Valerie Schafer: Today is Friday, November 16, and today we'll be interviewing Pat McDonald about his memories at Garnet. The interviewer is Valerie Schafer. And here I am with Pat, and we're going to talk about his memories at Garnet. I know I just asked your sister, Sharon, this, but I thought I'd ask you to tell me about your birth, and how you got to Garnet.

Pat McDonald: Born [full date of birth restricted] 1939 and needless to say, no memories of those early years. But we moved, as I understand it, shortly after I was born, we moved to Garnet, and we lived there for quite a while. And of course, I can't remember that, but I guess it's kind of interesting, the reason we were there. It was the Depression era. My father was trying to scratch out a living as best he knew how, and gold mining appeared to be the way to do that. One of the few ways you could make some dollars back in those days. My first memory of Garnet, I can faintly remember sitting—and maybe it's because this story's been told to me that I remember the story rather than the incident—but, I have this memory of sitting out on our front porch with my father singing some kind of song about on the river. I don't know if that's, like I say, if that's the incident I remember or the story.

The next incidents I remember from Garnet were when Frank Davey was alive. I think that Davey died in '47 or '48, I believe, and so I must have been about five or six years of age. We would go to Garnet and visit our cousins and aunts and uncles. That was the McMahons—both Jeanie and Bobby McMahon, the two kids, and Bob and Aggie were the parents. Then the Hawes: Glen and Edith Hawe, and Tim and June.

It was interesting because I don't remember any...Well, I do remember going down to Davey's store, and they'd go over to the motel and tell Davey that we wanted to buy something—buy some candy. They'd go get Davey, and Davey'd come over, kind of grumbling, and he would unlock the store and we'd go into the store. I remember the big glass candy counters on the left. I also remember the big old coffee grinder. That was always an impressive sight. We'd go in and we'd buy our, probably three cents worth of candy, and toodle out of there. Even though I was never involved in it—probably by luck, not by purity or anything—my cousins told me the stories of how they would go get Davey to buy some candy, and Davey would come over, grumbling like he always did. Unlock the door, and they'd go in and they'd pick out the candy. He would give it to them and then they would take some rocks they had in their pockets and put it on the counter and they would say, “And this is how we pay for it!” and they'd scramble out the door with the candy. [laughs] Davey'd be hollering and grumbling at them. But you know, like my cousins have said, that had to be a game with Davey. Because you know, once,
yes. Twice, maybe. After that, no. This was kind of a continuous situation. So, they always figured in later years that Davey would get with the parents at the month's end and even out on what they owed him for the candy, and that was their little game.

The other thing I remember, when we were up there at that early age, there was a telephone, and it was the old hand-crank telephone. It was right next to the Ole's bar. We'd go out there, and oh we loved it. Just cranking, cranking that old telephone and once in a while, you could get an operator on the other end. Oh, we thought that was fun.

Dick Fichtler: I had no idea there was a telephone up there.

VS: Me neither, I've never heard that.

PM: Yeah. I can remember that. And see, that's when I was like, let's see, if I was six years old, that was in '45, '46, somewhere in there. '46, something like that. I can keep talking like this, or you can tell whatever you want me—

VS: You can keep talking, you're doing great.

PM: I remember shortly after Davey died we went up there. I can remember since then my father and aunts and uncles lamented the fact that there was a museum in existence and they let it slip away. My dad and my Uncle Glen would tell me that, or tell us all, that Davey was ready for the resurgence of Garnet. He knew that going into the Depression and going into the war, he knew that Garnet was going to rebound. When Garnet rebounded, he was the guy that had the hotel. He was the guy that had the store. He was going to make a lot of money. So he kept that store well supplied. The only problem was, the supplies were 20 years old or more. Dad and Glen would talk about the high-heeled, lace-up shoes that were popular, but they'd been sitting on the shelf for maybe 20 years. So they just, in later years, kicked themselves so that they didn't [unintelligible].

When Sharon was talking about the buggy rides, why we didn't get killed, I don't know. Because we would take those horse-drawn carriages, horse-drawn wagons, and at first we would...we got about five or six of us kids, and we'd pull it on up the hill—on the old road that went up towards Coloma—up towards the old school house and back up in there. We'd get up there just as far as we could, and we'd run out of energy. Then my cousin, Tim, had rigged up a steering apparatus with some ropes to steer it. I was the brakeman. You know, I'd have to brake on that big old hand rig, and then we'd get that thing ready, we'd all jump in and down that road we'd come, just lickety-split and crazy, and going down through there. Oh, we thought it was so thrilling. Then that one day, Tim wasn't steering it quite right, and we hit a tree [claps hands together] and wham! I think that terminated the rides on the old carriage [laughs]. But oh it was thrilling for a while. Then we moved back to Garnet in, I think it was '49, '50, '51, somewhere in there. I can't quite pinpoint it.
But I've always thought that, in the back of my father's mind, was the suspicion that Russia and America were going to come to war. Maybe I'm off on this, but I've always been suspicious that, as I try to remember back to that era, there was always the talk of Russia has so many nuclear weapons, we have so many nuclear weapons. I think the old man wanted us out of any population center, wanted to get us away. Anyway, we ended up moving back to Garnet that summer, and I think it was '49, '50, somewhere, and we had an ongoing business at that time. He and George Sutherland and Glen Faulkner bought the old Mussigbrod mill and operated it. That was my first job. I worked in the mill, and I think I was getting three bucks a day or something. I just thought I was, I didn't know how I was going to spend all that money.

