

## INTERVIEW OUTLINE: JOHN LACEY 11/12/98

### **1. Parents of person being interviewed**

1. *Father came to the U.S.*

A. *Father worked for ACM*

B. *Mother was a housewife*

### **2. ACM**

A. *Copper manganese and zinc for WWII*

B. *Transportation to Anaconda for employees*

C. *1980 Smelter bought by ARCO*

### **3. Columbia Gardens**

A. *Description*

### **4. Family**

A. *Mother*

B. *Brother*

1. *Drafted into WWII*

C. *Sister*

1. *Butte Business College*

2. *Intermountain Bus Lines receptionist*

## **5. Social Problems**

*A. Fierce sports rivalry: Butte vs. Anaconda*

*B. Union Disputes*

## **6. Present Day Mitchell Stadium(Copperheads F-ball Stadium)**

*A. Marcus Daly's race fields and stables*

*B. Mitchell Stadium*

1. Named after the manager of the smelter at the time

## **7. Old Works**

*A. Smoke Flues*

1. Described

## **8. ACM**

*A. Worked at the smelter for \$7 for an 8 hour day*

1. Mason gang
2. Concentrator Dept. (The Mill)
3. Roaster Dept.

*B. Mason Gang*

1. Job Description

## **9. Streetcar**

*A. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.*

*B. Opportunity Streetcar*

*C. ACM owned and operated*

*D. Time Cards*

## Interview: John Lacey by Mike Markovich 11/12/98

**Where were your parent's born?**

My father was born in County Galway Ireland and my mother was born in County Cork. My father came to America, I assume in about 1900. He went to Brooklyn and worked there for a few years then one of his brothers wrote him a letter and told him that there was good work in Anaconda. He went to work for the ACM Company 'till about 1956. In 1919 after World War I they had a 9 month shutdown. He had continuous employment and earned a good living. My mother came to America in the early 19-tens and she came to Oakland California, where one of her sister's lived and she worked in a sewing shop. Later she moved to Butte with another one of her sisters that lived there. I have one brother and one sister and they are both older than me. My parents died of old age.

**How would people get to one from work at the Anaconda Company?**

During World War two and a con the copper mining was making all the copper and manganese for the war effort. They had upwards of 4000 men working at the smelter at that time. There were many people working that lived in Butte Phillipsburg and Deerlodge. to remember seeing coming from Butte or deerlodge for each shift. the people with unfilled sport just drove to one from Philips board. It was a busy place until about 1960's when things began to slow down there was still good employment when the and laconic company shut down. In 1980 article close the smelter.

**Did you ever get a chance to go to Colombia gardens?**

When I was a child I went to the Columbia gardens several times. I also went there during my high-school years.

**Can you describe what it was like?**

Yes, they had many dances underneath a pavilion. They also had a roller coaster and many beautiful flowers. I don't remember much else about the Columbia gardens I was too old to with for the horses etc.

**What did your mom do for work?**

After my mom and dad are buried, my mother never did work again. She was just a housewife.

**How about your brothers and sisters?**

Well, my brother he went to work in the manganese plant in the late 30's, and then he was drafted into World War two. After he came out of the army he went back to work for the smelter. He got a job in the time office which is called a white-collar job. he remained there until he retired in 1980. Sister went to the Butte Business College. She worked as a clerk in the counter mountain bus lines Co. she was married and raised a family. Paragraph

**Were there ever any major events that caused problems concerning alcohol, fights etc.?**

No, I don't remember any problems with alcohol, the only problems I remember is the sports rival between Butte and Anaconda. I was never aware of any alcohol or drinking problems.

**Do you remember any union uprisings?**

I am well aware of the union problems but those problems were in the early 1900's. There was really no union violence around and the time when I was growing up.

**Did you go to school here in Anaconda?**

Yes, I went to St. Paul's grade school, it was located on Maple and Fifth Street. It has since been torn down, I went the first eight grades there and then attended the High School. I graduated from the high school in 1946. Things were very active here, employment wise and with the fierce spores rivalry. I remember when they had the old and athletic field which is in what is called a new edition of Anaconda now. It used to be Marcus Daly's racing fields and stables and there were a lot of fights their after the Butte and Anaconda games. But again that goes back into the late 30's, and in 1930 Mitchell stadium was built which is pretty much across from our house right here. It had grass and everything modern. I recall that the A C M helped support the stadium but it was mainly built by the W P A as a depression project. It was named after the manager of the smelter at that time and his name was Mitchell.

**Will you explain the idea behind the of the copper flues?**

That is what is referred to as the old works. The fluents or the smoke from the various furnaces would go up those flues into the stack and then out into the atmosphere. The tops of the flues are all gone which makes them look like slides. They are just the chimneys from all the various buildings.

**Were there any small-scale mining operations around here?**

Yes, there is the Stuart Mill mine on a stream leading into Georgetown Lake. And of course there is the gold coin mine up there too. That gold mine was not working when I was growing up, but it later re-opened in the mid-80's for a couple of years but nothing ever came out of it.

