

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #215 - Sides A/B

Subject: Denny Presley Interviews

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: 1986

Interviewer: Denny Presley

DENNY PRESLEY: We've got Roe Davis here, and as most of you know, Roe Davis does not need an introduction. But Roe Davis goes way back, and he is going to give us a talk, some kind of a historical sketch on early aviation here in Harney County. Now Roe, when was the first time you, or how did you become interested in airplanes?

ROE DAVIS: Well I took a ride the first time with a, in a old bi-plane that Billy Dibble had in here just --- he was taking passengers, and I took a ride in it about 1930. That was the first time I had ever been up in an airplane. And I kind of got interested in it. And then I didn't --- well I didn't fly anymore then until oh, about '35 when I traded for an old basket deal, that --- airplane that had been dismantled and I traded an old car for it. And went over to Boise and hauled it over here and rebuilt it, and learned to fly it.

DENNY: Well what kind of a plane was this one?

ROE: It was a bi-plane similar to the one that Billy Dibble had, only this was a --- the one he had was a Waco. And this one that I had was an OX Eagle Rock. It had the same motor, they had an old V-8 water-cooled engine, 90 horse. But the old bi-planes, they'd haul three people. The pilot sat in the back, and then two people sat in the front. And just open cockpits, and they didn't fly too bad for their time. But they was under powered, of course. And, but they was nice to fly. Had lot of fun to fly them, but ---

DENNY: Yeah, you --- how did you start these planes?

ROE: You start them by cranking the propeller. And they started pretty good if they was working good.

DENNY: Where did you get your pi--- who did you get your pilot's license from? How did you, who did you learn to fly from?

ROE: Well the way I learned then --- there was a guy in here that had a little, that knowed how to fly, that's about all I could say. And he learned Daryl to fly the year before.

DENNY: This Daryl you are talking about is Daryl Eggleston?

ROE: Daryl Eggleston. And then he learned me to fly.

DENNY: You and Daryl had the first two home-owned planes here?

ROE: Yeah, he had a, this little Curtis Pusher about a year before I got the old Eagle Rock. And he had the first local owned airplane, and I had the second one.

DENNY: Well what is a Pusher?

ROE: Well it was a, it was a little --- made by Curtis Aircraft. It had a little 45-horse motor that set back of the pilot, and up on top of the wing and it kind of pushed the airplane instead of pulled it like the one I had. Of course it had a prop out in front, and it --- so that was the difference in the Pusher and the ---

DENNY: And you really didn't have anything in front of you then on that one, you were right out front?

ROE: Yeah, that's right.

DENNY: That Pusher wasn't too speedy of an airplane either, was it?

ROE: No, it'd --- it landed slow, about 35 miles an hour. Oh, flew about 45 or 50, I guess. It was pretty slow, but fairly safe and nice to fly. And ---

DENNY: What type of heaters and stuff were in these airplanes?

ROE: Well they never had any heat. All they had, and all they had for instruments was a tachometer to tell how fast the engine was running, and the altimeter to give your altitude,

distance from the ground, and your height. And then the oil gauge, and the water temperature gauge, that's all, because they were a water-cooled engines.

DENNY: And you wore what kind of gear? You had to wear clothing in those days.

ROE: Well the only way you could keep warm, of course, is just put on more clothes. Because there was no way to heat them. And of course you wore a helmet and goggles, and kept the wind out of your eyes. And that was about it.

DENNY: And you looked a whole lot like Snoopy then, huh? (Laughter)

ROE: Yeah, that's right.

DENNY: Where did you, where was the airport then, the airfield?

ROE: Well the airport then was right across from the Grange Hall out there on that 80 acres. The runway was a little ways down the lane there from the Grange Hall. And it was in that 80 acres that laid between the Grange Hall and that next ranch down there.

DENNY: And it just consisted of a place where the sagebrush had been cleared.

ROE: Yeah. It just had --- it was pretty good, you know, they had cleaned off the runway and it wasn't too bad for that time. Of course we built our own hangers and took care of our airplanes.

DENNY: Then you --- then quite a few planes came in. That was the Burns Municipal Airport.

ROE: Yeah, that was in '35. And then in the next year we began to get some more airplanes. And then in a couple of years why there was 12 or 15 local airplanes in the --- in about three years.

DENNY: And they were all the Cub type planes?

ROE: Yeah, they was all light aircraft, yeah.

DENNY: And they had about 40 horse engines?

ROE: Oh, all the way from 40 to --- up to that. And then in a couple of years then I

bought that one that had 200 horse. And a couple years after that ---

DENNY: And the one that you are talking about with the 200 horse, is this Mono-coach?

ROE: Yeah. It was a four place Mono-coach, cabin plane then. And it was about ten years old when I got it. And it was built in '28 or '29, along in there. And --- but it was more modern, it was a pretty good airplane.

DENNY: And you ran a passenger service?

ROE: Yeah, we did some --- hauled some passengers.

DENNY: You moved, you pulled away from the Burns Municipal Airport then and built your own here in Burns.

ROE: Well I had --- I'd moved --- meanwhile I'd moved out between Hines and Burns and I had some acreage there so I built a little strip there where I could have my airplane there at home, and I moved my hanger over there. And later on Daryl moved his hanger over there, and ---

DENNY: You and Daryl were giving instructions into flying, kind of an air school then?

ROE: Well, yeah, kinda. Off the lamb, yeah. (Laughter)

DENNY: And then you, and when the mil--- When the war came around, World War II, you and Daryl were both involved in the military air duty of sorts?

ROE: Yeah, I went over to Bend to a friend of mine who had a war training program over there, training pilots. And he wanted me to come over and run the shop for him, and take care of the aircraft for him, and so I stayed over there until the program quit, and---

DENNY: You talk about barnstorming. Now what, what is barnstorming?

ROE: Well it was when you take your airplane and go out some place and take passengers out, you know. And we used to go, me and Daryl used to go out to the CC Camps, and maybe on a Sunday after payday, and some of them had a little airstrips, and we'd haul the passenger --- the kids for a dollar a ride. You know, take them around a

little bit and that's what they call barnstorming.

DENNY: That would give everybody kind of an introduction into flying.

ROE: Yeah.

DENNY: Now I understand you, you made a few landings that you weren't really wanting to make.

ROE: Well on the old early airplanes, when you took off you always surmised you might have a forced landing, so you kinda kept a field picked out to where you could land if you needed to. And when you got out of sight of it, well you had another one picked out. And come in kind of handy once in a while. I had a few forced landings.

DENNY: And you put them on the wheels though?

ROE: Yeah. I had one, I had a couple with the old Eagle Rock, and I had one or two with the other airplanes. Three or four forced landings, but all --- They're all right if you are ready for them, you know, but you just figure they never will let you down, why you could get caught unprepared. But them early airplanes you was always prepared for a forced landing.

DENNY: The horsepower on most of these small planes were nothing like today's planes, that's for sure.

ROE: Well they was all under powered. This eagle Rock had, biplane, had 90 horse. But it'd haul three people which was, it was underpowered, but it'd haul them if you was careful. And the little Pusher Daryl had was 45 horse. And --- but the little Cubs we had in here then was, well one of them was, later on then was a 40 horse, and then another one Daryl got one that was a 50 horse.

DENNY: Who were some of the other people that were some of the early pilots then that you probably taught to fly?

