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North Fork Oral History Project Interviews

Interview with Robert Drawe, 5/15/06
Interviewer: Shelly Means

Shelly Means Today is May 15th, 2006. And I, Shelly Means, am interviewing Bob Drawe of Pine Grove Colorado. Bob, thank you very much for letting us interview you.

Robert Drawe You're sure welcome.

SM Let's start first by talking about some of your early recollections of the area. What do you remember? And how'd you first get to Pine?

RD Well, when I first came to Pine it was kind of an unusual situation. I was working with the Internal Revenue Service at the time and I had saved up a bunch of leave, so that around about Christmas time I had enough leave to take off every Monday and every Friday and only work three days a week. And one of my coworkers said, you know, you've been interested in finding a mountain cabin somewhere. So he gave me one these Denver legal newspapers where they have legal announcements. And I took it, but I didn't think I was going to do anything with it. But while I had time on my hands, I did look into some of the buildings that were for sale by the county authorities. I looked at one in Morrison and I liked that a whole lot. And I looked at this one up here, and liked it too. Fortunately working for Internal Revenue Service I knew how to run the county records to find out what incumbrances was against the property. And on the day of the sale, on the courthouse steps in Jefferson County, I showed up and I wasn't the successful bidder on the Morrison property. The next sale that came up, I was there again. And Freda and her husband Pete Mizner were there too. So there were two of us bidders, along with the owner of the property who had inherited it. He was from Louisiana. The story is that the Brady's, had lived there during the '40's and 50's. I'm sure they were there in the '50's. And he was a bicycle repair man in Denver and retired up here. They both died, well, the wife got to be unable to take care of herself here and she moved to Louisiana with some of her friends and relatives. And she died there and they inherited the property. And since they were in Louisiana this property was of no real value to them, so they allowed the court to sell it. The court

put an appraised value of \$12,000 on the property and attempted to sell it on the courthouse steps. The first time there were no bidders at all. Nobody showed up. The judge then had a problem. He says, well, what am I going to do? I'm charged with selling this property. He says, okay. I'll just remove the \$12,000 floor and we'll sell it for what it sells for. Now none of the bidders knew this. So, on the day of the sale Pete and Freda and myself, a realtor representing the inheritor and the inheritor showed up on the courthouse steps and the bidding started. It started very low, and wound up very low; seven thousand seven hundred and seventy-five dollars and I was the successful bidder. I think what scared off most people; they didn't know what incumbrances could've been connected with it. I did know. And that kept, I think, Pete and Freda from actually entering a bid. They never actually made a legitimate bit. They were there to see what was happening.

SM Now had you been inside the property before you bought it?

RD I had not been inside the property. I looked in the windows and I checked the property. I wasn't going to bid very much anyway, so it really didn't make that much difference to me. If it was something I could use, I would. If it was something that I didn't really want, in the end I could sell it, because I didn't intend to pay that much for it. So that's the story about that.

SM And did you immediately move here full time? Or was it a weekend place for you for a while.

RD It wasn't in very good repair when I got it. So for about a year, maybe some little shorter time than that, I'd come up here on weekends and do work on it. For instance, it had three rooms in the main part of the cabin. I took down all the walls and made one big lodge room, which suited me much better. And it was much better to heat that way too. It did have a bathroom and a well. The well was not operating. I guess it had been hit by lightning. And that was the end of the well. So, one of the first things I had to do was to get the well running. And I had not moved in it more than about, I don't know, a few months and I walked out the back door one day and there was a big hole in the backyard. Like a sinkhole. Sure enough, it had a metal septic tank that had rusted out and caved in. So one of the early things I had to do in that house was put in a proper septic tank. And since my neighbor wanted to put a well in part of

the property adjoining my property, it really wasn't feasible for me to put a septic field down there. So I wound up putting in what they call a dry well. Same sort of thing the trailer park down here has. And so when I did the septic tank I put in the dry well and I've had no trouble with it since.

SM And what are some of your early memories of the town of Pine when you first came here? You mentioned the Mizners.

RD In some of my early checking around about what the town of Pine was all about, I was impressed that all the buildings were old at that time. Seemed to me like there was new construction going on all over the county, but not here. And that was unique. And I thought, well, I'd like to know a little bit more about this sort of thing. And so in repairing of my own cabin, I found a name up on the sun porch on a board. Apparently what had happened was, that this lumber was shipped out on the railroad and that porch was built as an addition to the house that was built back in 1908 or '06 or along in there. That's about the same time my neighbors house, Stan Blue, had been built. I think the same contractor built at least two of those houses at the same time. Otherwise, an interesting thing that struck me at the time, both had a flagpole incorporated into the building of the building. Neither of them will work any more because you can't get the flag up there, the pulley up top. I finally cut mine off when I did roof repairs some years later.

SM The name that you mentioned...

RD The name was of a Denver Post reporter who had that cabin and used it for a number of summers back in the '30's. I don't know much any more than that. And I don't recall the name, although it is stenciled on this board on the ceiling of my sun porch. How can I say, oh yeah, another thing, well that's now, well, all right, it is important. Mrs. Brady, who I never met. I guess her husband was all hunched over. He'd gotten to the point where something affected his spine and he walked around all hunched over, as I understand it. And he died and then later she died, but when the lightning had hit the well. That was the end of it for her. And from then on they carried water from the town well, up there to the cabin, both to drink and to flush the toilet. And they either got it from the river or from the town well, which is between the library and Wolf's.

