

Jefferson County Public Library Digital History Collection

North Fork Library Association
North Fork Oral History Project Interviews

Interview with Larry Hamilton, 3/5/06
Interviewer: David Rainey

[Part 1.]

David Rainey This is March the 5th, 2006. Almost made a mistake there. And I'm David Rainey, interviewing Larry Hamilton of Buffalo Creek who is the sole surviving member, no he isn't, but he's one of the sole surviving member resident in Buffalo Creek, of the fabled Hamilton family, that originated some place east of Chicago. So, Larry, your family first came out here, was it your grandfather that's the first one to come out here?

Larry Hamilton Yes. My grandfather was a claims agent for the Santa Fe. He'd gone to CU, although he was raised in Ohio. And he came out here to settle some particular claim, and was down at Union Station waiting for a train back, when he ran into an old college buddy. And he started chatting and--"we spend our summers in Buffalo Creek." I don't know the name. And by invitation the next summer, my grandfather, Poppy, as he was known, brought my grandmother and their four kids out to stay with this family. And I don't know which building.

DR What year was that?

LH That would've been 1919. And they liked it so much that the following year they rented a place down there and I'm not even sure which one. And then the following year they bought the house that we live in now.

DR I see.

LH It's a fairly crude cabin. The procedure back then was, of course train travel was virtually free for my grandfather and his family, that the day or two days after school got out, they would all load up on the train come out here. Poppy would spend a week, and then go back and work for the summer. Come back out just before Labor Day, spend a week, load up the family and take them back. So, it was basically my grandmother and the four kids out here all through the summer. Of course as you're aware, it wasn't like a



women being alone with four kids for all that time, because back then there were a fairly large number of residents.

DR Yeah. And that was about what year?

LH It was in '21 I think. Just as in the abstract and titles, I have the original document, going back to 1880 something. There is no record of the structure ever being built. There is also no record of when it was bought by the Hamilton's. I'm pretty sure it was 1921. So, _____(3:12) get pioneer license plates, wait until '21 for it.

DR 1921.

LH Right. I first came out in 1948 with my brother and mother and father. And my mother said, never again until there's running water. We had a cold water tap outdoors.

DR Yeah. I remember that.

LH And an outhouse. And so in '49 we did not come out. In '50 we did. And every year since then. I've never missed a year.

DR Yeah. Do you remember who put in your plumbing?

LH I could speculate. I couldn't say for sure. Byron Farthing. Did he do that kind of work?

DR Yeah. Byron did it and Charlie Trost did it. Tex did some.

LH Charles?

DR Yeah.

LH I have an interesting story that has nothing to do with my family but, that's all right.

DR Tell the story anyway.

LH I grew up in Park Ridge, Illinois. When I was not quite two we moved there from my birth place and went to this particular church the whole time. And the senior, well he was the pastor at one time,

and then was the senior pastor and then eventually they shut him out completely. But every year my parents would say, Pastor Spengler[?], why don't you come out and visit us in Buffalo Creek this summer. Oh, I'd love to do that. Thank you. He just never got around to it. One year he said, this was in Park Ridge, Illinois, and one year he said, this place in Buffalo Creek is it anywhere near Bailey? Said, well, yes. It certainly is. Have you ever heard of a Trost family? And I didn't know much of anything about Charlie. I've heard a couple of minor stories about Hilda. They used to go around with a cart supplying milk to people.

DR I used to jump on and off the pickup truck delivering the milk for them. That was in 1930.

LH Well, Hilda and Charlie Trost were founding members of the church we went to in Park Ridge.

DR I'll be darned.

LH Pastor Spengler never made it out here. But anyway, most of what I have heard over the years of the early construction was done by Byron Farthing. Including the corner fireplace.

DR Yeah. Both Charlie Trost and Byron Farthing were real big fireplace builders. They did a good job.

LH And my mother hated the corner fireplace too. She was a very opinionated woman. But when it was torn down, when they expanded the living room onto the side porch, they put in a new fireplace. The bricks went fifty percent to my brother, who made them into, I got to take them in a UHAUL trailer to Palo Alto, California. Had an interesting time explaining that to the people going into California. Well, what's that? Because they stop you for vegetables.

DR Yes.

LH What is that down there? That's two rows of bricks. Two layers of bricks. What's that for? Those are Hamilton ancestral brick. And then the rest of them are in the walkway coming into our house. That's all I know about Byron Farthing.

