

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #105 - Side A/B

Subject: Mike Larraneta

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: September 2, 1976

Interviewers: Royal G. Jackson & Jennifer A. Lee

Release Form: Located at Oregon State University

(Note: The preparation of this document was financed in part by the Oregon State University Research Council, and the Harney County Oral History Program. January 1978)

ROYAL JACKSON: Okay Mr. Larraneta, why don't you go ahead and tell us about when you came to this country, and why?

MIKE LARRANETA: Well, I left my hometown the 11th day of April 1920.

ROYAL: What was your hometown?

MIKE: A little village along side of Pamplona.

ROYAL: What was the name of the village?

MIKE: Azoz.

ROYAL: How do you spell that?

MIKE: A Z O Z. The meaning of that in Basco is cabbage.

ROYAL: Cabbage. So you came from the village of Cabbage.

MIKE: Yes sir. Really, the meaning for that is why the name, all of the villages surrounded it are like Biblical times in the Far East. All the names like Egypt, Israel and all that come from the Bible, Biblical names. The Bascos have it the same, and they don't know what Bible was. So is all the villages named for someone or something.

JENNIFER LEE: Why did you come to the United States?

MIKE: I couldn't answer that because I didn't know myself. I just wanted to go someplace, and I just came here.

ROYAL: How old were you then?

MIKE: I was 22.

ROYAL: And you just decided one day you'd come to the United States?

MIKE: Yes, that's right.

JENNIFER: What were you doing there?

MIKE: See, friends of mine they come over.

ROYAL: You had Basco friends?

MIKE: They were come over here, yes.

ROYAL: Where were they living?

MIKE: Well, they were around Denio. They were out in the sheep.

ROYAL: In Denio?

MIKE: Around Denio, yes. They were in the sheep, but I never seen them for years after I come here. They come and I asked one of them now when you get over there write to me and see what it's like. But he talked to some others. He knew me as just a little kid, and by gosh he wrote to me to come.

ROYAL: He was also from your village?

MIKE: Yeah, from Azoz.

ROYAL: Little Cabbage?

MIKE: Yes.

JENNIFER: What did you do in your village? You didn't herd sheep? Did you farm? Or something?

MIKE: No, I went to a ranch, to work on a ranch.

JENNIFER: I see.

MIKE: What I did was when I left 11th day of April, and I got in Winnemucca, Nevada where I

was coming, 11th day of May. It only took 30 days to make the trip. Isn't like now you can do it in 24 hours.

ROYAL: Where did you come in, to New York?

MIKE: Yes. I come from the Spain to LaHaure, France, from LaHaure got on a ship and went to New York. It was 14 days on the ship on the water. Then, I don't know how long I was in immigration building. I wasn't feeling good. I didn't get sick on the ship, but if I would have stayed another day I would have got sick, I believe so. I stayed there in that house, big place, about a week. And then I got on a train, and all alone I come to Winnemucca, Nevada.

ROYAL: Did you speak any English?

MIKE: No.

ROYAL: How did you know then how to get on a train, or how to do anything?

MIKE: Well, I tell you, when I got on the train, I know one thing the Conductor is the same in Spanish as it is in English. It rides the same and the name is the same, I knew that. So, the first thing was in Buffalo, New York was a stopover there. I want to eat something. There was a restaurant in this coach, train, you know, stopover there for 7 hours. So the Conductor come along and show me, and watch, what will go again. We was stopped here for 7 hours, so there was a restaurant, and he mentioned to me, says go over there to eat. Restaurant is the same in Spanish.

ROYAL: Restarante and restaurant are very close.

MIKE: They are the same, so I knew. Well, here I go, and of course they see many others just like me before, and they know what I was up against. Person who work in restaurant he grab me says come here into the kitchen, and show me what they have to eat, so I pointed what I want and I eat.

ROYAL: They were very nice to you then?

MIKE: Oh, they were very, very good.