ROE: Well when we --- when me and Daryl, when they learned us to fly, there was a guy,

a mechanic here that had flew, had flown a little and he'd knowed how to get an airplane up and down, so he learned me and Daryl how to do that. To get up and down that was about all, and then we went from there.

DENNY: Now you, you had to have a 100 hours in the air before you became, you could get your license.

ROE: Yeah, for a pilot, for a private then, yeah.

DENNY: Well what are you required now?

ROE: Well I don't know now, but not over 50 anyhow. It went to 50 later on, but the early pilots it took a 100 hours of flying.

DENNY: They figured you had to fly more by the seat of your pants, so they wanted to make sure you knew what you were doing, huh?

ROE: Yeah. It's told now, of course you can get more instruction, you know, and that's what counts, and get some training. And we didn't have that opportunity then, you know. And you just had to learn the hard way, and it took more time.

DENNY: But you knew what you were doing then.

ROE: Yeah.

DENNY: Yeah, I've heard a lot of old stories about the older pilots, Daryl Eggleston, and a few of them on some of the newer pilots said that they were real pilots. Because they had a few chances to see Daryl in operation, and you. And they said it really amazed them on how you could handle a plane. And where you could put them down, and how you could get them back up again.

ROE: Yeah, we learned how to have a forced landing if we needed them, and that was the main thing. And --- 'cause them older airplanes, you never knowed when they was going to quit you. And there's nothing you can do about it. They just wasn't as modern as they are now, and only one magneto, where now you've got two, and that made a

difference, you know.

DENNY: You and Daryl, neither one are flying anymore? Right?

ROE: Oh, no. Daryl flies a little, I think, occasionally. But I haven't flown for 10, 12 years. Yeah. But then I --- I used to have all kinds of licenses, but I didn't, if you don't exercise them, why I just --- like my mechanics license, I just turned them back because you don't use them. You have to exercise them some every two years or your --- And I got to where I didn't use them enough, so I just turned them back. I could always renew them if I wanted to, you know, but I don't have any use for them.

DENNY: Wayne's got --- There are a lot of pilots now with planes. Do you think there is as many pilots with planes here in Burns now as there was 25 years ago? Or ---

ROE: Well after we got started there, and in a few years, there was quite a bunch of guys flying in here, just before World War II. By the time the war started there was quite a few flying here, I couldn't say how many. But I don't know now, of course I've been away from it. I don't know how many guys fly here now. But I question if there is any more fly now than there was then.

DENNY: Now were planes quite expensive in those days, or ---

ROE: No, it wasn't. Well this plane I --- You could buy a pretty good plane for, older for \$300 or \$400.

DENNY: \$300 or \$400 was ---

ROE: This one I got, I, I traded a little old 1930 Austin and \$50 for it. He was wanting a \$150 dollars for it, but I traded him the car and gave him \$50, and ---

DENNY: And had you an airplane, but you had to put it together I understand.

ROE: Yeah, I had ---

DENNY: Yeah, and planes today are considerably more expensive.

ROE: Oh, yeah. Guess you can't look at anything now under \$6,000, \$7,000.

DENNY: Yeah, that flies.

ROE: Yeah. (Laughter)

DENNY: Well thank you Roe, and I'm sure that people will really appreciate this. It's very interesting.

ROE: Yeah, well that's about it. Okay.

DENNY: And thank you, Roe.

This is a continuation of the sketch on the Odd Fellows Hall.

WALLY WELCOME: Oh. Every Pioneer Day for years they'd have an old time dance up at the Tonawama Hall, you know where that is? The Bennett Motel. But the Rebekahs --- that was all for the old timers. Then the Rebekahs would give a dance for the younger people, and that was up in the Odd Fellows Hall.

DENNY: Oh, is that right?

WALLY: Yeah. That was quite an event, you know. The young people would go to the dance the Rebekahs would give, and the old timers of course would go up. And of course the Rebekahs during that era of jazz, you know, that was the music they played for the kids.

DENNY: Now is that --- Compton Moffet --- okay.

...

DENNY: This is a historical sketch on the old Brown Building.

WALLY: That building was built in 1896 by Nathan Brown. And he had two sons, Leon and Ben Brown. Was operated as a general merchandise store. In fact they had a wooden building there prior to that, I mean which went back to about 1884 or '85. But that stone building was built in 1896. And then the bottom floor of it on the south side, why they had their groceries, and they had their coffee grinder on the counter. And on the north side they had their apparel. I mean their --- the men's and ladies clothing. And flour



and wheat and so forth. And then the upstairs they had a hall, and it was used for various meetings and things. I remember in World War I, why the Red Cross operated up in there on Fridays, and had some supplies. And it continued as a grocery store after Nathan Brown, the father, then his son Ben Brown operated the store up through, until the '30's. And then when he went out of the business and moved away, why then it was when the new courthouse was built in 1940, why they occupied part of that ground floor for their offices, in that section of it. And it's had various uses since then, you know.

DENNY: Now you said this was the oldest building still standing on main street.

WALLY: That's the oldest building on Main Street.

DENNY: And it's probably one of the very few buildings on main street that is still, since like in 1884, is still under the ownership of the same people, still in the Brown's.

WALLY: Yeah.

DENNY: The Ben Brown family.

WALLY: And I imagine the Voegtly building is still ---

DENNY: In the Voegtly name.

WALLY: I don't know. I think they sold it and had to take it back.

DENNY: I think so, yeah. Is there anything --- I think that's probably all the sketching you need on that one.

This is a historical sketch of what's now Baird's Hardware, which was the Masonic Lodge, or still is I guess, the old Masonic Building.

WALLY: That was built in 1910. And the ground floor on the south half --- Schwartz and Budelman moved from across the street for their general merchants, merchandise store in the south corner of that. And then in the north corner of the ground floor, Schwartz at one time had, had that whole space, up until he went out of business in 1918. So anyway, then from 1905 until 1918 it was a general merchandise store. And they had a balcony in

that, and a millinery, a ladies millinery shop in part of it. And --- it was general merchandise. Then in 1918 why she closed it up on account of ill health, but the millinery shop still stayed. A lady named Mrs. ... had a millinery shop, or hat shop, and with Mrs. Schwartz, and they ran that millinery shop. But Geer, Irving Geer, moved the hardware store into the north half of that after their building burnt. The Geer and Cummings Hardware Store was right next to you, you know, where the old Liberty Theater was, the Geer and Cummings Hardware. And that fire in 1915 or '16, when they had that fire, well then they moved in and occupied the north half of the ground floor in the Masonic building. And they were managing that until 1932. And the south half of that building in 1926 was taken over by the Dillard Chevrolet Company of Alley, Dillard, Grover Jameson, and Ernest Musick.

DENNY: Oh, it was a Chevrolet dealership, huh?

WALLY: And they knocked out part of that wall on the south side, it was still ---

DENNY: Uh huh.

WALLY: And they had their pumps there.

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: And then on the face, you see, that, it was wooden floors in that, why that's where they displayed their Chevrolets. And they had that; they operated that Chevrolet Company there for 2 or 3 years. And then in 1930, in that section, Orville Corbett who had bought out Lancaster, who was up the street in the Clemens Building, moved down there in December of 1930 and occupied the--- that was a drug store in that part next to the hardware store until they moved across the street, which I guess was in 1972. But the Dillman Hardware, it always was a hardware store in that part of the, in that building after Schwartz, you know. There was always a hardware store in that building.

