



VERDIGRIS PROJECT

KBMF & BUTTE-SILVER BOW ARCHIVES

MOLLIE KIRK

The Verdigris Project

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Oral History Transcript of Mollie Kirk

Interviewers: Clark Grant & Aubrey Jaap

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Jaap: Alright, it's June 22nd. We're here with Mollie Kirk. Molly, I'd like you to first start by talking a little bit about your family, your parents. When were you born?

Kirk: I was born on November 15th, 1949. My father was Michael Ralston Blinn, and my mother was Sheila Elizabeth Kane. And I was born in Butte. Both families were long, long time Butte families. My dad's family was here in the 1860s and my mom's family arrived shortly thereafter, like 1878, 75, somewhere in there. So, we have a long history. I was one of five children. I was the second born, two boys, three girls. All our names began with 'M' - Michael Molly, Marnie, Martha, and Mark. My mom called us the M squad. When she'd start calling our names, I told everyone she stuttered. So that's how things started with me.

Jaap: So when your parents, or when your relatives came early on, what did they come here for? for mining?

Kirk: Mining. Some of them were actually mining engineers in Ireland. On my mom's side, both the Kanes and the Driscolls first went to Massachusetts, then Michigan. And then the Driscolls went to Colorado. My grandmother was born in Silver City, or her mother was born in Silver City and then from Michigan and Colorado, they came to Butte to work in the mines. The ones that first were here were mining engineers. And several of the family then went on to hold positions as mine foremen. My grandfather's brother was superintendent of mines here. He lived in the big white house up there. And he had wanted to go to medical school. And his dad had passed away. And as the oldest, he went to work in the mines and worked his way up. So he made the other brothers all go to medical school. One rebelled and became a dentist. But my grandfather was a frustrated carpenter. He liked that more than medicine. He was a great doctor, but I don't think he had his choice, that's what he would have done.

Jaap: Can you tell us your grandfather's name.

Kirk: My grandfather was Dr. Patrick E. Kane. And like I say, his father was a mining superintendent and then his brother became one as well. My grandfather led quite a funny life too. He and his brothers were very, very short. They were like, I think my grandfather, he always claimed he was 5'5", but I don't think he was. When I was 10, I had appendicitis. I was in a swim meet at what was then Gregson. And I got out of the pool and collapsed. So my mother is racing me into Butte, and we got picked up by the highway patrol. And she said, "She's sick. I think she's got appendicitis." And he gave her a ticket and said, "Nice try." So we got to Butte. And my grandmother said, "She's got a hot appendix. We have to get her down to St. James." But, of course, it was August. So we already had our school clothes. So I had to get dressed up to go to the hospital to get my appendix out. And the most vivid memory I have of it. It was the old St. James. At least they gave you either there. And he started counting and in come these two little green men, you know, in the surgical stuff. And they each had a little bench, they pulled up, so they were high enough to reach over the operating table. And it was my Uncle Joe, my great

Uncle Joe and my grandfather. And I later found out that they had had these little benches or stools or whatever, specially made, so that when they operated, they were tall enough.

Jaap: Oh, how interesting. So where'd your grandfather go to medical school? Do you know?

Kirk: He went to Creighton. And he, actually, graduated president of his class. He did some of his internship and residency in Portland and he was also in Chicago. But he came back to Butte. He had no desire to be anywhere else. So he came back to Butte and he had known my grandmother prior to that. Her name was Francis Urbana Driscoll, but everyone knew her as Fritz. And she was a hat maker. She had apprenticed as a hat maker. And they got married and they ended up having seven children and they were all born at home in the house that I grew up in. So it was a large family there. I had 49 first cousins. So I mean, we're, it's, like I said to somebody, when you were going out on a date, I had to check and see who they were related to because you didn't want to be dating your cousin. So it was an interesting life. But I can remember going on house calls with my grandfather.

My grandma would drive over and pick him up at like four o'clock. He finished his appointments and then we would go do house calls all over. So those days are gone. In fact, when he died, well, while he was alive, I remember him taking payment. He'd come home with baked bread or a live chicken or this or that, or the other thing. And that was fine with him. He never sent out a bill. People just came and asked what they owed and paid. When he died, it was in his will that the files containing the money owed to him be destroyed in our fireplace. So we did that. We sat there and burned file drawers full of bills to just, and that was the way he wanted it. He never was in it for money. He didn't really care about the money. He did rounds every single day of the week at the hospital. He took Thursday afternoons off. That was his fishing day. And he was off on Saturday and Sunday, but he still did his rounds. And if there were house calls to be made, he went on house calls, but they don't do that anymore.

Jaap: No, certainly not.

Kirk: But he taught me always to question the doctor. I've had a lot of medical problems. So at some point, some of my doctors were a little less than thrilled with me because I always questioned what they were doing, what they were giving to me, and why and blah, blah, blah. And as my grandfather once said, "Doctors think they're infallible, so question." So, you know, I learned some good lessons from him. But my grandmother was a volunteer at the hospital and she had her club where they were supposedly . . . it was called Study Club, but actually I think they just went and had a few martinis. So, that was the only way women did it in those days. But my parents divorced when I was six.

And so we moved up. We had been living in the house that my grandmother's father had built on Broadway street, where my grandmother grew up. So we moved up to the big house on Copper. And I lived there until I got married. So, it was a great childhood. This house was huge. And he had a pond and a big yard. My grandfather put in flood lights so we could play football in the evenings if it was dark. We raised pheasants. We had horses. We were on the very edge, right below Big Butte on the very edge of town. There were no other houses beyond us. So, I mean, it was kind of like living in the country.

Jaap: Somebody said you had a turtle?

Kirk: Oh, we had a turtle. Yes. We caught it at the Big Hole. Believe it or not, there used to be turtles at the Big Hole. And my grandfather drilled a little hole in his shell and we had like real thin rope. And it was very, very long. I mean, he could get all around the yard and in the winter he would burrow in and hibernate. But one day, the turtle got loose and we couldn't find him for two days. And we finally found him down on the railroad tracks on Emmett Street. It took him that long to make it that far, but he came home and he was very happy to be home. He never tried to leave again. We raised pheasants. That was a project my brother started. And then when he got tired of it, I did it. But yeah. We also had . . . somebody had given my grandfather ducks. And the pens were on the far West side of the house. So we would go up and I'd open the gate and the ducks would follow me down the alley, through the gate and get in the pond and swim for a while. And then they would follow me back to their pen.

So, you know, it was very interesting. And the way we got started with pheasants was we had gone to the game farm in Warm Springs. There was a big game farm there. My brothers stole a few grouse eggs. So my mother immediately got a little incubator and the two were born. One didn't live, but Roscoe lived. We built the first little pen and it was just Roscoe. And somebody told the game warden that we had, and we weren't a registered game farm. So they took Roscoe away. I don't think he probably survived long in the wild because he was a pet. So after that we got the paperwork, became a game farm, ordered eggs and had a huge incubator. We got to watch from the time they went in the incubator and then they were in a brooder and then they were outside. It was a kind of a teaching, learning experience, but they were more pets than they were anything else, you know?

Jaap: And that house has just been redone.

Kirk: The house has been redone. I was going to go up and see it because I'm writing down a lot of things about life in that house. And I have never been in it since we left. A lot of my cousins have gone up. My younger brother who just died. His friend, Joe Pat Thomas, Nancy's brother, who was a cousin, bought the house. And so Mark had his bachelor party up there in the basement, which was where we spent a lot of our time. My grandfather had built a big train board and put houses and tunnels and all this stuff on it, and it would fold up and go into the wall and then it came down. And we had a little school room down there. They bought school desks when the IC was selling because they were getting fancy new ones.

And so it was a regular like playroom down there. But I kind of want to remember it the way it was. And I was thinking of going up and looking at it just to kind of jog some things. Well, I was driving by with a friend, showing them where the house was. We stopped and we were looking, and I don't know if the lady thought I was going to steal her children or what, but she came out, "What do you want?" And I said, "Oh, I grew up in this house." And my mother grew up in this house. And she said, "Oh, you'd love it. You should come and see it. We knocked out all the walls and it's an open living plan." And it just broke my heart. Cause the kitchen, it was a huge kitchen and it was the heart of the house. I mean, you know, it was just, that was where we all gathered. In the winters, my grandmother would . . . sometimes I'd come down when everyone else was asleep and she would turn on the oven and open it. She'd make what she called oven toast. It was just toast with a pound of butter on it, melted.

And then we would put our feet up and have cocoa and toast. I mean, everything was in that kitchen. So that was kind of hard. And the other favorite room of mine was the den. My grandfather had put floor to ceiling bookcases in there on all four walls and it was just covered

with books, wonderful books. So we grew up reading a lot. I could read before I went to school. It was great. It was a wonderful childhood. And everyone gathered at our house. My mother and grandmother. They were like, "everybody's welcome." There was always room for somebody else. In the summers, we'd have big sleepovers where we'd all sleep in sleeping bags in the yard and go raid gardens. Which didn't make us popular in the neighborhood, but they could never prove it was us. But it was a great time.

And across the alley, there was a tennis court and it had a basketball hoop. So, I mean, we just had everything. We used to hike up to the M almost every day in the summer, bring a lunch up there. And you know, there was not a tree on the M in those days it was completely bare. And there was a place called the rock crusher, back a little from there that actually was a rock crusher. It was used for something in the mines. I don't know. My mother told a story about how the big wheel there got loose one day and came roaring down and went down the alley and crashed into the priest's house at the end of the block. So God didn't stop it.

Anyway, you know, those kinds of things. My mom would tell me too about when the IC church was built, the one that is there now. They used huge draft horses to haul everything and they kept them up in the tennis courts. Up there is where they kept the horses, but she remembers them hauling in all the marble and everything on these huge draft horses and watching the whole process. The only time I remember anything being built was the first new house to go up in the neighborhood was the Gardener's house up on Antimony, at the end of Antimony. And I can remember all of us from all over the neighborhood going up to watch, because it was so fascinating to see a new house. But it was a great neighborhood and there was lots of kids and we went to the IC school, which was down the alley. It was a block away. I went to mass every day. I got the outstanding choir girl award, only because I was there every day, because generally the nun would tell me to mouth the words. Because I don't sing very well.

Jaap: I was going to say, I've never heard you sing, Mollie.