- SM Collins.
- RD Wolf Collins' place. Interesting thing about that well. Doc.
- SM Hofferth[?]?
- RD Doc Hofferth has told me the story that he'd been down in that well, it was a hand dug well, to clean it a time or two. Climbed on in there. It was big enough down in there for him to go down in there and do whatever he did, and get back out. So Doc Hofford knew about that well and he cleaned it, according to his story that he told me.
- SM Oh my. And as far as you know was that well still in use when you came here?
- RD That well was still in use until the store that was there was sold to Wolf. And he felt it was his well. And in fact, he, I better not talk about that. That's something that's a little bit, I don't want to talk about it. Anyway, he took the pump off of the well and disabled the well. Okay. Where do we go from there?
- SM Well, were you involved when you came to Pine in the local organization PECIA? Did you do any volunteer work there? What do you know about that organization? Or the community center?
- RD Very little. All I know is some history about the building. The building was a church. Inside the building are still some seating out of some Denver trolley cars, that some of the, what kind of wood do you call that? Anyway, some of the wood inside the building, as the building was repaired, came out of the walls that I tore down in my cabin. It was Richard Green said it matched perfectly and if I'd give him enough, he'd put it up and wound up on the ceiling. Anyway, what else can I tell you about that PECIA building. For a while it was again used by a church group from, I can't think of her name now.
- SM Jeri Cunningham [?]?
- RD Who?
- SM Jeri. [?]

- RD Yeah, Jeri Cunningham's [?] church group moved up here kind of in mass. As I understand it she had a church group in Denver and they were all about to graduate from high school or whatever and they all moved up here and they held services and the like in that building.
- SM Let's see what, some other buildings that you wanted to know a little bit about. Obviously the Pine Emporium.
- RD I really didn't know much about the Pine Emporium. I knew much more about the library building.
- SM Well, we'll get to that one next.
- RD Okay.
- SM Anything at all that you can recall about Warren and Jenny Larson, or the Pine Emporium?
- RD They were operating it about the time I came here. Surely it was before I came. I've been here over 28 years, I suppose.
- SM Well, let's move over to the library. What do you know about the library? Which is now the library. It's been other things.
- RD Okay. Yeah. The library was a building owned by the Platte Valley Club or the Black Canyon Club. It was a local club that was a social club. They'd meet in there to play cards and have social affairs. At that time there were really two main parts to the building. There was the front part that still contained an elaborate back bar with mirrors and all that sort of good stuff. That didn't last long. Shortly thereafter it was gone. I say shortly thereafter, shortly thereafter they transferred it to the library people. And the back part of that building had two or three cook stoves where the ladies of the area would prepare things for the social events. They're gone too and they were gone not long after. Let me cover one other thing. In a later renewal of that building, some fifteen years later maybe, there had been a flood and the floors were all bowed and the like and we thought we ruined the building. That was when the library was operating in it.



- SM Was it a wooden floor?
- RD It was a wooden floor. And they just bowed. So Jack Miller took it on himself to get that building repaired. And took the floors out and with the idea that we were just going to pour a concrete floor in the old building and avoid that problem. Turned out that when we got all the floors out of there that in the back over the kitchen there was a cellar.
- SM Now, you're talking about the very back, right?
- RD The very back, under the kitchen. There was a cellar. It was a hand dug a dirt cellar. And we surmised that at one time or another, that was probably used as an ice storage place from ice they'd been cutting over on Crystal Lake. We don't really know that. It appeared to us that that's probably what it was. As far as I could tell, at the time we repaired it, there was no entrance. It was just all covered up when the floors were put down in.
- SM With just a wooden top then.
- RD Yes. Wooden top over it. But anyway, the floors were poured and Jack brought that building back to life after the flood had come down. Wasn't much a flood either, it was just that it came down the hill and the drainage under the highway was stopped up and the waters rose up maybe 18 inches or so and went into the floor, maybe six inches inside the building.
- SM Well, now that middle room is lower than the main room. Is there a reason that you know about that it ends up at two different levels?
- RD No. I don't know why that is. Jack might be able to tell us but I don't know. By the way we filled in that cellar with dirt. They got Jerry.
- SM Jerry Fitzwater
- RD Fitzwater. To come down there with machinery and fill in that. He dumped it in through the door and filled that thing in.
- SM And you've been involved with that library for a lot of years. Can you talk about some of the things that you've done?

- RD Yes. Well, let me back up and say how that library got started. When the Platte Valley Club members got down to about, oh, I don't know, a few octogenarians, they decided that they weren't going to use that building anymore and they had a small treasury and the building. And they got in touch with Don Smith's father, Don Senior, and said, look, we've got this building, we've got this small treasury. If this community can figure out what to do with it, we'll just give it to them. And Don talked to some of the people in the area and they said, well, we'd like to have a library. And so on a handshake the Platte Valley Club remaining members said, it's yours. Transferred the building to them, gave them the treasury and they backed out and Don moved in and there was the beginning of our library.
- SM Can you remember who some of the final people were in the Platte Canyon or Platte Valley Club or whatever it was?
- RD I have no idea. No, I never met any of them. And it was all something between Don and those people.
- SM And was that club like a woman's club as far as you know?
- RD I think it was a social club. At one time or another it was probably one thing or another. Maybe part of the time it was a woman's club.
- SM As far as the beginning of the library you mentioned Don Smith starting it. Were you one of the original members?
- RD No, I was not.
- SM Can you recall any of the other folks? And again it was both communities. Is that right? Buffalo Creek and Pine.
- RD Yes. Yes. I can picture them, but I just, well, I'm 75 now and I just can't recall the name.
- SM Well, I'm not going to put you on the spot. So they were open for business?
- RD Yes.

