

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV- Oral History #434 Sides A/B

Subject: Dee Swisher

Place: Swisher Home – Burns, Oregon

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Interviewer: Sandra Crittenden

SANDRA CRITTENDEN: We're with Dee Swisher, at Dee's house, and we're here today to kind of go over some of the aspects of living in Harney County. Let's start with when you came into Harney County, Dee.

DEE SWISHER: We came here in September of 1956, and it was during the, fair time. And we moved to Swamp Creek that was owned by Jim McEwen. And when we moved into Swamp Creek the buckaroos were all at the fair. So it gave me time to move in, clean the house, because they'd been baching in it, and get settled before the buckaroos came home.

SANDRA: How big a place, the house, was this that you ---

DEE: It was a lovely house, it was a new house. One of the nicer ones that I had lived in. It had three bedrooms, a bathroom, a great big living room, dining room, kitchen, and pantry. And it had a small shed by the side of the house, and it had a gas washing machine. And so I had plenty of room to wash.

SANDRA: Gas washing machine was propane?

BILL SWISHER: Gasoline.

SANDRA: Gasoline. A gasoline engine on it.

BILL: Yeah.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And so that ran the agitator in that machine.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And you hand rung?

DEE: Huh uh. It had a wringer. But you had to be very careful putting your clothes through the wringer because it didn't automatically stop if it jammed. And it would take your hand, arms, whatever that came through. And several women had their arms broken using those gas washing machines, you know. They were a real innovation for us, because we had been scrubbing on scrub boards prior to that time. But you had to be very careful with the gas washing machines.

SANDRA: You went from the washing machine into a separate rinse tub.

DEE: Uh huh. It had two big wash tubs with clear water to rinse the clothes.

SANDRA: And did you carry the water for the rinse tubs?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: Or did you have running water enough to ---

DEE: No, no. Not in the wash house I didn't. Water was all hauled by bucket.

SANDRA: And how far were you hauling that from? Was it a well?

DEE: No, we got our water from a spring up on the hill, and it was gravitational flow. And it came down to the house from the spring. And this was great too, because prior to that in buckaroo camps in Nevada we had to haul water, you know.

SANDRA: Like in barrels?

DEE: In buckets. Because we had springs at the buckaroo camps, you know, but we was carrying the water uphill.

SANDRA: I see.

DEE: But no, this was really nice. We had spring water, and it was gravitational flow in the house. And it had a gas water heater in the house, a gas cook stove. So I hauled the hot water and cold water both to the wash house.

SANDRA: And this was all gasoline?

DEE: Uh huh. And propane, the cook stove in the house was propane. And to me it was wonderful, because I wasn't having to chop wood, you know, and carry it in and keep the fire going to cook, until we moved up to the Refuge. McEwen's ran their cows on the refuge from fall until spring. And that house there had no running water, and I had a wood cook stove, and had to heat my water to wash everything, dishes, washing, whatever, baths.

SANDRA: And this water was in a water jacket, it was on the wood stove?

DEE: It had one, but it wasn't near big enough for all the water that I used, you know.

SANDRA: So then you had to use big kettles on the stove?

DEE: Uh huh, I had what we called the boiler with a lid on it, you know. And it was on the backside of the stove. So I had hot water all the time, you know. The main thing was keeping it filled.

SANDRA: And, for bathing, and for dishes, this was all the same process?

DEE: Uh huh, right.

SANDRA: Got the water the same way.

DEE: Uh huh, right.

SANDRA: Got the water the same way.

DEE: Right. And we took our baths in a big round washtub. It's a good thing we were young because you'd bend your legs and sit in the tub. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Believe it or not I can remember doing that. Believe it or not.

DEE: Now at Swamp Creek, see I thought that --- just moving in initially, there was a bathroom at Swamp Creek, because like I told you the house was new. And we had a nice bathroom, and had hot water and cold water, you know, a bathtub and the whole bit. But then when we moved to the Refuge I didn't have all those amenities.

SANDRA: When you had to carry your own water for a bath --- now today everybody jumps in a shower every morning, or jumps in the shower every night --- some people even twice a day, I guess.

DEE: Yeah.

SANDRA: Back then, was it a Saturday night bath?

DEE: No, no, we bathed frequently, Sandra. Especially in the summer season when the guys were haying, you know, they'd come in itchy. Now the hired men didn't, I don't

know what they did in the bunkhouse. But Bill was, bathed frequently. And of course I bathed daily, and so my baby, you know, of course got bathed.

SANDRA: I remember at that time, I think there was a sequence of who got the bath water first.

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: And it was ---

DEE: But we didn't do that. We didn't bathe in each other's bath water, did we, not really. I've heard of families doing that, you know, they put the little kids in first, and then --- or else the adult did first, or whatever you know, but we didn't. No, each one of us had our own clean water tub.

SANDRA: And in the kitchen, and you probably had a drain system for when you got done with dishes.

DEE: Right. I had a sink that had a drain in, at the Refuge. And of course, needless to say at Swamp Creek I had a modern kitchen.

SANDRA: After probably washing being one of your biggest chores, then was the baking and the food ---

DEE: After you did the dishes in the morning --- this was standard procedure I think with all ranch wives, you mopped the floor every day. Then you did the baking. You had to get that all done by noon, because you were cooking for three meals a day.

SANDRA: What time of the morning did you get up to start the breakfast meal?

DEE: About four o'clock, sometimes three o'clock in the morning.

SANDRA: And what was the menu for breakfast?

DEE: Usually hot biscuits, sourdough biscuits, or sourdough pancakes. Potatoes, fried potatoes, needless to say. Bacon, ham, sausage or eggs, and eggs, always eggs.

SANDRA: So you had chickens?

DEE: Yes, we had chickens.

SANDRA: You milked the cow?

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: You had to take care of the milk daily.

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: How often did you make butter?

DEE: A couple times a week.

SANDRA: And what kind of churn did you get?

DEE: Hand cranked churn, with a wooden paddle in it.

SANDRA: Was that one a gallon, like a gallon size?

DEE: Yeah.

SANDRA: And how often did you make butter?

DEE: A couple times a week.

SANDRA: So you had sweet butter.

DEE: Yes, oh yes. The guys didn't want any of that old sour butter, a lot of them made, you know --- that was a prerequisite, was sweet butter. And I had a propane refrigerator at the Refuge also. So --- and a pantry, that was not heated, you know. So I would put milk in milk pans, they're big round --- And the cream would come to the top and they'd

skim it off and then put the milk in the refrigerator, or give it to --- we had calves to feed a lot of times. Most of the time the cats got it.

SANDRA: Did you have hogs?

DEE: No, we didn't.

SANDRA: So how did you get your pork?

DEE: Bought it.

SANDRA: Bought it. Would you buy a whole pork and then butcher?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: Because you bought it already butchered.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And it was preserved when you got it?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: It was either smoked or --- because you didn't have freezers.

DEE: No. Well I did after the electricity came in. That was another wonderful thing to have. But at that time we had no electricity, no I didn't have a freezer. And like Joe was saying, the meat, we butchered what, every other week or so?

BILL: About every two weeks.

DEE: About every two weeks. And meat was hung out at night in the cold air. And then in the morning it was brought in a, wrapped in the meat sacks, covered with straw and put in the cellar. We had a storage cellar.

SANDRA: So you had, every two weeks you would butcher a beef.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And you quartered it, or somehow got it up into manageable ---

DEE: Right, in quarters.

