

Interview with Marcy Tell 5/23/02

Interviewer Vinh Nguyen

CHS Museum Series

V: the following interview was conducted on behalf of the oral history program of the Century High School. The interviewee is Marcy Tell. The interviewer is Vinh Nguyen. The interview took place at 11:20 on Thursday May 23, 2002, at Century High School

V: How did you get to Century?

M: I applied for a transfer; I was teaching at Hillsboro High School and decided I wanted to transfer over because my principle Phil Barnikof had transferred over to be the principle here.

V: So what was your role when you first came to Century?

M: I was the department coordinator for science.

V: What kind of programs did you start in the science department that you brought over from Hilhi?

M: We brought over I basic curriculum, although that first year we didn't have seniors and so we didn't have biochemistry or advance biology. We brought over our freshmen, sophomore, and junior courses.

V: What kind of challenges did you encounter coming to this school?

M: The biggest challenge from a science perspective was getting our equipment. We started ordering in February before school started and we ordered all spring and we had to wait for all the equipment and it took us all summer to unbox everything and put it away.

V: What was your initial vision that you had for Century?

M: Our initial vision was that everything was going to be intergraded and team, and I was teaching a Chemistry A/Algebra block at Hilhi and that was suppose to be the focus, was that everything was going to be intergraded together with technology at Century.

V: and how much of the vision have you seen that has been realized?

M: Nothing of the vision has come true. We teach are Chem A/Algebra 2A block class, just like we did at Hilhi and there has been several attempts to house and do smaller teams at the freshmen and sophomore level, but really they're still in the working process of it.

V: How did NHS start?

M: Actually Nation Honor Society was started by a counselor, Linn Miller and she worked with it the first two years until she retard. Then Bea Parich took it over and worked with Janine Jacobs for a year and then I started. I guess I've done it for two years. So I've worked with it the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year, but it was actually a counselor, Linn Miller who got that one going.

V: Could you tell me about the wetlands and how that is going since the school has been opened?

M: Even before the school opened, the last year I was at Hilhi, Shawna Dehler and I taught that block glass and we wrote and received a grant to buy all kinds of supplies, plantings, everything to kind of restart the wetlands. What had happened was that when the school was built Fred Meyers was built so it was completely destroyed and so we were trying to go back and restore as much as we could. So we get our first set of plantings at the end of that spring. Right before school started there was a big

miscommunication with the maintenance people here and they were trying to get the softball field ready, but kinda backed up to it, so they put down all this round up along the softball line and the fence. They set there mower and they mowed down our butterfly garden all of our plantings, our seedlings, everything. So the wetlands have sorta been started a couple of different times and we wanted to restore that area so that we could use it for our block class to do water testing and study wild life.

V: With the new school, Liberty, opening what advice would you give them from your experience to help their science department.

M: Well one of the main problems we had budgeted wise was that they wanted a science classroom to be packed for all science class. So your room would have biology supplies, chemistry supplies, and physic supplies. It ended up costing way too much money to do that. So we were spending money by trying to have all the rooms exactly the same, instead of specializing and have that be the physics room, let these three be biology, and like that. That would be my advice, is not try to do the room for all classes.

V: I was wondering if you had any interesting stories about Jag Fest.

M: The very first year that Century opened, we didn't have any seniors and so we wanted to start kinda of our spring festival like Hilhi and Glencoe did, but since we didn't have any graduates seniors and we were so busy and stressed just by opening the school year, what we did was this really lame assembly. Probably nobody would even remember. I remember it was a Hawaiian theme and it was just in the gym there was no decorations. There were three sets of chairs up front where there were some department awards. There was only like 25 department awards and department coordinators that sat in front of them and like Takahashi came out and like did a Hawaiian dance and then we each got up and gave our awards. There was only like 5 or 6 awards and the whole thing lasted like 30 minutes. So the following year about midway though the year we kinda started talking about it. If we are gonna do it this is the year to do it because now we have seniors, our first graduating class, and it was kinda the time were we were struggling with all of our traditions. We knew we had to do something, but we didn't know quite what that was, so we had a brand new activities director that year. I think that year Guy Takahashi did it because the following year Nancy Hawk started it and she decided she didn't want to do that job and went to P.E. full time and Takahashi had never seen one of the big assemblies like it had been a Hilhi's or Glencoe's, so he didn't really know what it was suppose to look like. So we were at a team leaders meeting and they kinda looked around and said who wants to do this because we all said we wanted to do it, we wanted to do it, well nobody would volunteered because everybody was so stressed and so then they said lets not do it, we'll do it on the TV. That was kinda the new thing and we'll just flash their pictures across the TV one morning for the department award and so when I heard that idea I finally said I'll help with it and so we got our first committee together and it was Pat Cochran, Linn Sheller, and myself and we did the first Jag Fest that year and it was kinda a fifties themes and it was really fun year. We'd picked fifties because Phil Barnikof, who was our principle, who was retiring that year loves fifties music and so we kinda did the theme around that. That was how the first Jag Fest started. We wanted something that would be a continuing tradition every year and it was 1999, so all the talk was about the turning of the century so we called it The Turn of the Century Award Celebration and we talked about not only were we turning the century as in 1999 over to the new millennium , but also it was our first graduating class who was turning

everything over as they left and so that was how we got that passing the key and their legacy over to the junior class and then Century turning and everybody moves up.

