

## NOTES ON USING MATERIALS FROM

### "IS THERE LIFE AFTER COPPER?" ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Because of limited funds available for this project, audited transcriptions of the tapes were not possible. However, there are detailed notes for most of the interviews. The user should be aware of a few limitations on the use of these notes. Unless otherwise specified, the notes were taken at the time of the interview and were not later audited against the tape. They can give you a good idea of what was covered in the interview. However, if you find something specific that interests you, you should verify it with the tape. Because the notes were taken quickly during the interview, they may include inaccuracies. If you use information for attribution, you must go back to the original tape.

There are rough transcriptions for many of the interviews. Again, because of time and funds available, these transcriptions were not later audited against the tape. They are more accurate than the notes, but again, if you use information for attribution, check it against the original tape.

A few interviews have restrictions against use of the tape. The notes for these have generally been read and corrected by the subject of the interview and are accurate. Check the releases for further information.



RELEASE FORM

I hereby give and grant to the Butte Historical Society as a donation for such scholarly and educational purposes as the Society shall determine, according to the regulations of the Society, all rights, including copyrights, to my tape-recorded memoirs, except for such restrictions specified below.

I also specifically grant Teresa Jordan, for valuable consideration, the right to use all or any part or paraphrase of any of my statements (with the exception of restrictions listed below) in connection with her proposed work of non-fiction provisionally titled Butte, America: Lessons From a Deindustrialized Town, as well as related articles. I understand that, unless restricted below, my name and photo may be used in the work and in related advertising and publicity.

Restrictions:

March 6, 1987  
Date of Agreement

Kathleen McBride  
Narrator

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Accession date

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Archivist

Interview with Kathleen McBride, at 712 1/2 W. Galena, Wednesday, February 6, 1984.

Tape 1, Side 1

Came to Butte 8, 10 years ago. Husband worked for MHD, then NCAT. New group of people, young, somewhat ostracized, banded together.

Janet Cornish got involved in historic preservation; Kathleen in politics. They put on the Future conference (get title, year), were involved in historical quilt, the mural.

K grew up in S. Calif; Escondido (sp). Family was involved in the community, grew up with feeling that you should be. Butte was K's first adult experience w/ community. College, moving around, not a chance to be involved.

Ran for office first time, '1978. Issues included need to develop more diversified economy, alternative energy and conservation, Sr. citizens, property taxes. Defeated Jim Mular. In that legis session, proposed idea that communities that tax themselves most should have first claim to state \$--new way to look at it. Her style of campaigning differed--old way was to pass out cards with name, picture, and some info like license plate numbers or counties or such like. K. did doorstep campaign. Had no family ties or school ties; campaign successful because of that campaign.

disliked by regular Butte Boys because she defeated one of them. Mike Cooney, in his 2nd term, was an ally. They were not willing to have their votes negotiated. Felt that she represented her constituency and should vote their needs. Reg. delegation fought her, not so much because of the way she voted, but her unwillingness to be part of a bloc. K. felt that those who would separate from ways of past could do some things, get some things accomplished. In campaign, could get defensive about not being a native. People often ask, are you from Butte--yes, I live over there. If they asked, were you born in Butte, then say no. K felt she had no special interests, that her constituency was her special interest. Some of Butte Boys voted in ways that would help their own business.

Delegation fought her and Cooney. For instance, Governor asked one of them to call all the members of the delegation about a meeting (or about some information--interviewer not sure which)--but the delegation forgot to call K. and Cooney. This happened several times. Other times, bills that the whole delegation was to sponsor never came across her desk.

This didn't help her, but didn't hurt her, either. Named a committee chairman and also chairman of a standing committee, which was an accomplishment for her amount of seniority.

Another example of lack of cooperation was fight to keep nursing school open (check). K. received no cooperation from rest of

delegation though they supported the issue. In the end, felt like she would do what she had to do for the delegation, but would not break her neck to do it.

'84 election: Not true that Pavlovitch HAD to run against McBride. Only 5% or so of his reapportioned district overlapped with K's. But he wouldn't run against another Butte Boy such as Dailey or Brown. The newspaper kept repeating that Pav. HAD to run against McBride.

Tape 1, Side 2

K was in 3rd year of law school during campaign, very hard semester. With hindsight, she even wonders about her decision to run again. Felt there were certain forces she couldn't combat, such as the newspaper. And in the end, lost by 3 votes, and there were four more ballots than could be accounted for. Makes her a bit cynical. Never know what the real story was. Feels like the whole delegation saw her as a target. Suspects that Pav. ran a campaign more against her than for himself. Takes a tough skin to be in politics; not sure her skin is tough enough, or that she WANTS it to be--problem of losing touch with constituents.

