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Nordic American Voices
Nordic Heritage Museum

Interview of Stan Boreson
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Seattle, Washington

Interviewers: Mari-Ann Kind Jackson; Marjorie Graf; Janice Bogren

Mari-Ann Kind Jackson: [0:00] This is an oral history interview for Nordic American Voices oral history program at the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Washington. Today is January 23, 2016, and we have the honor of hearing Stan Boreson's life story. We are at the Nordic Heritage Museum, and we'll be asking questions as needed- Marge, and Janice, and I am Mari-Ann. Welcome, Stan.

Stan Boreson: [0:35] Well, it's a pleasure to be here.

Mari-Ann: [0:38] Thank you. We are honored that you are with us today.

Stan: [0:42] I love this museum. I've got to take some more time and come again. I've been here, but you keep adding things.

Mari-Ann: [0:51] It is a good place.

Stan: [0:53] It is quite a big place, isn't it?

Mari-Ann: [0:55] Yes, it is. Would you please start by stating your full name, and tell us where you were born, and when you were born, and then share with us something about your Nordic background, your childhood, and your illustrious life.

Stan: [1:14] Well, I was born in Everett, Washington. My mother was from Trondheim, Norway. My dad was from Stavanger, and they met in Stanwood, Washington, U.S.A. So, they didn't meet in the old country at all. My mother came over when she was a year old from the old country. I don't

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know how old my dad was when he came over. But anyway, they...

Mari-Ann: [2:00] They found each other, didn't they?

Stan: [2:02] They found each other in Stanwood.

Mari-Ann: [2:04] Yes.

Stan: [2:05] I guess they wrote letters from home and so on. And everybody would mention Stanwood. So they thought this has got to be a good place to live. So that's why they ended up there, I guess.

Mari-Ann: [2:22] Yes. That's great. Was it your father or your grandfather who jumped ship and settled here?

Stan: [2:31] It was my grandfather. You know, I wish I could have... See, we came from Everett, and we'd go and visit them up in Stanwood, or on Camano Island, where they had a place. Well, I'm not keeping track here, am I? You'll have to stop this. My brain doesn't work like it used to.

Mari-Ann: [3:02] It's okay. We do know... We will all ask you questions as we want you to tell about something. So, your grandfather- that was kind of interesting. He jumped ship and hid in a forest on Camano Island.

Stan: [3:21] Yes, he did. He hid in the forest on Camano Island. When the ship had left, and everything, he came out and saw the people that lived here, and thought it would be a pretty good place. So he stayed.

Marjorie: [3:37] Was that your mother's father, or your father's father?

Stan: [3:41] I think it was my father's father. And of course, they were from... My grandfather was from... I'm trying to think of the name of the town. I can't. Anyway, he lived on Camano Island for all those years. Then when we'd come to visit from Everett, that was a long trip, from Everett to

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Camano Island.

Mari-Ann: [4:12] Yes.

Stan: [4:13] Then we'd visit with them. Then we'd have to go back. We'd have to leave real early, because we were going back to Everett. And we'd make it.

Marjorie: [4:30] How did you travel? What kind of vehicle?

Stan: [4:33] Well, I think it was a 1935 something or other. We didn't have the new cars. Couldn't afford them.

Marjorie: [4:54] Talk a little bit about what it was like growing up in Everett. What did you do when you were a child?

Stan: [5:01] Everett was a lovely little town. I never will regret that I was born and raised in Everett, because it was just a... You knew everybody. If you went downtown and walked along Hewitt Avenue, you could say hello to nearly everybody. And they knew you, too. So, Everett was fun.

Janice: [5:28] What kind of work did your father do?

Stan: [5:31] They called him a boom man. They'd bring the logs over to the mill and put them in the pond. He'd take them from the pond with a pike pole, and push them up to get on to the track to take the log up to the mill to make lumber out of it. So, that's what he did for a living.

Mari-Ann: [5:59] That was not an easy job.

Stan: [6:01] Oh, no. That was a tough job. He did that until he couldn't do it anymore. He lived to be 80. My mother lived to be 87. And I am 90. Can you believe it? I can't.

Mari-Ann: [6:21] [Laughter] When were you born?

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Stan: [6:27] May 5, 1925. 5/5/25 is when I was born.

Mari-Ann: [6:40] That's wonderful. So, when you grew up in Everett, were you involved in the Norwegian community there?

Stan: [6:52] Only through my parents, I think, because I didn't know that I was part of the Norwegian community, you know. I was just from Everett. But I guess when people came over to visit with us, then they'd realize that I was Norwegian. That's how I was born and raised.

