The following transcript was provided to Archives and Special Collections by The Gathering: Collected Oral Histories of the Irish in Montana with its associated audio recording.
Mary Downing: This is Mary Kay Downing, November the 6th, 2010 and I’m here interviewing Danette Harrington. Good afternoon, Danette.

DH: Good afternoon, Mary Kay.

MD: Now for the record, you’ll have to tell us your full name and tell us where and when you were born.

DH: My full name is Danette Marie Harrington. I was born in Butte Montana February 9, 1944.

MD: And did you grow up in Butte.

DH: I did.

MD: Where have you lived?

DH: I’ve always lived in Butte. It’s the only place I’ve ever lived. I was raised in Dublin Gulch and I moved, after I got married, further west to William Street and I’m still there.

MD: And all in Butte?

DH: All in Butte.

MD: What jobs have you had?

DH: Oh, let’s see. Well, I guess my first jobs were babysitting, and then I went to work for the Grand Silver Department Store when I was still in high school. Then I worked for Blue Shield Insurance and then I went to work in the courthouse when I was 19 and I’m still there.

MD: So the next question is, what do you do for a living now?
DH: I work at the courthouse. I’m the Electric Butte Silver Bow auditor.

MD: The Electric Butte Silver Bow auditor. What’s Butte Silver Bow?

DH: Silver Bow is our City/County combined into one government.

MD: Okay. And have you ever married?

DH: Yes.

MD: When were you married?

DH: I was married on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17, 1973.

MD: And was your partner also of Irish ancestry?

DH: No. That’s what went wrong. (Laughter)

MD: (Comments in background) Come on, tell us.

DH: No.

MD: And do you have any children?

DH: I have two sons.

MD: And how old are they?

DH: Jeff is my oldest son. He just turned 36. Jason is my second son and he will be 33 on the 17th of November.

MD: And where do they live?

DH: Jeff lives in Butte Montana, married to Velvet (?) that has two children, Hunter and Payton. Hunter is 11, Payton is 6. They attend Kennedy school. Jason lives and teaches school in Helena Montana. He teaches wood, drafting and leather. Unmarried.

MD: And did you have any brothers or sisters?

DH: Yes I did. I had one brother.
MD: And where did you fall, were you older or younger?

DH: I was younger.

MD: And who is your brother?

DH: James Harrington.

MD: And what did James Harrington do?

DH: He was a boilermaker for the Anaconda Company and he when the mines closed he went
to work for the Butte Silver Bow on the Metro sewer maintenance crew.

MD: So he too lived in Butte?

DH: He did, all his life.

MD: Now tell me about your parents. What are your parents’ names?

DH: My mother was Margaret Page Harrington, my father was Daniel Patrick Harrington.

MD: And were your mom and dad from Ireland?

DH: No.

MD: Where were they born?

DH: They were born in Butte.

MD: And were their parents from Ireland?

DH: Yes.

MD: When did your ancestors, who were your ancestors? Tell me about the 4 of them that you
know.

DH: you know my grandparents on my dad’s side were Mary and Pete Harrington and on my
mother’s side it was Hannah and James Frances Page.

MD: And do you know where Pete Harrington was from in Ireland?
DH: They were from Castle Condair in a little village called Pontrene (?) outside the city.

Transcriber/s Comment: Possibly County Kildare? Location unclear.

MD: Do you know when Pete Harrington came to Montana?
DH: I don’t.

MD: Do you know if he came directly to Montana from Ireland?
DH: As far as I know he did.

MD: Did he come to Montana already married to Mary?
DH: That I can’t answer. I don’t know. He died in 1914.

MD: He died in 1914.
DH: Um hm.

MD: So you wouldn’t know him.
DH: I didn’t, no.

MD: How many children did Pete and Mary have?
DH: Ten.

MD: Ten?
DH: Um hm.

MD: Are they all in Butte?
DH: No, they all, except the only two that stayed in Butte during my lifetime was my Aunt Jewel McCue (?) and my father. The rest of them all relocated to San Francisco.

MD: So was Jewel and your father?
DH: Brother and sister.

MD: Okay. And how about Hannah and James Page? Did they also come from Ireland?
DH: I believe they were probably born here. Or, I think James Page, I’m not sure. My grandmother was an O’Brien, Hannah O’Brien Page. I’m not sure where she was born but James F Page was born in Pennsylvania so they came to Butte through Pennsylvania.

MD: And do you know if they were married when they got to Butte?

DH: I don’t.

MD: Okay. Do you have any photographs of your, these would be your great grandparents?

DH: Un hm. I do.

MD: Good. Okay. I’d like to get, send me a copy?

DH: Okay.

MD: Now do you know anything about their lives in Ireland?

DH: I don’t know much other than my father telling me stories about how they used to walk from Castle Condair(?) to the mine at (word unintelligible) and how tough they were and how they were very limited with any kind of food and it was a cold very difficult life if you weren’t on the sea or in the mine and it was just a very sparse existence.