Kirk: Well, when I do, my cats and dogs all start screeching, so I don't do it often. But it was a lot of fun. It was a grand childhood. And like I said, we had lots of cousins and they'd come up and my grandmother was a little less strict than my mother. So we'd often go to grandma when we had a special request. And, my mom worked in my grandpa's office. So, my grandmother loved soap operas. Some days I didn't feel good. So I'd have to stay home and watch soap operas with her. So that was fun. My brother Mark got into that habit. In fact, I think he still owns the record for the least amount of days in school at Butte Central. Mark was a night owl since he was a little kid. He'd stay up. And my grandfather would say to my mother, "You're going to have to send him to night school. There's no way he'll ever get up to go to school." And he finally did. He got kicked out of first grade.

Jaap: That's an accomplishment.

Kirk: Yes, it was. They had to draw Jack and Jill and he had seen Barbie dolls. So he put boobs on Jill.

Jaap: Didn't go over so well.

Kirk: The nun was not happy. So he was sent home. They also tried to make him right. He's a left-hander. In those days, they would make you change. Everybody was supposed to. I don't know if they thought that left-handed meant you were the devil or what the hell. But anyway, so

they started and it was very upsetting to him. My grandfather was still alive then and he went down and he said to the nun, "He's left-handed. Leave him be left-handed or I'm going to come down here and kick your ass." So he got to be left-handed. One of the few.

Jaap: He is one of the few.

Kirk: Yeah, really. They did.

Jaap: Yeah, you know, Tim McCarthy was left-handed, but Jim said they made him write right-handed. And he said his handwriting was horrible because he's not right-handed, but yeah.

Kirk: The nuns were a world unto themselves. I got along very well with the nuns because they would come in mid August to get ready for school and I would go down and help them. Then the school year came and I was a good student, but there was a thing they had. It was called the depository. If you got to check in depository, it wasn't a good thing. And I always had a check in depository because I just was too busy visiting and doing other things. So, and then at the end of the year, we would help them pack up. And in fact, when I was in eighth grade at the end of the year, this nun had, they had these big black trunks that they kept in the basement and put all their stuff in. And this nun had got a new trunk.

So she gave me the black trunk, a big black trunk, which I still have. I keep sweaters in it. But, I really enjoyed that part. I enjoyed school. It was very hard for me. I had started kindergarten and first grade at St. Pats and my parents got divorced, which was difficult for me because I was the first girl in the Blinn family in like 90 years. So I was, and then, of course, my mother had to have two right after me, which kind of blew my whole thing, you know, but . . . I loved St. Pat's and my two best friends were Marianne Patrick and Katie Maloney. The three of us were inseparable. And so we moved up there right after Christmas of my first grade year. And we finished out the year at St. Pat's. My grandma or my mother, or somebody would ride us down and pick us up after school.

So, I really missed St Pat's. Of course, in 1955, divorce was a very bad thing. Especially if you were a Catholic, it was, you know, you're a fallen woman. Anyway, there were kids that weren't allowed to play with me because I was from a broken family and that's a term I've always hated. And I used to always say, "My family is just fine. I don't know why you say it's broken." But when I had already had a little run in with some kids from IC up on Big Butte. I was picking some wild flowers and they said, "You can't pick those. You don't live here." And I said, "I do too. And my grandfather says I can do what I want." So that was my start of my experience with the IC. And then when I started going to school and my mother said, "Hold your head high. And no matter what anyone says, don't get mad." Because I've always had a little bit of a temper. Someone once told my husband that I had a short fuse and he replied, "She doesn't have a fuse." So anyway, I went and I held my head high and there were whispers and all. And I had a very good nun though. Sister Mary Clarence.

She could throw an eraser at about 50 miles an hour and hit somebody in the head. I swear to God. But she was very good to me and very understanding and made it clear that nobody was to bother me about my mother's divorce. So, they didn't. I got along very well. I was kind of a class clown. My third grade teacher told me, if I wanted to be a comedian, I should quit school and be a comedian. But my mother wouldn't let me quit school, so I didn't become a comedian. But actually, I did love school and I've always been an avid reader. I started reading before I went to

school and, from the time I was old enough, I had a library card and would go. And I had read everything in the children's department and my grandmother's sister was the head librarian. And Ms. Molly O'Mara, who was also a relative, she was my grandmother's cousin, or my grandfather's cousin was (who incidentally I'm named after her) also a librarian. So when I was in third grade, I was allowed to go to the adult department and read. They watched very closely what books I took out of there. I loved the library.

To this day I read all the time. I probably have four or five books going at any one time. When I get bored with one, I pick up another one and then I go back to the other one. Everyone in our family read. My grandma and grandpa both did too. My grandfather had read a lot of books, but he also had this because of being in Chicago. We got the Chicago Tribune in the mail every day which was a fascinating paper. And, of course, there were all these bad things that happened that were foreign to people in Butte. So it was interesting reading for a young person. And, he also had this fascination with those lured detective magazines. They were just . . . and they had the most graphic pictures and things. And so when he'd get them, my grandmother would try to hide them. We had all these magazines. She tried to hide them so we couldn't find them. And, of course, we always found them and had to go through and it was like a big thing. And when kids would come to see us, or for a play date, they didn't call them play dates then. I don't know what the hell we called them, but we'd pull out the detective books. They were worse than Playboy, believe me.

But it was a great household. And my mom very soon became involved in the school. She was a PTA president and she was a chaperone for everything. She coached girls' basketball and volleyball. She had a Cub Scout troop. She had a 4-H group. I mean, she just was the volunteer of everything. But there was a lot of meanness towards her, particularly like from women. My mother was very attractive and she dressed very well. Men would look at her. And, of course, the wives all thought she was just a "fallen woman." "She was divorced."

And so it was a strange situation, but I think my grandparents and my mother made me a strong woman. They made all of us strong because they knew that we would face some things, and they were strong women. So I was lucky in that respect. My dad was not a part of my life.

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And for years I was mad at my mom because I blamed her. It wasn't until I was in high school. She never said a bad word about my father, but in high school she told me all what had gone on and stuff. But on my first communion day at St. Pats, I broke her heart. I said to her, "Well, that's just fine. When I can, I'm going to go live with my dad." And she said, "Okay," knowing full well, my dad was in Greenland, so he was an ironworker. So there was no way I was going to go live with my dad. But, anyway in St. Patrick's church, there's another very good story. They didn't have a children's mass, like the IC did.

So oftentimes my mom would bring Mike and I when we were still going to St. Pat's and drop us off. This was when we were living up on copper street when we had moved. So one winter night, we went to the evening mass and it was very cold outside and we were on the porch waiting for our ride. And Mike said, "Go inside, stay warm." So Mike was in fourth grade. So anyway, I went in and I heard someone coming. So I don't know if you ever saw those big, old confessionals that they had. There were three little compartments, the preset in the middle and they slid the door open when he would take a confession. Anyway, I got scared because of the

noise. So I went and hid in the confessional. Well, the priest came and locked up the church. The priest happened to be the brother of my godfather, but anyway, so my mom gets there and Mike goes to open the door, tell me, and the door's locked and he's pounding on the door everything. And by this time, all the lights are out in the church. It's dark. So I make my way back. Oh, except for the little candles flickering, you know, that you put the money in to pay for the candle. And so I make my way through the church and I'm screeching, "I'm locked in here!" So they had to go get father Kelly and he had to let me out, which was something I never lived down from the priest, you know, it was like a big story. But I mean, I always found a way to get myself in a jam. It was just a talent I had. But I went all the way through school at the IC, graduated from IC in '64, and then went on to Girls' Central High School.

All girls. That was before they realized that boys and girls could go to school together and not have sex. I mean, that was their whole thing. I think the thing about the nuns and the sex thing, I think all that made Catholic girls really want to have sex. Because the nuns had such a bad thing to say about it. So in fact, I don't know that they ever even said the word sex. It was all euphemisms. "Sleeping with." It was even that way when I first went to Carroll, though. The girls had to be in at 10 o'clock at night on the weekdays and midnight on the weekends. I guess they thought that it wasn't till after dark that you did anything bad.

Jaap: Nothing happens before 10:00 PM.

Kirk: And in fact, Mark Roscoe was elected student body president. And he appointed me to the student senate. So we weren't allowed to wear pants out of the dorm. And so we had a big to-do and I brought up two notions that I wanted. I didn't think we should have to have hours and we should be able to wear pants. So they passed the thing about being able to wear pants, which was just like a revolutionary thing. It was crazy. And then they got an experimental floor where they didn't have hours. And, of course, I was on the experimental floor and it really didn't make any difference because people just did what they normally did. I mean, it was like, and it kind of came to everyone's attention that, "Gee, this isn't a big deal after all."

But I mean, growing up Catholic, I went to Catholic schools from kindergarten till I graduated from college. So needless to say, I'm not an avid Catholic. I had enough of it in those years to kind of make me . . . and I always questioned things, which was not a good thing either. Uh, yeah. I had a nun that taught Spanish at Carroll, who said she was talking about Our Lady of Guadalupe. She said, "For those of you who have the faith, you need no explanation. For those of you who don't have the faith, there is no explanation." So this was kind of how they dealt with things. You know, you just believed what they told you.

Obviously, I didn't believe everything. So I was not, yeah, I wouldn't have won the All Catholic Award. But in grade school, everyone got excited about going to high school. It was like, um, I always wanted to go to Butte High, but because I was Catholic, I had to go to Central, even though I got kicked out of Girls' Central many, many times. They always took me back because of who my family was. So I never did get to go to Butte High. And I was going to go to college at either New Mexico State or University of Wyoming, I wanted to do PE and stuff, and my brother was going to Carroll. And, um, I went out one night in January of my senior year and got exceedingly drunk with some boys from Butte High and got in trouble. I came home and my mother was just furious. And my two sisters had been with me and it ended up, they got grounded for not calling to tell her that I was there, but she had slapped me, which she had never done before. So she felt bad. So I didn't get grounded, but they did. But because of that, she felt I

needed to be closer to home and needed to go to Carroll college where she knew I would be watched and I would not be doing any of that foolishness.

Little did she know Carroll was probably party time USA at that point in time? It was way lots of fun. But I didn't get to go to Wyoming or New Mexico which is probably good because as things turned out, being so close, there was a lot of things I got to do. And, Butte, I love Butte. I have never wanted to be anywhere else. I loved coming on weekends. My freshman year, I was there a lot. But after that I came home a lot on weekends. A lot of times I came home my freshman year because I was in trouble. I did things like they held me upside down and I had India ink on my feet and I walked across the roof of the elevator. And they had a big investigation. And these two girls that were with me that held me up were nice Catholic girls who had never been in any trouble. You know, their parents had never been called for anything.

