

Leslie Newall Oral History Interview
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Leslie Newall served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia from 1965 to 1967 in an education program.

Access

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Oral History Interview

with

Leslie Newall

November 10, 2019

Kapa'a, Hawaii

By Christine Musa

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

MUSA: [00:00:04] This interview is being conducted with Leslie Newall from Kapahi, Hawaii. She served in Liberia from 1965 to 1967 in an education program. Tell me, Leslie, about your initial interest in the Peace Corps and how you got involved.

NEWALL: [00:00:28] I remember when Kennedy was running for president and you just fell in love with him, and he was so neat. And I always wanted to travel. And so when he talked about the Peace Corps, oh, I knew that was my niche. Yeah. And my parents were very supportive, although I guess they were a little worried. I don't know. And, um.

MUSA: [00:01:02] Had you traveled any before then?

NEWALL: [00:01:03] No, no, no, no.

MUSA: [00:01:05] And how about friends of yours?

NEWALL: [00:01:10] I didn't know anyone else who was going in. Um. I guess they would support. I, I don't remember anything particular.

MUSA: [00:01:24] And what was the application process like?

NEWALL: [00:01:29] I remember there was some form and it asked you where you wanted to go. And I had always been interested in India and Gandhi, so I said India. And then I got a letter back saying, we have a program in education going to West Africa and we can offer you that. And I said yes. I didn't care. It wasn't that strong that I had to go to India in other words.

MUSA: [00:02:02] Uh huh. And then the initial training that you got, explain that.

NEWALL: [00:02:13] Okay. We were a group of volunteers that all went first to Berkeley, and it was West Africa. Some were going to Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, and I think Sierra Leone. And they identified some people who split off from our group and went to San Francisco State, which was an elementary program, I believe. Well, at the end of that summer, we were supposed to go back. It was between our junior and senior year. And I think it was an experiment for Peace Corps to see how it would work if we were, I think, supposed to go back to our senior year in college and learn about Liberia or wherever we were going. And then we would be so much more knowledgeable when we went back for our second real summer of training.

MUSA: [00:03:25] So you had already been accepted into the Peace Corps before you finished college?

NEWALL: [00:03:29] Yes. But at the end of the first summer, they deselected some people. And I was the only one who was transferred from the secondary education programs at Berkeley over to the San Francisco State group that were elementary ed teachers. I don't know what, what there was about me that said elementary. And in my later life, I've only worked with intermediate and high school kids so.

MUSA: [00:04:06] Now tell me about the second part of your training then, after you graduated from college.

NEWALL: [00:04:10] Okay, so that was at San Francisco State. As I remember, it was just regular classroom kind of things. I guess history. And we didn't have to learn a language because the official language of Liberia is English and, um. I, there was a component at the end where they were, um, going on some kind of physical training. And I think they learned how to drive a pickup truck with standard gears. But I didn't have to go because supposedly I had had my physical training the previous year. We went, for that, we just went up to Yosemite, spent a few days camping. Everybody just went off with whoever they wanted to. I guess we had tents and canned food and that was our physical training.

MUSA: [00:05:19] And that was between your junior and senior year you're referring to?

NEWALL: [00:05:22] Yes. Yeah. And then I was excused from the other training. So we got to San Francisco for my second summer of training, and there was a regular group who was just starting. And we were referred to as this experienced group, which was a joke. But, uh, we all were together in classes and everything, and the only thing I was excused from was the physical part at the end.

MUSA: [00:05:53] Mm hmm. Now you grew up in New York?

NEWALL: [00:05:56] Yes, correct.

MUSA: [00:05:57] But you went to school out in California, which is.

NEWALL: [00:05:59] Just for the training.

MUSA: [00:06:01] Oh, okay.

NEWALL: [00:06:01] I went to school in Buffalo, New York.

MUSA: [00:06:05] All right. And then they sent you out for the training in California. You left for your service from California then?

