The following transcript was provided to Archives and Special Collections by the Upper Swan Valley Historical Society with its associated audio recording.
Suzanne Vernon: You were born in Glendive. So do you remember coming up here?

Gyda Newman: I was only a couple months old, and I don't remember! My mother died when I was about six months old.

SV: Did your dad tell you any stories about how they ended up getting land here?

GN: I know a little bit. My uncle Nels was on the geodedic survey. He homesteaded the place. His dad died and he was the oldest son. He had to go back to Norway and take up the business there. So then my dad took over.

SV: Did he ever say why he thought your uncle liked it here?

GN: No. My uncle I think, figured this was the most beautiful place on earth. Up on Elk Creek.

SV: I read the homestead document. They planted apple trees up there?

GN: Yeah, I got apple trees planted, too. They planted apple trees, usually, on the east side of the valley because it's drier over there and they get more sunshine.

SV: Did the ones on the homestead grow.

GN: I think they did. My dad didn't plant any. He was gone every summer working for the Forest Service. My brother and I planted a little garden but it didn't do very good. We didn't have any water.

SV: Where did your dad work for the Forest Service?

GN: At Coram and Hungry Horse Guard Station.

SV: Did he ever work for the Forest Service here?

GN: Yeah, he did. He was on lookout at Elbow Lake, Lindbergh Lake. We lived up there on that Lookout with him. He was a smoke chaser. And then they have a man that was a lookout. The lookout tower was just a big tree they'd climb all the time.
SV: At Elbow?

GN: Yeah.

SV: How old were you when you lived up there?

GN: I think it was about seven.

SV: That musta been something.

GN: Well, yeah, we kept looking down at the water on Lindbergh Lake, wishing we could go down and go swimming!

SV: Was there a tower there then?

GN: No, just a tree and tent. We had a cook tent and sleeping tent. I got sick. I found out, you know what you can do to make those tents leak? Put your finger up there! I had that thing leaking all over the place.

SV: And you got sick from it?

GN: No, I got sick before and they put me in bed back there.

SV: Did you have to pack all your own food up there?

GN: We had pack horses to pack it up, and water. We had a little spring down over the hill. I showed Bob where it had been. Where we used to go and get water. It was. . . we didn’t take very many baths. It rained a lot.

SV: Pretty cold water?

GN: Probably why I got sick. I lived with a family by the name of Hartwick. We lived part of one summer up on Holland Lookout.

SV: With Hartwicks? Was that a regular lookout tower?

GN: It wasn’t a tower. Just a big rocky outcropping. There was tents and like that. For water we had a snowbank just over the edge on the east side that we packed out water out of. We packed food up on horses.

SV: Forest Service?

GN: Forest Service.
SV: Do you remember what your impression was up that high, being able to see over the whole valley?

GN: No. It was just, I lived there. I didn't especially take a good view of the valley or anything. It was just a long ways up, I know.

SV: Was Holland more open than Elbow?

GN: No. I don't think so. I think Elbow was more open. It was on this knoll up there and you could see all around.

SV: Do you remember any storms when you were up there?

GN: I remember the storms when we were up at Lindbergh Lake. They'd ring the telephone all the time.

SV: So the Forest Service had their lines strung up there?

GN: Yeah.

SV: Was there a good trail?

GN: Sort of a trail.

SV: You could get horses across it. . .

GN: They had pack horses.

SV: If your dad had to call out, he could use that phone? Do you ever remember him doing that?

GN: No. I didn't pay that much attention.

SV: Well, just what did you guys do? (laughter)

GN: I used a knife, I was whittling some branches. My dad said, don't cut your finger. No, I'm not. . . but I did! We just played in the dirt and stuff like that.

SV: Kind of care free?

GN: Walked barefoot a lot. It was quite something, you know? Bob Hartwick was the lookout, and my dad was the smoke chaser.

Gyda Newman and Bob Newman Interview, OH 422-009, 010, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
SV: How old was Bob Hartwick? Was he the same age as your dad?

GN: He musta been. I don't remember. You know, my dad died at 54 and I thought he was an old, old man. Bob Hartwick musta been an old, old man too. (laughs)

SV: Do you remember what he looked like?

GN: He was a big man. He was a big Dane. Kind of rough voice, long (?) hair.

SV: What did your dad look like?

GN: My dad? He was kind of real broad shouldered. Real athletic. Did a lot of running and walking. But he didn't have much hair. He had typhoid fever or something and lost all his hair. I didn't pay much attention. (phone rings).

SV: We were talking about your dad being athletic and, he must have hiked a lot?

GN: Yeah, on the weekends, if it was a little bit rainy, when we lived up on Lindbergh, he had made a trail from there down to Glacier Creek. So every weekend we would have to hike from up there clear around to our place on Elk Creek and spend the weekend there.

SV: How long did it take you to hike that.

GN: I don't know (laughs). Long time.

SV: Was there a trail across the foothills there? Right to Elk Creek?