And this girl from Anaconda figured out that we did it and she was going to rat us out. So I said, "This is how it works, guys. We turn ourselves in, they'll go easier on us." And they're like . . . so we went down and turned ourselves in. I did all the talking and I said it was my idea, which it was, and I said, "It was just a harmless prank." Well, they didn't think it was a harmless prank, but anyway, the other two girls started crying and crying and Mrs. Gilvetson, the Dean of Women said, "I should call your parents." I said my mom is used to that. And so they didn't call our parents, but I went home and told them anyway, they weren't surprised. So, I mean, I've had a fun life. I really have. I've had a lot of things go bad in my life, but I think the fun far outweighs the bad things.

[35:11]

Uh, when I was at Carroll, I started snowmobile racing. And like my senior year I would go to school on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. And then I would be gone Friday through Monday, racing in Canada or Idaho, Wyoming, Washington. And it was one of the best years of my life. I had a grand time. When it came time to graduate, I had the most credits in English. So that's what I decided to graduate in. I had always wanted to teach PE. So then I thought I'd try teaching English and I did my student teaching at the state girls' school in Mountain View which cured me of wanting to teach anybody anything. And the funny part about that is, when I went to WATCH, after I went to prison and I went to the WATCH program, there was a woman there who I had taught at Mountain View.

Jaap: Oh really? Did she remember you?

Kirk: Yeah. You can't escape your past. Just like you can't outrun your relatives. So, it all makes you who you are. But, college, I had a lot of fun and I made lifelong friends there. I would go to college forever if I could. After I broke my back, I shattered my back in a car accident, I had been a drug counselor in the first outpatient drug programming in the state. And then in the first inpatient one, which was at Galen and I was in a car wreck and broke my back. And so I went back to school to Tech and I got one of the last history degrees out of there. But I still like to go to school. This past year I took two semesters of welding. So I'm just, you know, I love to learn. I love to do things. And I think a lot of that does go back probably to the nuns because they made you learn. And I think if you have a thirst for that, and I will say this, the nuns, generally, you got a good education. I mean, some of them were difficult to deal with. Some of them were there because every family should have a nun in the family.

And, you know, same with priests. It was the same kind of thing around here. The highest thing you could do as a Catholic was to have a child in the priesthood or the nunnery, but unfortunately none of my family went. I did almost. I was living in Helena after my freshman year. And I met these nuns from Ireland and they were in Billings. And we wrote back and forth and I decided, I thought I might want to join their order. So I called my mother and said, "I'm not going to go back to Carroll this fall. I'm going to do this." And well, of course, everyone went ballistic.

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My mother knowing full well, I was not cut out for that, for that vocation or occupation. So everyone came over, you know, the whole family in force. And so I agreed that I would wait until I graduated to do this. Obviously it never happened.

Jaap: Were you glad you waited?

Kirk: Yeah.

Jaap: Or did you ever think that it's something?

Kirk: No, I came to realize it that I probably would not have been, it would not have been a good thing for me. Nor, for the order.

Jaap: You might have shaken it up a bit, Mollie.

Kirk: Yeah, I was good at doing - that shaking things up, but I don't think there's anything that I have wanted to do that I really haven't done. A few things. Maybe, you know, I have a few things on my bucket list, like skydiving and a couple of other things, which my doctors tell me is not on the horizon.

Jaap: But question them, Mollie.

Kirk: Well, I did, and I talked to my nephew who is head of the smokejumpers in Idaho at Grangeville. And he said to me, "We can do a tandem jump. I'll take you." So we'll see. I said, "I'd like to do it for my 70th birthday." I'll be 69 this year, so I have a year to prepare, but we'll see. I don't know. I lived in Helena for a short time after I graduated because I got married for two months, two and a half months. And it was not a good thing. I won't get into details because it's very complicated and not very flattering, but I came back to Butte then, and that's when I started to work for the drug program. I was married a second time and that one lasted five months. So it was not much of a success either. And then I met my husband in 1986 and we've been together ever since. So, I guess I just had to try things before I really . . .

Jaap: Sometimes you've got to test drive.

Kirk: Test drive. Yes. I like that term.

Jaap: So how did you and Scott meet?

Kirk: I was bartending at the Sportsman. I spent almost 20 years between the Sportsman and the M&M. And, he just had moved here from Washington. He had a black leather jacket and a braid to his waist and drove a Harley. So I immediately thought, "Oh boy, a bad boy. Oh, good." You know, and we went out, went to my house and an ex boyfriend tried to murder us with a pick. He

broke down the door and came in and took a few swings at us. And Scott knocked him out, got him out the door and we called the police and it was my friend Jocko Jimmings and he came and took him to jail. And then somehow the guy led them to believe that he lived there. He didn't. And so they let him out an hour after, but he broke every window in the house when he came back.

But we had gone, Scott took me to his house because he said that guy's nuts. I said yes. Prior to that, he said to me, "Is there anything you forgot to tell me?" I said, "No, no, no." So anyway, he took me to his house. When we went back the next day, Dale had gone in and broken every window in the house and all this stuff. So I went to the County attorney who, the assistant County attorney who happened to be my second little brother, Moose Holland, Brian, who was really like a brother to me. And he was Mark's best friend. Anyway, I said, I want to file charges. And this was before they had all these laws about domestic violence or any of that stuff. So. Moose was mortified. He said, "Would you be satisfied if I just got the money for your windows? Oh, imagine how your mom's going to feel if all this is in the paper." And he said, "It will be in the paper because it's pretty outrageous." And I'm thinking, I don't care if it's in the paper, it doesn't bother me.

But Moose was just so upset. So we went Moose's way. And looking back probably Moose was right. And like I said, Scott and I've been together ever since. And my mother and stepfather had great, um, worries about him when they first met him. I mean, you know, braid to his waist, motorcycle, black leather jacket. One of the first things my mother said to me is, "Is he from the pre-release?" I said, "No, he's from Washington." So anyway as time went on, they became very close friends. Scott was as good to my mother as anyone in the world and also to my stepfather. And they became fast friends and we always went camping and fishing together and did lots of things together up until when my mom died. So it worked out very well, but there were some rocky moments along the way. As my brother, Mark, who recently died, he and I were talking on one of our trips home from his doctor in Bozeman. This was right after they had told him to decide whether he wanted to go home and quit all treatment or whatever. Anyway, we were talking and I said, "Do you have any regrets, Mark?" And he said, "Do you?" He didn't answer me. I said, "Nope." I said, "You know, there was bad stuff along the way. Stuff I probably would not have chosen to do like go to prison."

But I said, "No, I don't really." I said, "I think it all is part of who I am. And I look at it that way." And I said, "I wouldn't take back the friends I made and we did a lot of partying and had a lot of fun. I wouldn't take any of that back." And he said, "You know, I feel the same way." So I had that to comfort me with when he was dying.

But, some of the best years I spent, I had college degrees and what have you. But my passion was bartending and I loved every minute of it. I first started here at the Room 71. Chris Martin owned it. He had also owned the infamous Rumpus Room upstairs, which was one of the funnest places in Butte. Oh God. Was it fun. But I'll never forget. I went in on my 21st birthday and asked for a birthday drink. I had been going in there about four years. So he said, "Kid, Just be quiet. Okay."

And he gave me a drink. So I started working there and I used to work Tuesday through Saturdays and I would go to work at 5:00 and then I would get off at 11:00 when Chris would come in and take the late shift. But on Fridays and Saturdays, I would get off at 11:00 and I'd come back at 2:00 in the morning for the after hours shift. And it would be packed in there. We

would have all the people that worked, bar people would come in, you know, because you work till 2:00 in the morning, you're not ready to go home and go to sleep. You're all wound up. And we also had, I mean, policemen, at that time, there was County and city and sheriff deputies. They'd come in their uniforms. And every so often there'd be a thing where there'd be a knock on the door. And Chris would say, "Nobody is in here. I'm just cleaning up." And they'd say, "Well, there's a lot of cars parked around here. So if you have anyone in there, get them out of there." They didn't ever give him a ticket or anything. But there were nights and he would split on Fridays and Saturdays, we would split everything we took in the til. If we had punched boards, we would split that money. We would split the money in the jukebox. Because we marked our 50 cents and quarters with red polish.

So we'd know what we put in, you know, after we lost the shake to somebody and what came in from other people. And there was nights I would go home with \$600 or \$700 in my pocket. And you'd have to remember back then beer was 65 cents a bottle. I got to the point sometimes where I wouldn't even do laundry, I'd just go buy new clothes because I had all that extra money. But Chris was kind of a, he was quite a character, but he could be a little difficult. So I would quit or he would fire me and then I'd quit if he fired me and he'd fire me, if I quit. We'd go back and forth and back and forth. At one point, it was right before St. Patrick's Day and I quit. I think it was like 77, maybe somewhere in there. 76, I don't know. Anyway, I quit. And I went out on St. Patrick's Day and I don't know if you ever knew Ray Pesanti, he was this big man from Walkerville, just a big bull of a man. Nice man. Tougher than hell. But that whole St. Patrick's Day I walked around town on his shoulders, you know, so we had a grand time. But I had spent a lot of time in the M&M.

I had started going in the M&M when I was still in high school. And in fact, when I got to Carroll, some of the senior guys would say, "That's the girl from Butte that hangs out at the M&M." So I spent a lot of time. So one day shortly after, Chris and I had done our fire, quit, quit fire thing. And I gave him his keys back. They called me from the M&M. Johnny Buni said, "I'm short a Keno writer, do you want to come write Keno today?" I said, yeah, why not. So I went up and I worked the keno counter for a while. And then before long I was behind the bar. And, the M&M was just always busy in those days. On Fridays and Saturdays and the first of the month, we cashed checks and it was unbelievable how many. They had two bartenders on during those shifts because they were so busy and we'd cash the checks. And at that time there was a thing. Montana was one of the few states that would give a single man welfare. He'd get a check. I don't know. It was like a \$100 or \$200 or something.

But these guys would come in and they'd show their ID and it'd be Texas, Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi, you know, all these places. I'd say, "How did you end up here?" And most of them, being the good upstanding citizens they were, had gone to the library and looked up, because there wasn't the internet in those days, you actually had to go look in a book . . . They went to the library and looked up what states gave single men welfare and Montana did. So they proceeded to move here. So that didn't make me really happy, but you know, It was what it was. And then of course at the first of the month, all the retirees got their checks and, a lot of my regular and favorite customers and friends were old miners, you know, um, a lot of them were tramp miners that just went from place to place.

And this happened to be the last place they ended up and they all had me call them uncle. I had uncle Clancy and uncle Lyle. And Hutch who Scott and I adopted as our son. And he was in, he

was 10 years older than I am or 12, but anyway, they would all come in and they would all tip so big at the first month and they'd have all this money and they, you know, it was great. And then by about the 7th or 8th [of the month], they were broke. They'd buy a meal ticket at the M&M so they had food. And then they'd have a few bucks. Or they'd come in and bum a drink. Oftentimes they would borrow 10 bucks from me. I always got paid back.