MD: Do you know how old he was when he came to the United States”

DH: I don’t, no.

MD: But your father would tell you stories about your grandfather?

DH: Um hm.

MD: Your grandfather died young. How about Page? Did he die young too?

DH: You know, I’m not sure. I remember my grandmother. I think James F Page died after my brother was born and I think he was probably about 11 or 12 when he died. And my grandmother Page died when I was probably 4 or 5.
MD: So do you remember her?

DH: I do remember her.

MD: What do you remember about your grandma?

DH: Um, she had a leather cast on her arm and she sat by the stove when she came to the house, that’s where she kind of just perched and I don’t know exactly what was the matter with her arm but she never left the kitchen. I mean that’s where we entertained was in the kitchen. Even if you had a bunch of rooms but you didn’t go there, you just sat in the kitchen where it was warm. And she sat drinking tea at the, in a rocking chair. And the leather cast. I’m assuming she must have had some kind of arthritis or something but it was a leather cast and it was very strange to see that on a person but I do remember that about her and she was white-haired, looked a lot like my mother as I remember her as she is.

MD: And she was Hannah O’Brien. What part of Ireland was Hannah from?

DH: You know, I don’t have any clue where the O’Briens. Nobody has ever done any research on the Page side.

MD: Have you ever thought about what your Irish ancestry means to you when you think about these grandparents and great grandparents?

DH: Well, I guess what it means to me and I never really associated it until I went to Ireland the first time and there’s just something when you go there that, the feeling of being there kind of just commands, that that’s where your roots are and it’s quite a settling feeling I think.

MD: What do you know about your family name?

DH: (response unintelligible). (Laughter, side conversation ...Irish...)

MD: Do you know the Irish word for it the family name? (?)
DH: I don’t.

MD: Are there any stories about the history or the origin of your family name or your family that you can tell us?

DH: Not that I can pull up, no.

MD: All right, let’s talk about your childhood. What are some of your childhood memories in Butte?

DH: Well, I was raised in the Dublin Gulch and that was

MD: Let me stop you for a minute.

DH: Okay.

MD: Do you know why they called it the Dublin Gulch?

DH: I don’t. I guess it was because it was full of Irish people. When my dad was born and they lived there and they were a family of 10 and a lot of the families that lived there, they, I think there was only one other family that had more children than the Harringtons and they had 15 and I think that was the (current? word unclear) because I remember listening to the stories. And there was 80-85 houses in the Gulch when my dad was being raised in the Gulch. They never left the Gulch. I mean their whole existence was there. They used the market or store at the bottom of the Anaconda Road but they went to church at St. Mary’s, probably went downtown to Hennesseys on Grand (Granite?) Street but the only time they left the Gulch growing up was to go to a funeral or have party at friends’ houses or something, going on but they seldom left the neighborhood because that was the whole world to them in Dublin Gulch

MD: Were there other nationalities in the Dublin Gulch?
DH: There could have been but mostly everybody that I remember them talking about were Irish. And there was, you know when I grew up there was so few houses. I think there were maybe 14 to 17 houses and then there was a fire and it went down to about 9 by the time we left the Gulch but one of the things I remember definitely about the neighborhood was, there was a lot of people that had grandmothers and I only had a grandmother for a short period of my life but there was lots of grandmas that lived in the neighborhood so we spent a lot of time knowing what a grandmother was but I didn’t really experience one cuz my grandmother died when I was young.

MD: Were grandfathers there as well?

DH: Not really, no. There were grandmas I think and they were widows, the grandfathers died early from working in the mine.

MD: So you went to St. Mary’s school; that was a Catholic school?

DH: It was.

MD: Tell us about your school experiences.

DH: We used to walk to school and it was quite a ways. We lived in the Gulch and had to go over to almost Corktown, across the railroad tracks and go to the school on Wyoming Street and later we went, the school was on Main Street, which was like half a block from the original school. And I think our first grade class probably had about 21, 22 students and I stayed at St. Mary’s straight through graduation, 8th grade, and then went on to Butte Central.

MD: Now you started with 20 some kids in your class?
DH: I think so. I’m not really sure but there was at least 20 some. I think there was like 10 girls and 11 boys or something most of the year with some dropping, some adding through the years of grade school.

MD: That’s what I was going to ask you, the change. Did you stay with the same kids pretty much the whole 8 years?

DH: Pretty much. We had some kids that moved in and out but the bulk of the kids that I went to school with all stayed in the same neighborhood. You know it was mostly from over by the Good Will on Montana Street. And north on Williams Street was mostly St. Mary’s Parish and then all on along between Montana and Main Street over by the nuns’ house, and then on through Anaconda Railroad and over on Montana and up in Dublin Gulch. That was kind of the Parish, the boundaries of the school.

MD: And when you said the parish, what do you mean?

DH: St. Mary’s Parish was the Church and the Parish of the, the Catholic Parish.

MD: So your school boundaries were the same as the parish boundaries?

DH: Yes.

MD: So you went through Corktown to get to Main Street?

