about it as far as high school. I wasn't really involved in any extracurricular sports.
- Blanche Touhill: Were you interested in photography?
- Diane Anderson: No, that didn't come until way later, yes. So after high school, I did not go to college. I figured kind of the same as my mother. She graduated high school, she actually skipped a grade because she was so smart. I wasn't in that department. So right after high school, she went and got a job and was earning money and so that's what I decided to do. I thought, oh, do I want to go to college and have student loans that I don't want to pay off or do I want to start making money right now? And I wanted to start making money immediately. So, got odds and ends jobs.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you take typing and shorthand and bookkeeping in high school?
- Diane Anderson: Oh, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: So you were prepared?
- Diane Anderson: Right.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you learn the Gregg system?
- Diane Anderson: No, but that typing, oh, my gosh, that's a thing that my dad told all of us: "Take typing. It's a skill you'll never regret that you have" and sure enough...little did he know that everyone needs to know how to type now, yeah. So, thank goodness, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: So you got a job.
- Diane Anderson: Got a job.

Blanche Touhill: Had a little money.

Diane Anderson: Had a little money, moved out on my own. I was in retail. I was manager of Casual Corner and the Limited stores and then met and fell in love with...well, he's my ex-husband now but my husband at the time, John Anderson who is an attorney, personal injury attorney. So we were married for 23 years.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Diane Anderson: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: A lifetime.

Diane Anderson: Yes, it is a lifetime. So that whole time I continued to work. Then actually opened my own ad specialty business in 2001 and ad specialty is anything with an imprint: pens; pencils; jackets; caps. If you want your logo on it...

Blanche Touhill: This was when you were still married?

Diane Anderson: Still married, right.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have children?

Diane Anderson: Yes, I have two boys, David and Jimmy. David was born in 1983 and Jimmy, 1985 and so Jimmy is out in Hollywood trying to be a movie star.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how wonderful.

Diane Anderson: And then David is here in St. Louis and he's taken up photography as well and doing the same sort of stuff that I am. But back to the ad specialty, I did that pretty much during that 23 years, opened my own advertising specialty business in 2001, September.

Blanche Touhill: How did you get business?

Diane Anderson: I had to knock on doors and cold call and ask them...that's where Dale Carnegie helped me out. If there were a way that I could increase your business, would you be interested? Can I take up 10 minutes of your time just to find out a little bit about your company and find out how I can help you out? So that's how I got in.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have a lot of competition?

- Diane Anderson: Tremendous competition. There's probably a couple of thousand competitors in the St. Louis area alone.
- Blanche Touhill: So how did you...
- Diane Anderson: ...stand out from the crowd? That's a good question. I think people do business with people they like and I think they liked me and I liked to give...I'm a good shopper. I like to shop around. If you want a pen, I can get you the best price on that pen, the best price on those t-shirts, the best price on those blankets or whatever it is that you're looking for and if they're having any specials, I can do that work for you. So, I think that's how I stood out from the competition, and be creative. If they're going to a trade show, what product do they want to sell to their clients and what kind of product can I give them so that they can give away and they're going to remember, that customer is going to remember: "Oh, that's the people that do that. I've got to call them."
- Blanche Touhill: You know, we used to take part in six or seven parades around town and then the students would give away little junk jewelry and stuff, and I always wanted them to give out pencils with UM-St. Louis on it.
- Diane Anderson: Oh, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: Without sharpening them, so nobody would get hurt. I never could convince anybody to do that.
- Diane Anderson: Why not?
- Blanche Touhill: I don't know. I thought that was a natural for a school, to give little kids pencils, even though when they got them, they wouldn't really react. They're looking for candy or bobbles but their parents would pick up the pencil and I thought that was such a great advertisement but it was something I couldn't sell.
- Diane Anderson: It is hard to convince people because what you're doing is you're giving people...let's say just one person comes to UMSL to go to school. You've already more than paid for however many thousands of pencils.
- Blanche Touhill: That's right. I never looked at it that way.
- Diane Anderson: Just one person.
- Blanche Touhill: Out of each parade.

Diane Anderson: And that's your advertisement and it's going everywhere so that everybody knows about you, yeah. That's amazing that you couldn't convince one person.

