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Interviewee: Gloria Busch

Interviewer: Suzanne Vernon

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[Tape 1, Side A]

Interview begins with miscellaneous discussion about Gloria being gone from the Swan Valley for a few years in the 1980s.

GB: I missed it when I wasn't here. I was happy enough down there, but I just really missed the valley and wanted to come back. I drank the water. I think I made a mistake. You drink the water, you're sunk. You always come back. I know how it is.

SV: I need some basic biographic information.

GB: I was born February 12, 1932. Maiden name Davis. Middle name, Anne. All of our dogs are named Anne in our family. Born in Cairo, Illinois. Father's name—Milton A. Davis, born in Cairo, too. Nationality? French, English, Irish and Dutch—we're from the melting pot. We are Southern. That's all we are, is Southern. Mother—Blanche Emery. Born about 1910, and father, too. Born in Kentucky. We're just American, just from the melting pot. The Davis side we traced back from 1835. My niece, two or three years ago, and I went down to Tennessee. It was 102 in the shade, and we were out looking at all these Davis's. I kept telling Becky, "Now don't be surprised if we turn out to be black, because there's an awful lot of black Davis's down here." Finally we went to the courthouse. We found my great-great-grandfather's will, where he left his slave and her issue to his wife. I said, "We're white. We had a slave."

(Discussion about tracing DNA on recent PBS documentary)

SV: Did you go to school in Illinois?

GB: Cairo High School. Graduated in 1949.

SV: When did you get married?

GB: 1953, January 7. Jimmy (James H.) was born in '54; Beth was '56; and Kim was '59. Husband was James H. My son goes as James now, too. James and Beth are in Hawaii. Kim is there now, too, but she lives in Wichita. She's gone to Hawaii for six months. She's taking care of Beth. Beth had massive jaw surgery on Monday, and Kim is living with her and working at Starbucks and taking care of Beth. I just talked to her last night. She's upset because she's a personal trainer and there's no place in Hawaii to swim. She said, "Can you believe it? We have all this gorgeous weather, and the pool where Beth lives doesn't have any lines on it, and the sides are

painted blue and so is the bottom and when you're swimming you bonk your head. She's ranting about that. She said everybody goes to the beach. So she went down to (the beach) and said, "This is great. There's no place to leave your stuff. You go in the ocean and you come out, and it could be gone." She was going on about that.

SV: Were you living in Illinois when you were married?

GB: No, I was living in North Carolina. I left home when I was 18 and went to North Carolina. Jim was in the Navy and I met out there. We were married in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

SV: Was he from North Carolina?

GB: No, he's from upstate New York. We came here from New York. When we got out of the service, we moved to New York. His folks owned grocery store in the Finger Lakes region of Kanadaseaga. His dad had a heart attack and wasn't feeling well. We took over the store and ran it for 12 years.

He came out here big game hunting. This was always the joke. He wanted to come before little Jim got big enough that he had to bring him, too. We didn't have any money. So he came out here hunting the first year. The milkman came with him. They hunted around here somewhere. Then the next year, of course, he had to go right back the next year it was such fun. He took the guide from his hunting camp up in the Adirondacks, and they came out here and they had a drop camp up in the Missions. Dick Hickey took them up and dropped them up there. Jim got an elk. So he walked down to get Dick to bring a horse in to pack the elk out. He sat down to have lunch with Dick and Jane Hickey, and they were opening the mail. Dick said, "Well, what do you think about this? The Barnes cabin is going to be for sale. They decided to sell."

Jim called me up and said, "Let's buy it!"

I said, "What are we going to do with it?"

He said, "Well, let me check into it. Maybe we could come out here and live. Maybe we could bring the kids out here." So he bought it. He said, "Down the road we'll come."

The next spring we had sold the business, and he came before me and I waited until school was out. Then he flew back and drove me out here. I left heel marks all the way. I had never been west of the Mississippi River. I thought everybody in Montana would have a Mohawk haircut. I had no idea—no idea whatsoever—what it would be like. Isn't it funny? How things change your whole life. Just him coming out here. He looked into the schools and all that kind of stuff. He thought this would just be the berries, and you see who's here. Everybody else is gone, and I'm still here. I told you, I made the mistake of drinking the water, I think.

SV: Which cabin did you buy?

GB: It's where Jan and Dave Stewart lived. We bought 200 feet of lake frontage, a four-room log cabin, and a half-way garage and an old Jeep, old boat, for 19,000 dollars. 1967—we came here on the Fourth of July, 1967. When we came across Montana, I thought, he has lost his mind. It was hot, windy. All the things I don't like. Then we came—I remember going down to Salmon Lake—and I was thinking, "Now this looks more like it." For two years I had been told that my address was going to be Seeley Lake, Montana, 59868. No address, no house number, no nothing. We got to Seeley Lake, and I'm here to tell you it was tarpaper shacks, pretty much. I thought, Oh man, this is not good.

So we went up and we went in (to Lindbergh Lake). Of course it didn't rain that year from the 15 of June till the 15 of September. You can imagine what the road was like going into Lindbergh. It was just dust and weeds. In those days we went in and drove down through the ranch and around to the summer home road. We didn't have the hill. We went around, and of course all the people were there. It was lovely. We met Sharon MacQuarrie driving through.

We spent that whole summer with everything we owned—we didn't bring much with us—one U-Haul truck with the kids' bicycles and the stereo and the new freezer, refrigerator. The cabin was furnished with John Stark furniture, most of it. So we piled everything in the backyard, covered it with plastic and started to work on that garage so that we would have some storage. It never rained, not a drop of rain ever fell on it. We got it done. Put all that stuff away. We had a saw with a black plastic handle. It just melted—it was that hot out there.

It was so cold in the morning, Suzanne, we had to take the *Missoulian* to have something to start the fire with. I didn't know how to start a fire. All we had was the fireplace. I went to town to try and buy the kids winter robes and pajamas and stuff, and, of course, they didn't have anything because it was July. So we just bundled up in sweaters. By noon, there was no insulation in the ceiling, by noon you could feel the heat coming down around here (points to the wall). It was a cathedral ceiling, but there wasn't any insulation. It was a summer cabin. So that fall we insulated the ceiling and started...we caulked it. Ed Underwood taught me how to caulk. I recaulked it. Dick Hickey was an architect, and he drew us plans and we built on. There was four rooms. Two bedrooms, a garage and a living room, and a walk-out basement. Of course we were half done...I can't remember if it was the second winter that we were here that my son got his bedroom and we got ours. We were all in the back—little rooms. Three kids in one room and us in the other room. Small bedrooms for at least a year. I can't remember for sure how long.

Kim was in the third grade. Beth was in the sixth or maybe seventh. Jim was in the eighth, and the next year he went to high school. Kimmy went to the third grade with Ronnie and Rollie [Matthew] and so she was in that class. Fifteen boys and Kim. Poor little kid. It was third and fourth. I know it was 15 boys and no girls. Next year, (unintelligible) and another little girl were in with her. But the first year she was the only girl. Kim was the youngest.

SV: Had you grown up in the city?

GB: Small town. I was raised on a farm in southern Illinois. We didn't have electricity or plumbing, not because other people didn't but we didn't. When I came out here, I remembered a lot of things my mother used to do helped me to get along. Cooking and cleaning and how to do it without all the comforts of home. We'd had a nice place in New York. But the first seven years we were here I didn't have a car. I stayed home all day. I learned to sew. I learned to cook, and I did all kinds of crafts—pine cones, all that kind of stuff. I think that's why I am the way I am. Up until that time I had been very social. I was into everything at church and took the kids to the Y [YMCA] and had Girl Scouts. We came out here, and I got to the point when somebody came to visit me, it almost made me nervous. I haven't outgrown that. I still like people, and I like them to come. But it's very strange, but if it's unexpected? Sometimes it makes me nervous. I know that's why. Because I got so used to living by myself. Being alone. Reading my book when I wanted to.

SV: Do you think some of the other women were isolated, too? Was it isolation?

