

# Oral History - Ginger Grissom

Interview by Cara Doyle

September 26, 2002

*This is Cara; it's September 26, 2002 and I'm sitting here with Ginger in her beauty shop and if we get interrupted, we're going to put it on pause so if you hear noise, that's just part of the shop busy-ness because we still need to make money.*

***Right Ginger?***

Right.

***Tell me where you were born?***

In Oklahoma City.

***Oklahoma City, and can you tell me about how long your family had been there? Was that a long time family place?***

My family, since probably the 1800s, my grandmother - - my mother's side is Indian (tape pause) has been in Oklahoma since the 1800s. Mother's side was Indian; they came from Texas.

***And now what tribe was that?***

Cherokee. They did not go to Reservation – they skipped.

***Huh! Do you know how that happened? Did they tell any stories about how they managed to get away?***

Yeah, they just left in the night. I don't know that much about that. I have stories that you hear but... and then they moved to Oklahoma; west – no eastern - - western Oklahoma around Cheyenne, Stroud, Strong City.

***What did they do first? Do you know - how did they survive? Were they...***

Farming. They farmed.

***Do you know what they farmed?***

Wheat probably.

***Did they have any animals at that time?***

My mother was I think always thought the Indian sign. She had a coyote, had a wolf...

***You're kidding! Now this is growing up?***

When she was growing up.

***Oh.***

She had broke her back and had back surgery. (tape pause)

**Okay, a wolf and a coyote? So these were her pets?**

Mm-hmm (affirmative). When she had broke her back and I honestly don't know how. I think falling off of (inaudible) but it could be something. But when they - - when the ambulance came to get her, they had to trick the coyote into the closet; would not let them near her and so unfortunately, the coyote had to be put down when she was gone because - - which devastated her, naturally. Because they had to do surgery; she was in the hospital and nobody couldn't get near it... except my mother.

**Oh, how sad.**

Yeah, and then later on, she had a wolf. We've had every animal in the world. My mother's a big animal person and ...

**Okay, so they - - so she grew up in this western Oklahoma farm.**

Mm-hmm, so did my dad.

**Can you tell me anything more about the farm? Were they raising cows or did they have their crops...**

You know, my Grand-dad was a District Judge and he had Muscular Dystrophy so he - - I know he didn't farm. My grandmother did a lot of farming, but they just did your basics, you know?

**Do you know how he got his education? I would think that would be a pretty big deal for him having...**

Right.

**You know, having run, when everybody was being put on the reservation to becoming a District Judge? That's pretty impressive.**

Okay, he was not my gran- - okay, my grandmother married him. He was not Indian.

**Uh-oh, so we dumped your first grandfather along the way. Where did he go?**

We didn't have a first grandpa. We don't know. You know, see, this is the other thing (inaudible). Yeah. It was pretty funky in 1921 when my mother was born and my grandmother as it turns out, was fond of sleaze obviously (laughter) but I loved her.

**Oh, okay.**

And so we didn't hav - - so, we haven't got a clue about him.

**CD So we don't really know what happened to the first grandfather but the grandpa you know was the District judge and he was English?**

No.

**Was that the one? No...**

No, that's my dad's side.

**Okay.**

I don't really know that. You know, I remember him, but I don't know much about him.

**Huh.**

He died when I was very young.

**Okay.**

And just stories – just very - - real artsy; played music, he played the fiddle, he was obviously a pretty neat guy, very intelligent, I have all of his law books, but I don't know much about him.

***Do you know what life was like for your mom growing up?***

Rotten. Rotten, rotten, rotten. Small town Oklahoma; illegitimate, ugly. Very ugly.

***Did they have enough money? Was poverty an issue or did they do pretty well?***

You know, they did okay. They did not have a great deal of money. When the Depression hit though, my grandmother, because there was a little money from my granddad when he died, started buying up land and property that was taxed, that people lost. So she, as it turns out, owned a great deal of a small town – Cheyenne, Oklahoma – which was the biggest gas well ever. So it was...

**Huh.**

GG That's where they produced or had the biggest gas well in this particular town, but she owned both sides Main Street.

**Wow.**

She owned quite a bit.

***That's pretty progressive I would think for that time.***

Mm-hmm (affirmative). She was ...had had a rotten life and never wanted to go there again.

***Do you know where your mom went to school?***

Yeah, it was Strong City and so did my dad.

***Was it a big school?***

Oh gosh, no.

