



VERDIGRIS
PROJECT

KBMF & BUTTE-SILVER BOW ARCHIVES

SHEILA PENALUNA

The Verdigris Project

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Oral History Transcript of Sheila Penaluna

Interviewers: Aubrey Jaap & Clark Grant

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AUBREY JAAP: All right. It's Friday, April 5th, 2019, where you're with Sheila Penaluna. And I guess I'd like to start out, did you grow up here in Butte?

SHEILA PENALUNA: Yes.

JAAP: Yeah? Your parents, did they grow up here in Butte as well?

PENALUNA: Yes.

JAAP: What were your parents' names?

PENALUNA: Mary McDonald.

JAAP: Okay.

PENALUNA: And my father was Howard Askins.

[00:08:00]

JAAP: And what did they do here in Butte?

PENALUNA: My father was a miner. And my mother was a secretary to a construction firm.

JAAP: Oh, interesting. Did your parents, did they immigrate here from somewhere else, do you know?

PENALUNA: No, my grandmother on my mother's side came from Ireland. And my grandmother on the other side came from Scotland.

JAAP: Okay. All right. What mines did your dad mine in, do you recall?

PENALUNA: Several of them, but he, I think the last mine he was at the Badger.

JAAP: Oh, okay. Yeah. and where was your family home, where you grew up?

PENALUNA: I grew up in the Hub Addition, in Butte, if you happen to know where that is.

JAAP: Yeah, well, why don't you tell us.

PENALUNA: Right east of the Anselmo mine, on Caledonia and Franklin.

JAAP: Oh, sure. Yeah. I know exactly where you're at. And what did you do as a young girl growing up? Do you have any good stories to share?

PENALUNA: I don't think you want to hear all....

JAAP: Oh sure we do.

PENALUNA: I grew up with, I went to the IC grade school and I went to Butte High School.

I was active in a lot of sports.

JAAP: I saw that, I did some research on you a little, and I saw lots of sports. So did you ski when you were younger?

PENALUNA: Yeah, I was a skier.

JAAP: How'd you get involved with skiing?

PENALUNA: I don't know if you remember the Holland rink, on Front Street? I used to go down there and skate with my father. And I saw somebody go by the Holland rink with a set of skis on it, and I wondered where they were going.

So we followed them out to Beef Trail. And once I got up there, I decided that I wanted a pair of skis and that ended my skating career. I skied from the fourth grade on.

JAAP: And did you compete?

PENALUNA: Yes. Many years. Up to 1980.

JAAP: Oh, wow. So what was the Holland rink like? What was kind of the, what was the feeling when you went there? Was there a ton of kids there?

PENALUNA: Oh, it was a great place to go. It was all closed in and it was about three rinks there. There was a regular rink for everybody just to skate. And then there was a hockey rink. And I think there was a training rink. They're all enclosed.

JAAP: I didn't know there were three.

PENALUNA: And there was a closed in, where you could put your skates on and it was just a great place to be.

JAAP: Yeah.

PENALUNA: In those days, that's all there was between that and the Columbia Gardens.

JAAP: Did you go to the Columbia Gardens a lot as a girl?

[00:11:00]

PENALUNA: Oh yeah. Thursday - free day. The company paid for everything, when you went to the Columbia Gardens.

JAAP: Did you ride the bus or trolley out there?

PENALUNA: Yes. Walked down to the Rialto theater, which was Park and Main Street. Take the bus to the Gardens. Yeah.

JAAP: What's some of your fondest memories of the Gardens?

PENALUNA: Probably playing, they used to have Miners Union Day out there. Yeah. There was great - they had a lot of sports activities, plus getting on the roller coaster and riding the carousel and the airplanes. Yeah. It was a great place to go.

JAAP: So you said you played lots of sports growing up. So you skied. Did you do any other sports?

PENALUNA: I took up golf.

JAAP: Golf. And you golfed for a long time as well?

PENALUNA: No, I really started golfing when I retired. I did golf a little, but then I took it up as a serious sport for, up till about five years ago.

JAAP: Okay. Very nice. Very nice. So you went to IC, and then went to Butte high school? Okay. What'd you do after high school? Did you go to college anywhere?

PENALUNA: No, during my, from the fourth grade, till a year after high school, I worked at a grocery store.

JAAP: Oh what grocery store?

PENALUNA: It was called Martin grocery, up on Caledonia and Jackson Street. A little neighborhood grocery store. And the lady that owned it, she didn't like kids coming into the store. She didn't mind waiting on the adults, but she didn't care for the kids. So after school I'd go up there and wait on the kids for candy. And that's how it started. Then I started working in the grocery store all the time.

But I did that, and then went to Pay'n'Save, which is on Harrison Avenue. I worked there for four years. And then I had a cousin that owned a grocery store and I worked for him off and on for several years. And then I went to work for the Anaconda Company in '56.

JAAP: '56. What was the name of your cousin's grocery store?

PENALUNA: Rice's Market.

JAAP: Rice's Market.

PENALUNA: In the court. It was on Thomas and Princeton.

JAAP: So is that like, the Rice family?

PENALUNA: It was two brothers to begin with. And then, I don't know how many years that was. Then they, he went to work for a packing company. I can't remember. I don't know what year that was. It was there when I was, all through high school. I think it was there maybe till '56, '57. You're kind of testing my brain.

JAAP: That's okay. We're not gonna, yeah, don't worry. You don't remember the years, that is no problem. So how did you come to work at the Anaconda Company?

PENALUNA: I don't really remember how it started, but I just applied and I got on as an IBM operator.

JAAP: Okay. So can you tell me some of the, what duties were involved with that ?

PENALUNA: Key punch operator. It was before the computers came out. Yeah. Very, very boring job. And I lasted there about six months. 'Cause I just, that wasn't my type of work. In high school I did a lot of artwork. And I was leaning towards drafting. But in high school, a woman was not allowed to take mechanical drawing, anything in the field - like draftsman or anything. So, consequently, I didn't have that background. And after working about seven different areas of the company, I finally was able to talk to one of the chief geologists. Charlie Goddard. And I talked to him and asked if he ever thought about hiring a draftsman, or a woman. There were no women draftsman. And he didn't understand that, but you have to understand in 1960 or '56, when I went to work, if you got married, you couldn't work for the company.

JAAP: That was company policy?

PENALUNA: Mmm hmm.

JAAP: And no women worked in drafting?

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PENALUNA: No, no nothing in that area. So when I asked about it, and I got married in '60, I thought that was the end of my job, but, well, they didn't stop it then. And so then I went on and asked about the drafting and Charlie Goddard hired me, as a draftsman. And I learned, and I picked up everything from the engineers and the geologist, in the job. So then I was there for, till my retirement.

JAAP: So what do you think Goddard saw in you, to kind of take that leap?

PENALUNA: I don't know if it was Charlie. I'm sure it was probably the boss I had at the time. Charlie was head of the geology department. Tom O'Brien was head of the drafting. And I was a draftsman there for about, I don't know, seven, eight years, maybe longer.

And then he, Tom retired and they were making a lot of changes at the company. And, finally I became supervisor of the department. For a couple of years, and then the company was shutting down. So then I had the opportunity to either be transferred to Tucson or Bakersfield, California, which I didn't particularly care about either way.

But I went on to Denver and got on there for, with Anaconda, and then a year after I was there, I went with ARCO. And then I retired down there, '85.

JAAP: In Denver. So, well, if we back up a little, as a woman in that job, did you have, was there pushback? Were you respected? Talk a little bit about that.

PENALUNA: Well, you know, I guess maybe my personality, understanding a lot of the miners. I think what helped me become a supervisor was, when I was in the drafting, in the Hennessy building, many of the people that I worked with that were drafting, they didn't want to leave the desk. And as I was going, I wanted to see why I was doing the things I was doing.

So I asked if I could go underground to observe some of these jobs that we were doing, and they were very upbeat about it. But the others in the department really weren't too keen on that. So I started going underground with one of the bosses or somebody, and go down and observe why I was doing the things I was doing.

And, that became kind of a routine, two or three times a week. For about two years I did that.

JAAP: Wow. Can you tell me a little bit, what was underground like? What was your experience like?

PENALUNA: It was much different than I thought. I was, I felt more secure underground than I did going down the pit.

JAAP: Really?

PENALUNA: Yeah. When you get down in the bottom of the pit and those walls, nuh-uh. I didn't care for that too much. But the underground, oh, there was one or two times I was a little skeptical about where I was and why I was there. But basically I really enjoyed seeing and observing how things were done down there.

I went down and I'd make 3D drawings of an opening, for drills to come in, whether they were gonna drill horizontal, vertical, or whatever they're doing. And I'd go into a spot, that was just a wall, and decide how many cubic yards or whatever they were. So the contract miner could come in and cut out exactly what he needed.

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And make a 3D drawing for them to use, to do their work. But there were a few incidents underground that were rather funny at times. But basically the miners were great. But me being a woman and the only one, when you're looking at somebody face to face with a helmet on and the light, you can't tell if it's a man or a woman.

And that was becoming a little hairy to some of them. So I had my clothes up in the dry and one day I come back and all my clothes are painted pink. My boots, my hat, my bibs, so that when they saw me getting on the cage, they knew that it was a woman. Oh, there were several incidents that occurred.

