



VERDIGRIS PROJECT

KBMF & BUTTE-SILVER BOW ARCHIVES

PETE GODTLAND

The Verdigris Project

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Oral History Transcript of Pete Godtland

Interviewer: Peggy Graving

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Peggy Graving: Oh, would you like to start with that today? What you wrote, then maybe you can pick up from there.

Pete Godtland: Yeah, I'll leave you with these two.

Graving: Ok, great.

Godtland: Ok, the first is the history about my parents. I don't know. I could just give it to you here.

Graving: Ok, if you want to because you kind of went through the history a little bit last time with your parents.

Godtland: Well I'll start with some of the history here. . . Ok, it's a mother, Godtland by Herald P. Godtland, 1887 to 1951. Ragna Betsy Thora was born and raised in a small farm in Norway near Mungnor north of Oslo and close to the Swedish border. The family is very poor and their main diet was potatoes and fish. They had a few milk cows that they milked, which they mostly sold. They had some chickens and a pig or two, all the clothes were homemade and they got a pair of new shoes each year when the shoemaker came around and stayed with them making shoes for the whole family. In the summer, the children went barefooted, washing clothes and bathing was not done too often. In winter clothes were washed in the river in the spring. Ragna's sister, who was Helga Thóra. Lara and Olaf. Rhonda completed the school, was confirmed in the state région was Luthern. She went to work as a maid in England for a year and earned several gold crowns. When she returned home, her father took all the money. Ragna and her sister Thora migrated to the U.S. together.

Their aunts in Helena, Montana, helped pay for the passage. When they arrived . . . Didn't know where or when . . . They took the train across Canada and ended up in Helena, Montana. They stayed on a small farm in Clancy. After a while, they moved to Helena, their aunt's place. They found work there cooking in a boarding house. Ragna brought her guitar from Norway. She and her sister, Thora would entertain the Sons of Norway meeting at church. Ragna met Ole there and ended up marrying him. The wedding was July 22, 1915, at the home of Lou Roberts on Logan Street. Mother's other aunt who was Gustaf, who lived several houses away. Ragna and Ole moved to Butte and lived at Copper Street in the basement of the church west of the Gold Hill Church. The church was a Swedish Baptist and Ragna cleaned the church as part of their rent. Sons, Palmer and Ralf were born there. Ole bought an old house on the flat at 1943 Roberts. He put in a cement block foundation under it and built on a room. There was an outhouse in the yard, and later he added a bathroom and another bedroom.

The twins, Anna and Harold, were born in the house. Their birth was premature and they placed Herald on the hearth until the sister was born.

Ok, that ends my mother's history in Norway.

My dad was from farther up north and I didn't have that written here, but he was born on a farm and I mentioned this before . . . they had kind of a dairy and they had goats and other animals and a garden.

Now this moves into Butte. In the early days of Butte, some of the history of the . . . Or the symphony orchestra, there were five major theaters and other smaller ones. The theaters had live acts, musicals and traveling shows that required musicians. Most of these professional musicians played in local bands and pit orchestras. The theater also had theater organs with bells and horns when they didn't have the pit orchestra.

Butte was nationally known for its acclaimed Butte Miners and Industrial Band and its leader, Sam Treloar. The Sons of Norway of the West, there were several national competitions. Al Crighton played the French horn there in the band and violin and horn in the orchestra pit. Charles Kiss and I became acquainted with Al Crighton when we played in the Mines Band during the summer vacation from college. Albert discussed starting a small orchestra and invited us to play in this house located at 1011 South Wyoming. Other members were Tony Leskovar, bassoon. Tony Coleman, clarinet. Graeme Smith, violin. Mary Joe Tripp, violin. Eleanor McTucker, piano. Charles Kessell, trombone. And Harold Peter Godtland, played trumpet and French horn. Our first music was from the pit orchestras loaned to us from the musicians' union and music that Al had on hand. Eleanor McTucker played piano.

She was a teacher, piano teacher. Shortly after we started to fill our missing instruments parts. Eleanor was a secretary and adviser to the board and recruited. I remember her playing harp parts on the piano. Al, our director, thought French horn would be nice to blend with a group rather than the trumpet. So I started playing Al's French horn. I have been playing French horn ever since. Our orchestra started in 1950 and is now at the present still playing. We are the oldest in the state, which makes me the longest playing member also. We met weekly and played for our own enjoyment, although we did perform for several fraternal organizations. As the group added more members, Al's living room is no longer enough. We then rehearsed at various locations uptown - Musicians' Hall, YMCA and the Anaconda Employees' Club, Emerson School. George Schotte's building was on East Park Street. Our first concerts were at the Anaconda Employees' Club, the School of Mines' Mineral Museum Auditorium where we had our first concerts.