***Was this a one-room schoolhouse?***

I think they're probably one-room schoolhouse; yeah, 'cause I think they had six in their graduating class.

***Okay. Did she tell any stories about the Depression about what they ate or about...***

Well,, they raised most everything. My dad said that when he was growing up that they would - - you always had your chores you had and they rode - - both my parents rode to school on a horse. They lived out in the country and they both rode you know, they had to ride a horse to school. The old “five miles barefoot in the snow?”

***Uphill both ways?***

Oh yeah, but they rode horses to school and they both lived out of town opposite ends of town. I mean, they weren't close.

***Okay, now we didn't talk about your dad's family. Were they from that particular area?***

Mm-hmm. (affirmative)

***Do you know much about them, your grandparents?***

Yeah, I visited my grandparents ever - - stayed with my grandparents every summer in Elk City, Oklahoma.

***What was their life like?***

They farmed but then when I was real little - - but I think when my dad - - my granddad was a ...linesman.

***Tell me what that is.***

That is electric. He worked for the electric company and he did the lines, you know like he would climb the pole on his 80th birthday, I have a picture of him waving his hat and he used his spikes and went clear to the top of the pole.

***How neat.***

Yeah, neat guy. But then they had a little store in Elk City and my granddad had kind of a hard time. When he was fairly young, well fairly young – he was in his thirties - kids were playing out by the cars and he was driving down the street. He wasn't going very fast; matter of fact, he wasn't hardly going very fast at all, but a little boy ran out in front of him and he hit and killed him and he didn't drive for years.

***Ohh.***

And then of course, you kind of have to. When I was with him growing up, we had two tickets for (inaudible) and slow. I do remember that on the Interstate. Yeah, he just couldn't do it. Couldn't go, you know.

***I can understand that.***

It was all he could do just to drive but he finally did and then he farmed. He had a farm, raised cows, and you know, a certain amount of crop and then everybody raised their own food. My grandmother made her own soap; they had chickens, they had you know, it was just a regular farm.

***Did they, either side of the family, talk about some of the Depression stories?***

You know, not really. I mean, everything was obvious then because the people did everything. They made everything.

***So they provided for themselves.***

They made; they baked, they certainly no, I don't remember going shopping. They made everything. They made their soap, they made their clothes, they made you know, we had feather beds. We had...

***Had they plucked the feathers, is that what you're saying?***

Yeah, yeah. I mean, they did everything and so to go to a store was pretty big-time. You know, when they opened their little grocery store, it was just a little bitty grocery store, but they had a lot of friends here. It was so hard that they had accounts. You know, I can remember my granddad saying, "There's no excuse for people doing without food." He grew - - you know, he raised his but then there's people who were born in the cities in the bigger - - you know, they couldn't ... and he had friends that you know, it just devastated him that people would do without food, but they just didn't have food. So we opened and they ended up probably losing it. I mean, just because they were too generous.

***Gave so much away.***

Yeah, but it was okay. That part never bothered him, so... and then he just - - and then he had a little farm again and...

***After the store closed?***

Yeah and then when they got too old to farm, he - - my granddad was a guy that got attached to all of his animals except for chickens, but he knew all of his cows by name, would call them all in and so when it came to butchering, time to - - he would take them to market, sell them and buy strangers... to kill. And I could never stand whole milk when I was a little kid; just couldn't stand it. And I was a city kid kind of, what I thought was a city kid.

***Now when you say whole milk, this probably wasn't from the store. Was this right from the cow?***

This is what we call "raw milk." Right, it's from the cow, I mean, it's got the cream on top, you know, yeah. And I can remember saying, "I only like Bordenmilk." And my granddad, the next summer when I came, said that they had bought a cow from Borden's. (laughter).

***How cute!***

Drank it ever since!

***Oh, you're kidding?***

Mm-hmm.

***That did it.***

Yeah, just, "Well, okay, if that's a Borden's cow, it's fine with me." Aim to please, that was it.

***That's sweet. Did you do chores?***

Oh, yes.

***What kinds of things did you do?***

Actually my entire life consisted at my grandparent's on the farm was making my (inaudible). Stolen eggs, stolen pecans...

***Stolen.***

And the prettiest mud pies you've ever seen. I would rip them out of the (inaudible) the eggs because the shine on your - - mud pies look exactly like that if you used an egg and you got real pecans. (laughter).

