

Beth: This is Beth Smith. I'm over at Jean Hanfelt's house at 237 Shavano Avenue on November 24th in 2003. We're going to talk about Jean's life and her work with the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. Good morning, Jean.

Jean: Good morning Beth.

Beth: Let's talk a bit about your family.

Jean: All right, Beth. My maiden name is Archuleta. I was born in the San Luis Valley in the little village of San Pablo near the oldest town of Colorado which is named San Luis. My grandparents were from that area.
[00:01:00]

Beth: Where'd they come from originally?

Jean: My grandfather and grandmother on my mother's paternal side came from a little village in Northern New Mexico. I think the name of it was Cerro. I don't have the exact date when they became residents of the little village of San Pablo but we're assuming that it was probably around 1880 because my grandfather, Feliberto Vigil was born in 1882 in San Pedro which was a little village next to San Pablo. The way that it has been explained to me is that the distinction between San Pedro and San Pablo was the Culebra River runs between the two little villages. The post office was published in San Pablo. When we were asked to identify where we came from, we usually said San Pablo, although the little community was San Pedro.
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Beth: When were you born there?

Jean: I was born in November 11, 1939 in San Pablo. I was born at home. Then, we lived next to my grandparents. My father had purchased a property next door. He built an adobe house. Dad was born in Alamosa, Colorado. He lost his mother when he was two years of age. He had a sister who was eight years old. Their mother died in childbirth. His father remarried and went on to have a family of 15 children. Of course, dad spent most of his younger life living with his sister, Delfina.
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When dad was in the sixth grade, he was offered a job in one, at the local store, country store. They sold dried goods and groceries. The proprietor was so pleased with dad's salesmanship that instead of returning to school, he worked in that store for a couple of years. Then, during the depression, dad signed up for the CCCs, and spent about a year and a half in Nancy, Texas, working for the Civilian (Conservation) Corps.
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Beth: Got you.

Jean: The CCCs. Then, upon his return, jobs were scarce in the San Luis Valley. Dad went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad. He was stationed in Lookout Mountain in Colorado. It was a temporary job. He returned to San Pablo. In 1945, he received a telegram from the Union Pacific Railroad in Green River,
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Wyoming saying that he was being offered a job if he wanted it. They were looking for cooks to work in their roundhouse. Dad accepted the job.

[00:07:00] I started first grade in September of 1945. I was pulled out of school. We left in December. My father and two of his cousins loaded up an old jalopy and headed west for Green River, Wyoming which is located in the southwest part of the state. Grandma and Grandpa Vigil took us to Ford Garland, and put us on the train where we were supposed to meet dad in Green River, Wyoming. I was very resistant about the change. I did not want to leave grandma. I cried all the way to Ford Garland. We arrived at the train depot and I was still crying. I think, mom, to shut me up finally looked at me and said, "If you want to stay with grandma, you go right ahead." I sobered up and decided, "No, I needed to be with my parents."

[00:08:00] We boarded the train. We got to Green River, Wyoming where dad met us with bad news. Apparently, the Union Pacific Railroad officials in Green River, Wyoming were not expecting three families to accompany the three men and there was no housing in Green River, unless we wanted to take up housekeeping in a boxcar. Dad wasn't quite sure what he was going to do with us and the railroad officials in Green River did some talking, and come to find out there were three positions that were needed in the section town of Bryan, Wyoming which was located 15 miles west of Green River.

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Dad decided that it would be better to take that job than to return to San Luis Valley. We headed out to Bryan where housing was available. That started dad's career with the Union Pacific Railroad. We went on to live in Bryan from 1945 until May of 1958 when dad was finally granted a transfer to the town of Green River.

[00:10:00] In the meantime, when we left the San Luis Valley, mom and dad had three children. I was the oldest. My brother, Ron, was born in December of 1940. In fact, December the 11th. On the day of his fifth birthday, we arrived in Green River, Wyoming. Then, I had a brother named Albert. He was born in August of 1944. He was only about one-year-old. Mom had her hands full with three small children. I was not enrolled in school the rest of the year. The following year, September of 1946, I started first grade again.

