

*MONTEREY  
COUNTY THEATRE  
HISTORY PROJECT*

The Story of Jacquie Frazier

*HCOM350S: Oral History and Community Memory*

*CSU Monterey Bay*

Interviewee: Jacqueline Frazier

Location: Zoom (Carmel and Marina, CA)

Interviewer: Nike Stewart

Date: April 21, 2020

Q: [00:01:04] So, my name is Nike Stewart, and I'm interviewing Jacquie today. We're going to be talking about a little bit about your life and mostly about the Monterey theater. Okay? All right, so I'll start by—you want to start by telling me where you grew up?

Frazier: Okay, I grew up in England in the northwest of England in Lancashire. Not too far from where the Beatles were born in Manchester or what is now called the greater Manchester area. It's a series of cities that are all connected by imaginary lines. So I went to school there. I uhm eventually went into—and so I would, yes I was born in the northwest of England in Lancashire in the city of Manchester the huge city.

Q: And then how long [00:02:04] did you live there for before you relocated

Frazier: I lived there until I was 18 and then I moved to the middle of England to a place called Birmingham and there I started my nursing training. I went into my —to become a registered nurse and that was 1958. So I was born in 39. So that was like 58 through 60 or 57 through 60 somewhere like that.

Q: What made you want to become a nurse?

Frazier: Oh, you'll laugh when I tell you this they were up in the town and the city that I was born. They were operating a new program now in England we go to school much

earlier than they do here and we get out of school much earlier. So for most people know students in England or out when they're 15, or [00:03:04] 16 years old but you cannot go into nursing training until you're 18. So there's a two-year Gap. What they found was that people, you know could be male or females that left school at the age of 16, but want to become nurses got another job to fill that space. They therefore became too comfortable in that job, and they would forgo going into nursing. So the city I was born in operated what they called was a pre-nursing program where the when you left school at 16 you went into this program and you had educational classes. You also got to work in hospitals in different units within the hospitals and different departments. And you also were able at the end of this course to take your first nursing examination. So that's what I did. How did I get into [00:04:04] that? They told me I would get a day off school to take the pre the exam to get into the course.

Frazier: Well, they changed that and made us take the exam on a Saturday. So I guess I played truant for a day admit that now because I'm very old. Basically, I passed the test. And therefore I went into the special program that gives you —it's really like an introduction into nursing. I worked in many different departments and uhm, I took my first nursing examination which was anatomy and physiology. I'm going back many years now, things have changed in the nursing profession. So I took my first course, my first pro exam, which was anatomy and physiology. Of course, I passed that then I went into nursing school —I so I got a reprieve I didn't have to take that exam when it came up because I already had it.

Q: Oh nice [00:05:04]

Frazier: So that was nice. So I jumped over that one, because once I get into nursing when in England when you become a nurse the next step is going and taking Midwifery to become a midwife and that yeah, that's an additional one year after you become an RN, then you can go into Midwifery school and you go to and you work for a year and it's a two-part thing that in two six months segments and I took both of those and so I became by the age of twenty one plus, what is called a registered nurse and a certified midwife and I was able to deliver babies in the hospital or in the hall.

Q: That's better than me. You were younger than I am now, you were delivering babies!

Q: And so what about like your family? What was [00:06:04] the dynamic? Do you have any siblings?

Frazier: Yes. Uhm, I was the youngest of three and a half. I say three and a half because my eldest sister was my half-sister. My first —my father's first wife died at a very young age of Believe It or Not tuberculosis and they had one child who was my eldest sister Mildred and then there were three —when my father married my mother, they had three children. So, I was the youngest I consider myself the youngest of four children and we of those of course my mother and father, my eldest, my half-sister Mildred, and my

brother are dead. There's just my sister is 18 months older than I am. So there's just her and I.

Q: And are you guys close?

Frazier: Are we close? Actually, uhm were close, but she's in England of course the I'm here, but when we get together, we're very close but I was —[00:07:04] I would say I was much closer to my brother and my half-sister if I had to say particularly, I was yeah, my half-sister was a really wonderful person. She was a wonderful woman and my brother is very alike me in character and impersonality, so it was like being with myself when I was with my brother. We got on very well together

Q: That's nice. And how did your family end up in the area that you guys grew up in?

Frazier: they were, they were born in that area, They were born and raised there. Yes. Yeah, so it was yeah generational they was born there.

Q: I know you kind of mentioned like coming to America, but can you tell me more about that like the transition?

Frazier: Okay. Um, so there I am in England. I I was actually working in a hospital which is no longer around it's closed down. It was called Freedom Fields in the city of Plymouth [00:08:04] in Devon. And I was a midwife working in the Midwifery unit. And it was what we call an abnormal unit hospital and I —circumstances with my friends my close peers, we were all at that age when we were breaking off and going in different directions. Some were getting married, you know, so we were sort of moving off into different areas and I decided that it was a good time for me to travel. Now, I always

wanted to work for the World Health Organization. Who by the way is getting a lot of bad press at the moment, but I did want to work for the World Health Organization and go to Africa, one of my most favorite countries? I've been there four times. Continent not a country, continent. I've been there four times. But they had an 18-month waiting list and I was not prepared to wait 18 months, so I had friends in Bermuda. What a difference huh and I decided I'd go to [00:09:04] Bermuda and that then I went to the Bermuda, worked their hospital, King Edward the Seventh Memorial Hospital and I worked there for a year and then I decided to move to someplace else. [laughter] Originally my good friend and I planned to go to work in San Francisco, but all countries have immigration uhm, limits and from Bermuda they had fulfilled their limit for that particular year so we could not proceed with our immigration status from Bermuda to San Francisco. So my friend and I who by the way, we'd already booked our passage to San Francisco. Talk about the cart before the horse. We looked at each other and said "well, where could we go?", and the next place that the ship docked was Vancouver British Columbia.

[00:10:04] Now Canada is a commonwealth, you know, it's very closely tied to England and there are no restrictions for that time, for British subjects going into Canada. So my friend and I we moved to Vancouver British Columbia, and I worked there at one of their hospitals. And from there I met an American, he was in the Marines and we eventually got married and that's how I ended up in this area in the Monterey Peninsula area.

Q: Marrying a marine, huh? Hahaha

Frazier: Every girl likes a man in a uniform.

