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Mark Samson: This is Mark Samson, a University of Montana student. I am interviewing Mr. Kirby Hoon. The date is November 15, 1979.

You were born in [18]84 is that right?

Kirby Hoon: [Eighteen] eighty-four in Ohio—Mariette, Ohio.

MS: You came to Helena in 1889?

KH: We came in '89. Montana was a territory at that time. It was made a state that same year, and I think it was in this month—in November 1889—it was made a state.

MS: Did you come before the Broadwater [Hotel] was open or afterward?

KH: Oh yes, it was before the Broadwater was open. The builder was building it then when we came here, and he completed it in 1891, I think. I think that was the year because he finished it. We had a cadet band of 18 pieces that we use to play at, oh, a couple nights a week and on a Sunday used the bandstand there. You know they had a bandstand.

MS: Was it like a special group of people he selected himself that would like to come out to Montana and play for him, or was it local people that played for him?

KH: Oh, they were local people. I think he hired them, you know. They were there all the time. He had a band there. Oh, that was a swell place. The bar was fixed up beautifully and the dining room and everything. It was really quite a place. They came...that was about the only place in Montana that there was anything of that kind, you know, entertainment.

MS: Where you there very often? Did you and your family ever go there to eat or stuff like that?

KH: Well I don't remember every eating there, but I used to go there on a Sunday. I would walk out there to get in those foot races, and if I won any money, why, I would always ride back on the street car. (laughs) They ran an engine out there with a street car on behind it, and the baseball park was right across the water there—the creek. The Ten Mile Creek was right across the water...The baseball was right out there at Broadwater.
MS: In those races how far were they?

KH: The fairgrounds was about a mile from there—the state fair grounds.

MS: You would run off to the fairgrounds and back to the motel. Is that right?

KH: My brother and I had the concessions at the state fair for, oh, three or four years. We had all the concessions, and the funny thing about it my brother one day said...We had a concession right in the ball park, right in where the racing was. He said we were not getting enough money out of that station. That was a big money maker there—the betting ring—near the betting ring. We went down there, and the workers would throw the silver in the hot grease. Of course we were busy in the day time, and at night it would come down cool. You couldn’t see the coins in there are all. They scraped the coins and scraped them out I guess...I don’t know how much money they made.

MS: Oh really! (laughs)

KH: We caught them doing that, and we had to hire all those done by rustlers—the fellows who followed the fairs, of course. We were green peas, you know, but we had to learn all that stuff. (laughs)

MS: Yes, Broadwater was pretty busy wasn’t it? The hotel.

KH: Oh yes, always busy. We had people come there and stay there. They had that big plunge, you know, the biggest at that time—the largest plunge in the United States or in the world, I guess. Undercover. Remember the big stones at the end there? The earthquake came along and took care of all that. The building went down, and they hauled the building away. I remember that as well as when they did it.

MS: Did you spend a lot of time, like did you go swimming there quite a bit?

KH: Oh yes! I used to go out there every once in a while. Winter time they use to have skating out there. I used to go out here skating, and I used to walk out.

MS: I don't know if you can remember, but were there quite a few famous people that came out to the hotel?

KH: Oh yes! I think there was quite a few people there, but I was never around the hotel much because you had to have money to be there.

MS: Yes, yes, that’s true. How much did the trolley cost to go from the hotel and back into town?
KH: Oh, it was like three and a half miles from town. I used to catch a bus once in a while into Broadwater. Usually I would always take it home if I won.

MS: How much money did he give out?

KH: Oh, a couple of dollars, you know. Of course, I'd run third or fourth. We had this Dan Grinrod (?) who was the fastest man in the world. He went all over foot racing, and he won everywhere. They never did get his time. He's got some relatives there in Helena [Montana] now. Bill something...I can't think of his name, but he is still there in Helena. He was in our lodge, the Masonic Lodge there.

MS: Was Colonel Broadwater...was he ever out in the public very much?