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Beth: At which school?

Jean: I went to the Green River public schools, the Jefferson Grade School, which I attended for six years. We were bused from Bryan, Wyoming to Green River during the school year. It was not always an easy ride because Wyoming was known for its blizzards in the winter and there were many, many days, we have to walk about a quarter of a mile from where our house was located to US Highway 30 which was then known as the Lincoln Highway. We had no shelter. We would wait out by the shoulder of Highway 30 for the bus to pick us up.

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They had another stop to make further west of town which was in a little

[00:13:00] section town of Granger, Wyoming. The bus would turn around there, and pick us up, and we made several more stops along that 15-mile route before we arrive to our school. That was in the days where there were no hot lunches in the school. We brown-bagged it for 18 years. It was not an easy thing, I don't imagine, for our mom because our family continued to grow. My brother, Elmer, was born in 1946. My brother, Bob, was born in 1948. My sister, Julie, was born in 1953. Mom had many lunchbox sandwiches to fix every morning.

[00:14:00] I might also want to mention that mom was a very good cook. She was offered a job about two years after we were living in Bryan, Wyoming to cook for some of the single section men that were stationed in Bryan. The railroad paid her a salary. The individual men that she fed also paid her a small fee which resulted in us, children, being very well fed. In the mornings, she had not only our lunches to fix but she would fix lunches for the railroad workers. In the mornings, she would be up bright and early fixing bacon and eggs, or pancakes, or waffles and it was always, always a feast. We were well-fed.

Beth: Wonderful. Now, did you go on to Green River High School?

Jean: Yes, I went on to Green River High School. Green River during those years was a small railroad town, population remained at around 3900 for many years. There was one high school which included the seventh and the eighth grade. There were two grade schools. The grade school on the west side of Green River was the Jefferson High School. Of course, that's the school that I went to. The other grade school was the Washington High School and that was located on the east end of town. There was not until the seventh grade that the two grade schools merged. Our class became about 48 to 50 students that went to junior high. Out of those 46 students graduated in 1958.

Beth: That's great. You went on to some other education?

Jean: I excelled in business classes, typing, shorthand, bookkeeping. I especially enjoyed English. I had taken journalism while I was a junior and a senior in high school. I had two years of typing and two years of shorthand. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do when I graduated from high school. I didn't want to be a teacher. I didn't want to be a nurse. I was not geared towards science and math. I was looking at possibly going to business school but I had not really given too much thought to it.

[00:17:00] When I was a senior in high school in 1958, there was a talk about construction of the Flaming Gorge Dam in Utah which we're talking about 96 miles from Green River, Wyoming, and the newspapers carried a lot information on construction of the Flaming Gorge Dam and Reservoir. When I was a senior in high school and the Flaming Gorge Dam had received congressional approval in 1956. In 1958, they were looking for personnel including clerk steno secretaries to work on the project.

[00:18:00] The Bureau of Reclamation Personnel Officer from Salt Lake City visited our high

[00:19:00] school in Green River and made a specific appeal to the students that were taking business courses. He encouraged us towards a civil service career. He, then, arranged for a special civil service exam to be given to the business students that would be interested in going to work at the Flaming Gorge Dam. That perked up my ears. That sounded very romantic to me. I took the civil service exam in June, a month after I graduated from high school.

[00:20:00] Basically, I sat around and waited for this letter offering me a job. In August, I had not heard anything. Mom took a look at me one morning. She says, "Jean, you got to get a job." Mom had gone to work in Little America in 1957 while I was a junior in high school. They were looking for someone to help with the salads.

Beth: Where is Little America?

[00:21:00] Jean: Little America is a hotel, restaurant, gas station located, at the time, about 12 miles west of Bryan, Wyoming. It was an oasis in the desert is the way that they described it. The billboards up and down Highway 30 showed the penguin because of the association with Little America. At that time, it was one of the nicest ... it was not a resort area but it was a nice motel unit with restaurants, and gift shops, and coffee shops, and very appealing to the truckers that traveled along Highway 30.