Q: Do you want to talk about more about that like transitioning with your husband to Marina or?

Frazier: Yeah, he worked— He actually his family lived in Marina. So we came down to Marina, but he wanted to be a policeman. He got out of the [00:11:04] Marines, and he'd spent a couple of tours in Vietnam and he got out of the Marines and he wanted to become a policeman and he got a job with Carmel police department. And so that's how I ended up by moving into the, living in the city of Carmel. Okay, and so here's a policeman in Carmel and eventually after I got my all my nursing registration papers evaluated. I went to work at Community Hospital at the Monterey Peninsula.

Q: Nice

Frazier: So I'm working at Monterey Peninsula, you know, and I worked there for 25 years in their Women's Health Department OBGYN. My husband was a policeman's for several years, became an attorney, and then he said he was used to—a defense attorney and used to say he defended most of the people he put in jail but he unfortunately was killed in a plane crash, and that was oh 32 years [00:12:04] ago. So that was unfortunate, but nevertheless I continue to live here in Carmel and were where—to continue to work at Community hospital because I have many friends and I became a citizen. So this—I have dual citizenship.

Q: That's nice!

Frazier: Yeah, you're allowed to do that. So but yeah, so I retired, you know, 20 years ago now seems all but no, yeah, 1999 I retired. Yes its gone very fast. I retired early because I always planned to retire early.

Frazier: Get all your ducks in a row.

Q: Yeah, hopefully that's always the goal

Frazier: that the goal, get all your ducks in a row and then you can retire on your own, you know, you can do retire when you want to retire.

Q: Yeah, and forgive me for jumping back and forth if I don't but [00:13:04] you mentioned that you grew up during a time of War what was that like in that aspect of

Frazier: Yes, actually interesting. There's a program on PBS now called World on Fire and it just starts with the prologue to it Is it September the first of 1939 when the Nazis invaded Poland and then there's a speech that was said by and September the 3rd by Chamberlain to the people about the fact that Hitler was very aggressive and not, did not want to listen to anybody and I was born actually on August 19th of 1939. So when— see that I was like 15 days old and I was a child. So for me, It was sort of I hate to say this because it sounds so self-trite. I did not worry too much. On reflection, my parents worried more [00:14:04] because of course they had the responsibility of as adults of keeping the family going. Where as I just sort of went along for the ride. So, yes, we continue to live in Salford, which is a big mess, you know right next door to Manchester. As a child we would -- they have these Sirens that they would put out when when bombers were coming over they would blow these Sirens, not unlike tornado warning sirens. And then if you heard them you would take shelter. We had an air raid shelter belt at the bottom of our home and we would go into that but after a while that gets kind of boring so we used to sit and watch the searchlights to see if they would pick up any planes, and if you've ever seen 20th Century Fox, they have the search likes that you can



see in the sky Crossing and what they were looking for the search lights, [00:15:05]

We're picking up a plane and then they would hold them the searchlights on the plane and they would give people who are trying to bomb, you know blow the plane out of the sky, a target to go for. So for me as a child, It was—I hate to say the sort of fun and exciting but it probably fit into that category, but for my parents it was much more stressful. I did ask my—you'll see you read a lot about children being evacuated during the war to protect them and after the war and after when I became an adult, I did ask my mother I said, "Why weren't we evacuated during the war?" to which she replied, "Your father and I discussed this and we decided if we were going to die that we would all die together because if we died you would have all been orphans and who would [00:16:05] have taken care of you?"

Frazier: Some people might think that's a funny thing to do, but I don't know maybe it wasn't at all because we all survived the war, we all went on to live normal kind of lives.

Q: Yeah, and you weren't split up which was

Frazier: no we weren't split up. So we had no stressful kind of memories. I do remember that—and I when I talk about this people, young kids, look at me and they go "oh" because I was asked by a young person too here in the states, they were writing a little paper about aliens are what made them come to the United States and he was interviewing me because he thought and perhaps hoped 'hoped' that I've been somehow victimized and I said to him and it was so cute. I said, "well, you know when I was a little girl when I went to school I carried my gas mask I didn't take books." [00:17:05] Books were provided in England anyway, I said I didn't take books to school. I took my gas mask to school and he thought that was a cute like this cutest thing you ever heard that I

would take a gas mask to school and that's what we did. You had them in little boxes. We wore them and carry them just like a shoulder bag with a gas mask

Q: Sounds like what will be going on soon I'm sure. People carrying around their mask.

Frazier: Well, yeah because during World War One is you see the Nazis used uhm, mustard gas and mustard gas is very harmful to the lungs. So they didn't know they were going to be any chemical warfare. So everybody was issued this mask and you'll see a lot of old pictures and you'll see people wearing masks and it was part of it was part of the way it was.

Q: mmm.

Q: How about as being a nurse? Can you tell me about some of your [00:18:05] experiences like maybe one that just stands out to you?

Frazier: What was this? But the question again for?

Q: Sorry, uhm an experience that you've had as a nurse like one that really stands out.

Frazier: as a nurse?

Q: Yeah or an RN or Midwife

Frazier: I've got so many of them. One of them is that is very special to me was and this was when I was in this pre-nursing program. So I but I went on to become a nurse and I've got lots of them from delivering babies in the hospital to, you know women saying, oh God, if people knew how wonderful you were they were they would come to me all the time. But when I was 17 and just before I went into nursing school proper, I worked at a skin Hospital in Manchester and it's hard to believe that there's an actual hospital devoted to skin conditions. People with skin conditions are very [00:19:05] uh—when