Marjorie: [7:22] Were there traditions that your mother and father practiced in the home? Norwegian?

Stan: [7:28] Not many. Isn't that awful? It is. Because my mother should have... Well, see, my grandmother Linbeck lived with us for a while, about seven years. And that's when my mother [and grandmother] only spoke Norwegian to each other. And that's how I had a little bit of knowing what Norwegian was like, because my grandmother only spoke to me in Norwegian, and I'd answer in English. She wouldn't speak a word... She said, "I learned my language. One is enough." Doesn't that sound typical?

Mari-Ann: [8:15] [Laughter] Yes.

Stan: [8:16] One is enough. Then, it's very interesting that Everett high School is the only high school I know of that taught Norwegian as a credited language. Ylvisaker. Reverend Ylvisaker from Stanwood- his son was Walter. And Walter was the teacher at Everett High School that taught Norwegian. So I learned. So, then I signed up with Norwegian. There were about 30 in the class. And we learned our language that way, two years. Of course, we didn't practice it, and lost it all. Darn it. But you know, we learned it for a while.

Mari-Ann: [9:18] Good. So, how did you get involved with music and playing and singing? Tell us.

Stan: [9:29] When I was twelve years old, my mother took me uptown to Everett to the Bune Music Company underneath Burnett's Jewelry Store. She wanted me to learn the guitar, because she had

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this old, beat up guitar up in the attic. So we got up to town, and the teacher started asking me questions. He said, "If I teach you the chords on the guitar, you learn those chords, and then you sing the melody." Well, I was twelve, and very, very bashful. I said, "There is no way that I am going to sing."

[10:17] So, he said, "I've got another idea. I also teach the accordion. So you take the accordion and you play the melody on one side of the accordion, and you chord on the other, and you don't have to sing." I said, "That's for me." So that's how come I became an accordion player. So I learned to not to have to sing, and I just played the music. Later on, you know how that goes, people wanted me to sing a song about something or other. I'm not dumb about it. I sang. And I sang this tune, both sides. So that's how I got going on this.

[11:07] And then my relatives have a good sense of humor, and they would say, "Well, why don't you tell us a story like your Uncle Torvald would tell it?" So then I would have to give a talk.

[Laughter] And I didn't mean to do it, but you just had to do it. So I would speak like Uncle Torvald would speak. And then I began to not be so bashful. I got to be fifteen, sixteen, up in the years. And that's when I began to elaborate a little bit on Uncle Torvald.

Marjorie: [12:04] Do you remember any stories?

Stan: [12:08] Well, not really.

Marjorie: [12:12] Okay.

Stan: [12:13] If I think of one, I'll tell you, though.

Marjorie: [12:14] Okay.

Stan: [12:15] It was just a way of getting across my thoughts. Well, anyway, it was a good life. My parents were very, very cognizant of the fact that we were Norwegian, of course. And I loved being a Norwegian. You know, gosh. There are not many Norwegians. We're kind of a small little group. And that's why I'm happy to be a Norsk.

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Mari-Ann: [13:04] Yeah.

Janice: [13:05] What kind of groups did you share these Uncle Torvald stories with? What was the setting?

Stan: [13:11] Oh, let's see. Mostly... Norwegians don't mind poking fun at themselves. So there were quite a bit of Norwegian folk, people that would like to be talked about. And so we would get together as a group, ten or twelve people. Not many. And then we'd trade stories. But we didn't do it very often, and we didn't do it with very many people. So, it didn't get around much. I wish it had. But, not many people doing it.

Mari-Ann: [14:05] But you gained a reputation as a fine entertainer very early.

Stan: [14:14] I was playing the accordion. If it wasn't for the accordion, it wouldn't have ever happened. But I would play. I learned a lot of Scandinavian songs. I would get records from the Ballard Record Store, and I learned a song from the record. And then I tried to sing some of the tunes, even, in Norwegian. But I didn't do that very much. I didn't do the real Norwegian. I would rather do... The only thing I could do was talk with a Norwegian accent. They said my accent was pretty good, so I just talked- stories with my Norwegian accent.

Mari-Ann: [15:16] Good. Good. And when did you start recording?

Stan: [15:24] Well, I'll tell you. I started recording when I was singing... Well, I was on the radio first. King Radio hired me. On Saturday mornings, they wanted me to do a Norwegian song, story. So I did. I went down there, and I was doing a song, a story. And then pretty soon it evolved that they wanted me to do a whole program, and they put it on television. So, hell, I thought that was wonderful. So, I did. I became the Norsk on Television. So anyway, it worked out fine.

