

Henry Pena Oral History Interview Transcript

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

idaho, people, farmer, colorado, dad, buy, thought, mexican, remember, railroad, home, pena, money, sister, years, knew, miles, long, engineer, job

00:01

Yes, my name is Marta Torres. Today's March 16 1991. We're at the home of Mr. Henry Pena. And His address is at 315 7th Avenue North Nampa, Idaho. It's approximately 1:17pm. And Mr. Pena, my first question that I'd like to ask you is where... When did you first come to the state of Idaho?

00:28

In March of 1947. Not 47, 39.

1939.

00:35

Yes. Why did you come to the state of Idaho?

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Because we... my dad came here on a trip. The (unintelligible) because he wasn't making enough money to support us in Colorado. He was earning \$1 a day for 10 hours work

in Colorado?

In Colorado. So he decided he come here because he had a friend here. That told him heard that there was making good money here. So he arrived in Nyssa, that winter. And well he left home around the last days of January, he caught this freight. And he told us he bought froze to death when he made it to Nyssa, Orego. Where there was farmers recruiting laborers for the next spring crop of the beets. So he went to this farmer and Marsing, Mr. oh, what was his name? Hardeen, I think and Herschel, two farmers. And the first farmer told him, Yes, he could come and work for him. And he said, okay, right awa., you didn't even know that and he told him how much money do you need? That said, I think about \$100 In those days, \$100 a month. So he said, Well, do you need a truck? Do you need a car to bring your family? He said no, I got a car back home. No trailer, we come to Idaho.

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So your father came first. When you say he just about froze to death. Was that on his way here?

Yeah,

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oh, no freight train boxcar because you have no way to pay for any transportation. So that's what he done and he had some relatives there and now for Utah. He stopped there and went to visit them and

they gave him some food and lunch. So he could make it to Salt Lake and then he had another friend that he came up with him I can't remember his name but they both came in on this farmer. Like I said, this farmer offered everything he needed. So he went home and he told us we want to go to Idaho and where's Idaho had never heard of it. He said well it's way far. And that was for us. We never been on a stage or nothing so he said a well we'll pack up and leave. So we left. During the time that we left or we had quite a bit of drama with a trailer took us seven days to get from there to here. Now it only takes us about 12 hours.

What kind of trouble did you have?

Tires, flat tires and troubles was a little trailer and that time we couldn't find that tires for it as I say made as a crater so... But 10 miles that we had a lot of clothes and that was a fixer tire. So we packed it in with all clothes and he made about 10 miles and we didn't get hardly that (unintelligible) got 10 miles the desert so that we state though her brother Benny Lopez, he will hitched a ride to Bernie found a tire. So we came back and he hitched another ride and then he we put it on and it didn't work but we had to get another tire in Greensboro to make sure. But my dad wouldn't go over 30 mile an hour already had a big world and conserve 32 them tires were pretty huge. But it took us that long. We would travel but five, six hours a day and no it can't. We couldn't rent a motel. So we had to camp out. In until we got here to Nampa that said of all were bought in marketing 20 Miles More but he said we've got to stop past Nampa and eat. polished up around where Lakeview school is now and we said how far is it yet? It's all just over the hill so it took just about another hour from there. And then we got there and farmer had a place for us it was a chicken coop

Oh my goodness.

05:54

Before we move on to that Mr. Pena, those seven days that before you got to Nampa it seems that money was a problem?

06:02

What did you do for food?

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Well, we had to we had beans and stuff. We had to go buy hamburger and stuff from them \$100 seat cut from the barber

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so when every time you camped out...?

06:17

we made our own we made our own food and all he buy was bread. Or mom her sister she make tortillas out on desert we just take a steel plate and you can make mud or you call that Marsing and we still had money left.

06:44

So was this during the winter that you were doing?

06:46

March. Time to start hauling beets.

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it was still kind of cold so when while you were getting on your trip to Nampa, How did you keep on those...?

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Times by that time. It was different weather than now oh by April was already warm. so you didn't march and wasn't know who's happy with that was out on a picnic. But we got to Marsing that day and what we found but it was still better than what we had in Colorado, we just had a house. It was about as big as this room and kitchen, dining room kitchen, was there in the bedroom and dad sleep (unintelligible) was my home bed for my sisters and him and his wife.

07:37

But the first house that the farmer or the provided you with was the chicken coop? Literally, huh?

07:43

Yeah. And there was another two families there afterwards. Yeah, they got there. And so we start well it wasn't one or two days before we started working. And dad said well can the family work here? The farmer said all yes Idaho don't have that law. Colorado's they wouldn't let you work out on the fields til you was 14 or 16, one of the two. We all started working from that time, we started making about \$100 a day and then.

For the whole family?

The whole family was me and my older brother and my sister and dad. Four of us my other sisters are going to school (unintelligible) and while she was the only one. But when we started to work in and work there all summer and hay and all that. That farmer was really good he never did remind that that he had to pay him that money but that paid to him. And dad... when we came in and paid for his car he said he did pay a payment or two and he knew he had made the payment but then guys over there said no you never saw pay came in compensate this car. Dad said I'm gonna want to give you no more money so you know why I'm making enough now don't buy two cars like that.

09:26

So, so they came in and took his car?

09:29

but he got one right away. Later cars washed with a cap that Carla was antique on of those Lincoln's vehicle tires or spokes on. One of them cars was a lot of money. No, but then that summer, we worked

there and then Colorado we go back and pass winter. (unintelligible) was it two three wins. We went back and best one.