Beth: You went to work making salads?

[00:22:00] Jean: Mom went to work making salads. A year later, she was offered a job in the bakery. That was in the days when everything was made from scratch. There were no mixes. She would leave home at 4:00 in the morning so she could get the homemade doughnuts made. Then, they would bake the pies and other pastries, and it kept her busy. She would leave home about 4:00 in the morning and arrive home at 3:00. This summer job turned out to be an 18-year career for mom.

Beth: Then, what did you do?

[00:23:00] Jean: We're getting back to mom was encouraging me to get to work. One day, she came home. I think it was around the 1st of September. She says, "I have a job for you working in Little America." The college kids were returning to college. They were in need of waitresses and in need of people to work in the gift shop. My first job was working as a waitress. I was a very timid person. Having grown up in Bryan, Wyoming virtually by ourselves, I did not have people skills. I was terrified of that job. Luckily, three weeks later, I was offered a job in the gift shop which, again, was not the kind of job I wanted to do permanently. I had contact with people, I had to get change, and I just found that job very difficult.

[00:24:00] Finally, in October, I received a letter from the Bureau of Reclamation offering me a job as a clerk steno for the Flaming Gorge Dam. I was thrilled to death. I signed that form, turned it in, and the 18th of October, I went to work for the

Flaming Gorge Dam.

Beth: Where were you working with that?

Jean: Flaming Gorge Dam was in a remote area of Utah. To begin with, the government had to build roads into this remote area which would eventually become the housing, government camp for government and contractor employees. Housing was not yet available for personnel in 1958. Some of the employees were living in Green River, Wyoming and commuting. Some were living in Manila, Utah, McKinnon, Utah which were all little communities, little farming communities in Utah. Because there was no housing available for clerical pool, I boarded with a Mormon family in McKinnon, Wyoming which was probably a distance of about 50 miles to the dam site.

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Beth: Wow, that's quite a commute. Eventually, they got a little town over there called Dutch John. Is that it?

Jean: Yes, eventually, they built the town of Dutch John, Utah which housed the government personnel, engineers, technicians, maintenance people, and secretarial staff.

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Beth: After that job was completed, where did you go next?

Jean: When the job was completed, I stayed there until 1964. By then, I had pretty much decided that I was going to make a career of civil service. I was still single. Happy with my single life. I had dated some but I was not really interested in marriage. I was interested in a career. When the Flaming Gorge offices closed their doors, I was offered two jobs. I was offered a job in Montrose, Colorado working for the Colorado River Project which would be the operation and maintenance office. I was not interested in that job. I preferred construction.

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I was also offered a job working on the Flaming Gorge, on the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project stationed in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. That was more up my line so I accepted the job. In July of 1964, I moved to Glenwood Springs. Two years later, we were relocated to Salida, Colorado.

Beth: What was the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project supposed to do?

Jean: The Fryingpan-Arkansas Project was a transbound diversion project. Studies by the Bureau of Reclamation began as early as 1936. However, it was not until 1953 that a planning report under the name of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project led to congressional approval. This project was to be a multiple purpose transmountain development with its principle features including construction of the Ruedi Dam and Reservoir near Aspen, Colorado which was not too far from Glenwood Springs.

The North and South Side Collection System, the Charles H. Boustead Tunnel,

Sugarloaf Dam, and Turquoise Lake, Twin Lakes Dam and Reservoir, Mt. Elbert Pumped-Storage Power Plant, Pueblo Dam and Reservoir, the Fountain Valley Conduit near Colorado Springs, transmission lines, substations, and permanent operating and maintenance facilities.

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Beth: Can you tell me why it was called the Fryingpan-Arkansas?

Jean: The reason for the name, there is a river called the Fryingpan on the western slope and it feeds into the Arkansas River. Therefore, the name Fryingpan-Arkansas.

Beth: Then, the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project begins over there at Ruedi Dam on the western slope?

Jean: Yes, on the Western Slope.

Beth: It continues clear up to the eastern border of Colorado?

