

Oral History Number: 223-001

Interviewee: Jim Piquette

Interviewer: Dan Hall

Date of Interview: February 16, 1989

Dan Hall: Jim, I would like to start the interview by asking you when and where you were born.

Jim Piquette: I was born in Missoula, Montana, September 26, 1915. I went through high school and graduated from Hellgate High in 1933. I was a newspaper boy on the streets of Missoula, I started when I was eight years old, selling papers not delivering them, selling them on what was known as the Dunovan Hickey corner, which is the corner of Higgins Ave and Main Street. That was considered the prime location to sell from. I bought it for fifteen dollars from the predecessor who used to own the Oxford, when he was selling papers and quite naturally he garnered the best corner in town. I sold papers there from the time I was eight years old until I was... let's see, I come into high school, until I was fourteen years old.

DH: What businesses were at that corner?

JP: On the corner was what they called Dunovan Hickey's, it was a sophisticated cultural bootlegging joint, right on the Main Street there. And they would have, they had a great big green river, what's it...that was the facade, like, they were just serving cola drink or something. Under the counter of course they had the bootleg whiskey, pour some of that in a glass and then hid it with a little bit of that phony lemon... you know like... you know. Of course you were wired in to the... federal government and the sheriff and everybody was in cahoots in those days. Money talked, you know what I mean. And they dressed the part, Dunovan was a tall man, Charley Dunovan, stately, he could pass for a banker anywhere and Hickey was a short, refined looking man. They were the epitome of class, they dressed the part and so they ran that place. In the back end they had booths, mahogany booths where people would play poker, pan, pinochle, the whole place, seven or eight rooms they would play in those days. Much more sophisticated than the Oxford, it was the place to go. There were two taxicabs, one in the front, Jay Bell had the one right out the front door, and the one on the side was Louie, Billie Cormeer (sp?). They were both bootleggers, too and they'd deliver whiskey on call from the Dunovan Hickey's. I would take, when I was there I would take Cormeer's (sp?), Billie's calls off of a pole. And for any good call I got I got twenty five cents and for just answering the phone I got a dime, you see, just for answering the phone. If it was a good call they would say to me, Where is Billy? That meant that, that was a code signal. "Billy has gone to church for about an hour, and he will return in about ten minutes." I would write their name down, "who will I say is calling?" No last names at all, Frank, he knows who I am. Back comes Billy, gets his booze, in some places he has got it hid, out he goes and delivers, see. Then I had another route that was nothing but prostitutes and bootleggers, they were the fellows who ran bootlegging establishments out of rooming houses, party houses, you see. Some of the people were Paul Quinell, Johnny

Mahoney, Mike Basil, the King of the Raviola, who subsequently moved down to Billings and was very successful.

DH: Where did he get the name King of The Raviola?

JP: Well he got it when he hit Billings, because he was an excellent cook and he had the... world's most fabulous recipe for raviola, right out of Italy, he was an Italian immigrant, you see. He ran a house of ill-fame, doubled, called the Royal Rooms, which was a house of ill-fame and a bootlegging joint. Now when I speak of a bootlegging joint, you could come there and have a party, upstairs, right about over where, in the area where...that... on West Front Street, about the second hundred block, just down below the Matador, where the El Matador used to be. Then there were two other houses of ill-fame between there and the El Matador, and I delivered papers to them. Now I charged them five dollars a month and it cost me sixty cents for the papers, and on Sunday another ten cents, so the papers cost me a dollar and I got five dollars a month. I just rang the bell and threw the paper up, then come back, rang the bell, then they would come meet me downstairs and pay me the five dollars. I had twenty bootleggers and houses of ill-fame places in Missoula, see I had a nice business. While I was gone on my corner I would lease it out for fifty cents to a kid, because it made good business because I had these five dollar customers and what did I want to be monkeying around there for an hour, at least out for an hour, and then I could make all this other money, you see. Then when they would go to jail... they only put them in jail for thirty days, for... they didn't put them in for prostitution in those days, in those days they put them in for bootlegging. They only stayed there thirty days. Then I got, I gave them their newspapers, then when they got out they would pay me ten dollars for the one month. I was operating all different systems, you see.

DH: How did you get this corner?