- SM And all of the books were just people donating them? When did the Jefferson County get involved, do you know?
- RD I don't know. Don had been involved very early I'll say. But I don't know exactly when. We've had just excellent cooperation from Jefferson County with this library. They cannot do enough for us. If it's possible for them to do it, they'll do it. And the benefit for both of us is, this is a fully self-sustaining library. We are not a county library. We take in no funding from them other than what they feel like they can do from time to time.
- SM Right.
- RD But it's not county funded at all. And that's unique and that's been a benefit to them and a benefit to us. It really has been a volunteer funded operation from the very beginning.
- SM And what a wonderful gift.
- RD Yes, indeed.
- SM It is just a gem, I think.
- RD And to imagine we've done it on a handshake. Nobody does that anymore. That was the days when people were quite different than they are now.
- SM Now you've also served on the board of the library for many years.
- RD Yes, I have.
- SM And have done quite a bit of work as the secretary, as well as some computer work in there, haven't you?
- RD I have. And I guess it was, I can't think of her name either. The lady who lived down the hill from me. She was a really good seamstress.
- SM Oh, dear. I can't help you, I don't think. Jensen?
- RD No.

- SM Okay.
- RD The name won't come to me, but anyway, she was on the board. And the board had a vacancy and she had ____ (23:40) me into coming to be on the board. Why can't I think of her name? I think it was with an S. Shedd.
- SM Edith Shedd.
- RD Edith Shedd. Edith Shedd was the one who got me on the board.
- SM Now was she a librarian at the Pine Library?
- RD No. She was not. There was another librarian from up Elk Creek a ways that I replaced. I can't think of her name either. But she was an octogenarian too. Edith was the one that got me on the board.
- SM What are some of your recollections of Mrs. Shedd? Mostly with the library or...
- RD Mrs. Shedd was active in the community. Her husband was a very active person around. He was on the fire department. The thing that always impressed me about Edith Shedd, she was an excellent seamstress. She would make her husband's trousers. And I think anybody who can do that kind of sewing work really is an accomplished person.
- SM Now were they living here when you moved here?
- RD Yes, they were here.
- SM And do you remember what Mr. Shedd did? Was he retired?
- RD He was retired. An interesting thing, right across from my house is the Perkins house. Mr. Perkins, the old grandfather Perkins, was in the pickle business. Perkins Pickles. And on the side of the building they had the pickle thing for a long time. Anyway, they died and that cabin was taken over by the heirs. And it's still today, various heirs come and spend a week from one time or another. They come from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and they come from Chicago and they come from all over, come and spend a week or so. There's some in Boulder. Nancy _____ (26:03) is the daughter that pretty well

takes care of the cabin now. It does not have water. And it does have an out house. And it's a cabin-y cabin. I do remember some years ago when the daughter, Nancy's sister, came out from North Carolina. They took out a bunch of Indian rugs that the grandfather had collected and hung them over the fence to air them out. They were magnificent antique Indian rugs. And I was going, wow! They've been in that cabin a long time. Of course that's the same way with Mrs. Blue's cabin. Mrs. Blue's cabin is right next to mine. Barbara Blue. Everybody calls her Bobbie. She and Stan had that cabin. She inherited it from her parents. I want to say it was Schecters, but I'm not quite sure of that. It's close.

SM Right.

RD But whether that's it or not.

SM I think it ends in an L.

RD Maybe it is. Schaetzel, I'm not sure.

SM I think you're close there.

RD Okay. Anyway, she inherited the cabin. Oh, by the way, before I go any steps further, there's another cabin up the hill from me that, darn, I can't think of that lady's name either. But another cabin that was inherited by the wife. She was from Grand Lake. No. What's the town _____(27:58).

SM Granby?

RD Granby. She was from Granby. And, a rancher's wife in Granby. And that was her total inheritance, and she just lived for that cabin. She'd come in the summertime, at the beginning, come on her motorcycle. Spend her time at the cabin or at the Bryn Mawr. Getting away from the ranch where she cooked for her husband and her children and where she was mostly a hired hand rather than a wife. When she came over here she was free. And probably still has it. I mean, nobody uses that cabin anymore. But she's at the age now where surely she can't use it. She can't come anymore.

SM And is it on the same side of the road as yours?

RD No. It's the other side of the road.

SM The other side, okay.