GB: Well, no. The big thing of the week...every Friday night after Jim got in from high school, every Friday night or Saturday night we went to the ball game. We became really good friends with Bryce and Peggy Wiscarson down at the county house. We used to play cards on Saturday night. It was so funny. Bryce did the plowing. He and Red Campbell. He had a road grader. He'd come up and he'd deal the cards, and he'd start telling us about something. He'd say, "Deal the cards so you can tell us what you heard!"

He would know all of the gossip around, who was doing what, because he'd stop and have coffee with everybody. We kept track of what the valley was doing. He would come and tell us. They were nice people. I really enjoyed them. We went antelope hunting with them a couple of times. I think what you want to know is about Rustics and how that started?

SV: I'm a little curious about what Lindbergh Lake looked like, before we go into the Rustics stuff. What was your first impression?

GB: I thought Lindbergh was beautiful, and I liked it. But we were so busy trying to get everything organized, because we could see winter coming. New York winters are worse than here. Wind blows, and it drifts. You have drifts as high as the house. Of course, you are plowed out. In all the years that we lived here, I've never been snowed in—Lindbergh Lake or anyplace else. My son had perfect attendance when he went to high school. He never missed a day of school. He had to drive out to the road, of course, which brought lots of adventures. Dale Conley—I give him credit for making life worthwhile, or passable, because he drove the school bus. The high school was here. We wouldn't have come if the high school hadn't been here. The year we came was the year Barney Jette and all of them went to State (basketball). That was the year Seeley Swan took State. Jimmy was going into high school that year. It was a really big deal. So he went down there to school and that connected us to the high school.

Of course we were connected here. You see Jane Hickey lived up here. And Sharon MacQuarrie. And Jeannie Good and Hank, they came. He was in Vietnam, and Jeannie came up and stayed. We had a little social group up there. Dune Hultman and Buff. We used to have parties. We made long wool skirts, and we still wore high heels, believe it or not. We would carry our high heels with us and take our boots off and put on our high heels. Now we don't even bother doing that anywhere. Everybody just gave that up. For a while there we fought it. We tried really hard. Long wool skirts to keep warm. We'd have people over for dinner. I always say, if you are bored and lonesome, you need to have somebody over. That's how we used to do it.

We didn't go to church. There was a Lutheran church here. I went there and while I was going there, we started the Community Church. Bobby Fisher, Jim and Linda...and Al Carlson. The guys gave money...There were some people named Overmeyer, used to have the Swan Centre. Then Bill and Sandy somebody came and had this one singer, and they were big in the church—Lutheran church. She had a kiln back in there, and it was the gift shop. She gave ceramic lessons. This brings so many stories. (laughs) You know those praying hands? I think it was Donnie Anderson—he was just young. He made a pair of praying hands. He painted them orange with green fingernails. They fired them, and they were sitting in the gift shop. Ed Foss saw them and nothing would do but he had to have them. He bought them, and then he gave them to Caroline Berner's mother who had it made into a lamp. They gave them back and forth to everybody! They've been to Canada and Hawaii. They mailed them all around for years. Just something to do. Anything to keep yourself going.

Ed and David Berner were big practical jokers. When David moved out here, he brought some of those big telephone spool wheels. Now, we already had some. Everybody had one of those in the yard. They'd buried the cable. He had them stacked up down there (Swan Centre). He had an office down there in one of the cabins behind the Swan Centre—David Berner did for a couple of years. It got too much. He had too many people. He quit. He had already retired. He was just going to do a little bit. He had them all stacked up down there. He went away for a vacation, and Ed put a sign on them that said "Free Wheels," and he gave them all away when David was gone. To get back at him, David gave him a subscription to *Motorcycle* magazine. I think he was still getting it when he died. David sent those to him. One time David Berner went away, and he sent Mary Philips a post card. Of course the mail came to the Swan Centre, and they read everything. Everybody knew that they read it. It was a post card, and it said, "Pleased to tell you that your gonorrhoea is cured." So everybody knew it. David, he'd get by with murder. Funny man.

SV: I do want to hear about Rustics. What were you doing for a living when you came here?

GB: The funny part about it was we were going to retire young. We were both 35. We sold that store, but we didn't get the money we thought we were going to because of his folks. So we came on anyway. By that fall we didn't figure on the wear and tear on tires and vehicles living

that far off on a gravel road and all that. Things were beginning to go to heck. He said, I'm going to have to go to work. I'm going to have to find something to do.

Ed Underwood—I don't think we knew him yet. He and his crew were building Seltzer's cabin on Cygnet Lake. He came over and knocked on the door. He said, "I need a hod carrier. Are you a hod carrier?"

Jim said, "Absolutely am!" He got his coat on and went to work for Ed. In those days, everybody was entitled to a set of house logs from the Forest Service. That's how it worked. If you wanted a cabin, you could have a set of logs. Well, somebody would order a house. They'd go out into the woods and select the house logs, how many they needed, and cut them down, fall them skid them in and peel them, over there by Ed's place. Then they would build the house. Then they would take it down and move it to wherever the site was—it was always close by. This would take a year or a year and a half.

In the winter when it got cold, they set down and put their feet on the stove and rested, and kept warm. Jim said, "I can't do this. We're going to starve to death, while they have their feet up, eating elk." So he proposed to Ed that they get a piece of land, and they build cabins to sell instead of waiting for an order. Ed said, well, he thought that was a good idea and he could see how that would work, but he was too old and he didn't want to go into it. He said for Jim to just go ahead and do it on his own. So that's how we started. He came down and he talked to Joe Wilhelm, and he bought this piece of land where Wolff's are and this and that was the first Rustics down there. We built that cabin...

SV: Alongside the highway? [across from Hungry Bear]

GB: You can look right down there and see it. It's just a little log cabin. Then they bought a butler building, a great big thing with a metal roof, open-sided. Just a roof. We were going to build houses under there.

SV: The log home that is there now, you built that?

GB: That's it. We built it. That was the Rustics. There was no Rustics office as such. Nobody worked in the winter. It was too cold, and the snow got in the way and they just went home. The idea with the building was we could work under there and build this house underneath this building in the winter. I remember pulling in down there and Joe and Adolph...Joe Wilhelm was our first employee and Adolph Anderson was our second, and they were working down there and they had a barrel stove out in the open with a fire going. They were working on this log house. We were going to town or something. Joe said, "Pretty cold today, isn't it?"

Jim said, "Yes, how cold did you have?"

He said, "Twenty-four [degrees], and that was in the house!"

I remember him saying that. He was just joking, laughing.

SV: How did he find Joe Wilhelm? Joe hadn't worked on log homes before.

GB: No, nobody was building log homes before. They might build one, for themselves. I think Joe was a sawyer in the woods and so was Adolph. I remember distinctly that Adolph Anderson was on his 52nd week of unemployment when he came to work for us. Of course we wanted to survive. We wanted to have a business or something, but what we really wanted to do was to have something the people in the valley could work at. We really and truly did feel that way because there was no income.

Some guys like Herb Styler and Kraetzer and Charlie Goff, they worked for the Forest Service. Of course, their money came in from the Forest Service. But the rest of the people, I don't know what they lived on. Bryce had a job with the county, and Red Campbell had a job with the county. The people running the store...I don't know where the rest of them got their money. It seemed to us that there was no money here. These people are just on the brink of poverty. But they didn't feel that way about it, you understand. Russ and Harold Haasch, and Joe (Lee?), Marguerite Wilhelm's husband, they didn't. I guess they just worked in the woods. As near as I could tell, they were just sawyers, and they worked in the woods, which is a tough life. Jim had been a hunter, big game, and he had a bunch of rifles, and he had Bausch and Lomb scopes. They were the berries. Very expensive. He heard they were having a turkey shoot. It was right down here where the Rustics office is now. They had little shanties set up and targets and stuff. He said, "They give turkeys and hams, and we could certainly use those, so I'll go down and get us a turkey." So he went down there, and Lee Wilhelm and Russ Haasch, and Harold and probably some other guys.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

(Turkey story continued. For the turkey shoot the people in charge had purchased “seconds” for the turkeys—those with wings torn off, etc. The turkey Jim Busch won and brought home had no wings, et cetera)

GB: Anyway, they went and told them they wanted better turkeys. You go to wrap it, and you see no wings and you wonder, what happened to him? Cancer? (laughs) How come he lost his wing? Marguerite, she was a funny lady. She was retired. She and June Underwood (the clerk at the school), she and Rhonda Underwood...That was July when we came. That fall I had to go back to St. Louis. My mother was sick and died in December. I was just beside myself. I had to leave my kids out here in this godforsaken place, and I didn't know who was going to take care of them. Certainly not Jim. He wasn't one of those diaper-changing types. I was just torn. I broke out in hives. I was just so upset. June and Rhonda took care of my kids—all three of them—for three weeks. Packed them lunches and made sure they were okay.