KH: No I don't remember him. Of course, he was interested in the banking business there in Helena. T.M. Marlow is, I think, a nephew of his. T.M. Marlow was president of the bank there for the National Bank of Montana for a long time. See, when I in the post office, I could of gone in there a year before and I didn't. I had a fairly good job on the road and Lindsay owed the banks a lot of money. Lindsay used to be Lindsay Produce Company there in Helena, and he owed them some money. They said if I would let him stay they would get some of the money back so I let him stay there a year. I could have gone in a year earlier. I was there about 13 years as post master, central county post master of Montana. We had 900 offices at that time—post offices that we supplied money to—and we handled all the money of the banks that came in. I had to get up in the middle of the night if the train was late go down and open the vault. Let them into the money. There was one time when there was 2 million dollars laid out. They changed the drive at...not Drummond, Logan. The train would go through Butte, and they would put the money off on a wagon. It's one of those station wagons, and it would stay there all night. Two million dollars. (laughs) A big haul for somebody you know.

MS: I'll say.

KH: My gosh, there was quite a lot of confusion over that money because I was the only one they would telegraph me when the money would be on the way. I would be watching for it, and I had the key to the place where I would store the money. (laughs)

MS: You were quite a busy man weren't you?

KH: Well, it was a lot of money in those days.

MS: Yes, that's for sure. Where did Broadwater live? What street did he live on? Do you remember?
KH: I don’t know whether he lived in Helena, Helena, but I think he stayed out to his place after it was built.

MS: Did he?

KH: I don’t know that I couldn’t tell you that, but they had a nice home in Helena. A lot of fine homes in Helena in those days because people had stock ranches all around Montana that lived in Helena. There was about 1,500 Chinese there at that time—all those people had Chinese cooks.

MS: Did people mostly drive chariots then or wagons? What kind of stuff did they drive ‘in those days?

KH: Oh yes! They had carriages, footmen even.

Mrs. Kirby Hoon: Didn't they call them tandems...that wasn’t it. That wasn’t the word. There was a word for it.

KH: No, no, that wasn’t it. That wasn’t the word. Carriages, they had teams. Oh, everybody had one over on the west side. Wealthy people lived over there mostly, and they all had carriages. I went up on a little hill to watch Broadwater’s funeral. I’ll never forget it. His name was quite popular all over the country at the time, and I went up on that mountain and watched that funeral procession. It was all carriages and horses in those days and before the automobile. I’ll never forget that. They had a band. They lend the band.

MS: Do you remember who took over the hotel after he died?

KH: No, I don’t know somebody did, but it just went down. Finally it was sold to a caretaker. I mean he tore it down eventually. I mean, most of it.

MS: What was it like the inside of the hotel? It was pretty fancy right?

KH: Oh, it was fancy, oh yes. It had a lot of statues and things of that kind. The bar especially was a beautiful bar. I remember Charlie Donovan used to be one of the bartenders there. Donovan Hickey probably started the place here. He didn’t sell any whiskey, just beer, and quite a popular place. Charlie Donovan worked for him, and he told me, “I used to watch him shine those glasses. (laughs) I would go up there and watch him, and he told me that he never worked for anyone nicer than Broadwater. I guess he paid him well.

MS: That would of been fun to have been in those days. I would of enjoyed that.

KH: I was on the messenger for years there, and I used to take telegrams. Alex Sulliman was running the East Helena smelter, and he was one of those wealthy man from New York.
Sulliman—very wealthy family—and he was out that East Helena smelter. I used to enjoy getting his telegrams at night because he would always give me a half a dollar, and that was a lot of money in those days.

MS: Oh, for sure, for sure!

KH: I used to do my walking mostly all those places at night. Of course, in those days nobody locked their doors. You were safe because if you didn’t (unintelligible) they wanted to hang they just put note on their door. Do you remember what the sign was?

MS: Seven, seven, seventy, seventy. Is that right? I think it is.