When Rod Lewis became our conductor, we moved to East Middle School. We were in Butte High for several years. The Butte school district has been very good in providing us with the use of the buildings and the rehearsals and performances. We slowly added members, some of whom were musicians, friends of Albert, a few alumni from the MSU orchestra who were working in the area. Some of the members were Eileen and Jack Hite, Carole and Matt Thornton, Phil Beagles, Leonard Decco. When Fay and Robert Taylor joined us in the group, we had a good boost. Robert became manager, and Fay, choral director. Robert was the lead cello and Fay played the viola. They held the group together over the years, organizing a library, ordering

music, composing the programs, kettling the music, providing instruments for young players and the general manager of the group, Fay, organized a choral group for many performances. Taylor's generally had their car loaded with instruments and music, plus members who needed a ride. They also gave lessons to young people, including our children. Theirs and others became members of the symphony, and many of these youths that trained in our group went on to universities for a professional career and others played today in symphonies.

The BSO always encouraged student musicians to join and develop their skills. Many of our members came from surrounding towns - Whitehall, Twin Bridges, Sheridan, Dillon, Deer Lodge and Anaconda. Our principal Bruce Gustafsen, played in the Anaconda High School Orchestra. She was director, conducted it and brought students and others with her. The BSO, that is the Butte Symphony Orchestra, Symphony and Choral Library was organized by Robert Taylor and Fred Honeychurch and is now the largest in the state and exchanges music with other state symphonies. The symphony holds the distinction of being the first symphony in the state of Montana. 12:06

Graving: Can I back you up a little bit? When we finished and I know it's off your papers, but when we finished last time, you were still in the Army. So when did you come back to Butte? Do you remember?

Godtland: Yeah, I came back from the Army in 1946. I come back from Korea and my sister, my twin sister, already had me enrolled in MSU in Bozeman and I was still on furlough when I went to college.

Graving: And you majored in?

Godtland: I majored in architecture.

Graving: Really? OK, and then so were you there for four years?

Godtland: I was there for four years. And when they told me, when I first came there, that I had to take a few high school courses because I didn't have enough math to qualify, but I did that along with it.

Graving: OK, so then did you come directly back to Butte when you graduated from MSU?

Godtland: Yeah, I did. I looked around for other work, but ended up in Butte, worked for Mr. Moyle. He started a firm up on Granite Street and later it had a fire and it was torn down. But I remember that across the street it was the . . . Well, it was Smithers on the first floor, car agency on the corner, and they had a medical floor on the top. I have one here in my history. Do you want me to go into that one?

Graving: Maybe if we ask questions and just talk for a few minutes and then if there's something we missed, we can go back into those. How's that sound? You'll be worn out reading that.

Godtland: I can leave these with you, but most of this was done years and years ago. OK, I got some information here on my army career . . .

Well, I was drafted in 1944, I was still in high school and I got an extension to finish high school. Many of my classmates enlisted in the Navy and didn't get to finish school, but I was drafted and went into the Army, September 12th, 1944. I took training in Fort Lewis and then in California, Camp Roberts and we shipped out from Fort Lawton in Seattle and went to Hawaii and more training and then we were on ship all this time, you know, no, there wasn't any flying then. I took training on Hawaii, Oahu. That's where we landed, where they had the Pearl Harbor and got to see the remaining things from the Japanese attack. After training, we first went to Saipan and had additional training there. Then we went to Okinawa. And my brother Ralph was always looking for me. He was in the Navy and he never did find me, but we were in the harbor at the same time. He was in the Navy and he was on the landing craft that would take the troops in.

We went there as a replacement. We left the ship and got in a big truck and it was very disheartening because we passed a truck, a big truck, that was full of dead G.I. 's with their feet sticking out the rear. It wasn't a very encouraging sight, but we had different stops to let replacements fill out the place where they were wounded or killed in action. But I volunteered to go to a heavy weapons company, and I found out that I was assigned to a machine gun squad in the 184th Infantry and we joined up with a group that I was to join. They'd just come out of the front lines. They were back in a resting area. And after we'd been there a few days, we got sent up to the front. We took the truck part ways and then we were on foot the rest of the way until we got to the front.

There were many bodies you passed by going in, mostly Japanese, on the way to the front. We always walked about 20 feet apart because there was snipers shooting at us all the time. At night, we were placed in guard positions on the front. We dug foxholes and stayed at them until our turn came up for guard duty. It was generally two hours on and two hours off. At one location, we were pinned down for three days. There were wounded men there, waiting to evacuate. Some of the guards in this position. I was on guard near daylight when I spotted Japanese soldiers attacking us from the rear. They'd come around us on boats. I got the machine gunners up and they opened fire. And soon they were all wiped out by the infantry and the mortars. And there was one rifleman who showed me his helmet where one Japanese had fired a shot through the side of his helmet. And he showed me where it ringed around the inside the helmet and hit the Japanese himself. I saw the groove on the inside of the helmet. This was quite unusual.

