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**The Iowa Blind History Archive  
History of Blindness in Iowa - Oral History Project  
Interview with [Name]  
Conducted by [Name]  
[Date]  
Transcribed by [Name]**

**NOTE: Any text included in brackets [ ] is information that was added by the narrator after reviewing the original transcript. Therefore, this information is not included in the audio version of the interview.**

**Peg Brandt, 57, Reinbeck, IA  
Karla Ice  
IDB Building, 524 4<sup>th</sup> Street; Des Moines, IA  
10-2-2010**

**(Beginning of Recording 1)**

**Karla Ice: My name is Karla Ice, and I'm collecting the story today. The name of the person I'm collecting is...**

**Peg Brandt: Peg Brandt.**

**Ice: This is the story of Peg Brandt. The recording is being taken at the Iowa Department for the Blind in Des Moines, Iowa, on Saturday, October 2, 2010, at about 2:30 in the afternoon. And, I need to read this statement to you: All stories submitted to this project will become the property of a History of Blindness collection owned by the Iowa Department for the Blind. By submitting your story, you are acknowledging that your story is a gift, which transfers to the Iowa Department for the Blind all legal title and all literary property rights. You will be granting to the Iowa Department for the Blind an unrestricted license to use your recording, and all the information which it contains, in any manner the Iowa Department for the Blind may wish to use it, for as long as the Iowa Department for the Blind wishes to use it. Do you agree to have your story recorded?**

**Brandt: I so agree.**

**Ice: Thank you. Now would you please state your name?**

**Brandt: My name is Peg Brandt, or Peg Brandt Zee, whatever you want to call it. Technically, I'm married, but I don't claim him.**

**Ice: Okay, your age?**

**Brandt: Oh, my gosh. Thanks! I'm 57.**

**Ice: Okay. And, where do you live now?**

**Brandt: I'm in Reinbeck, Iowa.**

**Ice: Okay. And, what is it you'd like to tell us about today?**

**Brandt: Growing up I have always been legally blind, always received services, to a certain degree, from the Department for the Blind. I was brought in one year. I think I was probably in about ninth grade, maybe, and Kenneth Jernigan, of course, was the Director, and he used to do this to everybody, you know he'd hold up his fingers and say, "How many fingers are there?" Well, I used to do fairly good, but he'd still say I was blind. And, I would always constantly deny that.**

**I came in at another time, probably when I was about a senior, went through the same deal and I still denied my blindness, even though I'd grown up legally blind all my life. But, the Department decided to sponsor me going through college, which I greatly appreciated, because my folks could not afford it.**

**So, I did go through college, through sponsorship through the Department. I had a few readers; mainly I did my own reading, which really took a toll. So, I was not the greatest of students.**

**Years later I decided that I saw so many success stories of people who did go through the Orientation Center. And, I figure, "I think I finally need this." I'd gone through college, I had worked for a bunch of years, and I quit a job, came back up to my hometown area and I'd got another job and decided that was not for me. I was sitting, and I decided it was finally time for Orientation. I was in my thirties, and I figure, "Hey, what better time?" (Laughter)**

**So, I went to the Orientation Center, enjoyed myself immensely, learned a lot. Now, here's where you'll get me to cry because I sent a letter to Jernigan, telling me...telling him, you know, that through him, because of listening to him and other people that went through the Orientation Center, because of how he had set it up, that, you know, that I'd turned out pretty good, and I was glad I did it because I did learn a lot. I got to network with a lot of other blind people, which I hadn't done...I had not done in my life, other than my counselor, Jim Glaza. Who, my parents always thought that he was amazing because he could do stuff, just because he was blind. We know that's a bunch of malarkey, of course! Anyway, 'cause Jim, he was just good at what he did.**

**Anyway, I went, I sent him the letter, and telling him about how great the Orientation Center was. I did tell him that I had joined the National Federation of the Blind, an organization that he had also started, too, and that I was really very happy with my life. And, he sent me back a personal letter, and he said that he knew that I would eventually go to the Orientation Center, and that I would belong to the NFB, because I was a strong, stubborn person. He says that was the kind of person that, people, that go to the Center and do well. So, my story!**

**Ice: Well, thank you very much for sharing that.**

**Brandt: Yeah!**

**Ice: Thank you for coming today.**

**4:39**

**(End of Recording 1)**

**(Beginning of Recording 2)**

**Peg Brandt: This is Peg Brandt and I agree to the statement that was read. This is another story of mine. Being a student at the Orientation Center on travel class, I was walking up north towards Vets Auditorium, and they have those dips where the cars are, you know...that the cars can go in, and I kept tripping on 'em and my ankles. And, all of a sudden somebody come by and says, "Well, hi there." He was walkin' along there with me, and we were havin' a good conversation. He finally informed me he was with the carnival...they had a carnival, small carnival behind Vets Auditorium. I was goin' home that weekend, and I said that, you know, when I come back, you know Sunday, you know, I'll come up and see ya." So, yeah, you're not supposed to, but I lifted up my shades to see what he looked like, so I could make sure it was him that I was...he was working at the Tilt-A-Whirl where he said he was going to be at.**

**So, about four or five of us, when I got back Sunday, we went up to the carnival. And, I went up to him and I says, "Hi, you remember me?" And, he goes, "Yeah, I do." So, he gives us a whole bunch of tickets then, that hadn't been ripped or punched, so we all went around free and rode on all the rides and everything! (Laughter) So, that was fun.**

**Another good...travel was always an experience, for I think about everybody, but I loved it. Another time, I'm...I can't remember whether what street it was...I think it was Sixth Street, and I was headed back actually toward the Department though, I believe. I was one that hugged the wall when I cane traveled, which you're not supposed to do. But, I did it. So, I go along...tap, tap, tap...thug! What was**

**the thug? Okay. So, I reach my hand out. Oh, one of those white and orange plastic trash cans that they used to have out in years ago, you know? We're talking in the, you know, nineties here, guys! So, I go okay, you know. So, I know what I tapped. So I'm still goin' along the wall...tap, tap, tap...another thug! Okay, so another trash can. Keep goin' along...tap, tap, tap...thug! But, the thug sounded different. I go to reach my hand out, and this guy says, "Well hi there!"**

**I kinda groped the guy! (Laughter) And, I says, "Well, gee, how come you didn't move out of the way? You know, I mean, I'm ready to grab the trash can, and you're not a trash can!" And, he says "I was watchin' ya!" And, I says, "Well, I think I woulda gotten out of the way." And, we just giggled about it, and I said, "I almost touched you probably, where you weren't expecting it or anything!" But, I figured after that, whenever I thugged on anything, I wasn't gonna reach out and touch it! (Laughter)**

**So, I never did after that! I learned my lesson! But, travel, I think, it was the scariest going into. But, I think I had the most fun, because I'd meet different people, and I caused my travel instructor to get his suit all full of oil, because he tried to get me to duck under a scaffolding that was...I woulda smashed my head on had he not been there. So, lots o' fun!**

**Karla Ice: Yes. (Laughter)**

**Brandt: And, that's it.**

**Ice: Okay.**

**Brandt: That's all for me, unless you have anything.**

**Ice: No, thank you very much!**

**2:58**

**(End of Recording 2)**

**Sandi Ryan**

**1/6/2011**