Beth was there. Beth was 12, I think, and I made up a whole bunch of food and put it in the freezer and everything. I was worried about them and worried about my mother. It was a terrible time, almost to the point that I was relieved when she died. Because she was suffering, and we just wanted the whole thing to be over. She died just about the first week in December. To leave the kids, you know how mothers are. You don't want to leave your kids. But I certainly couldn't take them with me. It wasn't that I thought they were going to die or anything. I just didn't want them to be in that predicament. We want everything to be fine for our kids. We always want to take care of them. But June and Rhonda, I'll always remember them. They were so good for me. Took good care of my kids for me.

SV: It sounds to me like the whole Rustics things was a novel idea. Was anybody else doing this?

GB: Down in the Bitterroot, eventually. They were building log houses. I don't know for sure. I can give you kind of a timeline. 1967—is when we got here. 1969 is when we started the Rustics. We had one house sold and it was down here under this, when that building fell down, and this was an interesting experience. It was the dead of winter and Jim was gone back in New York or somewhere and Joe called me and said, “Gloria, there's something wrong with the way the building is tied, and it's going to fall. The snow load on it is too much, and we got this house under there. What do you think we should do?”

I said, “Well,”—we had a little CAT, little tractor—“if you can get the house out from under there without risking your lives, do it; otherwise, just let the thing go.”

He called the bar and all the guys in the bar came down and there was no electricity. They had headlights. Those men got that house out from under that building. The next morning it went down like a house of cards.

So there we were. We had one house to try to sell, but we didn't have any place to build it because our building site was full of broken down building—tin and stuff. So then Jim went up and talked to Harold. Harold Haasch owned where the Rustics yard is and that little house up on top of the hill. Harold owned that whole thing. I don't remember what kind of a deal we made, but we bought that somehow. That little bitty that sits there by Liquid Louie's, that was the place where the warming shack...we didn't have an office or anything. I guess we were using this office for a while. It was several years before we built the office for Rustics. Down there, they set out these little pads in a row and build the houses on them. Joe Wilhelm is the one that devised this (points to logs in cabin) put this hole in them. He would take chainsaw and make these...we even called them Adolph strips. He'd ream them out of there about this long (three feet), and they make great firewood. They'd do all the logs that way, then turn them over and make them fit. Now Bob Ford, when he came, he put insulation in there, but we never did. This house never had insulation in between the logs. It was built in 1977.

SV: Where did the first house go that you built?

GB: I can't remember. I tell you that in 1972, about, Rustics was going pretty good. We went to Great Falls in March to Ward Junkemeir, and Ward said, "You are bankrupt, absolutely bankrupt."

Jim said, "Well, okay."

Went back home and Fritz Kizer (?), who lived next door to us from Santa Barbara, and Dr. Kotschevar each put in 15,000 dollars. The next day we got the order for a double house in Sun Valley, the Millington family. She was a Janz that owned Sun Valley. They built...It was like an L—30 by 40 and a 30 by 40 with a swimming pool in the middle? That's when they became Custom Log Homes. They weren't log cabins anymore.

Then we sold one to the Chandler family that owned the *LA Times*. I don't know where that house is. It's octagon-shaped, and it's over by St. Ignatius somewhere. Those two big contracts...Then kind of word of mouth we started selling more houses. We left Joe and Adolph here building, and Russ Haasch came to work for us. Then after Harold retired from the state, he worked for us. At one time, in maybe 1974, we had a Christmas party. We had, I think, 35 employees, because there was 70 some people at the Christmas party. We had it at the Terrace, and we limited them to one drink before dinner, because they had to drive all the way back. Then we had a party at Liquid Louie's with lots of beer. That was really fun. I've always said, if I could wish for anything...but to work as hard as we worked and do without as much as we did without. My kids would come home from school and say, "We need 14 dollars for activities tickets," and I didn't have it. It came out of the groceries. You know how that is.

Then to have it succeed and all of a sudden we had some money, and we had a car and we had to travel. We had 48 dealers in 24 states. They all had to have a house. That's where many of the houses went. In order to be a dealer, you had to have a model home. Jim and I traveled. We

flew, and we drove. We had a dealer in Alaska. Flew to Alaska for that open house. We had them all over. That money came into the valley. We had a payroll. That was the object of the whole venture. By golly, it worked. It was amazing. My husband was a very smart man...In some ways he was dumb as a post, but some ways he was just very smart. How he figured that out. I know he had the idea and he had Ed Underwood's knowledge, but I know Joe helped him a lot. Joe and Adolph. They knew logs and wood. They would give him suggestions, "This is how we ought to do this."

I remember Joe saying—I still quote this to Sue and Mike Holmes—"If we can't make it with new stuff, we'll never make it with this broken down saw. We have to have good equipment, or we'll never make it. Don't start out with just this old beat up thing. Venture out. Get us some good saws." That was his point, and he was right because if you have bad equipment, it's always broken down.

But after we got down to the Rustics, we didn't have the building anymore, and it became a common thing to work. Everybody worked in the winter, it didn't matter. If it was zero, we waited until it warmed up. But if it warmed up at ten o'clock, then everybody went to work at ten o'clock. Nobody questioned it anymore. Isn't it funny? Somebody with a different idea. If you can sell it, then you've got it made.

SV: Industry. Describe to me what the log yard and the office was like.

GB: When we started a house, log cost 69 cents a foot. Now a good house log costs 400 dollars. But see, we could be competitive with frame homes because of the cost of the logs. Now I think that's different. They'd be building a couple of houses. We had a D-9, we had peelers over here. Then he'd [Roger Watson] go and get the log and bring it down to this house, or he'd bring it over to whoever needed it and, "Does it fit?"

The idea was that instead of having one log and you had to make it fit, you had a pile over there, and you could go pick it out and say, "I think this one would do." Then they'd peel it and bring it over, and Adolph would cut some sticks in it and they'd put it on and pin it. They'd pin it as they put it up with ready-rod—drill a hole down in it to hold it.

SV: Local?

GB: Most of the logs came from around here. Sometimes you'd get somebody wanted a tamarack house, but mostly they are pine, lodgepole. Swan Valley weeds—that's what Harold and Russ always said. We had the hardest time trying to convince them not to...well Bob Seaman, too. They just treated them like weeds. They'd just knock a hole in them, or knock them over or get them out of the way when they were building something. We said, "Wait a minute!"

Sally Cory, when we built her house in Bigfork, she went out and put Christmas ornaments on all of her trees around her place so that they would look at them and realize it was a tree. They weren't to push it over or something, to keep it.

SV: When you set the logs?

GB: Yes, when they poured the foundation or whatever and cleared the site. They'd just clear them out and knock them all down. When we were building our house up there and they were digging a basement—you talk about nervous—Jim already had to go to work, but we needed more space so we had to build. Henry Brechbill and Ed Underwood were working on our house, but before they could do that Bob Seaman had to come up—he had big equipment—and cleared the land. This was at Stewarts on the lake. They had to dig this walk out basement. Bob Seaman had Jamie Hollopeter on the job training with a cat, or loader or something. We had some little lodgepole out in front, and we didn't want them all knocked down. Bob said, "Leave the trees."

I was ironing, and I was watching Jamie with this tractor back and forth. It was 15 dollars an hour, and I finally went out and said, "Knock it down!" I couldn't stand it any longer. Better lose the tree. But I said to Bob Seaman, "What is his problem?"