We had many snipers shooting us at all times and the old veterans told us to stay undercover at all times. There was a footbridge we had to cross to get supplies. I set a new speed record with the case of C-rations on my shoulder when I crossed.

The Navy ships were out in the harbor from us all the time. They would shoot their big guns on positions called for by the radio. They would light the sky at night with their flares.

After a week or so, we were relieved by another company and sent back to the rest area. When we returned from the rest area after several days to the front line, the island was in the last phases

of being secured. A buddy and I walked around, discovered a man coming out of a hole in the ground. He was a native. We couldn't understand him, but he pointed down the hole, indicating many more were there. We got an interpreter who talked to him. We sent him back down the cave and many people came out, including soldiers without their weapons. The demolition squad came in afterwards and blew up all the caves. I'm for sure that a lot of people were buried. When the fighting was over, I was on a detail to pick up old ammunition. It was still on the ground, mostly unexploded artillery. It was a very touchy detail.

We hauled them in a trailer right behind the Jeep. Of course, if they ever went off, there wouldn't be any Jeep or trailer. Our 184th outfit set up a camp with a mess hall structure, showers and squad tents. I received a notice that a jeep was coming to pick me up to go to the headquarters band for an audition to join the band. My records showed that I was a musician and had played in the band. I played a number for him and he said it was ok. But he says we had plenty of trumpets. If I wanted to join, I could play the baritone horn. I accepted it with delight and joined the band. I moved from my duty back to headquarters where we were rehearsing and had guard duty at night. We had nightly movies in the open air. On one evening there was a great celebration that the bomb had been dropped on Japan and the war would soon be over. Previous to this, we were busy packing and ready to go to Japan for the invasion. We were much relieved. Our army was loaded and sent to Korea to liberate the country. We landed in Busan and we went by truck to Seoul to march to the city.

I just skip around here a little bit.

Korean people greeted us as we marched down the Capitol and raised the American flag. The climate there was about the same as Montana, very cold in the winter. We played for troop parades all around the country where they were stationed. The trains were always so crowded. People on the roof, hanging on the side, they were coming from the north, moving beyond the 46 parallel.

The whole country smelled all the time because of the honey wagons collecting human waste for the fields.

I had a good duty there as band librarian and rehearsal set up. I stayed in separate quarters with the music and we were not required to have inspection every morning. I changed to play the trumpet as was needed. We passed the time of the winters signing up and taking G.I. classes at the school there. We had our basketball team. And we had a pool there, left by the Japanese. There were many professional musicians in the group, including arrangers, singers, accordion composers. We had to dance bands, a small combo which played for the officers' dances.

When I got my orders to ship out, that was 1946, in August. We left Busan and landed in Oakland, California at night with no special greeting. We went to a friend's house for a home cooked spaghetti dinner. The next move was on a train for Fort Lewis, Washington. I was processed and September 11, 1946 to muster out of the Army. I was given too much time of leave before I was official. I had a train ride home, was greeted by my dad's sister when I arrived. My mother was too excited to meet the train. My twin sister, Ann, going to MSU college at the time had me enrolled. After a few days home, I left for college and started a new life.

[00:25:59]

College was very crowded with veterans. My sister found me a room upstairs, downtown to share a room with others. We were on the second floor. We had a small room and we shared a double bed with a stranger. His name was Bob Story. Later I moved to 12th and later after that I was able to go to 419 South Grand with Russell Bush and we were the house boys to work for our room and cleaning the yard and cleaning the house. I was still on leave from the army. My sister, Ann, had enrolled me in college. She signed me up for architecture as she thought I might like it. The campus was loaded with veterans and the housing was a problem. They even set up bunk beds in the basement of the student union. Classes were at all hours, 7:00 a.m. and in the evening, I ended up signing up for band and orchestra and continued that for four years. We went on trips during our spring break, had a great time with all of our friends.

Architecture was located on the third floor of the Roberts Hall where I spent four years there. I went to summer sessions to catch up on the credits and roomed with Rudy Autio at one time. He passed away in 1910[?] and he was internationally known for his ceramic works. When we built the fellowship hall, the Gold Hill Church, I was working for . . . well, anyway.

Anyway, I graduated in 1950 and worked for Eldron Moyle, ACM architect and Charles Kessell. I also ran the new private office of Eldron Moyle and would visit us at noon. At five p.m. I passed my board examines in 1952, started my own practice in 1960. My brother Ralph, who owns the Western Ironworks there, I had an office on the second floor. My first large project was the Crest nursing home. Others were Madison County Nursing Home. Courthouse remodeling in Sheridan after it was torched by an inmate, other projects around Butte, which I can remember, I will name later. I met Liz Sheridan there or in Butte and did a lot of work for him.