I happened to be going underground one day and they, the cage stopped. I was at the Kelly and the cage stopped at the 600 level, which was the dynamite room. And when they stopped there, my father-in-law was coming into the cage and he never knew that I had been underground. And so I said, 'hello, Tom'.

And he looked and he looked, he said, 'what are you doing down here'? And I told him, I came down to paint the outhouses pink.

He didn't like me being underground at all, but I enjoyed it. I really did. There was several incidents where those men deserved everything they got down there. That's hard to work. For some, for some of it. I won't elaborate on the other, but it was much safer when I was down there, than it had been in earlier years.

JAAP: Like when your father was down there?

PENALUNA: Oh yeah. It's a totally different environment and atmosphere down there.

JAAP: Do you recall any accidents down there, during your time?

PENALUNA: Not in my time, but there was some bad ones before, while I was working there. But no, while I was there, no. It was fairly, I never, I really didn't have a problem down there. One time it was an elderly boss and they were going to make a brand new opening from the shaft over to the Steward, from the Kelly to the Steward. And they wanted me to go down and do some measuring. Well, when you go down the cage, all you're looking at is a cement wall. And they were going to have to break out that cement wall.

And they had a shelf that was about this deep, about 12, 13, 14 inches deep. And on that shelf was a freshwater barrel. And there was fresh water coming down into the barrel. And the fellow I was with, he was a boss, and they stopped the cage, right at the shelf. And I stepped off onto this ledge. And now I'm buckling my safety belt to a hook on both sides because the cage is going to leave us. And now we're sitting on the shelf and then nothing below us.

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And I'm standing there facing, and I've got all this paraphernalia on, with the board, and I'm standing here with the wall and I'm trying to measure, and we're calculating things and that water that was trickling into that barrel.

I moved, and the drip, it started going right down to the front of my pants. It went right down in my legs, into my boots. And I just kept working. I thought, what else can we do? There's just the two of us down there. And I kept looking at him and I was kind of laughing, but we just kept doing our job.

And finally I said, 'how much longer are we going to be here'? And he said, 'well, it's going to be a while, because when the cage went down, it went down to pick up other men and all of us, finally it came back up. Well, there's about 10 men on that cage now. This fella, a great big fella, turns around and we turned around to get in the cage and here's all these headlights looking at me.

And I was drenched from here all the way down. As soon as I got on the cage, somebody said, the fella's name that I was with, it was, the name was Babe. And somebody said, 'Babe, what did you do that poor girl'? And he happened to look down and see me. I was drenched. He said, 'I scared the piss out of her'.

And I was, the boots, they were full of water, just absolutely full. But my God, you know, you're standing on a ledge, could have been anything to...

JAAP: Oh my gosh. Yeah. I can imagine, oh what a great story.

PENALUNA: Black as coal. Yeah. But some of those things, but those men underground were, I never heard a cuss word. I never heard anything like I heard up in the offices, sometimes. The younger generation. The men underground were, they were great. I enjoyed working with them.

JAAP: How interesting. Yeah.

PENALUNA: But I worked up at the mine, at the Kelly for about four years, I guess. I was at the Hennessy building first, and then we moved, there was a trader up at the, where I could, if I had to change or anything, it was, that was my quarters.

JAAP: Sure. So you worked at the Kelly. So the things you were designing then...

PENALUNA: Yeah, I was still drafting.

JAAP: So tell me about some of those projects you worked on.

PENALUNA: Well, before the computers came out, we had a set of maps that came right back, well you've probably heard of the stope books?

JAAP: Yeah.

[00:27:00]

PENALUNA: Okay. The stope books were plans of the whole underground, by level by footage. And it's a history from 1890's or so of what's been mined out. But from those books, and they're documented in color by year, then you went to a 50 scale map and the sampler gave you the information. He went down daily and measured how much ore was taken out of a certain area or how much they dug out. So we kept track of that on 50 scale maps and recorded the date or the year. And then you went from 50 scale to a hundred scale, to 200 scale, to 500 to 1,000 and 2000. Each one of those maps had to be done individually because we didn't have the means of computers then.

So all these maps, I'm sure there's duplications, of overlays, but you can overlay those maps, the big maps, right over the stope books and they all match. And then they bring the linens in, and overlay them, and then they put the ore that was taken up and marked how much copper or whatever, mainly copper, in the linens. But all of this was done by hand daily. It was a real drawn-out process. And now, right about the tail end when I was, about the last two or three years that I was working, or maybe five, then they brought the computers in and I started to see - you could do it once or twice at the most.

And then you could enlarge or reduce whatever you wanted. And even all of our reports, if they had to be done graphically, you did them by hand or with a camera, the color. And it was a long drawn-out process. The computers just totally made drafting a whole new ballgame. What we did in weeks was done in about 10 minutes.

JAAP: Yeah, then did it require less manpower?

PENALUNA: Oh, by far. We used to have about six, seven draftsman in the offices up here. That's when the mines were all running.

There was mining. And then there was re-mining, you know, they go in maybe in 1925 or '30, excuse me. And they mined out, and that was all taken care of. But then, they might come back in and mine out again, the same area. Where you had to be aware of what had been mined before. Back in those days, they use timbers. And the timbers, if it's closed off and they rot, forms a gas. So if these fellows went back into re-mine, they had to be very careful that opening up and old working, the rot and the gas could get to them. So you had to make sure that you came and looked at the maps first, because sometimes those areas were reopened two or three times.

And then you started your pit. And you had to be careful after you got down so far that you're going into openings where men were working and then they're coming down blasting and whatnot. They had to keep the people away from those areas.

JAAP: Oh, sure.

PENALUNA: Well, we were in, we were right underneath the pit several times. Where the men were drilling up towards the opening in the pit. And you had to make sure that men were out of there, at noon they were going to blast in the pit. Because those 12 by 12 timbers that were holding up the ground, you could hear them creaking, you know.

JAAP: Yeah. I've never thought about that.

[00:32:00]

PENALUNA: Oh yeah, you had men underground, right below them because, they went clear over to the Leonard, where it used to be Meaderville. Yeah, when you went from the Kelly,, and a lot of times it took an hour, an hour and a half, when you left the shaft, to get to your workplace. You might be an hour and a half before you ever get there. Because you had to either go down and walk through, or if the train was available, to take you back into the work area. But you walked.

JAAP: So what, then they get about an hour to work before they then had to start walking before they blasted?

PENALUNA: It only blasts a certain time every day. And that was usually a change of shift. Like if they're getting off at four, they might blast at three or 3:30, so that when the miner walked away, he was out of there, with the smoke and all. He was out and the other crew hasn't come in yet. Same with the pit. I think it was noon or 12 o'clock or one o'clock and then at four or five o'clock they blast. But I don't know how they're doing things now. I haven't been working for 37 years, so it's a little, but not much different. Yeah the underground is not working, but the pit.

JAAP: So how did your job duties, did they change as the pit was started?

PENALUNA: The pit was already going, it started just about the time I went to work for the company.

JAAP: As underground ceased though?

PENALUNA: Well the underground wasn't ceasing at all. When the pit started, they had all that overburden to take off first. So they weren't getting down to the ore for a few years. But it didn't change underground. Except what was changing is the strikes. We were having a strike about every three years. And every time we have a strike, we had less and less people.

They kept closing down a mine. Yeah, things started really dwindling in the fifties.

I don't recall, I think the last strike, I dunno, it was '50, '59, '63, somewhere around there.

JAAP: Yeah. There was a big one in '59 I know.

PENALUNA: Yeah. , And I was working, I don't know if it was '59 or maybe there was one after, but I was in the drafting department and we had the camera in the photo department. And when the men were on strike, you know, they were taking pictures.

I don't know if this is to be, I don't think this should be recorded. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] But that's a portion of - yeah, there were some, a few hairy incidents, when the strikes were on.

JAAP: Can you recall any other incidents that you'd like to share?

PENALUNA: Well, not when I was working, when I went to work, but before. I can remember when I was in grade school or high school, there was three, two bosses lived just a few doors from our house.

And, my mother worked night shift a few times. And so she sent my sister and I out to my aunts who lived out on the flat, because these fellows didn't know if they were hitting the right house or not. When they were tearing them and scabbing. Yeah. And we had a couple of them in the block. And if they didn't ever hit the wrong house, and we were home, you know, they didn't care. They just broke the windows out and tore the houses apart.

JAAP: We have some photos of some of those incidents and yeah, it's devastating.

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PENALUNA: Yeah, threw the piano out of a window of a house down there on Granite or Park. But I can remember the incidents. And of course, the gun turrets up the headframes, where a man stood up there with a gun, when that yard was closed. Anybody come through there, they were going to shoot him.

That was 40 something, I think - '48, '49, one of 'em. But I remember that well. 'Cause you go up and down the streets of Butte and there was 'scab' written all over of the houses of the men that stayed behind the fence.

Other than that, I.. just don't put my incidents in the photos because I-- okay. Well, yeah, I don't want - that isn't my job.