"He's on the job training."

I said, "Not on my job, I don't want him."

Everybody was so very nice and friendly. Everybody laughed a lot. Lots of jokes and that kind of things.

SV: It was still a small community.

GB: Joe Nagy was in charge of the co-op, and because I was the last person up on Lindbergh Lake, our power was forever going off. It was my job to call him and tell him that the line was down, and he would come and fix it. Jim would say, "Invite them in for coffee, Gloria."

I would say, "I don't know if I want them in here or not, up here by myself." I kind of hesitated. But he was so very nice.

One day he came up and this was quite a lot later, when McCabe's had built right next door to us—really close—and they had this big cable that went from the power line into their house. They were going to change it. I was in the shower. Nine o'clock in the morning. The power went off. Oh nuts, I thought. I finally got wiped off and got my clothes on. I went out, and here's Joe standing out in back. I said, "What are you doing?"

He said, "Well we are going to change the entrance here to McCabe's."

I said, "Do you know you shut the power off on me in the shower?"

He said, "Gloria, I'm so sorry."

He had this young kid with him, and my husband wore white wool socks and he didn't want them pinched on the toe so I had to lay them over the clothesline. I saved them all up so I could do them in the washing machine, I wasn't about to do them by hand, so I had this big long string of socks hanging on the clothesline. This kid was up the pole, and he said, "Headache below!" He cut that cable, and it hit that clothesline and socks just went everywhere. Joe looked at me.

I said, "You're going to have a headache if you don't get those socks out of those huckleberry bushes!" We laughed so hard. That kid was so scared he thought we meant it. If you could have seen those socks go flying, it was funny.

But people were fun, friendly. You called everybody by their first name. I'm the first one to admit that sometimes people call me by my first name, and it insults me. Nowadays, people are too friendly or too free. But in those days it was great. It was just friends and neighbors.

SV: I've always heard that when newcomers came, there was a level of distrust. Was it gone by the late 1960s?

GB: No, it was still there. I used to say, "I wonder how long I have live here before I get to be an old-timer, like the rest of you guys."

Paul Morton came after me and he'd say, "Now don't worry about this, us old timers will take care of it."

I'd say, "Wait a minute, how long do I have to live here before I can be an old timer?" That was after we had the Rustics going pretty good, and Paul Harbin was working for us and we had a lot of people down there then.

SV: Highest number of employees?

GB: About 35. Lots of fun. Crazy people.

SV: What was the best part of doing that business?

GB: The best part was feeling that we succeeded in bringing the industry to the valley. To go down there and have people working. They were just all so busy. They had lots of jokes going on all the time. Kenny Paul worked for us. Do you know who he is? He's Indian. The last I heard, he was pulling a string up at Glacier Park. He had a blue heeler dog and a little bitty trailer right

by the warming shed right by Liquid Louie's. He would go get drunk every weekend, and he'd be in that trailer and he wouldn't get up. Jim would have to go bang on the door and get him up. He was an excellent employee. But he had this heeler, and he'd put his jacket down and the heeler would sleep on his jacket all day. Then he'd get him, and the dog always went with him. We had a white Samoyed named Samantha who owned the log yard, and she was beautiful. That dog would tie into Samantha, and Jim said, "If you don't get that dog off my dog, a Chinaman's going to come down the road someday and you will no longer be my minority employee!" Nobody ever got mad or anything. It was just hilarious.

SV: People didn't take offense?

GB: I don't think they did. But I tell you, this valley can get up in arms, and I have been so devastated by the meetings that have happened here and things they've said. See, Bryce plowed everybody's driveway—the county did. Then they woke up. He took care of the dump which was on Holland Lake Road. Then they came along, and the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] or somebody said we couldn't have a dump anymore and it had to be cleaned out. Then the county said that he could no longer plow driveways. Just do the road, and they have to do their own driveways. People were so angry at Bryce. He didn't do it. It wasn't his idea. They had a meeting at the community hall, and they said things to those people? I was sitting there crying. I was in tears. They were so mean and hateful—mostly at Bryce. I got in the car with Jim and said, "I've never been through anything like that in my life."

Well, we didn't start it, but Jack Dolan, the ranger, started the first Conservation Club. We were going to that...

SV: Why did Jack Dolan start it?

GB: He was the ranger. He was in on it. Ed Foss was in on it. Hultman. We used to go. I don't remember what our concerns were except for signs. The county came around and put up all the 30 miles per hour signs on the back roads. They [local residents] would cut them down just as fast as the county would put them up. I don't know exactly who did it, but some people did it. Some young guys, would saw them down. It was when Harold Older was the copy—the deputy—and he would just get so frustrated. The road crew did that. It was because people didn't want all the junk...just get me started on those blue signs that say, I clean the highway. Can't you clean the highway without putting up a blue sign, and then we wouldn't have to look at the blue sign and spoil the view!

SV: When you first got here in 1980, there were signs put up by the Conservation Club. Do you remember the signs?

GB: I don't remember. When we built the Hungry Bear, our sign did not have a light on it. It was just a plain wooden cedar sign, routed out and painted. Whoever came later put the lighted sign out there. We just felt that the scenic beauty was so spoiled by all of these unnecessary

signs. Who's going to drive more than 30 miles an hour on Lindbergh Lake Road? If they do, they are going to kill themselves, winter or summer. Loose gravel. We walk on Beck Road—my dog and I. I was coming out of here today and Livvie had her head hanging out, and I wondered how fast I was going. I was going 15, and it seemed like I was going really fast with the ice and stuff. They have a sign up there that says 30 miles an hour speed limit. But that was civilization. When they put up the road sign at Lindbergh Lake, they misspelled Lindbergh. We all had a big laugh out of that. Called them up and couldn't wait to tell them how dumb they were. (laughs)

SV: There was wilderness designation on the Missions side...

GB: It was wilderness. When Jim went in 1966, they couldn't take chainsaws or anything.

Raising my kids up here...one of the differences is that nowadays the kids go to Seeley or they hang out, but mine never left home. They went to school, they came home on the bus, they drove in, and they stayed home. Beth and Kim might take the snowmobile out to the highway after dinner and back. Or they might go up the lake summer home road and pull an inner tube. In the summer they stayed. The summer home, kids came. They had lots of friends from other places. The only one who ever went was Kim. She was a really good friend of the Port girls—Ellen and Amy—and Neva (?). Used to feel sorry for her because she was so isolated, and she would have Kim come down for Easter or Halloween. But most of the time, until Beth got in high school, Jim stayed home. When Beth got in high school, she started dating, so that brought into play all this staying overnight. She went with Bill Baier, and she stayed with Mrs. Baier. I didn't have to worry about that.

It was Dale Conley...They took the cheerleaders with the team. They went god knows where—Libby, Thompson Falls—all these wild places, and they wouldn't get home to the school until one or two o'clock in the morning. Then they had to clean the bus. They could go in and call me and say they were leaving the school. I knew they should be home in 45 minutes. They had a car out at the end of the road. Three o'clock in the morning in the wintertime. If they weren't back, we got in the car and went looking for them. They always showed up. But one time the phones were out. Dale brought Beth all the way into the ranch at two o'clock in the morning. I trusted him to take care of the kids. That made it work.

SV: How long did you live at Lindbergh?

GB: Fifteen years. We built the Hungry Bear in 1977. We built this house in 1976 and the Hungry Bear in 1977. We opened it on Thanksgiving of 1977. This house was already here. This was our model home when we opened the Hungry Bear. We built this as a model to show people. We decided you couldn't sell log homes from pictures. I had been doing it at home. We had a log home, or part of it was log, so potential buyers...Jim would bring them up for soup and cheese and wine and the fireplace and sell houses. People wanted to see what the logs would look like. Gene and Marty Shipe (?) came out from New York to work with us. They were friends with us, and he retired and they came out here. We built this house for them. That's

why the cupboards are so low. Marty is very short. They entertained for us. If we had customers coming in, we'd say, "We'll have wine and cheese," and they would come and look at this house. We said that if you are going to be a dealer you have to have a model.