I continue on. This is kind of disjointed. It goes on and on, so we can go on from there.

Graving: Ok, you did great. You have a lot of my questions answered by reading that. When you worked for Mr. Moyle, was there any big project that you remember that you did?

Godtland: We did all the Anaconda newspaper buildings, one in Butte, one in Helena. You know, they had owned the newspaper, you know. Well, they had kind of had control of that and also.

Graving: Ok, so and then in the late 1950s, that's when Goldhill asked you to design the social hall?

Godtland: Yeah. And we added on to the present church, added on to the back and did some remodeling.

Graving: What were the main goals with the remodel? What did they want to accomplish?

Godtland: We wanted a fellowship hall and Sunday school rooms. At that time, they had approximately 100 Sunday school kids and they needed room for all of those. And later on . . .

this is a few years later, they needed an access to the church for the handicapped. I think John Williamson was one who was needed instead of being lifted up the front stairs. Anyway, we built the ramp and instead of having it in the building, it was built outside the building and it had entered the present building.

Graving: And originally now the pastor was down in the basement of the original church. There was an apartment there.

Godtland: The pastors lived in an apartment downstairs in the church. And we had one big room down there and the kitchen and the kitchen was for the ladies who provided all the meals and did all the cooking when we had big meetings, but all the groups met down there. We had a very active Luther league that met down there. And we had other people coming around. When the VA was up at Montana Tech or School of Mines, some of those joined our group. And I remember Mary Dicks and sister, Frances Arless Conners, other people from our church. Now a lot of those young people have passed away. When I was inducted in the Army, this is coming ahead, they all came down to the station, the southern Pacific, to see me off for the war.

Graving: Well, and I found in some of our records that they had. I showed you the big poster with all your pictures on it for everyone who was serving in the war. And it said in their minutes that they provided you with care packages. Did you ever get a care package?

Godtland: Well, we got care packages in the mail. They also gave me a small testament with the steel cover on one side. So I was to wear it near my heart so I couldn't get shot in the heart.

Graving: Did you do that?

Godtland: I did.

Graving: OK, good.

Godtland: I did that all through the war.

Graving: Followed good instructions then. So what was in a care package that came from Goldhill?

Godtland: Mainly cookies and stuff. Cookies and candy, things that would keep, you know. You know, everything came by ship, you know, before they would fly that over, you know.

Graving: So how long would it take for those cookies to get to you?

Godtland: It would take almost a month. And when I went overseas, we left from Fort Lauderdale in Seattle and landed on Oahu and right at Pearl Harbor there. We took some training there and went on to Saipan for some additional training and then ended up as a replacement to Okinawa.

Graving: So those packages had to keep following you around and finding you.

Godtland: Yeah, they did.

Graving: They did. OK, we're going to go back to being back in Butte now. At the church, do you remember how they funded the work?

Godtland: Well, they had a loan, a church loan from the headquarters.

Graving: Lutheran Brotherhood.

Godtland: Yeah, I don't know who from. But I could go back when they first built the church, they got the ground from the Anaconda Company. And it was a mining claim and it was much smaller than it is now. It was large . . . we had mining claims. George Schotte was in with the Anaconda Company and had good relations, and we got the rest of the mining claim.

Graving: George was a very active member of our church, too.

Godtland: When we first built the church there, you know, Elling Halverson, he was the main guy. He came to town to build the Silver Bow homes and some buildings up at Montana Tech. And when we rebuilt the church, he was able to ask a lot of his men to join in on construction in their off hours, on weekends and off hours, and it was excavated probably by a team of horses. And, you know, the way they excavated a team of horses, they had a scraper and they put it in the foundation and they set up on the Upper Hill, they set up the cement because, well, cement for the foundation.

And they had a big mixer, which was probably on loan from one of his jobs. They had big piles of gravel and sand. At that time. I remember coming down and they had a big load of used brick from the houses that were torn down, you know, for the Silver Bow homes. And I helped clean these with a hatchet. It would take the old cement off. And they used these as some of the backing for the masonry. We had new brick for the outside, which I think we got a load of brick from North Dakota.

Graving: Do you remember where the windows came from, the stained glass windows in the original church?

Godtland: They came later. They came later as people would want to donate for their family, passed away. Helings, one of them, Ida and her sister, they were twins. They had a big window there and some on the other side. When the church was first built, they were not plain glass, but they were kind of rippled glass a little bit on the yellow side. There may be, I don't know if there's any left or not, but those old windows.

Graving: Who built the section that you did all the architectural work for? The newer section of the church.