DENNY: Now ---

WALLY: The upstairs of the Masonic Building were law offices. And they had in that Masonic Hall the first Pioneer Day of 1960, and met in the Masonic Hall when it was organized.

DENNY: That was the first --- that was the first one, 1916?

WALLY: They were organized in 1916. I'll tell a little more about that, but they did. And then during the school days in the 1920's, in 1926 particularly, why they had dances up there for the high school students, I mean in the hall. About --- usually about once a month during the wintertime. And then when Vale came over and played basketball, they played Crane one night, and Burns the next night, they had a dance for them up in the Masonic Lodge hall room for both, or all the school kids. So it had quite a few uses as a hall other than, you know, I mean funerals and so forth. But --- that's about all I think I can tell you on that.

DENNY: Well Hale Baird has been mixed up with the hardware in there for quite a while. He was in there with Jinks Harris originally.

WALLY: Yeah, they went into --- you see that --- Dillman --- it wasn't a hardware store when Geers closed that up in 1932.

DENNY: Was that Henry Geer?

WALLY: No, that was Waldo Geer. You see their father, Irving Geer, had a hardware when they moved down. He was the father of Waldo and Henry, and all those. But Henry was never connected up with it, but they --- Dillmans took that hardware store over, I think in 1934. And they were the ones that sold, I guess, to Harris. I guess Dillman was the one that sold it to Harris.

DENNY: When did Hale Baird get in there, do you know? '34?

WALLY: No.

DENNY: He doesn't go back that far, does he?

WALLY: No, no he, I think, came in with the C's.

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: And then after World War II he came back. And he and Jinks bought it, I think, probably late '45, maybe.

DENNY: Yeah, and he's been in there probably almost 40 years though.

WALLY: Yeah --- '72, so it would be 41 years about.

DENNY: For the --- Corbett Drug Store was in there for 41 years.

WALLY: Yes.

DENNY: And it was known as Corbett's Drug Store all that time?

WALLY: Uh huh.

DENNY: And the soda fountain was there all that time?

WALLY: Yeah, for lunch and ---

DENNY: This is a historical sketch of Dalton's business. And --- Dalton Distributing. Now Dalton Distributing originally was not a --- they distributed what? Dalton's was originally a fuel distributor, wasn't he?

WALLY: Well he had --- Truxton had that Richfield, you know. And his dad went in with Mel Kundert, as Mel's Oasis, took over the Oasis Building. You know where Copelands was, Mel's Oasis, that's where it started out. But they were in with Mel Kundert first, and they called it Mel's Oasis. Mel started it. They used to have a dairy here, you know, in 1929, early '30's, and delivered milk. Then he got into the distributing, other business. And then of course when beer came in --- And then Dalton, I think, got into some kind of partnership, which I don't know, because I wasn't here. That was during World War II, and I wasn't here. That was during World War II, and I wasn't here. But it was still Mel's Oasis. And then Dalton took it over, and then they built the building up here.

DENNY: About what year did they build the building up there?

WALLY: Oh, I'd say it must have been ---

DENNY: Sue might know. They said ---

WALLY: Yeah, ask her for sure, I don't know.

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: I mean, I'm sure, you know, I'd say it was 1950 something.

DENNY: This is the answer to the question of the picture that's in Harney County, Oregon, And Its Rangeland, by Brimlow. The picture of --- the first picture of Burns, 1884.

WALLY: Uh huh.

DENNY: The question was, "Who was the man sitting on the rock?" And here's the answer to that question by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: ... Dillard.

DENNY: (Laughter) And this is the answer to the question, "What was the first building or house in the Burns/Broadway area, or region in town?" Here's the answer by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: Frank McCloud.

DENNY: And what was the date of that building?

WALLY: 1873.

DENNY: And where did it sit?

WALLY: On the brow of the hill, right in the location of the Silver Spur Motel.

DENNY: And there's your answer. This is the answer to the question on, "Who was the first white child born in what is now called Harney County," by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: The first white child in Harney County was a lady out at Fort Harney named Lucas.

DENNY: And who are the other two people that are controversial?

WALLY: Well Maggie Smyth Donegan born in 1873. Ella Luckey born in 1878.

DENNY: Thank you Wally. This is the answer to the question on, "Where was the first --- When was the first airplane to come to Burns, and where did it land?" And whoever is the closest to this one wins. Here's the answer by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: Middle of May 1920, and it landed at the Bell A Ranch.

DENNY: And do you know who flew that plane?

WALLY: Ah ---

DENNY: Maybe that's not significant.

WALLY: Ah ---

DENNY: This is the answer to the question on, "When was the first train into the Harney Valley," and the answer is by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: July 11, 1916.

DENNY: Yeah, and all of you who said 1924 Burns, is wrong. And this is the answer to the question, "That if you were petitioned, and had to show up for jury duty in 1885, where did you show up for jury duty, and why," and here is the answer by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: Canyon City.

DENNY: And why did you have to go to Canyon City?

WALLY: Because it was Grant County.

DENNY: Yeah, this was still Grant County; it wasn't Harney County until 1889.

We're here with Eldon Presley, better known as Cyc Presley. And Cyc is short for Cyclone. That's a nickname he acquired in his earlier days from being in a hurry everywhere he went. Now Cyc grew up with the Ford car, and started out with the Model-T when he was 14 years old, and he built what they called a Model-T Bug. In fact he had a couple of them. What's a Model-T Bug?

ELDON "CYC" PRESLEY: Well that's a stripped down Model-T. You took all the body off from it, and you kind of custom build a little old bug body around it which didn't weigh very

much, and didn't amount to much either. But you could least ways ride in it, and it was a lot lighter, and it just go a little faster.

DENNY: Well now what is some of the significant things about a Model-T that distinguishes it from cars of today?

CYC: Well they had three pedals. A low pedal, reverse pedal, and a brake pedal, and they worked on bands. And whenever they'd get real loose you'd have to take the cover off and tighten the bands up. But if you wanted to go ahead you pushed down the low pedal, and then they had a lever on the side there that you shoved down, and you let up on the pedal, and you were in high gear. And that's the only two forward gears you had.

DENNY: Now how did you stop the car, and what did that consist of?

CYC: Well you just had one brake, brake pedal that worked on those bands. And of course they had a little emergency brake when you pulled that lever back. But they didn't work too good.

DENNY: Now this is after you got the car started. How did you get it started?

CYC: Well you had to crank it. In the warm weather, it was a magneto system, and in the warm weather it didn't start too bad, but in the cold weather the Model-T was quite a chore to start. You had to jack up the rear wheels so it would crank easier, and if you didn't jack up the rear wheel when it was cold, why the thing would take after you.

DENNY: It'd get you, huh? It didn't want to start in those --- What kind of a fuel system did it have on it?

CYC: They had gravity feed, and if you went up a very steep hill they wouldn't feed, and you'd have to turn around and back up the hill because they just wouldn't feed.

DENNY: Yeah, I can remember Mom talking about Model-T's. She said you had to get out and push them up all the hills, and you got to ride down the other side. Besides having to back up the steep ones. What kind of an engine did they have in them? What

kind of a pump systems did they have on them?

CYC: Well they didn't have any oil pump, just a splash system, and no cooling system pump, just regular old thermal heat. And you'd go down the road and the thing would be steaming all the time. And also on the crankcase on there, you had to --- a petcock down there. You checked that petcock to see how high your oil was in your crankcase.

