

Interviewer:

Good. Okay. Thank you for being willing to meet today. We're going to start, I'm going to ask you your name, where you live, your birth year, and if you lived somewhere else, while you spent time on a farm.

Margaret Nelson:

Okay. My name is Margaret Nelson when I was living in this area. My maiden name is Freeland, Margaret Freeland. My birth year is 1944 and I presently live in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Interviewer:

Okay, but you farmed in the Huxley area, though?

Margaret Nelson:

I grew up on a farm in the Huxley area between Cambridge and Huxley on Highway 210.

Interviewer:

Okay, nice and specific. Love it.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

All right, so onto the actual questions. How did your family come to live on a farm in Iowa?

Margaret Nelson:

Okay. Well, it's a really good story because my great great-grandfather homesteaded the farm that I grew up on in 1855, and we owned the farmstead until 2022, so we just sold it last year. But our family... The farm has been in the family since 1855.

Interviewer:

That's amazing-

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah, it really is.

Interviewer:

... that you can trace it back to the 50's.

Margaret Nelson:

It really is. In fact, we have the whole story of the family coming to Iowa from Norway and they initially came to Lisbon, Illinois where there was a Norwegian settlement and they were hoping to homestead there for a dollar and a quarter an acre, but the land had become more scarce and more expensive there, so they didn't know what to do. So they were stuck, but they were with a Norwegian group there who had been there earlier. But a salesman was coming through the settlement there, in fact, two

salesmen, and they said, "You have to go to Iowa. It's the land of milk and honey." At that time, they thought anything west of the Mississippi was desert. So after hearing from these two salesmen, and one was a Bible salesman, selling Norwegian English, English Norwegian bibles.

They sent a scouting group of four men to Iowa and they took a spring wagon and came to... They followed the California trail and they kept going west when they got to Iowa. And when they landed in the Cambridge area, it's just a little bit north of Palestine Lutheran Church now, they formed their wagons into a circle, and that was in 1855. It took them three weeks to come. We have the story of how many wagons and how many horses and cows, how many people. Many of the names are still familiar in the area.

Interviewer:

That's incredible.

Margaret Nelson:

And they formed their wagons into a circle, I think it was on June 9th, 1855 and had their first church service there, and I believe Palestine has marked that area now as where the first church was. This whole group became the founders of Palestine Lutheran Church.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

It's a great story.

Interviewer:

That's incredible. It's a great story, but even that you just have this much information on it-

Margaret Nelson:

Right.

Interviewer:

... 'cause if you think, like say, my family history, it gets foggier and foggier as it goes back even two or three generations. But you have all of this firsthand accounts, I'm assuming?

Margaret Nelson:

We do, we do. In fact, we have two books. Palestine has a book that tells the history and includes that story, and then one of the sons, the name of my great-great-grandfather who was in that group and my grandmother were Ole and Anna Apland and their son has written an account of that journey also, settling here in this area.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

When the scouting group came here, they literally had the land plotted out and they went to, I believe, it was Fort Des Moines and claimed the land. They went back to Lisbon, Illinois and told the people there, "We have land." And this was in actually, 1854, and they said, "We are going to leave in the spring on the Norwegian holiday, Syttende Mai." I'm not sure I'm saying that right-

Interviewer:

It's all right.

Margaret Nelson:

... for those Norwegians. May 17th. "And we are going to leave May 17th, we have to get to Iowa early enough to plant crops so we have something to live on for the winter." So they literally prepared their wagons and left on May 17th, 1855, and then took three weeks to arrive here.

Interviewer:

And they stuck to that same spot until you sold it last year?

Margaret Nelson:

Oh, yeah. They had claimed the land for everyone.

Interviewer:

Oh, and then they were kind of redistributing it in that way.

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah. I don't know how they did that, but because they had a tight group of people, they knew who they were purchasing the land for and they got it for a dollar and a quarter an acre. And my great-great-grandfather Ole was, I think it was 240 acres that he bought at a dollar and a quarter an acre,

Interviewer:

And about 1,25. That's about 40 or 50 bucks in today's currency, I think.

Margaret Nelson:

I have no idea. Yeah.

Interviewer:

I know that from the late 19th century you multiply by about 30 and that's the inflation rate.

Margaret Nelson:

Sure. Sure.

Interviewer:

But if you go back farther, I'm guessing it's more.

Margaret Nelson:

Right.