SANDRA: And you'd just bring it up and cut off what you needed that day for meals.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And put it back --- oh you probably cut it at night, because you put it away in the morning.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And so you butchered like this all summer in the heat. It would keep this way even in the heat.

DEE: Because, fortunately Harney County nights are very cool, and the meat would be chilled. And the meat just aged beautifully. I mean that beef was marvelous as far as taste.

SANDRA: When you butchered, what age did you butcher.

BILL: Yearlings.

SANDRA: Yearlings. And that was a rule, or was that just generally what you had available?

BILL: No that was the rule. Because a yearling is tender and its good meat, and they're fat.

SANDRA: And how often did you buy pork?

DEE: Well not too often. Because when they would, like during the winter they would buy ham and bacon and that sort of thing at the store.

SANDRA: When you got your supplies, obviously you weren't in a situation you'd run to the store.

DEE: No.

SANDRA: So when you got your supplies, you went to Burns?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: This is all by automobile by this time.

DEE: Yes, right.

SANDRA: What year automobile?

DEE: Well 1956, '57, '58.

SANDRA: What kind of automobiles did you have?

DEE: I didn't shop for the groceries then, the boss did.

SANDRA: So you took what he brought you.

DEE: That's right, that's right. And I had to make a list, and I had to be very explicit as to what I wanted, and the amount I wanted. Because I learned early on that if I said, I want lettuce, or I want cabbage, or what, I would get one head to feed 15 men.

SANDRA: That could be, that could be really hard to stretch out.

DEE: That was a problem, so I had to be very specific. The canned vegetables, and the canned fruit they bought by the case. And like I said, we had a storage cellar, you know a sod cellar. And it was very cool in there, and we had bins in there with sand. And they bought potatoes, carrots, rutabagas, and turnips, and put in the sand. And they kept beautifully all winter long.

SANDRA: Now what about summer, could you keep them as well in the summer? Was it as cool in the summer ---

DEE: It was as cool in the summer as it was winter. And, but in the summer --- I didn't have a garden at Swamp Creek --- yeah I did have a garden at Swamp Creek, I take that back. I grew fresh vegetables in the summer. But I didn't when we were haying up at the Refuge.

SANDRA: You had a garden at Swamp Creek, but you didn't at the Refuge.

DEE: Uh huh. Because we weren't there --- in the summer we were there what, about three months? Then we would go back to Swamp Creek, and the guys would gather the cows and everything, and bring them to the Refuge for the winter. So we usually moved around October, November, and spent the winter at the Refuge.

SANDRA: So you were with your garden through the growing season.

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: And then you preserved it yourself?

DEE: Yes, I did a lot of canning.

SANDRA: And by that time was it pressure cooker?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: Rubber rings, or did you have the Kerr lids?

DEE: No, I had the Mason jar lids, and Kerr. Yeah.

SANDRA: And about how many quarts would you put up?

DEE: Oh heavens, sometimes it would be twelve quarts to a batch, you know. And I kept it up, you know, I kept picking, and as I picked I canned them fresh. So I would end up with several dozen.

SANDRA: And these would always be your winter supplies, but you didn't have the numbers to cook for? Or did you still have ---

DEE: Not in the summer I didn't. I had usually what, about four guys in the summer?

BILL: Yeah, about that.

DEE: And then when we went to hay I had from 15 to 20 men to cook for. And in the winter when we were feeding up there, there were about 8 guys.

SANDRA: You made bread every day?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: How many loaves to a day?

DEE: Usually four to six loaves. And then I would make hot rolls too.

SANDRA: And this was every day, four to six loaves?

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: And this was yeast, or sourdough?

DEE: Yeast. We used sourdough for breakfast.

SANDRA: And what kind of yeast were you using then?

DEE: Just ---

SANDRA: Was it granular?

DEE: Yeah, like we buy now.

SANDRA: I have seen it come in blocks, yeast in blocks. And I have never used ---

DEE: My mother used to use those. And they had to be kept cool, or otherwise they wouldn't keep, you know, they would mold. But luckily, by the time I got to making bread, it was granular yeast. And you had, it got old of course, you know if you bought too much, and it would give the expiration date on packages so that was terrific.

SANDRA: How much flour would you --- how often did he go to town for supplies for you?

DEE: Oh, about every week.

SANDRA: So you didn't have to buy quantities like the flour. You could order another twenty pounds of flour each week he went.

DEE: Usually he bought fifty pounds of flour.

SANDRA: A week?

DEE: Uh huh. And the flour was in cloth sacks at that time. And I had, oh, what did they call that, where I mixed the --- we put the flour in this ---

SANDRA: Bread bowl?

DEE: No, it's got a name. And it had a kneading board in it, and the flour was underneath, you know, and there was space enough for me to get the flour out and sift it. It was all done in this piece of furniture.

BILL: Flour bin.

DEE: Well yeah, they called it a flour bin.

SANDRA: But it had a table on top of it that you could knead your bread, and make your bread ---

DEE: No, it had a lid. And I raised the lid up and there was the flour board inside of it.

SANDRA: Really.

DEE: Oh, yeah. And then it had, like I said, on the side of the flour board there was space enough for me to put my sifter in and get flour, and sift it.

SANDRA: You didn't measure, you knew by eye?

DEE: No. I don't measure. I don't measure now. (Laughter)

SANDRA: So you just got it to a certain consistency and it was ready to go.

DEE: Right, right, and you dump a handful of salt, and dumped it in, you know, and that's the way you made it. And after you made it so much, you knew exactly how much salt you needed, how much sugar you needed. And of course I had lots of milk to put in the bread.

SANDRA: So you got up at 2 o'clock to start breakfast, 2 or 3 o'clock, to start breakfast, get the guys going. The bread production came after breakfast?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh.

SANDRA: In the summertime, how did you deal with the flies?

DEE: That was a problem, Sandra. We had, what do you call them, fly tapes?

SANDRA: Uh huh. Yes, I'm familiar with them.

DEE: And they were all over the house. Our biggest problem in the summertime at the Refuge was mosquitoes.

SANDRA: And how did you deal with those?

DEE: You used a lot of spray, and itched a lot.

SANDRA: And I suppose Cam really ---

DEE: Oh yes, they were death on --- Cam survived a lot better than my little daughter Martha did. She was swollen all summer long.

SANDRA: Did you have mosquito netting for their beds at night?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: They just --- I'm kind of getting off the kitchen ... in a minute. The sugar was another thing that you could buy as a weekly commodity that you'd bring in.

DEE: But usually the sugar, I didn't get, that came in 50 pound sacks too.

SANDRA: Did you have any kind of storing for flour or the sugar?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: So you didn't have it long enough to worry about weevils?

DEE: Weevils, and that sort of thing. Now if it wasn't used right away, you know, like at buckaroo camp, it would get weevils.

SANDRA: And you never had trouble with ants in the sugar?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: Did you have trouble with ants?

DEE: No. The buckaroo camps, now this is going back --- used to have trouble with termites.

SANDRA: Termites.

DEE: Termites.

SANDRA: And what damage did they do?

