

An Interview With
M. KENT "TIM" HAFEN

An Oral History conducted and edited by
Robert D. McCracken

Nye County Town History Project
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Tonopah
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From left: M. Kent "Tim" Hafen, Janie Hafen,
Nevada Governor Paul Laxalt, and Greg Hafen
late 1960s

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PREFACE

The Nye County Town History Project (NC HP) engages in interviewing people who can provide firsthand descriptions of the individuals, events, and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interviews are not history. They often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiography as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the NCTHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the NCTHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts, and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often largely unreadable and therefore a waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the NCTHP will,

- a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often sprinkled;
- b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;
- c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context;
- d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered but have been added to render the text intelligible; and
- e. make every effort to correctly spell the names of all individuals and places, recognizing that an occasional word may be misspelled because no authoritative source on its correct spelling was found.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As project director, I would like to express my deep appreciation to those who participated in the Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP). It was an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to obtain oral histories from so many wonderful individuals. I was welcomed into many homes--in many cases as a stranger--and was allowed to share in the recollection of local history. In a number of cases I had the opportunity to interview Nye County residents whom I have known and admired since I was a teenager; these experiences were especially gratifying. I thank the residents throughout Nye County and southern Nevada--too numerous to mention by name--,who provided assistance, information, and photographs. They helped make the successful completion of this project possible.

Appreciation goes to Chairman Joe S. Garcia, Jr., Robert N. "Bobby" Revert, and Patricia S. Mankins, the Nye County commissioners who initiated this project. Mr. Garcia and Mr. Revert, in particular, showed deep interest and unyielding support for the project from its inception. Thanks also go to current commissioners Richard L. Carver and Barbara J. Raper, who have since joined Mr. Revert on the board and who have continued the project with enthusiastic support. Stephen T. Bradhurst, Jr., planning consultant for Nye County, gave unwavering support and advocacy of the project within Nye County and before the State of Nevada Nuclear Waste Project Office and the United States Department of Energy; both entities provided funds for this project. Thanks are also extended to Mr. Bradhurst for his advice and input regarding the conduct of the research and for constantly serving as a sounding board when methodological problems were worked out. This project would never have become a reality without the enthusiastic support of the Nye County commissioners and Mr. Bradhurst.

Jean Charney served as administrative assistant, editor, indexer, and typist throughout the project; her services have been indispensable. Louise Terrell provided considerable assistance in transcribing many of the oral histories; Barbara Douglass also transcribed a number of interviews. Transcribing, typing, editing, and indexing were provided at various times by Alice Levine, Jodie Hanson, Mike Green, and Cynthia Tremblay. Jared Charney contributed essential word processing skills. Maire Hayes, Michelle Starika, Anita Coryell, Michelle Welsh, Lindsay Schumacher, and Jodie Hanson shouldered the herculean task of proofreading the oral histories. Gretchen Loeffler and Bambi McCracken assisted in numerous secretarial and clerical duties. Phillip Earl of the Nevada Historical Society contributed valuable support and criticism throughout the project, and Tom King at the Oral History Program of the University of Nevada at Reno served as a consulting oral historian. Much deserved thanks are extended to all these persons.

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--Robert D. McCracken
Tonopah, Nevada
June 1990

INTRODUCTION

Historians generally consider the year 1890 as the end of the American frontier. By then, most of the western United States had been settled, ranches and farms developed, communities established, and roads and railroads constructed. The mining boomtowns, based on the lure of overnight riches from newly developed lodes, were but a memory.

Although Nevada was granted statehood in 1864, examination of any map of the state from the late 1800s shows that while much of the state was mapped and its geographical features named, a vast region--stretching from Belmont south to the Las Vegas meadows, comprising most of Nye County-- remained largely unsettled and unmapped. In 1890 most of southcentral Nevada remained very much a frontier, and it continued to be for at least another twenty years.

The great mining booms at Tonopah (1900), Goldfield (1902), and Rhyolite (1904) represent the last major flowering of what might be called the Old West in the United States. Consequently, southcentral Nevada, notably Nye County, remains close to the American frontier; closer, perhaps, than any other region of the American West. In a real sense, a significant part of the frontier can still be found in southcentral Nevada. It exists in the attitudes, values, lifestyles, and memories of area residents. The frontier-like character of the area also is visible in the relatively undisturbed quality of the natural environment, most of it essentially untouched by human hands.

