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North Fork Oral History Project Interviews

Interview with Janie Campbell, 9/29/05
Interviewer: Shelly Means

[Part 1.]

Shelly Means Today is September 29th, 2005. And Janie Campbell has graciously agreed to be interviewed for the North Fork Valley Oral History Project. Shelly Means of Pine Grove is conducting the interview. Janie, thank you very much for doing this interview. We appreciate it. Wondering if you could talk about your early recollections of coming to Buffalo Park, Buffalo Creek. Just what do you remember?

Janie Campbell We came to Denver in 1953 and we started going around looking at all of the places and doing a lot of camping and we finally found the Buffalo area and fell in love with it. So we did a lot of camping here.

SM Okay.

JC And we were able to stay with the Smith family at their place. We found our first cabin when we were at Smith's one weekend. Papa Smith said that there was a cabin up the hill that was in an estate that needed to be sold. So, it had been raining every weekend when we came up, so we said let's see what this is about. So we found out about the cabin and were able to buy it for \$6000.

SM And that was in...?

JC In 1959.

SM And did your cabin or your cottage have a name?

JC The Blue Bird Cottage.

SM Okay. And then did you move in full time? Or...

JC No, it was just a shack.

SM For weekends you'd come up.

- JC It was just a shack, yeah.
- SM Okay. Now you mentioned the Smiths. What are your recollections of them?
- JC They were my mentors and they were my kid's grandparents. They took them under their wing. They took me under their wing and Don under their wing and were wonderful to us.
- SM And Don was?
- JC My ex-husband.
- SM Your ex-husband. And you had how many children?
- JC Two boys.
- SM Two boys. So, they got the love and care of...what were the Smiths' first names?
- JC Marie and Don.
- SM Okay. What do you remember about doing when you'd come up here? Other than it rained every weekend.
- JC Tramping the hills. Just tramping the hills and just loving it.
- SM Did you have any hikes that you particularly liked?
- JC Oh, we hiked everything around here. Absolutely everything.
- SM Any of them that stand out in your mind?
- JC Not particularly. The bishop and cathedral and green mountain and all. Long's Scraggy. We did all those.
- SM And would you sometimes camp out when you're hiking up there? Or were they just day hikes?
- JC They were day hikes.
- SM Day hikes. Okay. What'd you take on your day hikes?

- JC You mean like a picnic?
- SM Yeah.
- JC Like a picnic.
- SM You would take a picnic lunch?
- JC Sure. Yeah.
- SM Yeah. Okay. So when did you move here full time?
- JC In 1969.
- SM And where, did you move into the same place where you originally bought? The Blue Bird Cottage?
- JC Yes.
- SM And, did you expand it? How'd that happen?
- JC Well, we were able to buy the little shack next door in 1965. And we put a room between and made a rather large house out of it.
- SM Mm-hm. Yes, it is quite a lovely, large house. Great views. Did you know anything about the other place that you bought?
- JC Well, the couple that owned it wrote religious literature and stuff in New Jersey and would only come out just in the summer time. And they found they couldn't come any more, so they put the house up for sale. So, we bought it.
- SM Okay. Do you have any knowledge of how old your cabins were?
- JC The Blue Bird was built in 1924. And the other one was built, that doesn't have a name, was built in the '20's sometime. I don't know exactly when.
- SM Okay. So you've spent all the time that you've lived here in Buffalo Creek. You've not lived in any of the other small communities.

JC No.

SM Okay. Well, let's focus mostly on Buffalo Creek then.

JC Okay.

SM Whatever happens in the other areas we can get to those too. Can you recall any old buildings that aren't here any longer, that were pretty memorable?

JC The Bryn Mawr.

SM The Bryn Mawr okay. What do you remember about that?

JC Well, we used to hang out there once in a while.

SM Yeah. Can you describe what it looked like?

JC It was an old bar.

SM An old bar.

JC Yeah.

SM Yeah. So, no food, just a bar?

JC Oh, no, it had food.

SM Yeah?

JC Yeah.

SM One story? Anything unique about the inside?

JC Not particularly.

SM Yeah. Any bands come in there?

JC I don't remember. I don't think so.