09:56

This is after you win. You married your wife?

09:59

Oh No work before so then that bought a place here that's why we start staying here for sure then the Fallen two years we never work for them farmers no more we walked around here in this seasonal work like picking peas, tie and carrots gardeners plucking beets, and all that worth making \$30 a day myself at that time. So when I got married all that I quit all that started when that same year.

So this was in 1947?

47. So in we got married September and in November of that year I started working.

10:52

How did you, How did you know about the railroad jobs How did you?

10:56

Dad that had worked there he was working and he told me that they was hiring. So I went to see who had to go to Emmett, Idaho had extra gang. We worked out all that when clicked on extra game; laying steel and surfacing track and things like that. Then next spring, in 48, I started working here in the yards and the section the same kind of work they steal and taken care of maintaining tracks. And then I got laid off that winter and start looking for scrap and stuff you know sell make it make ends meet. So it wasn't long before they call me back and picked up on and they laid me off again. I went on extra game and we went to Crane, Oregon that winter in 48. Or was it 50? 48 I think. We worked there all winter and we just bought froze freezing cold. No. was happy so motorcars whether it didn't have no canopy or stuff. In one day we want to get our checks to Bern Jordan and it was 50 below zero. God couldn't hardly walk about froze. Was so good thing that they had sent the checks instead of sending them to hunter or Oregon. They send them down to Canada. so good thing they did because the breeder started right out back to the camp which was 30 miles. was a gave us about two three hours before they made us time cards. (unintelligible). And then we thought out and we'll look for gunny sacks and papers to wrap around ourselves to head back.

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And what were what kind of transportation were you using to get where you are going?

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motorcars motor clubs et Cie to meet on and trailer behind. And we'd get on there just on the opener I think they don't have pictures.

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so the way that how was it that you kept warm just by using the newspaper? Yeah,

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Yeah they didn't have no heaters or nothing so that's how we had to travel. We just open air there, nothing to cover ourselves with we had to find some ways to get back. Good thing that by that time it must have been one or two by time we started back. And by that time we got about 10 degrees warmer. So we made it back and good thing we had a camp (unintelligible) he had them all the time bunk cars, and he had fire in the store. So we was all right. That that winter and that spring I came back and start working here in the yards again. I worked pretty steady till 1950. I started working at Banks, Idaho (unintelligible) Work there but two years and then I moved down to Emmett. I worked there about two years. Then by 1953-54 work pretty steady here in the yards.

15:05

Before you started working, you know, steady. What did you do with that during the times of layoffs?

15:12

Well, I draw my unemployment. And then I'd go out and do odd jobs. And like those times they were given good money for scrap iron and stuff I bought to clean this yard and this country here. Then they buy bone, give you about two pounds, two cents a pound and anything that keeps us going. We never suffered once we let go right away, and it made. Dad had an old brother when he was making just dollar a day... but think it was for about 10-15 years. In wintertime, while he didn't have enough to feed us so he'd go out and hunt you know. The game would know what he was doing. So he knew that meat wasn't going to waste. So we had meat, beans, potatoes and rice and stuff like that. But we had meat. But once that away game warden retired, he didn't tell the new one on what's going on. So the new game warden, well, he took his guns away and said you can't hunt no more. Dad tried to explain to him but he didn't want to get that other guy in trouble. So that's when it really got hard and he said he had to do something so that's when they came.

16:44

So Mr. Pena How would you describe your first memories of Idaho?

16:48

I describe them as you know, like when like that saying from rags to riches we thought it was rich people and no one's we got to Idaho. We've had everything we needed and that took care of his money on then for two three years we went to Arizona after that after gonna pass when on Colorado, we'd go to Arizona and pass when was a money we'd made on summer. So we always happened to find jobs in Arizona to help us out more so

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was that just to leave the hard winters in Idaho and go spend? Yeah,

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so finally one we all got married dad didn't have no other resources. He just stopped to the real world and he didn't have more help from us no more. So that's what he done till he retired and that's what I done up to that time I retired.

17:58

Do you remember other Hispanic families when you first came to Idaho?

18:04

Well the only ones we knew was what was their names there was from Colorado to figure their last names now. There was two three families that there was there was working that form

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in marketing that were already they were already here in Idaho.

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We know there was in Oregon. Oh in orange Yeah. And this Oregon and then when we heard of them on Dad went over and vitam to come and help him because there's farmer needed more help. So when they heard that there was a place there we told them what kind of place so we don't mind as long as we make money so I came down and that's the only family we we know I can't consider land names. I know his name was Abraham the first first name

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I know he had three sons Danny and Leo but I can think of as names.

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Can you give me a description of your living conditions I know that you have described a chicken coop already. Can you describe the surroundings?

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Like you know mean like

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what kind of bedding or what did you use for cooking did you have

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oh, we had a regular wood stove and table. They gave us some, you know bed springs. We could just lay them on the floor sleep there and seemed like that and do some coops are in For five years it was pretty clean but he had like didn't used to be cold or didn't mind sleeping during the winter I mean springtime or summer but the outside was pasture and stuff like that but no animals around or stock what the farmer treat us all right we had a thing we want to eat, eat furnish eggs and milk. Then was a Monday was making notes. Everything we needed to eat,

20:39

how many people would you say lived in that group? At one time.