DH: Um hm.

MD: What’s Corktown?

DH: Corktown was the neighborhood to the west of the Dublin Gulch, and it had a BNP railroad track that went through there. That was a Anaconda Company Railroad and it was on Wyoming and, I guess it would be Corbett? Street, which was kind of in the center between the Gulch and
Main Street. That was the neighborhood all of us (word unintelligible), kind of right up in there and they had a cluster of maybe 100-250 homes at one time.

MD: Why do they call it Corkown, do you know?

DH: It’s an Irish name. We had a, also a hill in Dublin Gulch that they call Hungry Hill and that had a lot of homes on it so I think they were places from Ireland that they called these places once they settled in Butte because the Irish population was so heavy.

MD: Who named them?

DH: I haven’t any idea.

MD: I’ve often wondered that. So what kind of games did you play when you were a child?

DH: When I was a child we basically played a lot of guy’s games, boy’s games, because there wasn’t a lot of girl’s games. We played baseball with the boys, we played Kick the Can.

MD: What’s that?

DH: Kick the Can was when you stood around and stacked the cans on top of each other and kind of kicked one off and the person that didn’t kick both cans was the winner. If you could kick the top can you were pretty talented. And then we played...

MD: So you got pretty agile in that game?

DH: We played, we could pretty well balance on one leg. And we jumped rope. We couldn’t play hopscotch because we never had a sidewalk but you could draw it in the dirt. And then one of the things we used to do was in order to play hopscotch was to go look for the shiniest toss to toss to your place and you got a really shiny piece of glass or got an excellent shining rock that was your toss and you’d tossed playing hopscotch. Jumped rope. I can remember jumping rope, double door.
MD: Double door?

DH: Double door. You’d jump with a single rope and then when you got a little bit skilled you’d do the double rope which was two ropes when went in opposite directions and you had to go in the door and out the door and it was very difficult.

MD: Um hm. Did you used to sing any verses when you did your jump rope?

DH: We probably did but I can’t tell you what it would be. And we played Polly Veranche (? Name and spelling?) and Red Rover, did a lot of Run Around the Hill. And then we had a swimming pool in the Gulch but it never had water in it when I was growing up. And it was down by Hobart’s, Hobart’s grandmother, Linda Haydebeck(?), and apparently before, or maybe when I was younger maybe when my brother was around, some child was drowned in that pool so they drained it and never filled it up again. And so Linda still had a bar and grocery store and so instead of putting the cans in the garbage, they’d fill the pool with beer cans. And they were not aluminum cans that were flexible, they were metal cans. So we didn’t have a baseball to play baseball with so we played beer can baseball. And we played in the field and when you’d go home right above your fingernails, on your thumbs where from holding the bat the cans would come in and hit you. You went home every night with just bleeding fingers. From holding onto the bat from the beer can because we didn’t have a baseball. But it was great fun. We didn’t have a ball.

MD: Where was the swimming pool?

DH: Over behind would be Harp O’Neill’s and (word unintelligible) Olson’s (word unintelligible) kind of (phrase unintelligible) up in the back, kind of up on a plateau (couldn’t get something in here) where you come down around the corner by Harper O’Neill (word unintelligible). So it
was pretty amazing. Those were the games we played basically but a lot of times when you’d be playing with the boys they wouldn’t let you play ball but they had a pigtail (?) and it was such an honor. Somebody would, the catcher would miss the ball and the group (?) with the pigtail would have to run down the dump, probably about 400 yards to bringing the ball back and you were just so privileged to bring that ball back up that they let you in the game.

MD: The guys in Butte. What kind of home entertainment did you have?

DH: You know, we listened to the radio a lot.

MD: Remember some of the shows you listened to?

DH: Yes, we used to listen to Matt Dillon on Saturday mornings and we listened to the Green Hornet, it was mostly music in the evenings or news while my mother would iron. As I said, we lived in the kitchen, were seldom in the living room and so the radio was always on in the kitchen and that’s where we spent our lives was in the kitchen of our house. The kitchen and the bathroom was most used room in our home. We had other rooms but you just didn’t, they weren’t heated so you didn’t go.

MD: So did you ever have a TV growing up?

DH: We did. We had TV, the first television in the gulch was owned by the Malonesys and they lived two houses down from us and so we went down to watch the neighbors got their TV and it was black and white and we used to go down, they invited us down to watch Bishop Sheen and the night Bishop Sheen was on that was a big gathering of people to go to Malones’ house. And my father loved the little angel that would come up and erase the chalkboard.

MD: Did you ever see the little angel?
DH: No, no not really. The chalkboard. So that was the first TV. And then we got our first television at Radio Engineering and it was black and white and we had it for years and it was a console TV and a great monstrosity of a thin and but it was wonderful we were just thrilled to have a television. And then everybody bought those colored screens to put on the TV and the top was blue in the middle it was kind of a green and the bottom was kind of a red and it was just a colored rainbow but (phrase unintelligible) if you could afford that .99 cents for the screen cover.