But Charlie at the M&M always lent them money because he knew he would get paid on the first. So, they were always there and they told such wonderful stories of old Butte. And I ended up taking them to the Fort when they had to go to the Fort. And taking them to the doctor. I remember going to the Fort with this one old guy. And, a lot of them lived in these rooming houses uptown. The LaSalle was across the street and a lot of them lived there. And, this young woman doctor said, "You know, he needs to quit drinking. Is there a gym he could join? Or, maybe he could take up hiking or something." And I just looked at her and I said, "Boy, lady, you got a lot to learn." And she said, "What?" I said, "These guys worked underground their whole life. They got off work. They went and had drinks." I said, "Most of them don't have wives or if they did, they're far behind somewhere.

Most of them don't have children or if they do, they aren't friendly with them." I said, "This is what they do. They get up in the morning, come over to the M&M, have breakfast, have a couple of beers, have lunch, have some more beers, have dinner, have some more beers and maybe a couple of shots. 'Cause it's the end of the day." I said, "That's how they live." "Well, really? They have to change. They can't live like that." And I said, "Well, good luck with that." So he never did join a gym. He never took a hike. The biggest hike was across the street, but they were so interesting and so much fun.

And it was such a fun place to work. We were all friends and like family. We all ran around together. We just had great times. And it was a fun place to work and a fun place to be. Their own little after hours thing, you know, a coffee cup with whiskey in it. Like nobody knew, you know, you were drinking whiskey out of a coffee cup and they had poker games and Penn Guinea games that would last for two, three days, you know? Sometimes I'd show for the house. Sometimes I just played for myself. There was always something going on and the keno was a big deal. All those retired people loved live Keno and it's across the street at the Sportsman. Emmett had it too. And they had these things called specials and, it paid more, paid double. So our specials at the M&M were on the hour.

The ones across the street were on the half hour. So the line would be long and they'd be collecting their money and then they'd be running across. I'm surprised nobody got killed on Main Street running across the street. I can remember Carl Schreiner. He was on a walker. I can remember him picking up that walker and running across the street. It was just crazy. And there was always something crazy going on. I can remember there being some guy, robbed a gun store and came in and he had a gun behind the toilet in the men's room. And I had seen the gun. So I told Dino who was the floorman and is a dear, dear friend of mine to this day. And he went in and found the gun and it was like, okay, what do we do now? I said, "Well, you can call the cops or we can give him enough booze that he will fall down."

But we ended up calling the cops. It was winter and they had traced the prints anyway to the M&M. So they got him and he had just gotten out of prison. I had known him since I was a kid. He was always a wild kid. But they probably say that about me, too. "She was a wild kid. She just got out of prison." But anyway, so, uh, things like that were always happening and there was

always just weird things. But it was fun. And I can remember too, there was a certain group of guys that would come in there and start a fight. And if you called the police and said their names, the police wouldn't come. They'd just wish that they would kill each other. You know? So when I'd call and they'd say, "Who is it?" I'd say, "I don't know." And then when they'd get there, there'd be like . . . but I remember there was a bomb scare in there once. They had to empty the building except for me and Janice.

And Charlie, Charlie was in front of the safe. He said to me, "You stand in front of that register and don't let anyone behind the bar." And he said to Janice at the Keno, "You stay by that register." So I'm thinking, "Oh, well, good. If there is a bomb, we're just all going to blow up with the money." You know? So anyway, they brought him in there and they're looking around and everything and the one cop comes up to me and he said, "Has there been anyone strange or suspicious around here?" I said, "It's the fucking M&M look around you." There was no bomb, but I mean, of all the stupid questions. "Anybody strange?"

Jaap: Everyone is strange.

Kirk: The worst day was when my friend Mark Roscoe raided the M&M over the big \$10,000 Super Bowl pool. And he made everyone go outside while they checked everywhere for all these things. And that's why I never ever put my real name on a pool. I used to always put Patty Hearst and then my mother and I would put me and Ma. But anyway, there was people eating dinner in there and it was around Christmas time and they made everybody go outside. So people took their plates outside and were eating their dinner on the hoods of cars. While the government was raiding the place.

And I just walked in. They said, "You can't go in there." And I just walked in and walked down to the basement. Delmoe was down there. Danny Delmoe long time owner. He was just rolling his eyes. And so we sat there and had a drink and waited for them to get done. And everybody whose name was on that pool had to go then and talk to the state department of revenue, the agent down there. Nobody said anything that they could use, you know, they just said, "There's a pool. That's all I know." But there used to be lots of those pools. There still are some if you know someone, but they're hard to get on now. I won 10,000 one time and I've won quite a bit of money on them, but they're hard to find now because it's gone underground.

But maybe when, now that gambling is legal, who knows what's going to happen around here. However, I think they will probably see the same blue noses that won't want it because it's such a problem people have. And you know, my attitude about gambling is. If people are going to find a way to do it, no matter what, if they really want to do it. So why not tax it and get the money? Same way I feel about marijuana.

But I remember at one point, not many years ago, maybe 15. I don't know. I remember they were going to have that whole East side. These guys came in and they were going to make it a gambling thing. They were trying to get just a district thing passed and they gave money to all these bars that they were going to buy and everybody was just up like, "Oh man, this is going to great." And it never passed. So, you know, all those people were stuck with their bars. They thought they were getting rid of. And they were going to build a big thing like Branson, Missouri. You know, theaters and things. Which is really not the way to start. Because number one, you might get people on weekends and, but you know, who's going to fill those places. And, you know, it's even like concerts in Butte, people would rather go to Missoula or Bozeman than

see the same band in Butte, which is utterly ridiculous. I was in that business for a little while, too.

So I know all about that, but like I said, the M&M years were some of my best, and the people, Elsie who just died, was one of my dearest friends in the world. In fact, I just got a text from her son, Tony. It said, "I miss the M and M. I was just thinking about her. I wish we could just go back to the eighties and live there forever." You know? So some people feel that way. A lot of people don't. Butte was a fun town and you could go uptown and you didn't need to drive because there was all these places you could go. There was lots of live music. It's a lot different now. And you know, I know people my age complain, there is nowhere for us to go. "There's no music we like." Well, people have tried it, but those people want to go out at 5:00 and be home by 10:00. So it doesn't work out so well, you know, I don't know what the answer is. I think there's so much musical talent in Butte and things, and I think the festivals are great. There are people trying, but it's a hard thing to do.

I know because I was one of the founding members of lunch in the park, which was a very successful thing. And then people ran it into the ground, but also you don't have the, we're getting it back now, but there's not the working population uptown, that there was back then and people would take their lunch. There were a ton of people working at the power company and they'd come down and the vendors, the vendors, we had a waiting list for vendors to get in. And we used Butte music, but we tried to bring others. So it was really, it was a great thing. And, uh, same with, you know, I did Butte celebrations for 25 years. And it was a great thing. And some other people took it over and didn't really, to my estimation, do what it was supposed to be. And so then it failed.

And now I appreciate people like Matt Boyle that are trying to build it back up again. But we had a Veterans' picnic with live music. We had music on the night of the third. We had a street dance. I mean, we had all kinds of things going on, but it takes time to build. And, I know lots of people that have started things, and if it isn't an immediate success then they stop it. It takes years even to get things to a point where they're accepted. I appreciate music on main street because I think that's a great thing, you know, and I think the more of those things you can do, the more you draw people that want to live here and play here. I think it's a great place. I think I do, uh, do have an, I guess it happens everywhere that gentrification of the uptown, where, some of these places where people on pensions lived and they didn't have cars.

So they didn't really go anywhere except the uptown and people came in and remodeled all those and raised all the rents. So those people are gone. Now they're living in, you know, housing that's for old people or broke people or whatever you want to say. And I think that's too bad because I think that one of the greatest parts about Butte is not only all the ethnicities and the different types of people, but also the age groups. I think that there was before. Always, you could go in the M and M and there'd be a miner sitting with a lawyer or a doctor. You would meet . . . And it seemed like everybody who came through town came to the M & M and you immediately became their friend. I have addresses from everywhere in the world. I think it's a sad thing that we aren't trying to, and I know change is inevitable.

But I think if someone could find a way to draw that kind of stuff back together, you know, make us one community instead of this, that, and the other thing. I think that people would find it way more interesting. I don't consider myself old. There are people that do consider me old, but I think people have, all people, young people, older people, whatever, have a lot of knowledge to

impart to others. And we're missing out on a lot of that. And I think that's a shame, but it is what it is. And you know, it's like the bar business. When I turned 21, I was going to have a drink at every bar in Butte. Now, mind you, this is 1970.

Jaap: Quite the tour.

Kirk: There were many, many. I started in Walkerville and I made it to East Park Street.

Jaap: Even that's pretty impressive.

Kirk: Well, I don't know how I did it, but I mean that's and people moved around and it was interesting. And some of the places that you would never expect were the most interesting. A's Buffet was a little hole in the wall over here, across from the Thorton building. And it was, it was a fascinating place. The people that you meet. Like I said, I, um, Ruby Garrett was a great friend of mine. She would come to the M&M. She loved my mom and my step dad because she said, "They treated me just like a real person." They didn't treat me like I was, you know, but that's how it is in Butte or was in Butte. And I think when Norma Jean came here, I became fast friends with her. But there's always going to be people.

And I'm a little softer now in how I say it, but I used to think that. You know, I used to get irritated by people who moved here to get away from somewhere else because of the way it was. And then they would get here and they would want to change Butte. Making it more like where they were from. And it still irritates me. I don't get as angry as I did about it. But I think it happens. And I wish more people that have left Butte because they couldn't get work would come home. There are a lot of people that retire and do come home. But a lot of people think Butte has nothing to offer. And to me it has everything in the world to offer.

I can't imagine living anywhere else. And I've had some tough times here. You know, I got my fourth DUI and went to prison for three months. Which was no other word to describe it, but hell. I was in solitary and it was a bad thing. And I had to threaten to sue to get into the WATCH program, which is a minimum security prison is all it is. But I knew I would get out in six months instead of 13. So that's why I did it. But I had a lot to come back to. I had a real, real big network of friends. I had the archives to come back to. I had all kinds of things. A lot of my friends that I made and the majority of whom are native American, had nothing to go back to. There was a girl that didn't even have a place to live and they let her, they kicked her loose. I mean, I think there needs to be big changes in that respect.