Mari-Ann: [16:25] Good. Good. Did this start when you were a student at the University of Washington? Or was it after that?

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Stan: [16:37] I think it started when I was still a student at the University. I was a student at the University of Washington, and they wanted me to do Norwegian and English, you know. So, that's the way it worked out. I didn't mean it to be that way, but that's just the way it worked out.

Mari-Ann: [17:07] Good. Well, we'll all happy that it ended up that way.

Stan: [17:11] [Laughter] Well, you know, I'm amazed that you people think I'm any different, or a little different, or something, because I'm just another Norwegian kid that grew up... I think it's because I played accordion and put the two together, and that makes a difference.

Mari-Ann: [17:38] But you also have a really great sense of humor.

Stan: [17:45] Well, I must say, yes. I get that from my parents, I think. Both my parents had a good sense... I think my mother, mostly, more than my father, although he had a sense of humor. But my mother was the one that egged me on, you know. She wanted me to do anything I could to stand out a little bit so that maybe, you know, wouldn't be just another one of the group. So I tried to think of stories, or work in stories. I wish I could think of a really good, funny... You know. I know so many, but I know that you wanted me to do that when I came here. I didn't get the letter, so I didn't know what I was supposed to know what I came here. And I'm sorry that I don't have more preparation.

Janice: [18:51] Do you remember when you put Uncle Torvald in your television show? Do you remember how that came about, how you decided to put him in there?

Stan: [19:03] Well, see, when you're on television every day for thirty minutes or an hour, you've got to come up with stuff. And if you don't, you just have a half hour of dead air. So I'm sure that one day we had to come up with a story. And who is going to tell the story? What's the story about? Well, let's make it about your Uncle Torvald. And then you can say anything you want, and nobody will know, because nobody knows your Uncle Torvald. So that's how it happened.

Mari-Ann: [19:51] Good. Good. When you were at the University, what did you study?

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Stan: [20:01] Well, I took accounting. Ugh. Accounting and personnel management. Personnel management, I thought that would be a good thing to be in. So I graduated from the U, and I couldn't find any personnel to manage, and I haven't accounted for anything.

Mari-Ann: [20:29] [Laughter]

Stan: [20:32] But anyway, I went to Everett Junior College for two years. Then I transferred and went to the U for the last two years. I wish I had gone all four years to the University of Washington. Everett Junior College, that was right at the start of it. And it wasn't a big deal then. It wasn't like it is now, with the campus and the college, and everything. And so I should have gone four years to the U. And that's where... Boy, I had fun down there, and met all of these good people. It was a great experience the last two years.

Marjorie: [21:25] Did you take any music classes at the University?

Stan: [21:29] No. And you know why? Everything I wanted to take, there was a... What do they call it? You have to take something else first.

Marjorie: [21:39] A prerequisite.

Stan: [21:41] Prerequisite. Yes. There was a prerequisite. For everything I wanted to take, there was a prerequisite. And it just discouraged me from doing anything in the music line, or the Scandinavian line.

Mari-Ann: [21:57] So, when you came out of the University, did you work in accounting?

Stan: [22:04] No. I'll tell you. For the first few years, I worked in the banking business. I worked for People's Bank in Everett, Washington. People's Bank. I was a teller. I kept working in the bank business, and I liked it, but there was no future there. Luckily, television came to Seattle. They came to me and said, "We're going to put you on a television show." I said, "Well, that sounds wonderful, but I don't know anything about television. They said, "Neither do we." Brand new.

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[22:58] So they put me on this. They had a television show that they wanted me to be on, and I went on that show, and I liked it. They'd keep telling me what to do and what to say, and so on. And that's the way I got into television. Well, then they wanted to figure out something that could do with me so that they'd use me every day. So, they came up with the idea that I've have a "King's Klubhouse"- a clubhouse at the end of the block. So there I was. It would be a half hour a day. Then I would play songs, and sing a little bit.

[23:55] And then I was lucky, I had the Our Gang Comedies. Spanky McFarland, and all that gang. The Our Gang Comedy. Then it just evolved, because you had to come up with something every day, or you'd have dead air. So they'd come up with ideas. Not many. I had to come up with my own ideas every day. That was tough, but I had to do it. So it would get to about four o'clock, and we'd have an hour to discuss what we were going to do, and then they'd turn on the camera. It's not like today, you know, where it's all cut and dried today. It was very ad lib when I started out. Nobody knew what to do on TV, because it was just brand new for everybody. And it worked out.