Jean: Yes, it does. It was through a series of tunnel. The North and South Side Collection System through the Boustead Tunnel brought the water over from Ruedi Dam and they deposited some of it in Turquoise Lake. Then, more of that was brought into Twin Lakes Dam and Reservoir. Then, it was carried over to the Pueblo Dam and Reservoir with pipelines going into Colorado Springs to take water to the farms and ranches in the Pueblo area.

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Beth: That's a big trans-mountain project.

Jean: That was a very big project. This bill was signed in 1962 and it authorized \$170 million which received its final approval. It was finally enacted into public law with the signing of the measure by President John F. Kennedy on August 16, 1962. In August of that year, President Kennedy made a two-hour visit to Pueblo, Colorado where he addressed an estimated crowd of 17,000 persons at the Pueblo Public Schools Stadium. His address lauded the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project and the efforts of all who made the project possible.

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In fact, to back up a little bit, President John F. Kennedy also enacted into law the construction of the Flaming Gorge Dam. Backing up to 1952, the Congress had given approval for four major water projects, the biggest one being the Glen Canyon Dam and Reservoir which I'm sure many of you have heard of or been to. The second biggest one was Flaming Gorge Project. These all fell under the Colorado River Project, Colorado River Storage System. The Fryingpan-Arkansas Project came about ten years later.

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Then, in 1962, the Department of Interior announced that the Bureau of Reclamation would establish its headquarters for the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project in Pueblo, Colorado under James L. Ogilvie as Project Manager. Salida was one of the first towns to actively support Mr. Ogilvie for project manager

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because he was a native of Colorado and he was conversant with the irrigation problems faced by the eastern Colorado farmers. He was also a career government employee and was familiar with the ideas and aims of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project.

[00:34:00] Separate field offices were established in Basalt which is located near Aspen, Colorado, between Glenwood Springs and Aspen, in fact. Glenwood Springs, of course, was the first construction office. Buena Vista had a field office. A laboratory had also been opened in Salida probably around 1963. There were already three or four families in Salida that were in charge of the laboratory which I think was located in the maintenance buildings. The forest service maintenance buildings housed the laboratory. The purpose of the laboratory was to start testing samples of rocks and samples of water.

[00:35:00] Then, because Salida was more centrally located to the remainder of the project, there was talk of moving the construction office from Glenwood Springs to Salida. This actually did occur in 1966. The GSA built an office on Highway 50 west which became the project construction office headquarters for the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. Howard E. McGinnis was appointed construction engineer to head the construction office. He was reassigned to Salida.

[00:36:00] At the time, in 1964, this construction office in Glenwood Springs probably had about 40 employees working at the office, and all of these employees were mass transferred to Salida and the construction office in Glenwood Springs which had not been a permanent office and was closed. Salida became its headquarters.

Beth: It was quite a positive impact on a small community who welcomed the government employees with open arms.

Jean: Yes, it certainly was. I think Salida really made an effort. They really wanted to be part of the construction of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. They welcomed us with open arms. Salida was still very small. A very small town at the time.

[00:37:00] Housing was scarce. Frank Butala got busy and built the Crestone Apartments on Crestone.

I came out to look for housing three or four weeks prior to my actual move to Salida in February of 1966, and there was very little housing for a single person. Apartments were scarce. Someone led me to the Crestone Apartments where I visited with Frank Butala, and he assured me that the building would be ready in time for me to occupy one of the apartments. I accepted his offer and rented a very brand new apartment on Crestone Boulevard.

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Beth: Good. You were a clerk typist?

Jean: No, I had worked my way up the ranks. When I started for the Bureau of Reclamation in 1958, I accepted a job as the clerk typist stenographer. When I

was reassigned to the job in Salida, the project construction engineer put me in charge of the steno pool. I became the steno pool supervisor under the administrative division.

[00:39:00] The Fryingpan-Arkansas construction office operated in Salida a total of 18 years from 1966 through May 1984 when its office doors closed. The remainder of the construction work was transferred to the project office in Pueblo. During the 18 years of operation, approximately 260 government employees worked under the direction of the project construction engineer which included field office personnel working in Buena Vista, in Leadville, in Pueblo. We had a field office there in addition to the main project office.

