

Gathering Our Voice

Interview with Whitey Evenhus
Interviewer: Nancy Warner
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Transcribed by: Marlena La Paz

NW: Make sure that we're - that we've got good sound. And sounds like we do have good sound. Umm, it's Nancy Warner and I'm here on May the 18th, 2012, at Whitey Evenhus's home in Rock Island, Washington. And we are going to do an interview about Whitey's experiences in, in Rock Island. And thank you very much for taking time to talk with me this morning.

NW: So, Whitey I'd like to start with jist askin' you how long you and your family have lived in the Rock Island area?

WE: I came here in '52.

NW: 'K, 1952....

WE: '52, I came here, yeah.

NW: Where did ya come from?

WE: North Dakota.

NW: North Dakota?

WE: Yeah.

NW: And what was it that brought you here?

WE: Well, North Dakota's was a right to work state. You couldn't make any money back there. And, ah, everybody wanted me to farm and I didn't wanna farm. I wanted to play baseball so I jist made up my mind, I'm not gonna git stuck on the farm. So, I jist took off and played 'sand lot' ball, you might say, all over the country. And tried to make it 'big time' but there are some pretty good ball players out there. (laughs)

NW: Oh! So, you jist said a couple things that I, I'm not entirely sure I understand. So, eh, I wanted to back up and ask you, what d'ya mean, umm, North Dakota was a right to work state?

WE: You, you had no unions. The only union you had was a truck - was interstate trucking. So, in order to make any money you had to either belong to, like, Dakota Transfer [indistinguishable] Express or one of those companies of the interstate. Then you were union. But you've gotta reasonably, reasonably good salary. Otherwise you were - give you an example. First year I played baseball I came back and I drove beer truck for Reinheld Beer. My, my take home pay at the end of the week - this is five and a half days and they were long days - would be about 29 dollars, you know. And you jist - of course, everything back there was a lot cheaper then. You know, gas was .25 cents, .30 cents, you know, whatever. And so, I jist - and, ah, so, I decided to come out here. And, and, ah, came out in, right about the right time. My first job or one of 'em was building this road out here between here and, and, ah, Crescent Bar for Curtiss Construction, got me outta Spokane. So, I was a - I'd operated farm truck and I spent about two months as a kid when I was about 14 years old at Garrison Dam back in North Dakota - on a Yuke? If you could drive a truck back there, you could drive a Yuke, you know, of course -

NW: What's a Yuke?

WE: Say it's a truck that hauls about 20-30 yards - they're huge.

NW: Oh, o. k.

WE: So, I came out here and they needed a belly dump driver and the guy that was running the job here from Morrison Knutson was a guy that had been foreman at Garrison Dam. And I'm sittin' down there havin' lunch or something along in the afternoon and this guy walked in - guy by the name of Canyon, Herb Canyon. And he recognized me and come over and asked me what I was doin'. I told him, I said, "I've got a bellyache." "Well", he said, "I need you a driver for." And I said, "Well, I'm not in the union. And they weren't gonna let me in here. They" - and Herb Canyon said, "I'll get you in. You be ready to go to work at eight in the morning." So, eight in the morning, I go, go out to the job. And he's out there. He's got my work slip and everything, ready to go to work, so... he took care of that for me. (chuckles)

NW: Ok!

WE: And then I was in on all the dams, even get in on the last stage of Grand Coulee an' the only dam I didn't work on was the Wanapum.

NW: Wow! Driving great, big, trucks then the whole time.

WE: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yukes.

NW: Yukes. How do you spell yukes?

WE: Euclids. U-K - euclids.

NW: Oh! E-U-C-L-I-D is the name of the company.

WE: Euclid, yeah.

NW: O. k., I can picture them. Yeah, o.k. So, you did that for how many years then?

WE: Oh, God! I started up at Bridgeport - there about a year. And then I came down here, they started Rocky Reach. Well, I did some other road work. I worked fer old man Morell when he first moved in here from Yakima. Prior to me goin' to work at dam work, I worked for old man Morell when there was no other asphalt companies in the area. And, ah, worked for him fer about two years. And then the money got a little bit bigger, of course, driving the bigger rigs so, I moved in that direction.

NW: Oh, o. k. What was his name - Morale?

WE: Yeah. Len Morrell, you've seen Morrell paving in town? Morrell asphalt? Yeah, he was from Yakima, he was a real nice guy.

NW: O. k. Well, umm, let's back up to North Dakota fer, fer a minute. And, and you told me before I started the tape that, that your, your last name is Norwegian.

WE: Yeah.

NW: And so, umm, did you, where did you grow up in North Dakota?

WE: Right in the Esmond, its east, that would be west of Devil's Lake. Devil's Lake is right about centralized. And, ah, a small town back there by the name of Esmond, between Esmond and Mattock. I went to both schools

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and, ah, at that time those small cities were - they were actually small cities. Right now they're jist drive throughs; it's like going through a rest stop, you know. (chuckles)

NW: Right, right, but it was a little town that - ?

WE: Oh, they were all, yeah, they had four grocery stores, you know, four or five taverns.... And I remember watching my first show on, ah - Waldo, an elevator guy, put a sheet up there and - at a school out there. I, I remember that; and that was years ago.

(5 Minutes)

NW: So, what did your family do in North Dakota?

WE: Farmed.

NW: Farmed.

WE: They're farmers, yeah.

NW: Ok. And, and, umm, so, y' - how many siblings did you have?

WE: There were eight of us and we're all living.

NW: Oh, my gosh, that's great!

WE: I jist visited one of my sisters down in Oregon. I said, you know, we need to have a family reunion right now. We're all here. We're very fortunate. But one of these days somebody's gonna be missing and then you'd a wished to hell you'd a done it, you know.

NW: Right, right. That's amazing! So, when's your birthday?

WE: February 24th.

NW: What year?

WE: '27.

NW: "27. Ok, ok. So, you moved out here in, in 1952 cuz you didn't wanna git into farming...

WE: No, I definitely didn't wanna to farm. I'd had enough of that! (laughs)

NW: Ok, yeah. Was it wheat farming, or what was it?

WE: Grain farming, grain and cattle. Yeah, we'd git up in the morning, you know, with 20 head of cows, you know - And then, but at that time there was no money, so, you, you raised most of your food like your meats and, your poultry, your pigs, we pretty much did our own. Everything was smoked, you know, like our smokes, our hams and stuff. And that was jist comin' up the hard way. But it didn't hurt me a darn bit. But I jist didn't wanna do it for life. (laughs)

NW: Right. So, you wanted to play baseball, really.

