

Oral Histories

Number: OH 36 Date: 11/21/89 Condition: Holdings:
Good WP Library

Initials: DP

Interviewee: Visintine, Irene/Wunderlich, Elvera

Interviewer: Davine Pera

Abstract: Side A

00-28 Parents history and early life. Parents met and married in 1912 in Telluride, in St. Patrick's Church.

28-140 School days. Irene attended Parks Business School in Denver, after graduating from Telluride High School. Her first job in town was working for Charlie Fairlamb. She talks about working at the CourtHouse. She was the woman to work for the Mining Company. She speaks of wages paid at that time. Talks of the 36 years she worked at the mine and the different changes during that time.

140-169 Memories of the many snow slides during her years at the mine. Describes the Ajax snow slides. Speaks of diving under snow slides to reach her office at Red Mountain and of being caught between slides.

169-233 Irene participated in basketball and speaks of travelling to various towns for games. The school also had baseball and track teams. She was a member of Gibbs Graceful Grade Girls, a gymnastics team. They also traveled to various towns to perform. School had a good music department. Speaks of Jr.-Sr. Banquet at the Sheridan Hotel and the Prom was held at the community hall. Their Senior Sneak Day was a trip to Montrose to see first "talkie" movie. Speaks of living Denver while she attended Parks Business School.

233-305 Stories of Italian Christmas customs. Santa Lucia came on Dec. 13 and Santa on Dec. 25. One year the candles on the Christmas tree caught her dress on fire. There was always a community Christmas tree sponsored by the Elks Club. She repeats the Italian song that was sung to Santa Lucia. Many people of Italian community held parties with lots of accordion music. Foresters of America was an Italian organization in town.

305-357 Irene speaks of traveling on the train to Ophir to see good friend. Tells about the ladies riding the train to Lizard Head Meadows and spending the day picking mushrooms. Describes the stagecoach to Tomboy mine that ran every day.

357-417 Elvera tells of her Mother's trip to the United States and her first impressions of Telluride. Mother's first marriage. Tells of her mother being caught in Liberty Bell Mine when snow slide ran. Their mother rode the tram to town from Liberty Bell Mine.

Mother's first husband died after year and a half. Mother went to work in boarding house, met her second husband there and remarried

417-444 Speaks of the flood and describes her mother's escape through the window with 2 small babies.

444-611 Talks of childhood memories. The girl's basketball team won the District Championship. Eleven seniors graduated from Telluride High School, the year that Vera graduated and at the same time, 11 students, originally from Telluride, graduated from Durango High School. Vera attended Beauty School in Denver, returned home and opened her own beauty shop on Main Street. Speaks of different customers. She married Dutch Wunderlich and they adopted a son in 1953. Vera worked at Rose's Market during the war. Vera's husband died in 1963. She worked as town treasurer and town clerk, then worked at Idarado Mine for 2 years. She and son moved to Grand Junction while son attended school.

Side B

00-129 They speak of the July 4th celebration and the many changes in Telluride. Kids use to make their own entertainment. Describes the Easter and May Day celebrations. Activities as small children. Speaks of the different nationalities in town. Memories of trips to Tomboy on the stage coach. Describes the Memorial Day Celebrations that were held in the past.

129-218 Everyone raised their own gardens and many families had animals. Tells the story of the "Town Donkey". Speaks of preserving eggs and vegetables for the winter. Many childhood memories. Mother always had huge spring cleaning project. Mother and her friends "dressed" to go to town to shop on Saturdays. Tells many stories of mother.

218-238 They describe the many businesses in town. Their parents owned the Bottling Works.

238-288 Stories of the Red Light District and the girls that worked there. Vera styled the hair of some of the ladies from the Red Light District in her beauty shop.

288-611 Memories of Tom McMahn. Speaks of C.D. Waggoner. Stories of George Wagner and his wife. Mentions many town characters and tells stories about them. Speaks of the roomers at mother's house during the early mining days. Lots of childhood memories.

Description: sound cassette (90 minutes)

Subjects: Side A
Irene's life
Avalanches
School memories
Train

Elvera's life

Flood

Vera's working years

Childhood memories

Businesses

Red Light District

Town characters