[00:40:00] Many of the employees, younger employees went on to other jobs, transferred to other jobs with the Bureau of Reclamation but a lot of employees that were ready for retirement chose to stay in Salida which had been their home for at least 18 years. Some of those families include Clyde and Joanne Gleason who raised nine children here, Vern and Marge Grantham, Joe and Ginny Monserud, Bill and Sophie Arnold, Lohn and Mary Bell Finley, Vernelle Austin, Madge Valentine, and Herb and Nathine Senne to name a few. These folks are still residing in Salida.

Beth: It went good. Understand there was a fellow named John Hanfelt that was working on this project too?

[00:41:00]

Jean: Yes. John Hanfelt my husband. I first met him in 1958 on the Flaming Gorge Dam. John was graduating from Notre Dame. In 1957, when these four major construction project were getting started, the Bureau of Reclamation was doing a mass recruitment. They had gone out to the colleges and universities to see if they could entice engineers to come out west and work for the projects. John Hanfelt had his heart set on relocating west. He had grown up in Kansas City, Missouri, Nebraska. His heart was set on moving further west. When the recruiters came to Notre Dame, John was very eager to sign up.

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[00:43:00] I encountered John in Dutch John, Utah when I went to work there. Of course, John had a family then. Because Dutch John, Utah was a very remote government camp, there were no movie houses, no churches, no restaurants. People had to devise a way to entertain themselves. Bridge and pinochle were activities that some of the married couples took as a way of entertainment. They went from house-to-house to play Pinochle and Bridge.

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[00:44:00] Because I was one of the only single people living in Dutch John, Utah, I was in demand as a baby sitter. Actually, I had babysat for John and his wife. I think they had three or four children that I took care of. In 1962, John Hanfelt and his family were transferred to Craig, Colorado to work on the transmission lines. I heard from them for a couple of years through Christmas cards. Then, I lost touch of the Hanfelts.

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In the meantime, in 1979, while I was still working for the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, we were in the process of bidding out the Poncha Substation located up in Poncha Springs. Lo and behold, if John Hanfelt's name did not appear on the register, signing register that we kept in our office in Salida. Why I did not see John that day, I don't know. I must have had the day off.

[00:45:00] About a week later, I received a call from one of the inspectors working on the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project to inform me that he had run into John Hanfelt at the Poncha Substation, and because they had worked previously on the transmission lines of the Flaming Gorge Dam, they were visiting about some of the people they had known back then. Pete McCall, an old Texan, and quite a character, said to John, "Jean Archuleta is here." I guess John looked at Pete. He said, "Jean Archuleta, Jean Archuleta. She's still single?" Pete said, "Yes, she is. You better look here up, John."

[00:46:00] A couple of days later, evenings later, the phone rang, and it was John Hanfelt saying he was in town doing work on the Poncha Substation, and wanted to know if he could take me out to dinner. I had also heard from Pete McCall that John was divorced. I accepted an invitation from John to have dinner. I thought it would be an opportunity to talk about old times and people that we had known in the past.

[00:47:00] We run out to the Samara Inn which was located in Smelertown, and had a nice dinner, and talked about old times. That was the start of our courtship. John continued to come to Salida during the fall of '79 not only to see how things were going with the Poncha Substation but to take me out to dinner. In December of that year, I took John to Green River, Wyoming to meet my parents, and we announced our engagement. I was 39 years old. John is ten years older. We decided to get married. In June of 1980, we were married at St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

Beth: Here in Salida?

Jean:
[00:48:00] Here in Salida. John was offered a job. John worked for the Bureau of Reclamation for ten years. When the Curecanti unit in Gunnison, Colorado was reaching its completion, John decided that he didn't want to stay with the government. He didn't want to make a government career. He resigned, and started his own electrical business, and eventually ended up with a partner. The company was known as Addison construction. Their sole purpose was to build substations. John had graduated as an electrical engineer and preferred that line of work.