NEWALL: [00:06:12] No, we went home for about two weeks, and then we all went out together.

MUSA: [00:06:21] Where did you leave from?

NEWALL: [00:06:23] I think it was probably in those days Idlewild, which is JFK now. I don't think it was from LaGuardia.

MUSA: [00:06:32] Tell me about your arrival in Liberia.

NEWALL: [00:06:37] You know, I'm trying to think if we had an intermediate stop. We probably did, but I don't remember it. I remember landing at Roberts Field in Monrovia and it being hot. Hot, humid, awful. And there was a Peace Corps hostel in Monrovia, and they took us there and we stayed there for a couple of days. I guess it was like a staging. And people were sent out to the different parts of the country. And I was to go to Cape Palmas, which was the President Tubman's hometown. And it was majestically called Harper City, and it had a traffic light hanging in the middle of a road that never worked. But I think it was in honor of President Tubman.

NEWALL: [00:07:34] And we were met at the airport by a volunteer who had been teaching for one year, and his second year was to be as leader. And there was a small Peace Corps office in Harper, and he was there really just to help if there were any problems. And that's where our mail was delivered and, um. I was just outside of town. I had to walk maybe a mile or so into town to get to my school.

MUSA: [00:08:11] Were there other volunteers then in that general area?

NEWALL: [00:08:15] Oh, yeah. There were probably 12 of us in Harper all together. Yeah. Yeah. Some were, you know, previous, you know, the group before us. Yeah.

MUSA: [00:08:28] What was your home like?

NEWALL: [00:08:30] Very nice. It was cement block. It was owned by President Tubman's son. He had three rentals. The people next door to me were Dutch Canadians. He worked for the lumber company, and she had two small children. And I shared the house with another volunteer who had been there a year already. And this Liberian girl who cooked for us. I guess she did our laundry. I don't remember. She was a high school student. We paid her tuition at the Catholic high school, and that was for a year.

NEWALL: [00:09:12] When she left, I moved into an apartment over a Lebanese store that sold cloth and canned goods and stuff. But it was right next to the marketplace. And, you know, these open markets and there was loud music playing till very late at night. I didn't like living there so much, but it was right in the middle of town. And it was another cement block house. It had pipes and everything for a bathroom, as did the other house, but there was no water coming through the pipes. It had to be hauled in by buckets.

MUSA: [00:09:57] Mm hmm. Why did you have to move the second year?

NEWALL: [00:10:01] Because she was leaving and I guess they didn't have another new volunteer. They didn't want me in the house all by myself.

MUSA: [00:10:13] Okay.

NEWALL: [00:10:14] So they gave me a new volunteer.

MUSA: [00:10:16] Now, the woman that cooked for you, did she go with you?

NEWALL: [00:10:20] No. That's when, the young girl, she went to, uh, we paid for her to go to a Catholic. I guess they called it the convent or something, for girls that were going to the Catholic high school. So we paid her tuition.

MUSA: [00:10:36] And what kind of foods did she prepare for you? What was your diet like?

NEWALL: [00:10:39] Butter and greens. And she used to bake bread. Oh, that was the best. There was a Firestone plantation about 30, 45 minutes up the road, and they had a store. And we would go up there in the Peace Corps leader's, he had a truck. And there was a small store and they had like frozen meats and things from Denmark and canned goods and stuff that weren't in the regular stores. And so we could buy lots of that stuff and she would fix something from that.

MUSA: [00:11:21] What was the staple food?

NEWALL: [00:11:24] The rice and I guess palm butter and greens and *fufu*. *Dumboy* or whatever.

MUSA: [00:11:34] *Fufu* is made out of cassava?

NEWALL: [00:11:35] Yeah. Yeah.

MUSA: [00:11:36] Okay.

NEWALL: [00:11:38] But I didn't eat that.

MUSA: [00:11:41] Pepper?