MD: And you had a screen cover:

DH: We had a screen cover but we were probably, I think Ida Sullivan had a TV before us and Maloney. Ours was slow in coming. But in 1956 I can remember also my mother decided she wanted to remodel the kitchen and Ida Smith and Myrtle Hartman (Harman? Name) who lived next door, they made more money than my dad did, so they had gotten new (name unintelligible) gas ranges and I mean they were just cadillac. And they had chrome tops on them and so when mother went looking for a stove because she wanted to redo the kitchen, so we got a new (word unintelligible) stone, I think it was called (word unintelligible) stone, a sink that had two sinks on it (word unintelligible) off the wall and the sink had a console (word unintelligible); but had a drawer on each side and doors that open on the bottom and that, it was just cadillac so we got that gorgeous new sink and my mother got a stove but we couldn’t afford to get a (name unintelligible) so she had to downgrade instead to get a Wedgewood, but it had the chrome top but nothing like the (word unintelligible). But then she went to Hennessy’s and bought two cabinets, one on each side and it almost looked like it was a marble top on it although it was plastic of some kind. She was just so proud because Ida didn’t have

Danette Harrington Interview, OH 435-013, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
cabinets alongside her stove and neither did Myrtle Hartman. So her downgraded stove was made up for with the cabinets that she was able to install. You know so those are crazy things you remember. The night my dad was plumbing the sink we were all playing Polly Veranche (?) and I fell and we were getting beat to death with the dirt bombs. Do you know the dirt bombs? MD: Before we ever get to dirt bombs, what’s “Polly Veranche(?)”?

DH: “Polly Veranche” was you’d run through the hills and kind of held hands and you’d went screaming up the mountain and if you didn’t break arms then you were considered pretty good but we girls were considered kind of fragile so we always just broke arms, and then we’d just scream, scream and holler and call “Polly Veranche”. But we were up this night playing dirt bombs, I guess it was, and we were getting pretty well pummeled with the dirt bombs and I fell and broke my arm and my father was plumbing the sink. And I came down and I said, “Geez, dad, I think I broke my arm.” And he had a monkey wrench that was as big as I was and he said, “Git out of here or I’m going to hit you with the monkey wrench” because the top of his head was bleeding. He was bald and from working under the sink and from the sharp edged he’d a (word unintelligible) and every time he moved he had like a halo around his head and he said, “Git out of here.” And my mother was in painting the bathroom and I remember that vividly. She had all the knobs to the cabinets and she was painting them all and she was painting the bathroom and I went in (phrase unintelligible) and so finally she come in and she said to my dad, “I think she did break her arm.” So they had to throw me in the tub and I was in agony while they worked on it. So then she went out in the back yard and broke an apple box and set my arm.

MD: Oh my goodness.

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DH: And because it was nighttime we couldn’t go to the doctor so when we finally got to see the doctor McMahon all he did was throw a cast on it. And so that was how we repaired my arm. So probably about 4 years ago I went to the doctor because I fell off the gate and he said to me, “Gee, it looks like you’ve broken this wrist before” and I said, “Yeah, I broke it when I was a kind” and he said, “Oh,” and I said, “my mother set it.” And he said, “Apparently she wasn’t a doctor” and I said, “No” and he said, “Look at this” and the joint on my wrist was out about ¼ of an inch from where it should be. And I said, “No, she wasn’t a doctor but she fixed it.”

MD: So you remember the day you broke it.

DH: I do.

MD: What’s a dirt bomb?

DH: A dirt bomb is where you pick up weeds out of the ground and there’s a big clump of dirt on the bottom of it and you used it as a weapon just to throw it and the others’d throw it back. You could knock ‘em out of their shoes because we had some pretty good sized weeds in the Gulch.

MD: The next question here has to do with crafts. What sort of crafts did you like besides crafting your own toys in the dirt?

DH: No, we didn’t have crafts.

MD: Was there story telling?

DH: There was story telling. My aunts used to come to the house and it was an absolute piece of history if we’d only had the sense to tape it or something because the sad part about it was that they all told stories and everybody tried to outdo the other one and nobody really listened.
So you might have 4 people telling stories at the same time fighting for the opportunity to join in and they were wonderful stories about the neighborhood when they grew up and they really had a tremendous, tremendous life growing up in the Gulch.

MD: Can you remember any (word unintelligible)

DH: I remember them talking about the night that my grandfather died. And it was on Halloween and they had never seen such food in their lives and everybody was bringing food (phrase unintelligible). And the kids thought it was great. They got real loud (word unintelligible) because the wake was in our house so the noise got so bad that they sent the kids across the street so they went across the street in whosoever’s house they were in and they were using the bed as a trampoline. So the kids were having a great time. That’s what they remember and it was the best Halloween they ever had. (Laughter) (phrase unintelligible.

MD: Now the whole business of tradition about the wakes, wakes and funerals, what do you remember about that in growing up?

DH: I can remember I think I was (word unintelligible) on a kneeler. We went to Dugans (?) every Sunday after mass whether there were...