WE: Yeah, that was my big, yeah, that was my big (pauses) big dream.

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NW: So, what was your position?

WE: Oh, I was a pitcher.

NW: Oh, pitcher!

WE: Yeah, it was my boy, the same thing. He did the same thing.

(The telephone rings loudly)

WE: Now, my Lord, have mercy!

NW: I'll just stop this. Continue where we were, umm, so, you were, you were a pitcher and, and when you, you said you'd moved out here you were gonna try to make it in baseball. And you mentioned a word that I wasn't familiar with, a sort of a league, or a -

WE: No, the party was already over with when I left the coast to come out here as far as baseball was concerned. The only thing I did when I came out here was, we had an amateur team here for a while. It's old Stretch Garrett - a lot of people outta remember him. And we had a team used to go around play small towns. You jist - 'sandlot' junk. But it was fun, somthin' ta do on Sunday, ya know. (chuckles)

NW: Oh! Yeah! Oh, that's neat! So, was that in, was that a Rock Island team?

WE: Yeah.

NW: Oh, really?

WE: Yeah, yeah.

NW: And so, where would, what sandlots would you go to play?

WE: Oh, we'd make, I don't know. We'd go - I think we went to Waterville a couple a times and, ah, Entiat, Peshastin, up on that area, used to have some teams at times and we'd go up and play against. And they were jist guys that put together teams. They would, you know, whip you, you know, ah, "Come on! Try it, you know. Tex and I both played some ball, so, we were pretty confident, ya know. And we had a bunch of kids down there that were pretty good at it. So, we had them on our side. And we used little kids, everything, you know! Well, it WE: was jist -

NW: How fun!

WE: Fun time, yeah.

NW: Yeah! So, what did you, what was the name of your team?

WE: Ah, just Rock Island.

NW: Rock Island base -

WE: And finally we started a Little League team out here. I guess - I was one of the guys that helped originate the Little League in this area. And, and we (pauses) became part of Little League Association. Not what they have now but the regular Little League Association. And then I got a team started. It were called the Rock Island Red Wings. And we took, ah - one of the things I'm really proud of - after about three years of coaching and being along with Red Madder and Pink Milner and them guys, we took a team to the State Tournament. And the

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first time we walked out on the field, there was six boys from this little town right here were on this team that was it - announced as starters fer the tournament in, ah, Centralia, Washington.

NW: Wow! That's pretty good!

WE: So, yeah, so, that - these kids can do it! All they needs to be shown how.

NW: Yeah! Umm, Whitey, if I could ask you to not rock the table cuz this, that recorder will pick it up.

WE: Oh, I'm sorry!

NW: So, you really stayed involved in baseball all your life it seems like.

WE: Oh, yeah, yeah. And then I coached the Little League and I went to bi - to Legion Ball, took the Legion team to State Tournament twice. And, and then I finally jist gave it up because it, ah - let somebody else have the reins, ya know - step away.

NW: Well, so, umm, I wanna jist ask you a couple more questions about North Dakota and, and - what was it? That, while you there on the farm and you were lookin' ta go someplace else you could make some decent money, it sounds like, umm...

WE: Uh-huh.

NW: What was there about Rock Island that attracted you? How did you end up here?

WE: I don't know. I had a couple of uncles living out here and they, they worked, worked in the fruit. One of 'em worked fer, fer the, uh, was a ditch walker up here and the other one worked in the fruit. And, I don't know, for some reason I jist came out here... Ah, couldn't find any place to live in, in Wenatchee. You couldn't rent this place. There was one house to rent but I couldn't stand up in it, it was too - ceiling was too low. And that was up Grant, where Grant Road is now? All that was out there was orchard at that time but, so... My uncle said, "Well, along come out to Rock Island and see if we can find a place out there." And, well, lo' and behold, they did that housing project here. And Raul Alexander owned the bar up here and my uncle and I stopped to have a beer. And he asked him, "Is there any place to rent here?" And he said, "Well yeah, we've got a housing project down here!" So, bingo - that's when I landed in Rock Island.

NW: I'll be darned! A housing shortage in Wenatchee in 1952?

WE: Oh, yeah, yeah. You couldn't rent a house there.

NW: And why was that? Was that because of Alcoa, or something?

(10 Minutes)

WE: I don't really know. All I know is I couldn't, couldn't find anything to rent.

NW: Well, that's interesting. Huh. Umm, you know, would you, would you mind if I closed the door because of that, cuz that dog is barking?

WE: No, course you [indistinguishable]. Jist let it, jist shove it and it'll go like that.

NW: (whispers) Ok, I'll jist... Ok. Well, umm, so, could you describe what Rock Island was like when you got here? I mean, I'm getting a feel for the baseball and I understand, you know, the housing shortage is interesting... I mean... And, and, what did, what else was goin' on around here besides, umm, the, the a road to, to, ah,

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Crescent Bar?

WE: There wasn't much. Umm, had a mining which at that time was Keokuk. Employed about 250-300 people. But in the best times there was only 8 people from this area that actually worked there. The rest of 'em were Wenatchee, East Wenatchee, Quincy - so, there were only 8 - a lot of people thought that they were paid in flux in this town but there wasn't. We only had maybe about a hundred and, I'll say 156-158 people here to begin with, in town proper. And, ah, there wasn't much of anything, ah, before I came on board. Umm, we'd given away everything. We didn't, we didn't have - we didn't have a street department. We didn't have a police department. We didn't have anything. We were contracting with the Sheriffs' Officer. We did have a Marshall at that time - I take that back! But, ah, it, it was - we were always the last to be serviced as far as flying snow. We'd be last and be charged an arm and a leg. The county used to really nail us to the cross! And the city, the Mayor prior to me, had given the Water District and everything to the East Wenatchee Water District! So, and I came on board, this town council, and finally I got, came on board as Mayor, and the first thing we did was try to go back and retrieve our water system back then cuz it - building was really out of line and the people really complaining. And we were broke and didn't have any money. Ah, the second meeting I went to as Mayor, ah, guy by the name of Bockmeier from HUD came down and jist stood up front of everybody and said, umm, "We're not taking all the revenue from this city until such time as which we are paid off." Which was revenue generated by loans created to git that golf course, to build the original golf course. See, there were loans with HUD, loans with FHA - there was about two hundred thousand dollars in debt when I took over as Mayor. And, and I was.... So, I had to go to Seattle and argue with 'em. We got in that office there with, Bockmeier's office, and things got pretty dirty back there. We started callin' each other names and stuff. And finally I went to the hotel and I called Senator Jackson, Henry Jackson? Called him and his honcho was on board. And I said, "No, I don't want to talk to you, I want to talk to him." So, about twenty minutes later he called me back and I explained the problem and he said, "Whitey, you pack your bags. Then you go home. When you git there there'll be a telegram. You won't have to worry about this for a while." I got home and there was a telegram telling me to put it together in a payment plan and - with FHA - the both of 'em. And worked out perfectly. Twenty years later we had it done.