- DR Well, I can remember in 1930 when I first met your family, your dad's family, were Joe and Mason and Betty and her dad.
- LH Jack.
- DR He came out only for a week or two. I think it was before he and _____(7:27) were married.
- LH Yeah. They were married in '40. End of '40.
- DR So, this would be ten years before. I think, was he still in school? He might have been. But I understood he was with the Santa Fe railroad too.
- LH No. In 1930 he would've been in college, he was a studious sort. He enjoyed it out here. But my father was never...he enjoyed it immensely, but he was never the outdoorsy type. Climbed everything around here, just like everybody did.
- DR Yeah.
- LH But, in later years, you see pictures of him, and my dad was shaped like an executive and Joe was always real thin and Mason was a Colonel who, when he had a bad back in the army, he was put in charge of something like the hundred first airborne or something like that. He said, I've never jumped out of a plane. I should, because my men are going. And he said, a few times of jumping out of a plane, I never had a bad back again. But he was athletic.
- DR I remember that.
- LH Both he and Joe. But, I would not be surprised if my dad, well, Northwestern calls him _____(9:00). But he stayed back to work. Frankly I don't know what he did prior to getting out of law school. But when he got out of law school, he went to work for the Alliance _____(9:14) insurance.
- DR Well, _____(9:16) he did work for Santa Fe, because your dad was with Santa Fe.
- LH Right. Yes.



- DR And we did a lot of nepotism in those days. I believe in it. I really do. You get the best employees if you employ the families.
- LH Well, in the hotel business you get a lot of idiots. Arrogant idiots.
- DR Well...
- LH Maybe in real jobs, grown up jobs.
- DR Yeah. Well, I always enjoyed hiring family people into my office. Hired a lot of them.
- LH Well, you generally know what you're getting.
- DR You know what you're getting and you also know how to get rid of them.
- LH Right. Talk to the parents.
- DR Talk to the parents. Get them out of here. Of course you always were hiring starting grade people. Do you know anything about your father's family out here? Other than they came out on the train as a rule, didn't they?
- LH Right. Come out on the train, right after school let out and stay until school was ready to start again. My father was the oldest. Then Betty. Then Mason. Then Joe. And Joe and Mason were into the rodeo and stuff like that. My Dad and somebody, I've heard who, but I don't recall who published the newspaper every day, with what was going on around Buffalo Creek.
- DR What years would that have been?
- LH That's a real good question. Well, probably starting in 1922 or something like that. 1923, he would've been ten or eleven years old. And that's a good time to do a one page broad sheet.
- DR I wonder if there's any copies of that left.
- LH I've never seen anything. Any record of it at all. It's only things that I've been told by others. In fact my dad never really talked...oh



yeah, we did that. But _____(11:16). I don't know that it was...

DR Do you have any idea what he called it?

LH No. I just last year, when Jack Green was talking about _____(11:27), saw the rodeo programs.

DR Yeah.

LH That had Mason's _____(11:35). He gave me a couple of them to hang on to. Just kind of intrigued by that.

DR Yeah. Well, I remember your uncles both, Joe and Mason because they were about the same age that my brothers and I were. And we did a lot. In fact it was your Aunt Betty that taught me to dance.

LH I guess she was quite a looker.

DR Oh, she was.

LH Yeah.

DR My oldest brother courted her.

LH Oh!.

DR Yeah.

LH We could've been related.

DR Well, that would surprise him.

LH By the time I met her, that might have been as late as 1958, because I know in '58 we spent some time at their house in California. By the time I met her she was a mature woman, and while attractive, she wasn't anybody I would've been _____(12:32) when I was 14.

DR Well, I can understand that.

- LH Betty was married to Al Culver who was some kind of an exec with Portland Cement. And...
- DR Is that related to the Culvers here in Buffalo Creek?
- LH No. No, they are not. At least as far as I can tell. Because they had two sons, Albert Jr. and Johnny who went by Jed, which was what people called my grandfather, Jeddy. Outside of family where he was called pop. And then Mason was a military careerist with Susan, Judy, Billy, Emily and Dodie. And Susan in fact was out here two or three years ago. Her husband is the director, or whatever of the Naval JAG Association. And they had a meeting in Denver. And they came out a day ahead of time and came out for a visit. I hadn't seen her since she was probably 14. So, it's been quite a few years. Her kids are scattered. Well, except for Billy. He and his wife and two kids were hit by a drunk driver and Billy and, I don't remember his wife's name, they were killed. Judy took in their two kids. I would assume that they are well into adulthood by now. And then Joe was a teacher or a professor, I don't know if he was a professor or not. A teacher of meteorology and mathematics at...it wasn't Cal Poly, but it was one of the tech schools out there in LA. And he married Sicily[?], whose maiden name I don't know but she was from Buffalo Creek. They met in Buffalo Creek. She hated Buffalo Creek. She associated Buffalo Creek with poverty. Her family's poverty. Beyond that I don't know any background. But she really did not like it here. So, growing up, Culvers were here at least once. Mason and Dorothea, his first wife, were here three or four times, including once where they stayed in a Volkswagen bus in the driveway right over there. But I only met Sicily once in my life, before the passing of everybody. And then she called one day out of the blue. And they had two kids. Phillip, was the older, and Joe Jr. was actually the second. And she called one day, it would've been five years ago, and said, Joe had died and they were bringing out his ashes. And they wanted to stop and see us. But they didn't want to be a bother? And they ended up spending the entire afternoon. And they came back another time with Joe Jr.'s girlfriend. And they said, we'll only stay a day. But I think she softened toward Buffalo Creek. Mainly because it meant so much to Joe. _____(16:27).
- DR _____(16:27).

