

**VOICES OF THE CAPE FEAR  
INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM B. BEERY, JR.**

**JUNE 30, 1995**

**INTRODUCTION**

**This is Sam Bissette on the morning of June 30th, the end of the first half of the year and I'm at Bill Beery's home here in Wilmington. We'll just stay outside. We couldn't ask for a better day after all this rainy spell. So Bill, I appreciate the opportunity of being over here with you and we're going to talk just a few minutes about some things that you and I have run into in our business careers as the years have gone by and some other things I think that perhaps people might be interested, that would be a record here that might otherwise not get recorded.**

INTERVIEWER: So I'm going to start out and ask you a little basic fundamental as to where you were born and when? (Laughs).

BEERY: Well, you know with the talk of Landfall and with the tremendous development that's going on in this community and they say that you can go down the street and down the block and not even see anybody that you knew.

INTERVIEWER: That happens to me in church now.

BEERY: That's right. It happens to me in church, exactly and you feel bad about not welcoming people and they've been here six months or something and that sort of thing, but this is going on.

INTERVIEWER: You don't mind revealing your age though do you?

BEERY: No, not at all. I'll be 72 in July.

INTERVIEWER: So that would make you born in 1923 I guess.

BEERY: Right. That's exactly right.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. And where is home?

BEERY: Right here and this is the point I was bringing up. I was born in Wilmington. And one of the things that I recall along that line was in Los Angeles, California on a trip, we had an office in Los Angeles and we went out to eat dinner and there was one of us, there were more than one of us, but one of us was a particular clown and he said he was going to ask everybody in the restaurant we were in where they were from. He said he bet he wouldn't find anybody from Los Angeles and I thought about that in late years, the last two or three years, having been here all my life and seeing people. Now, I see people that I can't place and it bothers me and I used to, in fact we've got a picture somewhere of my father and the little store that he had and he would pull the lights out as he went out with a customer and there weren't anymore customers in the store and as one came in, he would go on down and he'd turn'em on. He'd save electricity.

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs). Which grammar school did you go to?

BEERY: I went to Isaac Bear where Wilmington College was started. We lived in the Carolina Place development area. My grandfather ...

INTERVIEWER: Beyond 17th Street.

BEERY: Yeah. Well, we lived on 17th Street. That's where we started. My grandfather was a developer and he developed, he was involved in that development. He bought pieces of land and certain houses. He built two of the houses there on the corner of Country Club and Wrightsville Avenue. I can even remember one of the men that was one of his associates, Mr. D.R. Foster and also, Foster-Hill, of which you would know well.

INTERVIEWER: In the same building as People's Building and Loan Association and William M. Hill was my first boss. When you were out of grammar school and then you went to New Hanover High School. We didn't have but one then.

BEERY: I went to New Hanover High School, but I also came through the depression and we lost a year. I didn't need to lose a year, we were short a year, we didn't go, but \_\_\_\_\_.

INTERVIEWER: I never have know that. I came to Wilmington in 1936, so I didn't know. We lost a year?

BEERY: Um hmm.

INTERVIEWER: In all the school systems?

BEERY: One year.

INTERVIEWER: I have never known.

BEERY: I only had eleven grades and it was done during the depression to save money and I needed all I could get, but it was one of those things, we didn't have any choice in the matter.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm. Well, what happened after you left high school?

BEERY: I went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. And got a usual Bachelor of Science degree. I went up to go into Marketing, that's what I went for.

INTERVIEWER: Uh huh.

BEERY: And there was a Dr. Taylor who was the head of the department of Marketing and about the time, or just before I got there, they called him to Washington in the Quarter Master Corp of the Army. He was called into service from a civilian who was a professor. He was quite renown I guess; people recognized him.

INTERVIEWER: Well you got caught up in, let's see, '23, '43, you were a little bit young at the war. Did you get caught up in the war in service then?

BEERY: Well, I was in the service about two and a half years. I was not, I wasn't in Japan. I was very close to being.

INTERVIEWER: What service were you in?

BEERY: I was in the Navy. I went to Cornell and midshipman's school and...

INTERVIEWER: I see.

BEERY: And I was in Cornell and I went to RPI which is the engineering \_\_\_\_\_ school for the state of New York and they sent me there.