MD: Who were Dugans (?)?

DH: Dugan Mortuary on Main Street.

MD: Okay.

DH: And every Sunday after mass, 9:15 mass, we would go to Dugans’ whether there was a body in there or not because my father did not like to drive, hated driving, so we had to go sign the book. He would drive us to church on Sunday, we always went to Dugan’s and signed a couple blank pages just in case somebody died during the week so he wouldn’t have to go back.
So we spent a lot of time at Dugan’s talking to Marvin and George Perry. So people are amazed at how comfortable I am attending wakes. But it was a lifestyle for me. That’s what we did every Sunday.

MD: What you said about your grandfather, he was waked at the house?

DH: Um hm.

MD: Explain that.

DH: They, instead of going to a mortuary, they held the wake, the Irish, I’m sure other nationalities did too, but they went ahead and had the wake in the home and

MD: With the body being?

DH: The body would be in the house too and then, that’s where they all came and they had criers and they had shivareens. that would take place and just food. It was marvelous because at that time it was a celebration because they ended up with more food than they ever saw because everybody brought their best dish to the house during the funeral. So the people that had very little to eat at that period of time of the wake. It was great you know it was a real feast.

MD: And they did a bit of drinking too?

DH: Oh I think they did. Yeah, I think they did.

MD: Were there any traditional Irish sports or Irish festivities that you remember growing up?

DH: You know I truly don’t. My father was a, you know he worked all his life that I can remember and so he worked hard and he, the only things that I can remember doing, some of the traditions was, things that we had to do as far as things he demanded was going to mass on Sunday. That was a real given. You couldn’t miss mass, it was just a given in the house and if

Danette Harrington Interview, OH 435-013, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
you ever got anything new the first place you wore it was church. Like if you got something new on a Monday, whether it be a pair of shoes or a new coat or a pair of gloves you had to wait till Sunday, because the first place you wore them was at church. So that was always a real anxious time. If you got something as a gift or whatever, early in the week you had to wait till Sunday to wear it to church. You always had to wear your best to church on Sunday, you couldn’t go, you know he was just mortified when women started wearing slacks, when you were allowed to not wear a hat in church. Those were the things that I think were very difficult for that generation to accept because it was just so against what they grew up with, what they believed was the lack of all that old tradition.

MD: The Latin mass?

DH: Yes.

MD: What was your house like? How many rooms?

DH: Our house was, actually, it was a pretty decent home. It had two bedrooms with a doorway in between and it had a front room and a dining room which was, my father had knocked out the wall when I was a child and I remember making it one big room. And we had a kitchen and a bathroom and a back porch and a front porch. So it was a pretty decent house. When my dad was born and raised in that house, they had the 10 kids of course and they only had their folks’ bedroom and the one other bedroom so they had 5 girls sleeping in one bed and the 4 boys sleeping in the other bed because they lost a brother at an early age and they’d had 10 and so they spent most of the years sleeping like logs of wood in a bed because they didn’t have another bedroom for them to sleep in.

MD: Then did you have a bedroom of your own?
DH: I did early on. No, I didn’t actually, I shared it with my brother. And then I had my tonsils removed when I was 7 and he wouldn’t let me in there anymore so they got a rollaway and I had to sleep in the dining room because I snored. They told me one night they were going to roll me down the road to Hobarts if I didn’t stop snoring but I (couldn’t help? unclear) my rollaway bed.

MD: Where did you shop for groceries?

DH: We shopped all the years I was at home with my mom, we went to the Safeway on Grand (Grant?) Street. So we knew generations of people working in Safeway. That’s the only place we went and then my mother walked to town every single day and she had something on layaway everywhere, every single place, whether it be a hat or earrings or something, she’d pay like a quarter a week and then we’d get those and my father would drive down after work and they have those little teeny, it was a coin think, it was like a football? I don’t know if you ever remember those little, with a (word unintelligible) on it?

MD: No.

DH: And that was for mad money and it was full of dimes and he would park the car. He would go over to get a beer. My mother and I, I would meet her after school or something and we’d walk over and after we’d put the groceries in the car and go into the brewery and he’d have a little pouch and it was full of dimes and beers were a dime. My mother would have a highball and (word unintelligible). So basically, she was downtown almost every day. But my dad would come down most nights and pick her up. Or my brother when he learned to drive he would pick her up.

MD: What do you remember about the brewery?

Danette Harrington Interview, OH 435-013, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
DH: I was raised in the brewery. I remember the smell of yeast in the bathroom. You’d go in the bathroom and it had this god awful smell and for years I didn’t know what it was. But it was yeast from the brewery on the other side of the wall that had permeated the walls.

MD: Well, you didn’t go into the brewery with the, where did you go?

DH: We went into the bar.

MD: Oh, you went into the bar. Tell us about the bar.