JENNIFER: How long did you stay over in New York?

MIKE: In New York, well I didn't see anything in New York, you know. In this place where all the immigrants, when we got off the boat, then where we got through, but I wasn't feeling good, so they notice that and they keep me there for I guess probably 6, 8 days.

ROYAL: Did you see any Basques there? Did any come to meet you?

MIKE: No, no one.

ROYAL: There was no travel agent?

MIKE: Oh, in New York, oh well yes, I was going to say, Valentin Aguirre. He's the one that come I guess, they call him from the place because I can talk, the only thing I can talk.

ROYAL: Did Aguirre come himself, come to the train, or did he send his agents?

MIKE: Yes, they call him, and he come to the immigration office or house, whatever, and then he told me if I was in shape to go on, on the train, because I did have a ticket. I bought a ticket in Spain clear on to Winnemucca.

ROYAL: You could buy a ticket in Spain clear to Winnemucca?

MIKE: Yes. Well, I didn't buy the ticket over there, you know, but when I was in New York they gave me the ticket there. It was already paid for. And he asked me if I was in shape to go on. I said that even if they have to throw me on the train, get me out of here.

JENNIFER: How much did it cost to come from Spain to America on the boat?

MIKE: It cost me \$400 then.

ROYAL: It was a lot of money then?

MIKE: Yes. It was a lot of money then, oh wow. These agents, they can see a sucker, and they really get you.

ROYAL: You think the agent charged you too much?

MIKE: No question about it.

ROYAL: Was this Aguirre that did that?

MIKE: No. He didn't have nothing to do with that. The agents over there in Spain, in Pamplona. That's where I pay all the money, there.

ROYAL: So, Aguirre came to meet you and put you in a Basque Hotel for a few days?

MIKE: No. I was there in this immigration building. He come to see me there and asked me if I was able to go on. So, I say yes. So, I got on a train and we stop in Buffalo, New York. I was hungry and I ate breakfast there in Buffalo, New York.

ROYAL: How many days did it take by train from New York to Winnemucca?

MIKE: I think it was either 5 days and 4 nights, or 5 nights --- or either. I couldn't say for sure.

ROYAL: The train rolled day and night and you just slept on the train?

MIKE: Oh yes, we never stop. From then on when the train stopped passengers came on. We transferred trains in Chicago. They take us from one end of Chicago to the other.

JENNIFER: What were your impressions, especially when you arrived in New York? What did you think of New York and the United States?

MIKE: Well, all I could see was from a distance. I saw big buildings.

JENNIFER: Did you like it, or was it different from Spain?

MIKE: Oh, a lot of difference, well yes. But I didn't go to New York itself, you know, from this immigration building, into train. I wanted to go to New York, but they wouldn't let you. Wouldn't be a safe place for you to be in New York. Too many things to happen. Besides I don't know how to talk the language. I never ever hear the English language till I got to New York. I don't know how to say "yes", or of course "no" is the same in Spanish, otherwise I wouldn't know either.

ROYAL: How was the trip on the train? Was it pleasant?

MIKE: Oh, on the train, it was good.

ROYAL: Seeing the American countryside, was that exciting to you?

MIKE: Yes, it really was good. Everything on the train. The Conductor really look after a person. Well, we got in Chicago, we changed depots from one into the other. So, they come here. I believe there were little cars, or horses then. And then there was a restaurant on the depot in Chicago and so I had ham and eggs. I remember that. It was really good. I was hungry. And then this guy, the Conductor or somebody had so much time wait there, and there was a grocery store there. He pointed to me to get some stuff and put it in a sack. So, I got oranges and fruits. So, I got all the fruits I can get.

ROYAL: And took them on the train?

MIKE: Yeah, on the train. That's what I had to eat all the way through on the train, just the fruit that I got there. We never stopped anyplace else, so that's all I could eat.

ROYAL: When did you get to Winnemucca? How many days after you left?