Blanche Touhill: I should have hired you.

Diane Anderson: You should have.

Blanche Touhill: If I would have known, I would have called you up.

Diane Anderson: At least you and I are in agreement.

Blanche Touhill: That's right, and I was thinking of having them in red/gold.

Diane Anderson: Oh, yes.

Blanche Touhill: It would have been really...

Diane Anderson: ...perfect. I'm also a minority...is it minority, like a female-owned business?

Blanche Touhill: I don't know what it is but you fall into those categories.

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Does that help?

Diane Anderson: It has helped in the past. I have done some business through the Transit...

Blanche Touhill: Oh, I see. Any public institution.

Diane Anderson: Right, so they have to do a certain amount of minority or female-owned business. They have to, by law, do a certain amount and so I can provide that for them.

Blanche Touhill: That's wonderful.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, and also in my photography business. Who did I just recently take photos for? It was the World Trade Center of St. Louis and how they're opening up the world trade industry and how much they're opening it up in the St. Louis area. And so they asked me to come take photos because I was certified and hopefully a good photographer.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, yes, yes. You could deliver the goods.

Diane Anderson: That's right, exactly.

Blanche Touhill: Did you like that?

Diane Anderson: I love photography.

Blanche Touhill: No, no, let's go back to the pencils and the ads.

Diane Anderson: Oh, that business, yes, I liked that business. I liked being creative and finding just the right item for my clients but, at the same time, it's kind of a little...it can be a little lonely. When I first started my own business, I work out of my home and so the only time I see people are when I go out to see my customers, which is not that often. I'm the chief cook and bottle washer or I'm doing the billing and everything. So it does get a little lonely and so after...I thought I was going to be married for my whole life. I never thought I would ever get divorced, but having said that and after I got divorced, I thought, well, now what do I do with my life? What do I do with my time?

Blanche Touhill: Yes, so what did you do?

Diane Anderson: So, I was doing a lot of praying and saying, "Please, God, tell me what do I do now?" because I thought I had my whole life planned out until my husband said, "I want a divorce. I don't want to be married to you anymore." It was like, well, couldn't you have thought of that, like, a year or two after our marriage instead of 23 years? So anyway, he wanted a divorce. What are you going to do? Say no? So, got a divorce and then I'm thinking, what am I going to do? So I looked through, I guess online and through the internet, part-time photographers wanted and it was Black Tie-St. Louis.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes.

Diane Anderson: You remember Harry Bean?

Blanche Touhill: Oh, absolutely.

Diane Anderson: So Harry Bean had that ad and so I came in to get interviewed. He says, "First of all, I'll just tell you, I got good news and bad news. The good news is, you're hired; the bad news is, I can't pay you anything but you get to go to really fun events." So that's how I got into event photography. It was through Harry Bean.

Blanche Touhill: Did you like photography at that time?

Diane Anderson: Didn't know if I liked it but I knew I liked people and I knew I liked making people feel good about themselves.

Blanche Touhill: And the photograph does?

Diane Anderson: It sure does, yes. When I go up to a person and I ask them if I can take their photograph at any given event, it makes them feel special.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, it does.

Diane Anderson: And then I ask them their first and last name afterwards and that even makes them feel a little more special. So I like making people feel good about themselves and maybe I've found what my true calling is because I got divorced. The worst things that happen in your life...

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes, sometimes...

Diane Anderson: ...can be the best.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, that's true.

Diane Anderson: And I really feel I would have never gotten into photography. I would have never known how much I love photography if it hadn't been for getting a divorce.

Blanche Touhill: Well, you know, the reality is, your mother's career was based on her liking people.

Diane Anderson: You're right.

Blanche Touhill: And so your career is based on liking people.

Diane Anderson: You're right. I never thought of that.

Blanche Touhill: And your ability to make friends with them.

Diane Anderson: You're right.

Blanche Touhill: How long have you been working for the Black Tie?