JAAP: Yeah. So, tell me about in Denver, when you went to Denver, can you talk a little bit about? ,

PENALUNA: I went down there, '83, when they closed here. Or they were closing down. I went to Denver in '83. And my work was with Anaconda and I was in the drafting and the engineering down there.

And I mostly worked on the, I think things in Nevada, mostly around Sparks or Nevada. It was all mining underground or surface mining down there. And then, I was

only in there a year and I transferred with ARCO and that was in the oil industry, which was totally different from what I was doing, the mining. Except we did, where we were working with five or 600 feet of drilling here, we were working with two and three and 4,000 feet of drilling for oil.

I worked on that for...right now that's about what I was doing. But I had several draftsman working for me then, and that was an experience. I had three or four Black people. I don't know if you want to record this. Let me tell you, they were great. I had three of the best, if they were ever the best, Black fellows that worked for me.

[00:40:00]

One of them was a draftsman and two of them worked in the reproduction of photocopying maps and all. And, my first incident was - I was a woman supervisor and I had these people working for me. And one of them is a Black person. Every day, he'd come to work with one of those Payne Stewart hats on, and wouldn't take it off. And dark glasses and wouldn't take them off while he was working.

And the cubicles were just so high, you know, just much that you could see, but everything's open. Yeah. And he had a radio, a blaster. Well, there was about six of them in that whole area, or eight. And they all had their own radios, and they all had different stations. And we were never working up here, we never, you're never allowed to have anything like that.

And why would you, because you're working with figures all day. And, well, anyway, I kind of got on this fellow's case and I first went in there and I said, the hat has to come off. Well, the union. is upstairs in our Jericho tower, and they're all unionized. And, I said the hat has to come off and the dark glasses are going to come off.

They weren't prescription glasses. They were just something he - anyway. I went on about two weeks with him. And finally he wanted a meeting with me. 'Cause I think I was on his case. Well, there was another supervisor in our department who was also Black. And I said well, we'll have a meeting, but I'm bringing the other supervisor, and I didn't want this on a one-on-one basis.

So he comes in with the hat and the glasses on and wants to sit down and talk to me. And so I had the other supervisor there and I says, 'all right, Ben. Tell me what your story is'. And he says, 'I'm a Black minority, Vietnam veteran'. And was going right down the line of all the things that made him a minority.

And I stood up and walked over and I took his hand, and I says, 'welcome. I'm a white female minority supervisor. So we both have the same job'. Well, he didn't like that a bit. And I just said to him, I says, 'you might feel this way', but I says, 'I'm only doing the job I was given'. And I says, 'one of the jobs is you're not going to have that radio in that cubicle. It's coming out. Or you're not going to be here'.

[00:43:00]

Well, he says, 'I'm taking that up to the union'. And I said, 'that's fine'. But I says, 'when it comes around to giving you a radio on your job, you're not going to get one'. Because I says, 'the things that you do in here are too important to me, and that I have to come back here and check your work all the time'. Because they'd be listening to

soap operas, and things that went on from day to day. Here you are drilling with angles, and with the mapping.

And here we are listening to all this garbage. Well, anyway, he went up and we had a session with the union. Well, then I had all of the radios taken out of all the cubicles. And that was kind of a, I had documentation about this high. Anyway, then I had one young man that was, he was the keeper of the maps.

That's all he did is he stayed in that room and the engineers that come in, want a map that we had worked on, or what. He had to know where they were. And he sat right across the hall from me, from my office, I could see him. And he was a drug addict. And he'd come in at eight o'clock and he'd be as high as a kite.

Oh, he could do anything and everything. But about quarter to 11, you could just see him folding in the chair. And they always got 15 minutes break, and of course they took it. Well, out he'd go, and he'd come back in 15 minutes, and it'd be right up steady as could be. Well, this was going on. And then the maps, we'd go in to find a map and it wouldn't be where it belonged.

And one year, it took me to get rid of him. I never had so much documentation on one young man, and I spent half of my time writing the documentation on him rather than working.

[00:45:00]

JAAP: So did you find the unions challenging in that regard?

PENALUNA: Yeah, it was. 'Cause here, we didn't have unions in the - well, none of the office personnel or drafting - we weren't union at all, but down there they were.

But the two young men that I had in the copy room, now, they were totally different. One of them was an alcoholic. And the other one was, he wore his hair in dreadlocks and a cowboy hat, all the time. I mean, they were just a panic. And one day, I was given money as a supervisor to spend each month on my employees. Well, I guess they thought I should spend it with the supervisors.

I said, if the fellows did their work, I took 'em to lunch. Well, we were on the 22nd floor of the Marriott hotel and on the main floor, the Marriott hotel and the restaurant and everything was right there.

At least two fellas - I don't know if you're familiar with Denver - they lived out at 5 point. 5 Point is the Black area of Denver. And I think the best place to ever eat is a chicken, like Kentucky Fried Chicken, or something. Well, I took them into the Marriott for lunch? Well, they died and went to heaven, the two of them. And while we were eating, they had a style show. And the one with the cowboy hat, this woman is walking by him and she had a beautiful designed belt or something on her, and I'm not paying one bit of attention, but all of a sudden, as she's walking by, he says, 'how much the belt?' And I thought he was saying something about how much she was. And she came back to me. She said, 'what did you ask me'? And he says, 'how much the belt'? And she says, 'I don't know. I'm just the model'.

He says, 'Oh'. And he was giving her this stuff. And I said, 'Bob, you don't talk to the models. You just let them walk by'. 'Oh', he said, 'that's a nice'. He liked that, you

know? And I says, 'you just be quiet'. Well, we got through the lunch and the other one, Ben, that was the alcoholic. What'd he have, what do you call that drink, that they got about five shots in it?

CLARK GRANT: Long Island iced tea?

PENALUNA: Yeah.

JAAP: Yeah. How'd he come up with that one?

PENALUNA: I thought he was talking about iced tea. Well, I found out. That's why he did well, because he probably needed it. But anyway, we're getting up to leave and we're going out the door and we're going to walk down the street for about 15 minutes, one of them on each side of me.

[00:48:00]

And Bob over here says, looked at me, and he had the cowboy hat, and I'm all I'm thinking of is, Oh, if people in Butte, Montana could see these two characters. And they said, 'don't you feel like an Oreo cookie?'

And the two of them, they were really good workers. Then they decided they were going to take me to lunch, in their spots. So they take me down to 5 Point, in the company van. And after I got down there, I thought, this was the foolish thing to do. But I go, they stopped and parked in front of this - I don't know, it was a restaurant and a bar. And when you walked in, there was a woman behind the bar - everybody's Black - and there was a policeman, a Black policeman standing out in front. And I thought, oh, this is...Anyway, they get in there and they said, 'now, you have to order your drink and your meal right here at this counter', as you walked in.

So when I walked in, they ordered and the woman says, 'what are you going to have'? And I'm looking around. And I had to have a beer, according to them and I says, 'well, do you have something light'? She looks up at me and says, 'the only thing light in here, honey, is you.'

Oh God. And I told them, this is my last trip to 5 Point. We're not coming here again. But I mean, they were really gracious. I really enjoyed them, but it was a whole different atmosphere. Working down there with and not being around Blacks, it was totally different. But the difference of one and difference of the other two is day and night.

JAAP: Oh, that's a great story. Yeah.

[00:50:00]

PENALUNA: Taking them into the Marriott was a total - I have never seen any of those people since. So I guess I left Denver then.

JAAP: All right. So you retired in '85, did you say? Well, after you retired, where did you go after you retired? Did you stay in Denver and live there, or did you come back?

PENALUNA: The minute I got out of there I came back. This was home. I had a home here and we have a place in Georgetown.

So we went up and lived at Georgetown. I had rented my home here for five years, thinking I was going to be down there a lot longer. The incentive package to get out was so great. I'm coming home. So I lived at Georgetown for three years and then moved back to Butte.

JAAP: Right. Well, what was the community like when you moved back after...you know, mining had shut down...

PENALUNA: Well, it was kind of disheartening because a lot of the people I worked with were forced to leave here too. And many of them were like say in their fifties, losing their job, and either they transferred and they couldn't afford to even leave here. Some of them went where, to Gillette, Wyoming or down to Black Thunder or whatever it was?

And they were commuting and some of them were living down there a month at a time before they could come home to their families. It was devastating to see what happened here and how many people were laid off. Yeah. And then, it not only hit the mine, it hit the businesses. And now look at it, this many years. Where do you go on down here? I used to, when I was in high school and I lived, I told you, by the Anselmo. I walked to school every day to Butte High. And there were times at eight o'clock in the morning you couldn't walk on the street, the sidewalks in Butte, because every business was open and people were on that street and it was full.

Now, you're lucky if you see a car go by. I mean, and what do we have? Walmart? Sad situation here.

JAAP: Do you see it improving?

PENALUNA: No. Do you?

JAAP: Gosh, I don't know.

PENALUNA: You might, maybe you do see it, from your...Well, you know, I've been going South for 30 years. And I haven't been South for five years. I've been back here. And I just went down five weeks ago. It was around the Phoenix area. I saw three cities built in five years that were never there when I left. And I mean 55,000 people. I can't believe it. And the high rises that have gone up down there.

And then you come back here and you see one or two houses. But look at Bozeman and look at Missoula. Helena, any of them. How much they've grown. Butte hasn't.