And I'm getting on my soapbox. I'll get back to my life because you don't want to hear all that I have to say about that. But I have a friend, an older lady, who's like my surrogate mother, who used to cringe when I'd say something about prison. Especially, right after I got back and people would say, "Oh, I haven't seen you for so long." Well, everybody knew where I was. It was on the front page of the paper, come on. And I think they expected me to say I was at a spa or visiting relatives. And then I'd say, "Well, I was in the slammer," or things like that. And it just used to upset her so much. And I said, "Hey, it's part of who I am and I'm not going to make up stories, you know, get over it."

Jaap: So Mollie, while we're talking about that, I think (and you do as well) you were treated very harshly and all of that. Can you talk a little bit about that? What happened?

Kirk: Well, you know, my DUIs were all spread out. You know, it wasn't like I got four real quick. The day I got my fourth one, I wasn't drunk, but I had been drinking the night before. So I knew that if they took my blood, that I would be, so I went up and I can't stand on one foot because I can't balance. So, of course, automatically that was, and I had just had back surgery. I was on a walker at the time, and I had had back surgery five months before that, a second back surgery. Second back surgery in two months. And I had just come from the courthouse and was bringing the car home. I was staying at my mother's. She had passed away. Because I didn't want to be driving. And I was speeding down by Clark's Park. The guy pulled me over and pretty soon there was five cop cars there. It was like, you'd think I was Al Capone or something.

Anyway, so I got out and I went up to the jail and this was on March 16th. I had come from a luncheon that we used to put on for senior citizens at the McQueen Club, so they could hear the bagpipers. So I had just finished that up. So I went and they were going to put me in jail and I asked for a phone call and I called Brad Belke and he called a judge who let me out because I had all the information about the parade and all that, everything. And my comrades from Butte celebrations were all crazy about "God, we're going to have to break into the house down there and get stuff" and on and on. So anyway, I got out and that irritated the judge, the judge that I went before eventually, judge Newman. So I got out and I did that. I could not go into any of the bars where the pipers were. I could go to the parade and that was it. And then the day after St. Patrick's day, they put an ankle bracelet on me. So, this was in March. Yeah. No, I wasn't on the walker yet. That was later.

But I was a walker when I was sentenced. But anyway, I was waiting to have back surgery and I had a lung infection, so I couldn't have it right then, but I waited. And then I went to court in October. I have a lot of medical problems. I take a lot of different kinds of medications. I take a chemo infusion once a month and stuff like that. So I went and the assistant district attorney wanted to do house arrest or some other thing, because he didn't think that I would get the care in prison, which I didn't. And it looked like there was going to be a deal made where I'd be on that bracelet for God knows how long. It was expensive as hell. But prior to that, one of the reasons Judge Newman was mad at me was because I, um, they did take my bracelet off while I went in the hospital for the back surgery, but I had to go up the day I got out and put it on and I was scheduled for a court appearance that day.

And my lawyer had had it changed because I was in the nursing home and I was coming up to get the bracelet. So. He saw me in the courthouse and was very angry that I could come up to the courthouse, but I couldn't go to court. So that was one of the things he held against me. He thought I was flaunting my, whatever, I don't know what I was flaunting, but anyway, so then when I finally did go to court, like I said, the probation people and everybody, and I got a call like at five o'clock the night before I went to court. And my lawyers, Frank Joseph said, "The deal is off. The judge won't go for it." So I go up to the hearing and Frank gave his spiel about me and the probation guy got on and said, "We can't treat her. She should not be.

We have to figure something out." And he said, "And by the way, we should be figuring more of this out because she's of a certain age and there's going to be more people of this age that we don't have the facilities to deal with them." So then Mike Clegg got up and talked. He was assistant DA and said that WATCH would not take me because of my medical issues. So the only alternative was the women's prison. And he didn't think that this was warranted and whatever.

So then it became Judge Newman's turn to talk and he called me a menace to society among other things. And he kept saying over and over again, and Frank kept making him say it too, that I would get better medical treatment than I would get anywhere in the world in the prison. I would be in the infirmary and it would be blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I go to prison. There's not even an infirmary in the women's prison. They have a place where a doctor comes in and there's a nurse kind of like a school nurse. They have one room with a bed in it that if you're sick, you can lay down. So, um, and I didn't get my infusions there. I was there three months in solitary confinement. I didn't have visitors because of the fact I was in solitary. I would have to see them through a glass and I didn't want to do that. And the reason I was in solitary was because they were afraid I was going to get hurt and they didn't want to be liable.

Jaap: Let alone the other type of hurt that, that causes, you know?

Kirk: It was a terrible, terrible experience. There was a, it wasn't actually a riot, but it was a I guess what these women were doing instead of a riot . . . the women on the floor below plugged up their sinks and their toilets and ran all the water. So that whole floor was flooded. So in retaliation the administration turned off all the power, all the lights and everything. So it was dark and these women were down below and they were taking the chairs out of their cell and pounding the ceiling with them and screaming and yelling. And it was frightening. It was frightening. And it lasted all night.

And in fact one girl off of our floor, she had an anxiety attack that was unbelievable. So that was a terrible experience. Being in solitary, you get an hour out to take a shower and you make phone calls. Not on a regular basis, but intermittently we could, there was a woman officer who would take us down to the gym. On Christmas day she took us to the chapel and we did drumming, but it was few and far between anything that had any positive effect at all.

I had to take tests to see what my reading level and math level and what my vocational outlook would be. I said, "I'm a college graduate. I am disabled. I'm not looking for a job." But I had to do it anyway because they needed the numbers, you know, so it was, it was a horrible thing. And the only way that I got into WATCH was there was a very sympathetic doctor who was fired shortly after I left, who kept calling them. And my brother was calling Mike Thatcher, we've known Mike Thatcher since he was a child. People were calling everybody they knew for me - the department of corrections and what have you. But this doctor was the one that really got it done. And she told them that I was getting a lawyer and I was going to sue, because of the Americans with Disability Act.

Because that was their reason for not taking me was because of my medical condition. So three different times somebody from WATCH came down to see me to assess my medical condition and if I could last the program and blah, blah, blah. But it was the threat of a lawsuit. That's the only reason I got in there. So, and it was a minimum-security prison. I was there three months before I ever got my infusions back. I had to go off all my medication, anything that could be addictive, you know? And I was on some stuff that I needed, and I couldn't have it. I went into it knowingly because I knew I would not have survived 13 months at the prison. So, the one thing that I did do, I was a model WATCHer.

Anyway, I got high grades when I graduated. So I was lucky in that respect because I got a year probation. A lot of them got five and my probation officer said, "I'm not worried about you." So I didn't have any probation problems. I never had to do a UA because with the amount of drugs I

take, they wouldn't have known one way or the other, but I respect her because she treated me very much like a human being. And I'd seen the way others were treated, but the one thing I did not do that we were required to do by WATCH was we were to go home and go to the judge who sentenced us and thank him for saving our life. And I said, "Well, I guess I'll be here forever."

Jaap: You got some other words for him.

Kirk: Yeah. I said, "Nope, no way." So they kind of just passed over it and let it be, you know, but I did run into judge Newman at one of the events that I do for the American Legion and the VFW. I'm a member of the VFW and I'm on the United Veterans Council. And it was the Vietnam thing over there that I worked real hard on and he came up to me and he said, "I'm so glad to see you're doing so well." And I turned and I looked at him and said, "No, thanks to you." And I walked away, but to this day I firmly believe that I would be walking. I'm still using a cane. I can walk around here because I know where to grab. But I still believe that my health was ruined because of that experience.

Because I have never, my balance is . . . I didn't have any physical therapy, nothing. I was in a back brace. The night I went into jail here, when I got sentenced, I had three hours to get my affairs in order. And then they put me in jail and they made me take off everything, including my brace. Wouldn't let me wear my brace. I don't know if they thought I was going to hang myself with the thing or what. And I was in one of those turtle suits. I was in so much pain by the time that night was over. And then they took me to prison and I was shackled to the floor of the car. My hands were shackled to my waist. I mean, even, I am not dumb enough to attack someone with a gun.

Jaap: Well, for a DUI offense.

Kirk: I mean, yeah, I really wasn't that big of a threat. So, I mean, I just really resent the whole process. And like I said, I know women that were treated way worse than I am. Generally native Americans are treated way worse and I think it's a bad system. I think there's better ways to deal with things. You know, they were waiting for me. I had had a few run-ins with the police force before. I had gotten off a DUI, and I was at target. I know that full well. So did the people around me. Because the people that were with me prior to my getting picked up, no, I wasn't drunk. And I refused the test because like I said, I knew I would. It was the night before I was out drinking. So I knew I would be considered impaired. So, it was outrageous. It was a terrible experience of which I kept a full journal of everything, which I am going to publish because I think that people need to know about the prison system.

And the fact, you know, judges have discretion, he gave that big line that, "This is the law. I have to do this." Well, I have a friend that just recently got picked up on his fourth DUI and a kindly judge dropped it to criminal endangerment, which means he has a year of probation. He's on a bracelet. But once that year is over, that charge goes away. So there isn't justice, not everyone is treated alike. I know lots of people that got a fourth DUI that have a lot of money and didn't have to go to prison, you know? Or didn't have a judge that thought they were a menace to society. And this was after Frank had gotten up and said about all the things I've done for Butte, the volunteer work. I've been on just about every committee there's been in Butte. I was on this trails committee years before it ever became an actual thing, the copper way thing. I mean, I was involved in a lot of things. And all the judge would say, "I have no discretion. She's a menace to society. She could have killed somebody." Well, I didn't. And, looking back, which we had to do

at WATCH, we had to tell our life story, which was, I had to leave out a whole bunch, but anyway . . . There was only six months, but anyway, looking back.

Every time I got a DUI was pretty much connected to a death in my family. It was within a short time of, you know, so, um, and I admit I drink. That was another wrong answer I gave at WATCH when they say, "Why do you drink?" And I said, "I like to." And that's the wrong answer because everybody who drinks, there's a problem that they have in their family, you know?

Jaap: Or you enjoy a beer every night.

Kirk: My first problem was that I was from a broken home, which I really have strong feelings about that term. And I let them know that. And the next thing was because I had a child that I gave up when I was 20. So that was what made me drink. I chose to drink because I liked to drink. I like the comradery. I love the people that I was around. I loved the conversation, all of it. I still go to bars because I love it. If I'm driving, I'd never take a drink. Sometimes I do, if I'm not driving, but it was a lifestyle for me.