GN: Yeah. In fact there used to be a fire camp up on Elk Creek when they had fire in 1917, big burn, I think it was. That was where the fire camp, there. Bob and I found it. I thought I knew where the trail was that went down the creek to get water. You know we found it? Found a ketchup bottle, you know, the old kind?

SV: What was the age difference between you and your brother?

GN: Let's see, about a year and a half.

SV: You guys were close. So you played together.

GN: Oh yeah, fought together, too!

SV: Was he older or younger?

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Gyda Newman and Bob Newman Interview, OH 422-009, 010, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
GN: He was older. His birthday was in November. Born in 1915, musta been.

BN: Yeah, Jens was a little bit older than me. I was born in '16. Jens was about six months older.

SV: How old were you when your dad died?

GN: I was 18.

SV: So you were able to spend quite a bit of time with him?

GN: Yeah. We spent, well, when we would bring the kids up here, I’d say, "Goodbye, Bob. I’m going to the cabin for a week." I knew he’d be mad at me so I stayed two weeks. (laughs)

BN: Your dad was gone then.

GN: Yeah, my dad was gone then.

BN: I never did know her dad. I met her in Missoula.

GN: Just about caused me to lose my job (laughter).

BN: She was working in a restaurant you know and when I was in there, coffee, demanding this and that. The owner was a woman accused me of bothering the help.

GN: My dad died of cancer. I quit high school to take care of him. Had to go to work. The first job I had was serving beer at the Park Hotel. I hate beer. My brother worked in the Forest Service then. He was in the South Fork on a lookout there. Between the two of us we had enough money to take care of my dad and pay for hospital bill. Bob helped me pay for his funeral. But we got it all paid for.

SV: He worked for the Forest Service here on (Elbow) that lookout. So you spent that summer with him, but when he was gone, you just stayed with various families?

GN: Oh yeah (laughs). He farmed us out. I lived with Haasch’s, Wilhelm’s, Stroms, Maloney’s. Who else? Oh and then my brother and me got old enough, I think I was about 13 or 14, we stayed up at the cabin all by ourselves all summer. Never seen my dad from the spring in April until September. We had to take care of ourselves.

SV: What did that cabin look like?

GN: It was, (laughs), it was log cabin. It was chinked with mud. It had a ceiling in it, rafters. One end was the kitchen area. The other end was the dining room area. Then my dad had an extra little cabin built onto that. Those two rooms were bedrooms.

Gyda Newman and Bob Newman Interview, OH 422-009, 010, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
SV: That was pretty roomy if you had two little rooms for bedrooms.

GN: Yeah. My dad built another little building aside from that that I used quite a little bit. We used it mainly for kind of alike a guest house. He always had hunters up there in the fall. They stayed there.

SV: What did the hunters come up to hunt for?

GN: Deer and elk.

SV: White-tailed deer?

GN: Yeah.

SV: Where did they go for elk?

GN: Elk used to come down from up on the mountain.

SV: Did your dad hunt quite a bit, too?

GN: No. We were allowed, them and my brother, two deer. That was all we had. Two shells. Two deer. If you shot a deer and wounded it you had to stay with it until you got it. You didn't leave a wounded deer running around. And the deer, I was just telling Mike Stevenson, we had this big screened porch on the back. We'd just hang the deer up whole and as wanted meat, we just carved some meat off of it. We didn't bother skinning it or anything. Cut under the hide, I guess.

SV: It must have been cold.

GN: Yeah, it was cold. It kept good. That's what we ate on mostly all winter long. Two deer. My brother was a pretty good shot. My dad was a good shot. I never went out, like you see a lot of women doing now, go out hunting, because I think with men around let them do the hunting. Cuz when you pull the trigger that's a lot of hard work starts. Bob used to hunt a lot and I'd go with him. I'd see a lot of animals, but I'd never tell him.

Bob Newman: She'd be behind me and she'd see deer, she'd be mum about it until we were on beyond, and then she'd say didn't you see that deer back there? And I'd say, heck no, I didn't.

GN: I like animals.

SV: When you had venison to eat, did you have potatoes and flour?
GN: Yeah, we had a root cellar and we had potatoes, and canned goods. Stuff like that in there. In the house, there was a kind of a pantry like, and we had flour and stuff in the chest, I think.

BN: Didn't you get a big order in, in the early fall? And have it hauled in my local means?

GN: Oh yeah. By local freight. But we never, in the summertime, my brother and I we could order anything we wanted from this one store in Missoula, but we never hardly ever ordered anything. We just lived off of what we could find.

SV: Which was?

GN: We picked strawberries, huckleberries. We found out that the bottom end of a Timothy stalk is pretty good eating. The inner bark on these, willows, is good, too. So we ate that.

SV: When you say Timothy you mean the grass.

GN: Yeah. Like you feed horses.

SV: Was there some of that grass growing around here?

GN: No, we'd just run around the valley and kind of scrounge it.

SV: The inner bark on just the willow tree?

GN: Just the willows.