RD All right, back to the Blue's cabin. Stan Blue was a realtor in Cherry Creek, had an office building there and the like. And Stan and Barbara would do a good bit of entertaining in the cabin. They spent quite a bit of time in the summer time, but in the winter time it was always closed up and gone. Stan used to, well three of us who lived up there on the same little road that went into the church, Stan was the furthest up the hill and he would come by and pick me up. And then we'd go down the hill and honk and Mr. Deiter [?] would come out and we'd all three go to the men's breakfast. Deiter was the owner of the Deiter Publishing Company, Deiter bookbinding really, Deiter bookbinding in Denver for many, many years. And Stan, like I say, he was a realtor. Interesting thing about Barbara Blue's family, I ran across a Life magazine in the basement in a pile of old Life magazines when I got the cabin. It'd been pretty well cleared out, but there was still this pile of magazines. Among the magazines was a story about somebody named Blue who had done an airplane tour of South America in an old Piper Tri-cycle airplane. It turned out that that person was a relative of hers. I gave her the magazine and she was most appreciative about it. It must have been done back in the 50's or very early 60's. And I understand that that particular man wound up being either the president or a high official in one of the airplane manufacturers in Wichita, Kansas. I wish I knew more about that.

SM All right. We're talking with Bob Drawe and some of his recollections of Pine, now Pine Grove. Let's see we were talking about Blue's cabin. And is there anything else you want to add about that, or shall we go on to another.

RD There's something I can tell you that can lead into all this. I have a map in my house of the early, early, early days of this area, that was signed, how can I say, the map designated that the property that my house is on was once deeded to Ulysses S. Grant. As I understand it, that after the Civil War in 1865, that Grant was somehow given properties for his service and that one section of land back in here was deeded to Ulysses S. Grant. And I have that map with his information. That's interesting.

- SM Yes that is. Well, do you think he came to the area?
- RD I doubt it. I think it was just one of these gifts that you got as being a great General.
- SM But he didn't build your cabin?
- RD No. I don't think he had any connection with this area at all.
- SM But you did mention a possible visit by another famous person.
- RD All right.
- SM And maybe you could talk about that.
- RD Across the gully from me is a house that belonged to Howard Jennings' mother. He inherited it. And Howard Jennings lived in it up until just a few years ago when he died. I've heard stories that at least one summer William Jennings Bryan lived in another cabin. Not that one, but within sight of my cabin. The cabin had a name. I can't recall what the name of it is but it had a name. And that he spent a summer in that cabin enjoying himself. Maybe he was doing work there, I don't have any idea. But that's the story that that particular cabin was supposed to be famous because he spent a summer there. For whatever value that is. The cabin is not original anymore. It had been original up until three or four years ago, when it was purchased by a local contractor. And the local contractor built a separate foundation and moved the cabin on to the foundation that he built and then extensively changed the cabin. Built utility buildings and built a garage and one thing or another. So, it's no longer recognizable as the cabin the William Jennings Bryan is supposed to have stayed in.
- SM Now, your cabin, let's go back to it for a minute. Was it ever named?
- RD It probably was. Most cabins were. I don't know. I do know that back in the '30's it was owned by a reporter and I can't recall his name although it's stenciled on one of the boards on my sun porch. He was a reporter for the Denver Post. And he spent time up here away from his work at the Denver Post. Most people at that time,

back in the '30's, came up here by train. And I rather suspect that board, that has his name stenciled on it, came on the train with a bunch of lumber so that they could build that sun porch onto the existing cabin that was there. In fact, my cabin and Mrs. Blue's cabin next door were built about 1906 or 1908 as speculative properties and sold about that time. I'm sure the lumber for the original cabin came up by train too. Sometime after that the Bradys bought it. Mr. Brady was a bicycle repair man in Denver. He and his wife got to the point where they were retired and they moved to that cabin here in Pine and spent the rest of their life there. Mr. Brady was pretty well incapacitated. He had a spinal problem and was all bent over. I never met him but, people who did know him, knew him by that. And his wife lived with him until he died. And sometime after the electricity came to the valley in about 1946, there was electric pump put on a well, a well was dug and the house had a bathroom and running water. And there was an electrical storm that blew out the electric pump on the well. I guess at that time they weren't able to have it repaired. And for the remaining time that Mrs. Brady and her husband lived in the cabin, which probably wasn't all that long, they carried water from the town well over here between the library and Wolf, what's his last name?

SM Collins.

RD Wolf Collins' place. Either from there or from the river. For drinking water and to flush the toilet with.

SM You talked a little bit about that well before. The town well.

RD Okay. Yeah. The town well was a hand dug well. There was enough room down in there for someone to be down in there, because I've heard stories from Doc Hofferth [?] that he had, a time or two, gone down in there and cleaned out that well where it had sloughed off, dirt from the side with the hand dug well. In fact, he may have some connection with digging it for all I know. But anyway, it was a hand dug well, and it had a hand pump.

SM Okay. Let's kind of move down the highway here a little bit.

RD Okay. I can tell you a story about the Swan Ranch. Back in the time of President Eisenhower, he was quite a fisherman, and of course Mamie's family lived in Denver, not far from the golf club there. And

he enjoyed fishing and he would get with some of the local Denver politicians and they would see that he got his fill of fishing. And the story that I've heard, was a time or two, he'd come down and fish at the Swan Ranch. All of those people were pretty well politically connected. And the secret service cars in the 50's would come zooming down Elk Creek road. Dust flying everywhere. And they would come down here so that he could fish at the Swan Ranch. And they'd set up a tent and they'd have picnic lunches and all this sort of business, barbecue, I supposed. And a whole entourage of people, the politicians, the president, his secret service entourage. And everybody would descend on the Swan Ranch, so that President Eisenhower could get his fishing done.