- LH I could ask my brother, but I doubt if he would know...well, I should get in touch with her because she's the one who's done the family tree business.
- DR I see.
- LH Going back to all sorts of strange names. We had, if you go back far enough...
- DR Excuse me.
- LH We were sitting on our front porch, deck whatever it is.
- DR If it's too hot, we can go _____(17:02).
- LH Joe was telling me about, when he climbed that and when he climbed that. And when he did Little Scraggy and Green Mountain. And he said, I used to swing from the branch of that tree all the time. That tree then got hit by lightning and was gone. But I remember asking him, because I was of that age and we had enough people staying with us that summer that I was using my cousin's sleeping bag. And I asked him if he ever had a sleeping bag. And he said, well, not until I got married. Really pleased Sicily.
- DR Well, the list of questions here that they suggest we ask...
- LH Yes.
- DR You, I know that you came out here on the train a few times.
- LH Yeah. Now, my brother never did. But I was a train freak. And I came out more often. In fact, when I started college at DU, I liked coming out on the train instead of driving or flying.
- DR Where'd you go to college?
- LH DU.
- DR Oh, you did?
- LH Yeah. Studied hotel and restaurant management in the business school there. I got smart and got out of that business. I got smart



and got out of retailing. And I'm trying to figure out how to get out of the _____(18:34).

DR Yeah. You have to work a little while to get, well, you're about at the point now, you and Dave, talking about retirement.

LH I've got some time yet. That was back when they had linen for dining tables, and silverware, not what we today call silverware, that is actually made out of stainless steel.

DR I see. I still have a place setting.

LH Really?

DR Yeah. _____(19:03). Your family didn't come out here for any health reasons or anything, did they?

LH No. No, they just after that first year, they just liked it so much that...

DR Yeah.

LH Even then the sense of community. There was something going on all the time. And at that point, by that time they were, I'm not sure when they actually moved to the Chicago area, Fort Madison. But even Fort Madison was a city compared to Buffalo Creek. And they all just really liked being out here and enjoyed the altitude and the smells.

DR Well, I always enjoyed your grandmother and particularly Betty, and well, Mason and Joe too. We were just roughneck kids together.

LH I hardly knew my grandmother. I only met her a couple of times. And then she grew sick. Poor health and couldn't travel.

DR Do you have any recollections of some of the other sites around here? Like Blue Jay Inn? Or the ranch?

LH Oh, absolutely.

DR Did you ever work at the Blue Jay?

- LH No. No, I made it a point not to work as long in my life as I could. But I remember Sunday dinners at the Blue Jay. Fried chicken. I remember, they used to tell people, when we'd drive by the Blue Jay, and it was not in general operation, that yes, they had excellent food there but you had to call up and ask if you could come to Sunday dinner. And then you would eat what they served and then you better be prepared to help clear the table afterwards. In fact, some friends back in Illinois called us one day all excited. They got Ford magazine, which I guess was sent out to everybody who bought a Ford at that time.
- DR Yeah.
- LH Said, look on page...well, we didn't have Fords.
- DR Yeah.
- LH But they ran it over to our house and there's the fried chicken recipe from the Blue Jay Inn.
- DR I'll be darned.
- LH Then it was a few years after that somebody called up shrieking and said, turn on CBS, turn on CBS. This was on a Sunday evening and we turned on CBS and there was the little red schoolhouse. And Don Green and a couple of other people being interviewed on Walter Cronkite's Twentieth Century, or...
- DR Yeah. That's what it was.
- LH Yeah. So, Buffalo Creek became so famous, I was worried about it being a metropolis.
- DR Yeah.
- LH Now, I still am...but when I moved here permanently...
- DR When was that? You moved here as a bachelor for a number of years.
- LH Yes. Yes. It was 1977 in the spring. And at that time I was working in Bear Valley and I lived in Aurora. And it took me a half an hour,



driving across town, smelling exhaust, dealing with traffic lights and screaming at people. And this only took forty-five minutes of trees and occasional dodging of deer or something like that. Why am I dealing with both? So, I moved up. And at that time Chuck Schissler said he wasn't sure if the population of Buffalo Creek was 53 or 54. And then a couple years later, he said, I couldn't remember if that was just before I did that count or after you got married, or just before or after somebody blew his brains out. So, that would've fluctuated the population.

DR That'd be Jack Hayes[?].

LH No. Bill Perklins.

DR Oh.

LH I didn't know Jack Hayes.

DR Didn't you know Jack Hayes(23:06)?

LH No.

DR Marie Hayes' husband?

LH Oh, okay. Oh, but that would've been well before.

DR No, it was in the fifties.

LH Well, yeah.

DR No, the sixties.

LH But I moved up here in '77. Yeah.

DR Oh, that's right.