My job was when they were working the tailings out of the old mines, they were going to run them through that mill. Or I should say again, they were gone through the mill but the old tailings had been cast aside in earlier days. They thought they could go back through and salvage a lot of gold and silver and they were going to make lots of money. Nothing like great delusional plans by miners. So they would dump the ore into this big chute right at the bottom of the conveyor belt, the ore would get hung up there, so it was my job with the shovel to make sure that the ore continued to flow through on that conveyor belt. I can remember the old ball mill, it was just whirling noisy, and when they were riding in the ore, you could just, I mean, just roaring in there. And then the other thing I remember was my dad would take me out and show me the end product. The end product, they'd had it, like big washtubs and it would be finely ground black sand. Just real black. He would say, “Here, now let me show you.” He'd take a gold pan, and reach down in there with a little water, and slosh it around like they knew how to do, real fast, and there'd be that old yellow streak [snaps fingers, and rest of comment unintelligible]. Boy, I can remember looking at that gold and of course the old man talking about gold all the time, and there it was. So it was kind of neat.

VS: And now you work in a bank. [laughs]

PM: Right. Little different. So those are the early memories. When you asked what we did, we were always going rabbit hunting, with us kids. And even though I was really young, I learned how to drive at a very early age. And we had a Jeep that came with the Mussigbrod mill when it was purchased, and it was an old army Jeep, no top on it, and I was the driver. We'd take off late in the evenings with my cousins and myself, we were going out to hunt those rabbits. I don't think we ever shot one rabbit, in all the time we went hunting, but oh we had so much fun. Hunting rabbits and I would drive the Jeep. So that was there. Other things I can remember, we'd go into the old cabins up there. There were always packrats. My cousins and I, that's Bobby McMahon and Tim Hawe, was there. We'd go in there, shooting rats and shooting rats like crazy. So, I babble on here. What else can I tell you?

VS: Well, what were you shooting with?

PM: .22's.
VS: Were they your own, or did you borrow your parents’?

PM: Well, I can't really remember. They were available, and my parents put a lot of trust into us, as young kids and away we went, shooting. Then I...At my age I start repeating myself. I don't want to do that. Was I telling the story of Davey and his hotel and the mushrooms?

VS: No, I don't think you told it on tape. Maybe once again.

PM: Well, why don't we go through it again here? But anyway, like Davey's old hotel. I can remember going into it, and I remember there were the set of stairs, I think, that go, just as you go in, off on the right. There was kind of a parlor and then in the back end, was where Davey lived. He had a big old stove in there. I remember he'd keep that stove lit and keep a fire going, and he lived back in that end. At that time, I think it was '48, and it was Duke Dennison who was a young man working, or going to school out there, going to become a dentist, that was the son of George Sutherland, and an amateur photographer. My father took Duke and myself, we went to the top floor of Davey's hotel. Like I earlier said, Davey was ready for the resurgence of Garnet to be this boom town, so just like his store that was fully stocked and ready to sell anything you needed as far as general merchandise, likewise, he had his hotel ready to handle people that needed hotel facilities. We went in this room, and there was the room all set up, ready to be rented out, and there was some kind of piece of furniture to store some stuff in, and maybe there was a chair, then there was a hand rail and a bowl—I suppose that was to put water in—and there was the bed. The bed had all the covers on it and pillow and everything, and there was the big mushroom growing there through the middle. I can remember a big mushroom. Boy, Duke Dennison took lots of pictures. That left a real impression on me.

VS: Now, when you're walking into the hotel, you said on the right there was a parlor?

PM: Well, I think there was the parlor on the right. Kind of a reception/parlor, something like that.

VS: Do you remember what was on the left?

PM: I don't. I can't remember. Sorry. Interestingly enough, our youngest daughter, Kristin, was in high school in, what was it, the '80s, and she was on a field trip to Garnet. And on that field trip, they were doing something around the remnants of Davey's old store, and she found a receipt that was made payable to my uncle, Glen Hawe, and signed by Frank Davey, that was dated like 1943 or something like this. Here, one of Glen Hawe's distant relatives discovers that receipt some 40 years later.

DF: Do you remember, in the interior of Davey's store, there was a candy counter on the left. You mentioned a coffee grinder. Where was that?
PM: It was in the store, totally different from the hotel. And I have a hard time trying to remember...I think it was on the right hand side, I believe. I could sit here and pretty soon I may be creating things rather than remembering them, but I, like I say, remember the candy counter on the left, and all of the big glass counter. I thought that the grinder was over on the right, I believe.

VS: Do you have any memories about Christmas? Holidays?

PM: I do, but not at Garnet. Because the two eras I was there, was number one when I was really young, and number two was in the summer of '49 or '50 and we didn't spend Christmas there. But I can tell you about memories of Christmas with my dad, Don McDonald, and my cousin, and my other uncles and I would gather at the house at Christmas time. There would be a little alcohol served, and pretty soon the stories would start flowing. Pretty soon, it was the stories of Garnet, and how they knew where the mother lode was. Probably the greatest theme was that back in the old days, the pumps couldn't keep up with the water that those mines produced. Pretty soon, those old pumps they were using back then couldn't keep up. They would fail, the shaft would fill with water, the guys would have to get out, and they were just getting close to the mother lode. So, now with these modern pumps we have, we can go up there, we can open that shaft up, and just make all this money. Of course, myself as a little kid, I'd just sit there spellbound by these stories of gold all over there. Why don't we go up there, get all that gold? As you know, there's no greater dreamers in this world than gold miners. [laughs] And every one of them's going to be a millionaire, and most of them end up broke, I think.