Janice: [25:13] Did you ever have a real bad faux pas on air?

Stan: [25:19] Well, yes. I don't remember the faux pas, exactly, but we ended up with bad timing or something, and we just didn't have anything to do. You just sat there and looked at each other. Oh, it was terrible. But we got through it, and maybe the next day, there was something better to do.

Marjorie: [25:50] Were you working with Art Barduhn on that show?

Stan: [25:54] What?

Marjorie: [25:54] Art...

Stan: [25:55] Art Barduhn. When I first started on television, it was called "Two B's at the Keys." Boreson and Barduhn. He was a student at the University of Washington in piano. So they put the two of us together, and then we had a fifteen-minute show. It was going pretty good, so they extended it to thirty. Then we were on thirty minutes a day, once a week only. They only had us on for once a week, for thirty minutes. In those days, it was all new for everybody- the announcers, they

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didn't know what to tell you. It was really pioneer days in the television industry. It was interesting.

Marjorie: [26:54] Did Art continue to work with you at King's Klubhouse?

Stan: [26:58] No. When they hired me, that was a little touchy, because they hired me away from Art, really. Art and I were real good friends. But they wanted me to have a children's show all by myself. So I had to take the job, and I took the job. I was on thirty minutes a day, and then they bought the Our Gang Comedies, and I'd have a comedy, or maybe not. And I'd have a guest. You know, anything to fill that half hour. Because they were looking for things that were more permanent and could keep going. That's why they hired me to take on the show, every day, Monday through Friday at five o'clock.

Marjorie: [27:54] Did Uncle Torvald ever visit you on King's Klubhouse?

Stan: [27:59] We had a frame in the back of the room up against the wall, but there was nothing in the frame. So the days the Uncle Torvald was going to be on, he would appear in that frame.

Mari-Ann: [28:15] [Laughter] How clever.

Stan: [28:17] Oh, yeah. That was clever. So then Uncle Torvald would be in that frame. And we'd ask him questions. There might have been a plot, that day- maybe something happened out on the farm, and we were trying to figure out what. I don't know. It's so long ago. It's been... When did I start? Do you have when I started on television?

Marjorie: [28:58] Not really. But it must have been around the same time you were at the University of Washington.

Stan: [29:03] Yes.

Marjorie: [29:04] And then it progressed from there. But you won a children's entertainment award.

Stan: [29:09] Oh, yes.

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Marjorie: [29:10] For that show.

Stan: [29:13] That's right, I did, didn't I? See, I don't even remember any of this stuff. It's fifty, sixty years ago, and my brain isn't clicking like it used to, anyway. So, I'm trying to think of what happened. But anyway, yeah. I was on television. I was on radio first, on King Radio. And then they switched me over to television, and then I dropped the show, because I couldn't do radio and television shows, both. So they dropped the one and kept me on the television. It worked just fine.

Mari-Ann: [30:03] [Laughter] Yeah, it did.

Marjorie: [30:06] Can you talk a little bit about how you met your wife? And your family?

Stan: [30:15] Barbara was at the University before me. No, no. I was before her. Heavens. I met her at the U, and she was a Kappa. I was a Beta. And we started going to dances together. You know how you go to these dances. And it worked out just fine. We went together for about a year, and then we decided it was a good thing. And it gradually worked into marriage. It worked out good. And we've been married for sixty-two years. Can you believe it? I can't. Sixty-two years. And we have two children. Now it's funny, because our [children]... We have [children] that are sixty. Can you believe it? Because when you take thirty and thirty and things like that, it gets to be sixty years old. Anyway, it worked out fine. Now we're going to keep going, I guess.

Marjorie: [31:49] Did Barbara help you at all in your career? Was she musical as well?

Stan: [31:54] She's musically inclined. She doesn't really... I did most everything when I got downtown to the studio. But we would talk things over. "What do you plan to do today?" "Well, I'm going to this and that." "Well, if you're going to do that, add this." You know. That's the way she helped me. So it worked out fine. We're a good team. We'd have to be, to last sixty-two years.

Mari-Ann: [32:32] Yes. That's very true.

Stan: [32:33] That's right.

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Mari-Ann: [32:35] What are the names of your children?

Stan: [32:39] Anne is my daughter. She is married, and she has had three daughters, Christina, Melinda, and Jamie. Jamie wasn't supposed to be Jamie. But [Anne] was married to an Irish guy, and he was... He liked Ireland very much. And I do, too. Gosh. But anyway, we wanted her to have an Irish name, like Colleen, or something. She was born on St. Patrick's Day, for gosh sakes.