SM Well, that's an important thing to do, you know. For some people.

RD I had no connection with this at all. These are stories I've heard.

SM Well, it sure is a good river for fishing. At least I've been told that. Do you know anything about the Swan Hereford?

RD No. Nothing. But, you could get information from someone else.

SM Okay. What about the Bryn Mawr? It was still here when you came.

RD Oh, yeah. The Bryn Mawr was operating and it was going when I moved to the valley. It burned down some years ago and has been rebuilt. It was an operating entity of business for as long as I knew. It was a surprise when I found that it'd burned down. Been run by a number of different people over the years.

SM Was it at one point a restaurant and a lodge? And there were cabins that were for rent behind it? Or was that a different entity?

RD I haven't any idea. That was before my time if it was true. That probably has some validity because that small area was called Bryn Mawr. Even though it was connected with Pine and it was known by the locals as a separate entity. So that it may very well have been a lodge and a restaurant and cabins for rent. That makes sense. Though, I don't know anything about it.

SM Okay. There's also a caboose across the road.

RD Yeah.

SM You know anything about that caboose?

RD The people that owned that property decided they wanted to make a bed and breakfast. And about that time cabooses were being phased out of railroads all over the country. And they were for sale. I knew at least two in Denver that were converted into private cars. Anyway, they were for sale, they were not expensive to buy. They were way expensive to move. But in connection with a bed and breakfast, I think the people that owned that property decided they would move a caboose in here, because the railroad property went right through there and it was appropriate to put a caboose on the old railroad property and convert it into a room for bed and breakfast use. And so that's how it came to be. Beyond that, I don't know anything about it.

SM Okay. Well, let's move to the west side of town. Now, before you came the hotel had burned down. What was the name of that?

RD The White Pines Hotel. It had probably burned down before 1940, but I don't really know that either. There were several outlying buildings connected with the hotel and they'd been converted into cabins and it still operates today.

SM Right. And was the hotel on the other side of the river as well?

RD Yes, it was. The old foundation is still there and still usable. You can see. You can see that's where the hotel was.

SM Also on the, I guess, the west side of town.

RD Yeah, it is.

SM Maybe the south west. Let's see there were Southwells [?] that lived across the river.

RD Yeah. They lived across the river. He was a nice guy. He used to come to our men's breakfast. And when we were building this firehouse, he did a lot of volunteer work with the rest of us on the building of the original firehouse, here in Pine. I say the original one, the one that is in operation now.

- SM And we'll talk about the fire department here in a minute. There was also a cabin owned by Ratcliffs [?].
- RD Is that the one where the farmer was?
- SM No. That's just the one that's kind of out on a little peninsula.
- RD Oh, yeah. Don't know about that one. I've always admired that cabin. I never see it used very much and I've always thought I'd like to own that property. That's a nice one.
- SM That is a nice one, yeah. Well then, coming back on this side of the river, you'd kind of talked a little bit about some retired gentleman who was a farmer.
- RD Yeah. Well, there's two. Just on this side of the river, there was a civic minded person who did a lot of work with the church down here. He helped build the pastor's addition to that church. By the way, I understand that that church was built as a result of some radio evangelist's connection. That probably Pastor...
- SM Dave?
- RD Pastor Dave could tell you more about it. But I understand that it was somebody in the area had connections with this radio evangelist. The radio evangelist contributed the money to get the original church built. And beyond that, as far as I know, he had no connection with it, other than the money to build it. But, that'd be an interesting story to find out from Pastor Dave or somebody who really knows what it is. That's where that church originated.
- SM And then the other person besides the civic minded person you were talking about.
- RD Was further on down on the same side. He was down next to the river down there and had scratched off a little place to have a pretty good size garden. And enjoyed gardening. And he would fight off the animals that kept coming over there, trying to get into his garden. There were good many deer that were down there all the time. And he was putting up fences and repairing fences and that thing all the time. But anyway, he enjoyed doing that sort of stuff.

He probably grew more stuff around here than anybody around. And when harvest time came, he was forever giving away, this or that, or something. I don't think he sold anything but he may have sold something from time to time. He had enough to do that. But an awful nice guy. And he used to come to men's breakfast. And finally it got to the point where this was not the place for him to live. He was getting too old for this. And they moved to town and not long after that he died.

SM And then moving still farther west was the Crystal Lake resort.

RD Right. The Crystal Lake resort has been, well, here's the stories, beyond what I hear, I don't know from first hand knowledge what it's all about. But Crystal Lake was one of the many lakes they cut ice on back in the '20's and '30's. They shipped the ice from a location right here in Pine Grove into Denver for use in Denver. Interesting thing about that. This was narrow gauge here and Denver was all standard gauge railroad. And when the railroad car was filled up here with ice, it had to get down to the Denver station.

SM Union Station?

RD Union Station. Because the ice house was almost connected with it. Just across the way from it. So they had to get the ice down there and the railroad had to put an extra rail from the end of the narrow gauge railroad, which was somewhere down in Waterton Canyon all the way into Union Station, so that narrow gauge trains could get in there to unload the ice. So the interesting thing, that particular part of the rail operation, there were three rails instead of two.

SM And do you recall any of the events or anything that happened at the resort? Or anything about that area, the Crystal Lake resort?