NW: Wow! That's a great Henry Jackson story! So, was that in the '70's, early '80's?

WE: '70's. Yeah.

NW: O. k., so, so, umm, when did you first become an elected official in Rock Island?

WE: I went on - was elected official, went on in '76.

NW: Oh, wow!

WE: I had to write some of this stuff down. I came on at councilman in '76, then '77 I came on as Mayor. And I didn't want the job as Mayor. I didn't want it. There were only there - our attorney said, "There's only two of you guys qualified to do this." And that was me and Roy Freeman. I didn't want it and Roy didn't want it cuz we were in debt. We didn't -

NW: 200,000 dollars in debt.

WE: Yeah, we, jist, it was unbelievable! So, the attorney said, "Well, gotta flip a coin. Will that satisfy you guys?" So, we flipped a coin, Roy won and he said, "You're the Mayor." Pointed to me, "You're the Mayor." If, if he was, if he wanted it he was the Mayor because he had a choice. "You're the Mayor." So, I got, that's how I got to be Mayor.

NW: (laughs) Well, so, how long were you Mayor, then?

WE: Oh, about 25 years. Jist went off it in '83 but a lots - I was gone part of the year. Couple times I was gone and - (pause) The first time I left - I think I was gone 2 months and I met a - We were reach - we could doin'

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some reconstruction my church up here at Eastmont, Eastmont Presbyterian. And I was up at a meeting, and, ah, the city - er, the a - church secretary came out and said, "Whitey, you're wanted on the phone." I said, "Well, you know, kind of - I hate to be interrupted when you're makin' ah, plans for constructing' the other building." But I went out and answered the phone said, "You need to come down here right away, Whitey. We need talkin'." I said, "It's gonna be at least a half an hour before I'm done. At least half an hour." So, low and behold, I took my time and I got down here - sat the Council, the attorney and said, "You've jist been appointed Mayor again."

(15 Minutes)

"You gotta be kiddin' me!" Yeah, the guy that was there - he didn't wanna do it anymore. So, that's the second time. The third time around, I'm over the basketball tournament, over in Olympia. And I come back to my motel room, a light's flashing, I pick up the phone and, and it was the attor - The attorney said, "You've been appointed Mayor." Said, "You can't do that." Well, I found out later you can. They can do it. You don't even have to be a Councilman or anything. Jist be a - elected official, elected, er, a registered official, let's put it that way. Registered to vote but you have to be a citizen of the state. So, anyway, that was the second time around and I've run, I ran, I think, five times. I was never defeated running as Mayor. And when I dropped out as Mayor, I thought, "Well, I kinda halfway started this sewer thing down here." Said, "I'm [indistinguishable] wanna stay on board and make sure this thing comes in right. So, then I jist ran as a Councilperson and I held that position fer 8 years. And I was supposed to hold it fer another year, another 4 years, rather. But I jist got tired here in February. And I said, "Ah, I'm outta here."

NW: Ah, so that happened to be the very night that I was there, then. That, that was your last night.

WE: February 23rd, yeah.

NW: I'll be darned! Well, it's great to be sitting here and talkin' to you now. That's a long time to be involved in city government - from 1976 to 2012?

WE: Yep.

NW: That's huge! So -

WE: Yeah. They were really hurting when I came on board, you know. We had nothing and, and we couldn't, we couldn't plow our streets. The first thing I did, I went to the county and paid 1200 dollars. I was able to put together this little money as I could. I would ask the council people, "Give up your pay this month," you know, which was only, I think, ten or twelve dollars. "Give up your pay this month and we really need it cuz we need to do things." And I was finally able to buy a snow [indistinguishable] from the county, snow plow from the county for 1200 dollars. And that alleviated were, we were paying 3, 4 thousand dollars at winter. Round about a thousand, you know, to, fer, fer costs, fer fuel. And at that time, we get - it seemed like we were getting a lot more snow than we're getting now. And, ah, that was the start of it. And then, ah, we weren't, definitely, nobody was satisfied with the Sherriff's Office. Set down and put together a Police Department so we had our own Police Department, our own Judge, had, held our own Court. Is a picture of the Police Department down here -- at time (pauses) And, ah, at that time, too, we were also in the process of, probably, trying to annex the entire Tea Cup into it. And, ah - (pauses)

NW: The entire what?

WE: The entire Tea Cup. It's the little thing down here it's called the Tea Cup.

NW: Oh, Rock Island City?

WE: Inside, yeah, inside the water. It actually, if you look at it, it's a tea cup upside down.

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NW: Oh, really?!

WE: So, it's called a Tea Cup.

NW: Ok. All right.

WE: (laughs)

NW: I've never heard that before. So, umm, all righty. Inside the Tea Cup. Is that, like, your tag line fer, fer Rock Island?

WE: (laughs hard) Yeah!

NW: What's happening inside the Tea Cup?

WE: It's used a lot, I'll tell ya that!

NW: Oh, that's great! Sounds like a radio program!

WE: Yeah! (laughs)

NW: Umm, so -

WE: So, put the Police Department together and, ah, everything was going good. And we had a terrific deal going on with, sssi, uh, sea - what the heck's that called?

NW: CTED? (Community Trade & Economic Development)

WE: Yeah it was, it were the, the, the government technically furnished everything the leathers, uniforms, the training... After 5 guys got hired got off the street, er, jist anybody downtown. If, after about three months on the road jist doin' some petroleum rock [indistinguishable], I thought he was qualified to go fer a training. I could send 'em over and they would train 'em, it wouldn't cost the city anything. The only thing we had to pay was, we had a fuel bill and, of course, our insurance. But it was still an excellent deal. But there were some people that, after I left, you know, they jist - ah, hell, before I left. I was gone about, I think, almost a year one time. And time I came back they'd dismantled the Police Department. Went to the Sherriff's Office and the people have complained about it ever since. They said we should have kept our own but - It was a little spendy but ya didn't have to worry, I'll tell ya.

NW: So, is it, is it true that during your time that you were, you were really building up the capacity of Rock Island to deliver its own services, right?