SM Yeah. And the Bryn Mawr was located where again?

- JC Between Pine and Buffalo.
- SM Mm-hm. So was that like a central hang out for a lot of people?
- JC People that drank.
- SM Yeah. Do you remember what happened to the Bryn Mawr?
- JC Burnt down.
- SM Yeah. Do you remember any of the details about it?
- JC Well, they always kind of felt it was arson. But, I don't think they ever proved it.
- SM Okay. Any other old buildings that aren't here that you have any knowledge of? Buffalo Creek area first.
- JC Well, there were a lot that burned and were torn down. Behind the Bryn Mawr they had a whole mess of cabins that they used to rent to Fisherman, would come up and stay in. In fact, that's what they did in Pine Grove too. But Buffalo didn't have the transients. People just came up to fish. They came up to stay all summer long with their kids.
- SM Okay. How about some of your recollections of some of the older buildings that are still surviving. For example, recollections of the Blue Jay Inn?
- JC Wonderful memories of the Blue Jay Inn. Wonderful parties. Get together and wedding receptions, and just wonderful, wonderful memories of the Blue Jay.
- SM Yeah. Can you maybe talk about any specific and maybe describe going inside. What it looked like inside. The gift shop.
- JC It was neat. It was neat.
- SM Yeah. Because?

- JC Because the way it was. It was old. And had all the old things. The dining was wonderful. And it had real linen napkins, and tablecloths and _____(8:06).
- SM And real china?
- JC Yeah. But it was hotel china.
- SM Mm-hm. Can you talk about some of the older items that were in there?
- JC Well, I think the old phonograph was the biggest one that they talked about. With a great big huge disc.
- SM Did they ever play it when you were in there?
- JC Just once. Just once.
- SM Okay. And then there was an old telephone booth in there. Wasn't there?
- JC Mm-hm.
- SM Okay. You know anything about that?
- JC Filled with Life magazines.
- SM Filled with Life magazines?
- JC It was.
- SM And was there a gift shop?
- JC Oh, yes. Yeah.
- SM Okay. What kind of things were sold in there?
- JC Well, they had really nice things back when Catherine's mother was alive but as it went on there wasn't the nicest stuff and then she had made it more or less a bookstore there. She sold a lot of books.

SM Okay.

JC And that was their income I think, was selling books. Or ordering books for you or something like that.

SM Okay. Can you recall the last event that you were there for?

JC Probably the anniversary.

SM Of?

JC Of the chapel. The celebration was probably the last thing I think we had there.

SM And do you remember what the celebration was?

JC I don't know what you mean.

SM Well, wasn't it like a high tea?

JC Oh, yes. Yeah, it was a high tea.

SM Yeah. It was a high tea. Yeah.

JC It was a wonderful celebration.

SM Yeah.

JC Yeah.

SM Well, what about your recollections of the Buffalo Park chapel? The little hill chapel.

JC What's my recollection?

SM Yeah. What do you know about that?

JC We went to the 1954 candlelight service and that was my thing ever since. That was my church.

SM Can you describe what that service was like? Or what those services were like?

- JC They were real, real neat in those days. We had luminaries with candles down the road and that they lit in bags. And we had individual candles in the chapel.
- SM And was that candlelight service at dusk? Was it at midnight?
- JC Five o'clock.
- SM Five o'clock.
- JC Yeah.
- SM Okay. And so, when the Blue Jay Inn had that anniversary celebration. That was for what year for the chapel?
- JC Hundred years.
- SM Hundred years.
- JC Yeah.
- SM Yeah. Okay. What about the Green Mercantile?
- JC That's our store.
- SM Which is still in existence.
- JC That's our store.
- SM Do you remember what it was like when you first came to the area?
- JC Same as it is now.
- SM Okay. Was there an old dance hall in Buffalo Creek at all?
- JC Oh, that was way before my time. That was in the cut as you go through. Up to the left of the cabin. _____(11:33) cabin.
- SM And so it was....
- JC That was way before my time.

SM It was long gone by the time you got here?

JC No. No. No. No. But the _____(11:44) was built by then. It was built. I don't know when the _____(11:46) was built.

SM Okay.