INTERVIEWER: Uh huh. Well you got a background in engineering then. (Laughs).

BEERY: Yeah. The funny thing about it is, I'd never had any physics. The closest I had ever gotten was Mrs. Williams chemistry class up here on the second floor of New Hanover High School.

INTERVIEWER: Well, that background ought to have helped you a lot when you later in life got into a real building problem.

BEERY: Well, one of the things that I think about often is I knew I had to do more studying than a lot, because I just didn't have a background in some of it. In the men's room, they had partitions in the men's rooms. It was the only place, they cut the lights out at night. This was in the Navy reg. at that point in time and they'd cut the lights out and so I'd go sit on one of'em and get my light on my books and I did much of my studying after lights out so to speak. In an unusual environment.

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs) You have to find a place to study.

BEERY: That's right.

INTERVIEWER: I went to Indiana University for the Savings and Loan Graduate School for three summers and the only place I could find that was quiet enough was their trophy room. There I was surrounded by all the trophies of Indiana University. Back then, there was nobody in the room and nobody ever came in there. It was a nice place to study. Bill, after you got out of school, out of college and finished up then and got in the military service, let's go to about 1946. That was after the war was over and things were beginning to get cranked back up again. Did you come back to Wilmington?

BEERY: I came back to Wilmington. I really hadn't been in Wilmington other than my family was here and I came home during school and during the war and that sort of thing from time to time, but because I really hadn't settled in yet in that point in time.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm.

BEERY: But anyway, we came back here and I talked to my father and he wanted to know whether I wanted to pursue some of the things that I'd gotten into during the war and this sort of thing.

INTERVIEWER: It was great of him to give you a choice.

BEERY: He really didn't, he really didn't push me.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm.

BEERY: He didn't push me really any. He tells me that...

INTERVIEWER: About going into the store?

BEERY: He tells me that he was concerned that I might have found something that might lead me away

from the store so to speak, but we didn't talk about it too much. He said why don't we work out, map out an arrangement that you can follow here in the store and see if you like it and we're going to get the job done. He said, "You know that's got to be first."

INTERVIEWER: All right now. Now let's begin to go in some different directions for a minute. The name J.C. Williams comes to mind. What was his connection with you?

BEERY: J.C. Williams opened the store. He and his father opened the store in Wilmington.

INTERVIEWER: That was Belk Williams back in those days.

BEERY: It was, but they came from Sanford. The Sanford store was the eleventh Belk store and Wilmington was the thirteenth Belk store and Mr. Williams' father had a store in Sanford and he and Mr. Belk got together and they merged the stores there and so there was this building on Front Street between Chestnut and Grace. There was a building there in the middle of the block that was where Walgreens was a while back and it was a bank in the time before 1915 and it was the Georgio Gaylord Company was the name of the company and they were in the same type of business that we were in. But anyway, Mr. Belk, Mr. Henry Belk's brother really was, from what I read, was the driving force in getting this particular one started down here and he was Dr. Belk, he was a medical doctor and he gave up his medical practice later on and was developing the store for his brother.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, now let's bring Martha into the picture. Where did Martha come on the scene.

BEERY: Martha got on the scene with, interesting enough and very fortunately for me, she was in college at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York and Saratoga Springs was maybe thirty-five, forty miles from Troy, New York where \_\_\_\_\_ was and it wasn't too far from Ithaca, New York where Cornell was and so anyway, one of her friends, one of her roommates was on a train coming up from New York and she met one of my roommates and they said why don't you come to see me. We had to have blind dates and they had dates and we were invited to go along and I met Martha on a blind date in Saratoga Springs.

INTERVIEWER: Well the principal is, is where boy's schools are, they seem to find them where the schools are.

BEERY: Just like a magnet school. (Laughs).

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs) That's right, that's right. Now, tell me about your children. How many children do you have?

BEERY: Well, I have three children. I have a son that was born in 1951 and he has got two daughters and one that's twelve and one that will be four in October. He had one late in life which is a joy to him.

INTERVIEWER: Great.

BEERY: And then I have a daughter who has two children and one is fourteen and one is twelve a son and they live in Wilmington and it makes it very nice. They live within two blocks of where we're sitting.