I do remember the story that my dad told me—if I get to babble too much here, shut me off—told of he was a young man living at Garnet, and he and my mother were married then, so it must have been in the late ‘30s. He got the desire to go down to this mine that was down there near the Mussigbrod. It was a mine that had apparently been closed for many, many years, and I want to say it closed sometime before the turn of the century. He had heard old stories how there was lots of gold in there, so he decided to go in there and apparently didn't tell anybody he was going to do it. He goes crawling back in that old mine shaft, and I can remember him telling how the ceiling had caved in in lots of places so he had to crawl up over the rocks and the dirt and everything, and some of the places he said he crawled through were very small and he was being very careful. He got clear on the back end of this old mine shaft and there at the very tail end was a pillar of rock. As I understand it, some of the old gold miners would leave pillars of rock to support the ceiling. In that way they didn't have to go get timbers and build it up. Well, Dad was sitting there with his old carbide lantern on, he said as he looked at that pillar, he could see sparklies in there. So he said he very gingerly reached in and took out what he saw was good and put it in his pocket. He carried that with him for the rest of his life. It was a piece of quartz, maybe an inch and a half by inch and a half, or something like that. In it were just raw gold just sticking out of it. You know, there was gold, and there was nice big chunks of it, sticking out of this piece of quartz. So what he saw in that pillar was gold. Of course, we knew for sure then there was lots of gold interest right there.
So, probably about 12 years ago—12, 15 years ago—my father, myself, and two of my grandchildren went to Garnet, and he'd always kept this a secret, where this mineshaft was. So we went up there, and he was going walk right out to it and show it to us. We went out on the old road. Of course, the road had been closed for years that goes out to that area and was overgrown with brush, and trees had grown and the landscape had changed. We went out there and there were two mine entrances. He looked and he looked and he looked, trying to put it together, and the entrances—the portals I guess they called them back then—were closed. They had drifted shut. But finally he could determine that that was the one. Then he almost reached an agreement with the fellow that was mining up in Garnet. I can't really remember the guy's name. This fellow wanted to go in and open up that particular mine—tunnel, I should say—and old Dad could never come around to quite telling him where that tunnel was. [laughs] So he went to the grave with that in his mind. That was always interesting. Looking at those old chunks of gold. It put the spirit in you!

VS: So, you say that you came back in the early '50s. When did you leave, or were you only there in the summers?

PM: We were just there that summer. The gold miners ran a bit of rich off of running the old tailings through that mill. Turned out to be in here. They didn't make any money. They sold off the equipment. We moved back to our place east of town, east of Missoula, and that was the last time that we lived there.

VS: When you came back to, like you said, '49 or whatever, when did you leave before then, to come back there? You remember being able to see Davey.

PM: Oh, yes. My memories of Davey were not...I don't think we were living there in Garnet when I remember Davey. I think it was like a weekend trip to go up and visit the aunts and uncles and cousins that were living there. So we left...I have two periods of time when I was in Garnet, one when I was just born for maybe three or four years, I don't know. Then again in summer of about 1949, '50, something in those two areas. We just had a great time, riding bicycles, when we were up there in that summer of '49. An old friend of mine, Del Fontaine, lived with us up there that summer. Del Fontaine is now deceased. He had the honor of being one of the oldest, or should I say longest-living, heart transplant recipients. He died here six months ago or so. But anyway, as a young fellow, he spent the summer up there. He and I would ride bicycles everywhere. That was a great sport, we had lots of fun.

VS: Where did you get the bicycles?

PM: Oh, they were our bikes. We hauled them up there. We even made them, that summer, my mother always milked the cow. We always had fresh milk. The house we were in, I think it was many of the families didn't have much money, and Mom felt her part would be to help that
way, so we had a cow, so we hauled the cow to Garnet with us. So my mom would go out and milk the cow up there.

VS: What did you haul it on?

PM: Oh, the old man'd throw it on the back of a pickup with a rack and away you'd go, you know. And then one of the incidents I remember up there, the carbide lanterns that you had. I was always fascinated with those. You can take a carbide and throw a little water on it and—I don't know if you've ever seen it before—they bubble and then fumes come off of it, and throw a match on it, you know, and it'd burn. So one time there was, we had oodles of it up there, so we took a whole bunch of it, a couple handfuls and I put it on top of a little barrel and then I put a bunch of water on it. Then I let it bubble for a little bit and I threw a match on it. Of course you had an explosion! I was that close, it'd go BOOM, right in front of me, and I turned around and everything I looked at was pink! [laughs] I didn't do that again!

Oh, another thing that I remember that was so fascinating to me was going into the old mines. Dad, in that same summer, coming back again in '49, they were working one of the mines up there. I can't remember which one it was, but he had a crew of probably two or three guys in there, working. I can remember the thrill of going from the outside into the mine, and that first change when you went through the portal area, from the outside and on into the tunnel, and when you made that transition, that was always a little spooky for a moment. Then once you were in, it was exciting. I can remember walking way back in there with my father, and you'd get way back there and you could hear voices. Then pretty soon, you'd come around the corner, and you'd look way out there and you could see the lights from those carbide lanterns. Then you'd get back in there and there the guys would be in there, working away in the gold mine. It was always thrilling to me.

The real thrill was when they'd get ready to touch off the dynamite. They'd be in there, and they'd be drilling and drilling and drilling. They'd have, they'd call it the face, and they'd have it all set up. Then they'd load her up with the powder. As a little kid, I was fascinated with that bang. They'd load it up, and they weren't using electric [unintelligible] back then. They were using the old fuses that you'd light with a match. I remember, boy, they'd get down there and get everything ready and they'd get all the fuses right there ready to start lighting. That was kind of my dad's part of the game. I can't remember if he used a match or a flare or what, but boy he'd start lighting those fuses. Man, here we are in this mine and boy, I know my old eyeballs were just like that, and the old adrenaline is running and going like crazy! Then boy, he says [snaps fingers], “We gotta go, we gotta go.” Oh, I was so nervous about that. You know, those guys, they knew that they had whatever it was, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 20 minutes, whatever it was to get out of there. But you know, a little kid like me, man, I knew that thing was going off any moment. Then you'd get out there, and you'd sit outside the portal, you'd stand out and to the side, and pretty soon you'd hear that go BOOM, and boy the old air'd just come roaring out of there. You wanted to be careful not to smell it, because...Remember, Don, how it always had a sweet smell, which was attractive, but if you smelled it, you'd get a horrible
headache. Just awful sick. Didn't want to smell that stuff. So, but that was, for a young boy, that was a very thrilling moment.