SV: Kept you going, huh? What was your favorite thing to go find?

GN: Strawberries.

SV: They're tiny though.

GN: They take a lot of time.

SV: Where did you find good patches?

GN: Out here in the field, up the road here.

SV: If you get tired of doing the interview, we can quit. (Gyda was starting to lose her voice.)

GN: I'm okay, I just lose my voice. We ate fish in the summertime.

SV: Did you catch them out of the creek?
GN: out of this creek (Glacier) and Elk Creek.

SV: What kind of fish?

GN: Trout.

BN: Then your dad used to make a trip down to Rainy . . .

GN: That was in the wintertime.

BN: He and some of your neighbors would. . .

GN: My dad and my brother, and Harold Haasch, and his brother, and dad, they’d go down and spent near two weeks camped in the snow. They'd catch a lot of fish, and bring them home. We ate a lot of fish, at that time.

SV: Keep them froze?

GN: Yeah.

SV: I wonder if it was cutthroat trout or?

BN: Don’t know for sure. Natives.

GN: To me they were just fish.

SV: How big were they?

GN: I don’t remember that, either.

SV: What did you use to catch them?

GN: Flies. Bare hooks with a berry or anything on them that we could find.

SV: Where did you find huckleberries, were they up higher?

GN: They were up a little bit higher.

SV: What did you do with the huckleberries when you got them? Make jam?

GN: Eat them! Just ate them. One year my brother and I decided we’d can some peaches. So we ordered a whole crate of peaches. It came, well, I’d never canned before and he hadn’t either.
We proceeded to peel them, and we ate the peelings. Ah, did I get sick. Anyway, we canned peaches. They were pretty good in the wintertime, you know.

SV: Did you have a wood cook stove?

GN: Oh yeah. And a wood heating stove. Both. When we were real little we had a heating stove that my dad took a box of hard dirt in it, set the stove in there because we didn't have any legs. And he would ski clear down to the highway, to the mailbox, and one time when he came back and the cabin was full of smoke. He was really upset about it, you know, cuz he thought we'd died. But what we'd done, we'd gone in this other bedroom and closed the door, so the smoke stayed in the other part. We didn't get any smoke. We were sound asleep when he came home. He put on his gloves, grabbed the stove and took it out the door, and threw it in the snow.

SV: It had started some of that dirt on fire?

GN: Evidently, it must have gotten too hot. Maybe singed the boards on that box that he made.

SV: He skied out of there? Did he ski quite a bit?

GN: Yeah, we always skied. From November until April. You'd have to ski down to get the mail. And we skied, my brother and I, we skied to school, and to Melton's here, and get on this, Mr. Maloney, had an old car. And he drove us to school. You know, there's a place . . . (laughs) I'll tell you about, Mr. Maloney, he chewed Climax chewing tobacco. So he'd be going along, you know, and he'd have to spit, so he'd "spittoo" and he ran off the road. Boy did we ever get stuck.

SV: Wasn't paying attention, huh?!

GN: And then, my brother and I stole a slug of his chewin' tobacco, took it to school, fed it to all the kids, told him you gotta chew this and swallow the juice. We couldn't figure out how the teacher knew, how she knew who it was that did that. Cuz we weren't sick, everybody else was!

SV: That's a pretty good story. Do you remember who the teacher was?

GN: Yeah, what was her name. Arlene. . .

SV: I can find it. When you were at the cabin, did you have any livestock?

GN: Oh no.

BN: Your dad did have cattle.
GN: Oh, to begin with. He bought sixty head of cattle, and he was going to... he thought this was cattle country. Anyway, what happened was, there was a man at the Gordon Ranch that got the flu and he came down to our house and he gave my mother and my brother and me the flu. So, my mother died and this man died. They wrapped them in canvas and put them out in the woodshed. Until they could haul them out. He had got a young couple to come up and take care of the cows. But what they didn't know was that you have to provide water for them. So they all went over to Elk Creek and broke through the ice and they all drowned. So my dad, he lost his wife, lost his cows, and the Norwegian bank that he had money in, he lost that, too. He was left with two squalling kids.

SV: You had some tough times, didn’t you? All at once...

GN: Yeah, we did. I think it turned him so he wasn't very... I think it affected his mind a little bit.

SV: You two kids got over the flu that time...

GN: Yeah, they held my mother’s funeral for three days so they could bury us all together. Cuz we hauled her back to Glendive. Anyway, we didn't die, we survived that.

SV: Did you have to go to Glendive then, too.

GN: Yeah, I was in Glendive when my mother died. My aunt lived there, my mother’s sister. She was mean, mean to us kids. But I imagine, I did a lot of crying. I was always looking for my mother. She'd have me stand at the window and look out on the snow, see if my mother's was coming. I went snowblind, too. My dad moved us from there to another aunt in Missoula. A twin to this one in Glendive. And this twin was just as mean as the other one. She used to lock us in the cellar all the time. We stayed with her in Missoula. That's where I started first grade was in Central School there. She used to lock us in the cellar all the time. There was a light there and my brother found out how to turn the light on. So, what did she do? She took the light bulb out so we didn't have any light. We were down in that dark cellar all the time. And then her son and a neighbor boy used to come over and pull my brother and me out the coal chute and we'd go riding on the bicycles all day.