JP: I bought it from the... the successor to Billy McFarland, who was the ace newspaper boy. A guy by the name of Lee Wiler sold it to me. Billy McFarland had owned the Oxford for thirty, thirty forty years, subsequently, and of course, naturally he would have the best corner in town. So he sold it to Lee Wiler and Lee Wiler, he wasn't, he... he wasn't too friendly of a guy, and so he only kept it a year and I bought it from him, when I was eight years old. Then I got out of high school and I thought I was going to go to law school. I had registered at the law school. In those days you went right into law school, you didn't have pre-law in those days, 1933. My father broke his leg, he had two taverns, he owned two taverns. He was very successful in business. He owned the Palace Bar and he owned another one called the Log Cabin bar, which is right where the office supply is, of course you know where the Palace Hotel is. That bar was right in the hotel itself. Broke his leg, so I was his son so I had to come down, at age seventeen and run the bar for about two months, until, these two bars, until he got out of the hospital. You stayed in the hospital in those days for six weeks with a broken leg, you know. None of the casts and all that sort of thing like they got today. So then that kind of threw me off, as I couldn't go back to law school, because I was two months late. So in the interim my uncle came out here to visit in the summer, and he said why don't you come back this fall, he said and go to

the mining school. We got a good mining department here, in the town, in Platteville, Wisconsin. Part of the University of Wisconsin, and, you know, kids have always at a certain age in life they want to get away from home. That was what I needed. See, they, just somebody to invite me. He was very successful in the lead-zinc business, he was the superintendent for the Vinegar Hills Zinc company, and a leaser from them, he made a lot of money. So I went back and stayed at his house for a year in Platteville, Wisconsin and went to the mining school, the Wisconsin School of Mines. I came back here in the spring of '35, from school and I went to work up at Clinton, there was a job up there at Clinton running a compressor. I got on there through the winter and in the spring I didn't go back to Wisconsin, I knew the attorney for the state highway department, you had to have connections to get a job in those days, political connections. We were right in the throes of the depression. There were twenty million people out of work. So my dad had done him a favor, my dad was a high roller, he drove a Cadillac and lived the part. Bought my mother a beautiful home, I'll show you a picture of it. So forget that. So by God, I got a job with the highway department, that was hard to get, see, as the chief of party, on a survey crew. I am a pretty good draftsman so I went out in the field for six months then come into their office in the fall, and with me was a kid that had flunked out of the School of Mines, Paul Devine. He said, you're smart enough, he says, you could make it at the school of mines. He says why don't you take those credits you got from Wisconsin, he said and it will save you a year, you know.

DH: You are talking about the Butte...?

JP: The Butte School of Mines. So that made sense, I mean, what the hell. Lawyers were curb stoners there, they didn't even have an office. I mean what the hell. School of Mines guys were coming out and going to work for major mining companies in Argentina, South America, all over the world, you know what I mean. It was a glamorous thing. The truth. So I thought I'll give that a whirl, he give me that song and dance too, so I went over there to the School of Mines. The first thing right off the bat who do I run into? A guy by the name of Colewater, who was a Jew. These Jews are smart business people. He owned an advertising agency and he owned a junk route, but they don't like to do the physical work of hustling this ads and hauling and going and getting this junk on Sundays up and down the alleys, Saturday and Sunday. So he had an old broken down truck, and he had all these customers, that for the School of Mines magazine that put ads in there, like the Kaimin would here, only he put it out five times a year. It was a much more sophisticated, technical magazine. So Jesus, I took that on plus the junk business, I was making two hundred dollars a month. Making more that some of the professors. They were really... you know, didn't, they called me a promoter, they wasn't all that crazy about me. Of course it took me four years because I didn't carry a full course, I just, you know, drove a nice car, and everything, going through school, stayed up at, I didn't stay at the dorm I stayed at the YMCA. And so I come out of there in 1941. I wanted to stay there and get a master's degree, but... they were getting ready for this war with Hitler, you know, so... I went down to Livingston and designed the airport for them there, and come back with the Public Works Administration and then transferred to the Corps of Engineers. And then in '42, I graduated in '41, then in '42,

then I was at the chrome mines south of Columbus as a shift boss for a year. Do you know where that is? South of Columbus, Montana?

DH: Yes, I do.

JP: Nye, up in that country, I was in Nye, Montana. Then that closed down, that was a blitz deal because of the shortage of chrome. Rhodesian chrome is what we were buying, until we chased Rommel out of Africa we couldn't get any chrome. He was the agent, or he was the Nazi general that was tough to beat. Montgomery beat him at El Alamein and run him the hell out of Africa.

DH: What do you mean by a blitz deal?

JP: Blitz deal, a urgent deal that they had to do something right now to get chrome, see. Urgency, I got other words for it, I could think of, crash deal, OK? They built a whole city and everything up there. So then I went down to Colorado and bought strategic metals, minerals, tandellum, columbite, manganese, beryllium, those strategic metals that they needed in the defense work. Stock piled that stuff in Salida, Colorado, and then after the stock piling was over I went back to Butte and I was a shift boss there until 1944. I was going to go into the Army, or the Navy as a lieutenant JG but I was color blind. I missed the, failed the color blind test. So I was waiting to go into the Army, and then what happens? Harry Truman throws the bomb and there was no more war. I had my orders to go to Japan, we were going to fight Japan and we would be there yet fighting them. So then I got into, by a fluke, I got in to the blown insulation business, immediately after the war. I was in it ten years; I made a lot of money at it. Doing attics, side walls and the homes, I did five thousand jobs, had three different outlets, Great Falls, Kalispell and here. Sold that for a pretty good piece of money then I went into the grading and paving business. I was in that... let's see... '55 to '70, fifteen years, then I sold that. Then I went to work for the Montana Concrete Pipe as sales manager, they owned a concrete pipe plant in Spokane, one in Missoula, one in Silver Bow, and one in Helena - or Great Falls. I was the general sales manager there for fifteen years. So that takes me up to 1984, about 1985, then I couldn't retire, I am a work-aholic, I got to do something. In fact this is the first day I have sat down for months.