MIKE: Well, I'm not sure, but I think it was 5 nights and 4 days, or vice-versa. One of the two.

ROYAL: Was there someone there to meet you?

MIKE: In Winnemucca? No, I didn't know anyone in Winnemucca. Everybody was a stranger to me. The guy that I know was in the Steens Mountain herding sheep, probably.

ROYAL: That was the only man in America that you knew?

MIKE: That was the only, really.

ROYAL: He was out with the sheep?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: What did you do in Winnemucca when you arrived?

MIKE: Well, I went to the Winnemucca Hotel; it was a Basco Hotel. So, happened, I was the only one at that time, otherwise there was half a dozen who would come.

ROYAL: You mean usually there would be a half a dozen Bascos coming in?

MIKE: Yes, they would have come. I got sick so that's why I happen to be all-alone on the train. And I was almost all alone on the ship coming across, there was 2 or 3 men who had been here before and they went to visit and coming back. But then anyway got at the Winnemucca Hotel, and I ask for mail.

ROYAL: There was a Basco Hotel owned by a Basco?

MIKE: Well, they talk Spanish too, they talk English too. They have too.

ROYAL: You remember the name of the hotel?

MIKE: Winnemucca Hotel.

ROYAL: Who was the proprietor, do you remember that?

MIKE: The proprietor was Genaro Esparza.

ROYAL: And he was a Basco?

MIKE: Yes. He talk English, Basco, Spanish, he talk everything.

ROYAL: I bet you were happy to see come countrymen, weren't you?

MIKE: Yes, I was.

ROYAL: How long did you stay in the hotel?

MIKE: I stayed until 29th day of June. Well, I done some work around, you know, around Winnemucca.

ROYAL: You got a job, you mean?

MIKE: Yes, my trade had been a carpenter.

JENNIFER: That's what you did in Spain?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: You were a carpenter before you came?

MIKE: Yes.

JENNIFER: Is that what your parents were too?

MIKE: Yeah. So, in Winnemucca, I start but I could not understand English. The guy in Winnemucca hired me right away. I couldn't understand him and he couldn't understand me. I worked there most of the time.

ROYAL: About how long were you at Winnemucca?

MIKE: A little over a month. I come the 11th, and I left Winnemucca the 29th day of June, to go to the Paradise Valley.

ROYAL: Paradise Valley, what state is that in?

MIKE: Paradise Valley is about 40 miles northeast of Winnemucca.

ROYAL: In Nevada?

MIKE: Yes. And then I work in haying there for an Italian man. I work there until about this time of the year, I think it was. And of course, the owner knew that I should learn English. He told me, "You wanna go to a ranch so you can hear nothing else but English?" I said, "I will go, but how in the world can I learn, and how can I do anything? I don't understand anything."

JENNIFER: This rancher knew Spanish then?

MIKE: Yes, he talk mostly Italian, over there we all speak Spanish. And so, he found me this place. It was a ranch the name was Freddie Harbers and General Harbers, two brothers. So, they hired me. I was there for two years in the ranch. It was really hard for 3 or 4 months. I was willing

to work hard and no fooling about that. And then gradually, I started to pick up little English. And then I have a dictionary and I would read it many nights, reading it.

So, then it was election year and there was this candidate, well they come everywhere. You almost have to walk the places and they have meetings. And this Harbers would take me to every meeting, and I like that and I did understand what they said that I could not say.

ROYAL: You like the political meetings?

MIKE: Yes. I can really understand because they really talk plain, and you know Spanish, lot of the English is the same as the Spanish. Only the pronunciation is different. So that way, I could get a lot of the stuff, and I liked it. So anyway, I was there the length of two years. Then I was all right and I could go places. So, I did.

ROYAL: Then you had enough English to travel and had some skills?

MIKE: Oh yes. I could talk good English as well as I can talk today.

ROYAL: Where did you go from there then?