SV: Miracles do happen.

GN: Yeah, they do.

SV: Was your mother here when she died?

GN: Yes, up at that cabin on Elk Creek.

SV: What a trip to have to go from here to Glendive.
GN: Yeah, they took her by sleigh to Missoula, her and this man that came up there. Then we went by train to Glendive. My dad told me there was some woman who was really complaining about this little kids that was bawling her eyes out all the time, and that was me. My dad told her, well her mother is in the baggage coach ahead up there. I don’t know whether that shut that woman up or not. But he it really tough.

SV: Do you remember any other burials up here. That was kind of exceptional, moving somebody that far.

GN: Yeah, there was a man that died over on Cooney Creek area. They buried him right there. Didn’t have any coroner or anything else. He was a bachelor, so, all the neighbors went in and said, well, they wanted this and they wanted that, you know, and they settled that. Then they buried him and got all of his stuff taken care of. I don’t know if they ever notified any of his relatives or what. At my dad’s cabin he used to have a skull up there in the attic, the top part you know, it was kind of. . . the mice used to make a nest inside this. They’d go into the spinal cord area, you know. My brother used to scare each other there.

SV: Halloween whenever you wanted it?

GN: Yeah, all summer long.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]
[Tape 1, Side B]

[discussion about cabin continues]

GN: The reason my brother started that cabin on the creek, he and I used to have to pack water all the time. Even in the wintertime, from there a half a mile to where we lived. He said, "Should we build a house over here so that we won't be having to pack water so far?" But we would ski in the wintertime, over there, to get the water. He had a wooden yoke and put two big buckets on it and I had two buckets I held in my hand, smaller ones. You know, there was quite a hill over there, and missing all those trees.

SV: Were there a lot of trees on that property? Was it pretty thick?

BN: Yeah, it was quite forested. The reason that Gyda's dad built where he did was, there was a small lake there. And, later years, earthquake, changed the water course and that went dry.

GN: My dad hand dug a well on that little lake. Went down sixty feet by hand.

BN: It went dry also. It wasn't a good place for water, so then they had to pack their water until in later years, when we lived over on the creek, Gyda's brother and Harold Haasch started the cabin and left the walls set there for sixteen years. Later years, we went over and cut trees out of the inside of that enclosure. We had a good log man, John Anderson, he was from Placid Lake. We stayed over there a month, in 1945, in September.

BN: What we did is finish that cabin, we used the walls that we could. Finished it up. One window, one door. Over the years, later, why we worked every weekend we could get up there, work on the cabin.

SV: Do you remember what size logs were in the original cabin?

BN: About eight inch lodgepole. They grooved them by hand with an axe. They are solid. Still solid. That's since February '32, I think it was.

SV: On the rest of that property up there, were there any natural meadows, or did you dad have to clear, or your uncle . . . ?

GN: To prove up you had to clear so much land. That's what he did and that's about all he did. The only meadow that there was natural, would feed one horse over the summer, you know. He had made a fences out of brush, cut trees, pile up.
SV: If you and your brother were spending this much time at all these different places, you must have had an awful lot of chores and responsibilities?

GN: One family would keep us as long as we were able to do some work. Like, I lived at Holland Lake Lodge and my job was washing dishes, dusting. My brother's job was getting in the eggs and feeding the chickens and taking care of, like that.

SV: Was that Holland Lake or the Gordon Ranch?

GN: Holland Lake. I stayed at the Gordon Ranch, too.

SV: What were some of your chores at the Gordon Ranch.

GN: Not much. I was kind of little. I was only about seven, I think, or something like that.

SV: Do you remember learning to cook, or that kind of stuff in the kitchen?

GN: No. I cooked in the summertime up at my dad's place. My brother and I were there. But that was pretty easy. Just fried potatoes and meat, or whatever you could scrounge. I'm not much of a cook.

SV: Well, you survived all these years. . .

GN: Yeah. In spite of it. You know next spring we will have been married sixty years? That's a long time.

SV: Did you ever have to go cut firewood?

GN: Yeah we did. It was with a handsaw, you know. But we would, my brother and I would saw a tree, but not clear through. Then when it got down so far we'd push it, and saw it that way. Then you'd hand saw the blocks.

SV: Has that property ever been logged? Were there any big old trees up there?

BN: Yeah, we had local people take some trees, some logs. That must have been, around 1950. Then later, about '55, we took some more trees out. We didn't log it entirely.

GN: We didn't clearcut it.

BN: We just cut the trees to kind of clear out, and open it up.