RD Well, no, I don't. All I know is that before my time that place had burned down. And the stories I heard, was that the two proprietors who had operated it, were old time restaurant operators from Denver who had retired and then decided that they didn't like retirement.

SM I can't imagine why.

- RD And they came up here and they opened the restaurant there. And it was well attended. People knew the people and the food was good and the area liked it. And the people from Denver would come. And it operated quite well until all of the sudden, the story is that it burned down and that was the end of it.
- SM And then even farther west is the Bear [?] Lodge.
- RD Yeah, Mr. Bear [?] was an official of an electric company in Chicago. And he'd come out here and found this piece of property and bought it. And decided in the '30's, I'm going to say somewhere around 1936, '35 something like that, decided he wanted a lodge. And in one year, one summer really, that place was built. He got enough workman in here to put up the lodge, put up some out buildings, do some repair to the lake. The lake was one of the lakes they used to cut ice. The railroad track used to run through there. The right of way is still there not too far in front of the lodge. He also had an observatory. He was an amateur astronomer. And on one of the hills nearby he built an observatory. And the telescope and everything are still in the building. I went up there this last summer and got to look through it, one thing or another. I met an engineer over at Warren and Jenny's store here a couple of years ago, who lived here as a kid. He's an engineer in Houston. And he came up here to do some geological work for some schooling he was finishing up. And as a kid he had a Model A Ford. And he and his brother hauled rock and things up to build that observatory in the late '30's with their old Model A. And he told stories about it. How the place was built, and he knew Mr. Bear [?], and one thing or another. When I first ran onto the Pine Valley Lodge, of course the Bears [?] were gone, it had then been purchased by _____ (22:35) a maker of television antennas and his son wanted to run it, wanted to have that lodge. The son didn't last long at all. And it was sold to a company called Pizzazz. Pizzazz was a real estate developer out of some place over, maybe St. Louis or someplace over there. Came over and bought it and decided to make a really, really good lodge out of it for re-sale. So during the time I was here, they were working on that lodge. There were several outbuildings that they had converted as cabins where people could stay. The lodge itself had about four bedrooms upstairs that could be rented out easily. They had converted the kitchen to a fully commercial kitchen. They had a bar there. They built an enclosed swimming pool and a hot tub. Just off of the main

dining room area there, which was large, was a flat roof and they had put waterproof sheeting on the roof so that they could spray that roof with a quarter inch or so of water, and skate on the top of that roof. I've never seen it done but I know that that was the intention. And then the main lodge room was a good place to have meetings and the like. It was well designed. They'd gone to a lot of trouble. They'd built a separate building to put a fire engine in. It would therefore make their expenses, tax expenses and insurance expenses less. So the North Fork Fire Department arranged to get a fire engine out of Utah. An old airport crash truck fire engine that would hold water and spray water and the like. A great expense. They got tires for it and got it operated, and got it over here and put it in that building. I don't think it was ever actually used. The last I heard of it, the heat went off in the building, water was in the pump, the pump broke, the pump couldn't be replaced. It wound up being sold at an auction and last I saw it, it was down, one of the Green sons had bought it down there and it was parked over there. But that was the original fire engine for Pine Valley Ranch. There used to be some tennis courts down there. They tore those out. That was part of the original operation. Now, at that area where the tennis courts used to be is a picnic pavilion down in there where they've got some shelters and the like. Can I tell you anything else about that? It actually operated as a lodge while they were trying to sell it. I guess to the, I don't know, it may have been to the _____ (26:30) or whoever it was. I'm not clear about how that went. But anyway, they operated it for one summer. At least one summer. Surely not longer than that. And we used to go over there and have dinner and they had a place where you could get drinks. It was really a nice place to go. Really was. Just missed a lot when it was sold privately and off it went. Since then it's been sold off to the Denver Open Space and Denver Open Space has decided that since that building had a bunch of insulation.

SM Oh, asbestos?

RD Asbestos insulation in it. That they would not use it. For them it was too expensive to have it taken out. So they just closed it up and fenced it off and it's just been sitting there ever since.

SM And what a tragedy that is.

- RD But it was perfectly ready to go. In fact I always thought that would have been a perfect place for a fat farm. You get these people to bring ten thousand dollars to the area, to spend two weeks at the fat farm. They can go out there and ride bicycles up and down the railroad area. They can play tennis on the tennis courts. They had horses. You could ride horses back in the hills. In the wintertime there was skiing nearby. You could load them in a bus and haul them up and let them ski. You had them far enough away from town, thirty-five forty miles, so that all the meals would be served here and they would be served proper diet meals. I thought, if I were the person that was connected with that, that's what I would've done. It never happened, but, makes a nice story.
- SM Yeah. And it sure is a beautiful building.
- RD Yes, it is.
- SM It's a beautiful building. Well, you know, you mentioned the fire department kind of helping get a truck over to the Bear Lodge.
- RD Yes.
- SM Maybe we could move back and talk about what you know about the North Fork Volunteer Fire Department.
- RD Well, the North Fork Fire Department when I came was pretty well inactive. It had had at one time, an old fire truck and a garage building, just across the street over here.
- SM And it's between the Nichols' [?] property and the Odd Fellows Lodge.
- RD That's right. I never saw a vehicle in it, although I've stored stuff in there for the fire department. But it was gone or moved somewhere else, before I came. The Fire Department was reinstated I guess or as far as I'm concerned that's what was done.
- SM Or maybe formally organized.
- RD Perhaps. Down in Buffalo Creek they had an old garage building down there. They obtained an old military four wheel drive vehicle and outfitted it with a pump and hoses so they could run around