DH: Could we go back to your student days at Butte?

JP: Yeah, sure.

DH: How big was the school at that time?

JP: Three hundred, there were three hundred students that were in the school of engineering, they offered it in three courses, they had geological engineering, mining engineering and metallurgic engineering. And they were divided equal, about a hundred in each, pursuing each, at different levels, of course, seniors, juniors, and so forth. And classes of fifteen, twenty each, see, that's all that there were, you see. Then they had what they called a general course, where

a lot of Butte kids went to school, it was a two year course, where they could take oh...political science, they could take drama, they could take languages and so forth. A good share of the, all of the Butte lawyers that tackled the engineering department flunked out, they couldn't handle it, they couldn't, in fact the judge sat next to me, Judge Olsen he didn't last the first semester. It was a tough school. So that is about the size of it. They had all those taverns, there was 160 taverns in Butte, if you can imagine that, Silver Bow County, all of the School of Mines guys had there hangouts there, you know. Beer was ten cents, shot of whiskey twenty five. It was a, there was never a girl that graduated from the School of Mines, they were all men. So it was a, there were some general students there, the other general course here, so the total enrollment with the general students about 350.

DH: How well do you remember your professors?

JP: Oh, I remember every one of them. Yeah, I have their pictures and remember everything about them. What their likes and dislikes, would you like me to go on a discourse about that?

DH: Just kind of briefly touch on the characters.

JP: Well, the president of the School of Mines was a Rhodes Scholar, an Englishman, a devout Englishman, very distinguished looking man, Dr. Francis A. Thompson. And then we had a fellow by the name of Professor Adamee (sp?), who was in charge of the civil engineering part they taught. We had an O.A. Dingman who was the mining engineering department, and we had a Professor Shoe, Dr. Shoe who was a mathematical genius. And we had a Dr. Curtis Wilson who was the metallurgical department. And Ettiore Corettie who was his assistant, and then we had a guy by the name of Bianchi who was a... and we had a very colorful fellow by the name of Walter Scott. He lived to be ninety-five years old and he was a graduate of Harvard. He taught economics there. Then we had a woman there, Madame Converse who was from Paris, she taught French, Spanish, and drama. I was even in one of their plays. That's about the run of those guys. There was a personal thing; your classes weren't over fifteen guys in it. They knew you personally; they took a personal interest in you. They knew a lot about you and you knew a lot about them. It was really a, what I call a real luxury, to go there. Compared to, I suppose you got classes of four five hundred there out there. I have been in your Underground Lecture Hall there. And Butte was wide open, the bars were open twenty four hours a day, there wasn't a key on any of the doors. They made their own laws in Butte. They had a hundred and fifty prostitutes in an alley, there was of course liquor by the time I got to Butte had been legalized for three years. And joints open twenty four hours a day. Just a booming town, eighteen mines operating underground. They had one thing where if you brought your lunch bucket there after a shift, a shot and a beer, first one free. Shot of whisky, shot of schnapps, just to get you in there, you see. There will never be another town like Butte, there will only be one Butte, and it was a hell-roaring town, is what it is, what it was. I enjoyed all that. Of course I did business with all of those merchants with my advertising business. They were good to me; they gave me a lot of plusses. Of course, I got a salary from the school for being the business manager too, see. I had three incomes.

DH: What did you do with yourself during the summers?

JP: I come right down here and tended bar in my dad's joint. He owned Murphy's Corner by that time. Which is where Hamburger Ace is now, right on the corner, but it was more this way on the corner, you could open, you could go in from Higgins Avenue or Spruce Street. And I got five dollars a day, seven days a week, I couldn't do any selling ads, there wasn't... nothing... we wasn't publishing a magazine for the summer, of course. Then no taxes or none of that. Then I got, then came Garnet. I ran into this old prospector by the name of Charlie Root. I met him in my dad's bar in the summer of 1940 and he wanted me to come up and work with him. Well, I kind of wanted to get out of the bar; it was a smoky joint any way. So the first of June I went up there with him, we went and doodle bugged. Doodle bugging is where you use a rocker, I'll show you a picture of it, and you put this gravel, there was very much clay up there, so hard that you had to break it down to recover the values in gold. To get this clay broken down, that is where your values were. Not in the stream bed itself, but off the side, up on the banks and so forth, on Indian Creek. I worked there June, July, August, September, and then I went back to the School of Mines in the fall, I was married in the fall of 1940, finished in the spring of 1941.