they look at you they're looking to see whether you reject them because of skin conditions are very visible. If you've ever had acne or pimples, you know that everybody's focusing on your pimple or your acne, whatever and I was taking care of this lady who had a condition on her legs that required bandaging. Now, I learned to bandage a lot when I was working at the skin hospital. So I told her that I was— I'll send him a little story to I forgot about that one, but they took care of this lady and I said to her. Oh, I'm going to be leaving the skin hospital soon because I'm going to go down to Birmingham to start my nursing training and she wished me well said she would miss me because I always did her dressings. Then long behold and a couple of weeks. I saw her again, and I said Oh, I thought you weren't coming back. Back for a couple of weeks and to which she said [00:20:05] "I couldn't resist coming to see you for one last time" because she's so enjoyed that I took care of her. So, you develop a rapport with some of your patients that's very important to them. You know, I had one man who burst into tears. That's when I was actually a registered nurse. I worked on a genitourinary floor male genital urinary and this man had had a major kidney surgery and I told him I was leaving to go into Midwifery. So I was you know ready to make that transition and I was very—I had actually given in my resignation and so I was sort of happy and uplifted. So I went to him and i said oh, I'm just given in my resignation I'm going to because I'm going to do Midwifery and he burst into tears. I was, I was so amazed [00:21:05] that I honestly didn't know what to do. So I backed away from him and gave him some space and then I went to see him and to which he said, which was kind of cute he said, I'm sorry. I was so upset when you said you were going to you know, go into nursing and Midwifery. He said that I always thought you were my nurse, and then I realized you're

not just my nurse you know, you're everybody's nurse and I knew his family and his wife and his son, but he had developed such an attachment to me for this period that he was in hospital because it was a lengthy stay with a major kidney problem that he looked at me as being like his personal nurse and and it's um, it's very hard on nurses when patients that get that attached to you, you know because it's, [00:22:05] It's upsetting for both of us because you are moving on and it's inevitable, of course that we do that. And then of all the babies I've delivered and people thanking me. That was fun. Yeah, that's the fun part.

Q: Was that probably your favorite job like being a midwife?

Frazier: Actually. My favorite job was when I worked in Calendar on Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. Eyes, nose, nose and throat. I just love that. I've worked in a lot of areas that I really liked Ophthalmology particularly. It was one of those things I worked on. This unit for four years and just loved it. And then if I went I went to charm —any time we had an Ophthalmology patient on our unit —Now we were OBGYN but sometimes if the patient needed a room that we had one and there was no room elsewhere they were, they could end up on [00:23:05] your unit. And so if there was an Ophthalmology patient on our unit, I would always take care of them because I knew what I was doing and I liked it and so the doctors felt comfortable because they would say "Why is my patient on [you know,] a Maternity Ward" and I and then I say, oh, well, I worked, you know in Canada and Ophthalmology and and I would mention a few doctors I would know and they would they would relax and be reassured that I would give them the care that their patients needed.

Q: That's nice. Good memories too. I feel like that it's similar on a smaller level because I work in retail but like meeting customers and growing relationships with them, that's always like the things that you'll never forget.

Frazier: Absolutely.

Q: Okay, so you did mention that you have like traveled all over the world. So what about traveling really [00:24:06] gets your blood flowing?

Frazier: Oh I've traveled so much. I'm actually on the downside of traveling now. I'm done. I've been to so many—I think I've been probably to every continent and I traveled so much uhm that I almost can't name places. Recently, my most adventure was this year when I was in Iceland. Yeah

Q: And what's your favorite? Uh, sorry, what's your favorite place to travel?

Frazier: I tell everybody that ever walks around, "You've got to go to Africa." I have been there four times. I've been to Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana. I've been into South Africa, Cape Town, I been to into Zimbabwe at Victoria Falls. So I just love it. Just love it and the other place I love too, I've been up to Tibet that many people [00:25:06] don't get up to Tibet and another place I love was the Antarctic

Q: Antarctica, nice.

Frazier: And I've traveled to I've traveled everywhere. India too I loved India. I love I love—I'd always had India was on my bucket list. I always want you to go to India and I did do that and I loved it and I'm real thing tiger saw a tiger in Ranthambhore. So I just had a I've just had a wonderful time traveling a lot and had some wonderful adventures met some wonderful people.

Q: What was the first place you traveled to?

Frazier: Oh, well, of course after I came here, I did sort of some some local, you know in the state's stuff, but the first the big major place I went to it was in 1994

Q: Mhm

Frazier: Was my first trip to Africa to Kenya. [00:26:07] And when I go to these places I do try to go ballooning there. So I get my little patch that says I ballooned in Kenya. So my first trip to Africa 1994 Kenya and that started the ball rolling for me to start traveling and I did one or sometimes two major trips per year to places outside of the US

Q: Nice. Kenya I want to go there that would be cool. I've, I've been really interested in South Africa. I'll have to check into South.

Frazier: Yes. It's all it's all wonderful. You know, the animals are all—just going on The Safaris to see the animals. It's just the most amazing amazing place. I remember when I was in it was actually my first trip to Africa to Kenya and got off a —I rode and they were stopping now for toilet breaks. And so I got off our little bus and I stood there on the Road and I looked [00:27:08] and I could see so far into the distance. It was amazing how far I could see whether there was nothing but open space and it was absolutely the most wonderful thing I can remember is just looking down that road and seeing nothing not a car nothing but open space right until the horizon which seemed to be miles and miles and miles away because of your equator level. Yes, that's the white part of the earth. Yes

Q: [laughter] I love those views like traveling or even just like in your backyard when you take a moment to like really realize what's around you. Yes, definitely something you won't forget.

Q: Okay, um, let's move into more theater. So how did you get into theater?

Frazier: Well, one of the things I've done for most of my life is dance and I started when I was very young. We used to dance in school, the school I went to we would dance and then I was about 12 I decided to take up ballroom dancing. Now I should preface I used to dance on ice when I was eight my father taught us to ice skate, so we would waltz and foxtrot on ice then I decided I wanted to do it on land and was about 12 years old. So I went to this uhm, dancing school for children, you know and learn to waltz and foxtrot and Cha-Cha do that. And then one of the things I always—so I danced from the time I was 12, I would take classes and I danced, I danced with my husband, ballroom dancing. He took classes, we would go dancing, dance was always a very big part of my life. In later life It turned out that one of my father's sister's my aunty Elsy was actually on the stage [00:29:08] as a dancer when she was a young girl. So we are a relatively artistic family we can draw, we can dance, we write well, we do a lot of things artistically very well. And my thing was dancing. So when I was an adult MPC, Monterey Peninsula College, our local College, they were offering tap dancing. So I started tap dancing because I'm really Ginger Rogers and I tap danced for 30 years until my knees gave out on me. Now that was tap dancing along with any other dancing I wanted to do too. So I tap dance for 30 years and I would perform in concerts at MPC and at that times when AIDS was first coming into our Consciousness, we would do benefits and I would tap dance in benefits. And so there I was a dancer and kind of theatrical and I knew a lot of