and do small fires. And they kept it in there for a while. And one of the local summer residents, I can't think of his name either, was an official with the fire department in Wheat Ridge Fire Department. And he arranged for the fire department here to buy some old fire engines that they were upgrading to new ones. And the story goes is that the Wheat Ridge Fire Department said, how much can you afford to pay for this truck? And they said a very small figure. Far below what it was worth. And the Wheat Ridge Fire Department says, that sounds fair. And we wound up with two trucks from the Wheat Ridge Fire Department by that. I heard another story, that some years later we needed some hose. The canvas hose had gotten leaky. And the hose was expensive and this whole operation up here was volunteer. There was no money involved.

SM This is tape two of the interview with Bob Drawe and we're talking about the North Fork Volunteer Fire Department.

RD I was saying the bake sales don't buy very many trucks. Nor does it buy very much hose. So the Wheat Ridge Fire Department personnel happened to tell us one time, you know, out in a certain field, we believe there's an old piece of hose out there somewhere that you could find. And some of the people from the North Fork Fire Department went to the location that was designated and sure enough there was enough canvas hose to replace some of the stuff that we had needed. So all in all, we are in great obligation to those angels that were connected with Wheat Ridge Fire Department. I do know one other time, there was a fire department trying to get started down in the Freemont County area. Big rural area. They just didn't have any. And they got in contact with our fire department how some of these things are done. And we put them on the trail of some of the businesses around, like Martin Marietta and the like, that will certainly do helpful things for volunteer fire departments. And it wound up that they got going. And they got trucks and they got information, and they got help from various businesses, and got a fire department started down there. But our fire department was one that they contacted because we were bootstrap people ourselves.

SM Now, when the fire department first officially started, there were some beginnings in Pine Grove and some in Buffalo Creek, but they eventually became one.

- RD That's an important point. Like you said the original building and stuff was in Pine. The secondary stuff that got started a little bit later was down in Buffalo Creek. And the officials, I call them officials, the people got these things started who were movers at the time, decided that, you know, it really is smart, not to connect the fire department solely at Pine or solely at Buffalo Creek. That it would be really wise to join these two communities together by calling the fire department the North Fork Fire Department. And that really was a very wise initial decision. Because since those days these communities have really been very cooperative with one another. Back in the old days they were quite separate. The Buffalo Creek area was separate from Pine. And up around Pine was where most of the bootlegging was going on, up in here. Some of these hills up in here had...
- SM We're talking '30's and '40's right?
- RD Yes, we're talking a long time ago. But back in those days, these two communities were separate. And nowadays, we're really one community. And I personally credit the use of the North Fork Fire Department as designating this area as the North Fork area. It has done the job.
- SM All right. Well let's move on and talk about some other folks that you knew who lived in Pine or now Pine Grove. Murray Hall, you knew him?
- RD Yeah. I knew Murray. He was an old-timer from around here. He was a cowboy type. He and his wife lived in Pine, not far from Doc Hofferth [?] just down a couple of buildings. He and Doc were good friends and both had been around here for a good bit of their life. I happened to be in Murray Hall's work building behind his house. He had a pretty good size barn back in there where he had a forge and where he could do horseshoing, and where had rock cutting material where he could cut rocks and polish rocks and where he could do, things to keep out of Cordelia's, keep out from being underfoot. He'd do things back in there. But he was interested in showing me, from the day I was there, the working end of a hatchet, no handle, that he told the story about being back up around Shaffer's crossing area back in there. He was doing some fence work, putting in fence work and fence posts and the like. And he ran onto this hatchet head that he was convinced that was

probably lost by the Spanish that came through here whenever the time would have been. He had quite a story that he told about this whole thing. The hatchet handle was a great opening to tell stories and I heard the story about the Spanish conquistadors in this area, and the hatchet head. I don't know whatever happened to that hatchet head. It probably was sold among the stuff in his workroom there, barn room, or whatever you want to call it.

SM Were there any particular markings on the head?

RD It was unusual. It was unusually shaped. I didn't have anything pointed out to me, how he decided that it was of old Spanish origin but like any old cowboy, it makes a good story anyway. And Doc lived not far from there, had stories of his own that he would tell. I can't remember them at the moment, but what I remember most about Doc was that he operated around this area for a long time as the official cook when everything was going on in the community. Well, let me tell you another story. He was rooting around in an old trash pile up the hill here and came upon the working head of a grill. A cast iron piece about maybe two foot long and eighteen inches wide and a half inch tall. And he said, that looks useful. So he hauled it out of there and cleaned it all up and welded some refrigerator legs on it and made a little shelf and put some propane flame burners underneath it and made a portable grill that he could take with him any place he wanted to go and could cook a lot of stuff on that grill. And did. He was the principle cook at the men's breakfast for years and years and years. He'd haul that thing down in there and break out his eggs and his bread and his whatever and he'd make one-eyed jacks. You want a one-eyed jack, you take a piece of bread and you take a glass, and you cut the middle out, you cut the hole out of the middle and put it on the griddle and start it toasting, and put an egg in there. And then when it was cooked on that side, you turn it over to the other side. And that's one of the things he served the men at men's breakfast, one-eyed jacks. But whenever there was some kind of activity going around where there was a need for something to eat, he was Johnny-on-the-spot, cooking bacon or cooking pancakes or cooking one-eyed jacks or making men's breakfast or whatever. You could count on Doc, Doc was there to help. Doc was highly community active.