DENNY: It didn't have a dipstick on it?

CYC: No, just a petcock.

DENNY: They didn't have a fuel pump, didn't have a water pump, didn't have an oil pump, they were pretty simple. They called them the poor man's car, why was that?

CYC: Well they were called the poor man's car because Henry Ford first came out with it, they were cheap. The cheapest car on the market, and a poor man could afford to buy one.

DENNY: And just about everybody had one, because most people were poor people. What kind of tires did they have on them?

CYC: They had a 30 x 3 1/2 clincher rim tire. And they had wooden spokes on the earlier ones.

DENNY: And if you had a flat tire, how did you get it off?

CYC: You had to just pry it off with a couple old spring leaves you'd pack along just for tire, tire maintenance. And then you'd put it back on with those things, spring leaves.

DENNY: You didn't pull the rim off, just pulled the tire off?

CYC: No, just pulled the tire off.

DENNY: And you had flats wherever you went, huh?

CYC: Right. If you hit any rocks you had flat tires.

DENNY: Then if you took a long trip, you had a lot of flats?

CYC: Yeah, everybody packed a pump and patching. If you didn't, you didn't get any



place.

DENNY: Now the Ford dealership here in Burns is an old one. It goes back a long ways, is that right?

CYC: The Ford dealership in Burns, as I understand it, and from my memory, is the oldest dealership in Oregon. It was started by McGowans.

DENNY: And McGowans also bought the Egan's Store and moved it to Burns, and started Burns in 1884. What about the Ford dealership in Crane, Oregon, what was it called?

CYC: Well the Ford Garage in Crane was owned by the Burns Garage in Burns, and was also called the Burns Garage down there.

DENNY: And it was ---

CYC: And it was run by John Loggan, and later sold to Marvin Curry, and that's where I went to work.

DENNY: You went to work there when you was out of high school?

CYC: Right, the first year out of high school.

DENNY: And then you came to Burns and went to work in the Burns Ford here?

CYC: Yeah, for Archie McGowan.

DENNY: And you worked in Burns Ford for a long time.

CYC: I worked there for 12 years.

DENNY: So you worked on the Ford cars as they progressed. You had a Model-A too. What was the difference between a Model-A and a Model-T?

CYC: Well the Model-A had a gearshift system, instead of the old pedals. And they had shock absorbers, and it had a water pump, and oil pump, and the fuel tank was high enough above the engine that you didn't have any problems going up the hill with it. And it was a lot faster car, a lot smoother riding, and just a more comfort-able car.

DENNY: A Model-T was --- they didn't have a heater or anything in them, did they?

CYC: No, they didn't have a heating system at all. In fact most of them just had side curtains, if you had any side curtains.

DENNY: What type of T's did they have?

CYC: Oh, they had Model --- well that was just about, that's about all you could call it, just Model-T. They had coupes and sedans, and a little old pickup, and they had a little old Ford truck. It didn't amount to much.

DENNY: Your dad had a flat bed Model-T truck. It had what, solid rubber tires on it?

CYC: Solid rubber rear tires, and pneumatic tires in front. And just the windshield and a box on the back to haul stuff in.

DENNY: It didn't have a top or anything on it?

CYC: No top on it at all.

DENNY: Had little old short doors. Oh, those trucks didn't even have doors on them.

CYC: Didn't even have a door on it at all.

DENNY: Well a lot of the Model-T cars had little bitty short doors on them.

CYC: Yeah.

DENNY: You could step over them if you didn't want to walk through them.

CYC: Well on one side, the driver's side usually didn't even have a door at all. The passenger's side had a door.

DENNY: Huh. Didn't have much on those cars, just went down the road. The Model-A had a, quite a bit more power than the Model-T, and they had different wheels and stuff. The Model-T's went about what?

CYC: Oh, 30, 35 miles an hour was just about top on them. And then of course the Model-A would so 70 or better.

DENNY: The Model-A was, also had better wheels and everything.

CYC: Oh, yeah.

DENNY: As Ford progressed from the Model-A; they went --- in 1932 to their Ford V-8's. Ford V-8's were quite --- they really revolutionized the Ford again, or the car industry again, because a cheap car could have a V-8. And those V-8's could really move down the road, wouldn't they?

CYC: Yeah, they were real fast; they had a lot of power, and a lot of get away. And they'd just go faster than you wanted to drive one of them, really.

DENNY: Then the '54, they came out with the overhead V-8. And Ford started --- their cars had a lot of power all the way through. I see down on the showroom floor now, that they've got

--- of course speed is one thing that they don't put into cars anymore because of the 55-mile an hour speed limits. But the Ford still has classic cars. I see that ... that they have revolutionized the car design on that. And it's a whole new change in the car again, like --  
- Now we're going, let's get back to the Model-A. The Model-A had a seat, they called the rumble seat. And you hear a lot of people talking about the rumble seat stories. What is a rumble seat?

CYC: Well Model-A had that seat behind the, clear in the back, it just lifted up --- it looked like a trunk back there, but you'd just lift it up and fold it back and there was a seat in there, and cushions, and the back rest, and people rode back there. And mostly those rumble seats was in the roadster type.

DENNY: They had the touring cars in the Model-T's. What was a touring car? That was like a ---

CYC: Well a two-seated car they called it, a touring car, side curtains.

DENNY: They didn't have a hard top or anything on it?

CYC: No, just cloth top. Folded, you could fold it clear down.

DENNY: Now Ford had what they called a Victoria, it was a pretty car. You owned one of those, didn't you?

CYC: I had a Model-A Victoria, real nice little car. In fact I wished I still had it, because it would be worth some money now. But they also came out with a Victoria in some of the later models. In '55 they had a Crown Victoria.

DENNY: And '51 had a Victoria.

CYC: Yeah, it wasn't called a Crown.

DENNY: Uh huh. In '37 they changed, they made a change in the Fords too. You said something about they changed the tops on them.

CYC: Well they came out with a turret top, and that's an all steel top, no cloth, just complete steel top.

DENNY: And now the '30 --- '34 Fords had suicide doors. You're talking about the '33 or the '35; one of those was an oil burner.

CYC: '33 was an oil burner. It --- they had something wrong with the intake manifold system on it. It just sucked the oil out of it and just burned it just as fast as you could throw the oil in it, pretty near. And you couldn't even keep the spark plugs from fouling. And '34 they came out with a different manifold system, the intake manifold, and they got away from that.

DENNY: I understand you owned a '36 and a '37 Ford.

CYC: Yeah, I owned a '36 Coupe, and a '37 two-door sedan.

DENNY: And I see Jerry Kimble, he owns a '36 Ford. And it seemed like everybody in town relates to a '36 Ford, for some reason. Like everybody got married or had one, or was --- some relationship to a '36. Then they got into the '50 Fords and the '40 Fords, and '55's. And it seemed like Ford had a lot of cars that were classics.

JERRY KIMBLE: (In reference to Ye Olde Castle Restaurant Building.) Mr. and Mrs.