people in theater just by doing stuff and my tap dancing teacher, Lucretia Butler, was also a choreographer and a director and she was doing a show putting on a show at King Hall in the Naval Postgraduate School, it was Anything Goes if I remember rightly and I was her assistant—she needed help because she was the director and choreographer. She wanted somebody who could help her. So she would teach the dances to me and to the cast and then when she was doing other things, I would review the dances with the cast. So I started off by assisting some of the people I knew in theater for their productions. And I happened to say to — at the time I was working on the show Kismet with Dale Leffler who's now deceased and he was directing, there's, uhm, Kismet and the next show coming up at the outdoor Forest Area was Fiddler on the Roof and I just happened to say that to the director who I knew, 'Oh, do you have all of your cast for Fiddler on the Roof?' And she said 'Well, no, I could use some more Mama's.' You know, they have The Mamas & the Papas. She said I could use some more Mamas and I said, you know, I probably could do be a mama and she said well, why don't you come to rehearsals and that's how I got from helping on the show's to being in the shows in ensemble and The Ensemble people. So I did a few Ensemble shows, you know, Fiddler on the Roof, Oliver, Uhm, Oh, yeah Inherit the Wind, Cyrano. So I did a few shows, oh and The Wizard of Oz so I did little ensemble parts in this. Always ensemble I didn't ever want to be a star. I wanted to be in the whole group, you know, some will get a lot of work and of course much of that they would have dancing in it. So I would always be in the dancing number so that gave me sort of, you know an outlet for what I wanted to do, dance, be on the stage, and sort of get that experience. And because I knew a lot of people it was, you know, I knew people in the theater. It was relatively easy for me to sort of go to auditions



and you know, get the ensemble. You know, I didn't have to worry too much about that. I would be given with little speaking things within those because I have um a voice that projects so I would you know, if they wanted someone to say a couple lines I could fill that role too. I never considered myself [00:33:08] like a big actress, you know, I can do it, but I'm not. I don't consider myself a big actress of course, so that's how I got into being on the stage.

Q: I just have to tell you that I have danced pretty much my entire life as well. I started as a gymnast around like two or three only did that for a couple of years and I went right into dancing. I wish I was as technical and started in something like ballet or ballroom, but I liked Jazz and Hip-Hop. Tap I always loved but I never really took those classes.

Frazier: Okay

Q: but I've uhm, taught like younger children dance as well and tap was always like my favorite but I'm on the same level as the five-year-old's [laughter] that's all but it is a lot of fun. That's probably my favorite genre that I haven't even gotten to do.

Frazier: I think I like the structure. I know Jazz could be very free form. [00:34:08]

Whereas I'm, I like much more. I think it's part of my personality that I like to learn The Dance. I want to do the dance to the music.[clears throat] Excuse me. And I'm sort of do that part of it. That's what I want to do that's — I like to learn a dance from beginning to end with the music from the beginning to end and do it.

Q: Yeah, definitely.

Q: Okay, and then you also said you volunteered at the aquarium you want to tell me about that?

Frazier: Yes, well the aquarium opened in 1984 I believe. When my husband was killed in 1987 It was a time of transition because you're losing your best friend, even though the time my husband and I were separated. He was still my best friend one of my best friends anyway, so I was sort of looking for [00:35:08] looking for something to do and I uhm, I went to the they're opening and I became a member of the aquarium a member, but they were looking sort of, you know, they were advertising for the volunteer program. It was in 1989 the year of the big earthquake here the Loma Prieta earthquake. So I was in the class of 89 at the aquarium and you went for an interview and although I was still working at Charm. I figured I could work every other Sunday because at the time we had at Charm we had every other weekend off as a nurse. It was arranged that way so I decided I would volunteer at the aquarium on the weekend that I was off and I would do it in the morning session because I'm a morning person I get up very early. So I took the—and I was also looking I was looking to meet [00:36:08] other people too. So I was just looking for some changes in my my life in general some additions to my life, which is always good because we should always be doing that, you know making new friends meeting new people. So I did that of course at the aquarium I worked on that Sunday morning and loved it. I did it for 15 years until I retired [unclear] from the aquarium and I retired uhm because I was picking up by that time into doing the stage managing business in the theater and it was getting more and more difficult to balance the two because local theater in the peninsula is weekends, Friday Saturday Sunday matinees, and I you know had this issue with you know, trying to balance that time and work it out. So I decide—and I was getting more and more [00:37:08] requests to do shows and so that became tricky. So I decided— plus I've been there for 15 years met some wonderful people. In

fact, we still our little group called little group. We do still get together and have a lunch and keep up with each other. So that's fun. So those people I still know them and still love them and we still get together but it was also time to move on. I felt like after 15 years. I was ready to sort of take on a new adventure as it were. Mhm. What's crazy to me is I felt like the stories you're telling me they're all happening in like such a short timeframe. You are going you are doing a lot at that like age I guess uhm, that was also around the time like you said that you lost your husband did that impact all the things that you had were balancing?

Frazier: Uh no, I'm I just like to do stuff. I like to be busy. I like to— I'm not one of these— I look, don't get me wrong. [00:38:08] I love myself. That sounds funny. I love my own company, I think we all should love our own company because we're with ourselves an awful lot. So we'd better like our own company. I love to read so I read every single day of my life. I have not only magazine subscriptions, but I read books. I mean I go to bed. I always read a couple of chapters before I go to sleep. Sometimes if I wake up very early I read in the morning when I take my books to doctor's visits. I carry— if I'm going somewhere I could be sitting around I take a book. So I love to read. I sew, one of my things is I've been sewing since I was 11 years old. I love to sew. I took classes in reupholstering furniture. I know how to bind rugs. I've made both men's and women's clothing. So I have a lot of uhm [00:39:08] things I like to do. So I'm never sort of bored. I can't understand people who say "well I'm bored" because I'm never bored, to this day. And now I'm having issues with my knee cause I'm gonna have a knee replacement but I— now we're locked into our homes, but I go line dancing three times a week sometimes four. So I still have this line dance. I'm still dancing may not be tap

dancing, but I'm line dancing. I have now this whole group of line dancing friends and that I enjoy being with them to get together for lunch and all sorts of things. It's wonderful.

Q: Kind of keeps you sane.