JAAP: Why do you think that is? Do you have thoughts of why we haven't grown?

PENALUNA: My feeling is that we don't have the lobbyists that we used to have in Helena when we had, when we were up and we were the big guns.

[00:54:00]

The Anaconda Company was feeding the state of Montana in those days. And that's all gone by the wayside. So, now, there's no, I don't know where you'd get a pull at all from Butte. Seems like everything is growing. Bozeman, the big money has come in there. Big time. Bozeman, Manhattan. Belgrade All that.

And then I was over in Helena here a week or two ago, and I never even realized how much that had built towards Montana City. That's like another city over there.

It's disheartening to come back. When you see all the building going on. Pocatello, that used to be about the size of Anaconda. Look at it now.

It's totally different. And when I see Uptown, it's terrible. Like, and the Hennessy building used to be the main stay. And I don't know, there's nothing in there, is there?

JAAP: No, the market has closed in there. Yeah. And there's in the building, some offices.

PENALUNA: The market closed?

JAAP: Just closed. They closed up shop two weeks ago.

PENALUNA: Really?

JAAP: Yeah, just put a sign on the door.

PENALUNA: Oh, that's too bad. I'm sorry to hear. Well after I see the mall out there. But even in Phoenix, when I go down to the Chandler mall, and it was a really a beautiful mall, we went down there a month ago and I don't think there were 20 cars. And you can see that everything is going to be out of there shortly too.

JAAP: Yeah. I think malls around the country are, they're a dying thing. Yeah.

PENALUNA: Yeah. Oh, well, I'm really sad. If that's gone, where is everybody shopping? If you go to Helena, or you go to the Bozeman, you're going to meet half of Butte people because that's where they're shopping.

JAAP: We had to get a microwave one time, and we couldn't get one in town. We couldn't get a microwave in the color we needed. So we drove to Helena. And of course, on a Sunday afternoon, it was like, yeah, we ran into lots of people. And you think, that's not how it should be.

PENALUNA: Well, they keep telling you to shop here, but you don't have anything to shop for.

JAAP: Right. I mean, when I can't get the microwave, I need in town, you know, there were three microwaves in town.

PENALUNA: When I go to Arizona, I go down to Casa Grande, which is south of Phoenix. And that was a mining town. In fact, the Anaconda Company used to be involved with it a little bit.

[00:57:00]

And when I first started going down there, there was like 28,000 people. It's now around 55,000. It's just a sleeper for Phoenix, because the Indian reservation is between and Phoenix can't expand that much. There's a Walmart in Casa Grande that makes this look like a midget. I mean, everything is in there. It's huge. And then they have what they call Fry's grocery store, which is about as big as Walmart is out here.

And they have furniture, they have everything in it. And this is just a small bedroom community, south of Phoenix. It's totally different merchandise

I don't know if you remember when Penny's was here. The merchandise in Pennies, it was nothing like the merchandise you'd see when you go down to a bigger city. To me, it was all a secondhand, or the stuff that was left over from one of the big stores. They dropped it in here. That's how I felt. And I think Herberger's was getting the same way.

JAAP: Interesting. Yeah.

PENALUNA: Well, I don't know what else. I don't know what brings people in here anymore. Are they going to ever start that medical thing? On Arizona and Park?

JAAP: Well, he just died. Didn't he? The guy who, oh his name is escaping me.

CLARK GRANT: The financing fellow. That's what I heard. They missed several deadlines.

PENALUNA: I really wonder about Tabish out there, in Anaconda.

GRANT: He's a convicted murderer, did you know that?

PENALUNA: Oh, I knew that. I can tell you the whole story about that. I was in Arizona when all that took place.

[00:59:00]

GRANT: I trust that guy, about as far as I can throw him.

PENALUNA: Well, I don't understand Bitcoin to begin with. So I don't know.

GRANT: Few really do.

PENALUNA: Well, I agree. And once in a blue moon on the news, I'll hear Bitcoin is worth two or \$3,000. And I'll think, how did that happen? The next day it's 6,000. And then it goes back down to 2000. And I thought, Oh boy, I don't know how this thing is running.

GRANT: To call it mining is a bit misleading.

PENALUNA: Well, completely, there's no mining involved - out of your pocket. I don't know how you make the exchange even. ,But this is where they come for, the greedy come to Butte or to Anaconda where they can, I don't know. I'm not too, I don't see anything that Butte and Anaconda is. Every time they bring up some big thing for Butte, every time it falls through. Or it never gets off the ground. How many studies have we paid for?

JAAP: Yeah.

GRANT: My favorite is the pigeon study. Did you hear about that one?

PENALUNA: Recently?

JAAP: It was five years ago, or maybe not that much, but yeah. \$70,000 to see that there are pigeons in vacant buildings. I mean, yeah.

PENALUNA: The pigeons caused some deaths in this city that should have been, you know... when the Steward or the Con. Or the Original, might've been the Original. The openings in the glass of the hoist house? It was pigeons all got in there after years and years. Well, the droppings in there caused a real health hazard and they were going in there cleaning that up without masks and all, not realizing. And a couple of those fellows died from the exposure.

JAAP: Did they?

PENALUNA: Yeah. So now they have a study? When I see those, some of these pigeons, somebody feeds them out there closer to where I live. And I think, somebody oughta come out here and fumigate them, or do whatever the hell they have to do to get rid of them. Because every time I see one, I'd like to shoot it. I don't see what they're good for. Them and the magpies. I get magpies out there, so.

JAAP: Yeah. They're down by my house. We have a lot of those. Yeah. Don't see them up here.

PENALUNA: All they do is steal the eggs from the chicks out there somewhere.

Yeah. That isn't the only study. When I first went to work for the company, they had a study because they were getting rid of the pit, or not getting rid of it, but gonna start the pit. And we had a study, I don't know, 200, \$300,000 that they brought these people in and studied Butte, that were going to move the city out to the flat.

Yeah. I'm sure you saw that. Looked at that. I think they'd done that about five times and every time where they wanted to put the city, the people in Butte didn't want the city.

JAAP: Yeah, the butte Forward Project, and moving them down where Stodden Park, and mine all of...

[01:03:00]

PENALUNA: Dewey Boulevard once. Once out by Lydia's. They should have put Meaderville out by Lydia's. That's what they should have done. Just picked it up and moved it out there. That would have been a better situation than what they did. And then we went up and built all these beautiful homes up on McGlone Heights. To move the people from the east side.

JAAP: How did you feel about that when all that was happening? Did you at the time....

PENALUNA: You know, I wasn't affected, by it. If I was a homeowner, I might've been. I was, well, I was at a stage of my life where it didn't make any difference what we were doing because it wasn't affecting me and it wasn't affecting my family. But the people that lived out there, it was devastating. Because you're, whole neighborhoods, you know, you're wiped out. And it wasn't a case that they wanted to move. They were told to move.

But in some cases they had, they came up with a better house. But they were still not together. And I don't know if you knew Lydia, she was at the Rocky Mountain. Well, when she bought on the flat, she bought a whole block. And then she built a home and then moved her two sisters and their houses next to her out there.

So everybody's together in the same block. And so they were kind of the same block out there as they were over here. And several of them did that. Dewey Boulevard, I think has got that - that whole one side is people that lived together out there. No, I think it might've been good in some respects, but the idea was they were going to move the city out there. That pit was supposed to come clear over in here, you know, almost Excelsior street. I mean, when you look at Park Street.

JAAP: I mean, even look at some of the stuff on East Park that was torn down that you think, gosh, that did not need to be torn down.

PENALUNA: Yeah, it was just solid buildings and bars all the way at Luigi's and all of them. But then, now they turn around, and now they're building out there. And I'm thinking, why did they let their ground go again? Why did they even move those homes? Except when they were blasting, of course, it was shaking the hell out of the houses over there.

Because my husband's side, they lost homes up there on Broadway Street. Even up here on the Hill, they were going to block cave. So they started moving things off of the Hill up here to block cave. And the Columbia Gardens went. Why? For what they got out of it.

[01:06:00]

JAAP: Yeah that was pretty devastating.

Well you know, it was. But you have to think about that. There weren't that many cars around in those days. And going to the Columbia Gardens was about what the kids in Butte could afford. And you went to picnics, your family went on a picnic. They went to the Columbia Gardens, where else was there to go? For me to be able to go to Anaconda was like going to Las Vegas. So the Columbia Gardens was always full of people. But as years went on, even when I was in high school, the Columbia Gardens wasn't what probably my mother and those thought. And as years went on, it became less and less the place to go. And the city of Butte was starting to go down too. In the late fifties, Butte, when they lost all these employees, the Columbia Gardens, now people couldn't afford it. And the company closing down was closing down the Columbia Gardens. They gave it to the city, the city couldn't handle it. Couldn't even afford the maintenance on it. So yeah, it's changed a lot.

JAAP: Definitely. Yeah.

PENALUNA: The theaters were all, there was five theaters around here then. Now you're down to one.

Anaconda has a theater. Deer lodge has a theater. Phillipsburg has a theater. Butte's going to become a Phillipsburg, a Deer Lodge here, if it keeps going. Phillipsburg is booming. It is. I used to, well, we had a place at Georgetown. I went over there and worked on mapping for the loop to go through Anaconda and come out at Drummond, for the state highway.