And, you know, I reached the point where, as I used to tell the people coming in after me, tell them what they want to hear. Because otherwise . . . there was a couple of people that got sent back to prison because they wouldn't tow the line, you know? But it's all about money. It's all about money. The state pays, and Mike Thatcher is a friend of mine, but it's all about money. Everything is about money. In my estimation in the justice system. And the more you're around people that have way less than you do, you know, we weren't rich. I had inherited money from my mom that I spent on a lawyer and all this other stuff, which means I ended up with no inheritance. But, when you see people who have to have a public defender, that cares nothing about them.

They just want that wage that they get. And I've seen things where, well, there's public defenders here who are not allowed to practice law that are, can't have their own practice, they're barred or censured or something. So, I mean, that's not a fair thing to start with. You know, the other thing is they tell them, "Uh, yeah, you were found guilty. They're sending you away. I'll come and get you out. It won't be that bad. We'll do something. We'll appeal it." Well, you can't appeal the DUI. There's no appeal process. So they're telling these people things that are not true. They know nothing about, and they don't know, they don't know how the prison works. They don't know how WATCH works. I think everybody who is a defense attorney, particularly, public defenders and prosecutors as well, should have to go through those prisons. Be there, look at it.

And the same with the programs, not on a day when you're coming in and they're on their best behavior and you know, the whole nine yards. Show up and see what really goes on. Before you start cashing checks with your mouth, that you can't cover. Yes, I resent it a lot. I came out of there with PTSD. I still to this day have night terrors. I do not like being in a small room, which never bothered me before. You know, I laughed. The old time jails on TV shows. Brick. They were cinder block, the prison was.

So what's the difference. But I mean, I just learned a lot of new words and a lot of new lingo. I met some friends. I think that the system really needs an overhaul. I resent some of it. I laugh now, Judge Newman's going to be on the parole board. Well, good luck with parole, pal, because he has no empathy and no mercy. And you need to have some of that. I think they should have

people that have been there on the parole board and on the board of prisons. Because they don't know how it works. The people that are there. It's a political appointment. So, that was a glitch in my life, but part of who I am. It gave me a different perspective on a lot of things. It made me appreciate my friends. Because I'll tell you really find out who your friends are. That's the very first thing you find out, and it is surprising the people that will send you a card or stay in touch and the people that you most expected would oftentimes disappear. And yet when you come home, they think you can pick right up and go back to where I was. You can't. You're a different person. And one of the things I said was I don't want any more goddamn drama in my life. I'm going to say what I think. I've always been pretty good at that though, but I just feel like, it was a short period. At the time it seemed like it would never end, but it was a short period in a rather good life.

I've had, you know, medical problems, serious medical problems. Nobody knows why I'm still here to be honest. And right now I'm the healthiest one of my family, which is really weird. I've had loss too, but I think every experience you have makes you who you are. I'm thinking about my brother, right now. That's what's hard. Like I said, I love Butte. I've lived a couple other places. I hated Helena. Oh my God. And the attitude they have about Butte people. And, of course, I just reinforced every attitude they had. I got arrested for having a parade without a permit on St. Patrick's day in college. Bunch of drunk people walking down the street, in the middle of the street. They dropped it, but still it was not nice. They had to call my mom. "Well, they went to jail today." But I mean, you know, I didn't color inside the lines most of my life, you know, and sometimes I did things that were not good, but I believe I'm a good person. And I believe that comes from my family. My mom and my grandma were strong women. Strong women don't cry.

Jaap: Oh sure, they do.

Kirk: Well, my grandmother was kind of the Rose Kennedy era. I remember my grandfather dying and she just was so stoic. And so, and I was a blubbering idiot. I was 12 years old. He died in April. And it's a good thing there was only April and May left of school because I wore those horrid black corduroy dresses all the time. I was in mourning. I was devastated and that was the first real death I had experienced. I've had far more interesting things happen to me than I've had bad things. I worked in Reno one summer. I may have ended up living there except I got sick down there. And worked in the casinos down there, which was right up my alley. And bartending, I probably couldn't have chosen a better profession and I think good bartenders are born and they're not made. I had good teachers as well. And it was a fluke that I ever ended up at the M&M. I never even applied. They just called me and asked me to come to work.

Jaap: And how many years were you at the M&M.

Kirk: Almost 20 off and on. When I first worked there, of course, Danny Delmoe owned a big part of it. He owned the building and everything. And that was when live Keno first started. So they were just, you know, and Charlie was really good to me. I mean, and Freddy and Johnny, his sons worked there and my best friend from years ago, Tina worked there. We all became grand friends. We're still friends. The ones that are still left. One by one, the older ones have died off. And so there's tales that I can tell now that I couldn't for a while, but you know, it was more like a family. I just loved it. And I believe the good bartenders are . . . you're almost like a cross between a social worker and a therapist and a friend. And it still irritates me. If I walk in today and see a bartender sitting behind the bar, reading a paper. I mean, we would have never done

that. You know, it was like it was one of the rules, you know, "If you've got time to lean kid, you got time to clean," you know, and things like that. And when I started with Chris Martin, there was a certain glass for every drink. And if you used the wrong glass, he was furious.

I mean, so it was just, you know, but the M&M was like, it was almost like a Shakespeare comedy. I mean, the things that went on in there. I mean, there was a guy named Bones Hanley. He was a cab driver. That's when we knew things were going bad with these guys, when they started drinking the wine. And we had these little, they call them, them booney glasses.

They were about this big and we served three kinds of wine at the M&M. We were pretty classy. We had white port, red port and muscatel. "Musky makes you husky." Anyway, when old Bones would come in and he'd be really . . . and he'd ask for a Musky and we'd put mostly water in it. We wouldn't charge him. Put mostly water in it for his own safety. And he'd drink it and say, "Oh, this stuff, you know, it doesn't taste as good as it used to. I must be getting tired of it." Little did he know he wasn't drinking. But I mean, things like that. We had a drawer where there were teeth. False teeth because people would lose their teeth in there and they'd come in a day later. "Did you find my teeth?"

And we'd pull out the drawer and they'd look and say, "I think they'll do." Same with glasses, but the teeth . . . and the first time I saw the teeth thing, I was like . . . and there was a file where everyone who borrowed money's name was in there and what they owed and when they paid. If someone would perhaps have the misfortune to die, we'd have a little ceremony and put his little thing in the dead box. And when people used to fall, I'd scream, "Man down!" Pick them up. And once a year they would spray the basement, you know, the insect people, you know, which would make all the cockroaches come to the top, you know. Once it was my mom and my stepdad sitting there in this big thing . . . And Tino's standing there and I'm going, "La cucaracha, la cucaracha!" So he went like this, you know, it was like, I mean, everything was, it was just fun in there. And we enjoyed our jobs. I don't know of anyone there that hated the work. If you did, you weren't going to last very long.

And you know like Elsie and Judy, another waitress, someone asked for a sandwich. And she gave it to the guy and he said, "Well, the cook usually smashes it down with a spatula. She didn't do that." Judy went [slaps]. "How's that?" It's just the way they were. And there was times at night when I would work the graveyard and it would be myself, a female cook, a female waitress, and a female dishwasher. And we were open all night and I look back now and I think, Holy Christ, you wouldn't do that now. I mean, we were just like a robbery waiting to happen, you know?

[01:39:38]

And, uh, it just, there was always a big. A big piece of iron coated in a rubber and they had a name that's not acceptable for it. So I won't say it because I would get in trouble, but you were supposed to whack them with that if they, yeah, but, uh, you know, and it's like Dirty Mouth Gene at the Stockman, that guy was coming over the bar after she shot him. And, you know, we were always told that if someone came over the bar, you could shoot him. But she ended up in prison and I'll tell you what, she was a sweet old lady when she wasn't . . . and her mouth being dirty, being Dirty Mouth Gene, she loved to shock. She lived for it. And if she saw a woman coming into that bar, she really put on a performance. Her big jar of men's parts, you know, things like that. And I don't think it was really men's parts, but that's okay. And she'd use the

language that you just couldn't believe it, but she was, she was Butte, you know, it was the way it was. And there was people, well, Percy Miller, owned the Montana bar across the street from the Rumpus Room, the room 71. He had a hairpiece.

And when Percy would go on a drunk, Percy was a binge drinker. Percy'd go on a drunk. You knew he was almost done for when the toupee was like at an angle. So he'd come over to the room 71 and Chris had a bed in the basement. First, he would go down the basement. The basement was a wonderful place. There was guys that brought things in there and Chris would say, "You didn't see nothing. You didn't hear nothing. Leave it alone. Don't repeat anything. There's things down there." Then pretty soon they'd be taken out. We also had a game that we made up that we played there and we would tell all the guys to line up by the basement door and take off their left shoe and they would, and then we'd throw all the shoes down the basement and they'd have to go down in the dark and find their shoes. And we kind of slowed down on that game after a while, because I don't know if you ever knew or heard of Patty The Midget. He was a bartender here in town.

It used to be, that was a mortuary at one time. So there was this place, like where the elevator used to be that took caskets up and he fell in the thing and we had a little trouble getting him back up. I mean, so it was kind of like . . . But I mean, in those days you did things like that. It was like people came for the entertainment. I think, I don't know. It was just, it was fun, you know? And at the M&M, you really didn't have to do anything because there was so much entertainment going on all around you that it was unbelievable. You know, there's guys that would come in. Old Man Batterman and he was a cranky old guy. He'd eat his dinner and he always drank shots of Blackberry Brandy. So he'd come and he'd have two. And I always gave him the third, but sometimes I'd play with him.

He'd have the second one down and he'd be standing there. I said, "Aren't you finished? Aren't you leaving?" And he'd start to get a little angry. And then I'd give him the third one and then everything would be fine, but, you know, and you knew everybody drank, you know, how they wanted their drink, you know, it was, and then there was guys that would come in and they'd drink it down. So there's only this much left, you know, and then they'd go back to the KENO and stay back there for a while. So you'd take the glass and they'd come back and they'd say, "I had a beer here, where did it go?" So you'd have to give them a free one, but you caught on to them pretty quick. You just left the glass there and then they'd be so disappointed because they weren't getting their free beer. I mean, it was just always something, always something. At one point Barb [unintelligible] had all the mirrors taken out of there, the bathroom mirrors, because people were using the mirrors for making lines of things. Mirrors had to go.

And we had a secret knock to get into the office, which everybody in the world knew. I don't know if you ever knew Kathy, her husband owned Jerry's Corner Bar and it was kind of a rough place. She came in one night all dressed up and she was really drunk. And jeez, this guy sitting next to her said something to her. It wasn't very nice. She had fries and gravy and a hamburger steak. She stood up. She picked it up and dumped the whole thing on his head. And he was wild. So, of course, we had to go out and drag her into the office before and she was like a cat. She was going to go right back at him. She was ready to, I mean, little things like that, that you just, you can't make up. I mean, they're just, it was there. It was all there. And it was Butte. I mean really Butte. I mean, there wasn't, like I said, you could walk uptown and just spend hours, you know, going to different places and seeing different people. It seemed like everyone had their

own favorite hangout, you know? And there were other places that were out of the way. If you wanted to get away from people, you could.