DEE: Oh, brother. Now this is going back to Nevada to the buckaroo camps, Sandra. I didn't go until spring after the cows were all turned out and the weather was better. Then

I went out to the buckaroo camps to cook for them, because they were riding every day. And the buckaroos kept the cabin very neat; they swept it out every day, and did the dishes. I mean the cabin was very well kept. Well when I moved out, being a woman you know, I decided wouldn't it be nice to scrub the board floor and bleach it. You know, have a really clean floor. So I boiled the water, and I put Clorox water in it, and I scrubbed and scrubbed, and got that floor just shinny. Well when the water started to dry the termites came out of the floor by the thousands. (Laughter) So I was just in a panic. So I got buckets of water and put under all the legs on the table where they ate, you know. The beds, everything that I could find so that the termites would, climbing out, would plop down into the water. Well when the guys came home in the afternoon expecting dinner ---

SANDRA: You were still battling ---

DEE: I was outside, and I said guys wouldn't it be fun to have a picnic today outside? Bill says, "What's going on here?" So I kind of took him to the side, took him in the house and showed him what was wrong. (Laughter) Well, no bug spray to kill them whatsoever. So after the floor dried they went back down into the floor.

SANDRA: You didn't get any, you didn't get so clean after that.

DEE: No.

SANDRA: (Laughter) Oh dear. Who would think of such a thing?

DEE: But I was fortunate, because I talked to some of the women in other buckaroo camps and they dealt with bedbugs. The guys would come in, you know, and they transferred bedbugs from one camp to the other. But thank God, I didn't have bedbugs.

SANDRA: So no fleas, or lice, or bedbugs?

DEE: No, none of that stuff, no. Huh uh.

BILL: Ticks.

DEE: Well ticks, you know, out in the brush.

SANDRA: What was your remedy for ticks?

DEE: We just put alcohol on the tip until he loosened up, and then took tweezers and pulled him gently out so they didn't leave his head or anything in your skin.

SANDRA: Uh huh.

DEE: You know, and then put a lot more alcohol on the, to sterilize it. And that was about it.

SANDRA: Did you ever have anybody get real sick with the ticks?

DEE: No, we didn't have anybody that got tick fever, thank heavens. But when we were at the refuge that one summer, the guys got, right in that particular area, five-mile area, they got tularemia from the mosquitoes.

SANDRA: Tularemia.

BILL: From deer flies and horse flies.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: How would you spell that?

DEE: T U L E R M I A.

SANDRA: And what is the effect of tularemia?

DEE: Oh my, they get terribly sick. Bill can tell you more about the symptoms, because he was one of the five people that got it on the refuge area.

SANDRA: What does tularemia do to you Bill?

BILL: It just takes all the sap out of you.

SANDRA: Was it like a flu?

DEE: Yeah.

BILL: It's kind of like the flu, you feel good, then you walk 50 yards and you're done. You're completely give out. And it lasts for at least for 3 weeks, and I had the effect of it for a year I think.

DEE: Plus they run a fever.

BILL: And run a fever.

DEE: Like I said, within a five-mile radius there were five guys. There were some guys on the refuge, one of our neighbors had it, Bill had it. And they had to take an antibiotic shot every day. So I gave Bill his shots. And our neighbor spent three weeks in the hospital, and the doctor said you can't go home, because you've got to have a shot every day, unless you want to drive in every day. And at that time it was all gravel roads, you know. And he found out that I was giving Bill his shots, so he said, told the doctor, he said, "Well I'll just have Dee Swisher give me my shot." Those shots were given intravenously. Well the doctor sent an emergency call out to the refuge, wanted to see me immediately. So I thought it was something to do with Bill, because he was treating Bill also. So I rushed in, took my little boy over to the neighbors to baby-sit, and went rushing to town. And Dr. Campbell was treating three of the guys. And he said, "I understand that you're giving Bill his shots." And I said, "Yes, I am." And he said, "Well I want you to give Harold Pelt his shot." And I said, "Now wait a minute, Dr.

Campbell, I'm not a registered nurse. I am a nurse, but I am not a registered nurse, and registered nurses cannot give people intravenous shots." "Now my husband consented for me to give him intravenous shots, but I won't give other people intravenous shots." He said, "Well Harold wants you to." So, he said, "I'll tell you what, you show me how you can do an intravenous shot." I said, "You're kidding me, give you a shot?" He said, "Yes, we'll do it with sterile water." So I gave Dr. Campbell an intravenous shot. And he said, "Man, you are good. You're going to give Harold his shot."

SANDRA: (Laughter) The word is out.

DEE: So ---

SANDRA: Your nursing training came in pretty handy out there.

DEE: Yes, it did. But you know that was the law, and I think it still is, that you have to be a registered nurse to give intravenous shots.

SANDRA: I think you're right, yeah.

DEE: You know, and it scared me to death. And then this doctor wants me to give him one. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Pretty good test, Dee, pretty good test.

DEE: And then of course the word got out, and every spring we had to give everybody in the, out there, tick fever shots. So guess who gave tick fever shots? Marcus Haines would give me mine, and I'd give him his, and then we'd ---

SANDRA: (Laughter) So you annually fought the mosquitoes, fought the ticks --- how about snake bites?

DEE: There were no snakes to speak of on the Refuge, other than snakes in the river, you know, water snakes and that sort of thing. We didn't have rattlesnakes.

SANDRA: Is that right?

DEE: Yeah. We did at Swamp Creek, you know. But oh we killed a couple, didn't we, in the yard, but not --- they weren't bad. They were out in the grass, you know. The guys had to deal with them.

SANDRA: So you didn't have to worry about Cam and the snakes so much?

DEE: No. Well I had to watch, because like I said, we had a couple that came in the yard that I had to kill. Same way with the Circle Bar, he almost ran over one with his tricycle. He came into the house and told me about it. Oh! So I killed it with a hoe, chopped it to pieces. Cam was about four then, he said, "Mom, I think you better save the rattles so you can show Dad that you killed a snake." (Laughter) But that's the closest he came, you know, to possibly being bitten by a rattlesnake.

SANDRA: Did you have a gun? Did you, were you able to use a gun, have a gun around to use if you had to?

DEE: If I had to, yeah. We always had a .22 around, and a shotgun. But I never did use a gun, I don't like guns.

SANDRA: How about rabid animals, did you have any problem with rabies?

DEE: No, no, no.

SANDRA: Well we really got off the kitchen. While we're at the cow camp, talk about cooking in the cow camp.

DEE: It was the same way as, you know, not having any electricity. We had springs, we were camped next to springs, you know, and they ran like a creek in the summer. And the guys built a box, and the spring water would come into the box, and I would put perishable things in shepherder ... with clamp lids. Put them down in the springs and it kept them cool.

SANDRA: Did you have to boil that water, or skim it?

DEE: Later in the summer, yes. The bugs would get in there, and we'd have to strain the bugs out, and then boil the water to drink.

SANDRA: And you cooked by Dutch ovens?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: How many did it take to --- How many were you cooking for at the cow camps?

DEE: Just a couple, sometimes three. Not very many. And we had visiting buckaroos from other outfits that came through every day. And of course if they were there at mealtime, they were welcome to eat with us. So, you know, I'd have three or four.

SANDRA: And what was the menu?

DEE: Beans, meat and potatoes, and biscuits. (Laughter) And of course canned vegetables, which the guys weren't too cracked about.

SANDRA: Did you do pies, or ---

DEE: Yeah, yeah.

SANDRA: Pies and cakes.

DEE: Pies and cakes.

SANDRA: And those you baked in the Dutch oven?

DEE: No, I had baking dishes, and I baked them in the wood stove, in the oven.

SANDRA: And just took them out there then? The cow camp?

DEE: No, I cooked them at the cow camp. I had a wood stove at the cow camp.

SANDRA: Oh, you did have a wood stove at the cow camp.

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh. It wasn't a very big one, but ---

SANDRA: You had a cabin there?

DEE: Yes, uh huh.

SANDRA: You had indoor sleeping arrangements.

DEE: Oh, of course. Hired men didn't, but Bill and I did.