Mari-Ann: [33:31] Oh.

Stan: [33:31] Yeah. He wanted her named Jamie. So they named her Jamie. But we didn't want to. Anyway, she's a wonderful girl. Now she's just finishing up her fourth year at the university. The oldest one of those three children... She married a great guy. He's becoming a minister. She had a little boy. He's now a year old.

Mari-Ann: [34:27] Oh.

Stan: [34:28] He's so darn cute. And they're on the east coast, so I never get to see them.

Mari-Ann: [34:33] Yeah.

Stan: [34:35] They live in some medical town. I can't think of the name of it.

Mari-Ann: [34:46] Okay.

Marjorie: [34:49] Can you talk a little bit about the King Olav medal?

Stan: [34:54] The King Olav medal. That was a surprise to me. King Olav was... Anyway, people who promote Norway or do good things to help the Norwegians along, they get the St. Olav medal. Well, I didn't think I had done anything extra special, but they seemed to think so in Norway. So, by golly, I got the St. Olav medal.

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[35:37] I've got it at home. It came in a beautiful packet. Oh, it's gorgeous. I have a little ring that I'm supposed to wear, too, that says that I have the St. Olav's medal, which is very nice. But I don't... I haven't been wearing it. I should, but I don't. Anyway, St. Olav's medal is a very prestigious thing. If you're really pushing for Norway, they give it to you.

Marjorie: [36:14] Did you travel to Norway to receive that?

Stan: [36:17] Most of the time you do. I should have, but there was no way that they could take me at that time. They were all tied up with other things. So I didn't get to go over there to pick up the medal. They sent it over here, and I did it at a luncheon. But it's a very nice honor, and I'm sure glad I got it. Thank you very much for asking.

Marjorie: [36:50] Have you had any opportunity to go to Norway?

Stan: [36:54] Well, yes. I've been there seven times. Been to Norway seven times. Once we took my mother to Norway. And she became our translator. It was very good, because she was still very good at speaking Norwegian, and she switched to English. She didn't even know she switched. So when she was over there... Anyway... I'm sorry. I'm not keeping track of what I'm saying. Anyway, she's a nice Norwegian lady that loves her Norway. So that's how we keep at it.

Mari-Ann: [37:56] Yeah. Good. That's wonderful.

Janice: [38:00] Can you tell us about your appearance on the Lawrence Welk show?

Stan: [38:06] Oh, I'll tell you. Years and years ago, we had a bus... We knew they were coming, of course. A bus drove into the parking lot on a Wednesday night. It was Lawrence Welk and the whole band. They were doing a one-shot deal to get down to California. This was one of the nights they were going to be playing on the way down to California. My God, we were just thrilled to death. The whole band got out there, and they got to the Seven Cedars. Oh, that music was so good, that Lawrence Welk music.

[39:00] Anyway, when he got down to L.A., he didn't forget his old friends that got him where he

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was. And he asked us if we wanted to be on his show. So, we were on his show. And we got to have a lunch with Lawrence Welk. Then, before we even got to that part, he said, “I would love to have you visit me now when you come down to L.A.” So we did. We took him up on it. He treated us royally. He was so nice to us, because we had him when he was working his way down from Minot, North Dakota. He didn’t have a bunch of people then. So we got to be on his show. He took us to lunch. It was a nice thing that happened. He’s just a genuine, good guy. Not a phony.

Janice: [40:23] Do you remember what you played? Did you play your accordion? Do you remember what you did on his show?

Stan: [40:29] We played something together. I think we... It was a kind of a Swedish waltz type of tune. We played that song together. And then my cousin Harry Linbeck was down there, too, so the three of us were on that show together. And then four of us- Myron Floren- his accordion player. So we had four accordions going.

Mari-Ann: [41:01] Oh, my goodness.

Stan: [41:03] I know it. That’s too much. [Laughter]

Mari-Ann: [41:05] [Laughter] That is wonderful.

Stan: [41:09] It was nice. It was really nice.

Mari-Ann: [41:13] So when you said, “we” were invited to come down, it was you and Barduhn?

Stan: [41:21] No, my cousin Harry Linbeck.

Mari-Ann: [41:22] Yeah. Okay.

Stan: [41:25] Yeah, because he was in Stanwood at the Seven Cedars, where I was.

Janice: [41:33] Maybe you could tell us a little about Seven Cedars.