[00:49:00] When we got married then he talked to Ron Southerd with Avery Construction Company to see if there would be a possibility of him helping them with the construction of the Mt. Elbert Pumped-Storage Power Plant which the bid had just been let with Avery Construction Company being the low bidder. John was offered a job. John sold the interest to his company with Addison Construction, and moved to Salida, and went to work for the business in Buena Vista.

[00:50:00] About a year or two later, he started an electrical engineering branch known as ASI Power Construction System. I retired from the Bureau of Reclamation in 1984. John continued to work in the construction area of the project.

Beth: Did you and John have any children?

Jean: John and I never had any children but I have eight stepchildren. As I said earlier, I had babysat four of John's children when they were working on the Flaming Gorge Dam. They went on to have four more children. When I met John, he was the father of eight children. The youngest was 13 years old and the oldest must have been in her early 20s.

Beth: Did they live with you here?

[00:51:00] Jean: No, they didn't live with us. Their home was still in Gunnison, Colorado. We did have three of the children that spent the summers with us between their school years.

Beth: What were their names?

Jean: Beth you would ask me that. The oldest of John's children, her name is Terrie. Terrie, Diane, Matt, Cathy, Marjorie, Johnny, Janette, and Bret. I can remember that because it's two boys, one girl, two boys, one girl, two girls.

Beth: Good. How long have you lived in Salida?

Jean: I have lived in Salida since 1966.

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Beth: Now, after you retired from the Fryingpan-Ark government connection, what did you do?

[00:53:00] Jean: I stayed home for about the first few months. Since John and I had decided that we were going to reside in Salida, we bought a home in 1983 which is our residence, 237 Shavano. We spent the next year and a half remodeling and living in the mobile home that I had purchased in 1976. The reason that I purchased the mobile home because my original plans were not to stay in Salida, but I was going to be moving on with the Bureau of Reclamation. The government, during that time, would pay to move your mobile home. I decided that it would be a good investment for me but since we decided to become residents of Salida, then we decided to buy a more permanent structure.

I stayed home from May to October working on this house. Then, I got offered a job working for St. Joseph's Credit Union. I worked there for about five months. In the meantime, John was looking for someone to manage the office in Buena Vista which was the power and controls systems, needed someone to take care of the secretarial work, and the bookkeeping, and all of the other work. I

[00:54:00] resigned from the credit union and went to work for John.

Beth: How long did you work for him?

Jean: I worked for John, I commuted to Buena Vista for five years. Then, five years later, we bought Ron Southerd out, and John was interested in phasing out construction. He no longer enjoyed going out to construction sites but he was still interested in fabricating, designing, and building special control panels for power plants. We bought Ron out, and relocated our office to Salida. Our office was located in Poncha Springs. We continued to run that operation until ... I believe it was 1994 when John sold the business to his partner, Chris Haines, who is still operating the business under Western Control Systems and John retired.

Beth: What was the name of the business that you owned?

Jean: Western Control Systems, which is still being operated by Chris Haines and his wife.

Beth: Then, you both retired?

Jean: We both retired from one job and I started another job. In 1990, I bought a computer so that I could become a little skilled with the new technical advances. I was wondering what I was going to do with this very expensive computer that I had purchased. Not too long afterwards, there was an ad in the Mountain Mail, advertising a "contract secretary for the Salida Aspen Concerts." I applied for the job, and was offered the job in 1990 to take care of the bookkeeping, and help Chuck Melien who was president of the organization to type the fund raising letters, take care of the mailing list, and attend the concert committee meetings, and take notes. This job became more demanding as the years went by. The board of directors changed and so did the dynamics of the job. I'm still involved with the Salida Aspen Concerts.

Beth: You're no longer working for them, are you? You're a volunteer.

Jean: I do both. Yes, I do both.

Beth: Very good.

[00:58:00]
Jean: I was very interested in the history of the Salida Aspen Concerts. When I took the job, I inherited boxes and boxes of newspaper clippings and reports, and information which over the years I have gone through and put in a historical context. I have a permanent history now of the Salida Aspen Concerts since they begin in 1977.