BILL: One room.

DEE: That's one advantage of taking the cook with you, isn't it?

BILL: You damn right.

DEE: Got to convince them guys you got to take care of her properly.

BILL: One room cabin.

DEE: Had a little cot for Cam.

SANDRA: Is that where you had the problem with the cats under the cabin?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: Tell us about that.

DEE: We went out to our second --- we first went to ... and we knew that. I had old cats around there, you know, and skunks and all that kind of stuff. But then later in the summer we moved to ---

BILL: Antelope Corrals.

DEE: Antelope Corral. And that cabin was just up on loose rocks. The rocks weren't cemented together or nothing, you know, propped up on rocks.

SANDRA: Uh huh.

DEE: Well we drove up there one day to set up camp there, and a bobcat ran out from under the house. And of course Bill got his gun and shot at her, it was a female bobcat, and he missed her. And he said, "Oh, she won't come back now with people around here, and after being shot at." And here I had this little year and a half-old child, you know, that likes to play outside. So the next morning, or that night, I kept hearing noises all night. And of course Bill was sleeping like a log, he didn't hear them. And I said, "I think that bobcat came back." "Oh no, she wouldn't come back." I said, "Well I don't know, something was making noises all night." So that next morning she ran out from under the cabin again. By that time Bill followed her, and she had kittens, and she had been moving kittens all night. And she had moved them into a cave by the reservoir. We had a reservoir close to the cabin. Well he got her, he shot her. But she had three little kittens. So we got the baby kittens and took them back to the cabin. In the meantime I kept hearing this weird noise under the cabin yet. And I kept thinking, there is another one under there. Bill said, "Oh there is not." Because it wouldn't make any noise when the buckaroos were there. So one noon I insisted that Bill move those rocks. I said, "There is a baby under there." So he said, "Okay, come on." So we went out, and he moved some of the rocks, and being a smart aleck he said, "Here kitty, kitty." Here comes this poor little ugly ... kitten. There had been four of them, yes. So we had to

feed them until we could go to town. And we gave them away as pets. So the kittens survived, you know, and I didn't have any more worries about the mama eating by baby.

(Laughter)

SANDRA: While we're on the wild animals, or animal portion of this, what kind of problem did you have with jackrabbits?

DEE: None.

SANDRA: None. There wasn't any on the refuge, there wasn't a problem with ---

BILL: Oh yeah, there was jackrabbits there, but they didn't bother.

DEE: They didn't eat down the ---

SANDRA: You didn't have the numbers that would decimate the field and ---

BILL: No. We can't ---

DEE: Not like when our folks were young, they said they used to have jackrabbit drives because they were eating the crops clear to the ground, you know. But by the time we ---

SANDRA: Do you remember your dad speaking of a jackrabbit drive?

BILL: Oh yeah. When I was a kid I helped them do that.

SANDRA: The things I've read about those, the numbers are astronomical.

BILL: Oh yeah, the whole ground would be moving.

SANDRA: And how often would, how often would you have to do that?

BILL: Oh they'd do it on a Sunday, once a week probably.

SANDRA: Once a week.

BILL: And then the jackrabbits got tularemia and all died.

SANDRA: That's this disease that you cowboys --- or your buckaroos were struggling with.

BILL: Yeah. They'd get big sores on them, then they'd die. And that killed most of them off.

SANDRA: When you had a drive Bill, describe how you handled a jackrabbit drive.

BILL: Oh they'd fence a hay corral with netting.

SANDRA: Netting, being like chicken wire?

BILL: Yeah, chicken wire. And put wings on it.

SANDRA: Movable wire wings.

BILL: Yeah. And then everybody would just get a sack and start driving rabbits. And when you got them in there you'd go to kill them.

SANDRA: And what kind of distance did you cover when you would drive?

BILL: Oh they'd probably, half a mile square, where they was the worst on a green pasture ground, you know, where there was alfalfa.

SANDRA: Then when you got them corralled ---

BILL: Just took a club and knocked them in the head.

SANDRA: And the numbers would get into the ---

BILL: Thousands.

SANDRA: When you --- my goodness, my question just went away. I had one right on the tip of my tongue ---

BILL: Don't feel bad, it happens to me too. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Let's see, where were we? I got my self all geared up, and I wasn't thinking about --- Other than the jackrabbits, and you said you didn't have any rabies problem ---

BILL: The last time we had rabies ---

DEE: Pack rats.

SANDRA: Had what?

DEE: Pack rats.

BILL: Yeah, pack rats.

SANDRA: Did you inoculate the livestock, the cattle for anything?

BILL: For black leg.

SANDRA: For black leg.

BILL: Uh huh, that was all.

SANDRA: And did you do that at the same time that you were ---

BILL: Same time you branded.

SANDRA: And you didn't de-horn?

BILL: Most people did. The Circle A, when I was there, didn't de-horn anything.

SANDRA: And those that de-horned, did they have trouble with, for the want of a better word, maggots?

BILL: No, we always did it in the late fall when the flies were gone.

SANDRA: So you didn't ---

BILL: No ---

SANDRA: You used tar or something on some of the ---

BILL: Well sometimes we used tar, and most of the time we didn't use anything.

SANDRA: And how about when you castrated, did you have any trouble with ---

BILL: No.

SANDRA: Good cold winter takes all those kind of ---

BILL: Takes all those things out. And the main thing, like when you castrate either a calf or a horse, you never put your fingers inside it, that's the main thing. You keep your hands and your knife clean. You won't have any problems; calves won't even get sore.

SANDRA: I'll be darned.

BILL: Now a vet won't tell you that. (Laughter)

DEE: What was that blue stuff you sprayed on ---

BILL: It was just blue lotion. But ---

SANDRA: How about horse liniment? Did you use horse liniment?

BILL: We used horse liniment, and if a horse got infection, we used blue vitro.

SANDRA: And blue vitro was ---

BILL: Blue vitro came in rocks, and you mashed it up into powder, and if he had proud flesh why the blue vitro would eat all the proud flesh right down to the live flesh and then you put bacon grease on it until it healed up.

SANDRA: And for the sake of history, I've seen proud flesh. But you go ahead and define proud flesh, Bill.

BILL: Well it is just rotten flesh, still in the wound.

SANDRA: And it almost looks bubbly.

BILL: It looks bubbly, it looks like old fat.

SANDRA: Good definition, yes. That does describe it --- yeah.

BILL: And it stinks.

SANDRA: Yes. I came from an area that had a lot of dampness, that you don't have here to deal with. So we had parasites that were ---

BILL: You have everything over there.

SANDRA: Oh, heavens to Betsy. You just spent your whole life inoculating and running fast to keep up.

DEE: We didn't tell you about the pack rats at one of the camps.

SANDRA: Right. You got to that and didn't finish that story, right.