MIKE: From there I went, it was about 30 miles from Paradise Valley to north of the city where they discovered a gold mine. They were building a mill there. So, I wanted to work as a carpenter somehow. So, I went there. It was the 30th day of June when I got over there and there was snow and I'm telling you, it snowed a lot. It was about 10,000 feet the altitude over there. I stay there through the winter, the spring till about the last part of August or first of September. Then I went to Winnemucca.

JENNIFER: What year was this now?

MIKE: 1923, I think it was.

JENNIFER: You still hadn't met your wife yet?

MIKE: Oh no, it was a long, long ways from that. And then there was a rodeo in Winnemucca. First time I ever see a rodeo. They didn't have a rodeo grounds either. They had it in the open, and the first arena was made by cars. I meet the guy that we worked in that mine in the mountains. He ask me, "Do you wanna go to work to build another mill about 60 miles south from Winnemucca in the desert?" It was a quicksilver mine. So, I went over there and worked there. If I remember

right, it was in September, but I don't know the exact date till about the 18th day of December when we got through building the mill. Then we start working to get the ore out and get the quicksilver out.

JENNIFER: Did you know many other Basques at that time?

MIKE: I knew a few over there, yes. Paradise, there were quite a few Bascos around there, and in Winnemucca. I didn't know many in Winnemucca because I never was there much, you know.

JENNIFER: Did you feel any prejudice? Were the Americans treating you any differently?

MIKE: Well, I started with the Americans, and I rather been with them and that's the way I went on.

ROYAL: So, you didn't just stick with the Basco speaking people?

MIKE: No, hardly any.

JENNIFER: So, you were accepted?

MIKE: In my trade, and I want to keep on. Well, I have to go with, not with the Bascos, but I have to go with the Americans, those who talk English. So, I always wanted something to learn, because I learned the trade in Spain. Here you had to learn it again. It is not as hard, the difference. The difference we do here in the carpenter work. A lot is the same, but most of it is different, lots of difference.

JENNIFER: Weren't you homesick for the Basque country and the Basque ways?

MIKE: If I was with the Basque, I couldn't be a carpenter. I never herd sheep; I don't want to do that. They ask me to herd sheep. They tell me the life of the shepherd is hard. I tell them I come here for the money like you guys did, but if I have to make it that way, I don't want any.

ROYAL: You didn't want to stay in the hills by yourself with the sheep?

MIKE: No, to me the money wasn't that good.

JENNIFER: And you didn't feel like you wanted to go back to Spain?

MIKE: No, once I came here, I was going to stay here.

ROYAL: Didn't you miss your family?

MIKE: Naturally, you miss the family, yes. You couldn't make \$400. It takes about a year to do

that. You have to be on a sheep camp to save it. But the longer you stay here the less you care to go back.

JENNIFER: So, you didn't see your family for a while then?

MIKE: Well, I didn't see my family for 32 years.

JENNIFER: Oh my gosh.

MIKE: Yes. My life has been okay. Well, I spent a winter in Winnemucca. I wanted to spend the winter in town for once. I did. And I made pretty good money that year. If I remember right, I made about \$2,000 working. In the desert, we didn't have to spend one penny. We wash our own clothes. The only money spent was for tobacco, and the clothes you need. We do our own washing, everything. And every day was working day. No Sundays, no holidays. So, you make money those places. So, I did. I made about \$2,000 that year. So, I thought well, I would spend the winter in Winnemucca. I didn't spend a winter in Winnemucca; I spent a year in Winnemucca. I did work. I work in different places there in Winnemucca. At times, I have a friend who had a big ranch about 20 miles south of Winnemucca. And so, a big ranch had a lot of work to do. A lot of carpenter work, everything. I worked for him for a year. And I was getting big money then. I was getting \$5 a day. That was big money.

ROYAL: Plus, room and board?

MIKE: Oh yes. Plus, room and board, yes.

ROYAL: So, you were a young man and making a lot of money?

MIKE: I was.

ROYAL: Still unmarried?