Godtland: I had mentioned before that I roomed with Autio one time over in Bozeman and he went to work in Helena for the foundation, the Archie Bray Foundation. And he had built other

things for other churches around the state. And I talked to him about doing something for the front of our fellowship hall. And he worked out some sketches and made a model for that Christ with the children. And that was all done out of brick, not brick, but the same clay that they made the bricks out of. It was done in an eight by twelve pieces, you know, the full depth of the brick. And he carved those over in Helena. It was brought over here and laid up by the masonry. When they did the front of the church, there was some opposition to the brick relief that the Christ had his head bent, that we didn't build at high enough. Kept you upright.

But Christ is looking down on the children. That was the reason for that. But he has work all over the state and he spent many summers in Finland. He was raised in East Butte. He was Finnish. He spoke good Finnish. And he did a lot of work over there. And then he got the teaching job over in Bozeman for the university there. And they had a special department for art and for ceramics. And he did a lot of work over there, but he became famous all over the country for that, his work down over there. I visited him in his house over there. And he had art all over the yard and in his garage. And his wife, Leila, they met in Bozeman. They were both in the art department. And they got married down in, well, many miles, we went in an old car down there and we had a big celebration before he got married.

And then he later went to the Archie Bray Foundation to work there. And then he worked other places making ceramics. He did the [inaudible] over in Anaconda. He did a fire station over there. He had to work all over. But we think his work over in Butte was one of his best projects.

Graving: It's beautiful. I think it's known nationally. Now was that then erected and built at the same time? Was that added at the same time?

Godtland: So when the brick mason came in and put in the walls, that was done at the same time after that. Yeah.

Graving: Now I had heard that he didn't come over to see it being erected. Was he here when it was put up?

Godtland: He came over a few times, yeah. But at that time he had different jobs. He finally ended up over at Missoula, the university there.

Graving: OK, and now we have a parsonage. When did we get the parsonage? Did you design that?

Godtland: No that was a house that was already built. The Cannon's lived there and he ended up being in the state legislature and he ended up being, I think, he was an attorney general at one time. But the whole area down there was a row addition. Many houses were built south of there, south of Front Street.

Graving: Do you remember when the church obtained the house then for the parsonage?

Godtland: That was when Bremer came.

Graving: Bremer was here in the 60s?

Godtland: He first moved into the basement of the church.

Graving: OK, so he was there in the 50s. I think he was there when you designed that addition to the church. Bremer was still there.

Godtland: Yeah, he was still there. And after that it was remodeled. And that part of the church didn't go all the way back to the alley where we built the fellowship hall that was extended. They already had the basement over it. And part of that was used for the office and for the apartment.

Graving: The Sunday school?

Godtland: The Sunday school was built with a fellowship hall where we had all those rooms and all those . . .

Carol: There was a pastor and his family.

Godtland: Carol might remember a lot of those, too.

Graving: OK, so then we remodeled the sanctuary and that was after, you know, after the addition was done, then they went in and remodeled. Can you explain some of the remodeling that they did so we can picture it?

Godtland: At one time, the original church had two big columns where you come down the aisle. Two big columns. They were false columns, and they had the choirs on one side and the pastor's office was on the other side, which was blocked off from the church by a wall. For heating, we had two giant floor heaters, floor furnaces, one in the front and one in the back. That's how we heated the church. And those were taken out when . . .

Carol: The pastors at first lived downstairs in the church.

Godtland: He was here when we built the ramp,

Graving: When you did the ramp and then the remodeling, it was under Pastor Ing? Now, Ralph built the altar, right? Can you describe that so that we know what it looks like?

Godtland: Well, it's stainless steel and it's . . . I don't know if I can describe it. Well, it overhangs the sides, the top overhangs.

Graving: So it's kind of like an hourglass shape.

Godtland: And on the front is a lamb that was etched in there. That was designed by Charlene Green or Charlene Rediker.

Graving: That's Ralph's daughter?

Godtland: Ralph's daughter. Yeah. OK. And a lot of remodeling has been done in the past. But when we built off, a lot of it was done by volunteers, a lot of finishing. It was kind of roughed in in the contract, but it wasn't all finished. So a lot of volunteers working on that.

Graving: Can you tell us a little bit about what Pete Hyam did for the church?

[00:46:36]

Godtland: Oh, bit by bit. I did all the wiring for the church and he was a contractor, electrical contractor. And he even had some of his crew coming down, working there. He attached on to the existing and enlarged that and put up new panels in the new boiler room, which was under the present offices we have there now.

And when we built the fellowship hall, we had plans for a basement under part of them. We added the kitchen on, but the ladies didn't want the basement. So and now they have shortage of storage for their quilts.

Graving: They didn't want more rooms to clean. Can you tell us about serving on council, how it was organized? Because I know in the very beginning there were deacons and there was like four or five different levels in the council. And the council didn't do everything a council does today.