KH: Seven, seven three, I think. Three foot wide and seven feet deep and seven feet long. I think that is what it was, but they sign on their door, and if they weren’t out they take them out and hang them. This fellow Biedler is buried right close to our lot in Helena. He sat a great, big boulder on his lot, but he is the fellow who hanged all those road agents in those days in Virginia City. He came to Helena afterwards. He was a little fellow about five feet, and he weighed about 300 pounds—great, big fellow. He was absolutely fearless too. He wore a big sombrero hat, you know, a Mexican hat, and I use to give him a paper. I had a paper rout in the mornings, and he would walk down Broadway—the foot of Broadway—and back to the IXL (?). He would sit on the beer kegs at the IXL saloon. They used to put their beer kegs out so the rest of the bars would see how much beer they were using, you see. They used more beer than anybody. Kessler was a brewer at that time.

MS: What were the grounds around the hotel like?

KH: Oh, the grounds were fixed up real nice. It was a regular vacation park is what is was. People would come and spend two or three weeks there from around the state. They had to have money to do it. It was the only place in town where they can swim and skate—natural hot water. They heated that place with that natural hot water. They heated all those buildings with the hot water. That was quite a savings.

MS: It would be that’s for sure. I guess, you could say that was really modern for Helena because they had a lot of things there at that place that a lot of Helena people didn’t have.

KH: You had to have money to go there and stay though. They did a big business. It was the only place in Montana where the stockmen could go and have a big poker game going every night there. I remember they told of one fellow lighting a cigar there with a 20 dollar bill. He lit his cigar with it. That was news in those days.

MS: Did they ever have any trouble with any vandalism or anything like that?
KH: No, none at all. I don’t remember. They had the Indians in the ball park. The Army rounded up the Indians, and they were across the ball park. They had a lot of Indians there. They got loose from the reservations. They rounded them up and put them there in Helena and the soldiers guarded them. Fort Harrison was built about that time, and they had a lot of colored soldiers. The 24th Infantry was there, and they were colored soldiers.

I remember that Clore (?) used to be a live place! The fellow that ran the Bucket of Blood—Vernon Gray ran the Bucket of Blood. He was a nigger—light-complected colored fellow. I will never forget the boots he wore—high-heeled boots, and he was quite a nifty dresser. He had a lot of girls there, and those nigger soldiers, they just played it to death. Every one of the soldiers had a buffalo coat. I got one for five dollars. They would sell them. They would get drunk and sell their coats. I bought one for five dollars, and I used it on my paper route. They were nice, warm coats. There was lots of buffalo in the early days in Montana. Well, all over the prairie countries.

MS: Hotel was kind of like there where a lot of things around there. Like you have a hotel and then you had the swimming pool, then you had the baseball park.

KH: Oh yes! Everything there.

MS: Then you had the brewery.

KH: They used to have the trotting races and the sulkey races. They were very popular at that time before they run them, and the Indians would cut the ears of the horses—round the ears off—so you could tell the horse was a race horse by the cuts on the ears. Indians used to cut all the horses.

MS: You were a big baseball player.

KH: Yes, I played ball a long time.

MS: So let’s see...When did you leave Helena then?

KH: Well, Senator Clark had the baseball team, and they were in that coast league—Frisco [San Francisco] Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, Butte, Spokane. I was playing with Butte at the time. We had a wonderful hitting club. We had a fellow sitting on the bench he sat on the bench in New York just a pinch hitter. Tiggy Ward was his name. He was about five foot high, and he weighed about 250 pounds—a big heavy fellow. (laughs) He led the league in base stealing and fielding. He was a hell of a good ball player. We had a fellow by the name of Rowdome Shaffer (?) that played first base. Big Jack Myers as catcher. He caught in five World Series in New York. He always wanted me to come back to New York, and I was so used to both clubs that I wouldn’t go.
When I got to playing ball, I was working in a cigar store in Butte. I was making more money than they offered me. They offered me 300 dollars. You know, Christian Knotson was the greatest pitcher in the world, and he was only getting 10,000 a year. That’s the most he ever got. Jack Myers—he had caught in five World Series, and he only got 6,000 a year. That’s the best. Now, these fellows get millions of dollars. Ball players. But I could have gone to the big leagues, which I should have done, I guess. If I wanted to play ball, I should have gone.