VS: Were you helping your dad mine?

PM: Oh, probably getting in his way more than anything, you know. Might have thought I was. But not very effective. Working in the mill, yeah, I had a job there, so I could be productive and do something.

DF: Do you remember any of the names of any of those miners?

PM: Boy, I don't. There was a crew that Dad had working there, for...no, I can't remember. They weren't people from the area there, they were kind of transient type people. And so there were [unintelligible].

DF: Was that the Mountain View mine?

PM: I can't remember, Dick. One of the things I was always poor at was remembering the names and the locations of those mines. Like the Nancy Hanks was a real landmark, and we knew that, but the others...I never paid attention to it, like I should've. And so when they were talking about mines, my mind was wandering.

VS: What do you remember about your mom's work up there?

PM: Well, you see, the cow bit. You know, back in the summer of '49 I can remember, vividly, my mom would always take care of the cow and milk the cow, and that's why I remember that. As far as other memories, it's difficult for me to come up with those. And I think again it's one of the situations where I'm sort of imagining what they would have done rather than real memories.

VS: Do you remember her doing laundry?

PM: I can't remember those things. Sharon can. I just don't remember those things. I remember the cabin that we lived in that summer, which was the newest cabin in Garnet at that time. And that was strictly a one-room cabin. I remember when we were out, digging the hole for the outhouse, which was just beneath from that cabin. I'm losing my directions here, I think, north, the cabin would be towards, from the subject cabin, towards Ole's bar on that side of the cabin. When we were digging out there, for the outhouse, we ran into some plumbing. Some miner piped it. And we'd say, “Boy, where did that come from? Who put the pipe in the ground and when did they do that?” Mysterious.

VS: I'd like to go back to that telephone you were talking about. Do you remember who owned that?
PM: No, I don't. And see, it was just outside of Davey's store, or hotel, I can't remember. No, it had to be outside the hotel. And it was on a stand, and it had a little protective hovel or hut over it. And you know, it might have been a BLM phone or something like that for reporting fires, I don't know. We always knew that we shouldn't be playing with it, but we just couldn't pass up the temptation.

DF: Was Jack Kohr's cabin built then?

PM: Oh yes, Jack Kohr, yeah.

DF: I remember the impression I'd got, it was built around the ‘60s or something like that.

PM: No, that's not correct. I don't think anyway, but I mean, my old head slips every so often, but Jack and Chrissy's cabin was, it's always been there for as long as I can remember.

DF: Behind the Dahl cabin?

PM: That's correct. And, you know, they keep that up, the two Kohr boys. I saw Danny here just a month ago, he stopped by the house. I think they do a little repair work on that each summer, kind of keep it in pretty good shape.

VS: While I'm thinking about it, I was wondering if you could tell us about the deer antlers again.

PM: Oh yeah. Neat story, for me. I remember my father telling me the story of, he shot a deer and I think it was sometime back in the ‘30s. I can't remember exactly when this occurred, but anyway, he shot this deer and it had a nice set of horns. So there was a tree that was kind of, a forked tree, and he took the horns out, slapped them in the fork of that tree. They stayed there, and I think to this day they're still there. I remember, we'd been back up there and I go and look at it. Of course, the tree has grown around it. The antlers had really solidified, really holds them in there, and the squirrels and such had not eaten much off of it. I think they chewed the ends a little bit, but they haven't done much damage to it. My father always said that was because they, he thought the ingredients of the tree had kind of gone into the horns, maybe gave them a tree flavor, something like that. I think the squirrels don't like to eat lodge pole pine. So I think they're still there.

VS: Did you go to school at Garnet?

PM: No. I was, my mother taught there, it was probably [unintelligible]. We had gone back and visited the old schoolhouse on numerous occasions, but no.

VS: Was your mother teaching before Garnet?
PM: Yes, I think. And Sharon tried to cover that, and Sharon probably has a better memory of it than I do, but I believe that after my mother graduated from Dillon, which was a horrendous feat to accomplish back in those days. For her and her family, that was so poor and that. I think that was her very first teaching job, was in Garnet. So she taught there, and met...and my dad was up there [unintelligible] when they met. And then they were married.

VS: Do you have any memories about the kinds of clothes you wore?

PM: No.

VS: What do you remember about the food you ate?

PM: You know, I was looking at that question before. Most, I think, I can remember is the candy bars out of Davey's store. I can remember that. But as far as other foods...I'm a great lover now of food. But I just don't recall any.

VS: Did you pick huckleberries?

PM: Oh, my mother was the world's greatest huckleberry picker. Ever. And she always loved them. So we always had huckleberries. That's just kind of standard fare. I would love to tell you this short little story, which happened many years later about my mother and huckleberries. This was in—if you don't mind—in the summer of, I think, of about 1963 or something like that. My father was a logger. Our families were living in St. Regis and logging down there. My mother was getting a little older and her eyesight was not as good as usual. She had taken some of our kids, her grandkids, a couple of them, out that day. Picked huckleberries. When we got home from work that night, after logging and having dinner and everything, and she said, “Well, Pat, you ought to come over, and have a piece of huckleberry pie. Just made a huckleberry pie.”

“Oh, well, I'd love to.” So I went over, and I was sitting there eating that huckleberry pie, and I said, “Boy, Mom, this is...It's a good pie, but this has a flavor like I've never tasted before.” I ate some, and I said, “Boy, there is something different...”“Well, finally, I picked up the crust and looked in it, and here were sprinkled amongst the huckleberries, deer poop! [laughs] What had happened was, well then she remembered, she had spilled the huckleberries out there while she was...and she picked them up, and she wasn't paying close attention. So they had a very distinctly flavored huckleberry pie. [laughs] So we didn't eat any more of that huckleberry pie.

VS: Oh, man! Did your family own a car when you were up there?