DEE: Well Cam had brought some little toys, you know, little cars and balls, and things like that, that he played with outside. And they were disappearing. So Bill said, "There must be a pack rat around here." So one day I saw one go under the cabin. And when Bill came in he said, "Well let's look under there." Sure enough, there was a great big pack rat nest under there. And little baby pack rats, and all Cam's toys. And some of the guys rigging, you know, pieces of leather. I mean it was totally amazing that all the stuff that they had packed under there. Well Bill thought he got rid of all of them, you know, killed them. And we had a buckaroo stove outside that they had used years ago, and they didn't use, and it was handmade. You put fire in; it was the long metal, rectangular thing with the chimney in the back end of it. The fire was in one end, and then there was an oven and a cook place on top, you know. It was really nice. Well Cam used to like to play in there. So one day he came in and said, "Mommy, Mommy, there are bunnies, there are bunnies. Come see, come see." So I went out there and he opened up the, the camp stove, and sure enough there was a pack rat nest in there. The pack rats was in

there. So when Bill came home I said, “I put a gunnysack over the chimney so that he couldn’t escape.” Bill said, “We’ll just set the nest on fire and that will get him, you know.” Well we set the thing on fire, and both of us had clubs, waiting for the pack rat to come out. He never did come out, he burned to death in there. Then afterwards, I told Bill, I said, “Look what we did in front of that little child, you know.” And he said, “You’re right.” So we had to explain to him that that wasn’t a bunny, that that was a pack rat, and it was a dirty, dirty animal, and it was stealing all of his toys. So Bill put him in the pickup and we went for a ride. And at that time there were a lot of jackrabbits around. He said, “Those are bunnies, and those are nice animals.” So --- but we didn’t even think when we put ---

SANDRA: All you had in mind was get rid of that pack rat. Did you also battle mice?

DEE: Yeah, always had mice.

SANDRA: And what did you do to battle the mice?

BILL: Tell her about that mice trap. (Laughter)

DEE: Well, I --- the first time I went to camp I didn’t have any bug spray. Didn’t have any mousetraps, didn’t have any mouse poison, and we were being inundated with mice. And Bill was very innovative, very innovative. I had a five-gallon can with a lid on it that I, an extra one, that I used to put flour in when we were at this camp, you know, to keep it clean. So he filled that can with water, then cut a round paper cardboard and put a wire through it, and wired it to the top. And in the middle of that cardboard he put a big chunk of cheese. Well all night long we kept hearing plop, plop, plop into the water. The next morning we had a whole bucket full of drowned mice.

SANDRA: That was your biggest kill, Bill. (Laughter)

DEE: That was his biggest kill.

SANDRA: That was great, Bill.

DEE: It's a good thing he --- I was just desperate, you know, what are we going to do.

SANDRA: Really.

BILL: I got, you want me to tell you a pack rat story, a funny one?

SANDRA: Sure.

BILL: Dad told this, I don't remember it, I was little. Him and Mom were in a camp somewhere. We were all sleeping on the floor. And it was full of pack rats ---

SIDE B

SANDRA: Okay, Bill. Your dad and the pack rats.

BILL: Well anyway, we were all sleeping on the floor, and the place was full of pack rats. And a pack rat ran across the floor, and Dad grabbed him by the tail. And he told Mom, he said, "Here hang on to him while I get a stick of wood to hit him in the head." Well he got up to get a stick of wood and the pack rats tail come off and he got away.

(Laughter)

DEE: He slipped the skin off that tail.

SANDRA: They do?

BILL: Yeah, if you grab them by the tail the skin will come right off. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Is that right?

BILL: Yeah.

DEE: Just freaked his mother out.

SANDRA: Oh my goodness, imagine. I can imagine.

BILL: She wouldn't grab no more by the tail.

SANDRA: I never heard that.

DEE: Oh, when I think of the shock!

SANDRA: What was your general clothing situation when you were out, either working at the ranch or out at cow camp? Was it the same?

DEE: Uh huh. Jeans and a clean shirt.

SANDRA: So you weren't afraid of wearing jeans?

DEE: Nope.

SANDRA: Was that past the time that they kind of frowned on ladies in their pants?

DEE: Oh, all the ranch ladies wore pants.

SANDRA: They didn't give a rip ---

DEE: But when we went to town, we dressed up. We didn't wear our jeans to town. We put on hose and a dress, and heels, and the whole bit.

SANDRA: And a hat?

DEE: Well, just when you went to church, just to church is all.

SANDRA: Uh huh.

DEE: But no, you dressed up when you came to town. You didn't come in looking like a bum. But, you looked like a bum at home. (Laughter)

SANDRA: That's more like useable clothing.

DEE: Right, right, work clothing. Yeah.

SANDRA: So few people know what dressing up is anymore. They just didn't ---

DEE: Oh that was a rule, and you went to any of the school functions or anything, you dressed up. Board meetings and ---

SANDRA: Did you have an electric iron?

DEE: Uh huh. I didn't before we had electricity. I had --- these kind of ...

SANDRA: Sad irons!

DEE: That you sat on the wood stove. Uh huh.

SANDRA: So you never had a gas iron?

DEE: No, I never did have.

SANDRA: You skipped right from the flat iron ---

DEE: Uh huh, to the electric irons.

SANDRA: To the electric irons.

DEE: Uh huh. And those days you ironed everything. You didn't have a drier, so you ironed pillowcases, sheets, jeans, shirts, everything.

SANDRA: Starched?

DEE: Oh yeah.

SANDRA: Boiled starch?

DEE: No, I had a starch that you just mixed with water at that time, you know. So, no --- but everything was ironed.

SANDRA: Oil cloth on the kitchen table?

DEE: Oh, absolutely.

SANDRA: You didn't do tablecloths except on special occasions.

DEE: Uh huh, just at Christmas

SANDRA: When you were out at the ranch or camps, I know there wasn't a vacation as we know it now, everybody has to have their two weeks come sometime through the year.

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: You didn't have the two weeks at any time?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: But did you have days off, or did you have times when you could say we're going to go picnicking or whatever?

DEE: Just in the, when we were at Swamp Creek we would have Sundays off. But when we were haying at both the Refuge and at Hill you worked every day. And there was one year --- I think I went to town twice in one year.

SANDRA: That's all? Did the staying out bother you?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: You didn't have radio?

DEE: Yeah.

SANDRA: You did have radio.

DEE: We had battery radio.

SANDRA: Did you have a, I think a Victrola? Did you have records, did you have music?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh.

SANDRA: So was there impromptu get-togethers around ---

DEE: Oh yes, it was a very close community, very close. At the Refuge we were, the ranchers were very close together, you know, and there were a lot of school functions.

SANDRA: The school was at the Refuge?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh. It was just down the road from the Sod House. And we had card parties.

SANDRA: Pinochle card parties?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh.

SANDRA: Or poker parties.

DEE: No, pinochle. That was --- and canasta.

SANDRA: And canasta.

DEE: We finally got so sick of canasta we decided we would switch to pinochle. Then, you know --- but you'd have a potluck dinner, everybody would bring stuff and play cards. The kids would play, and very social. It was a close community.

SANDRA: Dances?

DEE: Yeah.

SANDRA: Weddings were home weddings?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: Church?

DEE: We had ministers that would come out, and, in the summertime. And they had what they called church group, you know. And, but to go to church we had to come to town.

SANDRA: And so if there was a wedding or a funeral it would be in town, in Burns.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: Is there a cemetery out there, near that Refuge?

DEE: No, no. The nearest one, there is a cemetery in Crane, you know, in Burns.

SANDRA: When you had children at school, were you all the school board, so to speak?

How did they get the teachers, was that by the county at that point in time?

DEE: No, each school had a school board.

SANDRA: And you had to find your own teachers?

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: Did you have any problem with that?

DEE: No, we didn't.

SANDRA: And the teacher lived, did they have --- she her had her own room, cabin.

DEE: Part of the school, uh huh, very nice little apartment.

SANDRA: And it was generally a woman?

DEE: Generally a woman.

SANDRA: And she had grades one through, up through high school?

DEE: Eighth. One through eight.

SANDRA: One through eight.

DEE: And then most of the ranch kids either came to town to Burns, and lived with relatives or they went to the Crane Boarding School, high school.