Godtland: Yeah, they even had kind of a missionary, you know, they wouldn't call them missionary. But my mother was one. They would visit the sick and the people in their home that couldn't get out to church. I remember one family called Neiman and he was a blacksmith. That was his trade. And I remember he used to sharpen picks for us and for some of the other members and that was his business, sharpening picks.

Graving: OK, now you've served on council at church. What positions have you held?

Godtland: Well, I have, other than council members, that's about it.

Graving: Did you serve as president of the council?

Godtland: I was never president? Oh, well, I guess I was president one time. I don't . . . Yeah, I was president at one time.

Graving: OK. We'll leave the church for a minute. Can you tell me your favorite project that you did in Butte?

Godtland: OK, well I can tell you projects I've had in Butte to start with. One of my first projects when I left the firm of Moyle was a dry-cleaning place down on Harrison. You know at that time there was all open ground there. It was called the cinders down there because that's where they dumped some of the cinders from the mine down there. And they had a big ball field down there, but that's before the mall came in there. But then I had some other jobs. But when I had moved, I got a job doing the Crest nursing home. I got acquainted with, well, my brother was

acquainted with the people who started it. They lived behind the present Monroe school there. And they worked as kind of a makeshift nursing home that was uptown. They took in people that were somewhere on Park Street. They went to the government to get a loan from Helena. They were able to get a loan. And they were visiting my brother. He says, I've got to find somebody, an architect or something to help me out. So he says, I've got an architect upstairs. So they called me down. I got acquainted with them.

That was one of the major jobs was building the Crest Nursing home, and that led to a nursing home in Sheridan, Montana. And I did some work in Sheridan. I remodeled their high school. And then in Virginia city, they had an inmate that started a fire. He was mad at the commissioners, started a fire and burned it all the way up to the roof in the back. So I was able to get a job there and restoring the Virginia City courthouse. And I got some engineers that had worked for me from time to time. And we made that earthquake proof on the upper floors. And we restored the courtroom and there was an addition that was done by another architect and they weren't happy with him. So they hired me and we remodeled the entire building. It was damaged all through with smoke and with dust. And we rebuilt the whole back end of the courthouse.

[00:52:10]

I guess I'm probably moving back too far, but I did a lot of work in Madison County, at the school, the high school. I remodeled their high school and their grade school. They built an addition there. And later on, they expanded more, I think. I think the high school they built a new . . . but it was still being used. But I had got a set of the plans from the archives in Bozeman and I found the plans of Walter Arnold of Butte, an old time architect. He was hired by the WPA to draw up plans for them. And I got to say, the plans I turned over to their library in Virginia City. Then one of my first projects was the gym in Twin Bridges. It's still being used and it was done very economically and I see pictures of the gym.

And I did a lot of projects locally and I have a list of projects I've done. Oh, I did the country club, the new facility, they tore down the old club, I did the WP, I mean, KBOW radio station, which looks a little different when you go down Dewey there.

I became acquainted with Robert Poore. We always went to the Y after work, go run around the track and we started playing racquetball upstairs. Robert Poore became my partner and I did a lot of work for him around. And then that led to Sheridan, L.M. Sheridan. He had started the pit in Butte here and he became too successful. You know, he ran the trucks with the stopwatches and everything successful. And then the miners union became too excited about that pit. They took over management of the Anaconda Company themselves, took over management of the pit. That was a first start of it. But I did a lot of work for Sheridan.

And his downfall was he was always looking for a mine. He had a plane that we'd fly around and he'd get tips on where we could find a mine that he wanted to buy. He had an iron mine up at Sheridan somewhere, but he was looking all over. There was an outfit up above the [shootarium] and they were doing work all over and there was some slick-o up there that talked him into looking at this gold mine and in Redding, California. And he became acquainted with a fortune teller there and other people there. And they took samples for him. The samples came out with

real rich, you know, and he even did this himself. All the time, he was being salted, but he decided to build a big mill so he could process all this ore which was plain dirt. You know, in the early days, Redding was rich in placer mining, that's where some of the first miners came and they made a fortune there. But anyway, he was going to take this dirt that hadn't been quite gold yet.

And Don Sanovich, he was my friend, the contractor, he was sent down there to build this plant. And Ralph built the Western iron and he built the equipment. And this went on for quite a while. The plant run. In fact, I took a ride in Les Sheridan's plane and took a ride to Redding, to California. No, this was Pittsburgh to look at a pulverizer so he could get this ore into a fine dust where he could recover the gold out of it. But anyway, and he was trying out this jet. And, of course, I had my first ride in a jet across the country, three hours across the country. But then he decided to buy his own.