Interviewer:

But for 240 acres, that's a lot of money.

Margaret Nelson:

Right. 240 acres. And that was kind of a common plot of land that you would buy, size wise.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Margaret Nelson:

So it started with Ole and Anna and they were the first Norwegian couple in Story County that were married, and then their son came to work the land. His name was Knut and his wife is Tomina, and I remember Tomina.

Interviewer:

Really?

Margaret Nelson:

She was like a little Mrs. Santa Claus. She looked just like Mrs. Santa Claus and I remember her in a rocking chair. And then my grandfather, Andrew and Anna Freeland, because Anna was their daughter. So she married Andrew Freeland and now it became the Freeland farm. And during the Depression they had to sell off some of the land, but my father was determined to get land back. So that part that had been sold, they, my dad and mother, Kermit and Flora Free land, bought that land that had been sold off in the Depression. I think that was around 1937.

Interviewer:

Okay. So towards the end of the depression, you'd say?

Margaret Nelson:

Right. So that's how I came to live on the farm because my dad was so determined to get the land back.

Interviewer:

And stay there.

Margaret Nelson:

Right. Right.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

So it has been, part of that 240 acres has always been in the family till 2022 when we had sold the farm land in 2012, 146 acres. But we had kept the farmstead because the barn that Ole and Anna built, was built in 1875. The house that I grew up in was built in 1865 and it is still there and it's in really good shape. The barn, now, is being turned into an event center.

Interviewer:

Yeah?

Margaret Nelson:

Right, and an entertainment venue-

Interviewer:

Oh, you've hit my-

Margaret Nelson:

...and wedding venue.

Interviewer:

You have hit my soft spot. I love old buildings build around the 60s and 70s, 1860s and 70s.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer:

That's incredible that they're still up and they're still being used.

Margaret Nelson:

The interior of this barn is amazing. It's stunning. And the new owners have kept the interior and it's a huge barn. It's like 90, 94 feet long, 45 feet wide with a full walkout basement.

Interviewer:

I'd get married in that.

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm. Well, you could. You could.

Interviewer:

I have to get back to you on that one.

Margaret Nelson:

They bought it last September 30th, was the closing, and they have been renovating it since then. And we actually came here this weekend to-

Interviewer:

... to check it out?

Margaret Nelson:

... go to the barn. Yeah. I've been there several times in its progress.

Interviewer:

That's just really great to hear, personally. I grew up in a house on Main Street here in Huxley, it was built in 1917, and my parents really did their best to preserve the craftsmanship of it. And I just... Really amazing.

Margaret Nelson:

You have got to see the interior of this barn. It is incredible.

Interviewer:

I'll have to drop by.

Margaret Nelson:

It's a peg barn.

Interviewer:

Wow. Okay, should probably get moving here. What is your favorite story about growing up on the farm? You can only choose one.

Margaret Nelson:

This is really, really hard for me to pin down favorite stories and I can't say they're favorite stories, let's put it, they're favorite memories or they're memories. There was work, a lot of work. Walking beans and corn. We didn't have herbicides then. So you pulled-

Interviewer:

You pulled the weeds.

Margaret Nelson:

... pulled the weeds, button weeds and thistles out of the ground. And if they were really big, you chopped them off with a scythe.

Interviewer:

Like an actual scythe?

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

And I was the youngest of four children and it didn't matter how little you were, you were out in the field.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

So that was certainly a story we all grew up with. We also had chickens. We had 250 chickens, but when my older sister decided she wanted to go to St. Olaf, my parents said, they needed more money. So they added 250 more chickens. So in the spring, we would get baby chicks from Highline in Des Moines, 50 to a box, and we would bring them home and we would've prepared the chicken house, which means you clean out the chicken house and if you can imagine what that is like -

Interviewer:

For that many?

Margaret Nelson:

The ammonia smell, that was probably one of the worst jobs, cleaning the chicken house. But then you had to really make it clean for the baby chicks and then spread corn cobs that had been ground up, corn cobs on the floor. But then you would bring them home from Des Moines, take the chicks out of the box one by one and dip their beaks in... We had a little water, it was like a water bottle with a tray on it. Dip their beaks in water and that was teaching them to drink and then just let them run free.