A survey of written sources on southcentral Nevada's history reveals some material from the boomtown period from 1900 to about 1915, but very little on the area after around 1920. The volume of available sources varies from town to town: A fair amount of literature, for instance, can be found covering Tonopah's first two decades of existence, and the town has had a newspaper continuously since its first year. In contrast, relatively little is known about the early days of Gabbs, Round Mountain, Manhattan, Beatty, Amargosa Valley, and Pahrump. Gabbs's only newspaper was published intermittently between 1974 and 1976. Round Mountain's only newspaper, the Round Mountain Nugget, was published between 1906 and 1910. Manhattan had newspaper coverage for most of the years between 1906 and 1922. Amargosa Valley has never had a newspaper; Beatty's independent paper folded in 1912. Pahrump's first newspaper did not appear until 1971. All six communities received only spotty coverage in the newspapers of other communities after their own papers folded, although Beatty was served by the Beatty Bulletin, which was published as a supplement to the Goldfield News between 1947 and 1956. Consequently, most information on the history of southcentral Nevada after 1920 is stored in the memories of individuals who are still living.

Aware of Nye County's close ties to our nation's frontier past, and recognizing that few written sources on local history are available, especially after about 1920, the Nye County Commissioners initiated the Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP). The NCTHP represents an effort to systematically collect and preserve information on the history of Nye County. The centerpiece of the NCTHP is a large set of interviews conducted with individuals who had knowledge of local history. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and then edited lightly to preserve the language and speech patterns of those interviewed. All oral history interviews have been printed on acid-free paper and bound and archived in Nye County libraries, Special Collections in the James R. Dickinson Library at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and at

other archival sites located throughout Nevada. The interviews vary in length and detail, but together they form a never-before-available composite picture of each community's life and development. The collection of interviews for each community can be compared to a bouquet: Each flower in the bouquet is unique--some are large, others are small--yet each adds to the total image. In sum, the interviews provide a composite view of community and county history, revealing the flow of life and events for a part of Nevada that has heretofore been largely neglected by historians.

Collection of the oral histories has been accompanied by the assembling of a set of photographs depicting each community's history. These pictures have been obtained from participants in the oral history interviews and other present and past Nye County residents. In all, more than 700 photos have been collected and carefully identified. Complete sets of the photographs have been archived along with the oral histories.

On the basis of the oral interviews as well as existing written sources, histories have been prepared for the major communities in Nye County. These histories also have been archived.

The town history project is one component of a Nye County program to determine the socioeconomic impacts of a federal proposal to build and operate a nuclear waste repository in southcentral Nye County. The repository, which would be located inside a mountain (Yucca Mountain), would be the nation's first, and possibly only, permanent disposal site for high-level radioactive waste. The Nye County Board of County Commissioners initiated the NCTHP in 1987 in order to collect information on the origin, history, traditions, and quality of life of Nye County communities that may be impacted by a repository. If the repository is constructed, it will remain a source of interest for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years to come, and future generations will likely want to know more about the people who once resided near the site. In the event that government policy changes and a high-level nuclear waste repository is not constructed in Nye County, material compiled by the NCTHP will remain for the use and enjoyment of all.

--R.D.M.

Robert McCracken interviewing Tim Hafen at his home in Pahrump Valley, Nevada - April 28, May 3 and July 5, 1988

CHAPTER ONE

RM: Let's begin by you telling us your name as it reads on your birth certificate.

TH: My name is Maxwell Kent Hafen. I've gone by Tim from day one, and that's how most people would recognize me. My legal signature is M. Kent, but Tim is what I go by.

RM: Where were you born?

TH: I was born in St. George, Utah, but that's because that's where the hospital was. I was raised in Mesquite. My parents moved there in 1930.

RM: Could you state your brothers' names?

TH: The next oldest is Gary B. Hafen, who is currently a principal at a junior high in Las Vegas; the third brother, Brian K. Hafen, operates the family dairy in Mesquite; the youngest brother, Douglas, is an electrical communications engineer for DOE. in Las Vegas.

RM: What was your father's name?

TH: Dad's name was Max, or Maxwell, Hafen. He was born and raised in Santa Clara, Utah, moving to Mesquite in 1930. He married my mother, Estelle Bowler, who was born and raised in Gunlock, Utah. In 1930 they moved to Mesquite. She died in 1979 and my Dad died last week.

RM: What was your father's occupation?