Frazier: You know, I think it's very important for us all to just continue to learn keep our brains active keeps us sane and it gives us lots of options when we are like we are now, confined, because although I'm quite [00:40:08] confined to my home. I do like to watch television like everybody else, but I read and I sew and I've always got something I can do. You know, I'm not sitting up. And I have a bird. He's very quiet at the moment. So, you know, I got a lot of pets over the years. So I'm —I've got a lot of things.

Q: I know I have a I have a German Shepherd. I can hear her barking. [laughter]

Frazier: Oh, really? No. I used to have six dogs and three birds was like living in a zoo and my big dog is Dobermans. That was my cyanide one time uh, I had Marker, so I had like two Dobermans, a dobbie dail, no, 3 Dobermans a dobbie dail two toy Poodles. Can you believe the yin and the yang. And I had three birds two Cockatiels And then [unclear]. So now at the moment I only have one cockatiel and he's quiet at the moment.

Q: [00:41:11] Okay, so you did tell me how you got into theater. Is there anyone who inspired you to kind of tip toe onto that line?

Frazier: Not really. I just, I just — because I worked with theatrical people and I was helping on shows and I started off in this technical thing by being an assistant to other people, that I uhm, I liked that and I enjoyed being the little Ensemble work I did but I guess I always liked the organizational part of theater because that was basically my

whole life in that as a nurse, we organize you know we have to do certain things at certain times. It's simply what you do. You don't just drift into work in the morning and let it happen. There's definite structure to being a nurse. Organizing your shift and the people were [00:42:11] working with you.

Q: I feel like dance is kind of like that too. It's very structured. Usually when you're learning like in classes as a child, everything is very structured. So you learn how to like self-discipline, organize, and time management as well. So I feel like that helps.

Q: So, how did you go from doing little Ensemble work and you know assisting to Stage managing?

Frazier: now, this is kind of a cute story. One of the girls that I was in tap dancing class wanted to mount her own production and she wanted to do the show called Stepping Out. Stepping out was made into a movie with Liza Minelli as a as the lead actress. I don't think it was a major box office success, but it is a very it is a very good movie. [00:43:11] So this friend of mine wanted to mount this production and she gathered around her from people she knew in tap dancing class like the little group. Lucretia Butler who I mentioned here is a choreographer and a director, she asked Lucretia to direct the show and she came to me and she said her name was [unclear] She said "Jackie, Would you stage-managed stepping out for me?" to which I said, "Stage-manage? I don't know. I don't know what stage managers do." Because I may have been in shows and I knew there was a stage manager. I didn't really know what they did. They would do their bit and I just did my bit. She goes. Oh, I know you can do it. I said well, I don't know. "Oh,

please doing this as a favor to me." you know the usual thing. [00:44:11] So I said well, okay. All right, then I'll kind of give it a try. So what I did, because I met a lot of people in theater by doing ensemble work. I went to some stage managers I knew and I asked them to sort of, if I could shadow them when they were working on a show and sort of was picking their brains as what I could do to gather more information. One of the things was go to the library and take out a book and there is, believe it or not, there is a book that said How to be a Stage Manager. Well I read the book or as much as I felt I needed to because it was a book about theater. There's only one section on stage managing and I said to myself, "Oh my goodness me. I'm never going to be able to do this." Nevertheless. I did do it. I did become a stage manager for her show. Did I make a couple of mistakes? Oh, yes. Probably I did [00:45:11] but mistakes will never kill you. They just are little bumps in the road and you learn from your mistakes. Guess what, you learn if you make a mistake you say I'm never going to do that again. And I don't think I ever did do it again. So that's how I got into doing Stepping Out for my friend as a stage of manager. Unfortunately during the course of this and uhm, during the course of the rehearsals for the show, Lucretia who was going to be the director and the choreographer, had to drop. We lost our lead Leading Lady for some reason or we couldn't find somebody that was a really good tap dancer because it's a major tap dance number in Stepping Out and so Lucretia who's a tap dancing teacher and absolutely excellent at her and [00:46:11] tap jumped into the role of being the lead lady, which was Lisa Minnelli's roll. Now we had to get another director. So we brought on board a man John, John, what's his other name is got out of my name[head]. I'll remember it. We brought in somebody to direct John. And he was also a wonderful singer too he'd actually worked—I'd worked with him on

Kismet, but he was wonderful singer, a musician and so he was really good with the music and how people were singing and he was going to direct this show. So I worked with John on Stepping Out. After we finish stepping out John was directing a show for the Forest Theater Guild and he called me up [00:47:11] and he said "Jackie. I'm looking for a stage manager" to which I replied "but John I'm not a stage manager" he goes, "but we worked very well together on stepping out" I said, yeah, but you know, I did that as a sort of a favor. I'm not really a stage manager. Oh, I know we can work together. So well, you know stage managers are kind of hard to come by in local theater. And I said to him. "What show are you doing?" He said "well, it's for the outdoor Forest theater and we're doing Jesus Christ Superstar", and I said, oh dear because Jesus Christ Superstar. Uh was kind of dated, you know, it was but anyway, he persuaded me that I could do this. And so that's what I saw. I worked for John and [00:48:11] doing Jesus Christ Superstar and it was one of the best shows I've ever worked on. We did it not in Jesus Christ Superstar when it was originally made into a movie was set in Paris and present day which is like about 1970's I think so they wore 1970's clothing but John staged it in biblical times. So the show was almost were set in biblical times except for the one main number Jesus Christ Superstar, which we did very Las Vegas style [laughter] was the music. Well, of course you listen, it's totally music as a rock opera. So it's totally music now I can't read music but because I danced all my life, people look at me funny when I say this, I'm really good at hearing music. I can count music I can hear it. I understand music [00:49:11] and rhythms of music. So I had the prompt script was not the musical score. It was just the words and then it would it give you a little bar. It would say number 1 through 16, which may have been sixteen bars of music before the words began and I