WE: Oh, yeah, absolutely! Be our own entity! Do our own! We didn't have to ask for anything from anybody!

NW: Yeah, yeah. So that - you started that in 1976.

WE: Yeah, 70, well, '76 up to the '80's, yeah.

NW: Ok. So, Rock Island, at that point, was it an incorporated city?

WE: Yeah.

NW: But it jist didn't - it depended on the county fer services.

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WE: Oh, yeah, cuz we, we, we didn't have anything.

NW: Oh, that's interesting!

WE: We didn't have no, no snow plow, no nothin'!

NW: Why? Why is that for a ci -

WE: I don't know. It jist, ah, I don't think they really thought they needed it. Course most of the streets here was jist gravel, and, you know. And, ah, and I bought that, bought the first blade... The reason I bought that was fer snow plowing cuz that would cost us terrifically during the winter months. Cost us money and so, I bought that blade. And, and I would be able to plow the streets and also the sidewalks without having to buy extra equipment to do the sidewalks. And then, of course, the street work so, a blade was very essential. And the first one broke down and I had to, I bought and bought another one a couple of years later. And, ah, they jist sold it here the other day. But no, we, we wanted to be, we wanted to "do our own thing". We didn't want to depend on anybody WE: fer anything. Cuz I, I've never been that way. I've gone in - what do ya call it? Kind of a loner? (chuckles)

(20 Minutes)

NW: Well, bein' self-sufficient. I mean, you were talkin' about food earlier and you're sorta used to being self-sufficient, it seems like. That's what you learned how to do.

WE: Absolutely! You bet!

NW: And then you know how to handle equipment, big equipment.

WE: Well, that and, I, I, I, I learned early on the valuation of a dollar. I really did. I learned that quick-like. So, it, it wasn't easy comin' up but I had worked with some really good Council people that we'd sit down and talk things out. When I first came on board as a Mayor I took the five positions and they gave each Councilperson a position: streets, parks, and let them have something to do. They've taken that all away now. Before it used to be jist a 'head shaker'. The Mayor would say, "Let's do this.", and they all went bobble-heads. You know, and it, they jist took that away. Let the each Councilperson bring in his own like they got the, the, that, would attend the Link meetings with a report on Link. Each person had somin' ta do and it - I think it gave the people a little more interest. Now you have a heck of a time gettin' anybody serve on the Council. They jist don't wanna do it.

NW: Oh, that's true all over I think.

WE: Yeah.

NW: Yeah, so, so let's talk about that a minute. Cuz that's significant in our, in our region. Umm, when were people anxious to serve on the Council? Or when, would, would you have multiple candidates fer any position when you were Mayor?

WE: Times, yeah, wit... Yeah, at times there would be a couple running against each other, yeah. But, ah, those that came on board usually were - you know, you didn't have to be qualified and, and operating heavy equipment to set on Streets. You jist had to be there to oversee and, and bring to the Council that, "Well, yeah, the Maintenance guy is doin' a good job. He already did the snow plowing and..." Jist letting people know what's going on so that all the Council knows. And then, I, I'm, I'm opposed not having that in, in place right today. The whole thing today about it is, it's, it's about the money. You know, you get paid so much per, per meeting and then, like, I'll give you a good, an example. The Mayor - the Mayor gets so much a month fer being the Mayor and then so much a month fer going to each meeting. Oh, we've had 'em go as high as 16 and 18 meetings a month! Well, you take that times 50 or 65 and that's.... that's a little bit of money!

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NW: Yeah! So, it wasn't that way when you -

WE: No, no, no, no! I'd a - the most I ever went to would be, probably, 6 meetings a month. Some of these meetings they're goin' to now has nothing to do with the City of Rock Island at all. One of them, they go to up in Chelan, is two meetings they have up there, I can't remember the names of 'em now. But they have to do with highway 97, the 97 corridor. That's nothin' to do with Rock Island! It would attend that every month.

NW: Yeah, there's the RC&D and the ED&D - Russell attends those.

WE: Yeah, and those are - they're not beneficial to us!

NW: Well, yeah, I think, actually, the EDD was significant in some of the earliest, at least, potentially significant

NW: in some of the funding for the sewer project?

WE: It was very minimal if there was any at all. If there was any at all. I don't recall any of it comin' on board, to be honest about it.

NW: So, was it a paid position when you started being Mayor?

WE: Yeah.

NW: Oh, it's always been paid.

WE: Twenty-five dollars a month. Yeah.

NW: (chuckles) Oh, my gosh! And then, and then, all the perks, of course! (chuckles)

WE: Yeah.

NW: Did you have a car, or gg - of anything?

WE: No, no, they lend your own car. They didn't have anything! You - no, I - '53 - I think, in December of '53, or something' in there, - I was appointed Marshall down here by the old Mayor. So, I was Marshalling from '53 to '58 or '59 and I served as Constable for a couple of years, County Constable down in this area. And, ah, it jist - and I'm the one that headed up this Police Department thinkin' this judge I had ah, and the judge was, ah, Police Chief was, ah, er, Clausen, judge was Crommley or Bromily...

NW: Bromiley? Oh, uh-huh.

WE: Yeah, he was our judge down here, umm. We had, we had everything in place. It jist - the only thing I, I'm proud of down here, I got, I got along with jist two clerks all the while I was here. Of that, the first one I had, she came on board and when we went to, to, umm - oh, what the heck do they call it? It changed the bookkeeping ...she jist could not grasp that at all. So, then I -

NW: QuickBooks.

WE: No, the, ah, kind of a line item-type a thing...

NW: Oh, ledger whatever - double-entry bookkeeping.

WE: Yeah, she jist couldn't get [indistinguishable]. And then I hired, hired, umm, Gwen Hollock and she was with me for about 16 years. And then Kay Jones stayed until - well, she stayed on with ru - 'til Rusty (Russ Clark) came on board. And ah, so, we got some good, good help down here. And they were, they were good

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help. They were hard-workin' people.

(25 Minutes)

NW: Well, let me ask you this. After all your years of being very involved in the community, what, what is there about Rock Island that you think is special?

WE: I don't know. It's, it's changed a lot in the last couple a years, and I'll tell ya that! But it used to be the people - WE: you know, we never used ta have ta lock our doors down here, take a battery outta the back of our pick-up rig. Now, you don't dare, no way, you know! It jist, jist, and, and, and volunteerism, you know. We used to have volunteers ta help with this, and help doin' that. And anymore you - (pauses) you can't even git 'em to work if ya pay 'em! You know, you -

NW: Oh! When did that hap - when did that change, do you think?