DH: Well, we went to the bar. And the bathroom, women’s bathroom, was on the right hand side and the men’s was on the north side and it was a long, long bar. And before my time they had a cage where they used to cash checks and it was kind of like a early chain link fence but it was up in a bay window that faced the street. And I can remember being in that cage asleep for hours while my mother and my father were entertaining themselves in the bar with everybody from the neighborhood and everybody that we knew was going to be at the brewery. So we spent a lot of time there and I ate a lot of Hershey bars. I remember the bartender. We were kind of related to Bill Maloney who owned it with Connie Cal (?) and we were related to Connie Cal who was Connie Harrington and it was kind of like a family joint. We just spent a lot of time there but I can remember kind of praying to God that I just wanted to go home so I’d just go and wait and fall asleep in a corner. They had tables and chairs in there that were later became antiques, they were the ice cream chairs with the pretzel (?) backs on them and there was like a line of these on the north side of the bar. Lots of hours in there.

MD: (Unintelligible side conversations here)

DH: Yeah.

MD: Okay, so let’s go on. What kind of chores did you do around the house? Probably didn’t?
DH: You know, I think I did. I had responsibilities like dumping the garbage, things like that but my mother was a stay at home mom so she you know, had everything done by the time I got home from school and so I really didn’t do much I think took the garbage out, maybe helped shovel snow, basically things like that.

MD: Did you burn your garbage?

DH: No we didn’t, well, yes, we did have a trash can out in the back but we also had a mini dump that we could throw some things. Everybody had a dump, a private dump of your own.

MD: What were your strongest memories of St. Mary’s school?

DH: One of my strongest memories was I was forced to take music lessons. And my Sister was Sister Accordia and myself and Marie Daly, who was a very good student and a very talented woman (phrase unintelligible), not my strong suit. And so we had a piano and I was supposed to be practicing, I think it took me like three years to find middle C. But Marie was playing the mass by then so we were supposed to have some kind of a test and Sister Accordia was very demanding and we had to be able to pass this test and I went in and told her that I’d forgotten my music book and so she called for my brother so it had to be early in school because he was gone in ’52 so it had to be in first or second grade and so he had to come up and talk to her and so he had to witness that I’d forgotten my book and he was pretty agreeable that yes, he agreed I had forgotten my book. So she said “We’ll get Marie Daly, you can take the test on Marie Daly’s”, so basically I had to take the test with Marie Daley’s book. So I was so nervous I threw up on her book so for the rest of the year I had to use the throw up book and Marie got my brand new one that didn’t even have dog ears on it because I never opened it. And then I
had to finish the year with the throw up music book and never did get any better. So that’s probably an outstanding memory.

MD: So you’re not a musician today.

DH: No, I can’t even whistle.

MD: What did you do for family outings and holidays?

DH: Holidays were always held at our house. My mother did all the dinners, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, any kind of festivity was always done at my house because the only other relatives we really had were Jewel and Sharon and Danny. And Jewel didn’t cook so my mother always did dinners. So we always had huge dinners and my mother had china and crystal and we only used it for those certain days, the 4 days. But before the dinner she decided, always decided to remodel or wallpaper or do something so it was always such a crisis getting prepared for these holiday dinners. It was painful actually getting ready for dinners but then she would drag out all this stuff and the table was magnificent and then she wouldn’t let anybody touch it so it would take her like a week to get all this stuff washed, dried, put back in the china closet. When I was married I decided I wasn’t going to bother with any of that fancy stuff that I’d just go ahead and get things that you could use every day and drop on the floor and not have a heart attack because I remember how awful it was to try and cherish those wonderful pieces of china and crystal.

MD: Do you have any of them yourself here?

DH: Actually they’re down at my brother’s house.

MD: Very nice. Okay. Do you want to describe for us the neighborhood where you grew up?
DH: Our neighborhood was pretty unique actually. It was an open door policy in everybody’s home. You just kind of, you never had to call and say I’m coming over, you just kind of went. And most of the men in the neighborhood, the dads, all had nicknames. So that was kind of a unique fact. You never knew anybody’s proper name because they always had nicknames which was a, you know my father’s name was Daniel but they called him “Doony” and (word unintelligible Scutsy?) Shea and (word unintelligible) Olson and Harp O’Neill. You know it just was a thing you grew up with and then you’d go someplace and talk about these people and they’d say “What kind of names are those?” I mean I had uncles that my dad’s sister had married and one was Chick (?) and one was Gluck (?). And I’d tell everybody my Uncle Chick was coming or my Uncle Gluck was coming. And they’d say “What is a Chick and a Gluck?”(?) And I’d say “Those are my uncles”. And so everybody, you know, it was a real common thing for nicknames and most of the people in the neighborhood and that’s how you identified them because everybody had the same name. Like there were so many Sullivans, there’d be Jerry Sullivan and a “Jerry above” and a “Jerry below” because they were two different families. That’s how you described them when you were talking about them, they had to because when you were discussing families or persons so they could identify who it was you were talking to (word unintelligible). And the Gulch was sparse. I mean there was nothing. There was hardly any grass. We did have grass. Hobarts didn’t have grass. Sullivans didn’t have grass. Lees didn’t have grass. Lees almost didn’t have a house. It was just an old boarding house and they had an uncle who lived upstairs and

MD: What was his name?