And I said, when I first retired, I says, you know, this could be another Aspen, Colorado, and it's getting there. It's getting there. They've got a lot of money moving in there.

JAAP: Yeah. Phillipsburg is a nice little community.

PENALUNA: I don't know if you want all that information.

GRANT: Certainly.

JAAP: Well Clark, have you been jotting down any questions?

[01:09:00]

GRANT: Yeah, I put a few down. It's usually what we do over the course of the conversation, I'll write down some questions I wanted to follow up on. Not necessarily in any order. But I was wondering if you knew about your grandparents route from Ireland to America?

PENALUNA: Yeah. My grandmother and grandfather McDonald came from Cork. My grandmother was from Tipperary. My grandfather was from Cork. And I went over there about 15 years ago. I never really got a chance to visit with anyone, but I went to where they took off in the boats to come over here.

I just can't imagine them having the nerves to get on a boat and not know where it's going or where they're going. But the famine was so bad over there and when my grandfather and grandmother, they ended up in San Francisco. And because my grandfather was a miner, they came on to Butte. And my grandmother owned a rooming house on Park Street. It's still there. She had the rooming house and he worked as a miner and she was - single men that went to Tech and worked in the mine. Mike Mansfield was one of them. And he lived in my grandmother's rooming house while they went to school.

But my grandmother, who spoke Gaelic very elegantly, would not let her family speak Gaelic. And she wouldn't allow, and my mother used to speak it, but she was never allowed to say it or say a thing about it. My grandmother, she says, when I came to the United States, I want to be a US citizen. And I don't want to talk about Ireland again. Because they were so devastated.

Oh, like, when I went through that, it's kind of a museum there, now. I went through there and I thought, how could anybody get on a ship and head not knowing where they were headed or what was ahead of them? When you have nobody in front of you to give you guidance, like if you're going from here to Anaconda and you didn't know anybody over there and where you were going.

It just blew my mind after going over there and seeing what they went through to come here. And I can understand why she didn't want to have anything to do with Ireland after that. And I don't recall much about my, on my father's side, except my grandmother did live with us for a few, my young years.

[01:12:00]

She had a sister lived in Whitefish, but I don't know much about my father's side of

the, on my grandparents. But my grandmother, well, I had to be maybe 10 years old. Em, there used to be two cafes on Main Street. There was the Shawamigan and Greens. Well, my grandmother went to lunch one afternoon and I don't know which one it was. I think it was Greens. But she got food poisoning and she died within five days or so afterwards.

And the thing I remember most is my grandmother was buried out of our house. And that was a big thing in Butte then. Living up on Franklin Street, it was 12 steps up to the front room of our house from the street. All I could think of is those men bringing that casket in there, whether she was going to still be in it when they got her up there. But they wake 'em for five, six days.

And so everything in the front room of our house was moved. Our kitchen became a bar, because the Irish. And I was moved out to my aunt's house. But I can remember plain as day, today, the casket and all the flowers. And it was just like being in mortuary in the front room of our house and everybody coming.

And they did that up until, I don't know how long ago they quit doing that. But I thought that was the most gruesome thing I could ever think of. 'Cause it w it's still in my mind. They did both my grandmother and my grandfather, buried 'em out of the house.

And when my grandfather was working in the mines, they never had all the bib overalls and that. Actually, he looked like he was going to work in an Uptown store. He'd have a vest. you know, and they'd have the tie on. And then they'd have the hat, regular hat. That's how they worked underground.

They didn't have hard hats and all that. They had candles and some of them, they started using that light that had something in the front of it. When you think back, no wonder they had so many accidents underground. The security wasn't - what I could see, and talking to the men, myself, and then going up there at the later years.

[01:15:00]

Yeah. That's why it never bothered me near as much as it would have. And they rock bolt, you know, they that's totally different than timbering. Not that I don't know if it was any secure. Maybe made you feel that way.

GRANT: Right. Was the rock bolt actually safe?

PENALUNA: I don't know if it was any safer than looking at something this big around instead of a 12 by 12.

Yeah. But when you hear the 12 by 12 creakin', that kind of got your attention. Oh yeah.

GRANT: Did your dad ever talk about his work underground? Did he come home and talk about what he did that day?

PENALUNA: He was a diamond driller, somewhat not much. It was like everybody else, you know, he was probably more interested in hunting or fishing.

We talked more about that. As far as he might talk about something they brought in or something. Or a drill got stuck in the hole or whatever they did. But no, never, ever. And I was, I was young enough, I didn't really pay attention to that. It wasn't the conversation of the day in our house.

GRANT: Sure. I was curious too, the grocery store you worked in, what all did you sell? Could you tell us more?

PENALUNA: Well the time I was in the fourth grade, I was pedaling the candy to the kids, but as I was there, I started stocking shelves. It was a neighborhood grocery store.

It had meat, not steaks, but lunch meats and cheese, you know, and everything else you'd get in a store, but it wasn't a meat market. But we had a lot of dairy products, which I didn't like, because of the milk that had soured. Me and the smells didn't get along very good.

I worked it, from the fourth grade to the eighth, freshman year in that grocery store. And then I went out and worked for my cousin after school, in high school. And then I went to work for Pay'n'Save, which was Skinny Riordan, if you heard about him. He used to own KXLF TV, and he owned Pay'n'Save market. And his daughter had a dancing school upstairs, you know where...

GRANT: Is that where the Party Palace is now...

PENALUNA: No, It was down in the flat. It was. You know where the ACE hardware was up til a week or two ago? Okay, come this side, Downy Drug was on the corner. Southside Hardware is where great harvest is. Okay.

[01:18:00]

On this corner, this way was Downy Drug. And next to that, all the rest of that building was Pay'n'Save. It was a big grocery store, almost like Safeway. But that was the biggest home owned store until Safeway came in. There used to be five Safeways in Butte. And I worked there, I don't know, three, probably four or five, three or four years. Whatever it was, it was too long.

Yeah. It was a drug store and a grocery store and a meat market and a toy store and a cigar store. It was all. Yeah. And then he had the KXLF TV offices and his daughter, Frankie Riordan, had a school of dance up there. And they sold everything. They sold mining boots. They sold everything. Because, I don't know if you ever knew, we had the company stores, the men that they brought.

Part of my job before I ever became a draftsman was Ann Slanders of Butte. And that was, the company was short of miners. And so they went back to Virginia and the Appalachia and brought in about 600 miners. Well, I was given the job of meeting the families at the train. And taking them to the beautiful company housing

At that time, the company used to have chauffeurs and they had the big limousines. Well, they gave me, it was a Chrysler Imperial. Do you remember the big Chrysler? That was what they gave me to go down to the depot and pick up these people. And it was the middle of winter one time.

And I'm down at the depot and I call this name out. And all I got is a Mary-something. And so they had it on the loudspeaker that Mary, whoever, please come to this, meet me. Now it's night, it's probably 10 above. This woman gets off the train. She's got a muumuu on, like a house dress, pair of thongs, and she's got about four little kids. And that's all they have on, is just a little tiny dress, thongs.

[01:21:00]

And it's like 10 above. And I'm thinking, what in hell are they, how did they get on that train? But it's about all they had. And then when she went to get her belongings, here's two cardboard boxes tied with rope, and this is what they had. And I'm standing there thinking my God, you know, nothing else. And the father has been already brought here, maybe a month or so before.

In order to get here, they probably sold the kids, toys, everything the kid owned. And then I put them in the car and take him up to these beautiful rooms. I don't know if you've ever seen some of them. One of them used to be right up here on Main Street - Mullan. The Mullan apartments, the green ones. Then the housing up there off Excel. the green ones up there, all of these places don't have a backdoor. And so there's only one way in, and the same way out. And a lot of this was jail bait. They didn't go to prison. They came to Butte to work in the mines. And then I'm up here putting the people in these Kenwood housing. And we had them out on, right behind the Town Pump, right by the civic center, that housing behind there, that was the company's. And then where Safeway is on Front Street, the front end of that, going towards the track, that was a great big two story housing project. And all these places, we were putting these people in.

Most of them couldn't read or write. And they'd come up to the office and they weren't married. When they come into the company housing, when you brought the man down to the office to be hired, ask his name. My name is Mike. He'd get everything, and he'd say, how many children do you have? Well, first they'd ask you if you're married. No you aren't married. How many children do you have? Oh six. What's their name? Well, Mike, Pete, whatever. How old are they? I don't know. Maybe five, six, who knows? Birthdays? No, you have no idea. We'd say, well, we have to have an insurance, we have to be able to call somebody back in Virginia in case of emergency. Well, call my mom. Well, what is your mother's name? I don't know.

[01:24:00]

That's all they ever called her was Ma. I mean, my mouth drops when all this was going on. No education whatsoever. None. They can't read. They can't write. In order to hire him, you have to send a Butte miner down with him, so he can read the signs, whether to yield, or you're in danger or anything.

But 90% of coal miners do not mine like a copper miner. They mine on their belly or on their knees. Because they go just into the veins. And so they go underground with the Butte miner. When you had three shifts, one shift is responsible for the next shift, especially if they're contracting, because these fellows are trying to get this ore out.