WE: Oh, it's - since I know we hit - had quite a bit of one when relocated the golf course. But from that day on, I think, it jist zapped away, jist went away, jist yeah.

NW: When was that, Whitey? When was the golf course relocated?

WE: Ah, '77, '78. Yeah.

NW: Ok. All right. And then, the economy changed around then, too - big time. So, so, umm, well, are there any examples, sh- little stories that you would tell about Rock Island that are really good examples of community workin' together?

WE: Oh, yeah. Well, the golf course was number one.

NW: Talk about that a little bit cuz, I've, I've driven by it fer years and I don't really know very much about it.

WE: Yeah. There was a - Keane's had their defork CAT - the city had purchased a defork CAT. And, ah, we had volunteers come out and pick rock and move materials. Ridge Sand & Gravel was involved. A lot of the contractors uptown come out and helped us. And, ah, it was ah, that was about the last time when we really had - what you'd really say you had volunteers. On Saturdays you'd see a whole bunch of people down there workin'. You know, now, you know, it jist, ah - (pauses) and the thing that really bugs me about the whole thing is the fact that (pauses) we didn't look at things like we should have looked at it. Fer instance, right now, Hammond Lake - that's the far lake.

NW: Oh, Hammond Lake, uh-huh. Yeah.

WE: PUD, you know, hired a contractor and granted our property down there next to Pit Lake, transferred it all the way over to the foot of Hammond Lake when they should have been dredging Hammond Lake! Made a fishery out of 'em instead of the, the pot-hole like it is today! But they didn't look ahead they jist looked at today, not tomorrow. And I, I brought that up with the guy that was engineer at that time, I said, "Why didn't you guys do that?!" "Well now, Whitey, you're lookin', you're lookin' at yesterday." "Yeah, I know I am!" (laughter) So, that, that kinda bugged me. And jist like this here with the sewer, umm, I'm gonna be really up front with this. Back in, when they raised the dam - can't remember what year that was - when we were immediately sent, sent a letter from the Health District that our draining fields must now be raised up to three feet rather than six feet. Up to three because these, these lakes around here weren't here. They were nonexistent. So, in doing that, told you, pretty much, that your water table came up. So, the thing that I've really been upset about over this whole sewer thing, I know it's needed but, why wasn't PUD brought on board here? Nobody dared to go to PUD and they, you, you, you can't git anybody in this area to go to PUD, period. It turned this thing all to hell, we'll take 'em on. Yeah, right! You gotta go outta town, and those are - big dollar boys. But I, I, to this day, I, I feel that PUD

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should definitely have been involved. At least got ahold of FIRK anyway and got a explanation from them why they weren't involved.

NW: So, you know that these lakes are a result of the river rising because of the dam?

WE: Oh, absolutely! Absolutely!

NW: That's well documented?

WE: You bet, you bet! You bet.

NW: So, it didn't used to be called the Tea Cup, then, before the, before all the lakes were here.

WE: Did not, no. Did not, no, it's jist -

NW: O. k., that's interesting, all right. Umm, good background. Well, I guess it would be really interesting thinkin' about who, who would be listing at the Listening Post. You know, we're gonna have it at City Hall. And, and, and, umm, I, I think that, you know, the Rock Island Dam is definitely a huge feature of, of Rock Island. And you worked on the road, it sounds like. And, so, I was wondering if you could jist share a couple of stories about, about the dam or, or what it was like workin' on that road. I mean, some memories of that would be interesting, Whitey.

WE: Well, adjacent to the dam we took out the tun - there used to be a tunnel down by the dam which the railroad ran through. And, there again, Morrison Knutson and Herb Canyon was the overseer. Took that tunnel out and I worked on it and, and, and I can remember one afternoon we were takin' off part of that cap of that tunnel. And, I can't recall the guy's name [indistinguishable] from Leavenworth, if I remember right. And they were jist startin' in at that time to use a little fertilizer in the explosives. And, ah, I remember this guy, this building superintendent came to that. Herb Canyon said, "Well, I'm ready to shoot it off." And Herb said, "Well, I think we'd better wait 'til after a train goes." And he said, "Naw, naw," he said, "there won't be a rock on that, touch that railroad tracks." And we moved the tracks, I mean - had to hold up the train fer about 3 hours. (laughs) And the thing went off, my God! (laughs)

(30 Minutes)

NW: Yeah, a lot of power in that dynamite!

WE: Yeah. Jist like up here at Rocky Reach, you know, they shut off - they were going ta Waterville fer about three hours one afternoon - fired off a shot that jist covered the whole road. And we all had to work until the middle of the night to get that cleared.

NW: When they were buildin' Rocky Reach?

WE: Yeah.

NW: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WE: (laughs) Yeah.

NW: So, the people that you worked with, umm, on - when you were workin' on the roads and, and, and on the, umm, around the dam and so on - were they mostly people who had moved here or were they people who, some of them who had lived here a long time?

WE: A lot of 'em, a lot people had jist came in jist for that job. A lot of 'em lived in other states. 'Pends on your -

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the job they were doin'. Like some of your 'Powder people', you didn't have many 'powder' men here. So, a lot of those people were imported in. Ah, and really, when I came here to start with, you didn't have very many heavy equipment operators, as far as EUC's is concerned. You know, the people could run dozers and stuff like that. But as far as EUC's they were very few. You had some from up there, Bridgeport, but, ah, I know on Priest Rapids we would, we would break in new people. And I would be the guy to take 'em out and ride with 'em the first couple a trips and then let them take, take over. So, we had to teach a lot of people how to run those bigger rigs. Same thing up at North Cross state, you know, we did that highway up there. We had to bring people in that had never been in a rig [indistinguishable] out like that. And Goodfellow's said, "Why do you pick up a couple a guys, take 'em up there and break 'em in." So, I called a union and they said, "O. k., yeah, go ahead.", because they didn't have anybody! Everybody was out workin'. Strange, isn't it? That everybody workin'. (laughs)

NW: Yeah, different than today...

WE: Oh, yeah.

NW: So, what's the first thing you'd teach somebody? What are some kind of the basics that you'd make sure they understood when they're start ta using a great, big, piece of equipment like -

WE: Like a Euc? Oh, jist have to understand you've got a, you got a lot bigger hunk of equipment here now. You gotta allow, take your time, think first, don't rush into somthin'. Jist think about it like backin' in, you know. When you back in with one of them big EUC's, we never had any mirrors on the right-hand side. So, you'd have to pick your spot on the left-hand side, where you were gonna go to yer wheels, and that you'd back to that. Cuz if you didn't you might've backed into a CAT or somthin'. And you do those things, and you did that, you went home with a paycheck, so..... (laughs)

NW: Mmmmm, yeah. Only got one chance fer that! Well, another - you've done so many different things. Umm, the early years of, when you first moved here and you were the Constable, any stories from that? Where do people gather in, in, umm, Rock Island?