***Did you have pecan trees right there on the farm?***

Yeah, yeah – cherry trees, pecan trees. I had chores; wash day was the big day. My grandmother did her hair and her wash same day. She used bluing on her hair, bluing on the clothes; she never got an electric washer – refused. She said that they didn't come out the same. Even when they moved to town by my folks, they kept a wash house. She just would not budge!

***Because I know you, I know you're kind of an ironing fanatic. Did that come from that time? Can you tell me about the washing and ironing?***

You know, I'm sure my grandmother ironed. My mother was a freak about ironing. We weren't allowed to leave to house if we had wrinkled clothes. You just didn't.

***And what do you used to iron? You have the old-fashioned machine that...***

Oh, I have a presser, which just creases (inaudible) so I'm back to ironing.

***Let's see your – what are they called – mangler.***

Well, there are manglers but I don't - - they make them. I don't sue that. I have one but I don't use it. Those were better for sheets, towels, you know, and for pillow cases.

***Two ironing fanatics!***

Yes, I do my pillow case. I do not do my sheets. I can't put on wrinkled clothes.

***Okay.***

I can make wrinkles.

***Let's jump back and see where this problem started. (laughter). Tell me what year you were born.***

'49.

***Okay and what was life like as a little child? Where did you live, what kind of town was it?***

You know, my folks - - I lived next door to where my parents live to this day, which my grandmother lived in the house that we lived in when I was about five, we lived in that house. They've been there ever since.

**Hmm.**

Still there.

**And this is in what town?**

In Nicoma Park, Oklahoma.

**And is that a little tiny town?**

BBA little suburb of Oklahoma City.

**Okay.**

And went to all Catholic schools all my life.

**Tell me what kind of schools were like in those days.**

You know, I have great memories. I don't have bad memories. I hear stories, but those were the different nuns I guess. I have really good memories of all of my schooling. Great nuns, great - - boarding school was hard.

**Now why were you in boarding school?**

'Cause my chances with the nuns were better than with my mother,. She was very strict. I mean, we just didn't get along and so...

**What was she like besides strict?**

She was very generous. She did - - my mother was a good woman and she - - I didn't even have store-bought clothes until I was probably in high school; she made everything. But she was amazing! You couldn't buy clothes like she could make. She ...

**So you weren't embarrassed. Some kids will say, you know, they didn't have purchased clothing.**

Oh, God no. Are you kidding? No. I looked like I always walked off a bandstand

I mean, always. She made everything and she was so meticulous that you never wore wrinkles, you know and we worked. Mother was actually, as I look back, I got the best of my mother; I got her strength. She wasn't kind to me. It's a long hard story as far as the grandmother but, my grandmother was probably of my best friend and I know that was hard.

**Now which grandmother is this?**

This was my mother's mother.

**Okay.**

But my grandmother was not nice to my mother. I think she blamed her for not being popular, people not liking her. Well, you know, that's a self thing and that's a tricky one.

***Mm-hmm (affirmative).***

And so I think when my mother would look at me, she would see my grandmother and wasn't much on me. She loved me. She was good to me, she didn't like me, which was so you know, it's not a requirement.

***What about your dad?***

My hero in the whole world!

***Why do you call your dad your hero?***

He is my hero. He is a man's man; he is kind, he is talented, he is loving, he is ... he doesn't have a problem, an ego problem. He knows who he is, he likes who he is and so he's comfortable with him, you're comfortable with him, and he raised us the same.

***You had a couple of siblings?***

Mm-hmm, yeah.

***What were their names?***

Bob and John and actually, I've got to say they've always - - they're great guys.

***What did you do as kids for fun?***

I pretty much entertained myself and aggravated them!

***Were you - - where did you fall in the line of (inaudible).***

I was the youngest.

***Okay.***

Pretty much the pest... you know it's so different. I slept outside most of the time in the summer. I'm not a loner but I like outside and so if I was scared in the house, if I heard a noise I would get my pillow and my blanket and I'd beat it outside. Slept on the patio most all the time. I loved it. My brothers - - I was the tomboy. My oldest brother was scholastic - very smart. The middle one, John, was aim to please.

***What did kids do for fun then in that town in Oklahoma?***

Well, I had playhouses and on top of the flat barn I had a play house; I mean, that was my whole life for a couple of years and I had one brother John, that was scared of heights and I would talk him up there: "I swear to God I'll help you get down! See you sucker!" (laughter) and he would spend the entire day on top of the barn.