SANDRA: By the time yours got to high school you were in Burns?

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: What might have been --- that a lady had to put up with in that era when she was keeping house?

DEE: Other than you didn't have electricity, so we didn't have vacuum cleaners. We didn't have washers and dryers.

SANDRA: Bill mentioned something about ironing boards, didn't he?

DEE: That's a big joke in our family. (Laughter) Of course like I told you we had to iron everything. And when we would move from camp to camp, you know, it would be four times a year back and forth and so forth, my ironing board had to go, or I didn't go. Well it was always the last thing to be put on the pickup. And Bill was griping, snorting, saying, "Well why don't you just leave it here, and get you one for the ranch?" Or, you know, but it was always a bone of contention, my ironing board.

SANDRA: Always ---

BILL: She'd wait until the last thing, and then where are you going to put it. (Laughter)

SANDRA: On your lap, if no where else it goes on your lap. It was just part of the move. Did you --- what was the most important thing that came into you after modern conveniences started to show up? What was the most relief to you?

DEE: A washer and a dryer.

SANDRA: You didn't hesitate a minute at that, Dee.

DEE: No, no. (Laughter) After scrub boards, and crazy old gas engine washers ---

SANDRA: What year was it that you finally got your washer and your dryer?

DEE: They remodeled the Sod House and built a bathroom on. And that was what, about 1961 or '02, because Martha was a baby. Yeah. They built a beautiful new

bathroom and a laundry room onto the kitchen, remodeled it. And built a bathroom for the men, the hired men.

SANDRA: Oh, what a luxury that must have been.

DEE: Oh that was a luxury for those guys. Really was.

SANDRA: I guess. I've got to ask this, because from my own experience, was your washer and dryer two different units?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: Because the first one I got was in '60, and it was one unit that did both things.

DEE: Oh, wow.

SANDRA: And it was one giant lemon from the word go.

DEE: I'll bet it was.

SANDRA: Heavens to Betsy. But it was a --- now we can laugh about it. We didn't laugh then though.

DEE: Well Bill and I laughed about that, that crazy old --- here I was so tickled to have a washing machine, you know, we got that gas one. And that's about the time Virginia Opie got one too, and her arm went through the wringer, clear to her elbow, or I mean arm pit. It broke her arm, oh gee, just crushed it.

BILL: Had a blood blister three inches across on her elbow.

DEE: It was terrible.

SANDRA: How did she get out of that?

BILL: Stalled the motor.

SANDRA: Oh my George, it's a wonder it didn't jerk her arm right out of her body.

BILL: It stalled the motor. I was trying to think of the name of those old washing machines --- it was a Maytag. They had one ...

SANDRA: I can't think of what we had at --- by then you had indoor plumbing. Most of what you dealt with in your housework daily --- what would be one of your day's schedules? What would be included in your day?

DEE: Like I said, we'd have breakfast at 4 o'clock in the morning. And clean up, mop the whole house, start the baking, get the noon meal.

SANDRA: And that would consist of --- Was the noon meal your big meal?

DEE: All three were big meals at that time, because you had hungry, hungry guys. And you had three big meals a day.

SANDRA: They didn't worry about calories and fat?

DEE: Absolutely not, because they worked them off. Yep, they worked them off. And we had some really big eaters, you know. Then in the afternoon I would get, put my little boy down for a nap, and get things ready for dinner that night. And then I would sit down and read a book.

SANDRA: Did you get mail service?

DEE: Yeah.

SANDRA: Daily?

DEE: What, three times a week, wasn't it?

BILL: At the Sod House we didn't ---

DEE: Not at Swamp Creek we didn't, the mail came to the main ranch, you know.

BILL: Once a week.

DEE: And then when we lived at Crane at Circle Bar we had a post office box, at the post office in Crane.

SANDRA: Magazines and newspapers came to you in the mail?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: So they may not be daily papers, but you were, you got the paper. Radio stations were from?

DEE: Well most of our reception down there at Swamp Creek was from Boise. That's the only station we'd get. And Canada, believe it or not.

SANDRA: Canada?

DEE: We used to get some Canadian stations very clearly. But Boise was the station. We didn't get Portland, couldn't get Portland. So ---

SANDRA: Do you remember what your radio was, the old Philco was it, what your radio was?

DEE: Yeah, yeah.

SANDRA: Was it Philco?

DEE: Yeah, it was an old Philco.

BILL: Probably out here.

SANDRA: When you were out on the --- cooking for the family, cooking for the guys, what was your favorite meals to cook? What did they consist of?

DEE: Well like I said ---

SANDRA: The best?

DEE: --- the basic menu was beans, meat, and potatoes. The buckaroos expected beans, at least twice, you know, two meals. But they were always real pleased when I tried something different. You know like if I cooked spaghetti, or rib roast, or made a stew, you know. So I would try different things, you know.

SANDRA: In baking cakes, you didn't have mixes, was before mixes.

DEE: No, everything was done from scratch, same way with pies.

SANDRA: And do you remember when you first got your first cake mix?

DEE: Oh heavens, not until after I moved to town. Especially after my mother was gone, she would have had a tissy-foot fit ... bomb in it. (Laughter)

SANDRA: How about margarine? Do you remember when margarine came into ---

DEE: Yes, I remember margarine in World War II. It would come in a sack, and it was white, and you put a little capsule of yellow in there and worked that bag until it turned yellow, you know. And mainly it was used for cooking, you know. But you never put it on bread, or biscuits, or hotcakes. You know butter was the thing then. Of course my mother thought margarine was completely decadent.

SANDRA: Did you, when you moved into Burns, did you have your milk cow then too?

DEE: We did out when we had the place on Red Barn Lane, we had a milk cow. And Cam and I milked the cow. Bill was working at the mill by that time.

SANDRA: But Bill did the milking when you were out at the Refuge or at Swamp Creek?

DEE: Until Cam got big enough, and then he milked.

SANDRA: So you never had, you didn't buy bottled milk until much later?

DEE: Oh, no, no.

SANDRA: I can't even remember, it just kind of crept in on us, I was trying to think when we came --- I remember there was the bottled milk in the glass, and it came in the four quarts in kind of a box. And I'm trying to think; I can't even remember when that paper carton crept in on us. It must have been in the '70's.

DEE: Probably. Because I can't remember either, Sandra, because I didn't, you know, didn't buy it. So --- Then all of a sudden everything, cream and everything was in cartons.

SANDRA: Yeah. And they used to be cartons you could open. Can't open the darned things now, you know! I get so aggravated with those. When you had a holiday, what was the menu for a holiday? Did you have turkey?

DEE: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

SANDRA: Wild turkey?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: There were no wild turkeys around here, right Bill?

DEE: No wild turkeys.

BILL: No, there wasn't any.

DEE: No. They always bought a turkey in town here, turkey and ham both.

SANDRA: How about goose? You had goose out on the ---

BILL: Never eat goose.

SANDRA: Never eat goose.

DEE: Oh yes you have.

BILL: Yeah I have once, but I quit. It was terrible. Did you ever eat one?

SANDRA: The grease is unbelievable.

BILL: And all dark meat.

SANDRA: Yeah.

DEE: Marcus Haines, that was our neighbor out there at Sod House, he took Cam on his first goose hunting trip. And Cam shot a goose. And Marcus, bless his heart, he picked it, and gutted it and the whole thing, and brought it to me. And that's the first goose I ever cooked. And like you say, it was the ... thing I had ever --- Now my mother, she, we ate a lot of duck, you know wild ducks. But she used to marinate the duck the night before in wine and garlic and Worcestershire, and then would roast them and leave that marinade, you know, to bake. She could cook a wonderful tasting duck. But I don't ever remember her cooking a goose.