DH: How much time did you actually spend in the town of Garnet?

JP: Well, I spent; I was in the town for June, July, August, and September of 1940.

DH: No, I mean on a weekly basis. How would you divide your time between working and...

JP: Oh, we worked seven days a week. On a weekly basis we would go to work at seven o'clock in the morning and quit at seven at night. This was in the summer, you see, had to do all you could in the summertime, this old boy I worked with was a real regular old-time prospector, he was good at recovery, he could do the clean-up work with mercury, knew how to handle it. We split right down the middle what we... everyday what we cleaned up.

DH: How many people were living up in Garnet?

JP: Oh, I'd say there was, they was underground miners. There was about, I'd say a hundred. At least a hundred.

DH: Which mine was working at that time?

JP: Oh, the Nancy Hanks, no not the Nancy Hanks, someone was leasing it, but the McDonald boys were working, I don't know the names of these mines but if I looked it up I could find it out.

The McDonald boys, there was a guy by the name of Red McDonald, who was a successful logging contractor, retired now, he lives out in East Missoula, he was there. There was the Hannifen boys, they mined, all separate mines. There was Glenn Hawe, he had mining

properties he was operating. I would say there was about five separate mining operations going on up there, family operations. And there was the immortal Ole Dahl and Marriane. One cute thing, he would go with Pete Shipler to, Pete Shipler had a car but he couldn't drive it. He was the money lender up there. We lived in his house, we rented his house, he had two or three other houses. Ole Dahl, when he would go with Pete to buy his liquor for the week, he would mark all of the bottles because his wife Marriane would drink. And he would check when he got back. Well, all she would do was move the mark on the bottle. [laughter] But it was a... experience I would never want to miss. Plus, Butte, you know what I mean, when I was a shift boss. The deep mines in Butte. I was part of the whole scene.

DH: Was Frank Davey running his mercantile when you were there?

JP: Oh yeah, he was a little old guy, yes, little old dapper guy, of course he was, I don't know how old in 19... 40 but he died some time shortly after that. I don't remember when, the date at all. I suppose anybody could tell you that that was up there.

DH: What kind of goods was he selling out of his mercantile?

JP: Oh, he had a little dry goods, he had groceries, he had tools, he had explosives, he had... pots and pans, hardware, anything that you would need to survive.

DH: Did he own the Wells Hotel at that time?

JP: Well, was there two hotels there? He owned the big tall one.

DH: That's the Wells Hotel.

JP: I think it was up over the grocery store, I don't know. His grocery store was on the main floor. It was a tall building, I remember that. We pitched our tent right next to it there.

DH: Did you ever frequent the Miner's Union Hall?

JP: Oh, yes. There was nothing left I mean. We were right next door to it with our tent.

DH: The building was down by that time?

JP: Yes, partially down, the roof was off and all that kind of stuff .

DH: What would you do for entertainment while you were up there?

JP: Well, you see, we worked seven days a week and the best entertainment in the world was that bar because I'm not a drinking guy, but Jesus, they were singing and playing the juke box until two or three o'clock in the morning. As far as entertainment, everyone was entertaining

themselves. Ole's Bar was the place. People came from Drummond, they'd come from Missoula, from Philipsburg, to go there.

DH: How did he get his booze up to Garnet?

JP: He went down to Missoula and got it, brought it up with this old Pete Shipler, every week, he'd go on a Monday.

DH: Was there mail service in Garnet at that time?

JP: Mail service, yes, there was mail service. I think some of those people had mail boxes there in Davie's Store. Besides mail boxes out on the, out in front of where they lived. Very interesting.

DH: Was there someone who would go around and deliver the mail or was there a central point and collect their mail?

JP: I think that the bulk of it was brought there to Davie's Store and they had it collected there. But Indian Creek was right up where we were mining, right up at the head of the gulch. Oh, probably, we lived in Pete Shipler's house, probably a five minute walk up there. Very heavily wooded area, beautiful. We didn't mine the main stream, we mined the eddies, if you will. That's where the values were in, not in the gravel, the values were locked in the clay. He had a good system, this Charlie Root had a good system of recovery, he savvied the recovery of the gold. He used a, some people used a, at that time they used gunny sacks in the ripples. He used this wire mesh, wire mesh like plasterers used, to back up the plaster, instead of lath, wooden lath, they would come in with metal, real fine divided metal, much finer than and closer knit than fencing. But he was good at it; I wouldn't make any money without him, because he was so good on the recovery.

DH: Was that hard work?

JP: You bet it's all hard work. And he would pan ahead of me where I did the loading of the material in to the hopper. He would pan ahead of me, so that he knew where the values were. Excellent at panning, just incredible.

DH: Did you work this one claim that entire summer?