MS: So how many years where you away from Helena, would you say, playing baseball?

KH: Oh, I went to Butte in 1904...in 1903, and I stayed there until 1911.

MS: Then did you come back to Helena after that?

KH: No, I went to work for the Swift Company. I went to Billings as managers of the Billings plant, and then I came back to Helena when my father died and I came back and stayed—after the earthquake. Then I was in the post office there. Wasn’t an applicant for the post office really, but they forced me into it and I took the examination and passed it. I was a pretty good student so I was there about 13 years. Then I came over here, and I was a sales manager for the brewer for ten years...No, about 12 years. Steinbrener—the fellow that bought the old brewer building—he and Stafford that was running the hotel here...I think his name was Stafford. They bought the building, and (unintelligible) came along with the money and bough the Great Falls plant and this building here and started the brewery. Put up the money, and so I went to Steinbrener who always asked me to go to work for him...I didn’t know anything about beer so I went to work for him. I put the beer out in Washington, Idaho—all through both states. We done a big business—Highlander at that time.

MS: So were you in Helena during the ‘20s much then?

KH: I was there during the earthquake.

MS: Were you?

KH: My mother had a stroke and every time we would hear the rumbling, you know, before you would hit the earthquakes we had a lot of them there. We had 11 there are one time, and we had a little dog and always that little dog would hear them long before we. He would jump up on us, and my mother would holler and I would get her up and carry her out to the car and drive to the capitol. We would stay a couple of nights out there in the car. Then we went to Eleston (?), and there’s a hotel there. We went there for a while just to get away from Helena during the earthquakes. Our home—Dr. Tree (?) lived right close in a brick house, and in an earthquake they’ll pull away and will finally cave int. That’s how we had a frame house. After quakes we’d have a house full of people. They would come there to stay. They were afraid to say in their homes.
MS: Then did you go out to the hotel quite a bit toward it later years when it turn more—

KH: No, I never did. Oh, I used to go out there on picnics. Years later we would go out there. It was fixed up nice around the trees, and we’d stop after our picnic dinner. When my folks were alive, why, I had a little runabout. We would put a tree on the back of it and going down that Priest Pass—it’s McDonald Pass now but Priest Pass is the old pass. We use to put a tree on the back and tie it on, --cop a tree down and put it on the car to hold it because it only had two speeds—at that time. It was one of the first Fords they had out.

MS: Did the hotel ever hold any special celebrations, like for a holiday?

KH: Yes, on the Fourth of July and on holidays they celebrations there. They would have foot races and things like that. Oh, I used to get in all those things, but we had a fellow by the name of Del Hawkins (?). He usually ran second to this other man who was so fast. Ernest Young...No, Ernest Douglas was the man. They usually ran one, two, three, and just fast enough I couldn’t beat them—neither one or any of them. (laughs) I would get in the money, but if they didn’t show up (unintelligible) I had to run I would be maybe second or third.

I was pretty fast when I was a little fellow.

MS: It sounds like you were, that’s true. Did the hotel every hold any sporting events out there or did they ever sponsor those people—

KH: No, not—

MS: —besides these races?

KH: In the plunge there, they held a swimming contest one year, and my father had dived from the top of the building off into the water. You know, there is only seven footage of water there, and from hitting the bottom, you have to hit the water. He did it from the roff on the top of the...on a celebration of some kind they had there.

[End of Side A]
MS: When the earthquakes came along that’s kind of when the hotel more or less dropped out of sight. I guess you could say that the plunge was closed down, wasn’t it, right after the earthquakes or soon after?

KH: I don’t remember. I left Helena right after the earthquakes and came over here.

MS: Oh!

KH: My folks stayed there, and I finally sold the house. We had a home there and were awfully sorry we sold it. We should have kept it and stayed right there. I would have done all right. I had a chance to get into an insurance business and sell real estate there and all that property by the capitol was all free taxes. Helena has grown quite a lot since the early days. I could of made a ton of money there.