Beth: Tell us a little bit about the history of the Aspen Concert.

[00:59:00]

Jean: Salida Aspen Concerts began in 1977 with one concert which was the result of U.S. Soil wanting to bring some serious chamber music to Salida. U.S. Soil was owned by the Lionelle Family, Joe Lionelle. I'm sure some of the old timers remember he had quite an operation with the U.S. Soil. He had his own jet and

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was very instrumental in bringing Salida Aspen Concerts to Salida, going so far as to take his jet to Aspen, bring the musicians to Salida, and return them to Aspen. This first concert was met with interest. The following year, the Aspen Music School and Festival was in the process of doing some outreach concerts to some of the communities like Montrose, Carbondale, closer to Aspen with the farthest outreach being Salida.

[01:01:00]

The Lionelles just went to Aspen in '78, and met with the board, and said to them, "Hey, we are really interested. What can you do to provide us six concerts during the summer?" They got together and they worked out an agreement. In 1978, six concerts were introduced to Salida with musicians from the Aspen Festival that takes place in Aspen for nine weeks during the summertime. These were all young musicians that were attending school from all over the world.

[01:02:00]

When the board of directors, including Joe Lionelle, George Howerton, Ray Hosford, and John Held realized that there was a real need for chamber music in Salida. They incorporated Salida Concerts into an organization.

Beth:

It's still going strong.

Jean:

It's still going strong. We will begin our 28th concert season in July. These concerts run for six consecutive weeks beginning the first or second week in July depending on when the 4th of July falls and they run for the next six weeks.

[01:03:00]

Currently, the Salida-Aspen concerts is run by a nine-member board of directors, volunteers are part of the concert committee which we have about 50 volunteers that take care of the volunteer work being ushers, selling tickets at the door, distributing posters, selling ads for the program book which is a major job, and brings in some revenue to pay for the Aspen Concert Series.

Beth:

That has certainly brought a lot of music to Salida.

Jean:

Yes, it sure has. Especially in 1977 when there was such little music available that, that caliber of music available in Salida.

Beth:

That's an ongoing program.

Jean:

It sure is.

Beth:

[01:04:00]

You say you were married in the local catholic church. You've also been very active in the church work, haven't you?

Jean:

Yes, I sure have. I became a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church when I moved to Salida in 1966. I had been active in the Altar Society which is an organization that helps clean the church and among other things. I'm presently

on the parish council to give advice to the priest. I have been a member of the Helping Hands for years. This is the organization that provides dinners for the funerals.

[01:05:00]

Beth: Are you still a member of the ... where they keep the money? What do you call it?

Jean: St. Joseph Credit Union?

Beth: I think it's the credit?

Jean: Yes, yes. About five or six years ago they were looking for someone to be on the credit committee. I volunteered for that job. The first couple of years, we had a couple on the credit committee that were retired that would show up at the credit union every morning whether there was a loan to review or not. They expected me to do the same thing. I finally said to these guys say, "I still have a job. I'm still working. I can't possibly show up every morning unless there is a loan to look at or not." My duties changed somewhat. I got called only if there was a loan to review. Yes, I am still actively involved in the St. Joseph Credit Union which I think was begun in 1960 by Father Gallagher who wanted to help some of the local families get loans. The St. Joseph Credit Community was started then. It was catholic originally but quite a few years ago, it opened up to the community. Now, anyone can go in and apply for a loan.

[01:06:00]

Beth: Anything else you've done to help build the community?

Jean: I also worked for the United Methodist Church which you are a member of that.

[01:07:00]

Beth: Yeah. I remember you there.

Jean: In 1995, I had a little time on my hands because John and I had sold our business in 1994. I was looking for something to do in addition to the Salida-Aspen Concerts and other activities. I had stopped at our parish office and I had asked the secretary, little Mary, if she knew of any part time jobs that were available that I was interested.