INTERVIEWER: That's great. Tell me something, what is the B.? You're a junior as I remember are you not?

BEERY: Yes. Uh huh.

INTERVIEWER: What is the B. in William B. Beery?

BEERY: It is from Benjamin.

INTERVIEWER: Benjamin?

BEERY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

BEERY: It's Benjamin, in my family Benjamin Beery is the shipyard.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, I'm getting to shipyard a little bit. What can you remember about some of your ancestors in connection with Wilmington's history in times past, particularly the Beery Shipyard?

BEERY: Well, some of the things are hearsay. You'd hear good stories along the line and some of them have a little more documentation for'em, but Benjamin Beery was, and a number of our ancestors built ships and built boats all degrees of them. Going back, I used to kid my grandmother who lived to be ninety, she died in 1959, that we had some pirates in the family and she'd say, "No we didn't."

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs).

BEERY: She'd say, "These were loyal men that were out there fighting for the United States and the Confederacy later on and so forth." Anyway, they built ships and they also captained ships.

INTERVIEWER: How far back do you think that your family goes in Wilmington? Do you know?

BEERY: We...

INTERVIEWER: That would be a hard question to answer?

BEERY: Yes, that'd be a hard question to answer, but we have been in the area since the 1700s. The three Beery brothers came over in 1700s and they were in Pennsylvania and one of them came, Daniel came down this way for what reason I'm not real sure.

INTERVIEWER: Uh huh.

BEERY: But Daniel was the one who was the branch of our family and it goes on into Savannah where I had uncles.

INTERVIEWER: Well, that follows that normal migration pattern. People who have studied genealogy have started with people entering at the port of New York and entering at Baltimore and going on down and entering at Charleston and how they moved through in a big crescent, how they moved on down into Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas.

BEERY: That's interesting.

INTERVIEWER: And you were on the beginning of that, of that, of that crescent and so was my family.

BEERY: I think that religion was a little bit \_\_\_\_\_. They got into the Mennonite area of Pennsylvania

and so forth. Anyway, they seemed to \_\_\_\_\_ forces going through there.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm. Well, it looks like you ended up in the Presbyterian church if I remember right. Did you not?

BEERY: Well, I wound up in the Presbyterian church for a very different reason than a lot, actually my mother's family is very close to the Lutheran church. She had two brother's and both of them were Lutheran ministers.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm.

BEERY: One of them lives here now, he's retired here and we just had his 89th birthday. Anyway, I grew up a Lutheran and my wife, she lived in Bronxville, New York. I told you I met her in Saratoga Springs, but her home was Bronxville, New York which is a suburb of New York City and she was, \_\_\_\_\_ where she was baptized in the Presbyterian church in Aiken, South Carolina because her father came from Aiken. She had attachments in the south too and anyway, her grandfather is buried in Aiken and so forth.

INTERVIEWER: I see. Well, let's move on up now into a little bit more of...

BEERY: Into some things that mean something.

INTERVIEWER: No, things that you probably remember better. Things that have gone from memory is a problem with all of us. I get myself sometimes to, if I get tagged into giving a program for a club or something to say that if my memory slips, just bear in mind, I'm to the point to where I got a card in my pocket that says, "My name is Sam Bissette." So that's about as far as you can go. (Laughs). Let's come up into business life, back once again into business life and tell me briefly if you would, how you and the Belk's people got into the twenty-one store group that you had several years back, I don't know what it is now, in which you had twenty-one stores in the group at the time that we talked and you had made real inroads into Myrtle Beach and the new store in Wilmington. Tell me a little bit about that.

BEERY: Well, you could almost spin a yarn about most of them, but ...

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs) That's why I said we had to be brief. (Laughs).

BEERY: Mr. Williams of course had started in Sanford, North Carolina. That's about 125 miles from here and then, they came on down and we had a store in \_\_\_\_\_ which was on the way if you would. In those days, it wasn't like it is today, we'd do it by fax and network or whatever we are doing it by now. It has caused a different evolution there, but some of the similar ideas and so forth, we had developed into clusters. The clusters were being worked out of, we've got one in Jacksonville and just got one in New Bern. We've got one in Charleston. We've got one in Savannah. These are the clusters and the clusters report into a group office which is here in Wilmington where we had, Tom \_\_\_\_\_ has succeeded me in operating that group here in Wilmington. We've got a lot of changes going on in all of the stores for efficiency. We're being reengineered, you know that's part of the words that we see in the Wall Street Journal regularly and they're trying to get more production in doing it and do a better job in doing it.