20:43

While we had separate rooms, one family there had to porn. In our family, there was 3477 and our four three beds. Our boys slept together and our sister slept together one dad and mom the other usually crosswise. So it'd be rude. Whenever I don't remember being caught is always like you sleep together, you never get caught. But in total living conditions, I thought I was pretty fair. Not like in Colorado. Terrible were there. And I know a lot of people in Colorado was going through the same thing. I thought Idaho was paradise when we left Colorado. And what I heard about other people in Iowa, sure happy. Colorado and most of us were from Colorado that was here first. And all the other people start coming around the TFT. Close to the 60s. Mostly from Texas, California. All them state, New much gone. But they all used to say go to Idaho, you can dish rack the money into baskets. And so that's Idaho, that that's what I think about my live and I started to write a story. I don't know what I don't about her journey to Idaho. Next about like what I was telling you.

22:37

Well, we should like to see that when you're finished with it. Did you attend school here? And I don't know it must have been

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not at all. Just my smaller sister. No, we thought we didn't need school with all the money we should make. The way it is. And in those years, you didn't think it was gonna need school. My shirt Sure. thought of that when I went out as an engineer for up here in Nampa. I made 100%. But when they send me the Chyann to study about all the parts of diesel engines, or sixth grade wasn't gonna help me. So I told him I didn't come here to study about the engines or parts of it. I come here to run them engines. And there's nothing to run in in maintenance. And no. It's the rules and written tests they give you over their heads where I failed a merit test and stuff. But I did do pretty good. And like two points making engineer. But I may have done a lot of other things on a rural farm and machine operator and things like that.

24:03

So what was the total years that you spent with the railroad? 4242 Or two?

24:08

Yeah, Don bought everything. Three years old, but clerical work that I did do that. When I was driving truck, I had to do a lot of book work. And when I got injured to left here my career they had me there in the office doing a lot of book work. GH was my school in Tanana stone good. I learned a lot by experiencing

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Do you remember any other Hispanic men that were working men or women that worked with for the railroad? The time that you were working?

24:52

There, smack Lopez, my brother in law. I didn't mention him the journalist Yeah, he's he worked with me a few years here and he came here in Idaho. Otherwise I don't remember 48 I think it's when he

came up right away started working for the world. You can do nothing else but then there's Frank Shabbos they work with us there

25:27

How old were you when you move from field work you know farm work into the railroad?

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I was 22 years old. So you typed the same year got married but married in September and I started working for him in November or December

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do you when you were moving back a little bit before you came into the railroad job while you were doing migrant? seasonal farm work? Do you remember any other people that were involved in the black metal program or illegals that were working in the fields?

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Well, I remember one one year but it was I was laid out to under Paul I drove a bus for a farmer now was taken I take them right to stay in a bus waiting when they got down then I bring them back. But that was just a short time maybe a month or two then they call me back on the railroad just a temporary layoff

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Were you familiar at all with what the referral program was? And

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all I knew was they come to work and and go back home and what I seen that time they pay me a used to treat them right. And they have better pleasures or stay than some people I know around here. So I used to ask them if they was treating them right they said yeah, we get everything we need. So like I didn't work out or I didn't you know I get bothered to ask them a lot of questions. But that's why I got the job because I could speak Spanish nothing they needed they they asked me to ask a farmer and I find one or more pay for fuel being to wait a year to audit tell me to so far for money when we're so paid well, given what we want is our work done and that

28:09

being bilingual helped you get the job for working with the farmer. Yeah. Are there any other particular situations or experiences that you remember with the Brasero program?

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Well, when I remember one time to I think this was before I got married they needed two interpreters at stores, Windows used to come down and I work from home and work a certain temperature and wash and long either but I all I done was ask them what they want and they tell me that I'd go to the park for the only thing can remember about a program a jolly time or two times at work to try and help them out.

29:08

What the treatment Do you remember any kind of you know how Mexicans were treated at that time?

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But that time Mears away was cheered for time. They had lots of signs, you know Mexican to allow for for a long time. I don't know what happened. What made some changes but they did take them off. I know there was places I had them site and it might go someplace else.

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But not all businesses hadn't done

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this are certain people are you referring

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to businesses like restaurants or

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a restaurant or barber shops? I don't remember no restaurant on In the grocery stores. But I do know that there was barber shop here I seen that one or two. And some other stores. I can't remember.

30:16

How did you feel about that?

30:17

Me? Personally, yes. Well, I don't know a lot more than here. I didn't put much attention to it. Until I stopped it was something that was long enough that I didn't think much about it. But now that I see all that rational stuff was the black people think back and say No wonder they had them signs over our, you know, Indians they never did used to sell them later. Because we say there was radical naked creating, like, want to kill. Maybe they thought that about Mexicans too.

31:01

As an identity, did you identify yourself as Mexican or Mexican American or cheap guy? No. How do I how do you identify?

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I was put white on board.

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So when you're asked what nationality you

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are, sometimes I've seen that most times when I had to feel, you know, for sure employment nice to but why don't we have no right to reject?

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Mr. Pena, we were just talking about when you were when you would apply for jobs you would I as far as when they asked you for nationality? You were, you would identify yourself as white? What was the reason for that?

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Because I used to think well, they will hire me then. Do you know they never did? question me about that?

32:06

Did you have experiences then when you did identify yourself as Mexican that they would reject your application?

32:16

Because nobody ever rejected. Oh, my pregnant a while back to fill another location, I'll do the same thing. I really worked when it came to really, to work. If I was Mexican, I still claim much Mexican.