PM: [Affirmation] Yeah, I can remember several situations that involved cars. I can remember, I think the folks had about an old '47 Chevy and black. When I think along, it was black. Either '45 or something like that, somewhere up there. I can remember, boy that old Chevy'd get hot and just be a-smokin', and that was a tough time getting up there with it.
I remember one incident that I always remember, was that one time when we were going to Garnet, we came upon a group of these people the folks knew, and they had an either Model A or Model T Ford, and they were backing it up the hill instead of driving it forward up the hill. I just thought, what the devil are they doing? Why are they doing that? Well, they explained to me that the way that old Ford was built, they did not have a fuel pump on it. It was a gravity-flowed system. I think the fuel tank was mounted with just upon a cowling, right up ahead of the windshield. When you got so steep a hill, the gas was not going to gravity flow into the carburetor. So if you turned around backwards, you got the gas tank up above the carburetor, you could keep it running, and that's why they backed them up the hill rather than going forward. So that always stuck with me.

Then I remember in that same era, that '48-'49 era, my father had an old Ford station wagon, one of those old woodies. Of course, back then, it wasn't, not a very prestigious car. It was kind of an old beater. We were trying to...the guys were working up at Garnet, mining, and we needed to get some groceries to Garnet. So we started up there, and it was snowing and slick, and so we stopped and Dad put on the chains on that old station wagon. We started up that China Grade, and that was a steep hill, and he was having a tough time. So he got me over there next to him, and I was running the gas. I'd run the gas and he'd run the clutch and the brake, and between the two of us and that, away we'd go. We'd make a few feet and tear up the ground and didn't tear it apart, and finally got up there. Lordy, that must have been tough on those old cars. Doing that to them, you know. Then the Jeep incident, like I told you, when we would take the Jeep and go driving that around and looking for rabbits. And no top on it.

VS: Was that your parents' Jeep?

PM: It belonged to the group: my dad and Glen Faulkner and George Sutherland and the mine.

VS: What do you remember about your parents and their social scene?

PM: Well, you know, I thought listening to my sister Sharon talk about it would bring back some memories, but it doesn't. And I can't remember any of those functions, anything like that. I remember summer picnics, being out there, and a normal picnic—hot dog, marshmallow type thing. But as far as beyond that, or as far as social functions, I can't remember much. I think that when I was a kid, I wasn't interested in that, I was interested in rabbits and bicycles and Jeeps, you know. So I just can't remember much along those lines.

VS: Where were those picnics?

PM: Right there, in fact, right down below the McMahon's cabin right in there was the last one that I remember. I remember hearing my parents talk about the earlier days, when they would go out to some of the parks that are out around Garnet. I can't remember the name of it.
DF: Warren Park?

PM: Maybe that was it, I can't—

VS: Sand Park?

PM: What was it?

VS: Sand Park?

PM: I think Sand Park, I've heard that, of where they would go out there and the whole community would go out there periodically, like the Fourth of July or something in the summertime like that. Groups of them would go out there. But I don't remember those incidents.

VS: What do you remember about the Fourth of July?

PM: Going to Seeley Lake, when we were kids.

VS: What would you do there?

PM: Oh, it was always a two-day event. The first day, being with my complexion, I'd run around in the sun and get horribly sun burnt because there wasn't any suntan lotion in those days. Then the second day and thereafter for about a week, I would recover. [laughs] We would have a great time for one day, and then it was all over with. I do remember those situations, and I think Don had his first wife, Marian, who is deceased now, I believe, used to come up to those. There would be 20 or 30 people all involved in those situations. I think it was a deal of us kids were down in the lake, swimming, and the people were all of there, imbibing a little bit and having a little something to drink and having a great time.

VS: I was wondering if I could go back to Frank Davey again. I was wondering, do you remember what he looked like.

PM: Well, I was trying to. Again, whether I remember Frank or whether I remember stories of Frank Davey, it's hard for me to separate that out. But from what I remember, he was a small person. I think that he had the moustache. He was an old gentleman when I was up there. I was kind of scared of him and I can't tell you why I was, but his reputation was such that as a little kid, I was kind of scared of old Davey. And it wasn't Frank Davey. It was Davey. I think my aunt Aggie, who was the mail carrier in town for a bit, ended the post in the hotel shortly after he died. I remember my cousin, Bobby McMahon, saying how when he would go over there to get old Davey, he'd be sitting in the back room of the hotel, and he'd have a stick, little stick pushing in the firewood. That old stove was what was heating the whole area. He wasn't going
to waste a big bunch of wood. He'd just have one stick at a time. But I can't remember many
incidents with Davey.

VS: I heard that Davey was afraid of fire.

PM: I don't know that. May have been.

VS: What do you remember about special outings? To Missoula or into Drummond?

PM: I don't think I can add much to your comment there, Valerie. I guess I remember in '48-'49
[unintelligible] but as far as outings...either we didn't have any, or it's all gone out of my old
head.

VS: Do you remember anything about fishing? Did you ever go fishing?

PM: Well, we did, but you see, our fishing was, as young people, was with the family. Our family
was really a cohesive, strong group, and we would go to the Madison River and stay in Ennis, or
around Ennis in that little trailer house, and we'd catch fish like crazy. I can remember my dad
taking me fishing on the Blackfoot River, when I was really young. He was an avid fisherman,
tied his own flies and really liked it. So I can remember doing those things. I can remember
some of the creeks that we used to go to, like behind Potomac I think was Jimmy Smith Creek.
Arkansas Creek, where Don hauled some loads of logs out of there. We fished up in there. Then
I remember when my father went over on the other side of the mountain, so to speak, and
then we went up Beavertail Hill, and all of a sudden...I can't remember the name of the creek,
but it was over by Beavertail Hill. Anyway, the headwaters of it were back in near where the
headwaters of Jimmy Smith Creek originated. We went up, up behind over on the Beavertail Hill
side. That was into, built a road into was virgin country. It was a long ways back in there, so that
creek was filled with fish. It was fantastic fishing.