So cleaning the chicken house was one of the jobs. My brother was a trapper. I don't know what possessed him to do that, but he would get up at five in the morning and he would trap. He would go down the trap line. There was a creek on the farm, and he would trap opossums, beavers, muskrats, skunks, fox and skin them and stretch their pelts over boards and take them to Des Moines to sell. We had milking cows and all us kids remember my dad squirting milk in the cat's mouth's. He could aim -

Interviewer:

He could aim it.

Margaret Nelson:

... aim the milk at the cat, and they would open their mouth's for the milk. We had also, because we had a big house, we also could accommodate a lot of family dinners there. And my mother had six siblings, my dad had three siblings, and so, I remember many family dinners at our house.

Interviewer:

Big ones.

Margaret Nelson:

Big ones.

Interviewer:

Did you grow your own food?

Margaret Nelson:

Oh, yeah. Absolutely back then.

Interviewer:

Like you had a garden and stuff.

Margaret Nelson:

Mom worked primarily in the garden and the chickens and washing the separator. Dad did the field work, my brother helped out and my older sister did some, but with the garden we had the standard things, corn and beans, potatoes, carrots, radishes. We had a huge strawberry patch that we sold on the road.

Interviewer:

Really?

Margaret Nelson:

We sold strawberries on the road on highway 210.

Interviewer:

I would love to grow strawberries of my own.

Margaret Nelson:

And then mom would can also, tomatoes and then when we got a freezer, she would freeze them. So yeah, tomatoes, carrots, corn, radishes. And then my dad grew a wonderful cantaloupe, watermelon and sweet corn.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

And so that was just for you guys or you sold some of it off?

Margaret Nelson:

My dad was incredibly generous and he would find people we didn't even know and give them watermelons, cantaloupes and sweet corn.

Interviewer:

Awesome.

Margaret Nelson:

And take them to church. We went to Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cambridge every Sunday. Mom would fry chicken every Sunday morning and put a baked potato and chicken in the oven. So two and a half hours later we came home to very well done baked potatoes and chicken and then she'd throw vegetable and obviously, the staple, Jello.

Interviewer:

Having delusions of fresh farm food right now. This sounds incredible.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So you're kind of answering all my questions all at once for me here. So what kind of... You said you grew corn, but did you have any other field crops that you grew that your dad took care of?

Margaret Nelson:

Primarily, corn and soybeans-

Interviewer:

Corn? Okay, the usual.

Margaret Nelson:

...as far as field crops.

Interviewer:

The Iowa special.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah, the usual, Iowa traditional crops. Right.

Interviewer:

Oh, I can't remember the name of the crop, but I think it's used for livestock feed.

Margaret Nelson:

It's kind of like corn, but smaller maybe.

Interviewer:

Yeah, I think. I think that's what I'm thinking about.

Margaret Nelson:

We didn't grow that.

Interviewer:

But did you have livestock besides these 500 chickens?

Margaret Nelson:

We did. We had, yeah. And with the chickens, by the way, since we added twice the amount of chickens, dad built an area in the barn that could accommodate more chickens 'cause they grew big.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Margaret Nelson:

And these were chickens that would walk, had free range in the chicken yard.

Interviewer:

I hope they would.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah. But in the fall, we had to take half of them down to the barn. So at late at night, we would grab them out of their roost and carry them by their legs upside down, 250 of them down to the chicken house in the barn.

Interviewer:

Okay, so you wouldn't have to chase them around in the daylight?

Margaret Nelson:

You couldn't do that.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah. That's how you got them. But then we had cows, milking cows and we had pigs. And later on, Dad got sheep. In fact, my brother and my dad took them to the State Fair and we had grand champion and reserve grand champion at the State Fair. And because we had both, they got their picture taken in the Des Moines paper.

Interviewer:

The Register?

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Awesome. When was that? Can you pin down a year?

Margaret Nelson:

It was after I was... It was probably around, let's see, 19. It could have been when I was in college, somewhere between '62 and '68.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Awesome.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

A little stamp of history there.

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Let's see. Did you raise any of your own food? You really-

Margaret Nelson:

Oh, we sure did.

Interviewer:

... you sort of answered that one already.

Margaret Nelson:

We already talked about that.

Interviewer:

That's just incredible to hear. All of the people I've interviewed, they say pretty much, "Yeah, we had a vegetable garden and we took stuff from our livestock just to be self-sustaining,."

Margaret Nelson:

That's right.

Interviewer:

That is really incredibly to me.

Margaret Nelson:

That's right. We were very self-sufficient, for sure.