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Stan: [41:36] Seven Cedars was an old barn north of Mount Vernon. It was really a barn. My cousin Harry Linbeck bought the barn and started to remodel it. And he remodeled it. He put a dance floor in on the main floor, and then there was still a basement below. But gee, it was a beautiful floor for dancing. It was very, very slick and shiny.

[42:19] It just ran Saturday nights, and then he had his orchestra. There was an eight-piece band that he had. And then every Saturday night, that band would get together, and boy, they made good music. People came from droves around. Yeah. My parents even remembered going up to Seven Cedars on Saturday night. That was the place to be.

Janice: [42:56] What kind of music did they play?

Stan: [42:58] They tried to play the top ten songs off the hit parade. And they'd have a schottische and a polka, and a Scandinavian waltz thrown in every now and then. That's what made it different. Yeah. So it worked out fine.

Mari-Ann: [43:19] Did you have an opportunity to put your accordion down, and you and Barbara take a swing on the floor?

Stan: [43:27] A little bit. Not much. Now and then we did. Barbara, of course, had to dance with all the customers, and that went over big at times. [Laughter] She was a good sport about it. And she knew that that was our living, too, out at the Seven Cedars. I was on television by that time, so we didn't get up north like we used to. When we got married, then she didn't go with me much anymore. I'd go out to play and to the dance and everything. She'd stay at home. Sometimes she went with me, but not always.

Mari-Ann: [44:33] She was home busy with the children.

Stan: [44:37] Oh, yes. We had the two. We were married not very long when we had the first one. She got pregnant after we got married, and that took nine months. [Laughter] That's the way it worked. It was fun, though, in those days. Now it's so long ago, I can't remember it even, hardly.

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Janice: [45:17] What did your parents think of your success and your public...

Stan: [45:23] Well, you know, I guess they liked it. My dad and mother were always hardworking people, all their lives. Never had really any breaks. But anyway, my mother was a pusher. She was a pusher, you know. Got things going. So that's how it happened.

Marjorie: [45:58] When you would play at some of these places, do you remember how much money you would make for doing a gig?

Stan: [46:05] Well, a lot of times, nothing, but a lot of times fifteen dollars. That was big. So, yeah. And when I got on television, wow. Then it started to be better. [Laughter] It wasn't until later, with Lawrence Welk that they really started making the money. I was too early. But now as a guest shot, I do good. That would get up to several hundred dollars then.

Marjorie: [46:57] But you were able to support your family doing what you loved to do.

Stan: [47:01] Oh, yeah. Oh, sure. Well, you know, I always had a good... When I would play around here, the Northwest, I had a band then. I got an orchestra together. And then I would start to make some better money, several hundred dollars a night sometimes. You had to support your family.

Marjorie: [47:45] Was that dance music then? You'd play at dances?

Stan: [47:48] Oh, yeah. Dances. That's what I played at. Dance music.

Mari-Ann: [47:55] You were also invited to Hostfest in Minot.

Stan: [47:59] I know. Hostfest. Yes. What is that all about? Hostfest? That's... I don't know.

Mari-Ann: [48:15] They have all kinds of musical events- concerts.

Stan: [48:22] Oh, yes. That's what they do.

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Mari-Ann: [48:22] ...During Hostfest. And then vendors who come and sell Norwegian things, and so on.

Stan: [48:28] I know. And... Yeah. You're telling me what the Hostfest is. That's what it is. Gosh, I enjoyed going back there to that. That was a wonderful, wonderful shot in the arm.

Mari-Ann: [48:46] Yes.

Janice: [48:47] Can you tell us about your biggest hit, "I Yust Go Nuts at Christmas?"

Stan: [48:55] Well, you know, we wrote that song... I wrote it, really. And we thought that was it. Well, pretty soon, people started saying, "Do that song again." We were getting requests from all over. I couldn't go on the air without having to sing that song. That's how it got popular, I guess.
[Laughter]

Marjorie: [49:33] Do you remember it?

Stan: [49:36] Do I remember it? Oh, yeah.

Marjorie: [49:39] What does it sound like?

Stan: [49:41] [Singing] "*Oh, I yust go nuts at Christmas / On that yolly holiday / I'll go in the red, like a knucklehead / Cause I squander all my pay / Well, I yust go nuts at Christmas / Shopping sure drives me berserk, On the day before, I rush in da store / Like a nervous [inaudible] yerk / And I look at nightgowns for my wife / Da black ones trimmed in red / But, I don't know her size / And so, she gets a carpet sweeper instead / Oh, I yust go nuts at Christmas / But I sure have lots of fun / Yust the same as you, I enjoy it, too/ Merry Christmas, everyone!*"

[50:24] [Clapping] [Laughter]

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Mari-Ann: [50:28] That is so wonderful.