DF: Was it Kramer Creek?

PM: Thank you. Likewise, I remember as kids, my mother loved to fish, and my mother and
brother and sister and I would go up Jimmy Smith Creek and fish up there when Dad was up in
the woods, working. And oh we'd just catch fish like crazy. So yes, I do remember fishing.

DF: So there was probably a fair amount of subsistence food gathering then, huckleberries,
fishing—other subsistence stuff.

PM: Oh yeah. Oh, I think you're absolutely right. Like the hunting was always a ritual. We would
always go hunting every fall, and my father would especially. It wasn't for trophy, it was for
food. I can't, with our family, I can't remember any poaching going on, but I sure heard the
stories about it. If Don's old head was working better, he could tell you a lot of stories about
poaching, because boy, I can remember hearing the stories on the folks poaching. Well, it
wasn't anything other than necessity. The one story I do remember of poaching was when I was probably...or, no, probably nine or ten years old, and this Del Fontaine that I told you about earlier? His family was living up Elk Creek, and I was up there with them for probably a month that summer, fishing and fooling around like us kids did. When we were growing up there, with the Fontaine family, one afternoon out jumped a deer and out jumped Ed Fontaine and bang! bang! Down went the deer, and then they all got nervous and just you know it was emotion going on and on, and there were about five of us shoved in that little—

[End of Side A]
VS: Do you remember anything about the games you guys would play, other than the wagon?

PM: Now, the wagon of course, those were the most thrilling. Nothing like it. Well, and to add to that wagon story a little bit, even though I was really young, and Dad would let me use the pickup. So towards the tail end, instead of us pushing that wagon up, I would take, I would pull it up with the truck. So that simplified things there. Very exciting until we ran into the tree, and I think that just about demolished the old wagon. As far as other games... well, Del Fontaine and I, we were going mining so we built a mine. Needless to say, we got in, in fact it was right beside the old cabin that we lived in that summer there, and I think we made it all of about three or four feet. That was the end of our mine. [laughs]

VS: How old were you guys then?

PM: Oh, that was back when I was, let's see, just probably eight or so. Seven or eight. Seven. Our mining spirit didn't last very long though.

VS: I was talking to someone earlier that grew up there in the early '40s and the '30s, and he said that when they were going to school, they had a boy's club. And they built a little cabin back in the woods. Were you any part of that?

PM: No, no, in fact I don't remember that story either.

VS: It was the Robinsons.

PM: No, I don't. The going out and hunting packrats in those old houses—that was a thrilling thing. With our flashlights and our .22's and boy, those old packrats got hit in the crossfire. Apparently our parents didn't mind us shooting. So we did a lot of that, and rode the bikes like crazy. The old Jeep.

VS: Do you remember any sports, baseball?

PM: Killing packrats. No, we didn't have any organized games of any type: basketball, baseball, none of that that I can...too many other fun games to play.

VS: What kind of chores did you have to do?

PM: I don't...not much. Our parents were pretty lenient with us, and I worked at the mill. I started out there, the ore mill, the job I earlier described, and I had that job. That was my work, if that's kind of supposed to be any chores. Was my work a chore?

VS: What do you remember about the Dahls?

Pat McDonald Interview, OH 379-007, Archives and Special Collections Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
PM: Not as much as my sister. I think that the reason being that my interests weren't with older people at that point. I was a kid. Hunting rabbits, hunting packrats, driving the Jeep, riding the bicycle. I didn't have time to spend with elderly people at work, who were related to me. So I can remember the wine that Mrs. Dahl made all the time, and she was famous for that. I remember Ole as kind of a humped up little old guy, walking around there. But I just don't remember much about them. Their house, I remember it was always very neat, well kept. That's about it.

VS: Do you remember how the furnishings were in the house?

PM: No.

DF: Were there other folks outside of your family and the Dahls living around then?

PM: There was an old guy by the name of Stoddard, and Stoddard lived in the old jail, I believe. Did he not? I think. But what we had been told was the jail. Stoddard was a single fellow, and I don't think he ever worked while we were around there, that we knew of. Where his money came from, I'm not sure. And so yes, he was there. And our relatives were all there. Then, a fellow—it's horrible, I can't remember his name—kind of a caretaker of Garnet. I'd say Fitz—

VS: Fitzgerald.

DF: Frank Fitzgerald.

PM: Fitzgerald. He would show up periodically, and he lived on that same gulch where our cabin was. And he would show up periodically, but I never really knew him. It was kind of, he lived in that great big house down the road there. So I never really knew him. As far as others...there may have been some others but boy, I don't remember, outside of our relatives. We had lots of relatives.

VS: Kind of randomly, the question I meant to ask earlier, I heard Davey was an Englishman.

PM: Oh, I'm sure he was. That would be my guess, and I think I've heard my parents say that same thing. I think he was.

VS: Do you remember an accent?

PM: No, I don't. In fact, I don't ever remember hearing Davey speak. He was an elderly old guy, who didn't like to be bothered by those damn whipper-snapper kids, was kind of the attitude that I picked him as. So I don't remember him speaking.

VS: Why don't you tell me about your relatives?
PM: Well, we can start out with Don McDonald right over there, my cousin. Don and Marian lived up there, I think that summer when we were, when my father was running that mill. I can think, they lived on down past the Hawes' house. Then there was Bob and Aggie McMahon—that's my mother's sister and her husband—and they lived in the McMahon house there, which is now probably the nicest house in town there. Keith Luoma was married to my cousin, Elizabeth Therriault. [Unintelligible] So anyway, they lived there. My cousin, Tim Hawe and June Hawe, whose parents were Edith and Glen Hawe. Edith was my mother's sister. They lived there. Glen Hawe was a great miner, a great teller of tales. He was a graduate of, I think the University of Idaho, I'd always heard with a degree in mining, and that's why he was smart. He could really help build those gold mining stories. I remember he and my cousin Tim had a little place just up past the schoolhouse when we were there in that summer of '49 and they were mining and getting a little gold, and all that. There were those people.