Interviewer:

And so, who did what kind of work on the farm? You've already talked about what your parents did -

Margaret Nelson:

Okay. Oftentimes, it was pretty much -

Interviewer:

... but how was it split between your siblings?

Margaret Nelson:

Well, I told you what, as we siblings did. My brother certainly helped more with the farm work, not necessarily with milking, but haying. Before that, we had threshing, but for threshing, the neighbors would help each other. So for that, you might get six neighbors who would come and they would help combine straw and hay and then put it up in the barn. And then my mother would fix a big morning lunch or a morning snack, but it tended to be sandwiches and cookies and lemonade. And we would take it down to the field in a little red wagon, and then you'd fix a really big dinner for them. This was hot, hot work -

Interviewer:

I bet it was.

Margaret Nelson:

... and dirty. And a big dinner. And they would wash up outside the house. Mom had a wash pan for them to wash up and then come in the house to eat a big dinner, that would be what we would call lunch. And then also, in the afternoon you would take a big lunch down to them or snack, but usually that was bologna sandwiches and cookies.

Interviewer:

But you were kind of the delivery service there?

Margaret Nelson:

We were. And lemonade, I remember lemonade.

Interviewer:

I love the detail of the red wagon because during the derecho, my uncle's fridge went out and he lived across the street from us and he had a lot of really high quality meat and produce in his fridge -

Margaret Nelson:

Oh, in the freezer.

Interviewer:

In his freezer, too. And so we had a little red wagon we had on our porch as decorations from the 60s or so. And so, I would be dragging it across the street -

Margaret Nelson:

Oh, really? Sure.

Interviewer:

... over and over again, getting all of the meat into -

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah, those little red wagons come in handy when you need them.

Interviewer:

... into our fridge because we had a generator. History goes around, I think that's so funny.

Margaret Nelson:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

But you were talking about combining and things. What kind of farm machinery or technology was used? Did you have combines or tractors at all?

Margaret Nelson:

Well, we had tractors. I think, usually we had, I want to say, AC, Allis Chalmers, orange tractors. I don't remember having a John Deere tractor. Now, I should have asked my brother about that, to be sure. But usually, it was an orange tractor. But we were not sophisticated. We didn't have technology.

Interviewer:

It looks like it was a lot of hands-on work.

Margaret Nelson:

Not technology back then. And you did a lot of your repair work. There was an implement shop in Cambridge. I want to say, Ingram maybe, was the name of it. And then the co-op was in Cambridge. So...

Interviewer:

Could you go to them if your tractor broke down?

Margaret Nelson:

Well, and you could buy parts. You would buy parts there.

Interviewer:

Oh, okay.

Margaret Nelson:

And a lot of farmers, they did much of their own repair work.

Interviewer:

That's so many-

Margaret Nelson:

Back then, you did.

Interviewer:

...so many different skill sets-

Margaret Nelson:

Right. Exactly.

Interviewer:

...involved in that. Wow. And last question, how many members of your family are still farming? It sounds like your brother was very, very involved. So was he running it all the way up until you sold it?

Margaret Nelson:

You know, both my brother and sister were active in Boys 4-H. Girls would be in Boys 4-H back then. I was in Girls 4-H and my sister was too. So we did the County Fair and that was... But the Boys 4-H, my brother and sister had cows that they would take to Nevada for Boys 4-H.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Margaret Nelson:

But your question was more about...

Interviewer:

Are they still working there? But first-

Margaret Nelson:

None of us are farming.

Interviewer:

... I want to ask one thing. What would you say is the separation between Boys and Girls 4-H in the 60s and 70s and the 50s, I suppose?

Margaret Nelson:

Well, in Girls 4-H you did, they had three years, they alternated cooking and sewing and home furnishings. So you might recover furniture. But now, it's far more sophisticated in terms of all of the activities that you can do. I did do a demonstration with another gal from Huxley and we did it, it was called Mark for Accuracy in Nevada, and it was how to mark darts on fabric with tracing paper. And I don't think a lot of people remember how you did that, how we did it back then.

Interviewer:

I don't even know what that is.

Margaret Nelson:

See, you just don't know. Literally, you had a little handle with a little wheel on it and you had tracing paper and you would mark with your pattern on the fabric to mark darts.

Interviewer:

I've seen that tool before. I think I have one. I have -

Margaret Nelson:

It's like a little tiny pizza cutter.