Diane Anderson: So, I started out with Black Tie, the great thing was, I wasn't nervous about it at all because I couldn't get fired. I was never hired. So he gave me a camera and he said, "Go out, take 30 photos at this event. Come

back to me, send me the photos or give me the photos and the first and last names of everybody” and that’s how I started out. Then St. Louis Magazine would take those photos from Black Tie and use them in their magazine and one time I was at an event for St. Louis Magazine and the publisher, Leslie Tunney, she said, “We just love when you take the photos. There’s just something about your photos that people have the natural smile and they really seem happy. We love your photos.” I said, “Really? Well, you should hire me because I’m just doing it for Black Tie for something to do so if you like me, hire me.” She said, “Really? We could hire you?” And that’s how my career began in photography.

Blanche Touhill: Well, did you get nothing from Harry?

Diane Anderson: No, no money, no money, just experience but the good thing about Harry...and a lot of people didn’t like him because they said, “Oh, you either love Harry or you hate him,” but Harry is a straight shooter to me. He told me right up front, “I’m not going to pay you anything but if you want this experience, it’s yours,” and then I realized how much I really did love people and how much I loved going out and making people feel good about themselves. And then, with Leslie, giving me that foot in the door and actually hiring me on for St. Louis Magazine...

Blanche Touhill: Then you got paid?

Diane Anderson: Then I got paid. That was the beginning of my getting paid.

Blanche Touhill: How long did you work for nothing?

Diane Anderson: Oh, just a couple of months. And so now I work for St. Louis Magazine. They hire me; Ladue News hires me and so does Sophisticated Living, along with a lot of not-for-profits. They’ll hire me directly.

Blanche Touhill: For some event?

Diane Anderson: Yes. So I have been doing Leukemia and Lymphoma Society for the last, oh, probably five years, their different events. And you know, I’ll tell you something else about photography and doing event photography, I’ve learned so much about so many not-for-profits in St. Louis and so much good our community does.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes, I agree with that.

- Diane Anderson: And so many people in our community that give back. They don't have to. Just because they're rich...there's a lot of rich people out there that don't give back but the people that do, time and time again, they are there. They show up and they are giving lots of money and time and effort back and that's just...it warms my heart. St. Louis is a great place to be.
- Blanche Touhill: I think St. Louis probably ranks very high among the cities in the United States for...
- Diane Anderson: ...philanthropy?
- Blanche Touhill: ...philanthropy.
- Diane Anderson: I think you're right, yeah, a great bunch of people.
- Blanche Touhill: How many events like that occur a year, do you think? When you went, did you have maybe two a night or...
- Diane Anderson: I have at least, at minimum probably two a night.
- Blanche Touhill: At minimum?
- Diane Anderson: Yes. I'll have probably lots more because now, you know, I reluctantly do weddings but I'll do it as a favor. I'm doing a wedding just this coming Sunday for a gentleman that's turning 85, getting married. Is that a hoot?
- Blanche Touhill: How old is the woman he's marrying?
- Diane Anderson: I don't know but I'll find out.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, I got word the other day that a friend of mine whose wife died many years ago, who is 85, he's marrying a 78-year-old woman that he met on the computer and I thought, well, he was loyal and true and loving to his wife and children and the children are gone and he's got great grandchildren now and he met this woman and I thought, why not? I think that's wonderful.
- Diane Anderson: It's fabulous. He's not getting married this Sunday at Fayani is he?
- Blanche Touhill: No, he's married already, but he got married about six months ago.
- Diane Anderson: That's fantastic. Good for him.