INTERVIEWER: How many stores are now in the group that you were head of?

BEERY: About the same number, but different ones.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm.

BEERY: We've got, we've got actually counting Conway which was just rebuilt and redoing the center there and of course, Myrtle Beach has grown out to there and actually, Conway we looked on Myrtle Beach, but we've got five stores in Myrtle Beach now. If you want to count that one or four in the beach proper and so, a few years back, we didn't have anything in Myrtle Beach. I remember standing down and John Belk introduced me to it so to speak. He and I went down there in a December, a day in the middle of December to Myrtle Beach. The wind was blowing and sand was blowing and it was dark and the sun wasn't out. It was a miserable and sort of depressing kind of atmosphere, not what you'd expect to be out at Myrtle Beach and there was a building there with steel and the steel was up. John Belk said, "What do you think about putting a store down here and so forth?" Anyway, to make a long story short, I couldn't imagine a hundred thousand foot store in Myrtle Beach. That just didn't do a thing for me at that point in time.

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs).

BEERY: And he and I have talked about this and laughed about this and it has done very well. Sometimes when we were looking at the financial statements, John would chuckle a little bit and he said, "You want to get rid of this don't you?"

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs)

BEERY: And this sort of went on, but...

INTERVIEWER: Well, Myrtle Beach's growth in the area has just been unbelievable what is down there, but that is another story. Let's get into your program of rebuilding the stores and modernizing and bringing them up to date and that. I think you had a lot of fun, based upon my observations with building the store at Independence Mall here in Wilmington.

BEERY: We did. We had a Wilmington store and still is, you know a little place in your heart? The first one so to speak, for some reason, one that you have a great deal of attraction to.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

BEERY: And we needed this store here before we got one. It was pretty antiquated and part of it, one of the little things I remember when I came back in 1945 from the service and I went and one of my duties was the supervision of a lunch counter and replaced the fountain...

INTERVIEWER: I had forgotten that.

BEERY: And we had on the first floor a food service and we had a tea room too on the balcony up above, a little tea room for ladies.

INTERVIEWER: I'm gonna jump you one, is that the reason you didn't put a food service in the new building? (Laughs).

BEERY: That's one of the good reasons.

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs).

BEERY: But we had one there anyway and we were having the Health Department was giving us a bad time and refrigeration and I talked to Red Allsbrook. Red was with the White Ice-cream and Milk

Company and was trying to get some equipment for me and so we could get on. Anyway, the long and short of it is I couldn't do it, I couldn't put it together and I had to shut it down because of health reasons and anyway, that was just one little thing. This was going on all over the store and we needed the store and you couldn't get all the supplies you wanted yet and so, we started planning it anyway and we were able to get it opened, a modern store in 1951.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm.

BEERY: And in doing so, we had a lot of pleasant things. We had decided that we wanted it to be modern. We wanted people to enjoy it and we didn't want to do it so that they wouldn't think of it as the past too and be able to add to the past and we wanted things that people would recognize and in doing everything we did in the store, we tried to measure it and to place it against something that we had had that was a winner and something that we thought the people would want. One of the things that you and I had such a good time, we were just so fortunate in having you here.

INTERVIEWER: Now that's where you gotten over my head and I've never forgiven you for it. I'm saying that facetiously of course, but I tell you, I was out of my depth with that.

BEERY: No you weren't either. You were just perfect and you know that we wouldn't let anybody put their hands on those mosaics out in the store. We hear from them everyday and every year and every week, you'll have somebody come through or writes you a postcard. There is a battleship that I just thought about this morning that was on the news this morning because they got the new colors and we have a mosaic of a battleship following your art work and so forth and so...

INTERVIEWER: Well, it's been, people have told me, I get a lot of feedback too, people have told me that's the one place they take visitors to when they come to Wilmington. When they show somebody around town they show them that.

BEERY: We are very fortunate.

INTERVIEWER: Well you did and not only that, but in some of your other stores, I believe the one in Hickory did you not commission a working windmill for that?