Well, once you have to go in with the Virginian, and the next shift to come down, and the handles of the shovels are cut off. Because the guy that was on his knees or on his belly, he's out there. Oh, I mean, I'm telling you horror stories. So they'd come up and complain. The Butte miner was complaining about them.

And then some of them went underground and once they got down, they were panicky. They wanted to get out. And they wouldn't go up the shaft. And you're going to have a long ride up because the ladder goes up about a mile, you know? So some of them would quit that day.

Then we had a case of, down here on Montana Street, some of these guys got wind that if you had an accident of any type, they could get some money. And so they got a brilliant idea that, because if they cut off this little finger, they could get about \$5,000. So two of them down there, eight o'clock, first thing in the shift, they go down and get a log and they put their finger down and the one guy cuts the other one's off. And they go back up, now that workman's comp and all this stuff is worth 5,000 bucks to him. Well, that's money those guys had never seen in their life. I mean, this is the kind of stuff that was going on. And then, we put them in the company housing and at the time, Asolo had the store going.

He put a TV in each one of these homes. So they had a TV and a place to be. Well, my job was to go in because we were striking every other minute. Here are all these people in here and they didn't know how to handle money. So when a paycheck came, you put them in the company's store.

[01:27:00]

Now, one of the company's stores was Courthouse Grocery. The other one was Main National down here on Main Street. Another one was the something mercantile, was on East Mercury Street. And these people never knew what to do with money, never how to handle it. Well, then some of our famous grocery store owners became well aware of how to handle it.

And all of a sudden the Courthouse Grocery, for one, they sold boots. They sold bib overalls, they sold underwear. Because that kept that man in that store, he had no way of getting out. And then I'd have to go down and say, if one of them wanted to get out of the company store, and wanted to get the paycheck, I go down and they say, would you please clear it, clean out his bill? And, next week or two weeks, I want him to get his check. Not coming to you. Well, they had a way of saying he owed interest on something. So the check would keep, I mean, fighting with them, well, it became - but these people had no conception of money. No conception.

I'd go up to the houses to see these people. And the kids would be in the first grade, teaching the parent how to read the book, you know. Or I had to go up and I had to have either a reason, like a strike, are they doing okay? So I'd just walk in the front door, no further, and ask them if they were doing okay.

Well, I'd be talking to the woman. The guy would be over here laying on the couch. And I'm trying to talk to the two of them. Oh no, that's not her husband. That's the guy from down the street or next door. Their whole idea of life was totally, they don't live like normal people do.

I go down, right by the civic center, and I'm in there one night and it's at nighttime. And I didn't do that often, but I was called out there. And as I'm walking by, a truck is pulled up, nose right up to the front door. There's it's a cement step up to the house. The truck is pulled right up to the door. I can hardly get in the door. And I thought, what the hell is that truck there for? So I go knock on the door. I walk in and the front room kitchen is like one room. And then there's a bedroom in the back. Well, I'm not to walk any more than two steps inside that front door, and the woman's in there.

[01:30:00]

And I walked in and they had put a bit or whatever, up into the ceiling with a hook. And he had taken the motor out of that truck. And he brought it in the house and had it hangin' in there. He was fixing this motor. There was grease.

JAAP: He had his own little garage.

PENALUNA: He had the kit, the table, everything. And I looked at him and I said, 'what the hell are you doing?' 'My truck don't work and I can't get to work. I got to get the motor piston or something'. I says, 'if you don't get this truck out of here, you're not going to be in here very long'.

I called up at Kenwood. And I says, 'you better go out there. We got a real case going.' But this is the way these people were. The house was nothing to them. Indoor plumbing. I mean, I thought I was taking them a disaster area. Indoor plumbing didn't even mean anything to them.

And a washer and dryer. Hell. If it started vibrating because it was at her, they thought it was attacking them. Oh yeah. Those are the places I really had some experiences.

GRANT: What was your title at that time?

PENALUNA: Like I said, Ann Slanders. I don't, I can't even tell you if I had a title. I'm trying to think. I was just working in the personnel department and they decided to put me in. Oh, god.

GRANT: Go check out all these hicks?

PENALUNA: And every time I'd end up at the depot, somebody that I knew, or my mother knew, and they'd say, 'Sheila goin' down to pick up her relatives?' Oh my God. Oh, it was sad. It was really sad. Oh, about two families ever stayed in Butte, out of all that. I don't remember the Midnights, but I remember people named Garb. Helen and, he was a total illiterate, and she was a principal of a high school back in Virginia. Now take that. And she married him on a dare.

JAAP: Careful what you do, I guess. Yeah.

PENALUNA: And I think they're the only ones I ever knew that stayed in Butte. The rest of them. Yeah. There was quite a few years there, but Kirby Crowley, I guess maybe, do you know that name? He was in charge of going to Virginia and recruiting these people. I guess if they were a miner, a coal miner, to bring them in here. And my God, the company set them up. And half of them when they left, they took the TVs and everything else with them. They should have tore all those buildings. Well, I

don't know. I guess they remodeled those places up there for the students, I guess, up on Excel.

The ones out there behind by the civic, I don't know what they look like. I've never been over in that area anymore, to right behind the Town Pump there.

GRANT: I have to go. I want to go look now.

PENALUNA: You know, I don't think that's legal, or was legal, that you could have any building without a backdoor. I always thought anything you rented had to have two doors in it. But I was told never to walk in. Well, in most cases, didn't have to worry because I didn't want to be in there anyway.

GRANT: You know, up above the Anselmo now, especially on Empire Street, it's just a lot of barren land. Like the syndicate pit.

[01:34:00]

PENALUNA: Now I don't remember, from the Anselmo, from Caledonia and on the East side of the Anselmo mine, as you went up, and then we played all through there. And growing up, that was always, I never did see houses up in there. But they, you know, they were gonna, they found a streak of, I dunno if it was gold or what the hell, from the Lexington all the way down to the Anselmo.

And I think they were gonna just go in, like almost surface mining there. And I think they did. They put a tunnel. Yeah. I think they were also going to do the School of Mines one time and that went by the wayside. They got in enough trouble taking, getting rid of the Columbia Gardens without getting...didn't they, they went out towards Rocker.

They did open up that quite a bit through there too. One time. I don't know.

GRANT: That's what I was going to ask you about is, what games did you have in the neighborhood or did you have childhood friends?

PENALUNA: At all?

GRANT: Yeah, over here.

PENALUNA: Oh yeah, well, of course with no TV, in fact, just radio. So we played kick the stick and kick the can and chase. Hockey. Played football on ice skates. Sleigh ride from Washington Street, I don't know if you're familiar with where...

GRANT: Gets real steep, doesn't it.

PENALUNA: Okay. If you go down towards the West Copper Street and down in, okay, we'd get up there three blocks. We'd have to pass Washington and Jackson, we'd get on the sleds and we'd go three blocks and ended up down in the Hub Addition rink. You know, somebody coming down the street - that had killed us, but there weren't that many cars around there, you know? Yeah, those are the games we played.

That's about it. Or else, climbing Christmas, not Christmas trees, apple trees and stealing apples or A grandioso thing. We used to be in the mine, the mine yard, the

Anselmo was the carpenter shop. All the big 12 by 12 timbers came from Bonner. And that was where they stored 'em. And they were cutting him. So there was huge sawdust piles. And that was all fenced. So as kids, we'd crawl under the fence and we'd get gunnysacks and we'd steal the sawdust. Because in the dumps, there was the telephone pole and we'd shimmy the telephone pole, and we stole the rope out of the mine.

Now think about this. It's a rope that's about this big and thorny as could be. We'd take it up and put it on the top of the telephone pole. And then we made a pit for all the sawdust so we could play like Tarzan, fall in the pit. Another thing we used to do, there was a manhole, right by the, Anselmo. And we'd get in there. Oh, a bunch of us kids would be in there.

[01:38:00]

And then the sewer line coming from Walkerville, I don't know about this high, and we'd take a lunch and we'd get down in that sewer and we could walk almost up to Walkerville. And if anything ever happened, nobody'd ever found us. We used to pack a lunch.

JAAP: You're not the first person to play, we had another person that played in the storm drains.

PENALUNA: That was a ritual. And it took years. My mother said, 'what the hell would you have done if something happened?' Well I says, 'you'd have never found us'. And we did that. I don't, I couldn't tell you how many times. We'd always think it was adventure because we wanted to know where we were going to come out. I think about that now. And I, Oh my God.

JAAP: And you brought a sack lunch. That's pretty great.

GRANT: Do you have grandchildren?

PENALUNA: I don't have any children.

GRANT: Okay. Do you feel like kids nowadays are deprived of that kind of adventure?

PENALUNA: Oh, absolutely because, they're too up with the iPhones and the computers. In fact to me, I think they've lost the childhood part of it. The fun type. Baseball. The thing when you have to be driven to an event or to be able to go out and play is absolutely ridiculous in my mind.

In fact, I think when I looked at the school buses that go by my house with one and two kids in it, I'm about ready to commit hari-kari. Because they only live about three blocks from me, or a block. And the school's right there. They're not walking to school. Hell. I think it's sad.