Another side of it that I got into that I really enjoyed. We were traveling, and we went to Oregon. We had this dealer who was building this little house, and he was getting all ready to show it and all excited. His wife was in there sewing up little red bandana curtains to put up. We said, "It's very nice."

We left. Then I said to Jim, "Log homes don't have to have red bandana curtains." He said he didn't know anything about that. We were on our way to Jackson Hole to set up a dealer's meeting. We went to see a beautiful Rustics home. He had decorated with all native fabrics. Desert looking stuff, dried weeds in the corner and that kind of thing. I grabbed a piece of paper and I was making notes. "At the dealer's meeting I'm going to give a presentation on how to decorate a log home!"

He said, "Well, we'll just show them this one." We put it on the tour. That's how we got away from that stereotype of cowboy western fabrics and furniture.

I got so excited about that. I've always kind of been in art and that kind of thing.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

(discussion of differences in R-factor of log homes, depending on style of log work)

GB: A lot of them turn their logs, shape them. The minute you cut into a log you spoil that R-factor. These little porous holes are the insulation. If you just barely peel it, that's okay, but if you cut it, change it, then it loses some of that factor.

SV: What was the correct name of the business?

GB: Rustics of Lindbergh Lake. Anyway, the log homes came out and held its own on the R-factor.

SV: I remember there was controversy.

GB: We couldn't get insurance because they said, "They'll burn down!" That was so stupid. You can't set a log home on fire. Take a match and try. They just don't burn. Actually, they are not nearly as dangerous as a frame home because of the hole in the wall where the air circulates and the fire gets going inside the wall. I can show you—not now—but out there on the side of my garage, the roof comes down, and there's like a woodshed in there. The first year I was here, when I came back in 1989 and bought this place, I had a lawn mower. I had Barry Seaman's kid mow the grass for me. I didn't know any better, and I had put the lawn mower in the shed—cold—and I threw a piece of plastic over it, which I now know you are not supposed to do because moisture will get under the plastic and get into the gas tank. I didn't know that.

I hired him to come and mow the grass, and I went away with some friends to the Bigfork Theatre. My car was in the garage, and my dog was in the house. When I came home, everything was fine. A couple days later, in the morning, I walked out there for some reason. I walked out there and looked at that and came closer to fainting that I've ever come in my life. That lawn mower was melted into a puddle, and the flames had gone up. The whole wall was charred. Clear to the top was black like charcoal. It had been on fire, and it went out. I'm telling you, it scared me so bad. But it went out. As soon as that lawn mower burned up, the tires and everything burned. It just melted into a heap. The flames went out. The logs went out. You know how hard it is to keep a log burning in a stove? They just go out. I don't understand all the scientific things about it. When I saw it, I told Bob Ford he should come and take a picture of this and put it in your brochure.

SV: Did you sell Rustics to Bob Ford?

GB: Yes. He bought in 1979. We had a dealers meeting every year, and this year it was in Jackson Hole. He was the dealer of the year from Lincoln, Nebraska. He had sold more houses than anybody else. Jim was wanting to sell it. I don't remember exactly why, to tell you the

truth. He had decided it was time to sell it, and Bob bought it. Then Jim stayed on as a dealer rep for a couple of years.

We lived up at the lake, and we were building Tranquility because the office was over in the guest house, and I used to walk over there and send out the...The barn was built and the guest house was finished. I decorated the guest house. We were that far along: he had started the house and the pool was in. It was going to be our home. They've changed it quite a bit. Liz and Art have changed it, but the concept is still there.

Then I left in '80—the year you got here. We got a divorce in '80. I went to Wichita and stayed nine years then came back. When Doris Pockrus died, I came up here, and I had been back several times to visit. I still owned part of the Rustics, and Rob and I would always have a meeting. I said, "I think I'm going to buy a place and move back up here."

I had looked at a place on Lindbergh that we always wanted to use. They wanted 55,000 for it, and it was a swamp. I didn't want the swamp, I wanted the three acres on the river. They wouldn't sell it that way. So he said, "Gloria, I've got something to show you." So we came down here. I lived in this house, six months. I know this house. He said, "Well it's for sale." I thought, that's all right.

So I bought it. I was going to have a bed and breakfast. I moved in in May, and in June, Glen Gulden and I were out here trying to fix the septic system. Kitty walked into the yard and said she'd been hired to be the principal. She'd been hired to be the principal, but she wasn't going to sign the contract until she found a place to live. So I said, "Come on in and look." So we took her upstairs, and she was here ten years. Can you believe that? We didn't even say what the rules were. It was just okay.

Two years later Lee moved into the garage apartment, and he was here 8 years. I boarded them. I cooked for them. It was a wonderful arrangement. We had lots of fun and did lots of things together.

SV: So see things haven't changed that much from the old days.

(Discussion about Wilhelm's dude ranch.)

GB: With Dune [Hultman] or before that. Shirley [Webb] was just telling me the other day. Joe's dad lived in Polson in later years [Babe] by himself after his wife died. When we were putting up that Indian hotel over there...motel, which is a Rustics building and so is Doug Allard's museum. Joe was over there working, and his dad cooked everything with peanut butter. Joe took him out for a steak, and his dad was insulted because he didn't like his cooking. Joe was just sick of peanut butter.

SV: There are Rustics log homes all over...

GB: We did a lot of business. It was a going concern, a wonderful going concern. We had a dealer in Alaska outside of Anchorage. We stayed at the Hilton. The maids were all on strike, and they didn't have any clean rooms so they gave us the Governor's Suite. It was wonderful. We were only there for an open house on a Saturday. We went out to the house, and they had it decorated and everything. It looked pretty good. I remember thinking all the people who came up to me looked as if they came directly from the Swan Valley, right down to the moon boots and the big heavy coats. It was in October, but it was cold. At three o'clock in the afternoon it got dark, and we didn't have any lamps. We had to go to town and buy lamps. We had overhead lights. But it was dark, so they went and bought some lamps.

SV: How long did you have Tranquility in the family?

GB: We were divorced, and there were some partners in with Jim—doctors. Jerry and Roger Watson ran it for Jim for five years at least, and Liz and Art (Ortenberg) came. Two or three people came and were going to buy it but didn't. There were some doctors who were in partnership with Jim.

SV: Then the Hungry Bear, what sparked that project?

GB: All my kids left home, and I said to Jim, "What am I going to do now?"

He said, "Well, you are always talking about a restaurant. You want to build a restaurant?"

I said, "Yes."

So Cork Platts...do you know who he is? He was in with us. We went to Vegas [Las Vegas, Nevada]. We drove home the three of us and, every time we stopped for a meal, we had a stop watch. We unobtrusively put it on the waitress to see how much time a waitress spent at the table, actually waiting on somebody. We devised this concept where the Hungry Bear had a cook and no waitress. You came in and sat down. It had wine glasses and carafes and everything on the table. The coffee pot on the table. She would take your order and get all your drinks and go put your steaks on. You got your own salad bar. She would serve your steaks.

Of course, if it got busy, they could call me or somebody. I would go over and wait tables or whatever, but that was the concept. We were going to have a chain of these. We had a dishwasher in the kitchen. We had enough service for 100 people. We just stacked them, scraped them, and stacked them. The next morning...Debbie Biolo lived next door. She came over and did all the dishes and the prep for the salad bar. Got it all set. The cook came to work at five o'clock. Marian Matthews was the first cook after my son. Roberta Underwood and Rick Wilhelm—they were teenagers. They worked there for me. In order to get produce, Jolynn Mahaffey had the Swan Centre then, and she went to town every Friday morning. I gave her my

list, and she brought my produce. There were no trucks. We had to go to town to get the steaks. We had to haul everything up here.

SV: How did people react to having a restaurant like that in the valley?