NEWALL: [00:11:41] Pepper. Yes. They had, the volunteers that were experienced, they had us all for dinner one of the first nights we were there. And the palm butter was so hot, and you're pouring it over the rice. So I was pouring it over. Oh, gosh. My mouth was on fire. And I know they were laughing at all of us. I know that they were. So that's how you learn.

MUSA: [00:12:07] Yeah. Yeah. How did you do simple things like laundry?

NEWALL: [00:12:12] The Liberian girl and, you know, for living with us and feeding her and her school fees and everything. She did our laundry. I don't know. By hand. Downstairs in the, there was an empty lot next to the stairs.

MUSA: [00:12:30] And then, um, tell me what job you actually did in Harper.

NEWALL: [00:12:38] Okay. They first took me to the Catholic high school and they wanted me to teach algebra. And I have a mental block from small kid time about math. And I kept saying, no, I can't teach algebra. Oh, no. You just stay one page ahead of the kids. And that's how it was left. And I went home and I cried. And the next morning I got up and I went to talk to the Peace Corps leader and I said, I cannot do that. It's the, I tell people the Peace Corps was my most formative experience in who I became later in life besides my family. And that's the first time I ever had to take charge and demand something because I knew I couldn't do it.

MUSA: [00:13:35] Really asserted yourself.

NEWALL: [00:13:36] I did, the first time. And made me probably, you know, I, for 30 years I've traveled all through Europe and on my own. And I never could have done that before Peace Corps.

MUSA: [00:13:52] Huh. That was a good learning experience.

NEWALL: [00:13:54] It was. It was. So I was in a small school. The Peace Corps leader said, oh, well, I know of this small school in the marketplace. So it was right near where I was living, in a church, small wooden church, one room, and in each corner was a different grade. And I had fourth grade and there were like three benches in a round, a chalkboard on a stand. Few textbooks. And I would just sit on the benches with the kids and we would have our lesson.

MUSA: [00:14:36] Subjects taught?

NEWALL: [00:14:39] Liberian history. I remember the textbook. The Americo-Liberians founded the country and the rest of the people there were barbarians. Which is the kids that I'm sitting there teaching. But there were American, Americo-Liberians in the town because of President Tubman growing up there. And they had a, their own social status and, um. Yeah, math, you know, that kind of.

MUSA: [00:15:13] So define Americo-Liberians?

NEWALL: [00:15:15] Oh, they, when the country was founded, was founded by, I think, ministers in Philadelphia or someplace like Boston, I don't know, to send, uh. Before the Civil War, they thought one way to solve the problem was to send Blacks back to where they came from. Of course, Liberia wasn't in existence there, but that's where they landed. And the Americo-Liberians set up the government and they used American money. And the whole structure of the government was based on American. And they really thought that they were, uh, way better than these barbarians of the country.

MUSA: [00:16:07] So they were really Americans?

NEWALL: [00:16:09] They were. Well, they had been, yeah, they didn't speak any local dialect or anything. They had been in America.

MUSA: [00:16:17] You're referring to the Blacks that came?

NEWALL: [00:16:20] Yeah.

MUSA: [00:16:20] Okay. That's, I wasn't sure.

NEWALL: [00:16:23] They were former slaves.

MUSA: [00:16:25] Oh, okay. So they had a big influence then when they came back.

NEWALL: [00:16:31] Yeah.

MUSA: [00:16:31] Yeah. Okay.

NEWALL: [00:16:32] Isn't that the basis of Sierra Leone? Weren't there, um?

MUSA: [00:16:39] Yeah. Similar.

NEWALL: [00:16:40] They were sent by the English government. And that's the country next door to each other.

MUSA: [00:16:45] Yeah, that's where I served. And the, uh, the people were brought back to Freetown. And but so, the school, regular school day. Walk us through a.