WE: Well, they, what they call the Birthday Club Hall - that's where City Hall is now, it's a part of it? As a matter of fact, there's one small section that in the back it's nuthin' but two by two stuff that one of the Councilmen said, "We need to save some part of the old hall." And what was there, what they had there was the, the meeting room for the, the what they call the Birthday Club. And they had a kitchen! So, the women would come down one day a week and they'd cook a meal, I'm tellin' you! Unbelievable fer a very reasonable price. And with that money they would, they bought trees and planted all around town, like going into Rock Island? Plum trees and, and, ah, that building was the one that I first, when I first came on board, the clerk, when you went to pay your water bill, you had to go to the clerk's house. We didn't have a conciliate. So, I remember going to this woman's house she was clerk at that time, and paid my water bill. And she had a heck of a time finding the bill, she'd just had a new baby. And I thought, "This has gotta change!" So, then they transformed the Birthday Club Hall into City Hall! They made a meeting room out it, took the kitchen out and made that into Clerks Offices. Out in front was a little cubby-hole thing fer paying water bills and.... It was a, it was a, kind of a - when I think back - kind of a fun time. And, and Gwen Hollock and I we, we always got along really good and it got to be things picked up. Things been, begin to happen! And all of a sudden it was just papers all over, you know. And, her and I got into it one day because of the mess down there. So, she called me up that night and she was really mad at me, said, ah, "We need ta sit down an have a talk." So, we sit down talkin'. That's when we put together and saved the money over a period, I think, about eight years to construct the hall that we have today. And we paid cash fer that. We didn't borrow anything.

NW: Really?!

WE: Yep.

NW: Wow! So, did ya jist use the fees that people were paying into the city fer services to pay fer the new City

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(35 Minutes)

Hall and so it took you eight years to save it up, then?

WE: Yep, absolutely. To save that kind of money up - yep. It took us twenty-one years when our bill came up for our water, water tower, er, our water - when we brought the water system back from East Wenatchee. It was set up on a twenty-year basis. We had to pay so much a month for twenty years with a balloon payment. So, Roy Frayman, who was over water at the time, him and I sat down. And we figured out, if we'd take an extra, take, charge, an extra .50 cents per meter per month, put it in a savings, in twenty-one years we should have the twenty-one thousand dollars, or whatever it was - the balloon payment - to cover it. And we did. It was two thousand over so, that covered that.

NW: Wow!

WE: So - (chuckles)

NW: Did ya have a big party to warm-up the City Hall?

WE: (laughingly) No, no, we, ah, jist kinda thankful that we got it done, that was the main thing.

NW: So, there aren't very many City Halls that are known as Birthday Clubs, I bet.

WE: Yeah. (chuckles) No.....

NW: That's pretty unique. And, and, umm, so, tell me a little bit more about the Birthday Club. Who were the women that did the cooking and what kinds of things -

WE: Oh, wives around town, men's wives. Jist like our Fire Department, we had a hell of a good Fire Department. Mean, they took prizes, would go to these tournaments, you know, or - and, and, ah, they were excellent! And the thing was, we had a big siren up above Fire Department. And when a fire come on that siren would go off and these guys would jist bail outta them orchards and hop in their rigs and, and it really is somein' else. Today, the fire whistle goes off and nobody moves, it jist.... Sirens come on..... unlikely jist left up there, jist fer....

NW: Looks?

WE: Yeah.

NW: So, it was really, umm, a more....

WE: Community.

NW: It was more, there was more of a tight community because everybody had a role.

WE: Yeah, and everybody knew everybody. Yeah, everybody knew everybody, yeah.

NW: Oh, ok. Cuz there was what? A hundred and fifty people?

WE: About a hundred and fifty, yeah, approximately.

NW: Very small! Yeah. So, so the Birthday Club wha - did everybody celebrate their birthday there? Or was it jist called the Birthday Club?

WE: Ah, think it was jist called the Birthday Club. A lot of people did but, I mean, but it wasn't that - yeah, it

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wasn't nuthin', thing that.... The big thing was these, these women would put that meal together and, God, it would be good! Some of them, I could still remember some of 'em! Yeah, they fed you a plateful of good, they have - Okie's call 'em - grits? (laughs)

NW: Gri, gr, they call 'em what? Grits?

WE: (laughingly) Grits, grits is something, yeah. (laughs)

NW: Oh! Are there any particular foods that, that are featured at Rock Island gatherings? Any [indistinguishable] -

WE: Any at that time seemed to be meat-'n-taters.

NW: Taters?

WE: Ah, yeah, and, and, ya had ta have gravy. Oh, yeah, yeah. First time I ever had biscuits-'n-gravy fer breakfast was in Rock Island.

NW: Oh, really?!

WE: We never thought of that 'n gravy back in North Dakota, and fer breakfast? No way! (chuckles)

NW: Yeah, that's right.

WE: And Swedes back there, they - (chuckles)

NW: Yeah, you had more like sausage and -

WE: Yeah, right. Eggs-'n-ham. (laughs)

NW: Eggs-'n-ham, yeah. Well, umm, when you were the constable, what were some of the issues that you had to deal with?

WE: Oh, at that time, I think, they only had 5 or 6 dep - I think there was 2 of 'em up in Bridgeport, think there were 3 including the Matron in Waterville, and, I believe there was only one, old Johnson here, in, in East Wenatchee. So, I'd jist go out and help him. I'd help him when I was Marshall here, I'd help him out. And then when I became Constable, I 'gin, of course, and they would call up and ask if I could do this, could I do that? Could I relieve this, could I do that? And, there were no pay involved in it. Jist, you know, minimal but it was jist - wasn't even eatin' money, to be honest about it. But I didn't mind doing it! And then, ah..... (the telephone rings) Oh, Lord!.....

NW: So, umm, I jist wanted to ask you about the railroad, Whitey. Umm, you've got a lot of big players down here, the PUD, the, the, umm, Department of Transportation, umm, you're kind of in. And then this big factory wha - that, that I can never remember the name of it, that great, big, facility across the road that -

WE: Oh, yeah, It's Hannah, Hanna Mining.