GB: A lot of them really liked it. We had some pretty zero nights in the winter. Summer was pretty good. We had beer and wine. Where the old bar was, that was the store room. We had everything stored in there. We had a little bitty gas grill in there. If the power went off, we went out and cooked your steak if you had already had your salad bar. If you hadn't, no dice! (laughs) It's been changed. When you go in now, there's that long room. There's a door that goes into the backroom. Bar is on the right. That hallway was the porch. We just had that one little entry where the restrooms are.

We'd have people lined up and I'd say, "I don't have room." I'd ask them, "Can you go home for 20 minutes and come back? Watch TV?" They would, and they'd come back. It was really just a shirttail operation. I got it in the black the first year. Of course, I had the Rustics behind me, too.

SV: Where did the name come from?

GB: I named it. We were driving along one day somewhere—the kids and all of us. Jim always drove 100 miles an hour and never wanted to stop. I said, "Are we going to stop pretty soon? I'm as hungry as a bear." That's what I'm going to call the restaurant, and that's how it happened.

SV: How did you decide the menu?

GB: Practical. It was a steak house. We wanted to have steaks. Our first menus were written on a piece of shake shingle with a black marker. People stole them. Can you believe that? So we always had to be writing some more menus. What did they do with them? Jim said, "I guess they are starting a bar! I don't know what they are doing with them!" They stole them. But we had probably five steaks, all sizes, and a hamburger steak.

Then my friend Sally Kizer who lived next door to me, from Santa Barbara, she said...She was a wonderful lady, so precise. She said, "We would come down to eat more often if you just had a little piece of fish, if I could just have a little piece of fish." So we put in a piece of chicken and a piece of fish for Sally. We had a trout. The first trout I got was from Ronan or someplace. We did them almandine. We just had the grill. Put butter on them and sprinkled some toasted almonds on them. They were very good. But we'd get something like that and try it, have everybody taste it. That's how we did it.

We were open in 1977, the Sunday after Thanksgiving in 1977. It was five below zero. We had to practice. My son was helping us cook. He had been working with the Red Lion in Missoula while he was going to school. My husband was the door person, and I was the waitress. We

invited everyone who had worked on it to come and have a free meal. We had reservations. Doris took the reservations. They call up and say they wanted to come up at 6 o'clock. It only seats 34 or something.

So we had this grand opening and everybody was there. It got smoky from the grill. So we turned on the makeup air system. That mirror thing that is by the salad bar was the fireplace. Everyone had a view. Every table could look out the window or at the fireplace. It was all very carefully planned. All those tables that we had in there were measured so there was enough room for everybody to pull out chairs and nobody was crowded.

Anyway, we turned on the makeup air system. It sucked all the smoke out of the fireplace into the room. Everybody was coughing! So I opened the doors to try and let some air in. I turned around and our dog Samantha, who had been over there with me for months working on the wood work and stuff, she walked in and she knew everybody. So she said, "Oh hello, how are you?" So we had to go get the dog out.

We decided to have some entertainment in the winter to bring in some people. There was a young guy from Kalispell who played and sang. We advertised it. You had to have reservations. In order to pay for it, we had to have three seatings: 5:00, 7:00 and 9:00. So the five o'clock people all came and got seated, and we served them. He played and sang. We took their plates away, and they wouldn't leave! Jerry was cooking then. She went over to him and said, "Play 'The Star-Spangled Banner'!" So he started playing it, Jerry started singing it. Everybody stood up, and we grabbed their chairs and said, "Goodbye! You have to leave! There are other people waiting!" So then the next bunch came in.

On Mother's Day we were going to give away carnations. We opened at two. People just kept coming. I was the only waitress, and Jerry was cooking. We were going to handle this. It was just getting so bad. We were falling behind. Roger came to the back door. He wasn't dressed. He'd been working. I said, "Go home and change your clothes and come back and help us!"

So he went home and changed his clothes, and he got all dolled up with his cowboy boots on. We had a swinging door into the dining room where that door is...and he had this washtub all full of dishes. On the top he had this glass of wine sitting on...balanced like that. He's carrying it like this (demonstrates), and he went to the door and went. His other foot went out from under him, and he fell flat with his tub balanced like that. Everybody burst into applause. I'm telling you, we just had some times over there.

SV: Where did the tables come from?

GB: Out in Spokane. That's wormwood. They are all warped now. That's the original tables. We went to Seattle and bought all that stuff. They certainly lasted well. That finish—not Mylar—rosin stuff. It warped. Either it or the wood and some of them cracked. They are pretty. They are still pretty.

SV: Where did the name Rustics come from?

GB: Cork might have had a hand in that. He did advertising. He did the logo—the three trees. That was Cork's idea. That's why it said, "Of Lindbergh Lake." We didn't know it was going to be Swan Valley at that time. I don't know how that came about.

Jim named Tranquility, and I don't know where he got it. But Father Okorn is mad because he was building his place and he was going to name it Tranquility. Jim named his Tranquility and Father had to name his something else. He told me that. I said, "Father, I didn't have anything to do with that."

SV: What other businesses were here when you came here?

GB: The Swan Centre, and it was run by some of the Stroms. Min Kopra had where Nelson's is. Buckhorn Camp where the Merc is. It was just a post office. We all got our mail...Our address was Seeley Lake, and some people were Condon, I guess. He just had maybe a few canned goods. The way we got our groceries was, the kids rode the bus to Seeley and to school. Then Dale would stop at the store where Daisy Cainan ran it, and the kids would run in and get the milk and the bread and bring it home on the bus. That was when Lyle Slade drove the stage. We got our mail three times a week. If you wanted to do something with the bank, you went out, and you waited until he came. You got the mail, and you'd do all your stuff and put it back in. As he went back down, and he'd pick it up as he went back. We got the paper three times. We got it every day, but it came three days a week.

SV: Things have changed.

GB: Sometimes I don't think necessarily for the better. One thing that is different, we have much better roads. They take better care of the roads now. The roads are better maintained, plowed in the winter because they didn't use that salt stuff, and our cars lasted a lot longer. We drove on snowpack all the time, everywhere. Even the highway was snow-packed. They didn't plow it clear down to the pavement. We loved it. I was thinking yesterday how beautiful the road was. All the side roads would get plowed way out. We'd have all this room. We didn't have to worry about the ditch or anything. The snow banks would be higher than the car, and you'd just run into the snow bank. It didn't make any difference.

SV: I remember that, even later.

GB: The first time they gave Bryce some sand with salt in it or something, he and Red Campbell went along and threw it out by the shovelful. You'd be driving along and here's a big old hole. It wasn't evenly spread. It was on snowpack. It wasn't on the bare pavement. They didn't do that again. We all practice and learn.

I haven't told you that I also ran the KOA campground. In 1968...there's a little chunk of land behind the house that we wanted to own: that piece between Tranquility and the lake, we wanted to own it. Dick Hickey owned that. He also had 400 acres all back there, and he had this KOA campground at Cygnet Lake where the bridge is and you go up the big building. That's where the KOA is, that building. It's still there. He wanted to sell the KOA. He said, "I'll sell you this little chunk if you buy the whole thing." Jim said, "You'll have to run it. I'm starting the Rustics and I don't have time to be bothered. You'll be on your own." So we did it.

SV: What was there then?

GB: Just like a KOA. It's an A-frame with two sides: showers, ladies and men's showers, on one side and a grocery store on the other side. In the middle was a laundry mat. Washers and dryers. All that equipment was already there. We took that over. Beth lived upstairs. Beth was 12, 14 or 16. If somebody came in after we closed, she could check them in. Oh, Suzanne, it was like everything else up here. It was just a pain. They had water to the campsites, but you had to be careful. We had big signs: "Build your Fire Only in the Rock Rings." "Do not leave any dog food out. Don't leave anything out. Put it all away at night because we have bears." Right out behind the KOA was an old dump, and the bears came back there.

I had never been camping in my life. I had run a grocery store, but I'd never been camping. So it was all new to us. Beth and I did it. We had a little grocery store. I hit on the bright idea that I would go out and get the mail. All the summer home mail came in my bag. Lyle left it in my bag, and I would come in a sort it. They would come to get their mail, and they would buy groceries. You always had to be thinking. We were a 16-party line from the lookout, Lindbergh lake lookout and all the summer homes, and us and John Stark. You could almost never...[get an open line]

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Tape 2, Side B]

(Discussion about phone lines and Mrs. McCormick [Mrs. Sullivan]. Ordering bread from the Seeley Lake Mercantile which was Sullivan's store.)