LH Bill Perkins who also took his life. I had a car problem one day. A friend of mine was getting married here in Buffalo Creek and they wanted to use what was then our cabin, while I lived in Aurora. And he was going to use it for a honeymoon. And coming up here after the bachelor party in town, at two o'clock in the morning, apparently the thermostat went out on my car. And we stopped at the Tiny



Town exit to get close to the creek. First, we dumped a couple bottles of soda water in the radiator and then we started filling them out of the creek, in the night, in February, to get the car up here. And I asked the Greens the next day, and Don couldn't really do anything and he said, talk to Bill Perkins. I didn't know him. I went over, Bill Perkins got it taken care of for me, well enough to get it back into town. But in talking with Bill Perkins, he was in my brother's high school class back in Illinois.

DR I'll be darned. Where did he live?

LH Up by Janie Campbell. In fact, I think it was the house that burned down across from Janie's.

DR I knew some of the people that owned that house but not...that house had a lot of owners.

LH Right. Well, everybody up here talks about the old so and so house, and the old so and so house. And, I don't know who you're talking about. Tell me based on a tree or the color of the house or something like that. Because, when I was here as a kid, from the forties, fifties and sixties, although once I was in college, I couldn't really spend much time here. But at that time, Buffalo Creek was probably at its lowest summer population. Winter population too.

DR Yeah.

LH From its founding. And, you know, I knew Jerry Weed [?] and his brother Frank. I hardly even knew Ben Lombard when I was kid. I met him, but...

DR Either of the Green, no, the Green boys were older than you.

LH No.

DR Well, Don's children.

LH Oh, Don. Certainly. Oh, I'm sorry. Oh, I thought you were talking about their kids. Yeah, Don, Jack and...

DR Robert.

- LH Robert. Bob. Yeah, they were, I referred to Don as Mr. Green during my formative years. Oh, the other family that I particularly remember from here, spending time with was the Gray's. Jack and...
- DR Carol.
- LH Carol Gray. And Linda and John and Candy.
- DR Those were their children.
- LH Their kids, right.
- DR Yeah.
- LH Linda of course was the object of much attention. She was just about the right age and nice looking. But then again Jerry was older and taller and all that. Or Frank, as he's now called.
- DR Yeah. Well, you had the opportunity to use the community hall in those days.
- LH I have done some square dancing.
- DR Did the kids in your generation use the hall during the week?
- LH I don't recall very much during the week. We used the grounds, played ball down there, before there was a backstop and horse shoes. There was a tennis court down there. Dirt, gravel, whatever, tennis court at one time. I don't remember a whole lot during the week. A typical day when I was maybe ten years old was, get up, have breakfast, say goodbye, and leave the house. Now, keep in mind that I didn't learn to swim until I was fourteen or something like that. And I would go off for the morning and I don't know if it was based on the clock, or based on my stomach, but I would come back for lunch. And then I would leave again immediately after lunch and not come back until five or six o'clock in the evening.
- DR Did you have friends to go visit, or?

- LH Yeah. I enjoyed being alone too. The caves, is an improper word, but the rock hollows up by Buffalo rocks there...
- DR Oh, yeah.
- LH Billy Brogoitti hung out when he ran away from home.
- DR Yeah.
- LH I'd crawl around in there. I'd go looking for animals. Occasionally find a lizard and never caught more than a tail. I'd go down to the creek or the river and play in it. I got heavily into hydraulic engineering.
- DR Building small dams?
- LH Yes. And in some cases not so small. I would chase deer when I was young. Never caught one of those either. But, hey, got to do what you've got to do. One of my strongest, not necessarily fondest recollections as a kid, was probably in '53. The Korean War was going on. And I guess we got daily newspaper coverage up here. That's back when the Rocky Mountain News was in the morning, and The Post was in the evening.
- DR Yeah.
- LH It was also...there was a time in there where the mail was delivered twice a day.
- DR Yeah. That's right.
- LH And I remember my brother and I at the "dining room table", after dinner, with a kerosene lamp, which we still have, on the table, and us fighting over the newspaper and reading about the Korean War, and the kerosene lamp, while were fighting wobbling back and forth, and my mother freaking out over it. Waiting for it to tip over and dump flaming kerosene all over. We never had a problem. But, my brother lost his interest completely, well, he believes that no place is worth living if they don't have a proper symphony and orchestra, and access to high speed internet today, which of course they didn't have then. But you had to have professional athletic teams and stuff like that. And he says, what's the interest in Buffalo

Creek? One year, some friends of ours came out here from Illinois to visit, and they had a movie camera, which was not all that common back then. But there are movies in existence, I assume, still, of my brother and Pete Marks[?], their son of the same age, at the Top of the World. Well, the father had panned the entire horizon, all of the mountains. I guess my dad would name them as he'd go by each one. And, everybody's having a picnic up there, and a great old time, and Scott and Pete Marks sitting at a picnic table playing two-handed poker.

DR Sounds like my brother.

LH They just didn't care about trees and mountains and things like that. My brother also hates cold and snow, which is the reason why he didn't want to settle here. When it came time to do something from our parents with our residence, there was no question if my brother wanted it. We certainly weren't going to have a fight over it.

DR Did you buy him out or something?

LH Yeah. My parents bought out my grandfather in I think 1959.

DR Yeah.