JP: Just the one the entire summer, yeah. We leased it from Glenn Hawe, he owned that property in there. He since got killed in, subsequently got killed at a railroad crossing down at Drummond, the place he crossed the track hundreds of times. Drove right out in front of a passenger train, got killed. Glenn Hawe, nice fellow. He has a son by the name of Tim Hawe that is in the... is a petroleum engineer with Standard Oil down in Houston, very brilliant fellow, college educated. Not from the School of Mines, I don't know where he came from.

DH: How many businesses were running up in Garnet that summer?

JP: Well, there was just Davie's Store and Ole Dahl's Bar, that is the only thing that was there as far as businesses concerned.

DH: Were there, there are other buildings there that at one time or another were businesses...

JP: Oh, definitely,

DH: Were those just empty or...

JP: All empty, there was nothing there. No, see it was tough times there. It was the only thing that ended the depression was Hitler and Tojo. Hell's fire, jobs were hard to find. People had to, tough times, they had to create their own jobs. The Hannifen boys and the McDonald's and those guys, they are all Philipsburg people, good share of them. There was no jobs, there was no mines, see gold mining was out, when the war started.

DH: Why was that?

JP: Well, they didn't want the... they declared a ban on gold mining. Because they needed all the help they could get for the war effort. They didn't feel that gold mining was necessary, kind of a funny thing to do, you know, but... and gold was only twenty one dollars an ounce. Against three hundred fifty, four hundred dollars now, today, see.

DH: How many ounces were you guys getting out?

JP: Oh, we were getting just about twenty one dollars a day. Just about ten dollars and fifty cents apiece, for twelve hours.

DH: Did you ever go stop in at Beartown?

JP: No, I never did. I always... we worked seven days a week, he had no family, he was a bachelor, and he wanted to work seven days a week, I didn't care that much about it. Have you been to Beartown?

DH: Just drive through where the town site used to be. I have never talked with anyone who saw what was there.

JP: No, I was never there, I have heard of it about it from those guys that was there.

DH: How about Coloma, did you ever stop in there?

JP: Coloma, no, I went over there, I have heard that word a lot, too. Coloma and Beartown. Philipsburg was the big hub for a lot of people; they liked to go to Philipsburg. There was a lot of people that were from there that came to Garnet, see. They had relatives there.

DH: Did you ever go down to Philipsburg?

JP: Yeah, I went to Philipsburg a few times. It is very interesting there. I subsequently have gone in to that old town of Granite to look that over. That would be worthy of something to do this summer. There is a lot of stuff left over at Granite, it was quite a settlement, have you heard about it?

DH: Yes.

JP: I enjoyed that trip in there. We went with a guy that narrated the history of it good, a guy by the name of Hintz, he was a deputy sheriff there. Another guy and I went over there, just purposely for that.

DH: Have you been up to Garnet recently?

JP: No, I was up there in, I think we were up there on our twenty fifth wedding anniversary, something like that. It would have been thirteen years ago. And you are looking about... 1965 I was up there, no 1975...

DH: Where did you stay when you went up for your honeymoon?

JP: We went to Polson, we were gone for a week, we were gone for three or four days. We shut her down, they wanted to have a big shivaree, what they call a shivaree party for us but... they were all so broke I didn't want them to spend any money on me. They were good people, quite a few Irish men... the Hannifens, a whole gang of those, two N's, iffinn, I think, one N and two F's.

DH: Was their house...

JP: They were up above, over in towards Indian Creek. Up above Pete Shipler's house that we lived in, his sit all alone, somebody just built for speculation. He lived up the gulch there, he was a bachelor, did you ever hear of him?

DH: Yes. Did you ever meet Frank Fitzgerald?

JP: I met, was he up there, I went over there with my neighbor, who was with the Bureau of Land Management, BLM, he lives down the street here. We took a satchet up there about four or five years ago and I met a guy, I think his name was Fitzgerald. He was a caretaker or something, he was doing something. Is that the guy that you mean?

DH: Yes, he lives up there during the summers.

JP: Does he? It was during the summer.

DH: He entertains visitors in the visitor's center.

JP: I see, we were just there for a couple of hours, very interesting, we went over there. We were up at Lubrecht Forest, we went over the hill or some damn way we got over there. We went over to look at placer mining operation, there was somebody doing something, I think it was on Elk Creek, they were doing some placer mining in there. Have you ever been over there? They have torn the hell out of that creek.

DH: Yes, they were working on it; they were working on it real big last summer. Lots of work.

JP: I guess there is some pretty good values there. A guy by the name of D'Orazi, young Johnny D'Orazi, he has got some claims in there. He has a lot of pipe dreams about them being worth millions and all that stuff. Takes money to make money. But I have done well financially, I have no complaints. Got six children and they are all educated. Nice home here. I am the paralegal for the... I am the coordinator between the owners of rest homes, not the people, not the residents but the owners of the rest homes and the State of Montana.

DH: How did you get involved in that?