Lum (sp.?) lived here from '41 until approximately '47 or '48. They maintained the downstairs as their family home, and the upstairs was used as roomers. They didn't feed the men, but they had, always had 6 or 7 single men who lived upstairs, and they ate their meals elsewhere. They were generally people who worked for the railroad. Russell Hudkins, from Hines, his family lived here from '48 up into the '50's. Russell lived here when he was going to high school, and they maintained the rooming situation upstairs while they were here. They also kept 5 or 6 single men living upstairs. Sometime after '48 apparently, or after the mid '50's was when, from what I understand, is when Mr. Bradeen and his dad moved in here. And they were still here in '57 I know, I remember that. I think that he sold --- Ruel Teague lived here for a while in there. Then Ashcrafts bought it and they lived here, maintained it as a home. Then they started the restaurant. And on the east side they added a little porch office. They used it for an office for selling mobile homes.

DENNY: Bradeens did?

JERRY: No.

DENNY: Ashcraft?

JERRY: Ashcrafts did.

DENNY: They also sold mobile homes out of here?

JERRY: Yeah, they parked them out here in this lot out here on the east side.

DENNY: Did Mace's own --- did Mrs. Mace own this?

JERRY: Mrs. Mace bought this ---

DENNY: From Ashcrafts.

JERRY: No, Ashcraft sold it to Lonnie Justice.

DENNY: Justice?

JERRY: Yeah. He went from here and operated the Oasis in Juntura for a couple of

years.

DENNY: Oh. But he had a restaurant here?

JERRY: Yes. He's the one ---

DENNY: And he called it The Castle?

JERRY: Yeah, he's the one that started the bakery in the back.

DENNY: There was a bakery here?

JERRY: Yeah, he --- That's where they had the bake sign on the outside sign that was sitting up there when he was here.

DENNY: When was this converted to a restaurant? Do you have any idea?

JERRY: No, just ---

DENNY: Ashcraft's did ---

JERRY: I think about '62, I think, if I remember right when Ashcrafts converted it.

DENNY: Made some changes over --- Pete Clemens was telling me that when Ashcrafts had their grand opening they wanted --- and he was in earnest, but Pete wouldn't do it. He wanted Pete to stand outside here and shake hands with them when they come in, and tell them, "I was born here." (Laughter) Pete said, "I wouldn't do that for nothing."

JERRY: Well ---

DENNY: You don't know when the building was built?

JERRY: I haven't heard from anyone yet. We're trying to find out, but so far we haven't been able.

DENNY: It should be on record up at the courthouse.

JERRY: I haven't gone up there to look, but I think it probably would be.

DENNY: Yeah.

SIDE B

DENNY: We have Pete Clemens here with us, and we're going to do kind of a historical rundown, or historical sketch on the building that is now called Ye Olde Castle, it's a restaurant. Jerry and Rosie Kimble are running it, and I have Pete Clemens with me here. Now Pete, that building is in your --- it was known as the Clemens building.

PETE CLEMENS: Yes, one time when I was --- in fact I was --- that's where I was born, on August 3rd, 1911. And my folks bought it and resided there for about two years. Then we moved back on the ranch where I'm presently living. And also there was several houses there where Safeway stands. There was the Billy Smith house. And then right back of our house was the John Gemberling house, and right east of our house was the Peter Petersen house. And across the street where Nyleen's own now, was the George Fry house. And then right where the Safeway parking lot was the Cavender Livery Stable. And that was the type of buildings and homes that was around there in the early days.

DENNY: Is the Castle pretty much in its original structure now, or has it been added on to or ---

PETE: Yes, its been added on to. There's some of the original building there, but Bill Bradeen added on to it after he bought it. Then after --- oh I forget who the people that bought it there, oh --- but anyway its been added on to. The back end has been a lot added on to it since the time that my folks sold it.

DENNY: Who had the house after you --- Who did your folks sell the house to?

PETE: Well I think the folks sold the house to a real estate operator by the name of A. A. Traugott. And he later, it later became, it became the property of Bill Bradeen, and his father lived there for, or brother, whichever it was, several years. And then eventually he sold it to --- The Ashcrafts bought it and started the Castle. And then I assumed that Kimbles purchased it either from Mrs. Mace, or from the Kimbles (Ashcrafts), and it's

sitting there at the present time, and it's a pretty nice looking place, I think.

DENNY: Yes. And it's a good restaurant too. There's a lot of antiques on display, and --- Was that a boarding house at one time? I understand it was.

PETE: Well not to my --- It might have been a boarding house, but to memory I couldn't say it was. Yes, or no, it could have been. We were away from Burns for 4 or 5 years in my youth.

DENNY: The Mart Brenton Saloon, and the ---

PETE: The Mart Brenton Saloon.

DENNY: And Ty the Chinaman.

PETE: The Chinaman had a restaurant there, and also Charlie --- Oh, I can't think of his last name right now, had a barbershop there. And adjacent, next to that going south, the Reed Brothers had a Drug Store. And then Julian Byrd put in the Liberty Theater, and then there was the Brown Building. And then on the other side of the Brown Building was the old Burns Hotel, which was tore down when they built the present Ereno Building there. So that's the ---

DENNY: Did they have --- I understood they had ladies of the evenings houses out behind that saloon. Is that true?

PETE: Yes, out back, out behind there where they are now putting in a fill there. They had some sporting houses out there.

DENNY: Sporting houses! Huh? (Laughter)

PETE: Don't think we'd better talk about that. Is that on or off?

DENNY: It's off.

This is a historical rundown on the Silver Sage.

WALLY: It was built by A. Combs in 1926. A. Combs was the father of Goldie Racine. And it was called the Ideal Theater, and they had the opening show in July in 1926. They



continued it --- I know it was --- when he turned it over to Willie and Goldie, that isn't ---

DENNY: Nothing of significance, no.

WALLY: I'll read down to --- It remained as the Ideal Theater and operated even after they built the Desert Theater in 1950. They continued running the Ideal Theater for about a couple more years. Then Racines, who owned the building, sold that to Dwight Hinshaw of the Burns Times-Herald.

DENNY: The liquor store was around in there too, wasn't it?

WALLY: Huh?

DENNY: Was the liquor store around in there for a while, or was it next door?

WALLY: Well that's where the bakery was.

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: No, the only thing that was ever there outside of the --- was Hinshaw. And then the Silver Sage moved in. That's all that ever occupied that building. That's about all I can tell. It had a fire there, you know, I mean ---

DENNY: When it was a theater?

WALLY: Yeah.

DENNY: In about what year was that?

WALLY: 1932.

DENNY: Did it burn the theater down, or ---

WALLY: No, just mostly smoke damage, and some --- It was remodeled a little bit and then added on to. There used to be a stage in it, and the class of 1927, and the class of 1928 graduated from high school out of that building. It had a pipe organ in it. In the days of silent film, you know, it had a pipe organ.

DENNY: Well that theater goes back to the silent film days?

WALLY: 1926, yeah. Sound didn't come in until 1929. And that was by Lloyd Moore,

and Ronald Biggs who opened it in the Oasis Hall. You remember now where the Oasis Hall was at?

DENNY: Uh huh.

WALLY: Down where Copelands took over.

DENNY: Uh huh. Is there anything that is significant about that? Anything that happened there, or ---

WALLY: At the theater?

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: Well different --- The high school, you know, they had a pep rally there, you know. I remember, I don't know what year it was. The only one I ever went to was in 1936. And then there was a drama club in town that put on a play there in the summer of 1927. And there were a few --- besides movies that went on, movies mostly. They had a bond rally there in 1942, September; they had a big bond rally there.

DENNY: Yeah. When they --- when it was --- When they first started the theater there, you said in what, '20 ---

WALLY: 1926.