BEERY: Yes sir, a working water wheel.

INTERVIEWER: Water wheel.

BEERY: Grinding. We certainly did, but that was fathered from the experienced that he had here.

INTERVIEWER: All right.

BEERY: In other words, the things that we did here.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. Well, I enjoyed working on the mosaics and standing outside there with my friend John Oxenfeld, the afternoon when the man from Castle Hayne removed the covering on one. You ended up looking all over the nation and you ended up with somebody from Live Oak Parkway and a man from Castle Hayne doing the job.

BEERY: We did. We had a mosaicist involved in it from Pennsylvania. She was from American Olean who put us in contact.

INTERVIEWER: So you sent me up there and that little lady met me at the plane and took me to dinner that evening, so that was what you call a fringe benefit. I think my wife understood, but we won't get into that.

BEERY: We'll not get into that. (Laughs).

INTERVIEWER: Let's go back, we're missing an important area. As a business man, your contribution to Wilmington was evident in a number of organizations that you were connected with and worked with through the time, through Wilmington. You were very generous with sharing your time with the community and I know from some experience I had working with you with the Chamber of Commerce. Tell me something about, a little bit about that area. What you might have enjoyed or what you might have gotten into that was interesting. That was back during the time that Red Allsbrook was mayor. You had mentioned him earlier.

BEERY: Well, there's some wonderful things in it, particularly the people you worked with and knew and we go back, I sort of go back and get a place called the Coastline. The Coastline announced in 1957, I believe that's about right, it may not be the, it might have been little bit of '58 or a little bit of '56. I don't know, but that's about the time that they made the announcement that they were going to move to Jacksonville, Florida, the headquarters and it was going to represent some thousand people more or less give or take. That was the blow, Wilmington wasn't a country town, I don't know what a country town is exactly, but it was a homespun town and there were a lot of nice people here and people who had been here all their lives and had connections and so forth and they were uprooted and in addition to the financial loss to Wilmington and the people having to move away from their families that had grown up here, my family had been here. We had people in my, I had an aunt and an uncle that worked at the Coastline and we'd been here hundreds of years, a couple of hundred years whatever and here they find that they've got to go move. So, but anyway, I was thinking more on the economic part of it. One thing you might be interested in, Mr. Bellamy was a lawyer in certain matters for the company when the need would come up.

INTERVIEWER: For the sake of the tape, which Bellamy was it? Was it Marsden?

BEERY: Marsden. Marsden Bellamy. That's right. Marsden, yes. Mr. Marsden, on the very day after seeing this in the paper, I went down there to pick up something that he had done and I was going to take it back and get it signed and anyway, he asked me a question, he says, "What in the world are you all going to do?" "Where are you going to move?" That part I know. I remember it very vividly because it hit me. I mean, here I was, I hadn't thought about me either, but it sounded kinda like I was going to be moving too. Mr. Marsden figured that we weren't going to be able to keep going and after thinking about it a little bit and we had a little conversation about it and I told him I thought that things could be done that we all could get together and get something done to where we could add to where we'd come from. So, that is a big part in the life of Wilmington.

INTERVIEWER: I want to add a philosophical comment there. I had felt like, that we thought it was dire disaster, but it ended up probably being one of the best things that could have happened to us.

BEERY: Excellent. An excellent comment and we should put that in there. It did. It made you do things that you wouldn't have done before and to be concerned about'em. The committee of one hundred was developed. We had all types of groups of business people and contacts working and every once in a while, I run into something else. In retiring two years ago, two and a half years ago completely retiring, we have a room converted upstairs that I've been going through things and I call it an office, but it's a history room almost. I hate to throw things away and Martha says you got to get'em out of here.

INTERVIEWER: The wives don't like those mementos hung on the walls in the house.

BEERY: That's exactly right there. They're all folded up and rolled up in the closet. Anyway, these tell a lot of stories though. They're tough and things could have been really tough and it's remarkable that the expertise that a lot of the people from here brought forth in your organization and this was repeated in many places around the community. Well, anyway, we were involved in it just like everybody else.

INTERVIEWER: Isn't that a tremendous contrast to what is going on in Wilmington in the first six months of this year and go back and compare that to the first six months after the Coastline left.