LH And, there were some testy times then because a couple of my brothers, siblings spouses, weren't real thrilled with signing quick claim deeds to any future interest.

[End of Part 1.]

[Part 2.]

DR An interview with Larry Hamilton, on March the 5th, 2006, by Dave Rainey. Go to it Larry.

LH Well, we had no electricity. I have described the place to people in later years, if you drop the coin on the floor, then it's probably gone. At night you could lie in bed and look at the stars through the walls, through the cracks in the walls. You better dump your slippers out in the morning before you put your feet in because you don't know what else is going to be in there. Of course, there's the outhouse.

And first thing in the morning in the summer is fire up the wood stove, gather around that to get warm. Hold your clothes out next to it. I can remember bathing in a big galvanized tub because what was our first bathroom was originally just a pantry, which is why it's such a small bathroom. Things were obviously a little bit more primitive, now I can't remember, I had a subject there before but ...

DR Yeah.

LH Oh. About the house. I remember my father with a brace and bit drilling through these seasoned two by fours, which are not one and three quarters or one in a half.

DR They are two by four.

LH They were two and a quarter by four and a quarter.

DR Okay.

LH Drilling through those to run the electricity. And all out of his pocket. And when it was time for water it was out of his pocket. He made a good income but everything that was done was my folks.

DR Yeah.

LH So, my grandfather said that he should have it with the stipulation that Mason, Joe and Dorothea and their families could come anytime. Well, now, I doubt if I'll ever see anybody from any of those again. But, so '59, grandfather sold it to father. Then in '75...I think, my folks had moved up here. They had some health problems and the idea really was just to come out here for a year or two and then go back to work. But ended up...

DR I remember that.

LH ...in two heart attacks and seven strokes or something like that. And the final heart attack, which wasn't the final, _____(2:41), but it was on a Easter weekend and I was coming up to see the folks. And because I was bringing up a piece of furniture, I had borrowed a friend's Scout with all wheel drive. And I borrowed it because of the space in the back, not because of the four wheel drive. When my dad had his heart attack that day, it was one of

those where we hauled him back to the doctor who knew it was going happen and it hadn't actually happened yet. He just said get him down here as fast as possible. And if I had not had the four wheel drive, I don't know how we would've gotten, oh, fourteen inches of fresh snow. I don't know how we didn't get lost on the hill, because Longs ended and we could only get as far as Green's. But that night it took three hours to get him to a hospital. That's when he said maybe it's not a good idea to live in Buffalo Creek. So, they went out to California to stay, Mason had a guest house or cabana or whatever they call it, behind his house on the other side of the pool. And my parents had spent some time there, in the wintertime. And I flew out to drive them back. And they said, why don't we go look at this place. And when they told me what it was, it was Leisure World. Oh. You're not going to go to a place like that are you? We got there at eleven, and by two o'clock, I was encouraging them to sign the contract. What a fantastic facility.

DR Which Leisure?

LH Laguna Hills. Just marvelous place. And, they lived there for a while, about a year and a half, just enough for the property value to go up about sixty percent. And they both said, even though my dad really couldn't get around, didn't drive anymore, and at minimum used a cane to get around, said, I just can't handle California. Living in California. The seasons never change.

So then we moved them back into Littleton into a kind of a development there. That's where dad finally died. And then mother said, gee, your brother is all alone in California, so she moved back to the bay area where she died. Anyway, when they were moving to California, that's what I was getting to. They said, you know, we really can't afford two homes. We've got to do something with the cabin. She finally called it the cabin. And I said, well, sell it to me. And of course, they sold it at a very reasonable price. Now, within the bounds of the IRS. And for a year then, I was paying on what I owed them plus paying rent in Aurora. And, that's when I said, well, this is really stupid and that's when I moved up here. Friends of mine were afraid that I would become a total recluse and drop out of social society. _____ (5:55). But I managed to have the occasional engagement. Generally on a Friday night. People then would always tell me also, the weather's bad why don't you stay here. No. You know, if it takes me two hours instead of forty-five

minutes, I would rather be at home. And if it keeps snowing, and I can't get out, I'd rather be at home than at your house. I doubt if I stayed in town more than three times over the next several years. Part of that was when my parents moved back.

When I met Karen. It was a mutual friend, who...bad term. A mutual acquaintance. In fact that might be too nice, introduced us. Very devious. She called up one day, are you going to be at your store on Saturday? Which, that's the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Yeah, I think so. Probably should be if you stop by. She'd never set foot in the store, but she called and asked. Okay. Well, I'm going to stop by. So, she came in with a friend, Karen. The Saturday after Thanksgiving. I got to spend about a minute and a half talking with her.

But, I was immediately intrigued. And we, let's see, that was Thanksgiving, the following October was the first time I asked her to marry me. And a year later, Christmas, was when she finally agreed to marry me. She was hesitant. But she understood, I never said it, but she understood that this is where I wanted to live.