32:38

Do you recall any experiences when you were treated differently or the fact that you were Mexican

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oil one time in a rowboat that they did on one job. They they gave this job to a white guy. And they will slash and your D unless he had less time on our own. He gave it to him because though facial hate. He liked this kid. He liked his dad. And he was like younger than me. I used to know on the foreman was gone. They'd call me at all hours. And I'd go out and do their mergency work. And they depended on me a lot. And I figured well, that's the way they're going to treat me while I put this complaint against humans right. To me commission. Days, this showdown was an O'Reilly No, on bad case. They washed discriminate. And

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so you took this case to court and you won. Yeah. They gave Did they give you the job as always?

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They gave me the job and bad difference. Great

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is what would you say that was the only bad experience you had that you could

34:09

not the case, but this was this other guy was to know he was a union. One was this union Stuart brother. And he knew that put this application in for Trump driver. They'll also know another truck driving job. So he found out from his brother, what my date was that they put this application in and so what they done they said, Well, what I'll do I'll put an application one or two days. Oh God, he put it. So he'd done that, too eager to jump on a narrative like that because I know this Guy, probably third. He

was my friend and, and he, he showed me a lot of been railroad men. I said, Well, something will happen. I'm a great believer in God, you know, and the same God revenge on him. But this one time of just let him that's when you know when Anthony got a heart attack know that the job

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so you felt did you feel angry or

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anything? No, I didn't feel that it just happen to think that like Bill was read and worked here anything that you believe is possible? Or what impossible for a man it's possible or gods. But there's one time oh this other deal night, I went ahead because I knew it was time just to do it. And this one guy, I could tell that he was prejudiced. I said I'll show him a lesson.

36:07

Was this in the railroad?

36:12

That's a timer. Did when that case, because I wouldn't do anything you know that I knew. Or know that I wouldn't have no justice on it. But I truly assess what happened to this guy. And he was a former nanoscan here. He's the one that I've done that pretty nifty scanning. And I had the man that put the application I had had to write.

36:44

When you refer to gangs, you mean what we would now call maybe a crew of

36:49

workers

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crew. Before no danger to call an extra game from a demand from under that or section may take care of certain miles of track, extra gang, they go through the district. They have to go. They don't go let the reader go or stay. That's the way they work that and now they've got system gains. Which if you go on that game, you've got a call from her day only or she at or close didn't grunt for you people.

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So these are the different categories of workers. Yeah,

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duties.

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Mr. Pena as a result of the discrimination case, once you want and you were able to get that job. Did you feel that you were treated any differently after you got that job?

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Yes, there was a change. There was a change

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what kind of change

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whenever I dashboard jumper, whenever I go to them, they agree.

38:06

So the change was positive?

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Yes. And they don't do that no more. Just like when I went to engineer that's why they've done it, you know, because this I think the government put the law in that they had to hire so many minorities. I think it's one that I retaining so I was the first one here. So they call me they didn't have no more nowadays or when this book came in there were some already working but they there was college graduates and they grew up in Tennessee when I really got in touch my computer engineer. And He's my nephew. She's like me at school high school. Education. I don't know if he went to college at all remember, but he he was already working when he called me and there was somebody there named one more Spanish or two more Spanish and then from there on, they start hiring more minorities.

39:32

Do you recall any? I know that you mentioned Mack Lopez and Frank Chavis also working for the railroad. Do you remember them ever having a situation where they experienced discrimination such as you do?

39:49

Know I don't. Replay did they know what to tell me and never did? Find out about it.

40:02

Well, Mr. BRENNER moving along here, I'd like to go on into the different. I know that your background is absolutely extraordinary. And I'd like to get you know a lot more about it. But I would also like to know a little bit about your education. You did attend school. How many years did you attend? And when you attended school, this was in the state of Colorado, Colorado. What do you remember about school? Can you describe your earliest memories

40:34

about school? Well, I tell you what, I used to shoot a lot. I thought I was smarter than the teacher, I guess. When I had spelling, I knew she'd give it down an order and so I'd copy the word for domain my desk. advisor was given the words I like I was writing them when she was done, she say okay, and your papers, sign them up the front row. Act like I dropped mine in our slip this went on for days. So I did 100 every time so that didn't help remind someone I wasn't used to the week and almost unanimously by

not learning to spell out Alana. But you on mathematics. I used to do my best but I didn't get to good grades on that. I knew that I had to use at some time. History. I didn't study much on that either.

41:48

How would you say you didn't score overall?

41:51

Oh, just to do below average I'd say my did pass every year but one year that was from the 56 I was on six right Well, we came to Idaho. And in our calendar year I didn't pass I used to play too much on class.

42:16

After you came to Idaho, you didn't know attend school anymore.

42:21

I went to apply middle school to high school but there was just a short course. But we're not trying to study learn too much I think like we're doing good after that or evening like they're still here and neighbors engineer this Hofland test I got 100 on that that's what helped me to run this engines for about six months. He used to make trips from here to Boise and man with a weaker body in on the on Marcy. So I was there six months. And one day send me to Chai and I said well why don't you give me just a jump here and maybe ARCHOS. Does this just trade agents from around house to or the freight train? I've done that. Anybody can do that and the yards just got to three levels to move on the watch for switches but they said no you got to learn at all.

43:35

Did you have to go out of state a lot when you work for the railroad

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monitor you do the engineers when I was an extra game to go went to work and that's one of their rules they got to go play shows wants you to go that's my school

44:07

do would you say that? Do you remember any of the other teachers that stand out in your mind?