NEWALL: [00:16:58] I think it only went to like 8:00 to 12:00. I guess we started with pledging allegiance to the flag. I don't remember. We, you know, there was no bell ringing. The kids didn't change classes. There was no place to go out like for a recess or anything. No one ever asked what I was doing. The man who was the principal of the school was a retired general from the Army. He was a, I think, half Americo-Liberian. He thought he was a lot better than everybody else, but he never came to see what you were doing. There was no supervision of us.

MUSA: [00:17:52] Tell me the other subjects you taught.

NEWALL: [00:17:56] I remember the social studies. I remember the English, and I must have done math. I don't know how much science I could have done, but I would guess that's it. There was no music or any enrichment type activities.

MUSA: [00:18:14] Did the students work at home afterwards? I mean, were they involved in family activities?

NEWALL: [00:18:21] I think so. I know that some of the girls worked with their mother across the street in the marketplace. Um. I don't remember what boys were doing in particular.

MUSA: [00:18:37] Speaking of the marketplace, did you shop there often?

NEWALL: [00:18:41] Um, the girl who did our cooking and lived with us would shop there. I mean, I could go and walk around and stuff, but very strong smells from the marketplace.

MUSA: [00:18:59] Did you have an opportunity to travel at all in the country?

NEWALL: [00:19:05] Um, a little bit. They, Peace Corps must have brought us up from Harper City to Monrovia, maybe once or twice during a year. And

because it was a fly-in post, you know, it wasn't something we could just get in a money bus and.

MUSA: [00:19:27] Harper was a fly-in?

NEWALL: [00:19:31] Yeah, but there was a road up, where there were volunteers up along this road that was headed toward the Ivory Coast, but it didn't go anywhere beyond that. It didn't connect to any place else. So if I was going to go visit my boyfriend, I had to walk overnight, stomp through the bush with guides. I went with several other volunteers. I remember we slept on a floor of a house halfway, and then we reached the end of another road. And then I had to cross the country to see him in a money bus.

MUSA: [00:20:20] Oh, in a money bus.

NEWALL: [00:20:21] Yeah.

MUSA: [00:20:22] But you were talking about being a fly-in. But there weren't planes?

NEWALL: [00:20:25] There were planes, but we didn't have money for that. It was only if Peace Corps, I don't know, maybe for a holiday or something. They called us up to Monrovia. Or if we were sick, if there was a medical problem. But Harper had a small hospital with an older man who was a Frenchman. And at one point I remember I had an infection under my big toenail and I went there. I didn't tell the Peace Corps leader I needed to be flown to my, to. See, I was getting too independent and I just went to the hospital. The doctor said, oh, we need to pull your nail off. We'll put you to sleep. And I think they did it right then and there. I don't remember going home and coming back to the hospital. I have no idea what the operating room looked like because I was out.

NEWALL: [00:21:16] They had an old, dilapidated car that was the ambulance that drove me a few, maybe a mile to my house. And I couldn't put my foot down. You know, your blood is pulsing in it. And I had to go up the stairs

to my apartment on my rear end. And it was fine. But I don't know if anyone else went to the doctor at the local hospital. I really don't.

MUSA: [00:21:50] Now, this bus that you caught after hiking and then that bus took you up country. Describe the transportation.

NEWALL: [00:21:58] Oh, a money bus is like a Volkswagen kind of thing and packed with people, with chickens, maybe a goat. Packed with people. Some people on the roof and people getting on and off all along the way. And you just hail it. And if it was too full, it wouldn't stop. If they thought they could squeeze one more person on, they did.

MUSA: [00:22:32] What were the roads like?

NEWALL: [00:22:33] Oh, terrible dirt roads. The soil is, what they taught us, it was laterite, which is a red kind of leached out soil that's very fine. In fact, we have it here in Hawaii. And you would come out filthy, red tinged, out of the bus. Holes, you know. I understand that after we left, some of the roads out of Monrovia got paved, paved. But since then, Liberia's had some awful history with an uprising of local people. There was this Sergeant Doe who became president, I think. But it's, unfortunately, I think it was never colonized.