She'd been up here enough times. And she knew my mom too. Yeah. Karen lived in the same complex where my mom and dad had lived. In fact, my mom said one day, oh, I met the sweetest girl today and she's just got the cutest figure, nicest smile. Why can't you boys, because my brother wasn't married, why can't you boys meet somebody like that? Well, then we got introduced through whatever the heck her name was, who later, after we'd been dating for six or eight months, started telling other people, she didn't think Karen should be dating just one person. Well, wait a second, you introduced us to each other. This was your idea in the first place.

We got married in the little chapel in the hills. And it's the worst thing that I've ever done to anyone, especially my wife. Went on a honeymoon for a week, was it June, and the second week in July, I left for two weeks for Stanford for a special course. She'd been living in Buffalo Creek for a month. She knew almost nobody. And she worked in town. And I said, goodbye, I'm leaving for two weeks. Well, I'd been a bachelor for so long it really didn't occur to me but she took to it. Chuck was a good constant contact, and a couple of other people. She made herself known down at Green's. And

despite their credit policy, she could go in right away and say, hey, I need something, I don't have any money with me. I don't think she has ever regretted living in Buffalo Creek. She hates city traffic and crowds. Things like that. Once in a while you've got to deal with that.

DR Well, for an hour or two.

LH Yeah. And as far as Emily, she mentioned one time that, well, they have malls down there. Oh, okay. But she also realizes that there's no way she would own a horse if we lived in town. It would cost at least twice as much to keep it. And she wouldn't be able to get to it as easy. Actually, it's a half an hour drive right now to where our horse is and it's more accessible than if we lived in town.

DR Oh, yeah.

LH We drove down to Arizona one time to see my brother. And driving back, I made a special point of turning up from...is it Gallup, where you go up to Shiprock.

DR Flagstaff? Shiprock. Yeah, that's Gallup.

LH It is Gallup. Okay.

DR Yeah. Highway 550.

LH Right. And then a few miles south of Shiprock, I pulled off. What are you doing? What are you doing? Emily I want you to see, because, you know, we are certainly not wealthy people. But we live comfortably. I said, I want you to see what some other people in this world live like. And we looked, it was a couple hundred yards from the nearest home and it wasn't like we were gawking in somebody's window. A concrete block structure about the size of our living room, dining room, kitchen, before we added on to the kitchen. And to my eye, that was pretty much it. An old, beat up pickup truck. A couple of dogs either dead or sleeping in the front yard. When we discussed it later, she said, they've got a satellite dish, a pickup truck, and horses. What's wrong with that? So, I think that she's pretty content living up here.

Now, when I was, well, she's fourteen now, but when I was young, twelve, ten, as I said, I'd go out for the whole day and just wander around. And sometimes I'd see people and sometimes I wouldn't. We could not let her do that. Part of it is the fact that she's a girl.

DR Yeah.

LH That's how much life has changed.

DR Absolutely.

LH You can't let a youngster run around like that.

DR Well, I came here at ten, my father was an invalid and spent most of the time in bed over in my old shack. But he always said Buffalo Creek was the safest place in the world, to turn four boys loose and they were within whistle distance.

LH Oh, yeah.

DR And he would whistle. And Mrs. Warner or Mrs. Davis, or your mother would say, any Rainey boys around here? Chase us home.

LH My mother had one of those, he didn't even use his hand, I could never do it, but a really loud, piercing whistle.

DR Yeah.

LH And I knew it. If I didn't hear it. I got in trouble a few times. I remember one time, my folks were going somewhere and my brother wasn't here. And they were going to leave me, I think the first time they ever left me for the day up here. And, my mother was in Chicago. Lock the house when we left. And I took the keys with me, and I went out running around. I ended up over in this side, and heading back I thought, well, the easiest way, yeah, the easiest way, to get home was to go down to the falls, and up that way. Well, you can't just go there, you have to goof off a little bit. So I took off my shoes, oh, I carried the keys. I didn't have money. Put the keys in my shoes, took off my t-shirt. And I got to the other side, threw them up on the rocks, and of course the shoe with the keys, slid down the rocks, so the keys fell out and into the falls. And I couldn't find them. So the first time I was ever trusted with the

house all to myself, I lost the keys. Fortunately we had those windows that had the pin that slid in and out. So, I had my knife. So, I could take the knife, inch it, or sixteenth of an inch it, so I could get it in there and pull the window open. So, I was in there smiling when they got home. The next day or whenever they asked about the keys, I don't know. How would I know where the keys are? I didn't get in a lot trouble. My brother went swimming down the hill below, _____ (14:58). I don't know if he even knew what barbed wire was when he ran smack into that. He got little holes all over him. My biggest injury was back when I was at, beaver pond on this side of the river. This was before after the lake, reservoir, whatever they called it over there.