NW: Yeah, and then you've got right across the river, Alcoa, so, so, rock, Rock Island is kinda really an industrial center in a lot a ways even though it's so small. And, and, umm, least that's the way I, I, I see it and jist driving through fer years. But you've also got the railroad goin' through here and you talked about the tunnel, umm, that was there before the dam and, and, so I was wonderin' if you could talk a little bit about the relationship between the railroad and the town in the years that you've been here. Umm, any particular stories? Like, did ya have a lot of hobos that were, you know, in the - ?

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WE: No, (pause) no, not in my time in here. We used to have the Gandy Dancers used to come in once a year, maybe twice a year. They were a construction crew that come in on repairs. The thing that we're a problem with here right now is the fact that, hell, we can't git Hanna money to do anything with that property over there. Those buildings should be - I've complained about it, several Council people have complained, but there's nothing we can do to make them take 'em down! As long as they're there, there's a lot of things you will - people will say, "Why don't you git rid of that eyesore? Why don't you eliminate that eye - ?" Well, we can't, we've tried! Now, I Don't know why but we can't. But if they was outta there and the county would le-, or we would loosen up a little bit on construction and stuff, I think we could do something with that property. But there, again, you can't use the entranceway that we have in now. We'd have to go down below and go underneath the railroad tracks cuz there's no day they'd allow you to have a, a park or public going through all the time over those tracks like that. I don't think they would do it. So, it would have to go down below and then tunnel underneath the rail. Which you'll notice as you leave here, we git to the hill over here, the rails are up quite a bit above the, the level of the land. So, it would be real easy to tunnel underneath there fer another entranceway into that park area. And there's some nice land there. But you can't git to it. It's owned by somebody else and they don't wanna do anything with it. An, and it seems like there's nothing legally we can do. We've asked them to paint it, we've asked them to put up some trees to [indistinguishable] it, jist - it's like pulling teeth. And they didn't - nobody wants to do anything.

(40 Minutes)

NW: So, how long did that facility operate? Umm -

WE: It operated 'til - it's probably about 15 years ago, now. Somewhere in there, 15, maybe 20....

NW: Ah, and it started in the '50's?

WE: Yeah, it's in the '40's during World War II?

NW: '40's? Yeah, Wilfred did a column on it not too long ago and, and told me in a conversation, that they were making glucose there. And, and, so on. So, so, it operated until about 15 years ago. It's an interesting looking building. You know, I mean, it, it, it, it really is. And it's, it's, besides the dam, I guess, it's the most noticeable thing in Rock Island. Except for, of course, the, the landscape which is gorgeous!

WE: It used to be horrible, you know, fer, fer coming into Rock Island, you know. You had that smoke billowing WE: outta them towers. I mean, it were boil outta there. And this went on fer years, well, from the beginning of stuck until the last couple a years when they finally put in a bagging plant and all this stuff. But we had a - g-golf course was further east than it is now. And we used to, in the wintertime, that black soot offa there would fall on that snow and ah - we'd have very little snow on the golf course. Really, I've seen place snow - there'd be two foot a snow here, down the golf course be barely, be golfin'.

NW: Really?! Because of the soot from the plant?

WE: Oh, yeah. Soot from the plant, yeah.

NW: (laughingly) Well, that's an interesting system then, isn't it? It, it helped tourism, then?

WE: Oh, yeah, you bet! You couldn't hang clothes on the clothesline here, especially white clothes. It'd jist be covered with soot, you know. It'd jist - see, and the wind normally would blow in that direction. But the day you washed clothes, you can bet on it, it would blow the other way. (laughs)

NW: Oh, bummer! So, what exactly were they cooking there? What were they - ?

WE: Marin made ferrous silica. It's a metal that's put in aluminum and stuff fer hardening of the iron and they

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used to mainly 98, 98 percent. And, there again was, people thought that, "Well, my, and tax-wise, Rock Island's gettin' really rich." The only money we got outta that tax-wise were one thing Alcoa worth was put 'sold in state' and anything that went outta state, we didn't git a rip nickel out of. So, it wasn't a money-maker fer us! But it damn-sure was an eyesore! (chuckles)

NW: It's big. Yeah, it's big, it's noticeable.

WE: It used to employ and right up through right near 300 men at one time, you know. They run 4 furnaces; they run it all the way down to 22 percent. And, ah, they shipped it out. Everything was shipped out by rail. And, of course, that's what - now, let's see... used to be the winery over there. That first building you will see on the right?

NW: Right.

WE: That used to be a warehouse. They had an off-ramp there where they would load boxcars with fruit. That used to be a storage shed, a packing shed. Umm, (pause) ah, see what else?

NW: About - were cattle in the old days? I mean, I know you only go back to 1950's. But, but when you moved here you must have known old-timers, you know, that talked about, you know, ranching and so on -

WE: Oh, yeah.

NW: Did they used to load up a lotta cattle here at Rock Island? To ship 'em?

WE: No, no, they never loaded outta here, no.

NW: Oh, would take 'em to Wenatchee?

WE: Yeah. I'm not really sure that they were with Wenatchee. Its somin' I never thought about.

NW: Huh, o. k. Well, if you didn't heard about it, it must notta been a big deal, then.

WE: I know they used to have that - but that was later - that, ah, stockyard or that sale rod outta Quincy. But I know the Keane's used to raise a lotta cattle here and we had several people down in the lowland here, too, that also raised cattle. Umm, they weren't big ranchers; Keene's were big ranchers. But these people did small, raised maybe 3, 4 head of beef. Yeah.

NW: For their own use. Yeah. Well, I'll talk to Lucy about the ranching, umm, history. But, but, umm, so, the people who, who lived here and worked here in Rock Island, then, it sounds like from what you said, of course, there was working on the roads, there was working at the, at the dam. There was orcharding, there was small-scale farming, and, and, umm, the railroad people they were sort of transient, or, or based in Wenatchee? Is that true?

(45 Minutes)

WE: I don't know. I think they were out of Spokane. I, I don't know where that, what they called the gad- the, ah, - (pauses) It's jist -

NW: Gad - Gandy Dancers?

WE: Gandy dancers, yeah. They used to come in here, you know, an every payday, you know, they'd ha- they were millionaires for a day. Thanks fer this tavern would really make it, you know. They jist - and, ah, but that - they were havin' - only once or twice a year that they would come in. But where they would come out of, I really don't know. But some of those guys, you know, worked there fer years, you know, fer the same. As a matter of

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fact, one guy died down there that was, ah, he was a Polish guy. And Mayor that was here, Ralph Alexander, had to go down and take care of his stuff that he had and left in his car. And there was an old Bible in there that had checks that were twenty years old in there he'd never cashed. Yep.