But they were demonstrating. Sheridan had a big country home at Flathead. And he says, "I want to take you up there." Or, let me off up there because he would fly his King Air up there and on weekends or whenever he felt like it. Anyway, we landed there. We had many problems on the way. But anyway, we skimmed over the water. "I don't know if this landing field is long enough for this jet." It was anyway. He says, "When you leave here, kind of show off that plane a little bit." Well, I was the only one in the back seat because everybody else stayed up there and he was doing loops, roll overs. But that was some of my experiences. But he had a lot of experiences flying up to Redding, California, in his other King airplane.

But some of the other projects I've done in Butte here, you know, smaller jobs. Well, the Virginia City and the courthouse up there. I went with Robert Poore, a good friend. He says, "Meet me up at the old Fox Theater." He says, "I'm looking for a place where we can have our community concerts." They were there in the old days, but it'd been a theater and the ceiling had fallen down. The toilet room upstairs is flooded, took down all the plaster and they moved the booth for showing films down downstairs, but kind of a mess and looked around. He said, "What do you think? You think we could have the community concerts here and then make it into a theater?" So that's how it got started there. I got a hold of Stodden and LeProwse. They finished knocking down the old plaster and then replastered the ceiling, and that's how it began up there.

[01:00:51]

I got other people involved, other contractors. But then one of the big contractors were from Bentley contractor, put in the walkway up there where they could have the walkway across there.

And I had many experiences going through the theater up there. I had the keys for up above where I could, you know, that had, what, five floors, six floors . . . anyway I could wander around there and see what it used to be, the old masonry and the old uniforms they had up there and the drill hall in the top floor. They had uniforms.

Graving: And they had a ballroom up there somewhere, didn't they?

Godtland: They had a ballroom up there. Yeah. And they had a lot of other instruments stored up there, too. And they played in all the parades around the state.

Graving: Who got you involved in designing the archways?

Godtland: That was Rob Poore? He said, "Meet me up at Montana Tech at the statue up there." And I met him up there. He says, "What do you think? Right at the entrance here? You think we could." I said, "How big do you want it?" He said, "I want it pretty big." He showed me an entrance at Berkeley. He had pictures. It was kind of wide enough to put a car through if they opened the gates. And I said, "Well, let's take a walk down below." He says, "Let's go down to the railroad tracks." And we got down there. He started looking around. He said, yeah, this is where it should be.

The railroad was coming out and they were taking up the tracks. And it was to be the ideal place to have it. And I did some sketches for that. And I said, "How big you want it?" He said, "I want to go all the way across the street." I said, "How about the sidewalks? We could put the arch over each sidewalk." So on the north side, we had to deal with the property owner there. But we found out from the property owner, they looked in the deeds and he didn't actually own that himself. So he agreed that we could take the corner out if we put in a retaining wall. But that was the start of the arch. And it was built down at Western Iron Works.

And then they had the contractor put it up. I'm trying to think of the Montana Tech chancellor . . . I'm still in contact with his wife and he had, you know, but still on the board up at the St. Timothy board. Gilmore. Gilmore. Gilmore, yeah. They would come down to Western Ironworks to see how the construction was going, you know, and they were interested in it. We got it all powder coated and painted. Got Bentley contracted to load it up and bring it up there. And I asked him about what he wanted on the side material, and they wanted to go first class with the marble on the down below, the arch is going up the sidewalk.

So that was the start of my arches. And we did an arch for George Schotte and Don Aldrich, they said, "I want to put an arch down on where we go on the trails to walk." They had a lot to do with that. And he says, "Make it look fitting." So if you go down there, you'll see ducks and you'll see wildlife in that arch, fish. And yeah. So that was my start with those arches.

And then later I did the arch for the Mining Museum. That was when he was retiring. He said, go ahead and what do you think it should be and I'll pay for it. So and he was able to contact, always contacted the Anaconda company, or was it the lady that come over here from Washington who was in charge? Good friends. We had lunch with her and he would say, you know, could you furnish a little help on this so that they ended up doing her, got the contractor and got the foundations and concrete work. So, Montana Tech.

Graving: And they're beautiful.

Godtland: And also later on, they wanted to do something to honor the miners, you know, all the ones that were killed in the mines. So I did some work up there on that, kind of a little park, an entrance, that's a small arch up there.

[01:06:47]

Carol: They hired a lot of high schoolers.

Godtland: Who was at the high school?

Carol: I said that they hired a lot of high school kids for that.

Godtland: Oh, did they? A lot of volunteers, I guess.

Graving: Are you ready to take a break for the day? Or do you have a couple more?