I mentioned before, I didn't know how to swim. But my parents trusted me to go into this beaver pond and float around on an inner tube. They never thought about the fact I couldn't swim. I wouldn't do something stupid enough to drown. But I had been in there inner tubing, and I got out on this side, it was before the road was paved. And I was sort of running, skipping, whatever along the road, rowing the inner tube. And it started to get away from me, and I lunged for it. And all I was wearing was sneakers and shorts. And I went sprawling. And right then, Catherine Davis drove up with somebody else in the car. And I guess...tell you when it was, it was 1953, '52 or '53. I was just...cuts from head to foot on the front, from the gravel. Catherine got me in the car and drove me home. Had my aunt and uncle with us at the time, and my aunt was a nurse. So, somebody run down to Green's and get peroxide and felt real good, you know, cotton balls and had me all cleaned up.

DR Oh, yeah.

LH But that's probably the worst thing until I was in college. One time a friend and I almost got stuck up on the Bishop for the rest of our lives, because we got our rope wedged and we couldn't get the rope out, figure out how to get down. But, for all the fun I had, all the goofy things I did, I was never in any particular danger. And today, just couldn't let kids run around like that.

DR Yeah. You did a lot of climbing around here?

LH Yeah...

- DR Wait, just one minute. Okay. Now we can go ahead.
- LH I've been up Anne[?] a few times and Little Scraggy and Long's Scraggy and Cathedral numerous times. And Buffalo Rocks, that was our every summer, had to be done.
- DR Well.
- LH And several different routes up it. There's the basic one where you come up to the saddle and you come around the back, which has got some touchy spots in it really, for rock scrambling. But then, through the years of high school and all with Jerry Weed(18:07), Linda Gray, I could probably point out to you six different routes up or down. Some that you can't get up and some that you can't get down. Then there was the time that, I guess it was John Gray's Boy Scout troop was out here for some reason. And Linda, John and I in groups, took them kids up to the top and back down. Making sure everybody was safe. Until one kid started whining and crying about something and he sat down on a prickly pear. He wasn't too safe. But everybody else was. Linda used to climb Buffalo Rocks barefoot. Which, I don't understand that.
- DR So, she probably ran around the town barefoot.
- LH Yeah.
- DR That toughened up her feet.
- LH She'd show up at the little chapel on a Sunday morning in this real pretty dress. And a pair of old beat to heck sneakers. They just didn't look exactly right, but. And then, on the weekends, always, it seemed to me that there was a square dance almost every week. And then occasionally somebody would have movies or something like that down there. I remember the activities more than I remember the potlucks. I'm sure I ate because why wouldn't I?
- DR Well, you were there, I mean, you were able to use the hall after the kitchen had been built on.
- LH Yes.
- DR Do you remember it before it had a kitchen?



- LH I don't know. Well, maybe there weren't potlucks. When was the kitchen put in?
- DR I don't know. I've been trying to find out.
- LH Because maybe there weren't potlucks when we would go down there for the square dancing and what have you.
- DR It had the gasoline lamps?
- LH Yeah. Some kind of not-electrical appliance.
- DR No.
- LH Right.
- DR Used to have six gasoline lamps.
- LH Yeah. Well that's...
- DR Fire up and hang from those metal bars.
- LH So they couldn't fall down.
- DR Yeah.
- LH We managed to stay busy. I mean obviously, until we had electricity, I don't remember what year it was. It was after the Korean War. Certainly nobody had television and no video games or handhelds, and no computers and none of that kind of stuff. But we managed to stay busy. We still have some books around there, that I remember being in the house cabin...when I first became cognizant of anything. And some of those books are still there. And I guess we would read. And I don't know what else we would do. Once there was electricity anyway. Roasting popcorn over the fire. Ugly, filthy black basket thing that you'd put in there and shake up.
- DR Made pretty good popcorn too.
- LH Tasted fine to me.

- DR Yeah.
- LH My favorite sandwich when I was in that twelve or fourteen year old range was, do you have a good stomach?
- DR Yeah.
- LH Okay. Rye bread, or white bread, didn't matter, with liver sausage, grape jelly and a slice of onion.
- DR No worse than my son's potato chip sandwiches.
- LH Potato chip.
- DR Yeah.
- LH Not a lot of work involved in making that. Some kids, I don't remember who they were, Jerry might have been one of them, but I don't remember. Unless it was Don Green Jr. But we would get onions down at the store, and go sit just north of the highway bridge. There was a real deep spot in the river at that time. And you could sit in there up to your neck in water and eat onions. And the last one to dip for water was the winner. That's just the sort of games we played. Jerry taught me how to catch frogs under the bank by lying in the meadow, the one that actually belongs to Swan. Lie on the bank there, and he'd reach underneath and feel around for the frogs. We didn't do anything with them. We didn't eat them or anything.
- DR We used to do that, Tex, Bobby Brogoitti and I used to do that to get fish.
- LH Oh, really?
- DR Yeah. We'd get trout and flick them out on the bank.
- LH I've heard in the south, people doing that with an arm, for catfish.
- DR Yeah.
- LH And when it's halfway up to your elbow, pull your arm out and...doesn't sound very pleasant to me, but. I remember there

were times up big and little Joe and Mount Anne. Boy, there was one time, the stories that would go around that likely weren't true, but the guy who used to be the caretaker for Swan Ranch, I would've known his name up until a year or two ago, they lived in Pine. And everybody knew, he patrolled the property with a gun. And he wanted nobody messing around on their property. And Linda and John Gray and I went up to climb Mount Anne one day. And we heard the truck coming. _____ (23:58). And we ran up a gully so that he wouldn't see us. Well, we knew he was going to drive out, turn around and come back. So, we started going up and down gullies. So it took us the entire day to climb Mount Anne, because we covered vertically about three times as much altitude change as there is in Mount Anne. I was at _____ (24:22) once, I know this is not Buffalo Creek but, they had three sons?