GRANT: Just the culture of liability you think?

PENALUNA: Well, sure. I remember, when we went out and played, we played on the dumps of the mine. I mean, we were rolling down the Hill. Then they went and

built playgrounds and now the kids come home with broken arms and legs, from the playgrounds, with all the fancy equipment. Well, we never had a problem.

Well, I'll give you an example of my childhood. My mother worked probably six months and put it in layaway a baby buggy for me. And that was a big thing. And it had balloon tires. You had to, you had to put air in them. And of course I was about as receptive to a baby buggy. My idea was a football.

Well, my mother brought this beautiful baby buggy for me at Christmas, and she had to work that day. And the neighbor across the street is keeping an eye on us. And I'm sitting there looking at that baby buggy. And I thought, well, that isn't my thing. So I took the doll out and gave it to my sister.

[01:41:00]

And I went out in the backyard. And then I ran over to the mine yard. And got a board, a couple of boards, and I used my mother's paring knife and I made a hole with it, got a bowl. I made a go cart out of it, the baby buggy. I was taken all the kids in the neighborhood up and down the street. I thought my mother was going to kill me, when - here's the baby buggy sitting with no wheels on it and making a cart. But everybody, we were all outside playing. You know, we were down at the rink, even in the wintertime, it would be 20 above or 10 above, didn't make any difference to us. But you don't see kids outside at all. The computers have ruined the kids.

And I got to tell you, what I really feel is the dress code went out the door when they quit making the kids dress properly at school. That all went. We were in uniforms all during grade school. And high school, we had to wear a dress and the boys had to wear it, they couldn't wear jeans. But I look at the way people go now to the church or to events. It's sad. And the moral code went with it because the kids don't really care anymore, that I can see.

And when I see what these protesters are doing at the colleges, I'm wondering what the hell is going on in college? The teachers are worse than the students. Were you a professor or teacher?

JAAP: Nope. Nope. You're free to say....

PENALUNA: It doesn't make any difference to me, 'cause I went down to Missoula to buy tickets one day for something. And I walked in and I asked this fella, I says, 'could you show me where the office is to buy 'em'? He was one of the professors. I thought he had to be a student, the knees out of his pants and a t-shirt that was half torn. And I thought, well, no wonder the students are the shape they're in.

But it's the same with the doctors. I don't know a doctor from a nurse or a nurse from the aide when you go in the hospitals anymore. It's all the same thing. The dress code went with it.

GRANT: I was hoping you could tell us a little bit more about the underground, especially since we can never go there. What did it smell like? What did it look like, riding the cage?

PENALUNA: The deeper you went, the hotter it became. But you know, the Kelly mine was, they called it the down draft.

[01:44:00]

They blew the air down and the air conditioning went down. Let's just say like this last winter, those men had to wear long underwear. And, what do you call it? What do you call the overalls with bibs? Bib overalls. And then you had, the pack, which to me, it was like 50 pounds between the battery for the hat, with the helmet. And then you had to have a safety pack on you. By the time you got all that garb on you, when you're going to go underground, you had to have a heavy slicker. The Kelly was totally different because the Kelly was cemented from top to bottom. The rest of the shafts weren't. So that was one area that wasn't bad.

But, when you had to get on that cage to go down, it was one thing. Cause that down draft, you could almost freeze to death. But let me tell you, being a miner, they didn't go down like they'd take a visitor. They took you, whoosh, they dropped you down. But coming up, now I went down there, it's right below the - the 3,600 used to be the bottom of the Kelly and then they decided to go down to I think the 4,000.

And we went down there, and it was just the shaft. There was a slight opening, about half of this room, dug out. It was 140 degrees down there. And the air is blowing down into that, but it's a long way as you know, coming down. What you did is, when you're going to make an opening further back, you'd have to put three men stay at the shaft. And three men would start to work. And they'd work about 15 minutes and they were to come back out. And, if they didn't come out, one of these guys went in to drag them out because, but this is all they did. 15 minutes. Until they could finally get air in there.

But I went down into one opening. I can't remember if we were getting closer to the Leonard, which, we were under the Berkeley Pit and, we got over there and they wanted to check a bulkhead. The bulkhead has a monitor on it to tell you if there's any pressure coming from the bulkhead at all. And I was with an engineer, as we're walking back in there, it just gets hotter and hotter, and the water, I can just feel it and running right down.

[01:47:00]

I said, 'Bob, I don't think I'm going to make it. It's getting too damn hot here for me'. It was hard to breathe. And he said to me, 'oh we're almost there', he says, 'it's not hot down here Sheila until the water's running down the crack of your ass'. And I says, Bob, 'that happened back there about'...I says, 'we're ready to leave'. Well, I couldn't handle it. I don't know how anybody could be down there in that heat.

JAAP:: And then working.

PENALUNA: Yeah. And with all that equipment on. But then when you're that hot, and you get on the cage, and you're starting up in that down draft, well, I'm telling you, you come out white when you get on the top. Because that cold air hits you, and you're steaming from the heat coming out of there.

And that's a regular situation, other than updraft, but it don't make any difference. You're going to get it both ways. Those fellas, it was in their blood. My father-in-law,

he was down there and, he was very capable of being a plumber or electrician. He could do it all. He wouldn't come out of the mine. It's where he wanted to be.

I don't know why anybody would want that. Because I felt, I was only down there a couple, three hours a day. If I thought I had to be in there every day, all day in my life. No, it would be - and I wasn't doing what they're doing either. I was mainly going into areas that I knew there was air and there was water and something was established.

Other than that, I was in maybe a couple of areas where it was brand new and there's nothing there yet. But there's air in the cage where I was. No, the underground is a totally - but I'd rather be there than in the pit because to me, the pit was...

GRANT: Scary.

PENALUNA: Well, you ever get up in one of those trucks and ever then try to look down and see that opening below you and that road?

And those trucks don't have any security as far as, when it's loaded and they keep that road wet, that truck comes down the Hill like this. I mean, it's just four wheels, not much holding it. And if that berm doesn't hold that truck with all that weight on it, you know where you're going. And I didn't want any part of that. Not that I ever had to do any of it, but just riding down there and seeing what was going on. They only ride maybe four or five miles, but in that four or five miles is a lot of hazard.

[01:50:00]

And they were either coming down or they're coming up and the damn things slides. No, there's not much control to those. And you're about three or four stories in the air sitting on that thing. No.

And then the Kelly I was at - the clerk of the mine and the superintendent. There's the dry. And the dry is where they hang all their clothes in it. Well, one day, I don't know if you ever heard Pedar. He was the head clerk up at the Kelly. I was in the trailer, thank God, out in front. And we got a phone call. 'Don't come over here'. 'Cause I had to go in and see the superintendent once in a while. 'Don't come over here'. And I said, 'what happened'? The canister that they use to send an alert into the mine, like if there's an accident or something, they drop a canister down the shaft. And the canister is full of like a rotten egg smell.

Well, when that canister drops, that smell goes, because the air conditioning, the air conditioner takes it through the whole place and it's telling the men to get out of the mine. Well, how it broke in the office.

Half the guys went home sick over it, especially condensed into.... Yeah, they didn't come back to work for a day or two.

JAAP: Does that smell leave the office?

PENALUNA: I could smell it for days afterwards, but I didn't have to stay in there. I was out in the trailer. Thank God. We had some great times the miners, just working with... it was fun for me because, there were no other women up there.

Yeah. And I saw a lot of things that most would never see it in the office. And I was glad to be out of the Hennessy building. 'Cause you're just sitting there and working on maps all day. Up there, there was a little more activity and things to do.

GRANT: Did you ever see the pumps at the Kelly?

PENALUNA: Oh yeah. 3,600.

GRANT: What was that room like?

[01:53:00]

PENALUNA: It was huge. The room in there was 16 feet high. And it was probably, if I remember about three times bigger than this room, with the pumps in there. They also, in the pump house, they grew tomato plants. And, if you didn't have the lighting, where the light didn't hit, you saw everything was white. Everything grows just like it would be if it was in the sunlight, except it stays white because there's no chlorophyll. Chlorophyll. And, because there's no bees, it wouldn't pollinate. So the miner, or one of the superintendents, would take a toothpick and go around and pollinate those to make them grow. And they had a lot of plants down there.

And I don't know if you're familiar that they, I don't know how many trees they grew down there, at the pump station, to put on the dumps. They were plastic tubes, I'd say about that high and they put a moss type thing in the bottom, and they put the seeds in there and they'd water them. And then that part of the room, they kept lit and they pollinated, started the trees. So the trees, I don't know how big they were when they finally brought 'em, and you can't bring them out right away. You have to acclimate them. So they'd take them out of there, and I don't know if they went up to the garage or where they went inside. Then they moved them out onto the dumps and planted the trees. But that was all done in 3,600 level of the Kelly. Yeah, it was interesting.

GRANT: Did you ride a train underground, ever?

[01:55:00]

PENALUNA: I did from like the shaft under the pit. I rode it over, but we had to walk back. If the train was coming in or out, it all depends. You never knew when they were loading ore so, but I did ride it in. Yeah.

GRANT: I don't think people realize about the scale of the workings nowadays.