- Blanche Touhill: Now, when you take a wedding picture, how many pictures do you take? That's all changed, hasn't it? Don't they take 500 or something?
- Diane Anderson: That's why I don't like it. How many pictures could you take of the bride? I'm exhausted at the end of the day because it's the only time you get to take a right shot and how many can I take? I'll take a couple thousand.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, really?
- Diane Anderson: Yes. With digital now...
- Blanche Touhill: I see, and then the couple choose which ones they want to buy?
- Diane Anderson: Right, right.
- Blanche Touhill: Do you put them in the book or do people have books anymore?
- Diane Anderson: Yes, I can have that all done.
- Blanche Touhill: Or you put them in a video?
- Diane Anderson: I put it in a video. I can put it to music. Oh, I did Leslie Tunney, the publisher of St. Louis Magazine. She asked me to do her mother and father's 60th anniversary. They were having a little party. I did it for them and then I do this little bonus, surprise CD and put it to music and the music that they loved in their era and end it with Louis Armstrong, *What a Wonderful World*.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, how marvelous.
- Diane Anderson: Yes, she loved it.
- Blanche Touhill: Do you have a studio you do these things or your home?
- Diane Anderson: No, I don't have a studio. I can set up a studio in my home and I've done that before, like, for St. Patrick's Center, they wanted head shots done of all their board of directors and so I set up my studio at home and they all just came in at different times. Or I also go out to businesses and take their portraits for them. So, yeah, I pretty much do the gamut now.
- Blanche Touhill: Now, are you one of the few female photography companies or are there other women?

- Diane Anderson: I know at least one other photographer that now is working for Black Tie but I think there's mostly men, now that I think about it. I never really thought about that but, yeah, I run into...
- Blanche Touhill: Because I always think of a photographer such as you've described as being male.
- Diane Anderson: You're right. I didn't think about that before. Huh, that's interesting.
- Blanche Touhill: Does Black Tie still exist?
- Diane Anderson: Yes, it was taken over by...his last name is DeLouche. I don't remember what his first name is but he is a not-for-profit and wants to give it back to the community, any monies that they might be able to raise, to give back to the community.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, they make money by selling photographs once they're in the computer?
- Diane Anderson: But nobody really wants to buy photos; they just want to look at them.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, so they go to the computer and look at them but they don't buy them.
- Diane Anderson: Right. Like, for St. Louis Magazine and Ladue News, the internet...not that I understand too much of it but if you have photos on there and they're looking at this photo and that photo and that photo, every one of those is a click on the internet and so when you're on someone's site and you're clicking so many different times, then you can take that to somebody that wants to put their ad, let's say, for example, Ladue News, on the website, they can charge more money because of their pay per clicks. So you can generate a lot more by putting photos on there. So people make a lot of money from my photography. But that's America. That's the name of the game, you know? A movie star, he'll make a whole lot of money but he makes the film industry a whole lot of money and then that trickles down to him but then he has to pay his people. So, it all works. Everybody gets a little chunk.
- Blanche Touhill: Is your equipment expensive?

Diane Anderson: Yes, but I buy the best equipment to get the best results and it makes my job easier. It seems like, no matter what...I love to ski, buy or rent the best equipment makes you look good.

Blanche Touhill: When did you learn to ski? I can't imagine somebody growing up in St. Louis as you did learning to ski.

Diane Anderson: Right. That's an interesting question. When I was in the process of getting married, my husband at the time, it was important to him. He just learned how to ski and he loved it and I thought, oh, my gosh, I don't even like cold weather but if it's important to him, by golly, I'm going to try it because that's part of what you do when you get married. So it was our honeymoon and we went out and I learned how to ski during our honeymoon. The first two days I hated it but the third day, there was something about the mountains and that I wanted to be on top of that mountain. I wanted to see what the top of the mountain looked like. And that was a goal and ever since, I've been hooked and my passion for skiing has lasted longer than my marriage.

Blanche Touhill: Well, that's what you got out of it. You got your children and you got your business, in a way, your entrepreneurial experience...

Diane Anderson: Yes, I am very fortunate.

Blanche Touhill: And then you got skiing.

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Count your blessings.

Diane Anderson: I am so grateful and I'm grateful that he's moved on. He has found something that he's very happy. He's almost like a missionary now and he's giving back to places in Africa and what not, so he really did change and I don't know him right now. He's not the same man that I married, not that there's anything wrong with that. People do change and they do move on and it's okay. But I did have him for a lifetime, just like you said.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, you did.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, so...

Blanche Touhill: And a traditional woman's life, 23 years was a lifetime.

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: But now you've gone on because we all live longer...

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: ...and women have...they take advantage of opportunities they didn't have before.

Diane Anderson: Interesting, I think you're right.

Blanche Touhill: Well, that's what your mother did.

Diane Anderson: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Your mother took advantage of an opportunity which women didn't have before.