MIKE: No, no. Heck, I couldn't get married. I want to see places. How can I get married and go see places? No. Then in 1926, the 19th day of March, I come to Burns, Oregon. It was Sunday. I hear about this town. The mill was going to be built. So, here I come. I didn't know anyone. My wife now, she was here. She was the first Basque woman to come to town. That was her.

ROYAL: She was the first Basque woman?

MIKE: Yeah.

JENNIFER: What was her name?

MIKE: Martina. She was the first Basque woman to ever come to this town. Of course, she was married too. ... (Side conversation with Mrs. Larraneta.) I got here the 19th day of March, Sunday. I didn't know anyone in Burns, Oregon. There was a contractor here, his name was Charlie Silbough. He came from Idaho. He had a contract to build the picture show, which is now the Times Herald office.

ROYAL: To build a picture show, that building?

MIKE: Yes, build a building for the picture show.

ROYAL: In 1926?

MIKE: In 1926. And I work in that building from start to finish. And about the Fourth of July is when we got through with that. Then we build an undertaker parlor that summer.

The 16th day of August 1926, I left Burns to go to work for the same contractor close to Pendleton, Oregon, about 10 miles southeast of Pendleton on Indian Reservation. The name was Saint Andrews Reservation. We built a school there for same contract. We start working the 16th day of August, and we got through, I believe it was in the, the last of December or first of January, I don't remember.

And then he got a contract to build schoolhouses, dormitories, and cookhouse building in Idaho. It was in another Indian Reservation. The Slick Pool Mission. Right close to a little town in Idaho. And we work then from the 1st of April till the 20th of December.

So come back to Pendleton and do some little work up at the school. And so happened you probably read about it, the first kidnap in California. Can't remember the doctor's name. Daughter of doctor, the guy that kidnapped her, anyway she was a young kid going to school, she was about 16 years old. And he wanted \$1,500 for ransom money. And he collect that money, and left for Canada. So, the day we got to Pendleton, they catch him below Pendleton in Echo. You ever hear that? The chief of police and the state police.

SIDE B

MIKE: So, I left Pendleton, and I went from there and stop that night in LaGrande. First time I ever went through that road. Then from there, I went to Ontario, Oregon. I stay there over a day, and I left. Then I went as far as Twin Falls, Idaho.

ROYAL: Did you have a car then?

MIKE: Yes, I was driving my car.

ROYAL: You had your own car?

MIKE: Oh, yes.

ROYAL: So, you were prospering if you could buy a car?

MIKE: Oh yeah, I was rich then. I stay overnight in Twin Falls, Idaho. And it was in the dead winter in January. From there I went to Elko, Nevada to the desert. There was lots of desert and all alone, and there was lots of snow. Why I didn't get stuck, I don't know. Because in them days, there were no roads just cow trails. I stop in Elko overnight. From there I went to Winnemucca, Nevada. And in a day or so, after that I was going to this ranch. Spent a couple of days with the guys I know, friends of mine. And I was there for a year.

ROYAL: What did you do there?

MIKE: I build sheds, barns, everything.

ROYAL: Carpenter work?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: What year is this now?

MIKE: That was in 1928. So, in 1929 again I left Winnemucca for Burns, Oregon. The 20th day of March 1929 I came back to Burns. ... We built the Chevrolet Garage, all those buildings where Tijuana is now, all that line we built.

ROYAL: You built the Chevrolet Garage where Pulliam Motors is now?

MIKE: Yes. We built the Tijuana, the whole block there. Then we built an addition. The bank was a Harney County Bank. Now it has been torn down, and some other buildings. Then I started with another person, Clark Brown. I started working with him, we built homes. So, I never work a day in Hines on the mill. Only worked alone and I did some work in the office, something like that.

ROYAL: Were a lot of people coming into Burns now, about 1929 to work on the mill? Big need for housing?

MIKE: Oh yes. I bet it was about over 1,000 men working on the mill and all around it.