DH: His name was Jex (?).
MD: What was his real name?

DH: I think his proper name might have been John. I don’t know but we always called him Jex. And Jex used to summer well. And he wore his bib overalls and one day you’d see him out in overalls with the strap off the bib and the next day the other strap was off so he’d get an even suntan. And my father always used to kid about Jex that he thought he had Confederate bills under his matter because he looked pretty frugal.

MD: He did have money too, didn’t he?

DH: Yes he did the Shea girls I think benefited well from. But he had several Confederate bills under his mattress.

MD: What were the houses like you know like draw us a verbal picture of what Dublin Gulch looked like?

DH: Well, there was one street, we had two streets in the Gulch, that covered everyone’s address and it was called Summit Street or Ridgeway (Ridgely?). The Sullivan’s had a house up on Ridgeway and it was a two story house with a front porch and over the years with the boys growing up they cut off, they had the house sided and they didn’t have enough money to side the house and the guy took down the steps and they never rebuilt the steps so you couldn’t come out the second floor other than if you went through the house.

MD: Were they still—

DH: Yeah, they’d go out and stand on the porch but there was no place to go up on the porch. And then our house was fairly decent and then the Hartman house was next door to us and it was a two story house and it had been a two-family home at one time but they never painted it, but they, they were Finlanders actually that lived next door to us and they were wonderful
people and so they had never painted their house all the years they were there. And the 
Maloneys lived in...

MD: Was it brick?

DH: No, it was wood. And it was kind of painted grey and it had been, all the lap, shiplap of the 
boards had begun to peel and split over the years and basically falling off. They didn’t have 
indoor plumbing until we were in probably high school. And the girls, the youngest of the girls 
that would be your age slept in a crib till she was about what, 6th grade, because they didn’t 
have any beds. And Charlie was a piece of work. So he’d every time somebody was throwing 
away a mattress he took the mattress and put it on his bed. And his bedroom was wallpapered 
in cardboard boxes.

MD: (murmurs something)

DH: And it was a great treat (phrase unintelligible). And you almost had to pole vault to the bed 
plus there was a (word unintelligible) in his room and when you’d get on top of his bed you 
could lay there and read all the boxes, you know like Wheaties or Oxydol or something so it was 
always kind of a geography lesson to sit there and reading lesson, read the walls and read the 
ceiling.

MD: Whatever happened to Rosemary?

DH: Over in Dillon a far as I know. Rosey married, Sylvia lived there and I think she relocated 
after her husband retired. But the house was right next to us and Charlie was a hard rock miner, 
used to drive a Chevrolet and I can remember when they got their ’55 Chevy and it was like a 
Cadillac in those days because they had driven like a ’37 Chevy all the years I was growing up.
And Maloneys were on the south side of that. It used to be a family by the name of Ball (?) and my brother and them were living in Helena and O’Neil bought the house.

(A couple of sentences in here were unintelligible).

And then Dennehy and then (word unintelligible) Shea (word unintelligible). Down the street, the Lees were on Summit, Harp O’Neill was on Summit on Summit. It was kind of like a, a, in the wintertime my father would shovel the road after a snowfall and then he would get to the bottom and it would take him 4 or 5 hours to get to the bottom and then we would be on the top of the hill putting snow back on so we could sleigh ride. And to get the car, it was the only house in the world that you had to, to get up to it and to get out of it. I mean, it was sitting on a perch, it was horrendous, and you had to go 60 miles an hour around the first corner, hope you didn’t hit Hobarts’ house and make the next corner by Maloney’s house and then kind of just swish into the flat part by the garage. It was a ride and a half up that road.

MD: Are you talking about the sleigh ride or the car ride?

DH: Car, automobile. That was getting the car home. But it was kind of like a (phrase unintelligible) and the houses were all, you know, double hipped roofs and some of them had a front porch.

MD: When did you leave the neighborhood?

DH: I left when I got married.

MD: And what was it like then?

DH: It is basically the same as it’d been for probably 20 years prior to that. Nobody ever moved in. Everybody would still have been there except the Anaconda Company came and bought the homes so they all had to relocate. And it was really a tragedy, I think, as far as the women like

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my mother and Ann Lee and Ida and Helen Hobart. And them because they were so close for all the years raising their children and once they relocated in different areas of town, telephoning was sufficient to keep them together because they used to visit and walk into each other’s homes. So it made a huge difference in the closeness of all of those ladies. So even though they ended up with way better homes and in nicer neighborhoods they basically ended up kind of not as close as they used to me.

MD: (murmur)

DH: Well, they, none of them drove so they couldn’t get around to see each other. Helen (?) Maloney was the only lady in the Gulch that drove.

MD: Then they lost their neighborhood, didn’t they?

DH: Yeah.

MD: What happened to the houses once the ACM bought the houses?