SV: It seems like the roads were just getting good enough to actually haul something somewhere then, weren't they?
BN: Yeah, there was a dirt highway all the way through the valley. The side roads weren't the best in the world, I'll tell you that. Most of the time the logging, what logging was done, was hauled over it frozen, in the winter time.

SV: Did they have horses then to log with?

BN: Old trucks. Old cats. Old machinery. There was this one family, I think there's still some of them living in the Kalispell area, but they had a truck that you would not believe. It was a big, I can't even think of the name of it anymore, but the guy running it was setting more or less over the front wheels. It was kind of flat in the face. They could go through any depth of snow with that. Just like a tractor. I always kind of marveled at it. I'd never seen a motorized vehicle go through snow like that, you know. It had great big wheels, big high wheels. They hauled logs out of there.

GN: I was living with Haasch's when Russell Haasch was born.

SV: Did she go to town?

GN: No she stayed right here. Because that day, they sent my brother and I and Harold and his brother Carl up to my dad's place to stay overnight. We come back, here was this little red, scrawny-faced kid. I couldn't get over that. I didn't know she was going to have a baby. You just don't know. . . . but anyway, she had Russell in March.

SV: You would remember something like that. Did you help take care of the baby?

GN: No, that was her job. Us kids were going to school or something. Had to walk, from Haasch's place, clear to Rumble Creek.

SV: That was a long walk.

GN: Well, the longest walk I think I ever took was with Mrs. Hartwick, we left up by their place, up by Holland Lake, and we walked clear across the valley and up to the Lindbergh Lake lookout. I was about seven years old. That was a long walk.

SV: It would take most of the day to get there. Was it worth it?

GN: Well, I don't know whether it was or not. Summertime. (discussion) At Haasch's we lived in the little, you've probably seen it, looks like a woodshed? And Mrs. Haasch and us had to climb this ladder to get upstairs. So Mr. and Mrs. Haasch had a bedroom, well just a bed, in that end of the cabin. And the other end, on mattresses on the floor was Carl and Harold and my brother. I got to sleep at the foot, on my separate mattress.
SV: Cozy.

GN: Cozy, yeah. Those kids, sometimes they hated me. Boys with one girl around, you know.

SV: Do you remember any other furniture?

GN: Yeah, they had a kitchen table, big long table. A couple of chairs, benches for the table. Stove, of course. I don't know if they had a heating stove or not. Probably did. That's about all the furniture.

SV: Did people make their own furniture?

GN: Yes they did. Bob made benches and tables for up at the cabin when we first were up there.

SV: What was the furniture like on your cabin at your dad's place?

GN: Well, you know, my dad had a real nice round table like this one, and an old china closet.

BN: Was it a homemade table Gyda?

GN: No, it was boughten. He must have had it hauled in. Those dishes up there on the cupboard, belonged to my mother. They had china closet, kind of like buffet type. We had (?) chairs. My bed was a big wooden bed. My mattress was a slough hay mattress. Every other year I'd get a new bunch of slough hay in there.

SV: Did you make it? Who had to cut the hay?

GN: I think my dad must have. I always just knew slough hay was there.

SV: Better hope it was dry when they put it in . . .

GN: Apparently, because it didn't (?) seemed to me.

SV: Was it comfortable?

GN: Yeah, it really was. By spring you'd be snuggled way down in that. It was really nice.

SV: Was it right on the floor . . . ?

GN: I had a bed with slats across. My dad had, in their room, my dad and my brother, had real nice beds. Remember those old metal beds, kind of copper beds? (Kind of rounded). That's what he had in there, big dresser, table. Then there was a baby bed. You know, I slept in that, I
remember sleeping in that baby bed cuz I was always kind of small and scrawny. I slept in that until I was eight or nine years old.

SV: Your dad gave you an awful lot of freedom, didn't he?

GN: Sure did.

SV: Was that a good thing, do you think?

GN: Yeah, it was. We got into trouble, but... we ran around through the woods. We learned to get around the woods. We didn't get lost. And then he had an old muzzle loader gun. This one summer, I remember he was gone, so my brother wanted to try it out. So he got it all stoked up with black powder and laid it on my shoulder and pulled the trigger. Oh, that roar still deafens me, thinking about it.

SV: What was he shooting at?

GN: Just targets, I guess. That was only one shot. We used to, when my dad was home, I had to wash clothes on the wash board. In summer time, when my brother and I were there, the only clothes I ever wore were bib overalls, and nothin' else! For shoes, sometimes we had good tennis shoes, but they didn't last, so, and no socks, so I went barefoot a lot. I walked out of the head of Elk Creek barefoot one time.

SV: What were you doing up at the head of Elk Creek?

GN: Harold Haasch and my brother, and two Maloney girls and me just decided to go up there and go fishing. It was, one of the gals, she just gave out on us. Oh, dumb me, I gave her my shoes. They lived down here and they were as poor as we were.

SV: Did you know you were poor?

GN: No. If you don't know you're poor, you just don't know you're poor. And if you had, a little trouble, like getting in wood, you didn't know... that's just the way it was. You just did what you did.