Interviewer:

Yeah. I have a sewing kit. I never have a chance to bring it out. I really do want to learn how to cook extensive things and sew stuff and all the "girly things" that are actually very important life skills, but you just never have enough time to do it. You reminded me, I'm going to put my eyes to it.

Margaret Nelson:

Now when I've gone to the State Fair, I see all of the variety of things. Like I was cleaning out our house and I had some of my grandmother's dishes, just a simple China plate with a gold band on it, and I gave it to my cousin in Sioux City because her children would do contests at the State Fair on heirloom place settings.

Interviewer:

Oh, wow.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah. So that was cool that they could use that.

Interviewer:

I was never in 4-H, but I think I would've liked it, that kind of more home economics side of it. 'Cause I didn't grow up on a farm, I just grew up on the street in a former farming town.

Margaret Nelson:

Sure. And I even think you could be a city girl and be in Girls 4-H.

Interviewer:

Oh, yeah.

Margaret Nelson:

You could do all those activities.

Interviewer:

It was a little more common for, at least in my years when I was in middle and high school, for the kids that lived out in the country or more on the edge of town, they would be more involved in it.

Margaret Nelson:

Right.

Interviewer:

Or had parents or grandparents who were farmers.

Margaret Nelson:

Sure. Sure.

Interviewer:

I didn't.

Margaret Nelson:

The county fair was fun back then.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Margaret Nelson:

Because you'd walk through the barns and kids would be hanging out on bales of hay and-

Interviewer:

Before the Prairie-

Margaret Nelson:

... brushing their cows and...

Interviewer:

Before the Prairie Fest inflatables were a thing.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah. Right. Right.

Interviewer:

Yeah. That's all of our questions. Do you have anything else that you want to talk about? You've got this whole list here.

Margaret Nelson:

I just want to make sure that I covered things. 'Cause I had talked to my sister, Esther and my brother, Mark. Right now, you asked about anyone in farming. None of us... Mark ended up majoring at Iowa State in agriculture, but then he went on to Madison, Wisconsin and got a degree in agricultural economics. So he became an economist.

Interviewer:

Oh, I gotcha.

Margaret Nelson:

So then it just went straight into economics. So he ended up working for the Department of Medicare and Medicaid as an economist. And then my sister Esther was a school teacher, elementary school teacher.

Interviewer:

And was she the one that went to St. Olaf?

Margaret Nelson:

She was the one that started at St. Olaf and then she transferred. She was going to start in nursing and then decided that teaching probably suited her more, so she transferred to... It was another name, UNI. Iowa State Teachers College, I think it was called back then.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Margaret Nelson:

At Northern Iowa.

Interviewer:

University of Northern Iowa?

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

And where did you go to college?

Margaret Nelson:

And I went to Wartburg College. My brother started at Wartburg College and I went all four years to Wartburg College. I was a school teacher and then I got a master's degree in counseling and student personnel and did do some work. And then I became more interested in holistic health and became a massage therapist and I got interested in the type of acupressure called Jin Shin Jyutsu and as a massage therapist, I was certified in neuromuscular therapy as well as Jin Shin Jyutsu and the acupressure that I studied. It was just a passion of mine.

Interviewer:

Fascinating. That's very specific.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

You said you have three siblings?

Margaret Nelson:

And then I have another sibling, Diane, who has passed away. She went to Luther for a year, but then she decided that she wanted to do... She went to beauty school.

Interviewer:

Oh, cosmetics?

Margaret Nelson:

She had always been really interested in beauty products and that's where her talents led her.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

You just went in all these different directions from the farm-

Margaret Nelson:

We did go in different directions.

Interviewer:

That's incredible.

Margaret Nelson:

Right. Yeah. Yeah. I think our parents raised us, that is something that we didn't touch upon. My parents, things that they encouraged in us was education and travel that I really appreciate now.

Interviewer:

They weren't planting the idea in your brain that you can just stay here and work the farm and everything will be fine.

Margaret Nelson:

You can do-

Interviewer:

They were really encouraging you to go find your own thing.