V: When was the key created?

M: The key was created that first year. It was actually we had a metal fab lab, which no longer exist. It is now a day care, but the metal fab lab was supposed to take over wood shop. It was sorta the new technology and it was kinda gonna be our shop class. There were two guys Erin Deff and Alex Kidbee. They were two guys in the class and they worked with John Stoka who was their teacher and we sorta told them what we wanted and they created the first key, which is huge. It is 4 or 5 feet long and incredibly heavy because they used the metal they had in the lab. It took them a good solid month of working on it. The mascot head at the top of the C at one ring and the Jaguar C at the other end of the ring. So that's how that tradition got started. That first group of seniors picked six things that they wanted to pass down. Then they wrote little speeches for it and so each year we pass those same six things on, but they write there own speeches for what their personal legacy for the class was and the junior class accepts it if their up to the challenge.

V: How many years has Jagapalooza been going on?

M: We have been doing it four years because the first year we really didn't do it. We just did that little assemble and that really was it. So we started the second year and this is our fourth year.

V: What are major changes that you have Century go though?

M: Well population size wise. First year was maybe 12 or 13 hundred students. Empty classrooms. I had my choice of classrooms. I had two science classrooms and I would just keep my physics equipment in one and my chemistry in the other. I would just go back and forth and there were a lot of just empty dark classrooms. There were five people in my science department. Mike Dunn, Ed Bear, Joel Matykowski, Earl Porter, and myself. Now we have eleven.

V: What were the average class sizes?

M: My physics class was small because we didn't have the seniors so it was jus the juniors. Classes really were about the same though.

V: Is there anything else you would like to add that we haven't already talked about?

M: Well we have had a lot of change. We have added counselors, we've added administrators. We had a big change when Phil Barnikof retired the second year and then Dawn Montgomery was the vice principle at the time, she took that position. Staff was really small though. We first met in the spring before it opened. We all came from all the other schools, Hilhi, Gelencoe, and then all of the junior highs too because that was the first time we were intergrading 9<sup>th</sup> grade into the high school level. I remember that very first meeting we met at the district office. We probably only started with a staff of maybe 65-70, we have a staff of over a 100 right now. We all just stood of and talked about who we were and where we came from, what our goals were. Then we got together in our departments and had a big BBQ that night. It was kinda like a two day meeting and we pretty much worked all summer unpacking our classrooms and then training. We went through training all summer on the computers, all the new technology in the school, AS400, how we take our attendance and do our grades, and how everything was networked together. Even just basic things such as, how to program your telephones, how to get codes to get in and out of the schools, and lots of little things you wouldn't

normally think about. When Century was opened I think it was the first school ever in this area that actually opened on time with it totally built and ready to go. We actually had all our chairs and all our desks. The only thing we didn't have was like tape and staples for like two months. Just really simple things like we had no scissors, some of the basic items had been left off the list. We kept getting lost to the main office because there was no distinguishing marks in the school. It all looks the same from top to bottom except for the 3 colors that they chose. The first year the staff was not allowed to park in the back parking lot. All the staff had to park in the front. We had now field for anything, no football field. The teams play all their games away. I think they lost every single one, we only one like 2 or 3 games the whole year in all sports. We lost almost everything because our varsity team was all juniors. The first year we were on a regular 8 period day, so we started a 7:45 and got till 3. The end of that we had a group of staff members that were just like vigilantes about start time and they just went on and on and on and ended up getting the start time pushed back to 8 o'clock when we went to block schedule the following year. The first year we were on block schedule we had 10 min between passing times and at the end of that year they started doing the math and we had to had so many minutes of class time and they were looking at times to drop when we went to our 8 o'clock start time. So they went ahead of instead of having 10 min between class time the just gave 8 and that's why we could go 7:45 to 8.

V: What did you think of the block schedule?

M: We wanted it to open the first year, but they said no. There was already enough changes so we will work for it the following year. That was the reason why I came to Century, was to teach on a block schedule.

V: What do you think of the Trimester schedule then?

M: I would prefer the 4 by 4, which I'm on, the 90 min periods, 3 classes over a semester then 4 periods of three Trimesters. One I like having the 90 over the 70 and as a teacher its easier and I'm a more productive and a better teacher to prep 3 classes as apposed to 4 classes. Fewer students so I can get to know them better, you can work with them easier one on one and it just makes a lot ore sense to me. The only time were I would every consider going Trimester if I taught on an A B schedule. I could see on a AB schedule how that could be a little more manageable

V: I've head that Century is going to change to Trimester the year after next.

M: They have told us that we could decide our own schedule, but the rumor is that some point they're gonna force us to go on Trimester because all the other schools on district are on Trimester.