Stan: [50:30] Oh, it's that old stuff, you know.

Mari-Ann: [50:34] That is great.

Stan: [50:36] Well, you guys are so nice to have me over. I'm not news anymore.

Marjorie: [50:42] It sounds like Uncle Torvald was singing that.

Stan: [50:45] Uncle Torvald was singing that. Oh, yeah. Not me. That's where Uncle Torvald comes in.

Mari-Ann: [50:53] Yeah. [Laughter]

Stan: [50:54] Yeah.

Mari-Ann: [50:56] That's wonderful. You also had a different career in traveling.

Stan: [51:05] Travel. Oh, yes. Well, see, Barbara... When we were married, she would stay home, and I'd be going on all the time. She said, "Let's think of something where we can both go." So that was the travel business. So, we started Stan and Barbara Boreson Tours. Stan and Barbara Boreson Tours was a company... I'll tell you how it started. We took a group to... not very far away. Just Oregon or someplace like that. Very close.

[51:57] And they all came back, and they said, "Where are we going next?" we said, "Where would you like to go?" They named something. And then we did it. That's how it started. And they liked to be together with this Stan Boreson group. So they stayed together, and we kept going different places. When we came back- "Where are we going next?" That's how it worked. It was nice. Wonderful people. And we'd all get together and travel on a current tour, and we'd come back, and then we'd have to figure out where we were going to go next. So we'd do something.

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Mari-Ann: [52:47] Did you go to Europe? Or were most of your tours in the United States?

Stan: [52:51] No, it was Europe. Later, Europe. We went to Norway. We did several tours to Norway. And then we went to the French Riviera. That was beautiful. People loved that. And we went to Ireland, Barbara being Irish. We did that one two or three times- Ireland. Gosh, Ireland is great. Do you know you go there and they'd have a little party or something, and it wasn't anything special, but it was just the way the Irish do it. They've got a way with themselves in Ireland. And we went into Central Europe- Germany, and things like that. We did it for many years. Finally we got tired, and we couldn't do it any longer. We just couldn't keep it up. So anyway, that's how that worked.

Mari-Ann: [54:10] What are some of your... When you think back on your long, wonderful life, is there one, or ten highlights that you always go back to in your head, and think about as wonderful?

Stan: [54:29] Uh huh. Well, there were a lot of wonderful things that happened to me. It was always good. Well, I don't... I think that we... I don't know. I just can't put a finger on it. Just nice to be with people and travel. People just seem to be nice.

Mari-Ann: [55:01] Yeah.

Stan: [55:02] I like them. [Laughter]

Mari-Ann: [55:04] Good.

Janice: [55:05] How about No-Mo. Can you tell us about No-Mo?

Stan: [55:09] Oh, when I got on television, the children's show, you have to have a mascot. So then we had a contest for that- a hippopotamus and an elephant and everything. And then we narrowed it down to a dog. Then a contest- what kind of a dog? Oh, there's all the different breeds. And finally there was a Basset Hound on television in New York. And I came in one day, and we were trying to figure out what kind of a dog.

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[55:51] And I said, “What about a Basset Hound?” They have that one in New York, and they seem to like him a lot.” All right, let’s... That’s how we got it. Then we had to have a contest to name the dog. “Dopey, Sleepy, Sad-Eyes,” all that. And one day, one came in. “No Motion.” Because she didn’t move much. She slept all the time. She slept during the show. She slept the whole show. I’d have to wake her up to take her home at night. So anyway, “No-Mo-Shun.” So it worked out just perfect.

Mari-Ann: [56:33] [Laughter] Good.

Stan: [56:35] No-Mo. And then we shortened it to No-Mo.

Mari-Ann: [56:37] Yeah.

Stan: [56:39] And she lived twelve and a half years. Boy, that was a bad day. I had to put her away, you know. You can’t... She didn’t just drop dead. But she was getting so... You know. She couldn’t hardly move. And she wouldn’t eat. Oh, gosh. She was a mess. And then finally we just said, “Well, we’re going to put her away.” So we put her away.

Mari-Ann: [57:14] That’s a tough one.

Stan: [57:15] Oh, that’s a tough one.

Mari-Ann: [57:16] Yeah.

Stan: [57:17] They get to be real parts of the family, don’t they?