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In school? Yes. Or hate?

44:19

You didn't like school?

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Yes no? Yes No. Afterwards I did like it sometimes I felt like on bad Monday. I thought knows what is already gone this farm as well stay the course. And outro which I could see where school is good. Why? My Voice to them has gone to college and gone. Got a job with a railroad right of way so he

stayed with us in Omaha now Ray Michael is here no railroad he went to high school but no come here Ondra tower over here and then Well Andy and Richards only one who went to college and he worked for MK and Richard works version was one back in Boise but I see where but they tell me why we work hard our mind just too much pressure so was schooled in help too much says I'd rather be working out there driving spikes and stuff pure minds aren't bad in this array he took that job in Omaha and he said my dad your see I hate this job yes it just sitting there and everything he said about a ball your mind is opposed quietly. Much book work and computer stuff we weren't in that right when I went to this engineer school. I used to get headaches and there was too much popcorn

46:19

when you went to engineer school did someone provide that

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education for you? Yeah, they provide everything they pay them for the railroad

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they paid everything that's why I went or else I never made it

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and then they they said I could have gone back again if I took time you know instead of books I could have got be an engineer but then you say one you got to go higher was an animal Greg really worried that I I didn't want to do my kids and my wife alone. I could have been babel fish on our water Roadmaster some you know making big money but you're always away. We never know when guys that are away from home and stuff they always find out a woman breaker home a lot of them did. So I don't believe in that guy. I know that. I learned earlier Spanish returning a lot of mathematics all I asked God for I think he's so I learned Spanish. I didn't know what

47:45

did you speak? When did you speak at home growing up?

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Mixed English and Spanish most mostly network voices why you people never talk Spanish that far. We don't talk it's not trying to rethink who said was in English. Now they say it's your fault. So while you can learn in school?

48:12

Do you believe that knowing two languages is important.

48:16

It is a good idea. Because I've learned that by experience. I know a lot of red scum people are white. I think they're real white people. And they're talking Spanish as you have have had the nerve to ask them if they're really Mexican to say yeah, but they really surprised

48:46

what was depending on the other subject. I'd like to give a little information about it. The community, why did you choose to live in this community?

48:56

in Nampa? Yes, because the way he was treated people were friendly and on. So nice, clean little town. But now it's getting too crowded for me. At that time was just by 9000 people on right now. I don't know I tell my wife I want to get out here. When she retires she's a water motor kitchen here we have the kids don't come and see us anyway. So why stay here? Were the ones that have to go on and see. We're getting too old for that.

49:38

Where would you go if you left Dinah home. Now

49:41

think of going to a nice warm place like St. George should finish when a place that's close like that.

49:54

Do you own your own home here thanks Do you belong to any organizations?

50:03

No. I belong to the old timers remember with old timers and to start church at a union? I'm still on the unit with somebody

50:24

in the state of Idaho, which would you which city would you say is the one that you would like to live in the most?

50:35

Like Idaho Falls that place was too big to take on. What her clients own kind of snake we're fishing. I like fishing. That's one place that hangs from a financial place to new places with fishing.

51:08

So how did you learn to fish? How did you learn to fish?

51:13

Just by going out watching people who came to I don't know their Snake River. I used to walk fish in there, but that time will let us throw a throw line everywhere overnight. Next morning, which is really mean. But now they don't let you do that. But then I learned by watching people fish

51:37

fishing. It wasn't anything that you did as a child.

51:42

No. We've never had anything like that. We couldn't buy stuff to do. We want to go fishing. You'd have to get a hook and wash regular stream and try it that way. But we never did. No way to buy hogs.

52:02

What do you remember playing what kind of games did you play as a child?

52:06

Well, we played cowboys and robbers hide and go seek musical chairs. Cowboys and robbers we even shot my brother who was one hunting dog we heard about combiners drawn to my brother. I didn't know that they're not loaded. So it goes that way. They've got that song I didn't know

52:38

what happened and I

52:39

told my brother let's see who draws first so I turn around and pulled a trigger and sure enough, there was a bullet in there so I got to just buy a tiller nature and hit his heart. Just went through the fish.

52:55

How old were you when this happened? Golly, I

52:57

must have been a nine but 10 years.

53:02

And your brother?

53:04

He was 13 or 12

53:10

What happened after he shot him?

53:12

Well, I got scared. They said now you gotta go get a darker within a no car or nothing. I thought of the farmers place he lived about a mile so I took off running I got there and the doctor seen me borrower see me cry and never say what happened he says and I shot my brother there Why is he dead? I said no. He's not dead. is bleeding a lot. So I'll call the doctor saying yeah, that's why I came over. Doctor took about an hour to get there from Colorado Grand Junction was about eight miles out there on the farm. Say Good thing he got hit and bled to death but he saved me that was within play cops and robbers no more. Then my sister will have an old well sister and they call it was 16 feet deep. By eight feet wide and we'd play you know see hold hang there longer. Cheat grabbers from our feet and Amish down looking at the water we taller that's enough and cheap Paul is gonna say who won who stayed the longest COVID are dropped as we go drown there.

54:45

Oh, those were scary games you played

54:49

and then we we didn't know any better. Your parents, dad and dad wasn't married yet. afterwards. That was After mom died no they never seen us. Dad has seen that during us. Heater he used to really spank us. We when we used to do some naughty or play games of course somebody got hurt or we knew our sister was going to tell him we knew what Nico was going to get a spanking so we get some pillows and rags and put around, tarnish all around us. So

55:35

how old were you when your mother died? No, I

55:37

think I was eight, seven or eight

55:44

How did she die?