TH: He was a cattleman - range cattle operator - and he farmed in Mesquite. In the '40s he was one of the early people who started the dairy industry over in Mesquite and Bunkerville and in the Moapa Valley. He gradually switched over to more dairy, [which was] a little better economically. He sold his cattle interests in the '40s.

RM.: at got him started [in the dairy business] in the Mesquite area?

TH: Anderson Dairy was the pioneer dairy in Las Vegas . . . Ken Searles, the guiding force there (he is still living, by the way), was encouraging milk production. Ten farmers went together in Mesquite and built one dairy, which they called the Company Dairy, and they all used the facility to milk their cows. They had separate corrals and feeding facilities, and of course they gradually all split off into their own facilities. But that is what got the dairy industry started in Mesquite.

RM: The United Order?

TH: The Mormon Church United Order in Utah. Santa Clara was not . . there were different areas around southern Utah that practiced the United Order, but my great-grandfather, John George, was converted to the Mormon Church and lived in an area near the border of Switzerland and Germany and the name, over there, is spelled Hofen; it means "harbor" actually, like the Munich-hofen, and the other harbors. And my great-grandmother was Suzette Bosshard. When they immigrated to the United State, the spelling was changed to Hafen and to my knowledge all Hafens came from John George. He came into Salt Lake and then farther on, to southern Utah. After he moved into the Santa Clara area he married 3 other wives and there were then 4 families. But John George started the whole clan.

RM: So all Hafens . .

TH: Came from John George, from the Swiss-Germans.

RM: Did they have a connection with the United Order?

TH: I don't believe so. He practiced polygamy and my grandfather, John Hafen, did not practice polygamy. Of course, it was outlawed by then. He lived in Santa Clara and my mother's family, the Bowlers, lived in Gunlock. Both Bowler and Hafen are prominent family names in southern Utah, because when you have four wives and a lot of kids . .

RM.: What was your family's first contact with the Pahrump Valley?

TH: My dad was a long-term charter member of the Grazing Advisory Board for the Bureau of Land Management's Las Vegas office. On a field .inspection tour through Goodsprings, up through Sandy Valley, Pahrump Valley, out north to the Reno highway and back to Indian Springs, which were pretty primitive roads, they ran into Eimer Bowman. He had moved from Logandale in 1946 or 1947 and my dad had known him previously over there. Eimer Bowman encouraged him to buy land in Pahrump because of the artesian water, cheap land and so-called good agricultural area, which it is.

At the time I was going to Dixie Junior College at St. George, Utah, and during a Christmas vacation we came out to look at the area, and subsequently ended up making a deal and buying our first piece of ground - 840 acres from Elmer Bowman's family. That was in 1951; actually, Christmas time, 1950.

RM: Was the part that you purchased the old Manse Ranch?

TH: It was actually part of the old Kellogg Ranch. The Manse Ranch, at the time, comprised what was the Manse Ranch and also the Kellogg portion, which adjoined it to the south; it was about 6,400 acres altogether. Lois Kellogg moved here in the late '30s and started to establish same ranches for a cattle feeding-type operation. She died in 1941 or '42 and H. D. (Harold)

Cornell, an M.D. physician from San Diego County, owned the Manse Ranch then and subsequently purchased the Kellogg estate and joined the ranches.

Elmer Bowman sold off pieces to us. A son, Perry Bowman, took a portion of it. Perry, by the way, came from Logandale - had his own farm over there. A son-in-law, (A. J.) Arlen Frehner, purchased a portion of it. Those three - ours, A. J. Frehner's and Perry Bowman's - were all on the Kellogg acquisition. We purchased our first parcel of ground in 1951, and then in 1963 we purchased the A. J. Frehner portion. And that's how we got started. The property looked good. Elmer Bowman was trying to induce people into the valley, because at the time there were only the two major ranches. The Manse Ranch and the Pahrump Ranch were in existence, and had been for a long time, because of the artesian springs. They were farming and stage stop type operations. With the advent of well-drilling in the '40s and the '50s they found that artesian wells could be produced and farming expanded, and it was Mr. Bowman's interest to try to make a community out of it. We originally bought 840 acres at \$35 an acre. It was nothing down, and 20 years to pay at 4 percent interest.