Mari-Ann: [57:19] They do, indeed.

Stan: [57:21] They sure do. They get to be a real part of the family.

Marjorie: [57:25] So, when you decided to have a dog on the show, then you had to get the dog and raise the dog yourself?

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Stan: [57:32] Oh, yes.

Mari-Ann: [57:33] So, it was a puppy?

Stan: [57:35] It was a puppy.

Mari-Ann: [57:36] It came on as a puppy?

Stan: [57:36] Uh huh. And raised it. Yeah, we did. She became part of our family. The only thing I don't like about Bassets- they shed a lot. They really shed. My wife was always picking up hair or vacuuming. I know that part is not good. But anyway, it worked out to have a dog on the show. Oh, boy, then we had contests to name her pups. She had seven pups in her litter. We kept one of the pups, and we called her "Miss Mo." She didn't turn out very good, though. She lived on Whidbey Island for a long time with a family. I don't know if they liked her or not. We said, "Well, we have a dog that we'd love you to have. It's No-Mo's pup." "Oh, we'll take her." I guess it was okay. I don't know if it worked out fine or not. They didn't seem to complain. It was a nice little old dog.

Mari-Ann: [58:59] Good.

Stan: [59:04] Well, you guys have found stuff in there that I probably wouldn't have found.

Janice: [59:10] Well, I watched your show.

Mari-Ann: [59:12] Oh, yes.

Stan: [59:14] Oh, boy. Well, I'm sure glad that you've done this. You've done so much. Isn't this a shame? They want this building back.

Mari-Ann: [59:24] They do, and it is actually just fine, because it isn't the ultimate museum. You know, we need a building that is built to be a museum with air conditioning and climate control.

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Stan: [59:43] Okay. Is there money for that?

Mari-Ann: [59:47] We now have... We're a little short of the goal. Just a few million short of the goal.

Stan: [59:58] A few million? Yeah.

Mari-Ann: [59:59] A few million. But we have purchased the property on Market Street, and we are starting to build this spring.

Stan: [1:00:09] Oh, wonderful.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:11] Yes.

Stan: [1:00:12] So, it's going to happen.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:13] Oh, it is definitely going to happen.

Stan: [1:00:15] You know it will happen.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:16] Yes.

Stan: [1:00:17] And you'll be on the ground floor when we get that beautiful new building.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:21] We will.

Marjorie: [1:00:22] And you will be visiting.

Stan: [1:00:24] Well, I sure will. I'll be there on opening day.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:28] Oh, good.

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Marjorie: [1:00:29] Oh, good.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:31] We'll plan on a party.

Stan: [1:00:31] We'll have a party.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:33] Good.

Stan: [1:00:35] Well, you guys are so nice to have me over. Because you know, I'm old-time. When I was on television, that was... I haven't been on television for thirty years.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:52] But you have continued to entertain people.

Stan: [1:00:56] Oh, yes.

Mari-Ann: [1:00:56] And you have continued to share your humor, your talent. I was on the board of the Norwegian-American Chamber of Commerce, and we had you come to entertain us just a few years ago. We were at the Seattle Golf Club.

Stan: [1:01:20] Oh, yeah.

Mari-Ann: [1:01:21] For a luncheon.

Stan: [1:01:22] Oh, sure.

Mari-Ann: [1:01:22] And you came. And I think you brought back something to our group that was sort of in the process of slipping away.

Stan: [1:01:33] Yeah. I suppose. Well, it's memory stuff, isn't it?

Mari-Ann: [1:01:39] It is. Yes, indeed.

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Stan: [1:01:40] It's memory stuff.

Marjorie: [1:01:41] And this program that we do- the Nordic American project that we do, is to capture the history of people who are pioneers in their field, and you were a pioneer in your field.

Stan: [1:01:54] I was a pioneer in the field of TV, that's for sure. Not radio, but TV.

Mari-Ann: [1:02:00] Yeah.

Stan: [1:02:01] And you know, they would say to me, "What was it like back on radio?" I would go back and tell them anything about that. But nobody knew anything about television. Too new.

Mari-Ann: [1:02:24] Yes. Well, I think that we will let you have a break. We so appreciate you coming in to the Nordic Heritage Museum to share your fascinating life story with us. Thank you very much. We appreciate you.

Stan: [1:02:50] Thank you. I loved being here with you. And you've done such a great job with this museum. I've got to come back and see it again.

Mari-Ann: [1:03:01] Please do.

Stan: [1:03:02] And again, and again.

END OF RECORDING.

Transcription by Alison DeRiemer.