DH: They didn’t move any of them. They left them vacant for a few years and the Company come in and bulldozed them all over.

MD: So when I ask you, has your neighborhood changed over the years, it has indeed.

DH: It has, disappeared yeah.

DH: And I told her, I was looking at it the other day and it’s even hard to visualize where your house was. You’d think you wouldn’t forget that, because you know the landmarks that you would have thought you would have remembered but standing there looking at it I had a tough time trying to picture just where my house was. And then when we were younger it looked so much bigger and all of a sudden you’re looking at it now and it’s been dumped on and moved

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and bulldozed in different directions. So it’s really hard to stand there and it was rather
nostalgic actually. A little sad, quite sad.

MD: And when, one thing we didn’t talk on, until the ACM bought the houses, what did most of
the people do for a living?

DH: Most everybody that worked, or lived, in the Gulch, the dads usually worked in the mines.
One of the guys worked at the post office. (name unintelligible) Olson worked at the gas
station, most of the other guys, they were all (word unintelligible), the Dennehys, they were
(word unintelligible) worked for the Anaconda Company, the Kellys worked at the Anaconda
Company and then Helen Hobart was a widow so her, I guess you wouldn’t call her a widow but
she didn’t have a husband for lots of years, she went to work at the courthouse.

(Side comments from unknown person.)

DH: Yeah, but you know, I can remember when we were kids, for the 4th of July we had a big
celebration in the Gulch because we used to get catalogs, I don’t know if you guys remember
those old catalogs would come out and you could buy fireworks. And they started out with a
box for $2.99 or get a box for $6.99. If you had $20 bucks you could get a huge box. So,
everybody in the Gulch, Grandma Hobart included, every family, got a box of those things. And
absolutely the best 4th of July. We’d shoot off our fireworks long before the big ones started;
we’d all parade over the road and watch the big fireworks but (phrase unintelligible). For the
(phrase unintelligible) labs and he insisted on having my mother’s apron to put his firecrackers
in and they used to have cherry bombs, do you remember cherry bombs? And they had (phrase
unintelligible) firecrackers and they had other sparklers and all that stuff and (phrase
unintelligible) dropped into the apron so he’s out in the yard (phrase unintelligible) and he’s
running in the yard and my mother’s running after him trying to catch him and (phrase
unintelligible) and running around, she’s trying to get it off of him and he’s just rolling in the
cherry bomb and the apron’s all up in front. She’s, “Jimmy, Jimmy, stop.” and by the time she
got him he was almost fried. I’m surprised he lived.

(Side comments by others in the room)

DH: Yeah, so that was pretty exciting he, he was interesting, he got shot when he was 9.

MD: By whom?

DH: By Jimmy Sheehen. They had, the big boys had all gotten 22s for Christmas and so Danny
Sullivan and Harry Greeley wanted to shoot those guns so they had to earn being able to shoot
the gun. So what they had to do was set targets so they were setting targets for them, setting
up pop bottles so the boys could shoot and so they were busy setting up the targets after they
all shoot bottles and they had another case that they load and so Harry (Jimmy?) is bent over
picking up bottles and Jimmy Sheehan got hold of one accidentally and shot him in the neck and
so Danny Sullivan called my mother and he said: “Margaret” and she said “Yeah” and he said
“Jimmy’s been shot” and she said “Where?” and he said “up on the hill.” Well, looking out of
our house up on the hill, I mean we were like a valley of hills and my mother became panicky
and my dad was at work so she didn’t know where to go looking for him and Danny had hung
up and he ran home I guess, scared to death. So by the time Harry (Jimmy?) got home, he had
walked from wherever he was shot at, behind Ida’s or someplace, and he was holding on to his
neck and I remember him saying, they keep telling me I don’t remember but I do remember he
was holding his neck and the blood was dripping out and I remember my mother saying

“Jimmy, you ruined your tennis shows.” (Laughter).
MD: They must have been expensive shoes.

DH: Yeah, they were those black ones, I think with eyelets in them. So then they took him to the hospital and couldn’t find it and they decided that he got hit by a piece of rock but it really didn’t go in, so when they turned him over and they found a bullet in his back but they were afraid to touch it because they were afraid it would move to the bone and that would kill him so when he died two years ago the bullet was still in.

MD: Oh my gosh. How old was he when he died?

DH: Nine. Oh, when he died? 71.

MD: Oh my gosh.

MD: It was a wonder he could make it through the airport.

DH: He could encapsulate or, or whatever (?). Well, he couldn’t make it into the service. They rejected him for the service and he always wanted to join the service so he was devastated.

MD: Oh my gosh. Well, one last question. If you were to write the history of the Irish in Butte, what would you include if you were doing this for future generations?

DH: The history of the Irish in Butte? I guess I would say that they are the most generous prevaricators I ever met in my life.

MD: Explain.

DH: They love to exaggerate, they love a good story and they love a good party.

MD: Well, I guess that winds it up.

DH: It was a fun time of life, a fun time.

MD: It is. Thank you very much.

[End of Interview]

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