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Transcript of Interview with Sonora Dodd by R. Belle Colver, October 29, 1965

R. Belle Colver

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FATHERS' DAY INTERNATIONAL.....

This interview with Mrs. John Bruce Dodd, founder of Fathers' Day, took place at her home in the Spokane Valley, October 29, 1965, a glorious autumn day, ideal for such an event...Being a retired newspaper woman, I had worked with Mrs Dodd in various club groups,- more recently in the Spokane Branch, National League of American Pen Women, and the June (1965) magazine "The Pen Woman," has full page article which I wrote on Mrs. Dodd, relative to Fathers' Day, how and why it started, and why she hoped it might become world-wide. This interview, in more intimate conversational style, covers some of that same ground, and I might add, through my long connections with the Spokesman-Review, Spokane, I was familiar with the organizational activities from the very beginning. Now for the interview:

Question (Miss Colver speaking).- Did you have any idea Fathers' Day would become world-wide,- in the beginning I mean.

Answer (Mrs Dodd speaking).- I had only hoped it might.

Q.- Do you mind the way it has been commercialized?

A.- No, for I do not think any gift too great for Fathers. On the first Fathers Day I took my little son with me on a friendly call to the advertizing departments of our mercantile places (stores) and requested that Fathers Day gifts be displayed in the window, and that gifts for fathers be given display.

Q.- What was your own Father's reaction to that first Dather's Day?

A.- My own Father never accepted Father's Day as personal to himself, but to all fathers,- worthy fathers. Before my Father's death, it had become nationalized... President Wilson, from his desk in the White House, Washington, D. C., pressed a button opening ceremonies at the Fairgrounds, here in Spokane, observing the anniversary of Fathers Day, which attracted an overflow crowd to the stands. Inland Empire high school bands came to partipate in the program, various civic organizations shared in it, church groups and women's organizations. This brought nation-wide publicity, stimulating national interest.

Q.- What tribute given you, gave you your greatest joy ?

A.- When they made my son "The Ideal Father of the Year." The WASHINGTON POST, Washington, D.C., made him "ideal father of the year." That really was the highest tribute.

Q.- You must have had a lot of fan mail through the years,- children, parents, celebrities...tell me some of the outstanding ones you recall.

A.- Oh, yes,- many, time and time again. Ripley, the cartoonist, from somewhere overseas; Dale Carnegie, syndicated columnist; Ralph Bellamy, the actor; Marie Dressler, actress, who invited me to her home; Bing Crosby, Fathers Day National Coubcil's chairman for the 25th anniversary program; Oh, I could go on and on.

Q.- What of invitations for personal appearances...there must have been many through the half century and more.

A.- I visited New York several times (National headquarters are there), and was guest at many luncheons given by the National Fathers Day council. During the World War, the Council gave a luncheon opening the Bond Drive in New York which resulted in drive that raised a billion dollars. President

Rooster

This interview with Mrs. Bode... I had only hoped to...
Q - Do you mind the way it has been commercialized?
A - No, for I do not think any will be great for...
Q - What was your own reaction to that first...
A - My own reaction...
Q - What did you think of the year...
A - You must have had a lot of fun...
Q - Did you...
Q - What of...
Q - ...

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Answer (Mrs. Bode speaking) - I had only hoped to...

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"Father's Day" listed in the 1965 World Almanac as June 20 (1965) and "always third Sunday in that month."

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The Golden Jubilee anniversary, June 1960, was observed nationally and internationally...On this occasion Mrs Dodd told me, "I am happy indeed that my dream of a world-wide observance of Father's Day came into being while I was still in good health to enjoy it."

R. Belle Colver
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Spokane, Washington.

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Spokane, Washington

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