GB: Mrs. Sullivan had the post office in Seeley Lake. After Marie died, John Stark would talk to Mrs. Sullivan for hours in the morning. I would say, "John, please hang up for a minute and let me give my order."

SV: Was the KOA busy?

GB: It could be. I don't think it ever made any money. We might have broken even a couple of times. We had so many ideas. We had horses. We had Buff Hultman's horses. Nancy Mills was the wrangler. We'd take out dudes. We had Herb Styler's horses once. He had a little horse named Jewell, and she had a son named Thunder. Jewell was a little bitty POA [Ponys of America]. She would walk right up on the porch. You couldn't guide the horse. It was fun.

We had little dune buggies that people could rent and ride around. They were just a pain in the neck because they never ran. You know how gasoline engines are. There's always something wrong with them. Jim would say, "I don't have time. If the toilet got stopped up, I'd just put a sign on the door."

So my girls, their job was to clean the restrooms. They'd go in and clean the restrooms. They'd go in and clean the ladies room and they'd come and get me. You have to go knock on the door because they were afraid to go in the men's room. They were 12 and 14. I'd go knock on the door and prop the door open. They'd go in and clean the men's room. One day Beth came in and she said, "Oh mother, oh god, you have to come and see what's in the toilet. It's so bad." Somebody had put Rice Krispies in the toilet. It looked like maggots. Every time you'd flush, it wouldn't go down. They just kept floating. Just stuff like that.

Anyway, one of the dune buggies wouldn't work. I said, "Let's take it down to Joe." Joe Wilhelm is the best engine guy. Joe had a standard poodle named Buster. He was an apricot-colored poodle, and he was absolutely spoiled rotten. I don't think he ever minded. So we brought it down here over to Joe's. There were some guys there, but I don't remember who. Anyway, they had this dune buggy down and they were holding the back wheels up. He was adjusting the carburetor. Buster went over and lifted his leg on one of those wheels and it sprayed dog pee over everybody standing there. Joe threw his hat on the ground and said, "Buster! Goddammit!" I was just in stitches. I laughed so hard. It was the funniest thing I ever saw. Joe, bless his heart. He loved that dog, but he was so mad at him that day.

We ran that KOA four years. I guess it was because Rustics got going so big we just didn't have time. We closed it. We sold our house to Stewart's, and we moved into the KOA because Gene and Marty were still here. No, Gene had died, and they had left, but Del and Doris Pockrus were

here because their house wasn't finished next door to Jerry and Roger. So we were waiting at the KOA for them to move out so we could move in. So we did move in. It was in the fall, and we lived here until the next May. We built the cabin next to Stewarts. That was ours. We built that. That was supposed to be for us. We were living there waiting for Tranquility to be finished.

SV: Tell me about life at the lake.

GB: Oh, that's where I learned to drink! We never drank! When we had the store in New York, we sold 300 cases of cold beer, but none of us ever drank. You can't drink and work at the same time. We came out here, and we had Hawkins and Kisers, Hoofbergers (?) and Lindal Kotschevar, and Ports, all up and down. They were all so nice to us, especially Kisers and Holtzbergers (?). They would have cocktail parties, and so we would go for cocktails. It was great. You could just walk over and have cocktails and walk back to dinner. It was lots of fun. When Dick Bardo had that place up there, he had a horse and a cow and a pig that weren't pastured or corralled. One night we were sitting on Sally's deck. This Santa Barbara matron was having cocktails, and we were sitting on her porch. This pig walked by. I'll never forget the look on her face.

Ruth Fitzgerald and Joe—they moved in and bought Hickey's place when Jane and Dick left. Ruth was an environmentalist. She said to us that she didn't think...we were talking about having electric can openers—we were at cocktails—she said, "That's ridiculous. Think of all the electricity you'll be wasting. We've got to do something about how you waste power." She was telling us that we should use this can opener.

We said, "Okay." Two or three weeks later Joe got a job with the University of Montana. They decided to have an apartment in Missoula as well as this house. She was at cocktails again and telling us about how they bought a new washer and dryer. We all broke up and went home. I was washing dishes the next morning and thinking about it, and I got this idea. I ran over to Sally's. I opened the door, and I said, "I know what we can give Ruth for a house-warming gift!"

She said, "An electric can-opener." We both had the same idea at the same time. That's all it took was one little thing like that for a joke.

SV: What's the best thing about living here? You came back...

GB: It was the people. I loved the people up here. I feel so at home here. Actually, my life here now is a lot different than it was when I lived at Lindbergh. I don't know how long I would have lasted if it hadn't been for Lee and Kitty. I'm having some problems now because I'm so totally alone. I never had a chance to be alone. I came up here all fired up to do this, and I never had a chance to fail. They moved in, and there we were and it was great. Then they left. I had to reorganize.

Before they left, Sue asked me if I wanted to cook at the Hungry Bear. I thought, I ought to do that. I really enjoyed it, but it just got so it was too hard. I was killing myself. I have arthritis, and it was just hard. So I quit. Then all last summer I kept thinking, What am I going to do all winter? I can't sit in that house all winter and do nothing. Two or three years ago, that Margaret from the Agency on Aging talked to me about going to the school as a foster grandmother. I called her. At that time you had to do 20 hours a week. I'm not ready to sign up quite for that much. I do all day Monday, all day Wednesday. She let me pick my own hours. It turns out, if you want a day off you, can take it. I'm honest, thinking what I can do. This does work pretty well. Mostly I run the copier.

SV: What was the worst thing here?

GB: The worst thing about living here, what would that be? There's nothing that I ever said, "I just hate this." Some things were hard. When we didn't have any money, it was hard. Raising kids and not having much money, that's always difficult. And trying to build onto the house. If Jim was working and we had money, we didn't have time. If he had time, we didn't have any money to work on the house. It took us seven years to get the living room finished. We had a radial saw set up in there for five of it. We finally got the room finished. We had a big family room and this living room, nice with a little ceramic fireplace in the corner which Jim said would keep two people warm: one cutting and one feeding. We finally got it done. I got new carpet, and I had furniture. Everybody would come in and say, "Isn't this lovely?" and go right into the family room. We called it the three second room. Nobody ever "lit" in there. Too many years of being in the family room.

One of the things that I don't like is having to drive to town by myself in a truck and haul stuff home. That was never my favorite thing. Inevitably I got the wrong thing or there was a bolt missing. It is a long trip. Our equipment wasn't always the best. I have a good car now, but sometimes we had old trucks and stuff. We just did it by the skin of our teeth and hope for the best in the face of adversity.

SV: What kind of advice do you have for young people moving here today?

GB: It's a lot different now because they all come and they already have their fortune made. Most of them are retiring up here. Don't you find that? Not too many young people. It's becoming a retirement community in a sense. It would be so different...I think about Rhonda Underwood. She was young and had those two little kids. We were good friends. We all had it hard. We might get a lot of snow. The county didn't plow over to our house over the bridge, but Jim did. We had a snowplow business in New York, so he brought a snowplow and he'd plow it. I used to worry an awful lot about the kids, about them being on the bus. What if the bus would break down? They'd have school when it was 34 below! I was scandalized. I thought, This is terrible! Made tough little kids out of them. Kim was scared to death of bears. I think, all in all, all three of my children will tell you it was a great childhood. They loved living here. For me

right now, the worst part is being alone. I'm not the part of a married couple. Therefore, a lot of things go on that I'm not involved in. That's bad. That's not good.

A young couple coming here now, there are so many things: yoga, church, just like a community. You can go to Seeley Lake to the YMCA thing if you want to. There was nothing like that. Suzanne, that old gym at Seeley Swan High School...We bought season tickets, and Kim Haines marked us off a place about this wide to sit your butt on and you had your name on it. We'd get in there packed like sardines, and you couldn't get out and go to the bathroom if you had to. You were just packed until the game was over. It was the most fun thing you ever saw in your life.