NEWALL: [00:23:28] I remember we took a vacation. There were enough Peace Corps volunteers for the vacation, summer vacation between the two school years that we were there, to charter a plane and we went to Kenya.

MUSA: [00:23:44] Oh.

NEWALL: [00:23:45] There was a place in Kenya that had malted milkshakes. And then.

MUSA: [00:23:51] Luxury.

NEWALL: [00:23:51] Yeah, but, oh, what was I saying? The, uh, Liberia never had a postal system or banks or. There was a Dutch company, I think, that had a

Volkswagen dealership, like a trained mechanic in the middle of the town. And I think we could cash a check or get money there.

MUSA: [00:24:24] Yeah, if there were no banks, how did you get your living allowance that Peace Corps provided?

NEWALL: [00:24:29] I don't remember. I guess it came to us through the Peace Corps leader.

MUSA: [00:24:34] Now you mentioned a boyfriend that you went to visit. That was another volunteer, correct?

NEWALL: [00:24:42] Yes, yes. We met during training in the San Francisco area. He was at the very other end of the country, so we didn't see each other much. But then when we did, the sparks flew.

MUSA: [00:24:57] And his name?

NEWALL: [00:24:58] Bob Ginlack.

MUSA: [00:25:00] Okay. And he was a volunteer?

NEWALL: [00:25:03] He was a volunteer. He was a teacher also. He was a trained teacher. He, um, here in Hawaii we both taught and he went into administration. And we got divorced after about ten years of marriage but, um.

MUSA: [00:25:24] Okay, so you both ended up in Hawaii afterwards.

NEWALL: [00:25:28] Yeah.

MUSA: [00:25:41] Are you aware of your experience as a volunteer compared to any other education volunteers?

NEWALL: [00:25:48] Oh, yes. There was a girl friend that was my roommate in training, and she was in Harper also, and she taught at the government school. And, um, that was a real school, cement, you know, and it had a

playground and stuff. But she had second grade with like 40 little kids. And she had such a hard time, you know, controlling, knowing what to do and.

MUSA: [00:26:19] That's a big class.

NEWALL: [00:26:20] It was, yeah, yeah. I don't think she was as happy as I was in my teaching situation when nobody bothered me. I could do pretty much what I wanted to.

MUSA: [00:26:31] Now, after your service was done, which was at the end of the school year, you ended up coming home?

NEWALL: [00:26:40] Yes, um, we were engaged by then, and at that time, I don't know how it works now. We were given a plane ticket to home and we could add stops along the way. And we were given, was it half of our living allowance? I'm not sure. A certain amount of the money that had been banked for us in the States, our big pay. And so we traveled through Europe. I know we went to Spain, we went to Italy, Germany, Paris, maybe London. And it was the time of terrible riots in the States when cities were being burned in New Jersey and stuff. Terrible time. And it was a time of hippies. We saw our first hippies and that was terribly exciting.

MUSA: [00:27:41] In Europe?

NEWALL: [00:27:41] In Europe. And eventually we got back to New York, which was my home. And Peace Corps had a little newsletter with employment opportunities for returning volunteers. And my husband applied and he got Philadelphia, and so we went there. Well, I was planning our wedding, so I just did a little bit of subbing in Philly, but not much. But we had a year teaching. He was teaching there. We got married in Philadelphia. We went to Temple University that summer and by then this job opportunities paper became a little more formal, I think. And the state of Hawaii was recruiting teachers through that.

NEWALL: [00:28:38] And I was not an education major. They said, it's okay, you come and teach and you'll be in a regular school, you'll be supervised by a principal, you know. But we will give you your tenure after two years if

everything went okay. And so I taught in Hawaii on that certification, never having had an education, formal education course.

MUSA: [00:29:11] And what did you end up, what level did you teach when you came to Hawaii?