DENNY: '26 is when they built the Liberty Theater?

WALLY: Oh no, not the Liberty.

DENNY: I mean the ---

WALLY: Yeah, the Ideal.

DENNY: The Ideal, yeah. Who played for the --- Would that be significant, I think.

WALLY: You mean who played the organ?

DENNY: Yeah, they had that music in there for the old silent movies.

WALLY: Yeah. The --- Marie Haines played for it.

DENNY: And that's related to Marcus Haines? Marcus' what?

WALLY: It'd be a cousin ---

DENNY: Cousin.

WALLY: --- played in it. And then Phil Cawlfeld played in it later. And then they had a pipe organ that was, it was, had a multiple of instruments in it, and effects, not only the pipe organ, it was a combination. They didn't put the pipe organ in until 1928, two years later. They bought a second hand pipe organ, and --- a Wurlitzer it was.

DENNY: A Wurlitzer.

WALLY: They put it in, in 1928. Marie Haines played it.

DENNY: When did they --- they took it out though later?

WALLY: Yeah. They took it out when sound came in and --- When sound came in, Combs put movie tone in, in December 1929. But the first movie was Lloyd Moore, in the Oasis, by Warner Brothers ...

DENNY: When did --- was there anything there at that location before it was a theater?

WALLY: Yes, there was some wooden buildings in there. In fact, right --- not exactly where it's at, but right adjacent to it was the Byrd Building, you know, the Times-Herald Building, which was a brick building. And then on the north side of it were wooden buildings, and there was a warehouse in there. And it's --- and a laundry, Chinese Laundry. And they had a fire about 1918 that wiped those wooden buildings out. And then that lot was vacant.

DENNY: And --- up until ---

WALLY: Up until, well up until the First National Bank. Or actually put that nook in there. But that lot was vacant for years, I mean it's extended down. See the bakery building there was built in 1930. It was completed in 1930, the bakery. Corley built it; it's still there.

DENNY: Yeah, the Silver Sage.

WALLY: But it's right next to it. But they are different buildings.

DENNY: Yeah. All right, that's probably all we'll need on that one.

WALLY: Yeah, that's enough for that.

DENNY: This is a historical sketch of the Highlander Cafe, by Wally Welcome.

WALLY: That was built by Yee Quong. And the stone building was built by Yee Quong in 1937. And on the corner where the Highland, I mean in --- which was occupied by the Highlander now, was a grocery store in there.

DENNY: Smyth's Grocery.

WALLY: And right next to it was --- well Thornburg had it before Smyth.

DENNY: Oh, he did?

WALLY: But anyway, right next to it was a cafe.

DENNY: It's moved then?

WALLY: Yeah, the south part of it ---

DENNY: Which is what's the Hole in the Wall now, huh?

WALLY: Well the --- The Hole in the Wall, I think is --- is the Central Hotel Building, isn't it?

DENNY: It might be, yeah.

WALLY: See the Central Hotel Building has --- the ---

DENNY: Oh, all right.

WALLY: See, that's a different building.

DENNY: What the Highlander is now, was two buildings at one time. I mean it was ---

WALLY: No, it was all the same building, but it was ---

DENNY: Two stores.

WALLY: Two stores. There was a grocery store in it, and then the restaurant.

DENNY: And then the restaurant.

WALLY: And then later though, you see, then ---

DENNY: They made it ---

WALLY: Then they switched around and the grocery store, which Johnny Smyth had, is where the restaurant was.

DENNY: Uh huh.

WALLY: And then on the, on the corner is where the --- they called The Good Eats.

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: You may remember that, but it was just reversed around.

DENNY: Yeah, when did they change? Was it called --- when Yee Quong first built the restaurant what ---

WALLY: It was called the Club Cafe.

DENNY: He called it what?

WALLY: Club Cafe.

DENNY: The Club Cafe.

WALLY: Yeah, they moved from across the street there, right where the Elks is at now, moved it across the street.

DENNY: That's what he called it though, was the Club Cafe?

WALLY: Yeah, the Club Cafe.

DENNY: And then he called it the Good Eats?

WALLY: Well after they, after he and Fred Dunten --- He called it the Good Eats. But Yee was out, but before, you see even later there was a card room or something in there, you remember, for a while before it was a restaurant.

DENNY: Then they changed it to the Highlander. I don't know what else a guy needs to talk about that building. That's not a very long sketch.

WALLY: It was a well-built building, with all that stonework.

DENNY: Uh huh.

WALLY: That was in '37.

DENNY: What set on that piece of ground before Yee Quong built the building?

WALLY: Well there was a --- what was there before was a Overland Hotel. And the cottages built by Beulah Clemens' father, Ray Smith. Ray Smith and his father built a building, but the hotel there was Cole Hotel. And then right next to it, I mean in later, called the Royal Hotel, and those were wooden buildings. And it was operated as the Cole Hotel, why the Bend-Portland Stage operated that, was their headquarters between Bend and Burns when they put that on --- the stage through in the teens.

DENNY: Well now, Yee, he --- did he have a cafe in Burns before this one?

WALLY: Uh huh, up in the Lemons Hotel.

DENNY: And before that, he came from Crane, right?

WALLY: Right.

DENNY: He had --- he started in Crane.

WALLY: There was already a restaurant in the Lemons Hotel when Yee came up to Burns.

DENNY: But he just took --- he just started cooking there?

WALLY: It was in 1920, I think is when he came up there.

DENNY: When was the Highlander Cafe built, did you say?

WALLY: 1937.

DENNY: '37, and it was built by Yee?

WALLY: Yeah, Yee built it.

DENNY: Am I correct, did Yee Quong start some of these Chinese take-out dinners, frozen dinners?

WALLY: He did, I'm pretty sure he did. I mean he had --- Yeah, I think that he did, was

into those type of a dinner, and then later years of his life, when they was, I think when he moved out, when he moved out ---

DENNY: Moved out there on the hill, yeah.

WALLY: I'm sure he did for a while, kind of a frozen food, yeah.

DENNY: Is there anything that would be interesting, some little story or something that happened there that you can remember?

WALLY: In this particular building?

DENNY: Yeah.

WALLY: No, I don't. I can't think of anything.

DENNY: Okay, that's probably enough.

WALLY: It used to be open late, you know.

DENNY: This is a historical sketch of the Odd Fellows building, in 1909. I mean ---  
(Laughter) We'll let Wally say that.

WALLY: It was built in 1909 by Wiseman and Shepard. They were the stonemasons on that building. And that was built in 1909, and then on the bottom of that building --- there was a Commercial Club, which was a club, now called the Chamber of Commerce. Burns Commercial Club occupied the south part of that building, and the north part of the building Clevenger had a mortuary in the north little section of that building.

DENNY: Now ---

WALLY: That was the downstairs. Upstairs, other than the lodge room, there was some offices, law offices, up in that building.

DENNY: When was this?

WALLY: Well they were there in --- some of them in the teens. And then even later, in the late '20's, and early '30's still were offices up there.

DENNY: Now this is the Odd Fellows ---

WALLY: Pardon.

DENNY: This is where the Heather Shop and the Boot Shop is now, right?

WALLY: Uh huh.

DENNY: Now she came over and told me that someone came in there last year and asked her if she wanted to know what that building cost to be built. And she said, well, she didn't own it, she was just renting it. And he said well, he was the guy that built the thing, and he still had the bill of sale.