Beth played in the band and was a cheerleader. They had to stop cheering for her to run up and play "The Star-Spangled Banner" and then run back down and cheer. Everybody was involved in something. They either worked in concessions, you were a cheerleader, you were on the team—something. Everybody was involved. I think there was about 110 in the whole high school when my kids were there. Participation was it.

SV: What do you think are the biggest issues facing the people here?

GB: It's taxes obviously. They are going to tax us to death. Not necessarily me. I'll either pay it or leave. But there are people like Ethel Moore. Andy and Mabel—they've died, but...They homesteaded here, they've been here forever and they are on a very limited income. They just keep wanting to tax, tax, tax, and the people don't have the money. It's very sad when you see them to the end of their life, worried. Worried and afraid. That's not what we are here for. You should be left alone and enjoy the end of it. I think that's wrong.

SV: It becomes a bigger issue with more retired people.

GB: The people who are moving in here and building these big homes don't stay. They go away and they come back. Taxes don't seem to bother them. It's the little guys, like Herb and Leona Styler, and people like that who have been here forever. They are used to it and they love this place. Leita, Dixie, Neil...all of us. They were raised here, and I wasn't. Still, I just don't know how that is going to turn out. I was told the other day they have a new issue. They want to charge us for 20 years to buy open land. Not just here but in all of Missoula County.

(Discussion of Don Erickson's petition.)

SV: Is open lands an issue?

GB: Everybody is in favor of open lands, but they aren't in favor of the taxes. I hear about the taxes at school. I haven't been to the Hungry Bear. I don't go over there very much anymore, but I hadn't heard that.

I think if they thought they were going to buy open lands for here, they still might not be able to do it, but they'd be able to see it. They think it's going to be outside around Missoula, and they want to know why they have to pay for that.

It's always been like that. I've been on several commissions up here to discuss stuff. I was on that planning commission in 1991. You don't want to mention the word "zone" or you'll get your head cut off, but some criteria you have to look at before you let people do things. Once again, we're back to the signing. I feel strongly about that. I was in that. I was in a meeting once—this was years ago—Paul Morton and Marian Matthews were there, and they said something about zoning and they wouldn't be able to have pigs or goats. Marian said, "I can't have pigs on my own land? Not likely." That's how they feel about it. I'm almost with them; although, I see the other side. Personally, I don't want pigs. Look at Jenny next door. I call her Mrs. MacDonald. She has a farm over there. It doesn't bother me a bit. It gives Livvie something to do. She sits on top of her dog house and barks at them. It keeps her occupied.

If we get zoning, that kind of thing is not going to happen again and we all know it. I suppose a day is coming when it'll be...what was that? Forty years ago? It's still not that important. There's no big rush, I don't think. It has changed so slowly. Some things are grandfathered in. Like this water thing, about the wells. You could have knocked me over with a feather. I didn't know anything about that. I paid it. It's 20 dollars a year or something. I didn't know my well was registered. They just came out with that out of the blue instead of sending everybody letters. They just send you a bill: this is what you owe.

(Break in audio)

(Discussion continues about boating accident on Lindbergh Lake where a young woman was killed.)

SV: Could you tell me about the boating accident on Lindbergh Lake, where a young woman was killed? I've heard that your kids were involved in that.

GB: That was my kids. Jim was 16, my son. Beth was 14. They had a couple of kids from the lake, one her name was...Devine—I'm embarrassed, I can't remember—Patty Devine, maybe. You know how those (tri-hull) boats are made with the front, like a barge and you sit up front and the cabin is behind you and the things in the back? She was sitting up there. Tommy Hawkins was skiing. He got all ready and said, "Hit it." Beth was riding second, watching Tommy. The sun was setting. There used to be a stump in Lindbergh Lake that stuck up, and it had gnarled looking things on the top of it. They called it old Charlie Anderson because he'd had gnarled hands or something. They had an orange cone—a highway marker—setting on it because everybody was always afraid somebody would hit it.

When you hit one of those boats they raise up in the front. When he hit that stump, it just rode it right up between those two hulls, flipped it, and it went down in the water behind them. Beth

and Jim were trapped in there. Jim went out through the canvas top. Patty—it broke her neck. She was in the front, and it threw her out. Beth, when it went down like this (demonstrates) was trapped underneath the boat, and it was sinking. She was in oil and gas, and everything. She had had scuba diving training in New York at the Y. She dove down three times, and every time she came back up under the boat. Then the fourth time she went down, and she went further and she came up. She was just about drowned.

It was awful. It was terrible. The girl was killed. Tommy was okay, and Jim. Beth had gas and stuff in her lungs. We got them all cleaned up and straightened out. The Devines were very, very good about it. It really wasn't Jim's fault. It was an accident. It was one of those accidents. You can go back and say, "Well, he should have looked." Well, he did look, but the sun was shining in his face off the water.

SV: Were all the kids about the same age?

GB: Jim and Tommy were 16. Patty was 16, I think. Beth was 14.

SV: Did your kids swim a lot up there?

GB: Yes, all the time. They were all swimmers and divers and skiers. We teased them all the time about they were such great water skiers, but if there was a ripple on the water, they wouldn't ski. They were spoiled to death with Lindbergh Lake. It never has a ripple on it. It has to be like glass before they'll ski. We always tease them, "Well, you couldn't ski here. Look at the ripples."

They had such great summers. All the six Port kids, and my kids and Bill Melvin. All those kids up and down the lake. They had scavenger hunts in boats and stuff. They just had lots of fun. I had a big table, a four by eight sheet of plywood. They'd come up in June, and it would be raining. I'd have them all at my house. They all had big families in little cabins. I had the most room. So I had a table full of kids all the time. It was fun. I enjoyed it.

But that's what happened. I haven't thought about that in a long time.

SV: Sometimes people will make a reference to that, during an interview.

GB: There may not be anybody up there anymore that remembers it. The sheriff's department came up and blew that stump out of the water. Of course, there was a lot of dead fish. Everybody kind of had a problem with that. But we thought it was the roots of a big larch that had fallen into the lake. Lindbergh Lake is 97 feet deep in places. It's like a canyon. Our boat was in 90 feet of water. It was down on a rock ledge. They pulled it up, and we had it fixed because it didn't hurt the boat. It had a little hole in it, where it sunk. If it hadn't flipped, it wouldn't have sunk.

This tree—they went down there and put dynamite on it and blew it out of the water. It was a big tall tamarack. That was the top of it, the limbs. That tall. It must have been over 100 feet tall that had been growing down in that canyon before the ice age, I guess. When the glacier was there or whatever dug that canyon out. Great big old tamarack. Of course, it was petrified. Hard as a rock. They went down 30 feet and tied dynamite on it. Blew it up. We had lots of little fish floating around, but it didn't kill any bull trout. They were too far down. Down in the bottom somewhere.

I flew over Lindbergh in a helicopter. It's a fascinating lake. It's so shallow down where we were on the end by the lodge. Then off Kotschevar, there's a big sand bar. Very shallow there, which is about...the accident was on down another block or two. But then it's so deep in places. We know from when they went down to get the boat up. It was in 90 feet. It's like a big canyon.

You can't drill a well. Fitzgeralds put in three different wells, each 500 feet, and they didn't get a drop because of that rock. When we were digging that basement, Bob Seaman was digging that basement. He was pounding on that hardpan to break it up. The fireplace went "bump" about an inch and a half. So they said, "Look out," and the men shored it up. He quit banging on it. He said that three feet down there's a shale shelf at Lindbergh, and there's just duff and stuff up on top of it.

Does it ever occur to you, out here in my yard, I have this little patch of trees that has never been built on, dug on, scuffed up? It's thousands of years old. It's got to be. You can't plant anything. It's just dry duff. Nothing under there. I've tried to transplant those yellow flowers and put seed out. It won't work.

When you talk about how this country started, in the beginning, way back, that little chunk of grass right out there has never been bothered. As far as I know, nothing has ever been there since that.

[End of Interview]