ROYAL: So, this was kind of a boomtown then?

MIKE: Oh yeah, it really was.

ROYAL: Pouring in, a lot of work?

MIKE: Yes. It was a lot of work, and there was more work than there was men to work.

ROYAL: Were there many Basques here then in 1929?

MIKE: No, the only Basques that were here then were herding sheep out in the Steens Mountain.

ROYAL: They were all working on the mountain?

MIKE: Yes. I was the only one working in town.

ROYAL: So, you didn't have anybody to associate with that was a Basco?

MIKE: No.

ROYAL: Was there any Basco Hotel then?

MIKE: Well yes, there was one, the Star Hotel. Urizar's had that. And then we built the hotel, the Plaza Hotel. We built that then for Blackey, or Mr. Marcelino Osa, but they called him Blackey.

ROYAL: You and Claude Brown, the contractor, built the Plaza Hotel?

MIKE: Yes. That was in 1929. Then we built several homes, different places. Then here comes 1930. That's when the depression started hitting. And we built homes. This building here across, you can see the building across. See there a part of the building there? We built that, in 1930, Claude Brown and I. I didn't collect the money that I worked for there yet.

ROYAL: You still haven't been paid?

MIKE: Something happened then between the Jews that was really building.

ROYAL: The Jews built that apartment house?

MIKE: They were Jews, yeah. They come from the mountains. They got into trouble in the mountains. Neither I nor the others never collect the labor money. They furnish all the materials. But I don't mind. Then across the railroad tracks going to the fairgrounds, we built two or three

places there for this same people. In them days it was a Speakeasy home.

ROYAL: You built Speakeasy?

MIKE: We built for the Speakeasy's, that was the name. Because there was prohibition. They have high-class dances. They paid for the work we did there, but then gradually, comes less work. The depression, I believe during the depression we built two homes, one for, the name was Giddison, he used to be a sheep man. He was a retired, wealthy man. We did a swell home for him. That was in 1934. Then it got worse. Nobody had any money. There was a lot of work to do but no money.

And that winter in 1934, I work in the forest. We built a camp. That was for the government. That was the winter, which was good. Then after that, it was no work left. Then 1935, we started three CCC camps at Sod House. The first day of April we started working there. And I was a rich man. I only had 10 cents left in my pocket. And all the others were in debt. I was the only wealthy guy in the group that had 10 cents.

ROYAL: That's all you had left?

MIKE: That's all I had left.

ROYAL: And you still weren't married by now?

MIKE: No.

ROYAL: How old were you then in 1935?

MIKE: I'll tell you how old I am now. I am pretty near 80 now. You don't think so. Well, next birthday I will be 79, so you are not very far off.

ROYAL: So, you were about 37?

MIKE: Just about.

ROYAL: In your 30's?

MIKE: Oh yes.

ROYAL: You never thought about getting married now?

MIKE: No, I didn't have time to get married. I wanted to go places.

ROYAL: Okay. Did you have girlfriends?

MIKE: Well, yes to go to dances and shows, yes.

ROYAL: Were these Basque girls?

MIKE: No, no, they wouldn't associate with me. There wasn't any anyway.

ROYAL: There weren't any here then?

MIKE: Well, maybe was only kids, but that's all.

ROYAL: How about the Plaza Hotel. Was that kind of a center of Basques in Burns then, that you built for Osa?

MIKE: They didn't have any girls, no.

ROYAL: But there were a few Basques that lived there?

MIKE: I stay with them for 14 months in that hotel there. I don't know how long I stay with the Urizars. Anyways, I got through with building the CCC camps. We built several of them. One at the Sod House, one up the Five Miles which is about 5 miles from Frenchglen. Another one is Buena Vista, another one near Beulah Dam.

JENNIFER: What about Gap Ranch, was there a CCC camp there?

MIKE: Somebody else built the Gap Ranch. Oh, then we built the Sod House.