Diane Anderson: You're right, you're right. So maybe that's why...she's inside me, isn't she?

Blanche Touhill: She is inside you all right.

Diane Anderson: She's part of me...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, she is.

Diane Anderson: I'll be doggoned.

Blanche Touhill: I'm going to change the subject just a little bit and I want to say: If you had been born 50 years earlier, what would your life have been like?

Diane Anderson: Oh, my gosh.

Blanche Touhill: That's sort of between your mother and your grandmother, I guess.

Diane Anderson: That's interesting. I never thought about that. I'd be a housewife; I'd be working; I'd be...boy, if I got divorced back then, I can't imagine...could be homeless on the street.

Blanche Touhill: Actually, very few people got divorced.

Diane Anderson: Right.

Blanche Touhill: They stayed or the man went off but they stayed.

Diane Anderson: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Where were they to go?

Diane Anderson: There is no place, you're right. I'm glad I'm living in the here and now. Oh, that would be miserable.

Blanche Touhill: I wonder if you could have started a little business. You could have been the lady in the neighborhood that sewed. Do you remember those people?

Diane Anderson: That's true.

Blanche Touhill: They used to take alterations.

Diane Anderson: That's true and now, thinking back, in my high school years, I took sewing and I went all the way up to tailoring and made a coat and I'm still thinking I probably should go into designing swimsuits for women. I can never find a right swimsuit to wear, can never feel good in a swimsuit but I could design a good one. So maybe that's my next life.

Blanche Touhill: Maybe that's your next project. Well, then let's go on. Did you ever get an award or awards that you were really very proud of?

Diane Anderson: I never really did get any awards, no. I thought about that and I can't think of a...the only award I can ever think about is for swimming and it was always 3rd place ribbons.

Blanche Touhill: But you were a swimmer.

Diane Anderson: That's true.

Blanche Touhill: Was that the Y?

Diane Anderson: No, it was a local swimming pool that we joined and it was up the street from us, again, being able to ride our bikes to and from on the street.

Blanche Touhill: What was your stroke?

Diane Anderson: Back stroke, the best back stroke.

Blanche Touhill: Did you swim in high school?

Diane Anderson: Not competitively, no.

Blanche Touhill: Did they have...yes, they did. You went to high school when Title Nine was in operation.

Diane Anderson: Right, right, and I went to Melville High School and we didn't have our own pool at the time. We had to borrow...

Blanche Touhill: Did you have girls sports, that you played other schools or was that just for the boys?

Diane Anderson: You know, there were boys and girls in high school, the sports.

Blanche Touhill: That you played other schools?

Diane Anderson: Yes, we played other schools. I wasn't involved in that.

Blanche Touhill: No, but I mean...do you mind saying when you were in high school, roughly?

Diane Anderson: I graduated in 1973.

Blanche Touhill: Well, see, the Reauthorization Act is '72 and I think Title Nine is '74.

Diane Anderson: Oh.

Blanche Touhill: So you were just at that time...

Diane Anderson: Right before that.

Blanche Touhill: Right before that, right.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, wow! Interesting.

Blanche Touhill: And girls might have had sports but I don't think they played other schools. I think that was the main difference.

Diane Anderson: Oh.

Blanche Touhill: I'm not sure about those dates but I think that's just about in that era.

Diane Anderson: So, I guess, really, maybe I should have been born a little...

Blanche Touhill: No, you would have been...you did all right. If you had a theme in your life, what do you think it is?

Diane Anderson: A theme? Explain what you mean by that.

Blanche Touhill: Well, just, what do you think has motivated you or something that is just consistent all through your life, that you've always done.

Diane Anderson: Wow.

Blanche Touhill: It doesn't have to be a job. It's just some quality about yourself.

Diane Anderson: I haven't really thought about it.

Blanche Touhill: Well, see, I think it's you like people.

Diane Anderson: Oh, you're right.

Blanche Touhill: And that that has really gotten you to get up out of bed...

Diane Anderson: Yes, you're right.

Blanche Touhill: ...and go out and pick a job that you're meeting people.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, it's always been about that, hasn't it? I never thought about it like that. You're right.