**Did the Great Depression have any long-term effects on you and your family?**

I don't remember anything about the Great Depression I do remember some of the kids going down to the welfare office and pulling wagons to get milk and food. My family couldn't get welfare assistance because my father owned stock in the A C M. That's about all I can remember about the depression. The other thing that I have about the smelter is when I was growing up in World War two we were able to work at the smelter if we were 15 or older. I worked there for two summers during World War two when was 15 and 16 and then the war ended before I turned 17 and that summer I couldn't work. All through my college years I worked at the smelter, as soon as we got out of school we could start work at damn good pay. During Christmas break we could come home and go to work. They really took care of the college kids. The work was difficult but the was good. It was in the vicinity of \$7 a day, that was just for common labor.

**What sorts of things did you do when you work for the A C M?**

Well, I worked there during the summers and most of the time I ended up on what was called the Mason Gang, we just unloaded and loaded bricks it was heavy and hardwork. Then I worked for one or two summers in the concentrator Department or The Mill, It was very easy all you had to do was oil a vibrator that would separate the grades of ore and just watch that it didn't plug up. I also worked in the roaster department. I worked in most of the department's. But, other than the Mason Gang the work wasn't really hard work but they sure took care of the college kids. In a typical day you would go to work and the boss would tell us that we have a boxcar of bricks to unload, and we could leave as soon as we got it done. We would have about five men but it would take us a from 8:00 in the morning until about 3:30 in the afternoon to get it unloaded, and that's working hard all day. So, we did a lot of that and that was the main job. The bricks were not in bundles they were single. They would use the bricks for construction.

**Whereabouts did you live over here in Anaconda?**

I was born and raised on 17 Spruce Street Back in the early 30's it was about the furthest street west of the smelter. And of course in the 50's they built the new addition so it would be almost in the middle of town now.

**How did you do to and from work?**

Well, where we lived on Spruce Street was between Fourth and Fifth streets There was a streetcar that ran the length of town to the smelter. It would run for each shift; like if I would have to be at work at 7:00 the streetcar would leave about 20 minutes after 6:00 and it would get to the smelter at about 10 minutes to 7:00 It would take a full half-hour for the streetcar to reach the smelter. The smelter is about a mile from Spruce Street, but it was a nice comfortable warm ride, it was very slow but pretty. We got off work after the shift and the street car would take me approximately a block and a half from home. But again, it would take a full half hour to get from the smelter to where I would get off. If we got off at 4:00 from the smelter I would get home at about 25 minutes after four. The other interesting thing about the day shifts was there were so many men working on the Hill that there would be five to seven streetcars coming down the street; it looked like a train coming up third Street, it was quite a show watching the guys jump off the street cars particularly downtown where they would jump off to local bars. They always ran a streetcar to Opportunity which is little burg just 7 mi. east of Anaconda. It used to be fun to take the streetcar to opportunity, it would take about 45 minutes to get from Anaconda to opportunity it was a pretty ride. In the mid 1950's the streetcars were taken out and they went to buses for transportation just as progress will. One of my fondest memories is the streetcars. The ACM owned the streetcars. They charged \$1 for a book of tickets. I think it was less than nickel for each way. They were very beautiful streetcars.

**What street to the streetcar run down again?**

The way and economists, Park Street is the actual highway like if you for coming from Georgetown late and going through a tribute to going down Park Street and as Eagle South eagle from Port St. the third Street for St. fifth sixth Central. Third Street is a streak that the street car ran down. There was what was called a streetcar born it was about three blocks west of spruce Street. And as I mentioned that was really the West end of Anaconda at that time. the streetcar barns are still there and the use if for the school buses now.

**Were the car's electric?**

Yes, it was all electric they had a conducting postpone that would go to wire suspended above the streets period. the streetcar would stop the every other block every other intersection district or stopped, but she learned how to jump off a streetcar because it was never going to fast it was just something you learned how the jobs and run until you can stop. It would just build local speed and by the time of buildup it would slow down to stop but the next intersection never did go very fast. There's a conductor to. It was sure fun to take the car to opportunities, that was the end of line. The conductor would just go and disconnect the what the line at one end of the car and connected to the other side of the car and it would go the other way back into town.

**When you worked at the smelter did you have time cards?**

Oh yes, we have time cards. Usually I was working swing shift which was seven to three three to eleven and eleven to 7 and you had to make sure your punch than before 7:00 a.m. and you had to make sure that you didn't punch out before 3:00 p.m. or you would be adopted. If you only work 40 minutes you're a big stocks for the 20 minutes that didn't work. The only employees that did not have to punch and sort of speaks for the monthly employees, they were the metallurgists and clerks the work in the general office and the course the check the time cards and the Council of things like that the overall monthly salary so they can come and go when it wanted didn't have to punch in and out.