BEERY: It really doesn't compare. (Laughs). It just.

INTERVIEWER: You can't hardly get from one street to the next for the traffic.

BEERY: Isn't that something.

INTERVIEWER: I'm going to test you a little bit now.

BEERY: Oh.

INTERVIEWER: We were talking about the Coastline a minute ago, does the third and the eighteenth of the month ring any bell with you about the Coastline?

BEERY: That's when they paid.

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs). That's right. You get an A on that one. (Laughs).

BEERY: Well thank you, I was lucky.

INTERVIEWER: (Still laughing). The third and eighteenth was the payday for the Coastline and that's what Wilmington's financing rolled around.

BEERY: That's the way we developed a lot of our programs for merchandising in the store. We would have certain merchandise we'd take advantage of it. It was no different in Jacksonville, North Carolina, on the first and fifteenth with the military and we'd have a program for that.

INTERVIEWER: Um hmm.

BEERY: To go with the payroll times. We all were grateful for the Coastline and what it contributed to the community, but we had to get on with it.

INTERVIEWER: Well tell me, what have you developed in the way of hobbies since you have come along the way? Somebody is doing a beautiful job with your garden back here.

BEERY: Well, that's my good wife and she sort of guides that through and I'm a helper. I dig trenches and do things of that nature. We enjoy that. We've got all kinds of nuances around. Bird business and that sort of thing.

INTERVIEWER: Sounds like you got a chief operating officer dictating for you.

BEERY: That's exactly right.

INTERVIEWER: (Laughs). Well, Wilmington has changed a lot and any observations on what and where that we have come these last few years?

BEERY: I have been surprised and that won't be the first time that I've been surprised, but I have been surprised by the simple reason that it has been more of a larger movement of people than I thought would be. I think we've been fortunate in certain people getting involved in it and later on not only from the local community, but from outside of Wilmington, people who are known and are recognized. We are talking about a large project, we're talking about twenty-two hundred acres in Landfall and it's moving up the water to Ogden and it has taken off that way.

INTERVIEWER: They are calling that now the Golden Strip.

BEERY: And...

INTERVIEWER: That's what is being heard.

BEERY: Well, and we've got to think of it as People's Savings and Loan or Beery Company. We've got to look at it from a geographic impact.

INTERVIEWER: Well, that's why we put a branch up in Hampstead.

BEERY: And so we are going through those things everyday. Something is giving us some light into what maybe we ought to be doing and we will be doing something in the area because we again have got to serve customers and we've got a different customer in many cases, particularly the numbers and we're looking at them and paying attention to them.

INTERVIEWER: We want to begin to think about some things that we might have forgotten to say or that we'd like to add to what we have. I have, my memory being what it was, I had two or three things I wanted to say, but I didn't want to interrupt you and now I've forgotten what they are. (Laughs) Do you have anything more that you would like to add?

BEERY: No, I think I'd like to still comment on the thing that you said following the Coastline. I think that the Wilmington people deserve accolades for what they did at that point in time, they put their shoulders to it and went to work and did it and there wasn't any question about it. If you were put on a committee, you did it. I mean you really didn't...

INTERVIEWER: And in the background we have the accomplishments like the university out there. That was a major accomplishment that has come from that. In 1947 it had just begun at Isaac Bear with the establishment of Wilmington College, but in 1957-59, why the thing took off. Well Bill, I think we're gonna wind up now and I want to thank you for the opportunity of sitting across your dining room table and talking to you about things. I told you it would just be a little chat and that's about what it's amounted to.

BEERY: Well, I'm sorry there were a lot of things that I would have liked to have come out, but I think they will come out too may be of significance when some others read these and time goes on.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I hope they will be significance too. You certainly have a major part in the interview you have given me.

BEERY: Did you see that pretty picture of my wife's work in the living room over the mantle?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I saw that. (Laughs)

BEERY: Of the Azaleas.

INTERVIEWER: I saw that. You must have gotten some \_\_\_\_\_ artist to do that.

BEERY: Well, we got a fellow that resides on Live Oak Parkway.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I'm glad that Martha has enjoyed it. For the sake of the tape, Bill is referring to a painting I did of their garden two or three years back. Well, we're going to sign off now, thanks again Bill. I appreciate it.