ROYAL: The Sod House Camp?

MIKE: Yes. You ever been to the Sod House lately?

ROYAL: Yeah.

MIKE: Well, we built all those buildings. The stone buildings there.

ROYAL: Oh, that's the Refuge now?

MIKE: Well yes, we always called it the Sod House always. The Refuge, that's right. Then we got through with that, we built some buildings here in town. There was the Arrowhead Hotel. We put a second story on that.

ROYAL: You worked on the Arrowhead?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: It burned down now, right?

MIKE: Yes. It was a lot of work. We worked on that building over and over again. We built

apartments in the back. They all burned down. It was a whole block. Then we built several buildings. Built the Smyth's Apartments. Built both apartments left and right. After we built the apartments here comes the war.

ROYAL: 1941?

MIKE: Uncle Sam got me. I was 44 years old. I was the last one on the list, but he didn't care. "You go!" So here I go.

ROYAL: You were a naturalized citizen by then?

MIKE: Oh yes.

ROYAL: What year did you get naturalized?

MIKE: 1934. It was the 25th or 26th day of this month. Not sure.

ROYAL: So, you got drafted into the army?

MIKE: Oh yes. Well before that I help build Camp White. We were 8,000 men working on Camp White.

ROYAL: Where is Camp White?

MIKE: Between Medford and Grants Pass, that direction. Now they call it White City. That's where Camp White was, we built it. Then I was there working when the Army called me to come. That is, the draft board. So, I come to Burns, that was the 6th day of August in 1942. And the draft board asked me this, "Will you go to Hawaii? If you don't you are going to the Army. Which one will you take?" I says, "Well maybe they will take me anyway." I go to Hawaii because the government was asking for volunteers to go to Pearl Harbor. So here I go. The draft board told me they will take me off that list and send me to Hawaii.

ROYAL: You mean as a civilian?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: As a what?

MIKE: Same as a soldier because we were on the same spot.

ROYAL: They didn't put you in uniform then?

MIKE: No. But we was the same.

ROYAL: They needed carpenters and construction workers?

MIKE: Oh, yes, we built the biggest airport in the South Pacific at that time. Right at Barber's Point Oahu Island. I was there 10 months. Here comes the Seabees and they took it over. So, then they say, "You go home." I say if I go home, I not coming back here. I didn't like the climate. Everything else was fine. The climate to me, I don't know, too hot. It wasn't too hot but to me it was. Didn't agree with me. So, I come home and then they didn't want any more old 44's in the army, so I started working here.

ROYAL: You started building houses again?

MIKE: Yes. I did built two houses during the war. I had to get a priority to do it for the ranchers only, nobody else. So, they had the first priority. I build homes.

So since then, it's what I have been doing till almost 1952. When I got back it was 1943. I spent a whole year; I left here the 17th of August to go to Hawaii. I got back the following year the 17th day of July, 11 months. From there on I work here building homes for the ranchers. Till about 1952, I was building homes, everywhere.

Then I have two brothers and a sister in Argentina. So, I never see them since I left, so here I go. So, I went to Argentina.

JENNIFER: How did they get to Argentina? Why did they go to Argentina?

MIKE: I don't know.

ROYAL: They left home about when you did?

MIKE: No, after. My oldest brother left before me. The other younger one then he left probably 10 years after I come here. He got married; he and his wife went to Argentina. I didn't want to go to Argentina in the first place then. But I wanted to go see my brother and my younger sister. She was over there. They came to meet me at the airport. So, they meet me there. And they live in Mar de Plata. You hear about that city that is famous for the casinos, the biggest in the world? They're there. The summer resort is for all the wealthy people from other places go over there, which in January is summer over there. I spent there two and a half months. From there, I went to Spain, and I spent 5 months in Spain.

ROYAL: Is this now in 1952?

MIKE: 1952.

ROYAL: Did you go back to see your family?

MIKE: Yes. Martina and her youngest girl went to Spain, and I meet them in Barcelona.