MS: (laughs) Do you think it would of been worth it to renovate the hotel and plunge to keep it going after?

KH: Oh, I don’t know. I doubt it. It was too expensive, I think, for most people. After Broadwater died, why I don’t know, the spirit seemed to go out with the thought that wealthy people in Helena would have kept the grounds anyhow and done something with them. You know I always felt that way! I wish I could have some money to keep the place going because I think it was a money maker in the early days.

MS: Do you think it was actually maybe too fancy for this part of the country?

KH: Oh, I think so. I think it would. My brother was quite a financier, you know. We use to give my mother all the nickels that we would gather. She had a big blanket, and we would put those nickels in that blanket at night when we would come home from the fair. We would have two or three sacks of nickels so we used to give her all the nickels. (laughs)

We had one day—it was a hot day there—and we sold 11 barrels—those big barrels—of lemonade. We used citric acid for the lemons, and then we would take a great big cake of ice and put...It was on a hot day and it was fair, and we would have a big cake of ice in each barrels. We would take about a dozen of oranges and slice them really thin and put them on the top. My gosh you know, we just sold and sold. We sold 11 barrels one day at ten cents a cup. You probably get two bits for it now.

MS: Gee! You must have made a lot of money in that day. (laughs)

MS: Yes, well, you had to get this rustlers that followed fairs in order to make money, and we caught these fellows throwing in the hot grease and it would be cool at night and cover up all
the money. My brother come down and he would scrap that one night. He said, “My god,” he said, “we ought to be taking in more money.”

“Oh, I don’t know how much money we got out of that?” They were great big skillets you know. They would bring their own equipment, you see, in order to make some fast money. You would have to have space and know how to do it, and these fellows did it and they made as much money as we did for one year there. We had about six or seven locations around the fair grounds and one in the betting booth. That’s where the big money was—in the betting ring. We used to bet a lot of money in those days. Of course, a dollar was a dollar in those days, you know.

MS: Yes, that’s true. It was very true.

KH: Is that yours—them records?

MS: These are just more tapes just in case I have trouble again.

KH: I have lots of records. My son made them. He has a wonderful voice—the fellow that just called me. Both boys had open heart surgery this last year. One of them just resigned from president of Building Loan here. I would have stayed four or five years more with the salary he’s getting. He’s getting a big salary, but he wanted to do some traveling and see the country and travel across to Europe. It kind of scared him when he got that open heart surgery. This other boy has made about a hundred pictures down there in Hollywood. He went to Florida, and he’s with the (unintelligible). Now, he’s building a big tank for sharks and those others—you know, those things with funny nose.

MS: Dolphins?

KH: Dolphins, yes, dolphins. They’re spending 100 million building, and he’s going to stay with them until they get those buildings built. I hope he does. See he was in that about 12-13 years—that Sky King in those pictures. He used to fly his own plane, and he might go back into pictures. Again, I don’t know whether he is going to make any more of them or not. I don’t know. Of course, he got that (unintelligible), and there’s 500,000 kids that have kicked out that the families don’t want. He’s trying to make a home from them, and he’s been in (unintelligible) in about a dozen states. He hadn’t the money to build the buildings so he had to give it up. It took so much money right during the time when the inflation came along, and he had quite a time. He made a lot of money.

MS: How long have you been married?

KH: Seventy years.

MS: Have you!
KH: Seventy years, pretty close, 70 years next month.

MS: That’s really something. That really is. (laughs)

KH: Long time you bet. We’re the oldest married couple here by 25 years, I guess. There’s several that has been here 50 years. I mean, been married 50 years but we’ve been married 70.

MS: Where did you meet Haddie at?

KH: In Butte, yes I did.

MS: While you were playing baseball?

KH: Her father was killed in Butte. Did you ever read that Copper Mines...that Copper Kings.

MS: Oh yes.