NEWALL: [00:29:15] I was doing seventh and eighth grade English, and then I went back to the University of Hawaii in Honolulu and got my master's. Finally, I'm taking education courses in counseling. And so I spent the rest of my career as a counselor. I was doing seventh, eighth, and ninth, tenth grades at different times.

MUSA: [00:29:37] Now, your college degree had been?

NEWALL: [00:29:40] A history major.

MUSA: [00:29:41] History. So you went from history to education and the Peace Corps, and then that led you to your career?

NEWALL: [00:29:47] Yeah, essentially, yeah.

MUSA: [00:29:49] Do you have any regrets about the Peace Corps?

NEWALL: [00:29:53] Oh, no, no, no. None at all. It was, I tell my son, the most fun period of my life, my whole life. Because we were all about the same age, the volunteers. The ones who were up the road would come down to Harper for the weekend and there'd be a dance at school or a dance in church or in a bar. And we would go and dance all night, sweating, sweating, sweat dripping off our chin, having such a great time. And, and it wasn't, um. There were a couple of boy-girl relationships, but for most part it was friends and all going through the same, you know, experience. I guess we all missed home at times. I don't remember missing home at all. I thought it was wonderful.

MUSA: [00:31:04] How much, um, how much influence do you think you had on the local population in terms of helping them understand American culture,

which is the second goal of the Peace Corps? Your first goal was providing a service, which was your education.

NEWALL: [00:31:21] I think they came to realize as we were, you know, fun. We weren't political, we weren't soldiers. We were young people and we tried to have friends. And that isn't easy, you know, but, um. So I think we were liked. And in fact, ten years after being in Hawaii, my husband and I went back, bought a camper in Germany, and decided to go back to Liberia. And my son was only a year and a half. And we foolishly tried crossing the Sahara Desert, ran into problems in the desert, getting stuck in sand. Four German guys came by and helped us get out of it. And we turned around and went back and drove as far as Casablanca and put our Volkswagen on a train that took, uh, on a boat that took us to Dakar, Senegal.

NEWALL: [00:32:42] And so we took, put the van on a flatbed train and got as far as, went through Bamako, Mali, and then headed back to Liberia. I don't know, I think maybe through Guinea. At some point we crossed the Liberian border near Harper, and some young men in uniform stopped us at the border and they had their hand out. They wanted their dash, their money, their tip. And a young man came out of a small building and he said, no, no, no, not these people, not these people. It turned out to be one of my former students. And he remembered me and he got us through without any problems. So, I mean, I knew I made one friend.

MUSA: [00:33:47] And how did the rest of the trip go? Then you got down into Liberia and you got back to your village, both of your villages?

NEWALL: [00:33:54] We both did. We got up to where my husband was and my son is named Saa Tamba Ginlack. *Saa* means firstborn son. *Tamba* means second born son. So we used to joke that we had to stop at one kid because we had the two names in one person. And we just liked the sound of Saa Tamba. It rolled. So we did go back to the village that Bob was in and the, the reason why we gave him the name Tamba is the chief's name was Tamba Taylor. He was later the member of the tribal community that was in President Sirleaf's cabinet, when that woman Sirleaf became the first woman president of Liberia maybe ten years ago, I think it was. So he was the chief of the village.

MUSA: [00:35:01] Of the village that your husband was in?

NEWALL: [00:35:03] Yes. And we had to cross this little bridge. And then we came into the village and the chief came to the car yelling, where's this Tamba boy? Where's this Tamba boy? So we must have written to him or saying that we were coming with our son. And oh, we were treated really nicely and it was really great. And I got back to Harper. We stayed with a volunteer and we then went. We were in Monrovia for the longest time and we camped out in the front yard of a volunteer and he in fact lent us \$100 till our money check came from the States. Um. So we were there probably two months.

MUSA: [00:35:59] And then you got down into Harper?