In fact, since our south ranch, as we call it, which was part of the Kellogg, wasn't tested as far as artesian well production, Bowman even put up 2/5ths of the well cost and we took an option to purchase the land depending on how the well came in. If it came in and we purchased, then we paid him back the 2/5ths. The well did come in March or April of 1951. Our down payment then was to pay him back his 2/5ths of the cost of drilling that well, and it was a large artesian well - 1,080 gallons a minute. That's how we got started in Pahrump. We moved here July 2nd, 1951, and we planted 40 acres of alfalfa that fall and the next year planted some cotton and more alfalfa. The artesian water helped our limited resources, and that worked to get us established.

RM: Your father didn't move out?

TH: No, he didn't move out. We formed a partnership and actually, it was his faith and credit and money and the first year, we actually, physically transported his farm equipment from Mesquite out here and we would farm crazy for 2 or 3 weeks and then haul it back to him. But at that time there was no highway between here and Las Vegas. We had to go through Indian Springs, past Mercury and then down over Johnnie Summit, which was 4: miles of rock road. So it was a long trip, and it was also before nylon tires and with those rayon tires you could figure on at least one blow-out a trip because of the rock road.

RM: When you first came to the valley and decided to farm here, what crops did you think you wanted to grow? Your father had been a successful dairyman. What did he see here that attracted him in terms of crops and so

H: Well, cotton had been first grown in 1948 by the Hughes family and it appeared to be quite successful, so by the time we were looking here they had had 2 years' experience in cotton production, the cotton quality looked quite good and that was the crop that built Pahrump Valley. So although we had never seen a cotton plant prior to moving, that was our primary reason. . cheap land, good, cheap water because of the artesian well and a crop that was reasonably profitable.

We also grew alfalfa hay as a rotation and as a second crop, plus we did grow some feed grains too, and we would haul the feed grains back to our dairy. Some of the hay crop went back to the dairy but a lot of it was sold in Las Vegas to horse people and some was shipped to southern California for the dairy market there. The economics of hay were such that when we hauled back east, we were competing against hay coming from southern Utah, going west, and it was more economical for us to take our hay to either Las Vegas or to southern California and buy hay coming out of southern Utah.

RM: You could make more taking it to southern California?

TH: Yes. Historically, hay delivered to Mesquite is about the same cost that we would sell it for at the ranch, but if you moved that hay on through to southern California the freight differential made it competitive. Our original intent was to grow hay for the dairy as well, but in practice it didn't end up that way.

RM: How many cows was your father milking at that time?

TH: At that time we were probably milking oh, in excess of 100 cows, which through the 1950s and early '60s was built into a 700-cow operation, which is about where they are today.

RM: At that time Mesquite was relatively developed, in terms of electricity and so on, and when you came here it was relatively undeveloped. What kinds of drawbacks did you see and experience in beginning farming here?

TH: I looked at Pahrump as a big opportunity for me because we were able to purchase 840 acres. When you take into account that in 1951 my dad was one of the larger farm land-owners in Mesquite and he probably had 90 to 120 acres of land . . . In those valleys the land is very limited. Of course, they own more land than that now, but the opportunity to purchase large blocks of land here gave us an opportunity to expand the farming operation over the years to what I had hoped would become a large farming operation. We drilled more wells and we did expand the farming operation. But the primary reasons were good land, good climate, and good and cheap water. It gave us the chance to get started.

RM: Were the lack of power here and the isolation drawbacks in terms of your early operation?

TH: Yes, it did take some adjustment. People who were really dedicated to developing and building a farming operation were willing to put up with what kind of thing. There were families that moved in and just found it a little too primitive because the first few years it was outdoor privies. We carried water from the artesian wells which flowed by in ditches and we'd use a bucket for drinking water. We corrected that after a couple of years - put in a pipeline and overhead tank that we could fill at the wellhead - created a little pressure system for us. Later on, of course, we were able to buy generators and in the late '50s we could purchase a diesel generator and generate our own 24-hour power supply. There was a lot of maintenance

involved, but it was really living when we had 24-hour power. We didn't get central station power until March of 1963 and we didn't get telephones until March of 1965.

But the biggest thing that happened to us was that the people who were here during the early '50s were able to convince the state that if there could be a road between Pahrump and Las Vegas, it would be a good economic addition to the communities in the state, and that's proved to be true. The state did build a highway, which is now Highway 160. It was completed in the fall of 1954 and that made us 60 miles from the center of Pahrump to Las Vegas, rather than the 110 miles that we used to go. But remember, 40 miles of that was gravel and rock and a considerable difference. So we were not so isolated after that.