JC But, no. It was here when we came. The community hall.

SM Okay. Can you talk about the community hall?

JC We had lots of fun there.

SM Yeah? What kind of thing...

JC We still do.

SM Yeah. What kinds of things went on there?

JC All kinds.

SM Such as?

JC Such as, oh my goodness. I don't know. Square dances, Bingo, guests, _____(12:26). Pete Smythe, Kim Johnson was a clown that came. We had all kinds of things going on there.

SM Were they all year round?

JC No. Just in the summer.

SM Just in the summer.

JC Yeah.

SM Any in particular that stand out?

JC No. There have been all kinds.

SM Okay. What about some of the...we mentioned the Bryn Mawr in Pine. Some of the other buildings in Pine, what are your

recollections for example of the Pine Library building? Now, you were there when that became a library.

JC That's right.

SM Maybe you could talk about that.

JC That was Mrs. Smith and we were friends of the library. And it was in pretty bad shape. And through the men around here, they fixed it up, fixed it up, fixed it up. Now we have a wonderful library.

SM Do you know what kinds of things went on in the building before it was a library? Was it a private home?

JC Apparently, from what I read, it's been a little bit of everything.

SM Okay. Such as?

JC A private home. A grocery store, wasn't it? Just trying to think what else. A lot of things.

SM And so when the library started there had there been a library some other place? Or was this the first?

JC No. They found many, that's one reason, they found hundreds of old books. First editions.

SM Really.

JC Oh, yes. Yeah. It's wonderful.

SM You mean just in people's homes?

JC No, they were in the library. The books were in the library, when we got the library.

SM Oh, you mean they were in that building.

JC Yeah.

SM Oh. Okay. And so you didn't know where some of them came from.



- JC No, they were there.
- SM Right. Right. Okay. Can you talk about how the library was formed? What you guys had to do? I mean, you talked about how they had to kind of rebuild the building.
- JC Right.
- SM What else did you have to do? Were people in the community supportive of a library?
- JC Very supportive. Wanting to get started. Yeah. And Jefferson County worked with us at that time.
- SM Okay. And do you remember, that was '75?
- JC It was '75.
- SM Was the library building ever expanded? Like, there's kind of a little back room. Was that always on there to your knowledge?
- JC It was divided twice.
- SM Okay.
- JC It was divided up, I don't remember where. And then the back room was there.
- SM What about the floor?
- JC It was a dirt floor.
- SM Was it?
- JC Yeah.
- SM And so was that...
- JC I'll tell you where it was. It's where the other computer is. Where that, that was a second room too. There were two rooms back then.
- SM Okay.

JC In the shack in the back. _____(15:56) the shack.

SM Okay. And they were all connected though?

JC It was a kitchen.

SM Oh, it was.

JC Had some kitchen stuff in it which we sold. And I don't know what they had used it for. But it did have some kitchen stuff. Had lots of dishes and stuff like that in there.

SM Some other folks have talked about it also had been a church for a while.

JC I'm sure it had.

SM A saloon for a while.

JC Well, we had the bar in there. It was a beautiful bar. And this gal bought it. But I don't know how it got in that building. I don't know. I have no idea.

SM So do you know who bought it? Who bought the bar?

JC Betty Hearst [?] bought the bar.

SM And does she live in Buffalo Creek?

JC No. No. She lives at the top of the hill.

SM Interesting.

JC Yeah.

SM Yeah.

JC It was beautiful bar. She bought antiques though. She had much money.

- SM So, who all was involved in getting the library set up? You mentioned Mr. & Mrs. Smith.
- JC I'm just trying to think. I don't know. I'd have to look in the scrapbooks and see who the first people were.
- SM Were you guys opened a couple days a week?
- JC I don't remember.
- SM Yeah. All of you got a turn at running it, right?
- JC Oh, yeah.
- SM Yeah. Okay. And then you, I think, said that you worked...was it at the place next to the library? Or was it across the street at the Pine Emporium?
- JC It was Pine Grocery store.
- SM Okay. And was that the building...
- JC Next to the library.
- SM To the east of the library.
- JC Yeah.
- SM Yeah. Okay. And was that like a full service grocery store? What do you recall of the Pine Emporium?
- JC That's when Jenny Larson [?] started the store. And I remember that very well. She had antiques in there when she first started. She was neat.
- SM What do you remember...?
- JC And that wagon came from Butterfield's ranch, that's still in there.
- SM So does the building look today pretty much what you recall it looking like?