SANDRA: I remember you said when you got married you really weren't a very good cook.

DEE: No.

SANDRA: And the buckaroos were real helpful.

DEE: They sure were. (Laughter)

SANDRA: So your mom did a --- was a good cook, but you weren't a helper in the kitchen.

DEE: No, I did the dishes. Mopped the floors, cleaned the house, weeded the garden, did everything to stay out of her way while she was cooking.

SANDRA: What was her, what was one of her --- well she cooked a lot of Basque foods, right?

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: What was one of your favorite foods that Mom cooked?

DEE: Oh, we didn't have a real ---

SANDRA: What was the typical special Basque dinner?

DEE: We would have bak-a-low (sp. ?) with some salt pork.

SANDRA: Which is what?

DEE: Salt pork. Fish.

BILL: Salted cod fish.

DEE: Salted cod fish.

BILL: Cured cod fish.

DEE: Cured cod fish. And of course it was soaked, you know, get the salt out of it before you cooked it. And then she used to make a sauce, a tomato sauce and garlic and basil and all kinds of seasonings, you know, and simmer that cod fish in that. And it was called bak-a-low (sp.?). Don't ask me how to spell it.

SANDRA: We'll come close to the --- bak-a-low (sp.?) --- we'll go with the sound on that.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: Where did she get her fish?

DEE: We used to get, when we were at the ranch, half a fish used to come salted in wooden crates. And there would be about, oh what, six or eight of those halves in a crate.

Because his father loved salt, cod too, we used it. And then they'd hang it so then it wouldn't mold or, you know, anything. And then like I said, they would soak it before they ate it. But we got it from San Francisco, came through the mail.

BILL: Dad used to like trout fish, and I always hated it. So we'd hang it in the saddle room.

SANDRA: In the what?

BILL: In the saddle room.

SANDRA: Oh, in the saddle room.

BILL: There at the ranch. And whenever I was oiling harness or saddles or anything I'd wipe it down with a little Neatsfoot oil for him. He never did know. (Laughter)

DEE: You're ornery.

BILL: That's how bad codfish is. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Oh, you must have been a tester. (Laughter)

DEE: And then my folks used to get, during the war, of course there was a shortage of sugar, you had to have a stamp to get sugar. Well when you'd hire a man to hay, or something, the previous place that he worked at would take the sugar stamp, so he wouldn't have a sugar stamp when he came to work. So my mother, we did a lot of baking with honey, canning with honey. So we used to get 5-gallon cans of honey from Fallon, Nevada. They had bee farms down there.

SANDRA: And that would come in the mail too?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh.

SANDRA: And you didn't have to have a stamp to get honey?

DEE: No, no. You could get all the honey you wanted. And so Mom kept honey on the table, and they sweetened their cereal with it, their coffee.

SANDRA: Canned with it?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh, because we had very little sugar.

SANDRA: Tell me something, do you remember much about the stamps during the war, the ration stamps?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: What did you get stamps for, what was the ---

DEE: You got stamps for shoes, you got stamps for sugar, stamps for tires was it?

BILL: Yeah, and gas.

DEE: And gas.

BILL: Overshoes.

DEE: Yeah, you know all shoes, footwear.

SANDRA: All footwear.

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh. And my poor folks, I was growing up, and growing out of shoes practically every month. They didn't have a new pair of shoes the whole four years of the war. They went to me. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Trying to keep that Dee girl shod, was taking all the shoe --- Meat, was there a stamp for meat?

DEE: Yeah, uh huh.

BILL: But that didn't bother us.

DEE: No, on the ranch you didn't ---

SANDRA: In fact you would be in good shape if you could find somebody that didn't have enough meat and you could trade them a sugar stamp. Was there trading of stamps?

BILL: Yeah, they did that a lot, yeah. They did that. I've got too many of this; well I haven't got enough of that, so they would trade.

DEE: We were lucky in Paradise, there was an old Basque fellow that had a butcher shop. And he had an old Duesenberg car that he had taken the back end of it out and built a wooden box, kind of like a pickup bed. And he went around to the ranches and bought quarters of beef, and he sold the beef in town. And he didn't require anybody to have a stamp. That was just his little business.

SANDRA: He had himself a route, that he was working on that?

DEE: Uh huh. And then during the war the whole time, our neighbors were very close, like I said; we shared labor, because the young men were gone, you know, during haying and all through the year. And when one rancher would butcher he would share, he'd keep one quarter and share with three neighbors, and that's the way it was.

SANDRA: So then the next one would be the neighbor would butcher, and then he would share with ---

DEE: Uh huh, shared everything.

SANDRA: Was there hunting tags then?

BILL: No hunting tags, no hunting license.

SANDRA: You couldn't hunt at all?

BILL: Oh yeah, you could ---

SANDRA: Oh, you could.

BILL: Yeah. You could shoot --- I never bought a hunting tag until I was 25 years old.

(Laughter) And I've killed lots of deer, ate a lot of venison.

SANDRA: What was your favorite way of fixing venison, Dee?

DEE: Well our family liked deer steak, just fry it, you know. They don't like deer roasts.

SANDRA: Chicken fried, kind of breaded.

DEE: Uh huh. So that's ---

SANDRA: That's all the way I did too.

DEE: And if I made stew out of it, boy I had better season it dang good.

SANDRA: And you never, did you ever grind up any --- when you butchered did you ever grind it like hamburger today? Have a meat grinder then?

DEE: Uh huh, hand grinders.

SANDRA: Yeah. And did you grind up any of the venison?

DEE: Sometimes.

SANDRA: And then mix it with a little pork to get it to hold together.

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh, or beef.

SANDRA: Beef would do the ...

BILL: We used to butcher pigs there in Paradise Valley, every fall, a lot of them. All those ranchers did. And they made their, they cured their own meat, and made their own sausage out of the intestines. They made three or four different kinds of sausages. And they did it all themselves, right on the ranch.

DEE: Of course we had three prominent ethnic groups in the valley, German, Italians, and Basques. And each one had its own special sausage and curing and so forth. And we traded.

SANDRA: When you butchered, did the other neighbors bring their hogs to one place and you'd butcher all in one place? Or did you go around to the ranches, or did you share?

BILL: No, everybody butchered his own. They all had a big scalding pot that they heated the water in.

SANDRA: Uh huh.

BILL: Was an A-frame built over top of it, so you could let them down in there on the wings after you killed it.

SANDRA: Scalded them?

BILL: You scalded them, and scraped them, and then you butchered them.

SANDRA: So they were still whole when you dropped them into that kettle and scalded them?

BILL: Yeah, uh huh.

SANDRA: Then you butchered and saved the gut for the sausage.

BILL: Yeah.

SANDRA: Wrapper.

BILL: Yeah. Miles, and miles and miles of it. (Laughter) And you cleaned it all.

SANDRA: And did you make your own soap?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: Did you do that yourself, Dee?

DEE: I didn't make any soap, but my mother did, I helped her.

SANDRA: Did you help her?

DEE: Make soap, uh huh.

SANDRA: Do you remember kind of the process of making soap?

DEE: She, of course we had a lot of lard, you know, from butchering pigs, and my mother rendered it. And of course we always had an excess amount we didn't use in cooking. And she had a big kettle that she made soap on the stove. And all I can remember, Sandra, because I wasn't too big, was she put lye in it. And what else went in that --- I know she used to put some sort of scent, so it had a nice aroma to it. And that lye soap you would use primarily for laundry, not for doing dishes and things like that.