JP: It was kind of a fluke, everything, anything that is any good is a fluke, it's true about life. Unless you're a Kennedy, there's no flukes there because you got money, there is only two things in life as I look at it. One is money, if you have money you can be a total failure and be branded as a success. That makes up for that. The other two items, the other item that takes the place of that is if you have persistence and determination. That's the other two things that will offset the fact that you don't have as much money as you'd like to have. So I was never much of a guy for... belonging to mutual admiration societies. I don't belong to any of those things; I'm kind of a loner. So I had a friend that called me up down here at the Red Cross, they didn't have any help, stuffing five thousand envelopes, they was trying to put on a campaign for money. So I told them, I'll come down for three or four hours. I have got a lot of other things to do, but I'll do it. So I get down there, this little old woman, she says, I have to quit my job. I was the paralegal, the people got to me, she said. I got to visiting with them in these rest homes and they got to calling me at night, and she said I had to get out of there. She was with it for four years; called ombudsman or paralegal is what it is. So she said, why don't you take the job, you are a pretty good talker, you get along with people. I didn't want a job, what the hell. So I got to thinking about it, and I thought maybe here's a chance to give something back to society. I don't work for nothing, you know, nobody does that unless they are crazy. So they wanted to interview me and they interviewed me, so I told that I would take the job for twenty hours a week. They pay me well.

It's kind of interesting, as an advocate for those people, there is five hundred people in rest homes in Missoula. Your chances of getting in a rest home are one in twenty, there are sixty five, there are ten thousand people in Missoula in the age sixty five to eighty five and of that figure five hundred of them are in long term care. So that's one in twenty, most people will try to sell themselves that one out of every two people are in rest homes, that is nothing but a fallacy, no truth in that at all. Most people are living in their own homes, they are well, they are dying when they are ninety five years old. They got money, the people between the age of sixty five and eighty five have a buying power of four hundred million dollars a year. That is that age group. Most people think they are poor, Christ no, they are the people who buy the Mercedes, they are the people on the Caribbean cruises, they are... it is a misnomer. So I learned all these facts. Then I am a pretty good public speaker, I don't have any [], so I give talks to the Lions Club and the Golden Kiwanis. You'd be surprised how little those people know what goes on in a rest home, they haven't got the slightest conception at all. Because they are afraid to go there. They should go there if they have a friend there. You couldn't do anything better for a friend, that's there. But they don't know that until somebody calls their attention to it.

I have a friend that I went through all of grade school and high school with, has Alzheimer's Disease, he is at Hillside Manor, I heard he was there. Of course I have a list of who's there, because I am dealing with the administrator only, on legal matters, So I knew this guy was there, so I said to her, I'm going down to see him. She said you are going to be real surprised, she said I'll send the nurse with you. So I had a great big nurse with me, I got in here and he just stared at me, just stared in way that will get to you when you have known the guy all your life. She said to me we had better get you the hell out of here and get you some air, so I said all right, because I wanted out any way. So I made up my mind I was going back, alone. So I went on a routine visit, I go to each rest home once a month, that is my contract, for one hour, to deal with the administrators. I thought the hell with it, the next time, next month when I am here, after my visit with the administrator, I'm gonna go see that guy. By God, there he was sitting out in the hall sitting in a wheelchair, I had completely hypnotized myself, forget all this stuff. So I went and held his hand and he just, he looked at me, don't know me from a bale of hay, I stroked his head, talked to him, just might as well have been talking to that wall over there. So I said, hell this could be you, sitting there instead of him, put that through your computer. Just by the grace of God, see. So I was getting strength on that kind of thing, so I went to talk to his nurse. She said, and I said are there any days next month when I am here, when you knew I was coming that... medication, is there any time where medication makes any difference. No, she said sometimes there is just a little, they may just remember something for the moment. So I said the hell with it. I saw a woman go in there, I was looking down the hall, go in and take the wheelchair and take him in there. So by God, as nosey as I am, I said I am going to go back there. And it was this guy's wife, the guy with Alzheimer's, he don't know her at all. She is hugging him and all this stuff, she said what do you think of this? Well I said, I don't want to talk about it, I said let's go out in the hall. So she said that when I was talking to him there, I said to him do you remember, I am talking this way, Dick Stallman, Dick Stallman? He was the class comic, you couldn't forget him, he could have made it in Hollywood, funny, Dick Stallman, never, nothing. The first words he said to her when she went in the room and

wheeled him, here he said Stallman. He never said another damn word. Something that I said he had remembered, made me feel good. So we visited outside and she thanked me for it.

END OF SIDE A
SIDE B

JP: Besides my paralegal job, it's only twenty hours a week, I am considering becoming the director of the Missoula Reading Service. That's where you read to the blind over the radio, the director was a woman who quit not too long ago, and they want me to take the job. I would take it in conjunction with my other job. I think it would be interesting, too.

DH: Are there a lot of classmates of yours from your days at Missoula High School who are still in Missoula?