- JC Yeah.
- SM The sixties and seventies?
- JC Yeah.
- SM Okay. The Pine Post Office. What do you remember about those?
- JC I had no association with any of them in Buffalo Creek. So, I don't know anything about it.
- SM Okay. You talked about kind of getting started with the Fire Department. How did that happen?
- JC Well, four or five boys decided...
- SM They were men right?
- JC Men. No, they were boys. And you wouldn't know any of the names. It was Frank _____ (19:32), and there was Fred Schissler, Chuck's brother. And there was Franklin Dowd[?], and there was Steve Best. And they came from all around here.
- SM And how and why did they get started?
- JC Because we'd had a couple of local fires up here. Burned down a couple cabins.
- SM Okay. So, what was your involvement?
- JC I just helped them get it started.
- SM And how supportive was the county?
- JC Very supportive. Very delighted.
- SM Were there any fire departments here at all, like to help you when cabins burned down?
- JC No. There wasn't anything here. _____ (20:29) gave us a jeep. That was the first thing we had. And then we had the truck with two water tanks on it that, Cindy Green has down here, with



their trailer on it. That red truck. That was wonderful. And then, I'm trying to think, I think it was Wheatridge gave us, no Indian Hills gave us the first fire engine, it had a wooden steering wheel.

SM Really?

JC It might still be up at Butterfield's. And I'll never forget one day, Kenny _____ (21:10) said, I want you girls to learn to drive this. So, we said, okay, if the boys stay out of it, we will. I don't remember who all was there, we all drove down and around the community hall and back to Green's store and that was the last time any of us every drove the fire truck. It was so much fun.

SM And, you had mentioned before that one of the maybe bigger fires, beginning fires, was the Crystal Lake lodge.

JC Yes.

SM Now, was that before you had the fire district?

JC Oh, we hadn't made district until the last couple years. It was just normal fire department. Volunteer.

SM Right. But the fire at Crystal Lake happened before the volunteer fire department was formed. Is that right?

JC I don't know. I'd have to look it up.

SM Okay. Can you recall some of the...

JC It was about '70, '71. I thought Crystal Lake was '71.

SM Okay. Yeah. Can you recall some of the businesses that were in the area? You'd mentioned the Blue Jay Inn and Green's Mercantile. Were there other businesses?

JC I was trying to think. The Emporium. That's about it.

SM Okay. You've talked about, generally, fun things that you did. I'm wondering if you could give us some specifics of how you guys entertained yourselves.



- JC Played cards. Watched movie reels down at _____(23:07) and also the Smith's. And, we just got together. Had potlucks. I mean it was quite a radius of people. You know, back then. And usually at somebody's house.
- SM So you didn't have to live in Buffalo Creek to come to the potluck, it was just whoever.
- JC Oh, no. No. Yeah.
- SM Okay. Do you remember going up to some other places like Butterfield's or, down in Foxton for some of your potlucks? Or any entertainment kinds of things?
- JC They had the one fire department barbecue there, for quite a few years.
- SM Do you remember going to some of those?
- JC Oh, yeah. Went to all of them.
- SM Okay. So fire department had to have a lot of fund raisers.
- JC Yes they did! They sure did!
- SM Okay. Was there any evidence of the railroad had been through here when you first started coming up?
- JC The water tanks were gone.
- SM Were they?
- JC Yeah.
- SM And so by the time you started coming up in the 50's everything in Pine, the railroad station in Pine was gone?
- JC Yeah.
- SM Had it burned by then?