SV: Do you ever remember running out of firewood or...

GN: I remember running out of food. My brother and I came down here, you know where Nixon's place is? With Annie Hollopeter was proving up on it, that was a homestead. So she hired my brother and me to work with her and her brother. So we cleared enough land so she could prove up on the place.

SV: Did you live with her then?
GN: Just cut trees, and haul them. It was kind of easy. Sawed trees. We were kind of used to sawing trees, my brother and I.

SV: Big trees? Little trees?

GN: They were small.

BN: That was Nixon's place, wasn't it?

GN: Yeah.

SV: Well, there's big trees on there now.

GN: Yeah, they've grown up a lot. That's about seventy years ago. It was kind of good for a person. We didn't really have a lot of time to get into a lot of trouble. By the end of the day we were tired. Especially from not eating real good, we'd get really tired.

SV: Did most of your neighbors have the same kind of lifestyle?

GN: I think so, except that my brother and I were shoved here, there all over the valley. It was kind of, you get kind of aware of people, you know when you're running out of your welcome. You can tell by the looks on their face. We'd have to move on. The only place that we never lived was Lundberg's. We just accepted. . . We'd stay for awhile, then know they were tired of us and so we'd move.

SV: We talked a little bit about chores at different places. Did any of the other neighbors have livestock that you helped take care of?

GN: Haasch's had cows, I think. There was enough boys I didn't get in on any of that. At Wilhelm's we had to weed the garden.

BN: How about cows, you had to go and chase cows?

GN: Oh, yeah. That was up at Strom's clear up on that mountain towards Rumble Lake. That was a pretty new burned off area then. Tauno Strom, my brother and I would kind of nudge each other, he was Mamma's baby, he really was, too.

SV: When did you first go to work for wages?

GN: When my dad got sick.

SV: Did you have to work in the summertime for wages?
GN: No, I wish I hadda though. But no, I didn't.

BN: I don't think there were jobs up here.

GN: I worked at Holland Lake Lodge peeling potatoes and stuff like that. All I got was my board and room.

SV: Do you remember any of the people who came to the lodge at that time?

GN: After we were there, there were some people by the name of... well, White's ran it then. They had these Keywayden girls, and Wilhelm's had pack animals in the summertime, Wilhelm's would take the girls to Holland Lake Lodge and we'd meet some other people like over by Ovando, and they'd exchange groups of girls and the girls would come back over this way, the new group. I remember I stayed at the Gordon Ranch. I didn't do any work there, I just goofed around. But they had this Emily Hartley, from back East, really rich people. She always wanted me to ride with her. We'd race horses. I learned really quick like, you don't race against somebody old like that... you let them win. (laughs)

SV: Did they wear jeans and stuff at that time...?

GN: They wore fancy riding clothes. I wore jeans.

SV: Bib overalls?

GN: Bib overalls.

SV: Did you ever have horses to ride around the valley, or did you just walk?

GN: We would just walk mainly, my brother and I. One of the hunters brought a horse up for us to take care of all summer long. We couldn't turn it loose, it would run away. So we picketed it out. The horse was kind of nasty. So we took it back. But we just walked, all the time. In the wintertime we'd walk from up where our cabin is from there over to one of the schools, and dance all night long. At six o'clock in the morning here we'd be going back through the snow to go home. So you'd soon learn how to walk.

SV: You enjoy hiking...

GN: I do, yeah.

SV: When did you start hiking, going out with friends just for fun, fishing trips and...?
GN: My brother and I used to hike because we had to. I had a route for grouse that you go from our cabin, you go up Elk Creek a ways, and there was an old trail, you cut through the woods and come out at Windfall Creek, and over Glacier Creek, go down Glacier Creek a ways, and you can come out down here, like over here (points toward Missions). I'd just do that every once in awhile.

SV: Did you take a gun with you, then?

GN: I think I had a twenty-two, one time. One time.

SV: Were there pretty good trails when you were hiking to go fishing, like to Elk Lake?

GN: I don't know, were they Bob?

BN: No they weren't really good.

GN: That's one thing, Bob and I always had in common. He likes to hike, too.

SV: So, you hiked a lot after you were married?

BN: Oh yeah, that was part of our life, was hiking. In fact, Gyda was hiking before she had to go to Rochester for that brain tumor operation. Before we knew what was the matter with her, why we were still hiking. We could go from here up to Rumble Lakes, you know, in just maybe three hours, something like that.. I know there's a lot of people would take all day to hike up there.

GN: We hiked one time, started over by Ronan side, came up over the top of the Missions, came down this side a ways, turned around and went back up over there. I have a picture of Bob laying on his back. . . up there. I was sick, I couldn't lay down.