Godtland: Well, of course, the church and let's see . . . On the Mother Lode, we also did later I mean, this one is still going on . . . we also did the children's one downstairs. Yeah. And the people that had the theater, they'd put in a small place to show second films down there. That's an area we took over. We tore most of that out because you still entered from the lobby upstairs, you know, as you come in and you could take the stairway down there. And he had a couple ladies that he was always taking care of, older people with their wills and everything devices. So he got those two ladies to donate a lot of money to remodeling that children's theater. I did the work on that. They've done some remodeling down there and tearing some of the things out. But I mentioned one of my first jobs was the gym in Twin Bridges.

Graving: Yeah, you mentioned that.

Godtland: Did work at the country club. We built the new country club and the swimming pool, and it was much used today. And the swimming pool was built by the same people who built the original pool in Stodden park, the one that fell apart. And when they did that, there was a big rainy season in June and they had done the excavation and it was like that sandy soil. Well, it was a gunite pool. It should never have started that until they redid the ground, because that was the end of it. The bottom had a lot of cracks and pipe breaking. But we're getting our new pool and the carousel. I worked the plans for the carousel and we're going to have a partial opening on St. Patty's Day. But right now we're in the process of a lot of volunteers. It started out slowly, but we're getting more volunteers now that they can see the end. But it's going to have a good concession area and a lot to do for the children of Butte. I'm still working on some of the projects down there, but I haven't been able to do any construction there because of my leg. Yeah, my ankle.

Graving: It's hard work. Bruce has been down on the ground, grouting the last couple of weeks.

Godtland: Yeah, he was down there and fell off a ladder. They were down there. They were thirty below with no heat putting up sheetrock. I don't know how they did it. It was the exchange club and yeah he did, he hung a lot of the doors, put the hardware on the doors and now he's still working down there.

Graving: It's going to be really nice.

Godtland: Yeah, it's going to be very nice. And you know, they're going to have a second entrance to the park. It's going to come from . . . take Kaw Avenue, come down, go across there where the National Guard is at. But they're going to come in from that.

Graving: Is it Railroad? OK. where the new stoplight is.

Godtland: And so we're going to have a road coming through there and they're going to tear out the present parking lot and redo it all. They're going to redo all of the roads. You know, they're going to have a nice mall between the carousel and the new pool. And it's going all the way back to the tennis courts. And it's going to be great. I was on the board for a while, but, uh, I think they're meeting weekly now and there's going to be so much done there. You know, that's going to be a beautiful park. And I did an arch for the front. And there they're going to have an arch on the side too, the same thing.

Graving: And what part did you play in the archives building?

Godtland: Oh, I was on the board for the . . . I wasn't the architect, but I was on the board that complained a lot with the head architect out of Missoula, architectural firm. And they had a contractor out of Helena. And they, of course, the low bidders are always . . . and when they laid out the building here, they didn't have a good survey. They didn't know it was an angle that it was an angle that they designed it as a straight. You could ask Ellen about that. That they got this shape between the two buildings.

Graving: Now, Ellen had mentioned that right when you were finishing or while you were on the board. Yeah. You were also working on some architectural project for the University of Indiana or somewhere.

Godtland: Yeah, that was up at South Boulder. I was building a classroom building up there.

Graving: And that was as late as, what?

Godtland: Yeah, about three years ago, maybe three years ago now, but that turned out very good. And if you want to take a drive up the South Boulder just for a drive. It's very nice.

Graving: OK, so are you officially retired now? Are you still working on plans?

Godtland: No, I turned in my shingle.

Graving: You turned in your shingle.

Godtland: But I've done some light work. I did an addition on the Meat Block down there, on the side there. But I was just a designer and I had used my structural engineer out of Helena. He did that for me.

Graving: So you worked for just a few years, like from 1950 . . .

Godtland: 1960 I started, yeah. OK. When I graduated.

Carol: He worked a long time.

Godtland: I have numerous contracts around.

Graving: That's great. I appreciate it. Yeah. OK, thank you very much.

Godtland: Enjoyed working and enjoyed playing in the symphony all my life.

Graving: And you still have a group that plays together.

Godtland: I'm going to try to finish the year out. Hopefully.

Graving: Well, Pete, thank you very much for doing this for us.

Godtland: It's been all fun for me.

Graving: Oh well, good.

Carol: He enjoys it.

Graving: He enjoys doing this. OK, good. Well, if we come up with some more questions, we'll pull you up here again.

Godtland: I know you'll have to unscramble a lot of that. You keep those sheets. You know, I didn't finish a lot of it. There's a lot of stuff mixed in there.

Graving: And you worked a lot on this stuff though.

Godtland: Yeah. I started to write a history of everything. But then I got tangled up on jobs and.

[inaudible]

Graving: So when were you guys married?

Carol: September.

Godtland: 1954. September 12. My anniversary for being inducted into the army too.

Aubrey Jaap: Well, thank you guys for coming.

[END OF RECORDING]