Finished law degree, passed bar. Now works for judge in Helena.

When first came to Butte, NCAT/MHD early days--Jerry Plunkett not at all afraid of bringing in new people. The fact that both MHD and NCAT are here ten years later speaks to his vision. He didn't search just in Butte or MT, but nationwide. This brought a wealth to NCAT, but also the community, and to others like K socially. "Are you from Butte"--the newcomers didn't know that that was the key question. They went ahead anyway with projects, commitment. Told that couldn't accomplish what set out to do, but didn't give up just because someone said it couldn't be done.

People of the period: Carolyn Smithson spearheaded much with arts--involved with mural, getting the arts council going again, ethnic dinners. Yugoslavian dinner at civic center pulled in something like 1000 people.

Group liked the people in Butte, the sense of community. A lot of them saw Butte as their first adult community. If you wanted to do something, you just went ahead and did it. Very exciting. People talk about Montana as a cultural vacuum, but w/o theater or concerts, could make your own entertainment. John McBride very involved with theater groups. Maybe some of those possibilities fade by being here a long time--the longer you are here, the more you have to risk taking chances. They didn't have anything to lose.

NCAT, up over 100 employees at one time, has had a fairly constant turnover of people. Others from the period:

Pat Ingalls, Janet and Jay Cornish, Fred and Mindy Quivik, Andy Shapiro and Carolyn Smithson, Bob Moody and Mary Hoffsummer (now

in Portland), Bart and Phyllis Evans (now also in Portland--he with BPA, K. thinks), Mike and De Ann Cooney (now in Wash. DC), Pat and Kim Cooney, Chaz and Lorraine Jeniker (progressive, very involved with politics, new people, run Silver Bow Distributing, older), Kim and Kurt Krueger, John and Kathy Orth (John orig. from Butte but spent lot of years away, MHD, consulting, NCAT, older), Hiram and Toni Shaw.

We became our families, each other's families, because we didn't have family here.

also, Judy and Jack Jacobsen, Mike and Mary Sadaj (pron Sadeye). Mike and Jack both doctors. Mike on local study commission (K thinks). Neither are native. The women are phenomenal in what they do. Judy appt. Senate in '81, elected in 83, then elected for four year term in '84.

Margaret and Tony Schoonen (pron Shownan). Tony was princ. at Madison school, now closed. 2nd family to John and Kathleen. Very active on resource and women's issues, political issues. Live in Ramsay. Good source for more rural perspective, and lead to other ranchers. Also, possibly good source for miners names.

Young people--general perspectives. Only general comments because not talk to many. Most would like to stay in Butte if they could find a good job. Kathleen knows of young professionals from Tech who have found jobs here. For instance, woman engineer who was on panel w/ K. at '84 conference at Tech on non trad. roles for women got job at MHD. Happy to stay here. Can find name through program for conference.

Tape 2, Side 1

Also remembers a woman, last name Witt, K thinks, who came up to her at that conference. Jr. or Sr. in H.S., looking for ways to have a professional career in Butte.

People who leave for a few years then come back, help tremendously.

Ethnic ties--don't know much about except that because ethnic is so closely tied with religion, the ties have probably lasted longer/stronger.

Republicans in Butte--may increase because of new people coming in. Outflux of democrats and influx of repubs. Some democrats here are republicans in nature, dem. in name. This true in delegation. See this in "human" issues, even in labor issues. For instance, issue of bond required for taverns and restaurants to insure pay to employees if business goes under. Some members not support this bill.

K's commitment was to constituents over delegation. Had good working relationship with Harrington, Judy, Larry Steimetz.

McBride

Labor issues--last spring, campaigning, talk about labor issues. Talked to many union members who were laid off. K is in favor of unions but they can go too far the other way, and essentially put a noose around our necks. None of us plan for the downturn. When we plan, we think of upturning economy. But heard some union members criticize their unions. For instance, say that they were high on the waiting list but wouldn't get a job because jobs would go to friend of those in control. Heard lots of heartbreak stories. Lots of people very close to retirement. One man ONE DAY away; others only 90 days away or so. Afraid to take another job because want to earn pension. Catch 22. Feel that can't make a commitment to a new employer because would want to leave if Company starts up again. Feel that employers not hire a 55 year old man if think he will leave if he has a chance to earn out his retirement if Co. starts up again. And retirement, situation with pension, was something the union had negotiated, so some criticism of negotiations.

Some people say, "with the company shut down, why don't these people just leave? But K can understand why they don't. They'd lose money when they sold their house, many have used up their savings waiting for the Company to start up again, and here they have a support network.