***Oh no! You can't say your story's not a good one; it's your story! (laughter)***

I know! It's pretty boring.

***Before we jump, I just have to ask about you - you talk to - - what was the famous Indian you were talking about earlier?***

Well, I didn't know, but Chief Iron Kettle was from - - they had - - it wasn't the tribe Iron Kettle. This was Chief Iron Kettle. There is a tribe and he - - they had a place up by Cheyenne, Oklahoma, between Cheyenne, Strong City, all of that area and my dad, when he was a kid, they used to go up there and around all the teepees and they would just watch them; they would ride their horse up and it was like a little slope; like a dam area and they would just watch them and then on the weekends though, they got to know some of the kids and then they would just go up and hang with them. I mean, that's what's neat about that area. They still - - there's a lot of history; they were good people. Just the whites and the Indians, they all seemed to do pretty well together, but the reason my dad and his buds would sneak up there was to try to get arrowheads. (laughter). And they just - - so... and I don't know that much about that. Mother's side is - - I've got some glass negatives of some chiefs and cavalry that his family I'm going to get done.

***I might be able to help you on that actually.***

Oh, cool. Because they're glass negatives and they're starting to come off.

***Okay.***

And I want to get it done.

***Were the Native American values - - were you raised with those or was it just...did that carry through your growing-up time or was it more of a separate... was it an older time?***

That's an older time, I mean, in general it is just because I went away to school, went to Catholic schools. You wore uniforms, you were...

***Where did you go to boarding school?***

I went to boarding school in Atchison, Kansas. Mt. Saint Scholastica and all of grade school and everything, always Catholic schools.

***Okay. When did your family - - now we're kind of in a different place. We're talking more about Oklahoma but this is a history project on Park County. When did your family first start coming up to Colorado?***

Let me see, I was about twelve, so that was about 41 years ago.

***What started that?***

We have a friend that had a lumber company, a lumberyard in Breckenridge, Colorado; the Billington Lumber Company and they started way, way back and they'd been there and they had a cabin on Weston Pass and these cabins were built - well, they're eighty-five years old and they were built by their family. There were six original cabins and they were all people from Oklahoma and they found this - - most of the stuff was brought up by ox and cart because it was so rough that that's how they got everything up there.

***Is this still the family cabin that you have to this day?***

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

***Is it still that same...***

Mm-hmm, yeah.

***Okay.***

And so there's four still original families of their cabins.

***How neat.***

And there's been two added so there's really eight now and but four of the original people are still family and so...

***And you're not sure who discovered Weston Pass? Was it...***

You know, I'm really not. I think it was the Billingtons, but they had a friend that had came up here – there was a dude ranch on Weston Pass and he was a friend of - - he actually doesn't have one of the cabins. The friend that founded this camp went back and said, "Oh, my God, what a great place," so they came up, a bunch of these people and the Porters are one; Bill Porter, and his family, so they are up in eight-year bunch. So a lot of people would probably know. Miss McNamara knows Bill Porter, the Pollcocks - we knew the Pollcocks; a lot of people that had been - - and the Blacks; Clarence Black was an owner. The Porters, the Black, the Beales, The Billingtons, the Goulds, and the Wassons. So that's what...

***So what's your number? I sit twelve years coming up here would (inaudible).***

You know, it amazes me when I see kids up here who don't know how to play. When I was a kid and I came up here, you hiked. You did everything. It was like God just gave you this place and you just could do anything you wanted. We hiked, we did everything.

***Did you go fishing?***

Oh yeah. We fished; there's a stream, the south part of the South Platte runs in front of it and there's so many animals! We would go in the evenings and watch the beavers work and we've had bear, we've had elk, we've had deer, we've had big horn sheep. When I was little, they used to have sheep literally lily-white sheep. They had sheep pens on the top of Weston pass and when we were kids, we would go up and watch the herding them all. They would bring them up there in the summer to graze and then pick them up the fall and we would go watch them try to gather them all and there used to be chutes and there would be pens and...

***Now were they on horseback?***

Uh-huh (affirmative).

***Would they - - cowboys come from the ranches, or ...***

They were on horseback and they - - I can remember now and then, one or two would get left and we - - they are good! (laughter) We would try and catch them

for (inaudible) and they'd be little! And I always worried but then, that's how nature works. Some are leaving. You know that's what happened. I mean, because they would be left. There would be nobody - - and we would work for days trying to get them and we could never catch them

***Never catch them!***

That's the nature thing. That's something.