Then Jack and Chrissy Kohr were around there, but I can't remember them as being there all the time. I don't think they were there too much. I had all these relatives and I'm trying to tell you who they are. There are a lot of names here. Don's deceased brother, Red McDonald, used to be up around Garnet, but I can't remember...he wasn't there that summer of '49, he was there in earlier years. But I can't remember that, of course. My dad's brother, Marvin McDonald, was around there with Elsie, his first wife, and other wives. Of course, the stories of my Uncle Marvin were told to me by my mother, and I always loved the expressions. She always said that Uncle Marvin was so good-looking and such a talker that he could charm the snakes out of the trees. He was physically a big guy and a good guy.

I remember John Toole telling me the story—John wrote about it in his book The Baron, the Logger, the Miner, and Me [1984] or whatever it was—and John Toole I knew fairly well. He would tell me about the bloody battle he saw Marvin and this fellow out of Butte getting into. They fought for hours right in front of Ole Dahl's bar, and it was the bloodiest battle he ever witnessed and all that. In later years, I would try and ask my uncle Marvin about things like that, and he didn't want to talk about things like that. [laughs] That didn't fit real good. But anyway, they lived up there also...but I can't remember them there.

Then Vi [Violet] and Frog Therriault. Frog Therriault was just like his name implies—one of the most unique fellows I've ever known in this world. Harold Therriault, I guess was his name, and he's...they're all deceased now.

DF: They also had a cabin up Dublin Gulch, not too far from—

PM: I think that's correct, Dick. But see that goes back to where I was too young and can't remember exactly.

DF: The Luomas have mentioned to me on occasion that there was this long period of time when Grandma Therriault [paid taxes on the cabin].
PM: Oh, did she? That may well have been, sure. Sharon was mixed up a little bit on our cabin when she talked about a well. There wasn’t a well, there was a spring, but it was—and I’m not trying to sit here and criticize my sister—but I can remember it was so neat when we would walk down to the cabin, because off on the left was a little house that Dad had built that protected this spring, and there was a trapdoor and you’d open it up and there was your fresh spring water there. Then you walked across this little bridge, which was, had a little creek running under it, and then you were right in town. Now when I’ve gone back and looked at the cabin, it just amazes me that people lived in those places. It was so small. There was a kitchen and there was another room, and that was the house. I can remember being in that house as a young person. The kitchen of course functioned as the kitchen. The other room was, I guess, the living room, the bedroom—you know, the whole works. And they were just so small. We have closets today that aren’t too much smaller today than that house was. It amazes me.

VS: Did all your family sleep in the same room?

PM: Well, in the summer of ’49 when we lived up there, our whole family plus Del Fontaine slept in the same room. Very common. Kids jump in the bed and sleep, I’m sure we had different beds but I don’t remember. Very pleasant [unintelligible].

VS: What are your memories of Sharon and Doug?

PM: Well, Doug was always such a little kid. He’s, what? [calculates quietly out loud]...He must be six years younger than me. And he was always such, physically, a little kid that he grew up to be a great big, studly-type guy—6 foot 3 and great football player and on and on. But in the early years, we didn’t do much together like at Garnet. Because he was too young and too little and we didn’t want to waste our time with a little twerpy kid, you know, type of thing. My sister, Sharon, was a firecracker, fiery hellion. Ooh, she could get mad at you sometimes, just really filled with spirit. But she and mom did a lot of things together, so in Garnet, we didn’t do many things together.

I remember, kind of back in that same time era, one time at a place east of town about—oh, out there, about four miles east of town—a house we’ve had since 1944. I remember one time, this thing Del Fontaine and I were mining and we didn’t want Sharon around, she was bugging us, so Del couldn’t run very fast, so I said “Here, Del, you take off and run, and I’ll hold Sharon until you get down there. Then I’ll run down and catch up with you. We won’t have to play with her.” Well, she’s screaming and hollering and going on like crazy, you know like she’s getting killed, and just about then my dad drives in. My dad misinterpreted what was going on, and I could see fire coming out of his eyes. [laughs] I thought, boy, I’d better catch up with Del. Boy, I took off, zippity-doo-da, down through the field, and right in the next land next to us was an area that was filled with those little jack pine—like dog hair in there. I remember [claps hands to imitate running], boy, we zipped into there—old Del ahead of me. We’re going through the little trees and we’re slipping through there, and you could hear the old man back there,
banging into them and mad. Pretty soon, BLAM. He had me at the shoulder. “Okay, we're going back up to see Sharon.” He drags me back up there, and she explained to him it was a game and so everything was okay. [laughs] It was thrilling for a few minutes, I'll tell you.

Del Fontaine and I used to do a million things together. I mean, in Garnet when we were young. Kids, we just, why we didn't get killed or something. We built a cannon one time, and we got big wheels and built a platform, and took some W black pipe and drilled a hole in it for the fuse and all of that. We'd haul that around, and we'd...In firecracker season, we'd load her up with firecrackers and shoot rocks like crazy. Then we found, one time we found some of my dad's old black gunpowder, so that was even better. Boy, we knew we shouldn't be doing that, so we'd take it away from the house and we'd load her up with that old black gunpowder, stick a fuse in it, touch it off, and BOOM. She'd roar and blow rocks out of there, and like I say, why we didn't get hurt...there is a God.

The one time, we had it at our place four miles east of town. My grandpa was living with us, Grandpa George, who was an ornery old cuss. I don't want the gods striking me for saying this, but he was an ornery old bugger. I remember one time we took our cannon, and there was the outhouse up there. He didn't like indoor plumbing. He always used that outhouse. So we took that old cannon one time, and we shot a hole through it with rocks. Well, my sister says Grandpa was in there when we did it. I don't think we did it when he was in there, but I do remember that he'd come out of that outhouse after we'd throw rocks, “You damn kids!” [changes voice to make impression of Grandpa George]. He was always after us. You know, I always felt, as I got older in life, I thought about that, I was remorseful about it. I talked to my mom, and I said, “Boy, Mom, I must have treated him really badly.”