- JC It burned around that time but I don't know exactly when. 'Cause they always said it was arson. That they had wanted to burn it down, which I don't know whether that's true or not.
- SM Okay. Can you talk about some of the folks that you met? The local people you met when you came up here? Folks who are gone now, but you remember. You were the young ones, right?
- JC We were the young ones. Well, I'm trying to think off the top of my head. Now, we would have to talk about Ethel Myers who was my mentor. And she lived up here at Green Mountain.
- SM Now, why was she your mentor? Talk about her.
- JC Because, she told us everything. Just wonderful. She liked men. And she just was a very, very special person. That's a picture of her.
- SM What kinds of things did she tell you that you remember?
- JC She traveled all over the world. But, just about when she was a kid, you know, growing up up here on the ranch. Coming to Buffalo to go to school. Stuff like that.
- SM Okay. And so, she kind of took you under her wing.
- JC No, because she didn't like women.
- SM Oh, she didn't like women.
- JC No.
- SM But you still admired her.
- JC Oh, absolutely.
- SM Okay. Okay.
- JC Yeah. Absolutely. And of course, Mrs. Smith. Mrs. S, as I called her. She just grabbed me and we flew.
- SM Talk about some of the things that she did for you.

JC Well, we started the Eager Beaver club and that was what used to call an extension club, but used to call Home Bureau I think. Our parents. And we got together and we did all kinds of things. You know, that you do at a extension club. And all the women got together at their houses. You know, and they had a cookie party and this, and this, and this. So the women got together and had a good time. Because we couldn't belong to the GP club, 'cause that was Pine. Period.

SM So the Eager Beaver club was formed kind of because of the GP club.

JC Well, kind of. 'Cause we wanted to get together.

SM Yeah. And so was that all year?

JC I don't remember. And I don't remember when it went away.

SM Well, and so you had cooking days. What other kinds of things?

JC I don't remember. Sewing, you know. Crafts. Whatever you did at the home bureau. So the women got together, 'cause women didn't work in those days.

SM Right. And so you didn't have like a building to meet in. You were in other people's homes.

JC Oh, yeah. We had to.

SM Okay. And it was Mrs. S who started that?

JC Well, I have no idea how it started.

SM Mm-hm. Okay. Other people in the area you remember, besides Mrs. Myers and Mrs. Smith?

JC Turn the thing off and I'll get my book.

SM Okay. We're talking about some of your memories of some the people you knew.

- JC Mr. Pate had a vegetable garden on the river and we went across the river from White Pines.
- SM So this was in Pine?
- JC This was in Pine, and you started out, and you go in, like you go into the open space and it's just right down there in the river. And it was always wonderful, wonderful soil. Mr. Pate every year would grow real vegetables. And we could go up there, and for pennies, get all of the vegetables and potatoes and stuff like that that we wanted. It was wonderful.
- SM And do you know, did he come to the Pine area after he retired from somewhere?
- JC I have no idea. He was there.
- SM He was there when you came in the '50's?
- JC Yeah. I think he was a railroad man. Most of them were.
- SM Yeah. Okay. Quite a big vegetable garden there, then?
- JC Oh, wonderful.
- SM Okay. You mentioned the Miller's.
- JC Jack and Nona Miller. They were the Pine library for a long, long, long, long time. And they left the territory and were very, where they are now _____(29:38).
- SM And they're in...?
- JC Bisbee.
- SM So you got to work with them a lot?
- JC Oh, lots and lots and lots. Very special people.
- SM You mentioned the Southwells(29:59).



JC The Southwells(30:01), I remember when they built the house over there. And they were really neat people. And then, when they died, their son inherited. And, I can't remember his name, and his wife died and he married another gal who didn't like it up here, and they moved.

SM And you're talking about the Southwells who lived in Pine?

JC Yes, I am.

SM Okay. Margaret Graves(30:34)?

JC Margaret Graves. Well, all I can say about Margaret Graves is she's an institution. One of the most wonderful people in the world. She was just great. We loved her, all of us. So kind. So gentle. Do anything for anybody. Very very, special.

SM Was she one of the Eager Beavers in that group too?

JC Oh, I'm sure she was. Yeah, I'm sure she was. I don't see her name down. But _____(31:05).

SM Okay. You mentioned Mrs. Butterfield's mom.

JC Carol _____(31:13). She was a beautiful lady, and she was very, very active then as the...

[End of Part 1.]

[Part 2.]

Shelly Means Was she from this area?