55:46

She thought she was witchcraft. Your witches got it that time a lot a woman died they finally find out hold on which was

55:57

why did she think that? Why did she think it was

56:01

watching her it was dad that note was this way to us. So one time we watched when she left home and they went to one of her trunks she had all kinds of dolls in there was paint thinner so what that done was took a trunk and took that out and after that nobody died. No it was just woman that night hey finger favorite that she was jealous and good husbands that was right all the men last time I say was good husbands no had no trouble with their wives or nothing.

56:48

So your mother became ill and what in what way did

56:51

he know he started losing weight and you know like person that got tuberculosis and stuff like that some think that that's what it was but that

57:05

but that thing's different. He know that time there was a lot of that going on there Colorado

57:14

after that happened what that done it all stopped that's why he thinks that you know what? The doctor never did say that you had that TV but that's that's what I was nuts Wow mama when

57:35

you were fairly young when this happened? What do you remember about those hard times after your mother died?

57:44

Well I knew that we know our sisters they took care of us while my sister older sister was 14 or 15 men a sister older than me she was nine or 10 they learn to cook you know mama children are a cook and so they took care of a stove that got married and we had our time we we sleep on the floor and now as boys all three of us will lay a horse blanket on the floor and we'll cover ourselves with that child had a hard time we had one stove was warm the whole house or cooking stove. So at night we fired that up and got to the hospital last year morning in the morning we had turns to get up and fired up again get to house one night out but haven't pulled word or remember starving yet that all was provided he here to work like hard K usto net pay day what's your western dollar so my cousin used to go buy all the brochures we need and stuff. So at last or next day when he got to meet himself like I said why not honey? And no I don't remember starving. We had chicken farmer gave us the milk do we had our own age? What was your favorite food? Meal. Potatoes are still like a potato. But can you know kind of my diabetic system and potatoes, beans and salsa

1:00:00

So back what kind of SAPA today yours?

1:00:04

Yeah,

1:00:06

that's like the rope didn't spaghetti yeah and

1:00:09

then make the switch to refuse to make it or temporary and make sure that body

1:00:18

did you eat like 30 years?

1:00:19

Yeah no bread we couldn't afford

1:00:24

bread his more expensive sister

1:00:28

you know massage. They learn by you know a testa masa, they had a ceiling and they throw it up and get stuck up there wasn't ready to come down was done. So you'd go into our house you'll see

1:00:46

adults, that's how they would test the dog.

1:00:49

Like icicle stick. But they learn and add dirt in the wintertime before winter that go by golly, I don't know how much flour cost per lead by 25 sides of them 50 pounds. He'd buy 25 of them and stack them they're in a corner and neither state Oh, they'd last all winter. But then what was left? He was a drunkard then he'd go drink all the rest till it was all gone. So there was no more money for we couldn't eat candy or nothing like that. So he'd come he had a horse it used to call him God that horse take him to Grand Junction and he'd wait for him there. And when he got all drunk and stuff good gnarly get on a buggy one of those old buggy when he just say shortly take me home does that horse have taken on wait months? Boy dad cried when the horse died and he got in my car after that but I don't really remember having hard times we used to have good time farmers go buy a house and they used to be a hill and we'd hang through them widens you know right on get off the bottom of a hill sometimes we go up there and down the hill and right up one time I crossed because we will cut my lane and good thing it didn't break it into booted but I just dragged myself home about 300 yards great myself home mom asked me what happened I did say it just fell down

1:03:02

from the fall off the buggy

1:03:05

didn't see it run over me think I still suffer from that didn't go to a doctor nothing no joke

1:03:21

yeah they used to go by with big hearts and sheep and we used to enjoy that a lot would talk to him and was happy to hear it because they you know they always out on a desert they stay there for long periods of time I used to tell that they get long so much stuff. So the sister is sometimes used to give on tortillas and stuff like was all spying it so no a talk the same as we do in Spanish. So we enjoyed that. I used to think maybe someday I'll be shipper

1:04:02

shippers where we're in what state

1:04:04

Colorado? Yeah. So we used to enjoy we used to wait for that time. He knows like the fall we come down put them in certain places girls are landing in in springtime, they go back on we know about to tie in late we come in so we can wait for so we enjoy it that way. I don't remember being adult have an adult time or, you know, getting bored or something like that always always have something to do all the time.

1:04:39

Do you remember any other toys that you might have played with?

1:04:43

Not just just bad boys. We did have a sled who used to make you know we'd make ourselves. We had that hill and we'd go slide right now and then we'd hold water One to two minutes late summer Wait hold on a backflip donkey we're gonna go for a mile and get our backs the weasels busy I don't remember how many from the time we got up to a time we went to bed again no TV no radio or not all by town we got in the house and ate supper and that count tell us stories about the ocean and how things went over there then with all that being told it's money your father

1:05:46

was in the revolution

1:05:48

no he was me before a battle he seen what happened versus dad so we play toys mom a lot of you want to catch a toy you want to go back and kill them into the garage and kill his dad you want to go back and kill him by there we couldn't make enough to go back after work for a start working for a railroad they made enough and make two trips back. But by that time they guys work day by day he did go to see how is the land want to do what he had to do. Gonna finish that two, three section. Where was the midterm? So what was making here we never did find out very last two years when he retired that he used to send money to sisters telling me to pay the taxes as a man or find a girl last time he went he told them that they could divide around mine itself. So that's what he done. When he done that he never sent him no long running thing that they used to write to him for re stating but after that, no more letters, no more money no more later.

