

Historic Vienna Docent at the Freeman Store

VH: So since we've kind of been talking about Historic Vienna anyway, were you involved—that got started in 1976, right—were you involved in getting that going at all, or did Rodger (Seeman) pull you in after that?

FL: Rodger pulled me in after that. I'm trying to think. Another day, I'm going to go back through some of my papers and see what year I actually started at Historic Vienna. I was there many, many years.

I used to be a docent, of course, taking the children through from the schools. I think Mike (Chesalka) does that now. That was always a lot of fun. I can remember some crazy times we had, though. Maud (Robinson) and I used to alternate. She'd take upstairs and go through the history of Vienna, the pictures, and the furniture and so forth. I'd take the downstairs. I'd try to build a story around all the items. I'd have the children gather round. Maud would take, or whoever, would take the upstairs, and I'd take the caboose and the Little Library. So, what I'd do, I'd get the first group and I'd go through the store. I'd say, 'Okay, now see this item?' Say, the coffeemaker. 'Does anybody know what this is?' Several would finally guess at what it was. The milkshakes maker. People would want to make some milkshakes. People would think it stirred paint. I don't know whether it's still down there. Another thing that was really interesting. We had this big, it was like a paper-cutter. Somebody had donated it to us. It was to cut tobacco with plugs. People used to chew tobacco. It had these plugs. I'd always go through this, and I'd say, 'Now, does anybody know what this is?' And everybody, even the teachers, they'd look around. 'What is that? A paper-cutter...you cut cheese or something...' I said, 'No, it's something very nasty. A nasty habit. People used to chew tobacco. This is what it was used for.' We'd stand back, because, boy, you could cut your hand on it. I guess it's still there, isn't it, Mike?

MC: Yes, it is. I'd take them on a tour and show it to the kids. We've cut it out because of smokers.

FL: Anyway, then I'd take the children over to the Little Library. But those tours were really interesting. You had some good questions that kids would come up with. At one time, we had the caboose on it, but it was just so much. By the time you'd finish, you'd have to rush through so much. The school-buses, or Field Day was scheduled up at the Fire Station, so you had to rush through it. We finally cut the caboose off. I don't know whether you have the caboose on the tours or not because it would have to be planned out. I remember letting the kids go up. There's a ladder there and everybody wanted to climb up to the top of the caboose. They're stepping on each others' hands going up. I only did that a few times and we had to cut it out because of that. But it was a lot of fun, taking those tours.