***Did you come up in the wintertime also?***

No. You cannot get, without being on snowshoes – they don't maintain the road so you could only get so far. We've come up in winter. John and I dug our way in many a time and we spent a Thanksgiving up there one year that I stayed overnight; nobody else would stay. It was 22 below and I stayed so that Thanksgiving I had it 72 when everybody came. We had to dig our way in; we had to dig our way to the toilet, dig our way to the water. It was amazing, but it was great! But if you get stranded, I guess it would be ugly. I spent a summer at the cabin.

***Really!***

When I moved up there. I lived there for three months

***Oh, neat.***

Well, me and my cats.

***What do you remember about Fairplay during the time when you first got here?***

You know, Fairplay was - - what was cool about Fairplay and Breckenridge was you could still see miners on their horse, had a pack mule; I loved that as a kid. You would come into town and you would see some old guy and he would be - - have his horse and he would have a pack mule and he would be mining. They would have mining claims and they would come in for...

***Do you remembering seeing the rocks or the gold or...***

You know, there's still gold up there. We've found gold. Oh yeah. We panned for gold. It's a little nippy.

***Did they show you how? Did you talk to these old guys and learn about what they're doing?***

You know, we've been very fortunate. We would meet a lot of different people and when I was a kid, OSU (Oklahoma State University) had an agricultural - - that would come up every summer and they were always trying to figure what would grow here, what would grow there, then what could be raised, and then Colorado Mining School would go up there a lot; School of Mines. And so we did learn; you would meet people doing - - they were up there mining or they would do things for their student, and so yeah, they were pretty patient with, you know, a scraggly blonde-headed kid. (laughter).

***What did you see – can you describe to me – seeing the miners around? I mean, were they up the placer or was machinery going, or the dredge or...***

You know, you would see - - no, I didn't see many dredges. We had been stopped by people with big guns... the Ruby Mine was one. Somebody was mining it and we were just kind of lost actually, driving around and they literally met us on a Jeep – two guys with big guns – “You weren't invited and you're not welcome.” Certainly will turn you around! “Okay.” We've seen people have claims; they'd be out there, usually just - - they might have a sluice box set up; they might it and it's amazing how they lived! You'd just see a mattress in a - - you know.

***What did they have? What were they living in?***

In the old mines. In the old buildings next to it. They would - - it was amazing.

***So kind of the old cabins that you see that are falling apart up there now.***

Yeah, and then some of them, they would wrap tar paper around.

***Do you know - - do you remember how they cooked or what they were eating?***

Well, they cooked just on most of the time, on open fire. We had, the cabin, of course you cooked with wood, you eat with wood, it's all wood stoves. There's no - - outdoor john, a spring house, we would keep our food in crocks down in the spring house, which isn't the (audible) we still do that.

***Tell me about that because most people wouldn't have heard of a spring house.***

It's (inaudible) built; it's a little building over a running water, over a spring and you would fix it so things couldn't flow down and you'd either weight them down or you would - - we had a crock we would put in it and that's cold water!

***So that acted like a refrigerator.***

It is, yeah. Those are - - it's where we kept the meats, the things that would spoil easily. In the cabin, we have what we call our frig, is a bay window with a screened outside and a sliding door inside and so the outside is screened. So - - and it's cold. So things would stay fairly cool and the wind'd blow through it and it's all screened so flies don't get in and then this sliding doors - glass doors – on the inside.

***So the cold didn't come in, right?***

Right.

***Was it common do you think, of people living up here? Was that typical?***

I would think.

***Do you remember any people from that time? You hear a lot of famous names around here - were any of the folks...***

You know, I wished I could remember the lady's name, but there were the Aimsley Ranch was and it's the first one when you go up Weston Pass, that very first little - - it had the little old cabins right on the road. Cannot remember the lady's name.

***Why does she stand out in your mind?***

Denise Ogleman (inaudible) I've ever known. She was about 4' 11" and she always wore the old bonnets and when we were kids, we would go up there and talk to her. You could buy eggs from her.

***You didn't know what you paid for eggs, do you?***

No. She remembers Baby Doe - - she was a little kid when that was a stage stop and her parents had it and that was the change, the horse change stop.