1:07:24

Did you remember about the revolution?

1:07:29

Well, how they used to, you know, force people to join their group to you know, buy them gifts to government and how they used to kill people that didn't want to follow they thought people were spying on him that's why they killed that that they thought that he was helping government so that's why they killed him and he wasn't doing so that's kind of things that was going on and you know, they rob the rich to face it they rob to give to the poor, but they keep it themselves you know just didn't want to lie. That's what I can remember that that wish to tell us. So that's why or else I don't know what to say I had everything I wanted all the heater probably had a better life in here. When he came to when we first came we came to Texas in Santa Fe where we used in the same page in Colorado 10 times I finally came there to Colorado and we start working now we're barely back backyard of that and started working out with a farmer contract work. And then he got this job was farmer studies. I guess at that time 10 cents an hour was a lot of money. I don't know. When we came here we found a lot of weight, fat, everything we needed coal.

1:09:22

What do you remember the wages being at that time?

1:09:25

Where I think most of the people are making three or \$4 a day on that or something like that.

1:09:35

And when he came to Idaho

1:09:38

here I don't really know hourly but I know that all the contracts were to it and it was by contract. I know that they would which can love better than know what their monthly paid. Think they're making 7500 a month but I Trying to remember or rebuild data from what it was. I think this farmer told that he worked for him that's what he paid more 200 a month that thought he was gonna do good if we do

1:10:19

keep on helping that we will be we decide or we count instead of going to school was your mistake by we made it told us to live in

1:10:35

about family. You describe that you know your parents, one of your grandparents or your grandfather was killed in the revolution. Do you remember any of your other grandparents your grandmother's or your other grandfather?

1:10:51

No on the mother's side I remember that grandfather but very little I know he would work in a railroad car. He was a very What do you call that when you go all by yourself? You don't want nobody around? a loner loner he never did go to the house once in a while. But twice a year he'd go see as many leave right away. He'd give us a quarter 50 cents apiece and take off he just stayed there I guess. Again BahnCard we finally somebody said that he got some kind of sickness in his head and he died but I never did so you when they bury him or how or otherwise call Colorado after several months salvage especially I don't call much about him or his history story. Stuff like that. Remember your grandmother's no I achieved died before I was born

1:12:16

now one and magical I never get here I guess I had a chance to go watch that. I never want to go there

1:12:30

so I didn't go with him last time he took one of my other two they weren't with me. But then people over there on the side of dad's sisters and men all that when my brother went or quit that they thought they was gonna go over there and take the land away from where we're quite an opponent with guns and my tip so Dad told him no we can come here to fight for you're gonna take your Milan away from me in a way it's Milan. I can do what I want with it and that's why I came I came to this shoe retail and the minute I put away your arm shame you forget about all tariffs we do anything wrong. They did the gene

harm. That's why I didn't want to call you terrain. Fontaine a dad he was a brave man. He wasn't afraid. He wanted anyone to

1:13:39

you have a lot of memories about your father have your father. Yeah. So you were married at the age of 22. How did you meet your wife?

1:13:49

Well, I met her in Colorado and I watched her grow up and then they came over here after we did four years. And what dad done when he bought this place over here 605 13 townhouse a big house by about seven eight year old well he invited them to live there was I was never home. Oh going out for dinner party and stuff like that. I used to run a lot in Ukraine. I met her out on the field who was working on time. Tie and carrot and we used to pull them out and put them in over one time when the power advantage I said I'm normal corner case your was was just our dominant area so you can run over them not too dominant kiss I love to kill so you didn't want to you don't want to be my girlfriend and she didn't just kiss her that went down but I never did go again and that's why I started during the field curl your time went by a neck or two three years to finally say test a month three heart and one around to three years old we would on down the street told an answer at that time people are straight you couldn't even know and some lady singers up town holding hands and they come to father and said you guys are setting a bad example So I says how so was humbled from you was holding hands with Jenny said That's right what role is that? It's a while I don't like that. You go get married right now. Okay, you're right on like that. I didn't want to refer to you as too young to 115 and to say no, you're gonna get married to a woman that's what you want or I don't know if anyone wants to forgive me now that the hurry up to me when I say oh that's why I say nowadays they don't assume occasion and all that out on the road. Thing that man days. I don't know when all this started.

1:16:52

It is why you got married then your journey?

1:16:55

Well, I loved her. And she loved me but we wasn't ready for marriage Malaysia new Korean marriage so we did.

1:17:05

What kind of wedding

1:17:06

the job of a nice church wedding. Oh Then Dad took that tiny Technische \$500 And the man wants you to get married you get married. He was strict with my sisters do a quinoa Lattimore, California friends that's why he understood my powder so that we had a natural lining by go research and lightweight all started

1:17:56

to more stylish beer joints as I said and nowadays we've never seen a woman and beer joint we've seen one out there your time she was the last woman in the world. But now that's all you see.

1:18:11

Where do you think these thoughts come from? That like for example you say that holding hands you couldn't even do that? Would you say that?