JENNIFER: You were going back to visit too? (Addressed to Mrs. Larraneta.)

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: Your wife had been where?

MIKE: She had been here for how long, I don't know.

ROYAL: She had been in Burns?

MIKE: Yeah.

ROYAL: But she went back to visit in Spain, and she happened to be there when you were there?

MIKE: I went to Argentina, to Spain, to Pamplona. That was my first. Then there was a Eucharistic Congress in Barcelona, in last of May. So, I went to see that. Her and her daughter went from Burns to Barcelona to see the Eucharistic Congress, so I meet them in Barcelona. We went on an Italian ship. I went to the depot when they got in and meet them there. So, we see the Eucharistic Congress, and then we go back to Pamplona to see the famous festival. So, we got there in, I believe 25th of June. Of course, from Barcelona we went to Mallorca. We spent a week there. That is the most beautiful spot.

ROYAL: You were vacationing?

MIKE: Yes. I went to Pamplona and saw the famous festival of San Fermin. You read about it? You hear about the bulls run on the street and go crazy? That's our hometown. I done that myself. Not that time, but before I come to America. Here was the celebration.

ROYAL: You weren't married at this time, but just getting to know each other?

MIKE: That's it. We know each other here before. When we came back, we got married.

ROYAL: You had met each other here in Burns.

MIKE: Yeah. When we came back from Spain, we got married. We went to Nevada and got married, 11th day of August 1952. So, it was time to settle down I thought. I can't go places

anymore, so I better stop. Why did I stop in Burns? I was a lot of places. I seen a lot of things, and been a lot of places, and seen all the sights, I seen lots of things, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Nevada, California. You know why I am in Burns?

ROYAL: No, why?

MIKE: You don't have the least idea? I like to hunt. And this was the hunter's paradise. So, this is the place to be.

ROYAL: So, you got married in 1952?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: Came back to Burns and you have been here ever since?

MIKE: Yes.

ROYAL: And you built houses and been in construction?

MIKE: Yes, I built a few after that. I've been under doctor's care for 18 years now. I am still under doctor's care.

ROYAL: And you haven't worked in a long time?

MIKE: No, not much. Just walk for exercise, that's all.

ROYAL: Do the two of you have children?

MRS. LARRANETA: Yeah, I had 5 children before I married him. I had 4 daughters and 1 son.

... (Side conversation.)

ROYAL: Did you meet your wife at the hotel? Where did you meet her?

MIKE: The Commercial Hotel, they called it then. She was with the family there. I meet her then the first time I come to Burns.

... (Side conversation about Mr. Larraneta's heart pacer.)

ROYAL: You speak Spanish of course, as your first language; you probably have not spoken too much since you came to the United States?

MIKE: No, I didn't.

ROYAL: Do your stepchildren speak Spanish?

MIKE: I got our kids, my grandchildren, and they understand Spanish, but they don't talk much.

They don't want to talk in Spanish. I talk to them in Spanish continuously and sometimes they answer me in Spanish.

ROYAL: These are your stepchildren?

MIKE: No, my grandchildren. Well, it's my nephew's children; to me they are just like grandchildren to me, because they are my twin brother's grandchildren. My twin brother has a pacemaker too. I have one. He lives in Pamplona, Spain. Two years ago, he wasn't feeling good, like it happened to me. So, they notified me what was happening. So, I went to tell the doctor, it is something like me. The doctors wanted to know what it really was, and who operated on me. So, I had a X-ray picture and a cardiogram. And I sent them to the doctors and explained it where they operated on me and who did it. If they wanted to communicate with them that operated on me, they could.

ROYAL: This is so that they can see if your identical twin brother's problem might be the same?

MIKE: If he was here, you wouldn't know which was which. We still are the same. So, they operated on him in Pamplona, and they put in a pacemaker. Bore a hole here when they put in mine, the first one was in an experimental stage.

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