A week later, she called and she said that the United Methodist Church had just brought in a new minister and she was looking for a secretary. Little Mary wanted to know if I was interested in applying for the job. She sent me the form. I applied for the job and got accepted. I went to work for Pastor Chris Richardson in November the 1st of 1995 as part time secretary. I worked there through December of 2000 for a total of five years.

[01:08:00]

Beth: That's quite a long time. You think back over your years at Salida, what are some of the changes that you have seen on the town?

Jean: I have seen many changes, Beth. In 1966, Salida was still small town USA. All of
[01:09:00] the businesses were located right in the downtown area. Salida had a shoe store, a men's store, two department stores, Crews Beggs, Everybody's Store which was more of a family store, more inexpensive prices, Sharpe's which was a dress shop, Gilberts another dress shop, Mode-O-Day, a dress shop, three drugstores on one block, two sporting goods stores.

Beth: What was the population about that time?

Jean: The population about, around 5000.

[01:10:00]

Beth: Do you remember anything during the wars? Was there anything going on in Salida that helped the war effort?

Jean: The Vietnam War was going on during the time I moved to Salida. It escalated in 1967-1968. I don't recall too much. I do remember that the Mountain Mail at the time carried national news. The front pages contained a lot of information on the war but I can't remember that it affected Salida too much.

[01:11:00]

I think what affected Salida the most was in the '70s was probably ... The economy was not very strong. And I don't even know whether it was the economy. The dynamics were changing. Gibson's came in, and put up a store on Highway 50, and that caused the two sporting goods stores downtown to close. Then, when Walmart moved in to town, it created more businesses to close. I think small towns were changing as some of these Walmarts, and Gibson's, and Kmarts were working their way into the small communities leaving little room for Mom and Pop stores.

[01:12:00]

Beth: You're right. Salida was always known as a railroad town. Did you notice particularly when the railroad left tha Salida collapsed?

Jean: It was beginning to decline. I can't remember whether there was still passenger trains in Salida in 1966. I think if there were, it was probably very limited. The station was still intact. I think at that time I had the occasion to visit the railroad
[01:13:00] station because Continental Trailways had their office in the railroad station. I had taken the bus to Denver on a couple of occasions. I think the railroad was pretty well phasing out.

Beth: Anything else about your life in Salida that you like to tell us?

Jean: I have always been very happy in Salida. I think it's been a very progressive community. Politics have been interesting but I think overall, I think there's a genuine interest by business people in Salida succeeding. I see a lot of positive results when the mining closed in 1980. Then there were a lot of empty store fronts and people began to come in with art galleries and gift shops. In fact,
[01:14:00] Salida was recognized a few years ago for having one of the best art galleries in

the state, in the area.

Beth: That's interesting because I know you're an artist. Can you talk a little bit about the art things in Salida?

Jean: [01:15:00] I became interested in art while working on the Flaming Gorge Dam. I took a brief course in oils and decided I was really interested in art. When I lived in Glenwood Springs, I took another workshop. When I moved to Salida, I was very eager to get started in art. When the Colorado Mountain College first opened in 1973, Henrietta Hosford was offering a class in watercolors. I signed up for the class and became very interested in the arts. I met a lot of artists through Henrietta Hosford. I have continued to paint and continued to be involved.

[01:16:00] When Art of the Rockies started, I became a member and I still belong to the Art of the Rockies. That was founded by Nonie Payne of the Willow Tree frame shop. Pacey Hilton was another, very instrumental in seeing that artist could be seen and recognized, and have donated one at his buildings for an art gallery which we used for several years.

Beth: Yes, we got a strong art community going on, haven't we?

[01:17:00] Jean: Yes, we do. Yes, we do. So many people that retire that come to the valley are artists and musicians. Mel Strawn and Bea Strawn bought the Hosford's property in Poncha Springs, and they are artists themselves, and they have done a lot to promote the arts.

Beth: That's very good. You covered a lot this morning. Lot of different topics. I'm sure you'll think more you want to add. We'll see about that later. Thank you very much for joining us.

Jean: You're welcome, Beth.