BN: We knew there was a trail through there, you'd come out Mollman Lakes area. So we went over on the reservation. That was before Gyda went in for her operation, wasn't it Gyda. We spent a good day, we come over into this side a ways, and we'd already been up on this side, we hiked on back. I was hungry, and I thought Gyda might be hungry. Stopped at a restaurant in St. Ignatius. . . (Gyda: Ravalli) and ordered a couple of steaks. I had to eat those steaks cuz Gyda was sick. We'd taken a hell of a hike that day. It wasn't long after that we had to go to Rochester and she had this brain tumor. We were lucky it wasn't malignant. Part of brain that didn't affect her thinking. We lucked out on that one.

GN: I've gone through some real bad sicknesses. I was born with leakage of the heart. I went through the flu. When I got older I had rheumatic fever. I was in the hospital about two (?) with that. Then I had that darn brain tumor. I must have strong genes. Keep me going.
BN: Well the doctors in Missoula, they didn't figure they'd ever see her again. (Discussion) It took them a long time to decide that she had a brain tumor. One doctor had just come back to Missoula, put in his fellowship at Rochester. He got on the phone right away. Called up one of these buddy doctors on the brain surgeon team. Doctor said have her down here by Thursday. Here I was out on the railroad. Gyda got word to me and I got some relief. I came home, we spent about a day getting our stuff together. Went down on the train, takes two days to Mayo. (discussion) Later found out that flying was a heck of a lot easier.

(discussion of train trip continues. Kids on trip making noise.)

GN: Kids don't mean to be crude and rude and mean, but you just don't know them. I came home and had an awful crooked face. It really hurts a person, including me, to meet somebody and they try to avoid looking at you, so you know they don't want to look at you. You know, you can tell.

(discussion)

[End of Tape 1, Side B]
[Tape 2, Side A]

[hiking discussion continues]

GN: I took some women on a hike up to Holland Falls. This one woman complained all the way because the trail wasn’t paved. (laughs) I said, never again.

SV: Did you have any neighbors when you were kids?

GN: About two and a half miles away.

SV: Visitors?

GN: One time I’d made a cake and I was looking forward to eating that and a couple Forest Service men came up, I suppose my dad sent them to check on us. What they did, they ate that cake. Oh, I was so made at them. Then there used to be a trail crew camp right there on the creek (crick). Right where the cabin is now. These men, still laughing about it, we learned about what time they would eat their supper, so we’d go get our water at that time. We’d walk over there and stand around with our hands behind our back looking. This one man says, here outta the woods come these two scrawny big-eyed kids standing there looking. They’d start opening up cans of fruit and cans of this and cans of that. It was really good. We were just regular moochers.

SV: Well, I think Forest Service rations were pretty good at that time.

GN: Yeah, they were. They were really good. I think that’s where I tasted my first grapefruit, was through the Forest Service.

SV: Well, they had canned meat, canned fruit...

GN: Canned butter. Their butter was really good. It was good food. We’d go over there about every other day, have a really good lot of food. All the goodies we didn’t have. My brother and I had a fishing area up Elk Creek there. So the Gordon Ranch, they sent this man, I think a Bishop or something like that, for us to take him fishing. So we had a place where there was a big rock in the middle, and then deep hole between it and the bank. We put a log across it. You could walk on it from that bank. Well, we knew it wouldn’t support his weight, so we (sent him out on that) and we sat and laughed. He fell in the creek, a big splash.

SV: Was he mad?

GN: No, it was just an accident to him, but we knew what it was... it wasn’t!

SV: You’ve talked about all these different experiences, do you remember holidays?
GN: I remember Easter. Because I wanted to go down here to school and get in on their Easter Egg Hunt. My dad wouldn't let me, I remember that, that was when I got older.

BN: Gyda, you did go to a Christmas. . . Your dad packed you in a pack sack.

GN: Oh yeah, there was another school up here at Elk Creek School. I never did go to that except it was at Christmas time and my dad stuffed me in a pack sack and packed me through the woods over there. My dad skied and my brother stood on skis in front of my dad and that's the way the three of us went. Went about, must have been a couple miles.

SV: Just to go see the Christmas program?

GN: Yeah, but I froze my feet. You'd ride with your legs cramped up like that. I froze 'em again one time. We didn't know exactly what to do. We knew they were frozen, you know. So somebody had told him you'd put kerosene around them and wrap them up. So we did that. When we took the wraps off in the morning it was one big blister. They were just huge, humungous blisters. We spent the day sticking needles in there letting the fluid out.

SV: I bet that was painful . . .

GN: Oh, it didn't hurt. You know, actually, I think I have a high tolerance of pain.

SV: What other home remedies do you remember? Coughs?

GN: If we had a cough or cold, my dad's remedy was a spoonful of whiskey with sugar in there. That was all.

BN: He didn't kind of bundle you up and let you sweat, huh?

GN: I don't remember that part. I think we'd drink whiskey and go to sleep. He made homebrew, home made whiskey and wine. I don't like whiskey, either. He used to spend one night running the still. So when it would come out it would drip into his jugs that he had to have cotton or charcoal that it had to go through. He'd have to have my brother and me sample that whiskey. I don't like whiskey. See if he was getting a good do on it.