KH: Well, his father was killed in that mine. They lighted dynamite down, and he went up to inspect the mines to see whether they had done any work at all. It was on New Year’s Day, and he was killed. They lowered the dynamite and killed him. These fellows left Butte—the people that did it, I think. They went to Australia, or there was quite enough to do about him. I know they had the band out there at Butte. Yes, he was killed. They were fighting over the ore, you know, the Minne Heeley mine—Pennsylvania there. Yes, he was killed in Butte. We were married in 1910.

MS: I was just thinking, boy, that you have been more years then my folks are old. (laughs)

KH: It seems like a long time. My oldest boy is 68...no, 67. Jack, who just retired from that company, and he was 61 when he quit.

MS: Been through a lot.

KH: He’s raising money for the university now—175,000 dollars. They’re meeting every day there, trying to save the university. There’s been talk of losing the university, and it means a million dollars to the city to keep the school here so that’s what they’re doing by raising this money—all that.

MS: Yes this school here is kind of in trouble.

KH: Yes. What’s a different school all together? It’s more of (unintelligible) school.

MS: Yes, yes. You have been through a lot of years haven't you?
KH: Yes.

MS: What kind of things did you do as a kid?

KH: (laughs) Worked. I worked when I was a kid. I had a big broom and a shovel. In the winter time I shoveled sidewalks, and in the summer I sawed wood. I sawed a lot of cords of wood for a dollar a cord—saw them by hand. I did all kind of wood. Oh, in those days kids had to work. They had to; money was scarce.

MS: Did the Broadwater Hotel ever hire many kids to do things or was it—

KH: I don’t remember. I think they must have. Gosh, there were kids raised close to Broadwater there. There was quite a lot of farming there. You take up that Cody...where Cody has that place quite above Washwellers (?). Above there there’s a little valley in there, and those youngsters up there they all worked, I guess, at the Broadwater.

MS: What exactly was the Washwellers? What was that the Washwellers?

KH: Washwellers is a spring—a natural spring. They used to have the prize fights up there. Every week they had like a big colored man, and he fought and fought Sullivan for the championship. Kilrang (?) came through Helena, and he lasted three rounds with Kilrang. Kirk Frazer (?) was another fighter that...Remember the name. I never saw him fight, but Kirk Frazer was one of the fighters there, and Old Ike Hayes and Oglesby came along later—Kid Oglesby. There’s some his folks in Helena now.

MS: You were pretty active in boxing, weren’t you?

KH: Oh, I promoted. I got Bradley Emulsion (?) to come up here. I was playing ball in Spokane and Los Angeles, and we use to hang around Jeffery’s place. He had a big place on Spring Street, and they had the life-sized pictures of all the fighters and the wrestlers—Primer Burns and Scotch (?) and all the fighters in those days—Tom Sharkey. Oh, there was so many of them. I used to hear Jeffery talking to the crowd, and I heard [Bob] Fitzsimmons say he couldn’t hurt Jeffery because he broke both hands on him. Fitzsimmons was beat by [James] Corbett, you know, for the championship after Corbett beat [John L.] Sullivan. I used to hear those fellows talk to Big Jack Johnson. He was just trying to get a fight. They never used to let colored men play baseball or football or anything. Now, they control the game. We used to play nigger teams in the springtime training, and you let them get ahead of you and they’re hell to beat, I’ll tell you.

MS: Do you miss not being back in Helena?
KH: Oh yes. I like Helena. We raised our two boys and our home there in Helena. We had a good home life—had a lot of music and kids and everything else. Our oldest boy, he liked the violin, and he had a lot of good dates there at the...When the Shrine was first built, the great singers and all would come through Helena. Helena was quite a culture town—music. Pauline—did you know Pauline? She married Ray Church? Pauline Keene? She was in charge of music. Oh, that’s before you were born. That’s long before you were born. Well, we had a lot of music. Our boy won on the violin the contest for the state and got sick when he went to college out on the coast there. They stole all his medals that he had—the fraternity. He belonged to a fraternity, and somebody in there that took everything that he had—all his medals.