She said, “Pat, you don't remember the whole story. He would antagonize you and tease you.” So, well, maybe she said that so I would feel better, but anyway...ornery old bugger.

VS: And George lived at Garnet too?

PM: He did. As I understand it, but you see that was when...I don't know. I don't think he was alive when we moved there in '49.1 don't remember where Grandpa was living. That must have been that. But I don't think he lived with us when we went up there, that summer. But, needless to say, he had lived there at Garnet in the earlier years. He and Dad and Marvin did an awful lot of mining together. They were always mining.

DF: There was a McDonald boarding house in the first boom, just before the turn of the century. Is there any possible relation?

PM: You know, it could be, Dick. And it's really hard—I think Don has the same problem—we have a very difficult time tracking back our history on my father's side of the family. I don't think my father ever saw his grandfather, I don't believe. The story was that his, my father's
grandfather, had homesteaded in the Blackfoot valley, early on, and so is there any possibility? Yes. Do I know anything about it? No.

VS: Where did Del Fontaine come from, was he a relative or—

PM: No, just a young person. You’re probably too young to remember these things, but there was the old Club Chateau east of town, which in the early years, was originally The Ring. And it was founded by Fontaine, I can’t see his name, the boxer. He was a professional boxer, and that was Del Fontaine’s uncle. So the Fontaine clan lived around the old Ring that became the Chateau. Del and I were just the same age, and everything clicked together and we just did way too many things together. [laughs]

VS: So when he accompanied you to Garnet, his family stayed in Missoula?

PM: Yes. We lived up there, as kids, jumping around, doing all those things that kids do. Had great times. I say there is a god. [laughs]

VS: Let’s see if I can stir any memories about time spent with your father? [unintelligible] Do you remember hanging out with him at home?

PM: Well, see, it’s hard for me to pick out the specific incidents like that, Valerie. My mother and father in later years divorced, and it was a horrible situation. Like I suppose any divorce would be. I was 35 years old when it happened so I wasn’t a kid, but the end of the story is that my father ran off with a younger woman. Up until that period of time, our family was probably the strongest family around. I mean, just a real cohesive, strong family. So we did lots of things together. We were always doing things together. The fishing trips to Ennis. My father in my eyes was near god. I can remember as a young kid, six, seven years old, and Mom was working for Dad. I felt it was my obligation for someone to be out there, working for my dad. Whether it was getting anything done or getting in his way, you know, you can look at that both ways. But I always did that, and so from, I think, age seven on—or eight or something—I always worked in the woods in the summer months with my father. Just not feeling that I was burdening myself doing it or going out of my way. Just like I breathe air. I worked for my father in the summer. That's just how life is. So we had a tremendous relationship, a good relationship with the fishing, and we would always go hunting together. We would go skiing [unintelligible]. We just did oodles of things together, as a family. So then, when the folks divorced, it was such a dramatic change. It was really difficult. Really difficult.

VS: We'll go to something easier. What kind of skis were you wearing? [laughs]

PM: Old wooden skis, I think they were [unintelligible].

VS: They were factory made?
PM: Oh yeah, they were. In fact, my first ski days were at Marshall. I didn't start skiing until I was in about the seventh grade, because I played basketball. Our coach didn't want us skiing. When we were playing basketball that was a taboo. So, I didn't ski until, I think it was the seventh grade. On the old lift up at Marshall, which was very ancient, old. It had an old Buick V-8 motor and a rope tow, and you were skiing.

VS: Sharon was talking about the families coming over and having that coffee.

PM: Yes. When I was listening to Sharon, I was saying, “Now, does she remember that, or is she remembering hearing that?” I don't know. I can remember, like out at our house east of town, going through back to that same era—that '48-'49 era—primarily Aggie and Mom's sisters stopping by and having coffee. Oh, just like Sharon explained, they'd saucer their coffee. Pour that coffee into the saucer—I guess to cool it—and slurp it. I mean, they slurped it. Then sometimes they would, I remember, they'd use a sugar cube. Someone did. I don't know if it was Aggie or who. But they would slurp it through the sugar cube to get the sweetness out of it. So they would stop by a lot. Then Jack and Chrissy Kohr would stop by a lot, and there was always the coffee. Then there be the holidays when everybody would gather. Our place was kind of a gathering place. Don and Marian used to be over there every Christmas, and Mom would fix all the great food. The guys would have their drinks and tell their gold mining stories and get the little kids all excited about going gold mining. I don't know if I covered what you want or not.

VS: Well, I guess I asked a lot of the questions I was going to ask. What I'd like to do to finish up is ask you if there was anything you wanted me to ask you that I didn't cover.

PM: I suppose I could ask, how are you and your boyfriend doing? [laughs] Her boyfriend works at the bank where I work.

VS: Much better now he broke for the ice for me! [laughs]

PM: Good to hear that. I guess the thing that—as I get older I get very emotional—I used to kind of give my old dad heck. I wouldn't openly give him heck, but then he would get tears in his eyes so easy. I'd think, Dad, stop that! That's foolishness. I wouldn't say that to him, but that's what I thought. Now as I am the age that he was, I think I'm worse than he is, or was. So I have to watch myself a little bit, but like I've said, that we were so fortunate to have experienced Garnet. Just so fortunate. And it's a situation, a happening, that can never happen again. My kids could never do it. My grandkids will never be able to do it. That's an era that has gone. Forever. And it was a great era. I could tell you that. I think I've just about covered everything that I could recall, of relevance up there, that I should talk about. [laughs] So up to you, at this point.

VS: All right. Well, thank you very much for talking with us. I think we've covered a lot of ground.
PM: Yes. My pleasure.

[End of Interview]