Margaret Nelson:

They were encouraging us and they exposed us, whether it was two missionaries, I remember the first missionary we had in our home when I was a little girl. His name was Walwa Theophilus, I'll never forget that name, from Madagascar. Because we had two missionaries in our church, our little church of Nazareth, had two sisters who were missionaries in Madagascar and they brought him home. And this was obviously, the first black person that had been in our home. But they exposed us through, whether it's even trips to Des Moines for shopping. My dad even liked shopping in Des Moines. And we would always eat at Walgreen. We became very exposed to different cultures and they hosted Iowa State students, foreign students in our home. And that exposure to other cultures-

Interviewer:

To all those people passing through.

Margaret Nelson:

... was really good for us. Right.

Interviewer:

Yeah, I can imagine.

Margaret Nelson:

And it taught us, I think, a deep respect for diversity and inclusion and I really appreciate that now.

Interviewer:

That's really great to hear that this was something that they were encouraging like Mid-century, Midwest America, Because that's not really something I hear about a lot.

Margaret Nelson:

And I'm almost surprised that that became a part of their nurturing us. Yeah, very thankful for that.

Interviewer:

I would be. Well, that is all of the questions.

Margaret Nelson:

Okay.

Interviewer:

Thank you so much for coming in and talking. You have so much information. It's been really great to talk about.

Margaret Nelson:

Well, I was looking forward to it, not only because our family has such a great history coming to the area and now that our farmstead is becoming an event center, a wedding venue, which we are thrilled, we have always, always wanted it to be used by the community.

Interviewer:

Yeah, I was about to say that it's really going to the people now.

Margaret Nelson:

It is.

Interviewer:

I think that's awesome.

Margaret Nelson:

And every time we would clean out the barn for the Iowa Barn Foundation tours, which we put on several times through the years, we would say, "What is going to happen to this barn? Because it's a gem. It's wonderful. It's an extraordinary piece of history in the area." And we couldn't be more thrilled to have it being used by the community now.

Interviewer:

And preserved in that way.

Margaret Nelson:

They are really doing everything they can to preserve the interior 'cause it has that beautiful, what they refer to as, Iowa's rural cathedrals. And it really does have that beauty.

Interviewer:

That makes me so happy. One of my pet peeves is people flipping historical houses and it's completely modern trends. And it's like, "That's a piece of history that you're kind of destroying."

Margaret Nelson:

Right. And the family that moved into the house now, because she is managing the events, is into preserving it and has the house she is into, I don't know what you would call, there's a name for it. She modernized it by painting all the walls white but then she has a farmhouse... It's a farmhouse theme, a farmhouse table in the dining room.

Interviewer:

Urban farmhouse is the name of that aesthetic.

Margaret Nelson:

And I think kitschy, too, feel to it.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Margaret Nelson:

And it's just wonderful, too.

Interviewer:

Yeah, it does have this nice charm to it, especially in the Midwest.

Margaret Nelson:

It does.

Interviewer:

Yeah. It's really nice.

Margaret Nelson:

She takes advantage of the bones, not just of the barn, but also in the house. It's very... It thrills us that someone is preserving that homestead. And it's called 1850 homestead. If anyone is wanting to research it on Facebook. It's 1850 homestead.

Interviewer:

I'll have to look that up later.

Margaret Nelson:

You do, you do have to, yeah.

Interviewer:

It's required. Mandatory assignment after the interview.

Margaret Nelson:

It is. It is. We are going there, in fact, we are going to meet with the owner and the daughter tomorrow who we have gotten to know. Well, I went through 12 years of school with the owner who bought it here in Huxley. We were in school since first grade together and we're meeting with them tomorrow because they want to do some history in the barn. So we are going to... We have pictures of all the former owners starting with Ole and Anna, and Knut and Tomina, and Andrew and Anna, and mom and dad. So we're going to do some type of a history in the barn so people know about the struggles that these early settlers went through to homestead Iowa.

Interviewer:

I know it's a recorded interview, but I would've loved to have seen those photos.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah, I have them in the car. So we're going to... You will get a chance because it's one of the things that's very important is that we tell the story of the history along with the barn.

Interviewer:

Yeah. It's not just a building.

Margaret Nelson:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

It's amazing.

Margaret Nelson:

Right.

Interviewer:

Okay, well that's about all we have time for. So thank you so much again. We really appreciate it and it was really enlightening and nice to talk to you today.

Margaret Nelson:

Well, I appreciate it. I really felt this is an important story to tell.

Interviewer:

Absolutely.

Margaret Nelson:

Okay.

Interviewer:

And the more stories the better.

Margaret Nelson:

Thank you, Margaret.

Interviewer:

Thank you, Margaret.