PENALUNA: Really. And if you think about it, like the Kelly now, the Kelly was the biggest, there's no two shafts on the Hill are alike.

And you can't take a cage and put it on another one. They don't work. And, like the Kelly, you could put 40 or 45 people in the cage, where as the others were like 15. And the Kelly also had an extra shaft, if you just wanted to bring the ore up. I don't know what else I could tell you about the...

GRANT: When they flooded them, how did you feel?

PENALUNA: I thought it was a disaster. Mainly because they left everything in there. They didn't take anything out.

JAAP: Yeah. That's another thing I hadn't thought of that people have mentioned is the equipment that's down there...

PENALUNA: And all those trains and the pump stations, all the pumps, they didn't take anything out. They left everything in the mine. You figure the money, the equipment, and not only that, contaminated the whole works. I mean, if they want to go back in there, it'd be a long haul. The pit's contaminated, the underground's contaminated. No, it's a sad state of affairs, what they left Butte. And I don't know if you're familiar with - name one of the big boys, that ever owned the Anaconda Company. Did they ever leave anything in Butte for Butte? Nothing. There's not a thing that they've done.

Anaconda has the Marcus Daley hotel. What does Butte have? Nothing. We have all of the tailings of...

GRANT: The mess.

PENALUNA: The mess. Yeah. And ARCO's so happy they bought us. They're going to be Superfunding us to death. And that, look at that golf course over in Anaconda. Who's paying for that? The people over there can't afford it. And they knew that when it started. That was our great Superfund.

[01:58:00]

GRANT: What do you think that EPA has done for Butte?

PENALUN: I don't see it. I've wished somebody come in and fix the streets and the hell with the dumps. There's some holes out there, now you can bury the car.

JAAP: Oh yeah, no kidding.

PENALUNA: Oh, I can't believe the way this town is. And you know, years and years ago, the people all complained about the Anaconda Company. But now that the Anaconda Company's gone, they got a lot to complain about because they didn't realize what the company was doing for them. In many ways.

And Anaconda I think is getting a good hit on that, because the company used to do all their streets for them, all the maintenance. And look at the Columbia Gardens, the company maintained the Columbia Gardens. And then when they decided to give to the city, the city couldn't even take care of it. So, Butte's kind of...

And the wall they just built over here. I won't get started on that.

GRANT: By the courthouse?

PENALUNA: Uh huh. You don't have to record what I'm going to tell you right now. If they would contract these streets, and that project over there, it would probably cost them about one half of what the city - you take Gilmer or any of those companies, and come in here and do the street work and get it done right. It wouldn't have cost near what the city - 'cause I watch the city, how they work around my house out there.

JAAP: Yeah. They're paid some good, and yeah, they're expensive. Are those employees, they're paid a nice amount of money.

PENALUNA: In two years, they made about three repairs going right down alongside of my house, in the city water. And on the second one, I said, I don't think anything's ever been done out here since it was put in, which was probably 60, 70 years ago. I says, 'with these breaks, why don't you come in and do the whole streets, you know'? And he says, 'they won't let us do that'. I says, 'does anybody map the town see what's been done or what year this stuff?'

But I know they haven't because the Butte Water Company never had a map of the waterlines, let alone gas lines or sewer lines. And that was something, when I was working, that I was hoping they would have finally started doing. Whether they are now or not, I don't know. But I don't know that they even know half of the, where the lines are of town. They are forever breaking the gas line or a water line.

GRANT: The thing that gets me is, you repair a road, the whole road, build a new one, and then ..

PENALUNA: Decide to fix the pipes. Well, look at Harrison Avenue. They no sooner got it finished than they tore it all up again. Yeah. Same thing. And I'll bet you, Dewey Boulevard is going to be the same. If they ever finish it. And now we're going to go out and pave Roosevelt Drive. Of course we haven't got a damn road Butte that works, but this, we're going out and fix the dirt roads.

GRANT: I just had a couple more questions? One, I was curious just if you're willing to speak a little more about company tactics. I've always been curious where the rubber meets the road when they wanted to expand the pit. But there were people in their way.

[02:02:00]

PENALUNA: I don't know that I ever got involved much in that end of it. That was pretty much the managers and the powers that be in New York. It didn't make any difference what you did here. It's where the money and where the source was coming from. The managers around here were to me, the flunkies of New York, because nothing was done unless it was out of New York.

I was here for well, before Renoir. Well, he was one of the better managers. He took care of the men. You know, you had a lot of older gentlemen that had worked for 35, 40 years underground and may have got hurt and weren't able to relate to work or go back to this job. Renoir, if the guy was able to breathe and do something, he found a job for him.

And then a good example of it was a fellow that worked in the, I worked in the personnel office, right next to the Hennessy. The market there. And this fella had worked underground, but now he was all crippled with arthritis and he could hardly use his hands to hold onto a shovel underground. So they declared him not able. Well, he still had to work. And he went up and Renoir put him on as a janitor in our offices.

Well, I don't know if he ever saw one of the mops they used. The handle on the mop was about this big around. The mop, it was probably 50 pounds when you put it in water. So, and he mopped the floor where that miners and that come in. It was a big, big place. And Jim was, he'd come on at five o'clock when we were getting ready to leave. And one of his jobs was to empty the wastepaper baskets and get everything

ready. And then after we all left, he'd come in and start mopping the floors. Well, the poor bugger, he couldn't handle that mop and sometimes he'd have it under his arm and he'd be like this, you know?

Well, all of us in the offices were getting pretty wise to Jim. So we'd empty our own wastepaper baskets when we'd finished. But then we started hiding his mop and his brooms. So the poor bugger was down there half the night, trying to find out where his equipment was.

[02:05:00]

Then it got to the point, he couldn't handle it. And what did he do? He'd call his wife and she'd come down at 6:30 or so, and she'd do the mopping for him. Well, we all got wind of that. And it got back up to Renoir. And Renoir called him in the office and he says, 'what have you been doing, Jim'? He says, 'I'm having a tough time'.

Renoir said to him, 'how are you handling your job down there'? And poor Jim thought he was all through. And he says, 'I'm not, I'm having a tough time'. Renoir says to him, 'how long have you had your wife working here'? Oh poor Jim. Well, he says 'I've had her on there about the last six months'. He says, 'I'm not able to handle the...'

And Renoir says, 'well, I got to tell you something, Jim'. He says, 'I'm really surprised that you didn't come to me sooner'. Well, he says, 'I couldn't afford, I had to get a paycheck'. He says, 'you get your wife down here at five o'clock when you're here and she'll be on the payroll. And he paid her six months back pay, for her to come in there.

But that was a whole different breed of cat, Renoir. When he was here. He was for the people in Butte. You wouldn't find that today anywhere. He took care of the men that worked in the mine. There's more politics than there is work around. And especially, you can - years ago, if you were an Irish Catholic young boy, and you were related to somebody, you were guaranteed a job at the mine, otherwise you didn't get to work.

And if you went to School of Mines, you had a job. If you were going to school, you always had a job. Which I thought was a great thing. 'Cause we used to have students all the time up there in the offices with us. That's all I can tell you.

GRANT: Well, we appreciate your time today.

JAAP: Yeah Sheila, thank you.

PENALUNA: I hope you don't record all of it.

GRANT: I made a couple of notes to strip some things. I have one final question. Would you ever be willing to teach a small group how to read the maps?

PENALUNA: I thought you were going to say read.

JAAP: We have stope books here, yeah.

PENALUNA: The maps match the stope books.

JAAP: And we just got some of the maps too. Yeah.

[02:08:00]

PENALUNA: Who did you get them from?

JAAP: Well, I know you came in right after we got an ARCO donation, didn't you Sheila? So I think, I'm not sure. I think we might have some.

PENALUNA: You take two stope books and overlay the big maps. Well, they're 50 scale, they're the same scale as the stope books, but then they go on down or get smaller. But, yeah, they all match. Other than what's put on them, like the year. And some of them have mining information and then the linens all have the actual ore that came out of there. But yeah, I'd be happy to come up if you need... my problem is right now is, I'm having an eye problem. If it's good lighting, I can see pretty good. But if I'm in a dark environment, I use my light on my iPhone most of the time. I can see anything.

GRANT: Okay. I'll reach out to you then.

PENALUNA: Yeah. I'd be happy to come up. Most of the crew's all gone now, I don't know if you remember, did you have George Burns? I know he'd passed away.

JAAP: We actually have a DVD of him cause he showed us, we have a DVD of him showing us the stope books and saying kind of, this is what this means. And yeah...

PENALUNA: He was a draftsman, but he was a better geologist than 90% of them that were over there. He was, he really, yeah. George and I worked together. Did Bob Cox ever come in? No, I don't think so. He was the head of the engineering when I was up at the Kelly.

[02:10:00]

I don't know if anybody's around here anymore. It's getting pretty slim pickings when you're, you're getting up to my stage. There's not many of them left. Yeah. Okay.

JAAP: Well, Sheila, thank you.

PENALUNA: You're welcome.

GRANT: Thanks very much.

PENALUNA: You can have a good time with that. Just don't put my name on things - as long as it has nothing to do with the extracurricular things that went on in the mine. Or whatever.

GRANT: Sounds good.

[END OF RECORDING]