DR Yes.

LH Big guys. And lying out in the living room out into the fireplace was a tree, with the branches cut off. And periodically, somebody would get up and pick up the end that was farthest out and ram it another foot into the fireplace. And let it burn and then they'd go do it again. That was maybe a little more primitive than I wanted to live.

DR Absolutely. The _____ (24:59) were really quite a interesting piece of history around here.

LH Interesting, yes. That's well put.

DR Did you ever spend much time around Pine?

LH No. Not a whole lot. I entertained people back in Illinois by telling them the three local general stores were Green's and _____ (25:20). And of course, we had to go down there to get ice. Green's didn't carry ice I don't think. Or at least not when we were...

DR Never did, when I...

LH Had to get ice there.

DR Got ice from _____ (25:32) in my day.

LH Let's see, _____(25:36) was where the emporium is now.

DR Yeah.

LH _____(25:40), as I later learned was
_____(25:42), and that's where we got ice.

DR Yeah.

LH No. You know Pine is, it's a long way for one thing.

DR Yeah. Three miles.

LH Yeah. Well...

DR Did you ever go to Bryn Mawr?

LH I was just going to talk about the Bryn Mawr. This was the sort of place, or was the sort of place, when I was young, we'd go there occasionally. When my parents moved here, now, my mother was a proper Lutheran. And by that I mean a proper Christian woman, but a Lutheran. My dad, he was a business man or a suit, as they would call it today. But he could let lose. After church in Pine we would go to the Bryn Mawr for dinner. That's the sort of place the Bryn Mawr was. Then it started going through various owners. And I have told people also, I have seen at least seven of the commandments broken at that Bryn Mawr.

DR Oh, absolutely.

LH And I can remember, when I worked here but lived in town, it was kind of normal for me as a bachelor to come up on a Friday night and stop there for dinner and a beverage or two, or three...four, whatever. And I can remember spending part of an evening behind the bar with a bunch of other people, because somebody was out front with a shotgun threatening somebody. I remember the time that somebody with a propane truck, froze a dog with propane out there. I remember all sorts of things happening on top of the pool table that aren't supposed to happen in polite society. And I actually even tended bar there for...Al and Diane Hunt. They weren't the owners. I think that might have been when Cook owned it, but they were the managers pretty much in charge. And some evening they,

anniversary or whatever, so they picked two of their semi-regulars to tend bar for a Friday evening. That was kind of exciting too. You get to be a big shot.

DR It was the _____ (28:10) that owned the, he was a fireman down in the, what was it? What's the fire company on the west side of Denver?

LH West Metro.

DR Well, it was before West Metro. But, his wife ran an excellent dining room there.

LH Oh, yeah. It was, and it was a proper place.

DR Yes.

LH Now, later in my adulthood, a couple of things I remember happening there that were actually respectable. One is they had a fundraiser, I don't remember who the manager was, a fundraiser for the fire department that was a Trivial Pursuit tournament. Bring in your team and they just divided up the teams at the start and they had four or five different games going on at one time. Along with it, for whatever the entry fee was, you got elk stew, which was not generally on the menu and it was just a really nice evening. Another time, and I think it was Alice Wood(29:15) who told me that it was going to happen. I don't ever remember seeing it had, but the Evergreen String Quartet, I guess is what she played for.

DR Yeah.

LH They played there one Sunday.

DR I wouldn't be surprised.

LH The managers or owners or whoever at the time, said they sold more wine that afternoon than they had sold in the previous three months.

DR Not surprised.

LH And it was nice. Everybody was polite.

DR Keep on talking.

LH Well, what else is there to say about there? I was just up at Conifer the other day with somebody, and I was talking about, I couldn't remember the name of the Highlander. That was a really nice restaurant when it opened.

DR Oh, yeah.

LH And fancy by contemporary standards. It certainly wouldn't be today. But...

DR It wasn't bad.

LH No. Oh, what started that was telling somebody that I remember the stone, not brick or wood, but the stone conical fireplace that was at Conifer Junction. That was the only commercial building up there.

DR That was the Field's trading post.

LH Okay. In college, it would've been summer of '64, '65 probably. Winter, excuse me, dead of winter. On a Sunday, I borrowed a friend's '54 Chevy from DU, and two couples, myself and a friend from college, we drove up. It was winter, it was a nice day, but it was windy and cold. And there was snow, but it hadn't snowed recently. And something happened to the car right about in front of the Myer homestead. It turned out we ran out of gas was all it was. But with this old Chevy, you couldn't...

[End of Part 2. End of Interview.]