That's the problem. It's easy enough to understand; much harder to solve. Retraining OK, but talked to people in retraining program and though they supported it, they were not at all sure they would have a job at the other end of it. State insurance may be one answer. These people have dignity, but they have lost stature. Many not want to use programs even if programs available and they know about them. Heard many stories of families breaking up. Father gone to work at Coastrip, mother taking care of family. Or mother working. Self esteem drops when not contributing.

For miners' names--Al Hooper, Tony Schoonen.

Who's to blame? The Copper economy have major impact. Labor--not so sure. If you look at the southwest, at all the mining problems there, tough to say labor or taxes, when you see the whole industry shut down.

As a policy maker, it's tough to deal with the Company. You would be told one thing, the opposite would happen. Learned that the official route to information is not very fruitful.

Tape 2, Side 2

Ex: Told that there would be no more mining that would continue to erode on uptown Butte, and yet they continued that mining.

Problems exist. Like shutting down the underground pumps. Often when you refill something that has been pumped out for a long time, there is a possibility of earthquakes. Also, part of the pit is sided by alluvial or valley fill. Without pumps, ground-

water is filling the pit. Question--the company has said it will pump before the water gets to that level; but what if the Company is not here? And it hasn't been willing to do basic safeguards like water sampling. The Bureau of Mines finally got some money from the legislature and is doing some sampling.

The Co's liability: A lot of mining laws didn't come into effect until 1971, so much was grandfathered.

What is general feeling of community--that it is a good community, worth saving, or not a good community? The feeling is that this is a good community, a good place to raise a family. But there is also intense dislike from the rest of the state. Sayings like Butte is clannish--if they don't win the game, they'll win the fight afterwards. The inability to accept new people is a real limitation.

One problem with new professionals coming into Butte is jobs for wives.

When we came, we had to create our own work. Mindy started the bookstore, Janet Cornish with urban revitalization, Kathleen with politics. Can this still be done? Yes. Time and circumstances helped. We were at the very beginning of our careers, able to take risks.

Meg Sharp started what is now called Sharp Expressions, a very special gift shop. Works with Betty Hanson. When we came in, Butte people left to go shopping. Meg's store crossed the boundary line. SHE goes to other places, brings back what people here want to buy.

Butte at one time was a shopping center--especially for furniture and appliances. Also, strangely, children's clothes. It still is to some extent. One of the attractions of Butte before was Columbia Gardens. People came, it was like an oasis in the desert. They would spend the day, shop, go to Columbia Gardens. Butte no longer has that unique entertainment value.

Butte tends to live in its history--the good times. . .live in the good old times instead of plan for the future. Feeling, when things aren't so good, that anything we've added in the meantime should be removed. People talk about Butte of the past but not Butte of the future.

Future--will you stay in Butte? At one time, we would have stayed in Butte if John lost his job. I'd like to be in Butte, because I feel I can contribute. But contributions need some recognition. At this point, there is a good possibility we will stay in Butte. But both John and I are community minded enough to not want the door shut in our faces.

Fred Quivic has had prejudice toward the sort of work he does, and he has overcome it exceedingly well. All along the way he has always found a group to communicate with. He is exceedingly

innovative.

The Historical Society broke down a lot of barriers. Did a slide show in '79 or '80. It was well done, and they took it to lots of civic groups. It captured the feelings of buildings--not only for newcomers, but for people who are here all their life. Played on history of Butte, but also dealt with how to recognize if old building had value. It might be better to save that old building than tear it down and put up something new. The studies conducted at that time were very important to what Janet Cornish is doing now. Both Fred and Janet have DONE things--recognizable, tangible things. Not just paper studies.

Tape 3, Side 1

Nancy Sheets Freymiller--good to talk with. Works for MPC as PR person. Very civic minded, involved.

K. wonders. In our generation, you did things for the community. Both Janet and Nancy are expecting children. Possibly is that coming from a feeling that it's time to retreat for awhile? A tiredness or frustration?

Butte's survival depends on the degree of vision it exhibits, the use it makes of new people.

Don Peoples has leadership, vision. He is receptive and supportive of outsiders. Committed--but he can't do it alone. He is unique--VERY positive influence. He's not afraid of supporting unpopular ideas. He is supported by Butte machine, but also goes beyond it. Positive, good vision, NEW ideas. He is so effective, in part, because he is a native. He can support NEW ideas because he is OLD Butte. Not so threatening. Butte has been burned a few times by outsiders. Developer that bought City Hall is just the most recent example. But it's a problem for Butte that it is always putting a tag on people about where they are from.