Janie Campbell I don't know. I don't know. She came to live close to her, Barbara Butterfield.

SM And talk about her home. Carol's home.

JC They moved, I think it was a double wide trailer up on the property. _____(00:26). And Nancy and Tom lived there. Their daughter _____(00:34). _____(00:35).

- SM How'd you first meet the Larson's?
- JC Probably the Pine Emporium. I probably went in there. I believe so.
- SM And you talked about the building of the chimney and what you contributed.
- JC Well, everybody got a chance to bring a rock to put in the fireplace. Absolutely beautiful fireplace. And they don't use it anymore. It really warmed up that room. Beautifully.
- SM And what else was in the fireplace?
- JC They had little mementos of things that they accomplished over the years. As I remember I'm quite sure I'm right, but I don't know why I'd make it up.
- SM Well, no. But that's incorporated in that beautiful fireplace?
- JC Yeah. I think so. _____(1:34). Why did I think of it though?
- SM Well, not something that you would think of all the time, but it's a memory.
- JC Maybe it's somebody else. But I know we all gave her rocks. We all went out and got rocks, rocks and rocks.
- SM Okay. Do you have any recollections of Joe or Olive Hill who lived in Pine?
- JC No. I knew Olive. Joe, _____(2:01) he died. And, we knew Olive. She used to play bridge and went to all the potlucks.
- SM Are there other folks that you recall?
- JC Of interest. Trying to think. I can't, I can't think of anybody.
- SM Okay. Do you have any funny stories that you can recall? Things that happened? Or just outstanding events?
- JC That really stick in your mind?

- SM Yeah.
- JC No, I really can't.
- SM Okay. Other recollections of anything that I haven't even touched on?
- JC _____(3:10). Oh, I wanted to tell you about the Easter Egg.
- SM Okay.
- JC When you go out of Buffalo, and out of Pine and you start on that big, big, big curve, where you go into open space. Off on the left, down in the gully, just a little ways up, there was a huge, huge, huge Easter egg rock. And you knew you were almost to Pine when you saw that over the side of the hill. And Marguerite Hay[?] would paint it every year and she'd put the year that she painted it. And she wouldn't tell anybody she painted it but we all knew she painted it. And then after she passed away, Margaret Graves did it for a few years. And then they messed around with the road up there, and I cannot find that Easter egg. I mean, it was about the size of the one that fell down between Pine and Buffalo, on the ranch there. On the road. Did you see that?
- SM I think so.
- JC Up at...
- SM So, was it...
- JC It was shaped like an Easter egg.
- SM Right. But was it around Easter that it got painted? Or just...?
- JC Around Easter every year.
- SM Every year. So, for many years. Different colors? Or always the same color?
- JC No, different colors.

SM Oh.

JC It was fun.

SM Oh, how fine. And then the year, she put the year on it.

JC She put the year on it.

SM Cool.

JC But it's gone. Like so many things. Such a shame.

SM You talked about watching a house come in, up Elk Creek.

JC Oh, they brought a double-wide trailer in, piece by piece. And they parked it down in Pine for a while. And they got the foundation ready, and then they took it up. In with a crane and stuff like that and hoist it up there. And Tom Patton[?] who ran the Bucksnot at that time, furnished beer for everybody on the top side who stood there watching it. Nobody furnished it on the down side. And we were having exercise class in the Pine library, and so we all walked up and watched them follow this house up there. Watched them put it in. And as I remember, they didn't tell R.E.A. So they tore the line down. Got in trouble there. Apparently didn't have the proper permits. And boy, there was heck to pay there.

SM I bet it was fun to watch though.

JC It was.

SM Did they do it all in one day?

JC Not both parts.

SM Yeah. Okay.

JC No, just one part, and then did the other part.

SM Another day.

JC Yeah. They, it was fun.

SM I bet it stopped traffic too for a while.

JC There wasn't any traffic in those days.

SM Any other events, recollections?

JC Now that's one that probably nobody else would probably remember but it would be fun to see if they do.

SM Yeah.

JC Not any of the young people know about it.

SM Janie, thank you very much for letting us interview you.

JC The pleasure was mine.

SM Appreciate it very much.

[End of Part 2. End of Interview.]