One day Mark and I went on a road trip. We just didn't want to see anyone else. He was writing KENO at the time. I got him a job writing KENO at the M & M and he was furious. But anyway, we first went to Basin. And we're having a drink in there and in walked two of the old guys on their way to the fort. We look at each other, so we get in the car and we go to Boulder. In comes somebody else on their way, somewhere else. It was like, you couldn't get away from these people. They were everywhere.

But I loved them each and everyone. There was very few that I didn't like. And because of my job, I was nice to them. Until they did something that I really didn't like. Some of the old guys, when I'd have to kick them out, they called me Meanus Venus. "Meanus Venus!" Because I'd go, "You're out of here!" There was a lady that came in once and wanted a pink squirrel. And I said, that isn't that kind of bar we are. She said, "Well, I want one." I said, "I don't even have a blender." So anyway, we became good friends later when she brought a blender in the next day. I said, "There's nowhere to plug it." And Danny Delmoe said, "We're never gonna have pink squirrels in here. This is a shot and a beer joint." And that's the way it was.

But I mean, but she and I became friends and Catherine O'Brien was her name, and her son was a dentist and we would go to dinner at the Red Rooster or some other place often. And I mean, it was just a place that you made good friends, you know, um, it stayed with you. And I think a lot of Butte is like that. And I think it still is.

I think we're on a different wavelength, you know? And I think it bothers a lot of people my age, more so than it bothers me because I'm kind of up for any kind of a challenge, but I think that younger people could really take a few lessons from us old farts. You know, we're history.

[01:48:00]

So what else would you like me to talk about?

Jaap: Well, Mollie, this has been wonderful. Do you want to talk about Butte Celebrations a little.

Kirk: Sure.

Jaap: So you were involved in that for a long time as well.

Kirk: 25 years. I got involved right after I married Scott. I was at a meeting . . . that was when the Centennial or something was. And they had a committee that met up at Tech and I went to those meetings. And Neil Lynch was there and he said, "You ought to join Butte celebrations." So I went to a meeting and I immediately got connected with Frank Panique Penasco, the clown. And he became my mentor. So, you know, before, too long, I was on the board of directors. Then I became the secretary. Then I became the treasurer. Then I was the vice president. Then I was the president. So anyway, it was fun. It was a lot of work. People have no idea how much work it was. Um, and there was always some politics involved in it. You know, of course, you had to be nice to the right people. And of course, Democrats always got a better place in the parades than the Republicans. That was kind of a given.

Jaap: To be expected.

Kirk: But you know, when I started with them, they just did the fireworks and the parade. And then we started adding things on like the veteran's picnic and street dance and different things. And, we had a good crew and I had, you know, I had my moments with them. Once there wasn't money for fireworks, I was accused of stealing the money. I always drove cars similar to that truck I drive. "Rez cars," my friends called them, my native friends call them that. "Rez cars." But, I never took a dime. In fact, I spent more money than. I have a lot of money now that I'm [unintelligible].

Jaap: I like what you said that Scott said, didn't he say something about, wow, I think we have way more money than we did.

Kirk: He did. He said, "Holy God, I'm retired, you're retired. And we have way more money than we ever had because you're not with Butte celebrations." Because we did. I got my mom to join after my stepdad died. And then I had my cousins, Tom, and Shelly Wall we're in it. Nancy was in it. So at one point someone was angry and said that it was me and my relatives running it. There was something going on. But my answer to anybody who had a complaint was if it wasn't "Go to hell," it was, "Hey, if you want it changed or you think you can do something or. Come to a meeting, you can join and do some of the work." Well, nobody wanted to do that. You know, of course, that shut them down immediately, but you know, people were always complaining. It would get maddening. At first I took it all so personally, and then I got to the point where it just, I was like a duck. It just rolled off my back, but I enjoyed it or I wouldn't have done it as long as I did.

I was getting tired of it. In fact, my mom and I had talked. The year she died prior to that. We were going to do it one more year and then we were going to let somebody else have the headaches, but we started it. We were the ones that started because years and years ago when the company was here and everything they used to build floats for the parade. I mean, big floats. The company did it all. They did it all on company time, but pretty soon then no one built floats and they all bought them from Spokane from the Lilac Festival and they'd come here. But the prices kept going up and up and up. So we decided we'd do a locally built float thing. And so we started that. And the first place we built them was, the first place we were in the corral is where they had the tar. They had a big mound of tar in there.

So it was so filthy dirty, and we'd built floats in there and they didn't have the big sweepers they had. We had to go get this commercial vacuum to get up all the staples and all that crap all over. It was a nightmare, but then they built the new bus garages, and we got to use them. But, it started out very fun. Every year we were having fun with all our ideas and we had a theme every year and we would start building probably like the second week of June and everything would be . . . We'd have all the plans done by then. And then we'd start building. And my mother taught lots of people, Nancy included, how to use power tools and a couple of gay guys who thought that was the greatest thing in the world. And anyway, we'd build all these floats. By the time the 3rd of July came, everybody hated everyone else. We were all like, just because we were there from morning till night, you know?

Most times I never even saw the fireworks because I was still in there putting floats together. It was a lot of work, but you know, and then of course, when it was all over, then we were all friends again, you know, but it was like, it was, it was tense and it was, but I loved it and I loved Panique. I spent a lot of time with him through the years I was there. And as the older guys died off, you know, it was harder. And it got to a point where it's hard to get volunteers because

people don't volunteer like they used to. So I ended up, the way we did it is there were certain people that would volunteer to collect on the parade route. Coach Green always did it. He was the best collector we ever had in the world. Who was not going to give him a buck? [01:54:00]

And there was people that did floats and there was people that did the luncheons and different things. But it was a lot of work, but you know, it wasn't. And I never, like I said, I never, my wedding anniversary is the 29th of June and I never got to do anything on my anniversary because I was down building floats. But we had fun and we did a lot. And what people don't realize is that everyone who did this was a volunteer. A lot of people would say, "Boy, you must get a lot of money for doing this." Someone said, "You must get a lot of money." I said, "I'm a volunteer. I don't get paid."

And I said, that's fine because then if they don't like it, I can tell them to go to hell. But you know, people didn't understand why anyone would do all that work and not get paid for it, but it was the way it was. And it didn't bother us. I mean, in fact we had in our bylaws, "No member can use Butte Celebrations to benefit in any way financially." Because we had people that were in advertising that wanted us to buy advertising stuff and things like that. So, you know, when we cut that out, we lost a few people, you know, but it was the right way to do it and, you know, lining up the parade, everybody thought you just lined them up, you know, but you couldn't put the music next to this and you couldn't put two musics together and you couldn't.

Some people wouldn't put that they had music on their floats, so you'd have music behind them and they'd be mad. You didn't put music, you didn't say you had music. And there were people that would, you know, we're always the last ones to get their name in or whatever. We didn't charge kids' groups, we didn't charge non-profits. We tried to keep it as much of a hometown parade. The big firetrucks and the big semi-trucks, people liked that stuff. Little kids loved it. So we allowed it, you know, um, we had to outlaw hot tubs and water guns because people got splashed. And then I had to take governor Schweitzer's balls away because he was throwing footballs into the crowd and hit an old guy in the nose and broke his nose.

There was things. You learned as you went, you know. And Brad Belke was, it couldn't have been done without Brad Belke and his guys, because they kept that parade. So, and I don't care what you were doing at 10 o'clock. That parade was starting. There was just. It didn't matter if someone wasn't there didn't matter about anything.

Probably the most memorable year was when Obama came, because it was a nightmare. It was a complete nightmare trying to figure it out, you know, and you had to work with the secret service. And they were vetting everybody, everyone who was going to be in the parade, they scanned them and all that. Poor little old lady that was Grand Marshall that year. It was May that owned Matt's Drive-in, you know, and she was 90 and they're scanning her, you know, she can barely walk. And poor woman, she didn't get her due as the Grand Marshall, because here enters Obama. And they were very nice men.

And I had had my hip replaced right before that. So I was on a walker out at the front as they come out of the civic center. Before the parade starts, it's just like TV. These black SUV's pull up with windows up, colored up. Out these guys get with these gun cases and they're putting these guns together and they go on all these roofs around the place. You know, they were on Albertsons. They were on that little building that used to be right there at the Civic Center. They were on top of where the bus station is. They were on the civic center and they were on the

lawyer's building. Anyway, the snipers, anyway, coach Green was coming out and he looks up to me and he goes, "Hey, you guys watch her, she's trouble." All these guns turned toward me. I was like, "Hey, Coach, It's not funny." He went, "just kidding." And they didn't think he was funny either, but it was, it was just like, man, Whoa. But it was a nightmare, you know, and they had bleachers set up and they had, of course they had all the press from all over the world and all this, and I'm standing there and some guy from CNN or somewhere says, "Hey, lady, get out of the way. I can't see. I can't get a shot of the president."

And by this point I was so like wanting it done and I turned around to him and I said, "This is my fucking parade and I will be wherever I want." They didn't say a word to me again, but everybody got really upset. Like his bodyguards and everything. He was only supposed to go down like where that Pohr, Roth and Robinson building is. And he went way down past where that gas station was. And they were all just frantic because they were, you know, they were afraid somebody was gonna, and I'll tell you what, I had nightmares worrying about some nut from Butte, taking a shot at him. Seriously. I just was like crazy. But it was an interesting time and a big thing for Butte to have that, to have him in our parade, because I didn't expect him to be in the parade. At one point, he wanted to do the whole parade route and they said they couldn't do it because of logistics.

I would have been laying on the ground covering my head. But every parade was fun. There was always fun people in it and a guy that always came from Great Falls with his convertible. A group from Anaconda that always came. At one time we had the Pickles from Polson that were here, the dancing pickles. I mean, all kinds of fun, you know, and it was just, it was great.

But by the time it was over, the minute that parade was over, my mom and I walked to the Met Tavern and had a couple. And then Leonard, he was a bus driver and he used to . . . The city let us use their little buses to take the collectors down and bring the money back. And then he would take it to the bank. And the first time that we did it that way. He called for a police escort. And my mom and some of the other collectors were there. They had these sirens going down. She said, "I think we could do without the police. We're just kind of asking somebody to. . ." So we didn't do the police escort anymore. And then we had to go and count it, or the bank counted. And we even gave the bank a tip on how to get all the money. Nice and flat. My mom told him that she ironed it. She did sometimes. So they started ironing the bills. And you would be surprised by some of the crap that would be in those buckets though. Oh my God. It was unbelievable.