WALLY: Who was that?

DENNY: I can't remember the name, but she --- he showed her the bill. And the whole building cost \$2,200 to build.

I'm talking with Agness Brown, and we are going to talk about the Locher Castle. And lots of people don't remember the Locher Castle. I don't remember the Locher Castle, but I've seen pictures of it up here in the museum, and it is quite a monstrosity, and it really interests me. Now we'll get --- now Agness remembers this Castle. She was a kid when she went through it, and she knew the people, and knew him. And so we're going to get her version, her relation, or what she remembers of the Castle. Now before we start that, now who was this Locher?

AGNESS BROWN: Well Mr. Locher was an old German that lived here in Burns, I guess, when I was very small. And he and his wife, and they had one son. Then as I remember him though, he was a real old man. And at that time I think Mrs. Locher, and I know the son lived here in town. And he lived out there at this Castle in one little room, one dirty little room.

DENNY: Well here in town now he had other business prior to moving out there. That's prior to your time, I'm sure, but it's what they called the Harney County Brewing Company.

AGNESS: Yes.



DENNY: And he had a stone building up here right behind what would be Daltons, where Daltons is now.

AGNESS: Yeah. That stone building was still; well it was right where Daltons is. It's right where the building, Dalton's building is now. And at that time they told that he had tunnels under the main street. Now I never saw any of this, but they told these stories. And I've heard Al tell about going down there and going down in underneath in that building. But I never was.

DENNY: The tunnels were to keep his beer cool, is what I understand.

AGNESS: Yes, yes.

DENNY: But I've heard stories about tunnels going clear to Wright's Point. And I'm sure he didn't need tunnels that long to keep beer cool. (Laughter) He also had another building up there too, a wooden building, and that was ---

AGNESS: That was the dance hall at that time, I think.

DENNY: The Locher Dance Hall.

AGNESS: Yeah. I think that one burned down, I believe.

DENNY: Yeah, I think the stone brewery stood there for quite a few years. Now, now where was his Castle at?

AGNESS: Well the Castle, if you were going out on the highway, Highway 20 now toward Bend, it would be --- there's a road goes south.

DENNY: Towards Potter Swamp?

AGNESS: Towards Potter Swamp. And it is in that first field, just ---

DENNY: On the right?

AGNESS: Yeah. On the --- no it would be on the --- Well if you turned towards Potter Swamp it would be the first one on the right.

DENNY: Yeah, and that's where --- Riley Gaines lives now.

AGNESS: Is it?

DENNY: Yeah, Riley owns that piece of property. Now what was this Castle built out of?

AGNESS: Well the old man had the idea that you built a Castle to leave for posterity, to remember you by, and so it takes lots of rocks. I don't know where he got all these rocks, but they were small rocks. Lots of them no more larger than a grapefruit. And I think the best way to describe the way he started to build this was like we built playhouses when I was a little kid. You piled rocks up to make you a wall. Only he would have them, oh, I suppose eighteen inches wide at the bottom, and he butted them together. And there'd be, sometimes he'd have a pretty good size rock in there, and sometimes they were just all-little rocks. But he'd mud them together, and he'd keep building them up until he'd finally get him a wall. And some of the walls were one height, and some were another, and some of the rooms were three foot square. Some of them were maybe four or five-foot square, or maybe they weren't even square, maybe he'd just go around. And then when he'd come to a place where he wanted an opening, why he'd have an old door. I don't know where these old doors and things came from. I remember he had old doors in it. And all of it was built right on the ground. There was --- I think he had wood in that, now I'm not even sure of that, that he had that wood in the floor, the flooring in where he actually lived.

DENNY: Now he worked on this thing for years and years, from what I understand.

AGNESS: Yes, I don't know how many years he worked on it. Because we moved down there in --- I think in '17, down to the Lloyd place, which was just south of his place.

DENNY: You are talking about 1917?

AGNESS: 1917. And I don't --- I don't know how long he had been working on it, but he had been working on it for a long time. Because after we moved down there he only made just one or two more rooms, or three more rooms. 'Course he was old by that time.

I don't know, 'course anybody 50 years old was old to me, you know. (Laughter) When you're 7 years old. But he had white hair, I remember. He was white, and he had a white beard, I remember that. So ---

DENNY: He never really intended on finishing it though, the way I understand.

AGNESS: No, no you didn't finish it, because if you got it finished why you completed your life work.

DENNY: And that was going to be his life work.

AGNESS: And that was his life work. And there was nothing, nothing more for you to look forward to tomorrow.

DENNY: And you said something, and I asked you about how many rooms it had in it, and you said you could remember when you were a kid it had lots of rooms, because you were almost afraid of getting lost in there.

AGNESS: Yeah, they --- Well, and you'd go and you'd open a door and you'd walk into a room, and there would be no way out. You'd back out of that room because you couldn't turn around hardly. Then the next place you'd come to maybe would be a room three and a half feet across and there would be three doors out of it.

DENNY: (Laughter) Like a maze, huh?

AGNESS: It was, it was just like a maze. And the newer part, when I was a kid, Dad didn't object to us going into, but there was some rooms at that time that he didn't much like we kids to be up there and go through. Because, well you can imagine, the water --- The roof was just old boards, or tin cans or whatever he could find to make, you know, keep a little rain off.

DENNY: I'll be danged, huh.

AGNESS: And I think he had --- part of them was old coal oil cans that he beat down flat, you know.

DENNY: You say, now you packed these rocks all off the hill in gunnysacks, you supposed.

AGNESS: I imagine, I imagine. I don't know where he got those rocks. But because there's no --- Right out there in that field there weren't any rocks.

DENNY: If there were they'd all be in one pile. He'd had to have gathered them for miles, wouldn't he?

AGNESS: Yes, he would have. He would have had to --- Well of course there was that hill over by where the big spring was.

DENNY: Uh huh.

AGNESS: And there was --- he probably could have carried some rock from over there.

DENNY: Now over on the other hillside, you were talking about where the spring was, he'd carved some figures on the hill, and you could remember them.

AGNESS: Well yes. Now that was across the road.

DENNY: Uh huh.

AGNESS: That was across what is Highway 20 now.

DENNY: Highway 20, yeah.

AGNESS: Yeah. I remember those, and the first time I saw those they were very distinct, you know. I mean he hadn't carved those much before I saw them.

DENNY: Well he was --- he did them prior, in later years then?

AGNESS: Very, yes --- That was probably some of the latest things.

DENNY: And they were figures of what?

AGNESS: Well one of them was supposed to be Kaiser Wilhelm. And then there was a woman holding a baby. And, oh those figures were at --- Course I'm looking at it from the eyes of a child, but I think that they were probably twelve or fifteen feet high.

DENNY: And they were carved out of the natural stone up there?

AGNESS: Well, cinders.

DENNY: Cinders.

AGNESS: They were just carved out of cinder, that's why they didn't last long.

DENNY: Yeah.

AGNESS: And the last, well I can't remember the last time I was out where you could actually --- but it was in the '30's sometime that I was out there, and you could still make out that there was a woman and a man.

DENNY: Yeah.

AGNESS: But you couldn't see the crown on the man's head.

DENNY: Nothing any more.

AGNESS: Or anything more, no. And they didn't seem to have clothes on, they were just human shapes, you know.

DENNY: Uh huh.