could follow along because I can count bars of music. So I was always in tune with the music where they—the songs were going to begin if I had to make a lap a light change, I could, I knew them when they were coming up so I could hear music. And listening to music for six weeks I'm going to tell you I just loved—and to this day now it is one of my favorite shows and then I just love the music Jesus Christ Superstar. We had a wonderful test and it was really went across, came across really really well. And that was the one time I got my name in the paper because most people do not [00:50:11] know what the crew does. The crew is always listed but you don't see the crew and you know, most people don't even look at that. They look at the actors on stage, but they're not too sure what a crew member really does but I got my name in the paper because Mary Magdalene, after Jesus Christ dies and he rises from the dead, our director John, we got homing pigeons white homing pigeons from, I think we bought—we rented them from a place in Hollister. So we had homing pigeons backstage and every night of the show, Mary Magdalene would release one of these homing pigeons because you know, God goes to heaven as a bit as a dove, right but we didn't have doves. We had homing pigeons. They were white. So we would release these homing pigeons [00:51:11] the thing about it at night time the lights would sometimes confuse them and because now they would be suddenly in all these, these lights and they would be people and perhaps even music. But the man that rented him to us assured us the birds may go on perch in a tree they'll probably stay there overnight and the next morning. They will go home. They'll come back to their home in Hollister. Well, on one particularly night when we had to have the reviewer, she was reviewing the show when the homing pigeon came and landed right beside her. Would you believe? So in the theater the pigeon lands there, this



white pigeon and she said something like "I have to thank the stage manager Jacquie Frazier for having the you know this bird of come and land by me." So that was the only time I got my name in the paper and believe it or not. We had homing pigeons every one [00:52:11] of them got back home. If they started— and we had one that spent the night in the dressing room and the next morning we shooed it out. But every one of our pigeons got back to their to their home in Hollister. So we didn't lose any to raptors or to injury or anything like that. None of them got lost. They all returned home

Q: That's a hard thing to do. Keep track of birds.

Frazier: Yes. It was because we had to feed them and we had to have somebody who was not scared of birds release them and the girl that played Mary Magdalene was not scared of birds. Some people scared of birds because they flap their wings and fly, but if you hold the wings down, they're not fly away from you, you know, and they're not going to peck you too hard because you know, it's not like it's a big parrot family

Q: and besides, go ahead,

Frazier: I was going to say that started me off you see with the stage managing [00:53:11] because I did that and then the next show I did, somebody I— she was a costumer working for Pac Rep and Pac Rep were looking for what they called a rehearsal stage manager for their show, which was Peter Pan and she said, oh, I know somebody who staged manages, Jackie. And I had performed with Pac Rep. So they knew who I was so that's how I got my next job was because I knew somebody who knew somebody who was looking for a stage, somebody to stage managed the show. So that's how I got the next one.

Q: And besides that your first two shows, do you have a favorite that you've done?

Frazier: Um, we did a couple of years ago, maybe a year ago. We did Hello Dolly now, I was already—I had been in a hole of Hello Dolly as [00:54:11] an ensemble member and it was that was in 1999. And then in 2000 it was 20 years later. Yeah, when we did it, we did it recently. 20 years later we did, we just we did Hello Dolly again now both of them at the outdoor Forest Theater. So I was in it as an ensemble member and then I stage managed it and that was fun because of course, I knew the show and I knew the music, you know, and that and that's that also has got wonderful music in it, too. But I've done you know Beauty and the Beast and Oliver, Oliver's good oh and Fiddler on the Roof and Fiddler On The Roof is really good. And I was also in Inherit the Wind as an ensemble member but then I stage manage it for the Western stage later on I stage-managed Inherit the Wind. [00:55:11] So that was good because I also knew the play because I'd already done it. So doing it as an ensemble member then as a stage manager seemed to make it a little easier. Shall we say because you already know the job.

Q: Yeah

Frazier: oh Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream girl. That's a wonderful show. Rarely ever done, music's wonderful. So I've a lot. I like most shows because there's you know, once you get into them and you bring her stem and you know you your cast and you know what they're doing umm Yeah, I would say I've enjoyed all of them and I can't say one that oh, then I hated, no. Of all the shows I've done that I personally have been involved with, I pretty well enjoyed every one of them.

Q: Are there any shows that you would still like to do that? You haven't done yet?

Frazier: No, not particularly because I really did a lot. I know I— one of the shows that was strange for me and this was strange for me, Monterey [00:56:11] Symphony, they were putting on Amahl and the Night Visitor and I looked at online and there's an old movie on YouTube. So I listened to it and watched it and I listened to it and I thought oh dear, because the music is different, but we did it with Walter and the Monterey Symphony and we did a Amahl and the Night Visitors and that was a wonderful experience and the wonderful experience about it was the symphony put on shows for school children and they did it over in Sherwood Hall. So they did it on a Friday in the morning show we had 1500 school children and on the afternoon performance we had 1,200 and these children and they were, uhm they weren't sort of high school, we're talking, you know some of them give but more [00:57:11] the younger kids they were such a good audience and they got it. They got because Amahl, you know, the one of the characters is a young boy and they were so good. I was very impressed. They were good audience their behavior was good, they were appropriate and all the chaperones. But when you're dealing with that many children, you know, it could bad but they loved it just as much as the later shows for the adults and that was something that I was sort of on the fence because they thought the music was a little bit, you know, not my style. But I really enjoy doing it and working for the Montreal Symphony was a treat and we had opera singers. We had really good voices, you know, and really good quiet. So it was wonderful wonderful.

Q: What about the relationships you've built here in the community through theater? Can you tell me about some of them?

Frazier: Well, obviously [00:58:11] I have known I've met a lot of people and so for me doing anything in the theater, invariably I know the people I'm working with. Now Walter de Faria is also doing this program, I worked with him at the Outdoor Forest Theatre for— probably since I did that first show Peter Pan until I stopped well, I still work with him because if Walters doing the show and I am able. We're both getting older now, you know, he always calls me and says "Jacquie, are you available to the show?" So Walter de Faria and I have a good relationship. Not only are we friends that we are theater friends. So we work together. We work together well and we have done so in fact when I did that very first show Peter Pan where I was quote the rehearsal stage manager later on they said what I work the performances and I did and [00:59:11] that's when I worked with Walter and he asked me at the time when we finish the show, he said, excuse me let me just take a sip of water.