NW: Wow! Wow, and he worked for the railroad?

WE: Yeah. Yeah.

NW: Oh, that's interesting. Hmm. Well -

WE: It was a, it was a different - completely different world. Nobody, nobody would even complain too much about that smoke. I mean, you'd hear people talk about this-, "Ah, you can't do it tomorrow cuz of this or that, or -." But, I guess we jist learned to live with it. That was pretty much - it was here and what are ya gonna do about it? (chuckles)

NW: Yeah, people were sort of, umm, what? It didn't cause health problems for people?

WE: Well, ya woulda thought so. But I know some 'em that have worked there fer thirty years they're living today, you know, even after retirement.

NW: Yeah, ok, so, it wasn't like asbestos or something where, you know....

WE: Well, it was smoke, it was, it weren't a very nice place to work. When you walk in there them, heat, them furnaces, I mean, might be a hundred degrees outside. But it was a lot hotter in there. When you walked outside it was cool in a hundred degree heat. (laughs)

NW: Oh, my gosh! Oh! But it doesn't sound like fun. Well, so, umm, jist a couple more questions, then I'm, I know I need to let you go cuz -

WE: No, I'm ok. Don't worry about it!

NW: Well, I'm jist still tryin' to understand how Rock Island worked. Was there a grocery store here?

WE: Oh, yeah, there was two of 'em. Got two grocery stores, yep.

NW: And is, are there still, is there still one operating?

WE: Yeah, the one we call Dad's? That's still, that's been here since I came here. And right across from the tavern, used to be a grocery store, a post office, and that was old Sid Clapp's store. And then about, oh, I think it was in the '80's when, ah, they built this new one here. Ah, God, I can't remember the guy that built that now. He was part of, umm, the golf course deal. (whispers Ah, Swapps) - anyway, can't remember his name. But anyway, it was built about 20 or 20, 30 years ago. And he operated - he had a really goin' - he had a dry, he had a washer/dryer, umm, grocery store, service sta-, eh, is - gas -everything you need. Really had it going! And he got involved in, ah, the first, the first, ah, lease we had with the golf course called PALS. Perkins was his name, Bill Perkins. And he jist forgot about everything there and jist went in a hand basket - went down. It was, it was too bad cuz it was a nice little cafe, real nice grocery store, and, ah, jist -

NW: But Dad's has been there the whole time you've lived here, huh?

WE: Oh, yeah. But difference, different people have owned it though, several different people, yeah. But it's been here all the time.

NW: And how about that tavern? Has it, eh, been the same owner all this time?

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WE: No, no, no, it's changed hands, so - God, I, I gave a list of people up there fer the tavern here a while back. It's been at least eight different owners on it. Yeah. Umm, what's now the church used to be a dry cleaning - to be Wally Hill's Dry Cleaning.

NW: Oh, really?

WE: Oh, yeah, we had a dry cleaning plant here, two grocery stores, we had two service stations, had a four-apartment motel, umm.... The whole thing that killed the town, [indistinguishable] I mean, that really killed it was the city had a choice of an off-ramp comin' from the east instead of coming up here and turning into town? You jist cut right off, come right past with the pit side is here now? If they'd a left that open, I think this town would of survived a little better. But being as they shut that off and ya hadta turn in here, that was the end of that party. Same thing happened here, like in Martha's Inn. Used to be a good truck stop. The highway by-passed it, it's gone.

NW: Right. Is that what that one where that big old milk bottle is and everything? Oh, yeah, that was such a cool - thing.

WE: Yeah. Yeah.

NW: Oh, ok. So, when was that? When did that happen? Umm, the by-pass?

WE: Oh, that was back in the late si- early '70, early, late 60's. Yeah.

NW: Oh, ok. Yeah, that was happening all over the country ta little towns.

WE: Yeah, and it jist eats 'em up. Right now they're gone. Jist -

NW: Right.

WE: And now what's really makes me sick is that I, I go back see a lot, east a lot, and I see, ah, a lot of these beautiful churches.... they're jist sittin' there, weeds all around and paint peeling..... Unless they've got a cemetary, if there's a cemetery right by it, it's pretty well-kept. But if they're - a lot of churches didn't have cemeteries - those are jist sold and made into granaries, you know, and -

(50 Minutes)

NW: Right.

WE: And it is, it's kind of a, a real let-down to go through these little towns and see all these there empty spaces, buildings ready to fall down, you know? Yeah, it's - (pauses)

NW: Well, let me ask you one thing, umm, one lil-, I think, last question fer today, Whitey. And, and that is jist to reflect on yer whole experience in, in Rock Island and, and, umm, jist as a citizen and, and as an elected official, jist - What is one thing that you've been involved in that you're the most proud of?

WE: I think being the Mayor. (pauses) Yeah, I really think get, getting the things done that we needed to have done. Like having nothing and then when I left we didn't owe a dime with the exception of our water tower. We were free and clear, we had almost 400,000 dollars in the bank. That, to me, was a good feeling to leave. And now, we're so poor in debt now, we ain't never gonna get out! Talkin' about millions of dollars, ya know. And, but it's something that had to be. The sewer had to, had to happen. But I was, (pauses) I were work with the people and I would, I held meetings down at the school. About, well, I, I'm, I'm tryin' ta get a sewer plant in here but I'd only gonna get it in. Well, if ya can't get it less than 35 dollars a month don't norm-, don't fool with it. Well, I could never get it down there, you know. It was always up in the 60's or - and it jist - (sighs) So, I pretty much let

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it go which - and ya couldn't get anybody, like I said to you. You couldn't hire anybody that wanted to help you in reference to with Public Utility District. I went to them one time when I first became Mayor and I said, "I'll tell ya what. If you'll help me circumvent the entire Tea Cup area down here, this little island with 8 inch water line, so that everybody down here's got clean water, then we can forget about the septic tank, the sewage, right?" "Ohoohh, you can't do that! Them lakes, you know..." Well.... (chuckles)

NW: Hmmm, interesting..... All right -

WE: Yeah, and there, there, I, I, I don't know, it's jist - But it, it'll all work out, I guess. It's jist that some people, you know, this is not new and it's tough livin' an 80 dollar a month mo- sewer bills, you know. You're not low income anymore when you start talkin' that way.

NW: No, you're not, no. Yeah. Ok, well, thank you very much for this.

WE: You bet! You're more than welcome.

(52.19 Minutes)

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