Blanche Touhill: I think. But think about it before we finish and if you change your mind...

Diane Anderson: Yeah, I think you're right. That makes sense. Huh, wow.

Blanche Touhill: What are you doing now that you like?

Diane Anderson: Well, you know, busy with photographs. I just love it.

Blanche Touhill: Do you have an assistant?

Diane Anderson: No.

Blanche Touhill: Or somebody to answer the phone?

Diane Anderson: It's me, myself and I. So I do it all and, oh, I just recently got two little puppies so they're my little love buttons. They keep me real busy, in between answering the phone and billing and photos, yes, indeed.

Blanche Touhill: Do you think you're going to go on and have another business?

Diane Anderson: I might, but then, you know, every time I think about new and innovative things that can be done like, at one time I was thinking about maybe starting a Ladue News with my son only doing more of the picture aspect

and really...the picture aspect, that's how Ladue News started, as a society page.

Blanche Touhill: I didn't know that.

Diane Anderson: Society pages. So, kind of throwing that around but then I always go back to, you know, I'm 61, I don't want to work that hard.

Blanche Touhill: Well, that's true, and starting something up is very hard.

Diane Anderson: Right, yeah. So it would have to be baby steps. But, yeah, I don't know if I want to work that hard. I'm enjoying the amount of work flow that I have right now and being able to enjoy life.

Blanche Touhill: Do you have trouble going out every night to all these events? No?

Diane Anderson: No, I love it. I absolutely love it. Sometimes I get a little bored if I'm not...almost like a person with ADD because when I go out, I'm on.

Blanche Touhill: You're working, yes.

Diane Anderson: And no matter if I'm in a bad mood or something terrible happened that day, that's at home, that's at home and once I have that camera in my hand and I'm behind it, I'm smiling, I'm happy, life is good and, really, then if you smile enough, you become happy.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. Well, maybe your theme is the power of positive thinking. Maybe that's your theme in life, that you have to be a positive thinker.

Diane Anderson: Yeah. I think that's a big part of it so no matter what, to think positive and gratitude, come from a place of gratitude.

Blanche Touhill: Do you think anybody can make really a great living out of Black Tie?

Diane Anderson: Not out of Black Tie itself, not unless...Black Tie, they're all around based on purchasing photos. Black Tie should be more about helping the not-for-profits because they're asking the not-for-profit to join and to join...

Blanche Touhill: I did not know that.

Diane Anderson: To join means give money to Black Tie. Why are you giving money to Black Tie? Ladue News will cover it for free if you're a not-for-profit. They will cover your organization for no money. All you have to do is, you can go through me; you can go directly through Ladue News, if you've got a

not-for-profit because that's what they do. So I don't know about Black Tie. I don't know what they can do for that not-for-profit because they don't...they're charging money. So, yeah, I'm not real sure. But I know that I wouldn't want to own Black Tie because the last two...

Blanche Touhill: I know.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, passed away.

Blanche Touhill: Yeah, I know.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, kind of has a black cloud over Black Tie.

Blanche Touhill: Yeah, but it's still alive you're saying?

Diane Anderson: Yes, it is, yeah. They're still trying to resurrect somehow because it's a franchise. It's based out of Colorado.

Blanche Touhill: I did not know that.

Diane Anderson: Yeah, Kenneth Coon is his name who started it.

Blanche Touhill: Is it viable financially in other parts of the country?

Diane Anderson: I think it might be.

Blanche Touhill: Okay, that people do buy the pictures over the computer?

Diane Anderson: Or there's online...they can help with online auctions to help promote businesses or the not-for-profits but I've never gotten into that and St. Louis has never gotten into that. They haven't utilized that for their clients. So, yeah, I don't know how they can make any money.

Blanche Touhill: It served its purpose for you and it must have served its purpose for other people.

Diane Anderson: Well, it served its purpose for me because I learned on Harry's...the way that I learned was, I would come back and I had photos and Harry would say, "What did you take that photo for? What were you thinking? This is not how you want to do it" and that's how he would tell me. Well, I like that kind of criticism. I want somebody to be straight with me and tell me what they don't like. You can say, "Oh, your photos are great. We love your work." I don't learn anything. Tell me what you don't like so I can learn.