RM: One of the things I am unclear about in terms of the development of the valley is that I think that the Pahrump and Manse Ranches date way back, like to the 1870s, or maybe even a little before. But I think they were relatively small then, especially compared to the size the Pahrump Ranch eventually reached. I'm unclear if there was other ranching activity here around 1900, and if so, what was going on then. If not, how did the property that became the Dorothy ranch and the Bradys and Simkins ranches get into private hands, over the years?

TH: In my view, that's a very interesting point. How did Pahrump Valley get into private hands? I've never been able to satisfactorily answer that except that, under the various land acts, largely the Pittman Act, the Desert Land Entry Act, the Homestead Act and some of the others (I believe was the Pittman Act in the state of Nevada) you were able to buy land. You could designate a block of land and buy it outright for \$1.25 per acre. It was different from homesteading. In homesteading, you actually had to develop the land, develop water, and live on it.

CHAPTER TWO

TH: And there may have been some promotion back in those days, because the Pahrump Valley is largely blocked out and was blocked out very early in this century, in private land ownership. Cattle grazing, I think, then diminished and a lot of people may never have used it for any reason, but when I first moved out here, looking at a land ownership map of Pahrump Valley, everything was in large parcels. There were a few 40-acre blocks, but most of it was 160, 320 half sections, 640 full sections, and in some cases more than one section. The old Pahrump Ranch, of course, owned about 10,500 acres and the Manse Ranch, as I said earlier, was 6,400 acres, so there were 2 large blocks under just two ownerships.

Everything basically west of Homestead Road and south of Gamebird Road was federal land in the late '40s and was open to Desert Entry and homesteading by the Bureau of Land Management. It was during the early '50s that people began to claim and settle on that land, and that's where The name Homestead Road came from. However, most of the valley was private Land . . . and it's kind of curious, because Homestead Road is a range Line. Gamebird Road is a township line, but it's also the Fifth Standard Parallel, and Charleston Boulevard in Las Vegas is the same township and parallel line, so we are due west of Las Vegas, but it's curious that of those 2, the township and range lines, everything south and west was still federal land in the '40s, yet everything north of Gamebird and east of Homestead for miles was privately owned. So the land west and south got into private hands through the Desert Entry and Homestead Acts.

RM: Were people still homesteading when you came in?

TH: Yes. In fact in the '40s, one of the people, Harlis Wall, came from Porterville, California, and worked on a U.S.G.S. survey crew which surveyed and set section corners in the area so that it could be homesteaded. And homesteading was taken up very late in the '40s and the early '50s. Land was still available when I moved out here except that we had our hands full by then. But if you look at a Nevada land ownership map, what you find in at least the southern 200 miles of the state of Nevada is very, very little private land ownership. Las Vegas Valley, of course, has the largest private block of land ownership, then Pahrump Valley. Amargosa Valley is the 3rd largest, and then there are the small towns like Beatty, Tonopah, the Virgin and Moapa Valleys, Searchlight . . . RM: There's not much private land in the Virgin Valley and Moapa Valley? TH: NO. It's limited in Virgin Valley; there's probably not more than 3,000 or 4,000 acres, total, in private ownership. It's landlocked. In fact, there is a special act through Congress that just went through within The last year that gives Mesquite the right to buy several sections of land at a fairly high price. I know the first acquisition is going to cost them a half million dollars, which then can be added to the city of Mesquite, and then they will be taking proposals for development. It was a necessary because Mesquite just doesn't have enough land.

That's one of the reasons that we are seeing very rapid, residential growth in Pahrump; we have a large mass of land, it's in the sunbelt, which only the southern portion of the state is, we have good water, good climate, 2,700 feet elevation, just 600 feet higher than Las Vegas. The utilities are here, we have a community now, and housing and land are very expensive, and through the various land promotions and subdivisions we have something on the order of 38 to

40,000 land owners in Pahrump. Basically everything around Las Vegas is federal land unless you want to come to Pahrump.

RM.: Do you know anything about how the Dorothy Dorothy property and the Simkins property moved from state or federal to private ownership? TH: Let's back up a little bit. There were artesian springs around the old Pahrump Ranch, including the Pahrump Trading Post; and the Bolling Ranch, which used to be owned by Jim and Ida Raycraft; and Frank "Pop" Buol's ranch, which he sold to Doby "Doc" Caudil, who sold it to Binion's Horseshoe Club. Where you had artesian springs you had settlements. I don't believe there were any artesian springs of any consequence in the valley except at the Manse Ranch, the Pahrump Ranch, the area of the Trading Post, Pop Buol's old place and the Raycraft place. There were a few, very small springs, such as the Manse 6-Mile Spring, which is just a little seep actually - also one called the Buol 6-Mile Spring - which is out on Mesquite Road, west of Highway 160 4 or 5 miles.