NEWALL: [00:36:02] Yes. Yeah. And the, I remember we went to the Peace Corps hostel in Monrovia and we went to the Peace Corps office. And the Peace Corps nurse, her name was Comfort Butler, and she was still there. So we saw her. Monrovia had movie theaters. It had one big Western hotel, the Intercontinental, and we met some of the volunteers.

MUSA: [00:36:44] Then you ended up coming home. What did you do with the bus?

NEWALL: [00:36:48] We had to, we put it on a ship that stopped in Monrovia and took us to the Canary Islands. Got off in the Canary Islands, stayed there a month. Put it on another ship to Spain and continued our travels around Europe. Got as far east as Istanbul. People in Turkey are very nice.

MUSA: [00:37:15] Did you bring the bus back home or did you?

NEWALL: [00:37:18] We did, yes. We shipped it out of Amsterdam to New York and picked it up in New York and drove it across country. And a friend helped us put it on a ship to Hawaii.

MUSA: [00:37:29] Oh, wow. That bus.

NEWALL: [00:37:30] Yeah. Got around.

MUSA: [00:37:31] Did some traveling.

NEWALL: [00:37:32] Yeah.

MUSA: [00:37:33] Oh, wow. So that was a long trip, then?

NEWALL: [00:37:36] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Probably a year and a half, maybe.

MUSA: [00:37:43] Have you incorporated any kind of third goal activities since you've been back in the United States?

NEWALL: [00:37:53] What's the third goal?

MUSA: [00:37:54] Teaching, uh, teaching Americans about your experience in the Liberian culture.

NEWALL: [00:38:00] I gave a couple of talks at school. I remember once to students, once to my faculty. But that's the only formal thing that I can think of. But like I say, all my pictures were on slides and after a few years in Hawaii, they all turned purple. I have no pictures of Liberia from, from my sides and my husband's also.

MUSA: [00:38:40] Well, um, so overall, it sounds like you had a very positive experience.

NEWALL: [00:38:45] Oh, very. I just, I thought it was so much fun and I developed such independence for myself. I think I made a good impression. I mean, I'm a friendly person. I talk, I like to laugh. You know, I like to dance with him. Oh, I remember one Liberian man, older man. He was a judge at a dance and he asked me to dance a cha cha. And I said I didn't know how to cha cha. Oh, he was such a good dancer. He could just steer you anyway, you know? He knew, I became a cha cha dancer. Yeah, it was, I only have happy memories. Except for that one night when I thought I would have to teach algebra.

MUSA: [00:39:48] When you actually left the country, was there any kind of ceremony? I mean, how did you feel about that?

NEWALL: [00:39:54] The school that my girlfriend was at that was a regular school had a program for all the volunteers. Oh, sad, sad, sad. We were all standing up on the stage. Oh, I was really sad to be leaving.

MUSA: [00:40:12] Have you kept in touch with anybody from the country?

NEWALL: [00:40:14] Oh, yes. Yes, I'm pretty good about. From the country?

MUSA: [00:40:17] Yeah.

NEWALL: [00:40:18] From Liberia. The one girl who was my house, uh, lived with me for the year. She was, uh, she came back. She came to the States, got an education in the States. Unfortunately had a terrible stroke and can't talk any longer. But I've still visited her in Philadelphia and kept in touch with them, her husband, who is Liberian.

MUSA: [00:40:56] And you've kept in touch with other volunteers it sounds like?

NEWALL: [00:40:58] Oh, yes. Yeah. And the Canadian lady who lived next door to me, she just came to visit last year and, um. Yeah. Lots of volunteers I've kept in touch with. Yeah.

MUSA: [00:41:14] Well, before we wrap this up, is there anything else that you can think of you want to add?

NEWALL: [00:41:23] Best years of my life.

MUSA: [00:41:25] Well, that's a, that's a good endorsement for the Peace Corps. Thank you for your time.

NEWALL: [00:41:30] Okay.

[END OF INTERVIEW]