SANDRA: And what did you use for that?

DEE: We got, it wasn't detergent then, we just bought soap at the store.

SANDRA: Like Ivory and ---

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh.

SANDRA: When you did your laundry when you were, at your own place, your own home, did you buy your laundry soap?

DEE: Uh huh, uh huh. I never did make soap.

SANDRA: What was the first laundry soap that you remember, that you used?

DEE: Tide.

SANDRA: Tide. Boy, has Tide been around.

DEE: Yeah, Tide.

SANDRA: Still I got a box of Tide, well now in liquid form. Most of your personal soaps you bought too?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: Good old Ivory.

DEE: Good old Ivory. Used that primarily.

SANDRA: What did your medicine cabinet include?

BILL: Mercurochrome.

DEE: Yeah, Mercurochrome, alcohol, witch hazel, bag balm. That bag balm was used for everything, from burns to bad cuts, accidents. That's about the size of it.

SANDRA: What did you do for cough? And you had aspirin for flu, fevers?

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: And flu.

DEE: Uh huh.

SANDRA: Bad cough, what was ---

BILL: Kerosene and sugar.

DEE: No, I never used kerosene.

SANDRA: Do you have that treatment?

BILL: I took that treatment, yeah.

SANDRA: Kerosene and sugar.

BILL: Spoon full of sugar soaked with kerosene. Pretty tough to take.

SANDRA: Give you up the cough ---

BILL: Well I never coughed around anybody after the treatment.

SANDRA: Did you get the spring tonic?

BILL: No, never did get that.

SANDRA: What was the spring tonic? Did you ever hear what ---

DEE: I don't know, my mother talked about it, you know. Every spring my grandmother would dose everybody with the spring tonic, and it was a mixture of herbs. And what the herbs were, I don't know. I would like to know.

BILL: And some kind of a physic, from what I understand.

SANDRA: Yeah that's as close as I got to it too, but I never knew what was in it.

DEE: But my grandmother I guess was quite talented in using herbs for different allergies, and everything, you know. But my mother, well she was 13 when she came to this country, she said that she never learned that from her mother. You know she remembered getting that awful stuff in the spring, and everybody had to take it. And it was supposed to cleanse your system, you know. I have no idea what was in it.

SANDRA: How about, did you ever make wine?

DEE: No.

SANDRA: How about beer, did you ever make beer?

DEE: Yeah, the boys did.

BILL: Yeah, we made a little beer, made a little wine.

SANDRA: This was out in the tack room?

BILL: Yeah.

DEE: Of course in Paradise our Italian neighbors made wine, excellent wine.

BILL: All of them.

SANDRA: What was --- berries?

DEE: No, grapes. They would go take a truck down to California and come back with a truckload of grapes.

BILL: And the old Italians made two kinds. One kind was a table wine, and the other kind would just knock your hat off, it was stout. And they'd tell, oh it tasted good. And when old Cherry had that big wine back there, you know, and made that --- It must have held 400 gallons.

SANDRA: Oh boy.

BILL: He'd make two different kinds of wine.

SANDRA: Did you have many orchards here in the valley?

DEE: Not here, my folks had a big orchard in Paradise Valley, a real big one. And it was apples, pears, apricots, peaches ---

SANDRA: So your mother did a lot of canning?

DEE: Yes.

SANDRA: Was this commercial, partially, or just private use.

DEE: No. She would, it was private use, but she shared with the whole valley. They never sold it.

SANDRA: And the Basques don't do like wine?

DEE: Yeah, some Basques do, but my folks didn't.

SANDRA: And they would probably use fruits like that somewhat?

DEE: Uh huh.

BILL: I hayed for an old Italian here one summer when I first moved to Paradise, I was setting --- instead of packing water on his ... he packed wine. That was the best haying job I ever had. (Laughter)

SANDRA: By the end of the day you never knew you had any problems at all.

BILL: No.

SANDRA: You didn't even know you were tired.

BILL: No.

SANDRA: Hot, and sticky and all that stuff that goes with it. Well Dee, as I told Bill the other day, I think I have probably forgotten things, but we have covered an awful lot of the basics of living.

DEE: Ranch life.

SANDRA: And it has been great. I think that ---

DEE: Of course, like I told you, you know there were, when my kids started to school at, Cam started school we were at Sod House. He used to ride his bike down to the schoolhouse; it was only about a mile. There were no school buses, you know, out in the rural areas. And at Riley we lived close to the school, and I drove the girl to school. And then when they were in junior high, then we had a bus. But primarily everybody drove their kids to school.

SANDRA: They had to find a way to get their kids to school.

DEE: Right.

SANDRA: There wasn't any ---

DEE: School buses.

SANDRA: Was there school events every Valentines, Christmas ---

DEE: Always.

SANDRA: Always.

DEE: Easter.

SANDRA: It was a community excuse to get together, and everybody supported it, yeah.

DEE: Yeah, always. Like the Riley community and the Sod House community, even Crane, they were a very close community. And now, unfortunately, they're not like that.

SANDRA: Pitiful too.

DEE: It is, you know, it is really sad. Because we had all kinds of events, like I said, card parties, bingo parties.

SANDRA: How about cribbage?

DEE: No. Now Bill is a great cribbage player, and he tried to teach me. We had a great big huge fight, and I said that's it, I'm not learning.

BILL: I kept stealing her points. (Laughter)

SANDRA: Well I'd like to challenge, I'd like to challenge you, Bill.

DEE: Are you a cribbage player?

SANDRA: I'd like to be, and I'm trying. So ---

DEE: I'll tell you what --- Of course he started playing cribbage when he was a little boy, you know, and he is ---

BILL: I'd forgotten it, it's so long since I've played.

SANDRA: Well then that's when I want, that's when I want to play with you. I'm not no dummy, you know, catch you right ---

DEE: You know cards were never my pastime.

SANDRA: I grew up on pinochle, so ---

DEE: Well it was canasta, and I got so sick of canasta I could scream. When we were in McDermitt the ladies had a card club, and they played bridge. Well I was a real dunce as far as playing bridge. And then we moved up to --- I hate bridge, I really --- I think that's why I didn't learn to play well. Then we moved up to Oregon and it's canasta. Well I got so sick of canasta I could scream. Then it was pinochle. Well I liked to play pinochle better than anything. But I'm really not a card player, you know, per se.

BILL: There at the Circle A, there was one ranch that we always stopped at when we were moving those cattle to the desert. One old fellow stayed there, it's called the Bull Head, it's on the little Humboldt River, and he weighed about 120 pounds, and he was probably about 60 years old, and no teeth. And I'll guarantee you one thing; there wasn't a buckaroo in that valley that could beat him at cribbage. He was really sharp. We used to play for \$5 a game, you know. He'd break us every time we'd go by there.

DEE: Bill had a forest ranger friend that made him a cribbage board. Where is that thing?

BILL: I don't know. It's mahogany.

DEE: Oh, it's beautiful, about that long. But he was a cribbage player too, and he found out that ...

SANDRA: Well it used to be the one thing that you could carry, because it was ---

BILL: Easy to carry.

SANDRA: Yeah.

DEE: In the bottom he bored a little hole that stored the pegs, and it had a little metal slat.

SANDRA: You'll have to find that, Bill.

BILL: It's around here somewhere.

DEE: In one of these drawers. I ran into it when I was cleaning the drawers.

(End of Tape) bl