- Blanche Touhill: Did you remain friends with Harry even after you left?
- Diane Anderson: Yes, oh, yes. For me, he was great. I bought a camera from him used and started out that way and then worked my way up as soon as I could buy the best Canon camera, is what I did. So I'm hooked on Canon.
- Blanche Touhill: Do you ever wish you did something else in your life?
- Diane Anderson: I can't imagine anything else. I don't really have any regrets, none at all. I can't think about anything else I would rather be doing. I'm pretty content.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you ever have the feeling that you were in a business that you didn't belong in it?
- Diane Anderson: Never, never.
- Blanche Touhill: What are you going to do as you look forward to your life as it is now and in the future?
- Diane Anderson: Well, I certainly don't plan on retiring. I love what I'm doing. I want to go out and take photos of people for as long as I am physically able because I do enjoy it so much. It's what helps me get up in the morning and I have this event or I have that event to run to. So I love that. I just love that.
- Blanche Touhill: You know, you really are taking the history of St. Louis in one aspect: you're taking the history of St. Louis of people who support non-profit groups.
- Diane Anderson: Never thought about that.
- Blanche Touhill: But as a historian, they're always looking for pictures of people who have done that, in other words, who's been behind the Girl Scouts at their galas; who's been behind...oh, name somebody...the Red Cross or just myriads of non-profits in St. Louis and I think there is a core of people that go to maybe four or five of these but there's another core of people that go to four or five others. You don't see the same people at every event...
- Diane Anderson: Right.

- Blanche Touhill: You see them at four or five events but then there's another group. I often look at St. Louis and I go to an event and I think, this is an entirely different group of people.
- Diane Anderson: Yes, depending on what the not-for-profit is.
- Blanche Touhill: Depending on what the not-for-profit is.
- Diane Anderson: Yes, you're right, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: So you really do have a handle on something, if an individual wanted to do the history of the non-profits in St. Louis, they could go to your files. Do you keep files?
- Diane Anderson: I keep every single event that I have ever shot. I have copies of those photos.
- Blanche Touhill: So then I ought to say to you, some day you ought to decide where you're going to leave those.
- Diane Anderson: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: And do you have the people named?
- Diane Anderson: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: You do have the names of everybody you took?
- Diane Anderson: Yes, I do, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: That is a wonderful collection and speaking on behalf of the State Historical Society, I will say some day you ought to think about where you want to have those photos reside.
- Diane Anderson: I would absolutely love to donate those.
- Blanche Touhill: In time.
- Diane Anderson: Yes, because they're stored on individual hard drives, and it's all by date.
- Blanche Touhill: Starting in what year, 2001?
- Diane Anderson: A little bit after that. I think it was about...I got divorced in 2004 so I think shortly after that I started taking photos, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Well it's something to think about.

Diane Anderson: Absolutely.

Blanche Touhill: You didn't realize it but you're in the history business.

Diane Anderson: That's right. You're absolutely right. I think of some of the photos that I've taken...I mean, Covenant House and Stan Musial?. I took so many of his photos and his family photos.

Blanche Touhill: Did you take the Pope when he came or was that before?

Diane Anderson: No, that was before.

Blanche Touhill: That was before, it was in the '90s...'98 or '99.

Diane Anderson: I would have if I was in it, yeah. I wish but I have so many archived photos of...

Blanche Touhill: Have you taken the presidential debates in St. Louis?

Diane Anderson: No.

Blanche Touhill: Because they may come back to Washington U again but I'm just saying, and really, I'm more interested not so much in who comes, I'm more interested in the audience that's there.

Diane Anderson: That's already here in St. Louis, yeah, and I have them all, first and last names.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, you have a treasure trove.

Diane Anderson: Yes, you're right.

Blanche Touhill: Well, I look forward to seeing you at another one of these events that I go to and I always note that you're happy and cheery and you look like you really enjoy what you're doing.

Diane Anderson: I sure do.

Blanche Touhill: So thank you for coming today.

Diane Anderson: Thank you so much. It's an honor and a privilege.

Blanche Touhill: Good.