Oh, you got that attached?

MS: Yes. It’s just so the batteries won’t run down. It’s more reliable.

KH: Oh, I had a paper route in Helena for a long time, too, along with selling papers. I remember Charlie Russell when he used to come to Helena he’d get...he’d do a lot of drinking in those days. (Unintelligible) run the old Stan Saloon up across where the Independent used to be, and he moved down to the California Wine House. I have a picture of the first artist (?) in Montana—he painted that picture—it was in the California Wine House. I’ve got some of Russell’s paintings here. Here’s the Gates of the Mountains here. Oh, I’d get a little money ahead, and I’d buy those pictures. They’re worth a lot of money now. This was the first artist in Montana made that picture. That was made about 1890.

MS: Who painted that picture?

KH: My oldest boy put those signs up on the door there. He said, “You leave them there,” he said, “and every time you have company—little kids—and they want those signs just leave them up there,” so we’ve left them up there. Do you know, Jack, our youngest boy?

MS: No.

KH: Well, there’s a picture of him over on the...Kirby made that picture there on the end there when he was going to high school there in Helena. He played in the band there, and he made a lot of pictures. He’s used to go up to there Mrs. DeCamp. She had a studio there, and he used to go up there and take his violin lessons from her and he got to painting. You know Russell used to go up there and stay and paint quite a lot. I wish he’d have kept it up. That’s one of his pictures on the end there.

MS: How old was your son when he went to Hollywood and started making pictures—movies?

KH: Well, he graduated when he was 17, I think, and when he was 18 he went to Whitman. He got a scholarship to Whitman, and he went to the Conservatory of Music. He got a scholarship there at Chicago, and that’s where he played his violin. He had an orchestra there while he was
going to school, and he used to play for Capone, you know. Capone was the gangster, and god, he had lots of money. He’d come back, and Kirby would play there all evening for him. He said, “I wish you’d stay until two o’clock, and I’ll pay you well for it.” So Kirby stayed and he pulled out a roll of bills and he took five 100-dollar bills and gave each of the boys—there were five boys—each of them a hundred dollars for staying a couple of hours extra. This Capone was quite a fellow in those days.

MS: When prohibition came into effect did it have much effect? Was there much bootlegging in Helena?

KH: Oh, yes. Yes, you bet. When I was in the post office there in the Federal Building and we had all those offices, Berklund (?) was judge at the time and he had all those bootleggers. He told me one day...you know, a lot of people were afraid of Berklund. He was a fellow that wanted to be by himself all the time. He’d sit in the dining room alone way out in the corner, and he didn’t want anyone to sit with him. They was always kind of scared of him. He said to me one day, he says, “You know, I feel sorry for these fellows that have to use their wheat to make booze, and I feel so damn sorry for them,” he says, “I’d like to let them alone. But,” he says, “I can’t do it, and I have to prosecute them.” He was a good-hearted fellow and after all...I know I got along with him fine. Rankin was the only one we had any trouble with. Rankin was always...you know, he was a bad one. Smart as hell.

MS Did a lot of this bootlegging take place at the Broadwater by any chance?

KH Oh no, I don’t know. I don’t think (unintelligible) had any bootlegging. They had a different class of people. Bootleggers used to run a place...they had those tough spots. Vernon Grey had the Bucket of Blood over on (unintelligible), and he used to get all kinds of bootleg whiskey there. Oh, we used to have a place there in Helena...I had a vault built while I was in the building there, and bootleggers from the Dry Ditch would come along from the government. They’d go out and holdup a place and bring all the booze in there. I’ve never got a bottle from any of those fellows, but they’d always have a breakage. They’d break up the bottles at one time, and they’d sell them. I found out later they were selling those better brands they had in bottles, and I never got a bottle. I didn’t drink any. I missed out on that. (laughs)

MS: I’m just about of tape here so I’m going to have to close this off. I appreciate everything you’ve given me. It really has been a help.

[End of Interview]