***Okay.***

And then the Augustine, which is the next going up towards Weston; I mean, it is on Weston but it's up higher, that is where you would stop for food. You would have lunch there, dinner there; you could sleep over in them. They had little cabins and there was also another change deal. Weston Pass actually was pretty famous back then; they had Father Dyer, who almost died on Weston Pass; had a really bad accident; Baby Doe, if Leadville - - if Mosquito was closed or for whatever reason, they did Weston.

***And this lady was a child there.***

She was a kid and she remembers all these - - she's passed away now, but when she - - she said that she remembered all these people and she said especially Baby Doe because when they came through, she was so dressed up! I'm sure it was one of the times that had to (inaudible) they went through several. Different times.

***And this is the Tabors.***

The Tabors, right, uh-huh. They were going through - -who else did she tell me? - Possibly Molly ... Brown.

***Oh, Molly Brown?***

Yeah. I remember her talking about. There was a lot of different people that at some point, she would remember them stopping because that's where they changed horses. They would change teams there.

***You would sit and she would tell you these stories?***

Well, actually, she was not a real good sitter. She had a little bog and it's a bog out by the barns and she grew her herbs there. I mean, really boggy. IT was like mossy boggy, you know? And she grew all her little stuff and we would have to go out there with her and she would just talk. She was little-bitty. Just the sweetest thing and just had great stories and dairy and honey and ... and it was pretty cool.

**Was her husband still alive?**

No.

**No? She was all alone at this place?**

Mm-hmm (affirmative). I'm sure she had kids

End Side A

Start Side B

**You're worried that you're boring! How cool is that? Ti knew this lady who knew Baby Doe!**

No, I know and I wish I could remember her name!

**They're like names out of books that seem so far away and yet here's a connection that is actually told about it.**

Yeah, and they really weren't that far away.

**We were talking as we were switching the tape about how tough these people were.**

They were, they are, yeah. It is a shame to me that we, as the younger generations, did not get as much from them as we should have. I do kind of hate that.

**As people keep telling I should have talked to them, the people that are already gone and so that's - - I mean, you're the connection to these other generations that we missed** out on, what you remember of them, the old stories ...

Yeah, it's pretty neat.

**We can capture. What about Breckenridge at that time?**

I can remember Breckenridge was only like 3 streets. It was. I mean, it was ...

**Were they paved even? Someone said there was just like a main street.**

You know, the main street was paved; the others were not. Frisco was not paved. Frisco only went - - you only - - I hated going to Frisco; it was so boring because - - but ...

**Why did you go to Frisco as a kid?**

We would go to the store and to the laundromat. Pop liked hitting the different towns' laundromats. He just kind of liked for us kids to see different things. This was way before there was no dam, there was no highway, there was no Interstate and Frisco, when you went in, Main Street was dirt and it went to where the Historical Park is. And that's it and you did a circle.

**It's just a couple of blocks then.**

Yeah, it was and there was grocer and he did his own meat and had it hanging; I mean, Pop liked that and there's a lady that ran the laundromat back then and he loved talking to her.

***That was pretty modern I would think, a laundromat... up here.***

Well, yeah but they weren't ...

***Did they have a lot of travelers? I mean, I'm assuming the interstate was - - what was that at that point? Was it like a little highway or had it already been put through?***

What? In Frisco?

***Mm-hmm (affirmative)***

No, there was no highway. You went over Loveland Pass. You did that and you went - - I'm trying to think now how we...

***It's like a two-lane road going over...***

It was a two-lane road. No, there was no interstate at all. And Dillon was still there, the town of Dillon.

***Okay.***

Where the lake is, yeah.

***Okay, we got a little interruption. We're talking about Dillon and Frisco and can you describe what Dillon was at that time? Was that a mining town?***

You know, I don't remember it being a mining - - we didn't go to Dillon much. Frisco was about - - I mean, we drove everywhere. My dad was...

***What were you driving?***

At the time, it was a Ford - we always had Fords and I'm sure it was a yellow Ford; we always had yellow Fords. So that's probably what we were driving.

***What was Breckenridge like? You were saying when we were taking a break, you remember even miners walking through there with horses and stuff.***

Always. Yeah, you did. We saw one guy going into the Gold Pan - I'm assuming it was the Gold Pan even then. I don't know; I knew it was the same location.

***I think it was, because Shorty used to go.***

Right and he - - across the way - of course, was nothing you know, up from it. It was a big open field.

***On Main Street there was nothing!***

On Main Street, yes.