AGNESS: Nothing, no --- a lot of detail. There was just --- I can remember the nose on one of them was probably the most dominant feature, and you could see a mouth, and --- But as far as being any --- they weren't like naked forms, you know.

DENNY: Uh huh.

AGNESS: They were smoothed over.

DENNY: I wonder why he carved those things. Do you have any idea?

AGNESS: I have no idea.

DENNY: Maybe they were supposed to be the people that was going to reside in that castle, do you suppose?

AGNESS: I have no idea what his idea was. He didn't mention that. He did, he did talk about why he thought he'd ought to have this ---

DENNY: Project.

AGNESS: Project, you know, the building, the castle.

DENNY: What happened to the castle, did they tear it down?

AGNESS: Oh, I think it just disintegrated.

DENNY: Mud and mortared, and it just finally melted into the earth.

AGNESS: Mud and mortar, yes. And some of those old boards probably just rotted out. Get wet, you know, every winter and ---

DENNY: Well I know kids --- I can remember Mom and Dad talking about going out there and going through it. And it must have been getting pretty sad --- You said it was getting to the point where it was almost dangerous.

AGNESS: Well even when I was a little kid there was rooms Dad didn't want us to go into. But I'm sure I was in it after that. My father died ---

DENNY: You was just like all kids, huh?

AGNESS: --- in 1923, and I'm sure because that was our favorite thing to take people to show. When people would come to visit you, you took them out to show them Locher's Castle.

DENNY: Yeah. I wished I could have seen it, but you could, anybody that wants to see what the Castle looks like, there's pictures of it up in the Harney County Museum.

AGNESS: Uh huh. Were those taken by Heck?

DENNY: I don't know who took the pictures, Agness. I never looked. I'm sure they probably --- it says on the pictures.

AGNESS: Oh, all I was saying that would sort of date as to when it began to go, disintegrate. I'm sure that it was still standing and in fairly good shape in the '30's. At the time that they built the mill, I'm sure there was still lots of it there.

DENNY: Yeah, in the pictures it was quite a monstrosity. It was just rooms and ---

AGNESS: Oh it was, because if you can imagine just starting out and you built a room, and then you went out the door and you started in and you built another room, and then you went back this way and you built another room, and some of the walls were eight feet high, and some of them were six feet high, and, you know, I mean there was no rhyme nor reason to any of it. And there wasn't any build up to a gable or anything like that. It was just wherever he happened to stop, why he'd put a little roof over it. And ---

DENNY: And build something else, huh?

AGNESS: And then he'd --- Yeah, then he'd go over some other place and build some more.

DENNY: Well that's too bad that something like that --- Well I guess take pictures of it and remember it is all we can do, isn't it, 'cause I don't remember it.

AGNESS: Well yes, that's all you could have ever done.

DENNY: Yeah, it's just one of those things that happened here, and why or ---

AGNESS: Yeah, but I remember it very well though because it was during World War I, you know, that he came down to our house almost every day. And he'd sit and talk German to somebody on the front porch, and we kids didn't like that 'cause we didn't know what he was talking about. But he spoke German, and ---

DENNY: He was talking to an imaginary person?

AGNESS: No, no, he talked to old Jim Lumsden. And he was a Scotsman. No ---

DENNY: And he was German.

AGNESS: No, he was a Scotsman.

DENNY: Well how would they understand one another?

AGNESS: I don't know. And I don't know what language they were speaking. But they talked in some language I didn't know.

DENNY: Oh, they talked back and forth though?

AGNESS: Yes. Yeah, yeah, they'd sit there and talk.

DENNY: Oh, oh.

AGNESS: But he always came down and got milk from Mother about every other day, or every three days he'd come down and --- and it was probably a mile and a half from his, where he lived down to our house, or maybe, maybe two miles. And he'd come down in the middle of the hot summer, and Mom would pour that milk in that bucket. And the bucket was none too clean. It must have been sour by the time he got it home.

DENNY: (Laughter) What was he using the sour milk for?

AGNESS: And --- oh he was --- That's what he drank.

DENNY: Oh, I guess it wouldn't hurt you. If he'd ---

AGNESS: Oh, it wouldn't hurt him any, no, but I don't think it was very clean. Mama scalded the bucket one time and completely insulted him, so she never did that again.

DENNY: (Laughter) Well, you know, there is a lot of history in this town, things that's happened here, and we thank Agness for bringing this little piece back to us. Thank you Agness. (Shall we run it back and see what it sounds like?)

We're with Avel Diaz and he's going to give us a little talk on the Basque, and what he knows of them.

AVEL DIAZ: Well the Basque people come to the United States in the early 1900's, and migrated into Oregon, Idaho, and Nevada, California probably around 1910, 1908, that era. And most of them in these areas went to work for a sheep outfit. There was a lot of sheep in the country, and they were willing to put up with the hardships of herding sheep, because it was a way for them to save money and bring other members of the family over to the United States. Some of them never even knew what a sheep was hardly, until they come to the United States.

A lot of them were fishermen, like my people are all fishermen, and when they



come to this country why they got involved with working in sheep camps. They settled down on the Steens, and at one time there was probably a dozen Basque sheep outfits in Harney County on the Steens Mountains. And of course they didn't own any private lands to speak of, and they run their sheep on the public domain.

And at that time there was no such thing as BLM, Bureau of Land Management. So in 1936-37 era they started what they called the Taylor Grazing Act. And through that act if you didn't have any base property you weren't allowed to get permission to run cattle, or sheep, or whatever on public lands. And most of the Basque sheep herders in this country, in Harney County, had no private owned lands, so they was forced to go out of the sheep business. Some of them that did have land over in the McDermitt, Winnemucca, and the Westfall area.

And the Urizar family, which is a prominent Basque family in Harney County, were able to run sheep, and for a while on the Steens because they had base property here near Burns, and they are now in the cattle business. This is the third generation.

The Basque are a group of people that, although they come from Spain, they don't consider themselves Spaniard. They have a different culture, they have a different language. The language that they speak has no other language similar to it. In Europe, they don't know where the language comes from, it has no base. They --- historians have been studying it for years, and they still don't know where the Basque originated from. They have no French connection, no Spanish connection, no Roman, no German. Their structure is different, their customs are different.

And the Basque people are known in Europe to be some of the older fishermen that went out into the sea, and there is records that show that they were in Newfoundland, and that area long before Eric the Red. They found artifacts to show that the Basque people had been there.

They are doing a lot of study on the Basque people, and the University of Reno is doing it. And if you want more information on the Basque, why contact the University of Reno, or Nevada, Reno, and they are doing a complete study on the Basque. And this gives you kind of a brief history on the Basque, and where they originated from.

DENNY: Well that's good Avel, and I know that the Basque people are family oriented people. And when some of the young men came from the old country to the U.S. to herd sheep, they were put into isolation, and it was really tough on them.

AVEL: Yes, that's right Denny, you are right on that score.

DENNY: And they were the ones, some of the people that were given credit for all these tree carvings all through the northwest.

AVEL: Right.

DENNY: They called them Mountain Picasso's.

AVEL: Yeah, that's --- They enjoyed doing that, and they were lonesome, and they were thinking of home, and they would draw or carve things on quaken asps. Something to remind them of home. And they were hard working, they weren't afraid to work, and was willing to live alone in isolated conditions, as I said earlier.

DENNY: Well thanks Avel, and we really appreciate your time and your story on the Basque people.

AVEL: Okay, thank you Denny.

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