JP: Well, we had, to give you some figures; this is kind of a good subject because I know it so well. There were 243 of us that graduated June 8, 1933, Thursday night. Of that 243, 143 are deceased, they are gone, that leaves a hundred. We have had two class reunions, the 51st in 1984 and we just had our 55th last summer in 1988. Of that hundred that's left, ten of them couldn't come, couldn't come if it was across the street, they are stroke victims and so forth, they couldn't come under any conditions. So that leaves ninety, there are five of them that told us they wouldn't come if they were given gold bricks for their weight, they didn't like us when they were there and they don't like us now. So that's eighty-five. [laughter] Then of that eighty-five we had sixty-five that signed up to come in, from all over the country. By the time, from April until we had it in August, ten had to cancel out because of health reasons, so we had fifty-five. We returned their money to them, they didn't want the money back, they all had plenty of money. So we had fifty-five out of a hundred, that's pretty damn good percentage, from a class that's fifty-five years old.

So, I was the toast master both times, it's a cute story, so we gave a fifty dollar bill to any couple that had been married for fifty years. There were four couples there that had been married fifty years in 1984. I told them, at the podium, come on up, I said all four of you, I'll give you a minute each one of you, you can talk a little bit 'over the microphone. Oh Jesus, it got to them, they were crying, and going on, you know, we are in love and all this god damn stuff. Okay, people like that, so one guys says, he is hollering from the back, he says, Hey Jim, he says, I want the podium, I want the microphone, I want to come forward. I says you just stay where you're at. No, he says, I'm coming up. I said what the hell do you want to come up here for? He says I want to give a speech. I said, well come on up. He was a devil in high school, he had an orchestra. So he said, I want to tell you folks, he said, I deserve an award, a fifty dollar reward. I have been married four times, been married fifty years to four different women. Well Jesus, the men loved it, bravo they all raised, he's no coward, here's the wonderful man, give him the fifty dollars. He didn't want the fifty dollars. He says, I had to think pretty fast, I said well there's pandemonium here, this is... out of control. I'll tell you what I'm going to do, out of my own heart, if you'll bring your fifth or sixth bride to the next reunion which we are going to have in 1988, I'll give, the class here we had \$3,000, donated all this damn money, we'll give, the

committee will give a hundred dollar bill. Where are you going to get the hundred dollars? I said we will give it out of our own pockets, that made it worse, see, by God he said, I'll be back. I'll be back and I'll have maybe a fifth or sixth marriage. The men says he was the greatest graduate that ever lived. So then he says... this is the. . . no this is '84. So he shows up, this one here, 1988, got his hair dyed red, it isn't white, it's dyed red, looks good. Well, he says, I want the podium again. I says go ahead. He said I didn't make it, I had many proposals and everything else but I didn't make it, he said, I feel bad about it and I don't expect the hundred dollars. I said you won't get it any way, you remember the deal, yeah, he says, I am leaving five hundred dollars for your next reunion, here is a check for five hundred dollars. I can't say, promise that I'll be married again but that is to get you started. What a guy, they loved it.

DH: Do you meet a lot of your class mates in the business world while you were working in Missoula?

JP: Well, not a lot. A lot of the fellas from the School of Mines left Butte and were with different mining companies and they never stayed in the mining business very much. They stayed with companies, like this guy in Marion Ohio, Des Moines, Iowa, the Marion Shovel Company. There were a lot of guys that went with Ingersoll-Rand, those big companies. They didn't stay in the mining business, so I didn't have a lot of contact with them. Then the Anaconda Company did a funny thing, the class I graduated with, there were forty-three in it, in the class, in 1961 they laid every one of them off. Give them five, six thousand dollars severance pay, and fired the whole crew and just hired a few people. So they all left Butte and I lost contact with them. Scattered themselves all over, still weren't old enough to retire, they had to keep working, some of them went out to Hanford, out there at the atomic works. Some of them went down to Vegas, Henderson, Nevada, and all over the world. And the high school people, none of them... there are only thirty I think that we could count that stayed in Missoula. Because there was no jobs here, this was tough country. So there was only five that wouldn't come and that was the five. The rest of them... there was another five that couldn't come if they wanted to, infirmed you know, but...

DH: How strong of a company was the Anaconda at the time you were at Butte?

JP: Well, when I was in Butte, the Anaconda Company come out, I remember the first year I was there, with their annual report in the spring, they had made thirty million dollars that year. That was a lot of money in 1938. They become disintegrated, they got to be... they had a big office in New York, on Broadway, they had guards out at the door way, they spent a lot of money foolishly. They got into the Morgan Bank and Trust Company, a hundred million dollars, they had to sell out, sell out to pay their debts, they sold out to ARCO, big oil company, Atlantic Richfield. For oh, a hundred and fifty, two hundred million dollars. Settled up everything and didn't declare bankruptcy, paid everybody off, called it quits in about 1970.