***It's hard to imagine.***

And so - - I know. And he - - this - - he's on his horse, he had long hair; he had all leathers on, he had three pack mules. So he was obviously did it for a length of time is all I can figure. You would always see horses though, tied up in town. You would see them around. Not a great deal 'cause there was cars; it was getting modern. It was like say, three Main Streets. Actually, it was not a big deal, Breckenridge. It was nothing like it is now. Well, of course not.

***Can you say, like for someone who's just can't even imagine that time, what have you seen in changes in the towns up here? How have the people changed or the building or...***

They call it progress - it is pure greed. They've taken the history away. Frisco. Frisco used to be - - I know I said way back then it was boring, but it was more of a family town. It didn't have a ski resort. It wasn't a mountain. The people were like us over here. Okay. Summit County is like Park County is now except we're even more like Alma. And Alma - when I used to drive through, when we would come through here - I have to say, I love this town. I love the people in this town. Twenty years ago, I did say, "I would not live in that town if it was the last town on earth!"

***Did you really?***

I did. In the little building right over here across from the river, that is a residence now and it was way back, even farther than twenty years ago, it was called Second Hand Rose and it was a little pawn shop; a little thrift store and they had - it was like a little you know, it was a fun little store. There wasn't a walk here... but the houses were pretty much - - actually, Alma has not changed a great deal to me.

***Oh, and Breckenridge?***

Breckenridge is just... a joke. They've ruined it to me.

***Mm-hmm.***

There is no history the same. Breckenridge, you would notice, it always had the Victorian homes; there's still the Victorian homes there, but it doesn't have the same feel. It's lost its home to me.

***What was so special about that time.***

You know, it had heart and soul. You could feel it. You picked up the vibes from the forefathers; you really did. You would go in a place and you just picked up different energy.

***When I think now, I think of this as a place where increasingly wealthy kind of people are coming.***

It's a "wanna-be" town.

***Was is it a wealth place in that time?***

Oh my word, no.

***Who was your average person...***

These were average, middle-class America that wanted to be in the mountains and this was progressive compared to... even those three streets. You know what I'm saying.

***Mm-hmm.***

It was more progressive than Fairplay and Alma. Three main streets!

***Do you remember when the ski resort came in?***

In the forties.

***Okay. Do you remember people talking about it? Do you remember your folks saying anything?***

I don't. I don't at all... 'cause we didn't come 'til the fifties.

***Okay.***

So ...but the people that - - the Beales and the Billingtons they built a lot of the condos up until the sixties and they you know, retired. As far as the ski resorts, I have some magazines from - and they actually are quite old - they're not old; the ones I have, but I know the magazine, Rocky Mountain Life.

***Huh.***

And I have some from the forties and they talk about the ski resorts, when they first started and so... those would be good books for you to check out.

***Yeah, I'd love to see that.***

I just got them back.

***Okay.***

You know, we came to get away from. You know, people say that now: "Well, where are we going to go now?" It's not like it used to be. The energy's not like it used to be. Now it's hustle-bustle, rush; everybody's in a hurry; they're - - it's a money thing.

***When did you opt to move here? We started about talking it as a little kid that you missed it.***

When I was a kid. I knew when I was probably 14, 13, that I would be living here.

***But now it took a long time. We didn't mention what was your career? Still is your career.***

I was a hair dresser when I moved here.

***Okay and you were a hair dresser in Oklahoma for many years.***

Yes, many years. '67 and so I had a salon in Oklahoma for years and years. Hairy Situations- Hair Power - and then Hairy Situations.

***Okay and then when you came up here, what did you do?***

I lived at the cabin for three months?

***Were you alone? Did you come with your husband or ...***

No, no I just - - it was just me and the three girls.

***Okay, 'cause we've kind of skipped over your husband.***

Didn't know a job – I mean, I had no job, did not know one person, had no house, no anything.

***You just said you and the three girls.***

I meant two girls and two cats.

***Your son, Stephanie, your daughters.***

And my two (inaudible) although they did not live with me that summer. They traveled with my parents and I was moved up to the cabin.

***This was after you left your second husband.***

Uh-huh.. (affirmative)

***We kind of skipped those guys.***

Yeah, it's okay.

***(laughter). She just (inaudible)***

Lucky you! And it is amazing because I didn't know anybody. No job, no house, I had two kids and I knew that they would go to school in Summit County. Mainly because I wanted them to have - - to know more. Summit County I will say, you have kids - - back twenty some years ago, people didn't stay the same length of time they do now.