SV: You were good helpers. . . (laughter)

GN: No, we didn't like it. You know if you have to, if you make a kid have to do something, they don't like it. Best thing probably ever happened to me. I tried smoking a corn cob pipe one time. That was another good thing that happened. I got so sick I can still remember how sick I got.
SV: You didn't take up smoking, huh? Do you remember getting in trouble for anything?

GN: Yeah, we stayed with a family up here and they had two or three kids and my brother and me. We ran out of groceries so they went to Missoula to get the groceries and were only going to be gone overnight. They were gone for about ten days and we didn't have anything to eat except oatmeal and cocoa. So we put cocoa in the oatmeal. We went up to Haasch's place which was just a little ways away and went in their garden and we stole all kinds of vegetables, whatever we could find. So Mr. Haasch came down, he knew we'd done it he could see our tracks. He came down and took a look around, he went back home and brought us down bread and meat and bread, and everything. Actually, we were just starving to death. That was a real nice family I stayed with.

SV: That was good things to remember?

GN: They were really nice to us.

SV: Do you ever remember things like getting a new dress or anything?

GN: Dress? (laughs) The only dress... I had a dress that was sent to me from Norway. One summer we were gone somewhere and my dad was away working and somebody broke into the cabin and stole it. Other than that, the amount of money that I got from Annie Hollopeter, was I think, two dresses and sixteen dollars and I ran away from home to go to high school. That's what I went on. I worked for my board and room.

SV: Then did you live in Missoula?

GN: Yeah, different places there.

SV: Was your dad still working for the Forest Service?

GN: Yeah, he was pretty mad at me, too, cuz I ran away from home. He had gotten, supposedly, remarried by that time. When he left in the springtime, this woman, I still can't accept her as a mother, anyway, she took all the groceries, her brother come up and took all the groceries, they loaded them in his car and took off. So we were left without anything to eat. So we had to do something. So we did the next best thing, we found a place to work for our board and room down here, clearing land.

SV: Did you ever dream about doing anything beyond what was right here? You obviously dreamed about going to high school.

GN: Yeah, I wanted to go to high school and I wanted to become either a nurse or a teacher. But I didn't finish. I finished high school on GED after I had the brain tumor operation because I wanted to make sure that I had that high school diploma. And I did. You know, I was walking
down Higgins Avenue this day after this operation, and my face was so crooked, I was trying to get out and meet everybody, let them get a good look and get it over with. And I thought, I ought to go get my GED. I walked down out to the University, sat down and took the test. . .

BN: You know I wouldn't have been able to take that same test and pass it like she did. And she never even studied for it. That's one thing that I found in these little schools. There's eight grades in a little cabin. Young kids will learn faster because they learn from the big ones. Gyda was subjected to that over the years. She was smarter than a lot of the kids that had better chances, regular high school graduates.

GN: My dad was in the old fashioned way that a woman, the only thing that they are good for is to take care of the house and have kids. And that was just a little out of my line. I don't want that.

SV: Did you have magazines or books at the cabin?

GN: National Geographic and a Norwegian newspaper, which we couldn't read.

SV: Could your dad read it? Do you wish you'd done anything different?

GN: Yeah, I wish I would have finished school and gone on to become a teacher or something like that. I wished I'd done that. But Bob and I got married and that wasn't too bad, either (laughs).

BN: I showed on the scene you know, and I kind of took over. And she and her brother were struggling to live there in Missoula. He was working for Moeller Freight (?). Gyda was working in the restaurant. That's where I met her. I was working for Walford Electric, which was right around the corner on Higgins. I'd come around to this restaurant. I came in there and caused her all kinds of miseries. I finally, she went to another job, which was another restaurant, a better boss and better conditions. Eventually, why, we just kind of more or less eloped. My folks thought that I wouldn't ever be able to take care of a family. (discussion) But by gawd, Gyda and I showed them that they were all wrong.

SV: Sixty years now. What's the secret?

GN: Fight a lot. Settle things out.

BN: I think the secret is just to apply yourself, and realize that you're going to make your own. . . you know, don't ask anybody for . . .

GN: My brother and I had this house rented, the first house. Just a little stone house. Had one bed, double bed, one bedroom. And the toilet was in the closet. Kitchen, I needed an ironing board. That ironing board was our table in there. Anyway, then when my brother would go to
work, he worked days and I worked nights. He'd get out of the bed, and about that time I'd be ready to go in the bed. Bob got me a down quilt for Christmas, cuz we didn't have hardly any bedding. Then there was a big fight all the time, I'd go to sleep with this nice down quilt on me, pretty soon, zip, my brother would take it (laughs). Anyway, when we got married, by that time, my brother and I had rented a bigger place. So it still only had one bedroom in there. My brother was going to live with us. It had a long entryway. We just put a day bed in there, and he slept in the entryway. He had to crawl over the bottom end of that to get to bed. But it worked. You know, if you don't have much you can always get along. It's when you get so much you get kind of spoiled.

[End of Interview]