DH: How many people were working for the Anaconda Company while you were in Butte?

JP: When I was in Butte there were eighteen mines working, there were 15,000 people.

DH: Working those eighteen mines?

JP: Oh yeah, the administrative work and everything else. Attributed to the mining business there were 15,000.

DH: And what was the population of Butte then?

JP: Butte was about 45,000. It was the biggest city in Montana. See they went by the license plates, Butte was one, Great Falls was two, Billings was three, Missoula was four. Just as many people in the streets of Butte at midnight as there was at noon. The damndest place I've ever seen in my life. That was an attraction to me because there was some life. Missoula is a dead town, you know. Missoula is a very conservative town, not so much conservative as it was in those days.

DH: Did you ever have any of your class mates in Butte get into any kind of difficulty or trouble with the law?

JP: No. No. I've never have had any difficulty with the law at all.

DH: Any of your class mates?

JP: No, well I knew so many people, I got to know them in the business world. Some of them, if they got in jail, they got drunk, the first guy they would call would be me. I knew the mayor pretty well, Barry O'Leary, and I could generally make a call and he would tell them to straighten up, you know what I mean. They would get in arguments with people in the bars, not our colleagues. They didn't like that, the bar owners. You can't have that going on, there's a lot of people in Butte that are pretty handy with their dukes, you know. And they would get drunk and fall down, get picked up. After the semester they would get drunk, some of those guys.

DH: Do you still have a lot of friends in Butte?

JP: Well, yeah, the Mrs. is from Butte, I've got some friends there. Not so much colleagues because they are all gone. But see when the Anaconda Company shipped them out they left there. Just friends that I knew there...

DH: What do you think when you go to Butte today?

JP: I think Butte is vibrant. We had a class reunion there for the women, the Mrs., she was with the class of '38 and they had a 55th class reunion. Met a lot of nice people there, knew some of them, couple three four of them were from the School of Mines, that married Butte girls. And I thought Butte was, looked very good to me. Of course they have got the open pit mining going

and there is some other companies that are thinking about doing some underground mining, they are doing some development work. Butte is vibrant town. They have got a guy by the name of Don Peoples that has attracted a lot of government money in there. They even got the Port of Butte if you can imagine. Where you can ship stuff in container-type things, have them load it there. They have got those energy commission, mega-hydrodynamics, something like that, to make from coal electrical energy from coal. Christ, the Jews been making it for fifty years. They been twenty years trying to learn how here. Jews are a very intelligent race, no question.

DH: What do you think of when you see the downtown area of Missoula now?

JP: Well, I think, they have cleaned it up and they have tried to spruce it up. But this mall was a terrible thing for Missoula, the area. You don't have any of the old time business men uptown any more. And these people and come and go out of this mall, they have been coming and going out of there, their ten year leases are up. I think that it is part of progress; there is nothing that you can do about it. It is part of a new system of merchandizing. The prices are very high out there at the mall, they pay big rents. I go out there and walk for health reasons, a couple hours if I have the chance. You meet a lot of people, nice people out there, that you would never meet on the streets uptown, because you are all confined into one area. I think it was a good thing for Missoula and it's a nice mall. It is one of the nicest malls in the country for a town of this size.

DH: Do you remember the Highlander brewery here in Missoula?

JP: Oh yeah, that crowd used to drink in my dad's place. They'd work at the brewery all day long and then come down and drink whiskey all night. Get off work and come right to his place.

DH: How many people worked there?

JP: Oh, I'd say there were a hundred.

DH: Where was the brewery at?

JP: Right where the interstate, it went right through the middle of it, the highway, the interstate highway went right through the middle of it. Right, there was a round house, do you remember the round house?

DH: Yes, I do.

JP: Right east of it. On the side of the hill. It was pre-prohibition, they made beer, it's an old brewery. They adapted very well and they made good beer. But then when, you know you had Schlitz and Busch and that crowd, they have all corralled the business now... Miller.

DH: Did your father sell Highlander?

JP: Yeah, he was the, it was featured at that joint, he didn't sell any foreign beers at all. And that's why they all drank there, of course.

DH: Now there was a brewery there in Butte while...

JP: The Butte Brewery, it done well for a while, too.

DH: Now what was the name of that brewery?

JP: The Butte Brewery, there was one in Bozeman, one in Billings, one in Anaconda, one in Helena, The Kessler Brewery, Great Falls, little brewery in Kalispell at one time. The marketing and the delivery systems... so different than they are today. You couldn't compete with those people, it's a whole different world. It's changing while we are sitting here, changing fast. I just got through reading Newsweek before you came, I read it cover to cover, every article, and the amazing things, it is something new every week. In medicine, there is no end to what they are doing in medicine...

DH: I think I have exhausted my list of questions and things that I wanted to talk about today, is there anything in particular that you would like to add?

JP: No, I don't think so.

DH: Thank you for your time today.

END OF INTERVIEW