***Okay.***

They were here a few years, decided it wasn't for them and they left. SO you have a lot of best friends as kids. That's our pay. It's a good thing because you grow; you learn a lot and that's what I wanted for them and so we...

***So where did you first start out? Where did you live? You went to the cabin....***

After the cabin, I moved to Frisco.

***And you opened the salon.***

Well, no right off, I worked with Jimmy Covington in Free Style Hair in the Holiday Center and then I realized with two kids and no child support that I had to have another job, so I bartended at the Holiday Inn. I cut hair in the day; bartended at night.

***Tell me about dinnertime.***

Well, I believe in dinner with your families, so when I took the job at the Holiday Inn, the requirements were that I had to have 45 minutes every night with my

kids... and we had dinner and we did. We sat back there and they had dinner in the Holiday Inn, in the bar.

***You said you put a tablecloth on and...***

We did.

***And you sat down and...***

And we had our little dinner and... it's just one of those things I believe in and so - - and they were - - you know, it was a family-orientated place in general. I worked two jobs for nine years and they both graduated from college.

***Yay!***

Graduated from Summit High and college and now I'm - - when Stephanie graduated from high school, we moved over here.

***Okay, and had you met John already by that time?***

Oh yeah, John - I met John in probably '83 and he was too young, so I waited until '84, that I wouldn't go to the pen! (laughter)

***We're going to run of tape before you get yourself out of that hole!***

It's an okay thing. He's quite a bit younger than I am.

***And we've talked about that. You were married twice previously.***

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

***And you have never actually married John, but you've been together for 17 years.***

We have. We have a commitment.

***And you consider him...***

My - yes.

***Husband - life-mate...***

My life-mate, yes.

***It wouldn't be complete - we need to talk a little bit about Lenore.***

Well, Lenore is probably - - all my stories normally are about Lenore.

***We could ...that's right. We haven't done that because I think there are so many we need to do separate tapes sometime and that's a special thing.***

Yeah, yeah because she's part of it. When Lenore, the first time she ever went out of Oklahoma, was to Colorado with me.

***Mm-hmm.***

And I loved this one story. She wanted to know how the cows walked on the side of the mountain! "Well Lenore, these cows in the mountains, legs are shorter on one side," and she's like, "Oh!" And then a little while later, she's like, "You lying sack of --." And of course she has (inaudible). (Laughter)

***So you and Lenore - - tell me, you had the shop in Oklahoma and when you left and moved to Colorado...***

I gave it to her.

***And Lenore took over.***

I gave her the shop and I said, "You know, if you ever decide to move," because I always wanted her to move out here, but she just didn't find - - couldn't find it the way that she felt comfortable to leave, so she kept the salon and I said, "if you find somebody that's as good to you as you were to me, you give it to her. If not, sell it to her." Well, she sold it (laughter). She had it for many years and then finally decided to move out her.

***And you all moved up here. Okay. I won't make you tell more about her today unless there's something special you want to share but Lenore moved up here and she did pass away and she was the most, most unique friendship I've seen were the two of you.***

She lived here four years.

***Tell me about some of the fun things up here that you did.***

Everything Lenore and I did was fun. I mean, we woke each other up every morning. We were truly soul-mates. We did dance therapy and we would go out and dance, dance, dance and then come home.

***Over the years here in Park County, what kinds of things did you do for fun when you moved up here. What places were around here?***

Park County. You know, John and I are not - - we don't socially - - we don't do a lot. We go to the cabin; I dirt-ride; we rode motorcycles, we - - there's tons to do. We've done a lot. Out and about, we never were - - I possibly would go out and about. John only stays home. You know, there's lots to do. There's places to go. I bartended for so many years that truly it's not something that I enjoy overly doing.

***Mm-hmm. (affirmative)***

And when I go to a bar...

***Because you were doing outside things I guess when I think you picking flowers and ...***

Well now, I'm a picker from hell! Lenore was a digger (laughter). We'd pick and dig. We were pick and diggers (laughter). She loved - - she would have been a good geologist; she always liked digging and fossil-y stuff and I was a picker and that's how we did. We called each other "Pick" and "Dig."

***That's an interesting note to end on (laughter) but I know you have a customer now and so we'll close for today and I thank you and we will get back together and fill in some of the holes. These people are going to wonder...About pick and dig (laughter).***

*End of tape.*