And in the whole time I was there though, I didn't really have too many people really hurt. One St. Patrick's Day parade. And the St Patrick's day parade was more fun because it was kind of a looser thing, you know, but we had to put in that thing about having a title and insurance on cars, because one day these guys came from Spokane and somewhere along the way, they picked up this old green car. Didn't have a muffler, nothing. It was like, and they got in the parade and then they went back and got back in the parade before someone else. They did it four times. And finally the police found the car.

They had abandoned it somewhere and someone else had stolen it and they found it wrecked on the railroad tracks over by the Depot. So at that point it became apparent that we needed to know who owned the car. St. Patrick's Day was more fun because it was less of a formal thing. And there weren't as many . . . election years were huge and Saturdays and Fridays were huge. And the election times were really bad because you had so many politicians. We'd just put their name

in a hat. Pull them out and that's where they went, which you know, and everybody always wanted to be at the front of the parade. I do not know why, because everybody sees the parade no matter where you are. Yeah. So what's the difference? It didn't make sense to me, but you know, nobody wanted to be at the end.

And I remembered the one year that they were giving me a bad time about fireworks money. The guys building floats with me made a little one that they put at the very end. And it was a doghouse and they wrote across it Mollie's dog house and had a dog in there with my face on it. Some people got very angry. So people who are my friends, because they thought somebody was giving me a bad time. So I had to explain to a lot of people that no, I knew all about it and I didn't care. It was a joke.

Little did I know that I'd end up in the real dog house. But it was a group of people and when it was organized, you know, it was mostly men that ran it. And when I first was president, it was a little difficult. It was still that old time Butte thing and it took awhile. Like Jimmy Johnson at the Corral, he was a little, you know, and we became great friends and we'd go to the Corral and he'd say whatever you have a need take it from here. We don't care. He was wonderful. And then Brad Belke was another one. He was kind of like, you know, but we became good friends. He even came to my trial to say goodbye to me.

But it was a great experience because you met so many people and you learned so many things. There were so many people that really wanted to be in the parade. It was such a Butte tradition that I can't imagine it not being here. And like I said, I'm thankful to Matt Boyle on it. I don't even know who works with him for doing it. I had told his brother and his dad, if he ever had any questions, he could ask me because, you know, I have a little institutional history about it. But just for him to do that is it's a big step and it's not easy. And I think, I just hope, you know, there's a lot of young people out there that don't seem to get involved in a lot of things. And I think that they need to recognize that to be part of the community. You really need to be involved in something, whether it's Butte Celebrations or whatever.

And Lunch in the Park kind of came out of that whole Butte Celebrations thing. Someone had gone to Missoula and seen theirs. It was Dave Shea and he was head of the Uptown Association then. And he thought it would be a good idea. So we got together, and Ron Davis and someone from the newspaper, someone from the Uptown Association. We worked hard on it, but it was probably the most satisfying event because nobody ever really got mad. Everybody seemed to enjoy themselves.

There were a few little incidents. A vendor who showed up and wanted to know why he couldn't be a vendor, just by showing up. He wasn't. He had never applied or paid the fee or anything. So, and then that little Tommy the Leprechaun from Missoula came once and opened his case to play for money. And I had to ask him nicely to leave and he didn't appear to want to be nice. And we had a little scuffle and he finally left, but those are about the only two things that ever happened there that were bad.

I had friends like Mick from the Silver Dollar, bartender, guys like that, Jess Arneson, and they would come and put up the tent before we . . . I was the one, myself and some people from the Uptown Association that got that gazebo there. Because at first we thought it would be good for the bands, but you couldn't hear them when they were in there. Nobody had the kind of sound

system that would carry when they were in there. So it just became the gazebo and we still use the big tent. And people just loved it.

I don't know who goes to Music on Main. I don't imagine a lot of older people go because it's in the evenings. They all go to bed by 10:00.

Jaap: But it starts at like 5:30 or 6:00.

Kirk: Yeah, it starts early. And I hope it does do well. I don't know that Lunch in the Park would be successful now because then Montana Power had hundreds of people working for them and the courthouse and everyone would come down to lunch. I think that might be a little different now, but I think things like that are things the community needs. And I think those kinds of things draw people that want to move from somewhere to here.

And I also have an issue now that I'm talking about people who say Butte is ugly. That's fine. If they want to think it's ugly and not move here. I don't want to be like Bozeman or Missoula or anywhere else, but I do not think Butte is ugly. I look over at that pit and at those colors of the copper and all those things. And I think of the fact that it helped us win two world Wars, streetlights, all that came into being because of the men that worked here underground. It's part of our history. Instead of calling it ugly, we should look at what it did in a positive way. And one of the reasons I can do that is I don't live on the flat. So if it overflows, it's not going to hit me. But in the things that we've done, you know, my grandma said when she was growing up there wasn't a tree in Butte, you know, so we've come a long way.

And I think that the parks and everything, I think it's a great thing, but yeah. I think that we need to utilize those things and push them more and make more people realize what we have here. We need people to employ people to come here. We need people to bring a business here. And never again is it going to be like the Montana Power or the Anaconda Company. That's a good thing. You don't need a one company town because in the end it never works well. But, you know, I look down on Park Street at all those places and Main Street especially that were empty for so long.

And you know, all these little niche stores and that's what you need and you need them, you know, you need them to be open on the weekend so visitors can come. And the architecture, you know, when my husband's family came to visit they couldn't believe the architecture, you know, so we have a lot. And my brother Mark, when he saw the crane uptown, when they were building the Montana power, he said, "I can die now." Little did we know he was going to. "I've seen a crane in uptown Butte. I've been waiting forever." So, I think that we need more people that are trying actively to get people to come here. And more of a help. We need to do things. We need to find a way to get them here, because I think when you get people here, Butte people are hardworking. They have a good ethic.

And I think if you get them and you hire them, then you can have a successful business. For too long we let people from somewhere else tell us what to do. We also let business people, absentee landlords buy some of these beautiful buildings and destroy them or raped them for their own uses. Butte has a great history, but I believe there's a great future for it as well.

Jaap: Well, Mollie, thank you. That's a perfect closing point.

Kirk: And I didn't name too many names, so I'm safe.

Jaap: You're safe.

Kirk: They'll be in the book though. Honestly, I've been writing things down for years and saying I was going to do this, but I wanted to wait until certain people died. There's some secrets out there. And it's okay for me to tell what I did in my part in things. But I didn't feel right about telling other people's stuff, you know, once they're dead.

Grant: Jim Little and Jim Dick were in here and just kind of the same story.

Kirk: Oh yeah. Jimmy Dick. He's one of my favorite people. He and my brother Mark were great friends. Did Jim Little tell you about robbing a bank? Oh, okay. Keep my mouth shut.

Jaap: No, Molly, keep going.

Kirk: Yeah, it actually happened. The bank deposit thing. Yeah. Were they talking about Evel? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Those guys. Joey Ferrone was with them when they went on that trip to Australia and everything. He was one of my, we were after my second marriage. We were boyfriend and girlfriend for a while, but we decided that we'd be better friends. So we remained grand friends forever. In fact, while he was gone, he used to call at least once a week and tell us what was going on. But Jimmy Dick, Jimmy Dick is the one. I mean, you know how he's first got with Evel. You've heard that story before.

Grant: A card game. He was out of town. [unintelligible].

Kirk: After, after Jim and Lou broke up, Lou ended up being a card dealer up at the, up at the M and M. Uh, but. He's still a good friend too, but yeah, but he was, he was more, I think Jim served more as Evel's bodyguard than anything else. You know, Brad Belke almost shot Evel at the last parade he was in.

Yeah, Evel calls me up, "You're having problems getting people in your parade." I said, "No, not really." "Well," he says, "Well, I thought I'd come in and help you." So he comes in and I had gave him a spot in the lineup. He didn't like that spot. So he went and parked in another spot. Well, Brad didn't know all that. And Brad went over and was arguing with him and Brad had his gun on him and went like this and Evel backed right down and I'm thinking, "Jesus, don't shoot him, Brad."

I had a few run ins with Evel though. He came in the M and M and he would order drinks for everyone. Put a hundred dollars on a Keno and he wouldn't pay. So he did it once to me. And he came in and he'd walk out. He didn't think he had to pay. So he came in and he ordered drinks for everybody and everything. I said, "Money up front." He said, "Do you know who I am?" I say, "Yep. Money up front. I'm not getting any drinks." And he said, "Where's Charlie? He'll do it." "Go talk to him. He's in the office." And Charlie said, "She's the bartender when she's behind the plank. She's the one that makes the decisions." Behind the plank. That's it. But that was an easy out for him, you know? Yeah. Because he did that all the time. He didn't pay. Yeah. Well he was a big bullshitter. Yeah. He was. I got kicked out of it. A couple of bars for flipping quarters at him. Don't ask me why I did that. Both bars in Rocker kicked me out the same night.

Yeah. Jimmy Dick and Joel Little. They've got a lot of stories.

Jimmy ran around with Mark. They went to Carroll together. He's the one at Carroll that called him Rudy Begonia. Oh, Jimmy Dick gave him that name and we don't know why. Neither does

Jimmy, but. Once they all came home and they handcuffed Marty. Jimmy Dick cuffed Marty to a chair and left with the key. Marty is my sister. I don't remember how we got her in handcuffs. Yeah. Then another time they came home and there was these two kids from Samoa that Mark had made friends with and he couldn't say his real name. One was left-handed. So he called him Lefty and he called the other word Butch and they gave him some name, last name of Butte. It was like Johnson or something anyway, you know, so they had a Butte name and so they came and they didn't drink in Samoa, you know? Well, they went out drinking and Lefty went crazy. So that was right after I had broken my back in the car. So I was home in a body cast by myself. And so they brought him home, took him upstairs and took his pants away. Because he was going nuts. And I said, "And you're leaving him here with me? I'm alone. What am I supposed to do? What?" They said, "Oh, he won't come down in his underpants. He would never do that. You're safe." And he never did, but I didn't go to sleep. I spent the whole night worried until they got home. Oh God. Our house was like, I don't know, Vuvilla Central. We had a lot of fun.

But Jimmy Dick is one of the nicest men I've ever met. Good guy. Good guy. Good guy. He went and visited Mark quite a bit when he was dying, but we never, Jimmy and I run into each other. Now we tell Mark stories now, you know, But, yeah, he's a good guy. But yeah they led a little life there for while that was unbelievable.

[END OF RECORDING]