1:18:22

Whoa like there was a long he was real religious. And you know if people say some about you know your kid nature was that father don't discipline on me. Tell him that I'm in the twilight I thought that he was by the way and I wasn't religious and but I am now. He didn't want no bad talker. People tell him anything about his kid. And that's where I get it that he he wanted to be strict and he was right. No, he was no that's where I think that he doesn't want people cost them about his family to anything bad upon

1:19:18

its culture. Something important in your life of course, Mexican culture

1:19:27

No, no, no no sora touch or something that every nation you know, try to keep up with. And I never go

1:19:43

to growing up as a as a Hispanic. Do you recall your parents teaching you about the culture or the custom

1:19:51

Mexican. Now then I will take to address the Jerusalem other scores are all free, Scottish or whatever wanted to give him

1:20:07

Did you and your wife and your children celebrate like a Cinco de Mayo or any kind of Mexican celebration? No.

1:20:15

They are good

1:20:20

what family customs or values have been passed on to you that you feel are important

1:20:31

thank you I picked up a new car on day one is to try to another try to show us indeed relating to which we picked up that the only thing that I know that we have

1:20:52

now you said when you were growing up religion was not all that important to you, but it is it Now an important thing. How did it come to be important if you weren't taught that as a child?

1:21:05

Well like me I was growing up to be you know that that time when I was growing up, there was a shoe children's game and stuff. I'm familiar with that. But you know, I used to have that dark tail comb like demo hair and I have a big chain Blackjack, I'm talking 45 Tonight when we went to Arizona, I used to be a leader corner than Kane. So they were the Zoot Suit tutors. And we used to flip some of the nerds on Anatoli used to poor blacks and whites 20 miles from San Luis are quite sad little Alfa Romeo Mexico we'd go over there you know steal gas do not robberies and stuff in the Lord get after we just crossed back to the border but USA so they couldn't bristle with them. And I became blurred about that I don't think that was already converted and change life from my drunker to a different man of our content right? He used to tell me but he never did never find out that I was one of them. Okay, so just my hair. How old were you? I was banking, banking or 2018 99 I've done that for three

1:23:01

years used to do a lot of back and I figured that style and life was wasn't gonna last long. He said the lie ever caught up with us in Mexico was gonna take them put us in prison cutter her my kitchen ball and and they never did happen while I was there last year I left another guy in charge the first time they went over they caught the problem jail and prison prison Balkan Erica

1:23:44

What was the worst thing that as a gang member

1:23:49

Wow Thank you Robin. Stuff that we really didn't need a lot of fighting but we never really knew about it

1:24:05

was that a difficult time in your life that you felt that you needed to be part of this group? You

1:24:13

know, I thought I was somebody I thought nothing can harm as long as we was armed or you know never gotten beat or so. I know one time I stood up to six foot some even big who said first not have the whole game five eighths leader, federal among ourselves. Well, I know who to beat me to Paul. Well, I stood up to him when I was ready. When he's ready to in the meantime, somebody called Lon, those kids started running Oh Hidin all over finally me and Hamish 10 And then the cops come up as to what's going on there so nothing we're just arguing so while we've heard you guys will want to have on gang like I said no to just gonna settle it man me and him to do so well he told a white guy who said there was a white gang and a Mexican so you guys were weaker for those guys oh one P A guy now and the fight us face or I don't think so a lot of you said or done but this guy's been doing anything we catch him doing it it's gonna be bad. We already got a report from the other side. And he's scared this guy so he walked off and that time when we was bought ready to come to Idaho, so I never did see him hurt that they'd cut down again it was just lucky again sort of quote Lord knew what he had in mind.

1:26:18

So you say this happened this went on for like three winters Yeah, you were about 22 Then when you finally

1:26:25

go oh god here that the year before I've been married are here can look fine. And the last minute 21 Why did you decide to leave again? Because we had to come guide or what dad was ready to come alright. So the meantime in 2002 I was trying to work out whether when I change life and while I didn't do it myself I know what couldn't be done and Michelle mighty thought and now chance am I better take the quarry or California for you

1:27:14

it's interesting that your father never knew

1:27:17

it was produced secret secret never I'd go OUT out 900 glad he was sleeping when we went over there we're selecting about a block away or would sleep with certain people that he met over there then we had room back over chapel that chapter people are in it to bed or if he just stayed asleep so we could come any hour of the night and go to bed so that there were no guards how Kevlar secrets and that was it. That was a change in my life. Since then, I did many church poor thanks all I know, they were longtime I was young people leader for 22 years. And then points the same times and Superintendent of Sunday School Deacon talk like that. And that's what kept me on. By now I'm deep in a church and more board member. Locked Door that was locked to this.

1:28:46

Have you always belong to the same religion?

1:28:51

But that was before. But then when he went back to MIT for Georgia revolution he used to go on or that churches back to Turkey. We told us a lot about stories but we find babies and jars and amorphous. Greet Bill Pettit with preset views. The Mo has never had a moment that changed all that. So he he started content, not when he changed. When he came to me he heard that this gospel. Surely they're totally different. You know, he'd go to churches before he they came over to see if they had basement seat. They have things like that. You know, check. He never seen nothing. You know, he's seen the love of writing the people differently than They weren't trained because they didn't have no prompting already different life pacing so that's why I was growing up he didn't force us to believe different better store sells so when they go up though, see the difference in me so here's an example of what I can recall that made me change in drinking every word was a cussing or like nowadays actually here so it's a different life all I can say a bad culture while I believe that people should fall off what they believe they're called. But I never did I don't even celebrate for say two lives once in a while we go see the fireworks and stuff like that independence thing.