SM And so I bet he was involved in the early rhubarb festival.

- RD I'm sure he was. He was certainly cooking there. I don't know whatever else he was doing on there, but he was there during the activities absolutely. Rhubarb festival pretty well got started along when Richard Green was, in fact it wouldn't surprise me if Richard or Richard's wife made up the name Rhubarb Festival.
- SM Well, and McKelvain [?].
- RD Was it McKelvain [?]
- SM Yeah.
- RD Anyway, they were prime movers in getting the Rhubarb Festival going, primarily to promote the Pine Elk Creek improvement Association. It was their main money raising activity. And it has proven successful over the years.
- SM Now back to Doc and Murray Hall. They were both living here when you came here.
- RD Yes, they were.
- SM And their homes were on Grove street, do you think?
- RD You know we old timers don't pay any attention to what the name of the streets were.
- SM Well, okay, by the Prosser Hotel? Down that road?
- RD Yes.
- SM Okay. Just for clarification purposes.
- RD Yeah.
- SM And did you know either of the wives?
- RD I knew of Cordelia and I've seen her around a lot. But no, I didn't know her. And yes, I knew Ella Mae. Ella Mae was active in our library at the time I was. Doc and Ella Mae operated this lodge down here in Buffalo Creek. What was the name of that lodge?

SM The Hudson Hotel.

RD No.

SM And it wasn't the Blue Jay, so.

RD No. There was another lodge down there. Somebody else will be able to tell you about that, but they operated that for years and years and years. It changed hands and everything and they still were the main caretakers of that operation. It was one of these operations where people would come out and have two weeks during the summer of business operations or little retreats and that kind of thing. Somebody else knows more about that than I do. Doc and his wife operated it and actually lived on the premises down there. Although they owned the house here for a long time, for a good many years.

SM And then Alice Wood.

RD Oh, yeah. Alice had been married to an Air Force enlisted man. And when she was divorced she decided the appropriate thing would be to move up here and she found a place up behind the Bryn Mawr where interestingly it didn't have a well. That and some of the other houses up there were fed by a spring that was up in the hills up there. It did have running water at the house from that spring. It did have toilet facilities with, what do you call it, not a septic tank. Anyway, it was something that she has been able to handle herself. She was pretty well crippled up when I knew her but a most active person, most active person. She was really an expert on Colorado orchids and flora of all kind. I think she was somehow at one time connected with the Denver Botanical Gardens. She was quite a musician. She played the violin with the Evergreen Chamber Orchestra. She taught the violin. She was interested in everything. She was a fully interested person. Anything was going on, she was high behind. She kept a little garden back there and enjoyed feeding the birds and enjoyed and enjoyed the animals that came. I remember many a time when I was up there, she had a sliding door and she'd slide the door back. And she had a squirrel that would come up there and she'd put a peanut in a pinchers like thing, and put it out there, and the squirrel would come up and take it practically right out of her hand, out of this little pinchers thing she had. And she was most proud of that, that her squirrel was tame

enough to do that. But, Alice was a most interesting person. Quite active. Went to all the art meetings down there, and enjoyed, she just enjoyed life. One of the persons who fully enjoyed life. In her later years, I spent a good deal of time, taking her to the doctor. She got to the point where she couldn't drive anymore. In fact, I'll tell you a little story. The year that she was ninety, her driver's license came due. She says, you know, I'm never going to drive to town, but I really ought to have a driver's license. Wouldn't you take me down to the driver's license place? So I did. I took her down to the Arapahoe County driver's license area. And darn if she didn't get her driver's license at ninety years old. All she ever drove really was to the grocery store and occasionally to Evergreen to attend concerts. And beyond that, when something needed to be done that would go to town, somebody took her. But, she had an old four wheel drive Subaru. Snow didn't bother her. A time or two she'd driven up to my house in the snow to get me to do something. And I wasn't about to get out in my two wheel drive car. But she had lots of friends around. She was very, what do you say, very socially minded. She did things all the time and would help anybody with anything that she could. And she really didn't have two nickels to rub together. She did it all from social security expenses. But, she lived life to the fullest. I happened to be there the night before she died. It was just before Christmas. She had been taken down to Swedish and they said they really couldn't do any more for her, or whatever the problem was, I'm not sure what it was, but anyway. She went into a nursing home, which is associated with Swedish about two or three blocks away. And I took her down some Christmas presents. And I happened to be there that night or that evening when she was taking exercises. She had one of these rubber, kind of like a blue rubber thing, a long string and she would stretch it. At her exercise class she and her exercise instructor. She'd do, one, two, three. And a one, and a two...here she was within ten hours of death. So she lived life right up to the end. Right up to the very end. Most interesting person.

SM Yeah. It was really a privilege to know her. I enjoyed that.

RD What else?

SM Well, are there any final stories that crossed your mind that you'd like to tell?



RD No, I'm afraid I'm about talked out.

SM Well, thank you very much for this interview. Really appreciate it.

RD You're surely welcome.