Frazier: He said to me Jackie, will you do the summer show with me next year? So from the very first time I worked with Walter, he asked me to do the shows coming up. So that's how I got to work with Walter and there's another person Tom Park. I was introduced to this gentleman Tom Parks who writes original materials and work down in Hollywood and television. I work with him all the time because I worked with him in the first show he did which we've performed at Sunset and so Tom always asked me to work with him in fact we just put a show on hold because of this coronavirus we were not able

to mount the production but [01:00:11] both the crew and the cast which was only a one person cast, I know both of these people from theater. So whenever I do a show I'm most at some of the cast not all of the cast for some of the cast I will know and it's always a good recovery I can I think I can safely say that they like work when working with me because I think I'm fair and I think I'm approachable and you know the aim is to have a good show so yeah I know a lot of people still in the theater so I invariably when I go anywhere I'm always bumping into people I know With a very positive, you know attitude.

Q: And besides theater tell me about your experience in the area like around Carmel, Monterrey.

Frazier: What I do here in Carmel?

Q: Yeah, or what your life has been like here overall.

Frazier: Overall. I remember um [01:01:11] after my husband died, you know, it's funny what people say to each other but my sister Gloria who lives in she lives in the south of England, she called me up, you know to sort of say she was sorry and then she said to me "are you coming home?" to which I replied "Gloria America is my home." I have dual citizenships. But this is where I live. I still refer to England and sometimes with people and I'll say I'm going to I'm going home to the United Kingdom because that was my home too. So I have these two homes. But since I moved to this area, the area of suits me. Absolutely. I love the climate. A lot of people go 'it gets cold in the winter' has it now you haven't lived anywhere called if you think this is cold. I love the climate is [01:02:11]

temperate never gets too hot never gets too cold. I love living in this smaller place. The whole Peninsula doesn't have the amount of people that I grew up in for example, I think the city I grew up in when I was living there at 650,000 people and it was piggybacked onto Manchester which has millions. So it was a huge population. It's so now I'm in the shorter population. I don't know that we even come up to that number with the whole Salinas, Monterey, and Carmel, and PG. Don't come up to the city I was born in so I love the fact it stays small population, everything is available on the peninsula. Even we have good theater on the peninsula. I mean you people I know I love profession Santa like the rest of the world. I love professional theater, [01:03:11] but I think we put on very good shows here and I have been a big part of that and I like to say to people when we go from the, you know, we run previews here and I mean, I think to most big show's have out of town openings. where they want to fix problems before they go to Broadway. My theatre we run a couple of preview quote 'preview nights' where we usually when I say the show is not ready, they might be little things that needs tweaking maybe it's usually not visible to the audience, most of this stuff, it maybe that you want to add something to the set or a costume that needs to be fixing but I like to say that by the time we do preview nights as far as I am concerned as a stage manager I want the show to be at performance level.

[01:04:11] I want everybody to know what they're doing everybody to do that job that means all the technical aspects of it I want everything from the very GetGo to be performance level so that when the paying audience come in whether they pay for preview or full show they get to see a good production. And I've seen numerous shows— well I go to every show I can— and I think everybody just a wonderful part wonderful job here and I like that because we get to see a variety of of works, you know without

going too far and without a big financial outlay. So I love that. So I love the climate. I love the theater we have here. I love the fact that I can do all my line dancing that I've pursued, you know, everything I could want to do, I can do here. I think personally. And I've made lots and lots of friends and I wouldn't leave them. You know, unfortunately, I'm [01:05:11] of the age where we beginning to lose our friends and that's that's a sad thing, but it is part of life.

Q: Yeah, and you and Walter and Tom you guys are definitely some of the bigger names and like your guys's Community Theater and how do you think you and your friends have impacted or benefited the community through theater?

Frazier: Well, we impact them because we put on good productions. We benefit because we see people now people that come into as new members of say the production. We see how they develop as people and I've seen this particularly now when I work with Tom, the shows that Tom mounts usually have people who have been in theatre for a while. They are seasoned performers because [01:06:11] that's the kind of type of material that he puts on. Tom appeals to a mature audience. It's not to say that younger people can come to see the shows. But I think a more mature audience people who have lived a little longer at least done some really good school work know what we're talking about like Lindbergh or Stein, Gertrude Stein. They know Dorthey. So they know who were talking about. With Walter we put on shows that require a large cast with a large Ensemble and that includes young people. I have seen, some of the young people I have started off with

back in you know, 2000, well now they're adults. They said they're out of college. They're pursuing their own careers. Some of them are still pursuing, you know things in theater [01:07:11] and these, hopefully they're doing what they want to do and I see them develop as young people who are receptive to adults who know how to commit and follow through, you know, there's quite a few people in the world today that have no idea what it means to make a commitment or follow through but if you're in a theatrical production, you have to attend rehearsals, you have to be at all performances. You have to listen your stage manager, the director, the choreographer, of everybody on who's involved with you have to listen and then you have to do as you are requested and I've seen young people just become wonderful wonderful adults and I still see them and they'll come over and say hello and reintroduce themselves, you know, I may not have seen them for years. They've [01:08:11] changed a lot. I probably apart from getting older have not changed a lot. You know, I mean I used to be still but they changed because they've gotten from being maybe 10 years old to be in 24 that's on many years to go through. So I've seen that we've impacted them with putting on good performances entertaining them and and having them to become mature adults.

Q: Yeah, it's kind of awesome how similar I feel like listening to your stories how similar I feel like that is too like a dance realm which is probably why you fit into it so well as well.

Frazier: Yes, and we also what I love too is now Tom Parks not only does he write his own materials, but he'll take it from a specific character. He did this Gertrude Stein, Paris is Paris is Paris. And I didn't know a lot about Gertrude Stein [01:09:11] until he did this. So I learned something from him. We've done Lindbergh. I learned a lot about



Lindbergh. We think of Lindbergh and the kidnapping of his child, but he did all the other things that he did too. So, I think when Tom Parks puts on a play he puts on this material that he researches and then writes. I think it's that is like a learning experience because it we may know but it really reignites us and so we go, Oh, yes, and it makes us inquisitive to find out a little bit more about these people.

Q: And in a more generalized sense, how do you feel that theater benefits communities in general?

Frazier: Well theatre I think gives people an outlet. When you go to the theater. You shouldn't—it [01:10:11] should be the, way I look at it, not only should you learn something, but it should be enjoyable. It should be somewhere your where you can go and relax and have fun and leave your worries at the front door. get up and just go and say I'm going out to a show tonight and I'm going to relax and have a good time and if I bump into people I know good and if I don't that's also good because I personally I mostly go to shows on my own because I like to do that I've always liked to and I make a decision on the last minute too. I was sitting at my home and I'll go You know that show starts at 7:30. It's 10 after now I can get there in time. And so I don't want to call anybody up. I don't want to have to argue with anybody. I just want to say I'm going to go and I'm going to see this show I'm going to have a good time and get out of myself. And I think that's what [01:11:11] people should do. Just get out of yourself and let your worries leave them at the door way and go and have a good time and come back feeling a little rejuvenated and saying gosh I enjoyed that. That answer your question?

Q: Yea definitely, and of all the things that we discussed today, do you feel like I missed any, I miss any important things?

Frazier: Unless you, I don't know. What else do you need? Do you need to know anything else?

Q: Well, I feel like my goal was to get to know you obviously more in your past and how you came to the area in theater and then how theater has impacted your life and yeah, just kind of get history from multiple perspectives.

Frazier: Good. Yeah. No, I'm very glad I did it. In fact this sounds really funny. Um, I believe that we all have a bucket list you know things that we should do [01:12:12] in our lives and we shouldn't let this this bucket list go unanswered I think it was Catherine is it Catherine Kubler-Ross is that her name? And she talked about unfinished business and I think in like a lot of us have unfinished business we should not we should not have unfinished business because when we end on our life and we should be able to look back and say I had a really good time and I look back on my personal life and I could say I had a really good time. I did a lot of—I don't think there's anything that I have left unfinished. I one of the things I miss—you'll laugh about this because it's really stupid— [01:13:12] One of the things I wanted to be was in some sort of film format now, that sounds I didn't want to be in a movie. I just said to myself, you know, I'd that's something I've never done. I've been on this stage. Yeah, they actually I've been on so there's a video recording of that but that was thinking of something more general. Well, one of the things the Monterey Bay Aquarium was wanting to do years and years ago where have some members of the public come and be filmed in front of their newly planned, opening the shark exhibit. I think it was so one of my friends and I we were both volunteers and as

volunteers we could do it but we had to go in regular clothes and there was no guarantee that any of this footage would be used so my friend and I go and we are participates, [01:14:12] participants in this promotional video which may or may not be used. So we go to the opening of the show and we're now at the shark exhibit and they have these little buttons you can push to see different sections of it. So my friend, she's dead now, Donna, we pushed the button and we're looking at this video and suddenly there is, I hate to say this, the backside of Donna and I signed by side looking into the big exhibit and I said, oh my goodness Donna were on a video that's going to be seen by the public and I said check it was checked off. So I've been on the stage. I worked on the stage. I've done a little video. It's kind of nice. So yeah, we shouldn't have we should be able to look back on our lives and not say "I wish, I wish" because you know, [01:15:12] you should never be able to— you shouldn't say that—if you want to do something, do it ,bite the bullet. Even if you have to do it on your own nothing's gonna happen to you, you know, if you do things on your own you're not going to disappear. So yeah, so I can say I've had a really good I'm a really good time.

Q: That's good to hear. I feel like you wrapped up our conversation almost perfectly.

Q: But before we finish, can you tell me how you see your future?

Frazier: Um, well, I'm I see my future. I'm I've always had my life in order. Now we're confined into our homes, I am re-evaluating all of my stuff and I'm getting my hole in order. I'm getting my life in order so that when the time does come that I, you know, am no longer able to do things. I will be in order. I think that's something we should

[01:16:12] all do a lot of people put it off because they don't want to approach it, they're scared. But assure as were born we're going to die. So we cannot put off the inevitable, you know we so we should make it as easy as we can for the people going to clean up after us because somebody's got to do it. So don't put off what you need to do today because you may not be a tomorrow what they say. Yesterday's gone tomorrow is not here. So you only have today so live your life today. I'm planning on having a knee surgery, hopefully. Because of this COVID-19 It's kind of affected all of us and that's very sad for everybody for those who have lost their jobs, those have been sick, for those who died, everybody who's been impacted. It's very very sad and in a small way I've been impacted [01:17:12] to not only am I confined to my home. I'm quote in that kauris group. I am planning a knee replacement which is supposed to be in June the 8th. It could be delayed because of this issue. I am prepared for that. I'm not going to jump up and down and go whaling and saying, oh my goodness. I am everyday prepared that the doctors going to call me and say Jackie we're gonna have to push it maybe into July and I'm prepared to do that. I'm also prepared to be ready for June. So I'm ready for whatever I need to be ready for so and the rest of my I'm probably gonna get my knee replaced. I hope it's as good as my other one, which is already been replaced. I'll get back to my dancing with my line dancing group. I'll get back to my swim buddies. I have a group is a group of us from the Monterey Sports Center. There's one, two, there's five of us in the group, we call ourselves the swim buddies [01:18:12] and we keep in contact via email because we usually go on the same day. We meet up there. We have our little social Gatherings there. Now, we're on email because guess what we can't be together there. We are looking forward to being back. So my swim buddies looking forward to getting

together my dance buddies and I'm looking forward to having coffee with Walter. I call him the other day and he said "Rearranging coffee?" I said, yeah, don't be wish [laughter] We have the theater group. I have a theater group that gets together with coffee. I have my aquarium group we get together. So we have all these little groups of people that we get together and I'm looking forward to getting back to doing all of that.

Q: Yeah, that's great. You have a whole Community around?

Frazier: Yeah, so that's what that has done for me and they're being in this peninsula.

Yeah, I've really— because I think it's because of the size of the peninsula, I think you can make more connections. When you're in a big city, [01:19:12] you're one of maybe Millions it's a little harder, but when you're a small community like this is tend to bump into each other a lot and you make I think you make friends much more easily.

Q: And lifetime friends at that.

Frazier: Yes. I mean I have dear friends to this day from nursing school one lives in Australia the other in England. I have several friends couple of another friend in Australia and a friend I met in Canada as a nurse and I've been to Australia twice and visited with them and my friend in England we get together. So I'd like one buddies from when I was 18 years old. So that's one and then nurses but that group is kind of dropping off to you know, unfortunately. But yet we get together and we pick up our sentences as if we never skipped a beat. So yea, I have wonderful friends.

[END OF INTERVIEW]