But the technology of drilling wells . . . someone came into Pahrump with a well rig - it could have been the people on the Manse Ranch or the Pahrump Ranch wanting an additional source of water - I don't know. But somebody came in and punched wells and in a lot of the areas of the Pahrump Valley on the eastern alluvial fan, they encountered artesian water. Now, anytime you have artesian water, which is free flowing, you don't have the cost of pumping and you kind of create an interest in things, coupled with a good climate, long growing season and good soil. You would have to go back into the history prior to 1951, but agricultural interest wasn't really aroused until the late '40s and early '50s, and most of the agricultural development came during the '50s.

RM: Prior to that, it was alfalfa and what?

TH: Some grain. The old Pahrump and Manse Ranches didn't grow extensive acreages because it was just too isolated. You couldn't sell it, so mostly they grew fruits and vegetables for a localized market - Tecopa, Shoshone, the Indian tribes here, their own use, and they did take some of it out of the valley . . . and some cattle, because that's something you could grow here. They grew cattle feed, grains and hay, but largely that was the extent of it until . . . I think it was 1939 when Lois Kellogg moved in here, and she did drill some wells near the Manse Ranch.

RM: What were the circumstances that brought her here?

TH: Lois Kellogg was the granddaughter of the Kellogg Telephone [family]. Fifty years ago Kellogg Communications Company was the big name - it was like the General Electrics of today. If you look at a lot of the old hand rank telephones they are Kellogg. She was an heir, a New York City debutante, and for various reasons she rebelled against the family and moved to Palm Springs. She was an outdoorsy type and had horses there. Palm Springs became a little bit confining so she purchased the Arlemont Ranch in Fish Lake Valley in Esmeralda County, west of Goldfield. Subsequently she learned somehow of Pahrump and purchased this property low. here, I don't know from whom.

RM: 'It was an existing property?'

TH: Well, it was new land; she was the first person to grow any kind of crop on it.

RM: But it had been removed from federal

TH: That's right. I am sure she bought it from a private party. I have a little history on Lois Kellogg, but I don't think it shows who she purchased from. But that was some of the earliest well-drilling - 1939. By the way, we are still using those wells. In fact, curiously, they were drilled to a depth of about 750 feet, but they were only cased to a depth of 200 feet, so it's just an open hole below that. But it's been 40 or 50 years in some cases, and those wells are still producing. In fact, that may not be all bad, because we find that a steel-cased well, in 25 or 30 years, will tend to rust and close the perforations and restrict the water flow into the well. Those wells, not having any casing, may be the best long-run wells we have, because we have not had to re-drill.

RM: Were her wells artesian?

TH: Yes. As development progressed valley wide, some wells were not artesian, some were. Most of the wells were drilled on the east side of the valley because of the chance of encountering the artesian flow. It had better sub-strata; even if it didn't flow artesian, you had a better chance of pumping a larger volume because of the porosity of the strata below the ground. When you got out into the valley, it had been filled by erosion from the mountains on the east and the silts, which were heavier than the clays, settled in the eastern section of the old lake bottom. The clays floated more to the western end, and your silt soil was a better soil for farming than the clays; that's another reason it developed on the east side. But because of the clay-silt formation filling the old lake bottom, the porosity of the valley floor is not good in most places. So even though it's adequate for domestic wells, it was difficult to find larger, producing wells for irrigation purposes.

RM: Where would you say the valley floor begins? What landmark could

TH: It's easily identified because the alluvial fan is gravelly and it grows what we call an evergreen, or chaparral. Once the valley floor starts, it's a silt and it's a very defined line. This house sits right on the line. If you travel the valley and look, you'll see it defined; the valley floor is the old sediment portion.

RM: What plants grow there?

TH.: Low, desert brush, and of course the mesquite trees grow out there very well. But the chaparral doesn't grow out there. The mesquite trees are a native and they grew from flood drainways and farm runoffs. From the air you can see how the dense thickets of mesquite trees were formed largely from the old artesian springs running through the valley. They would run through a low spot and it would grow up with mesquite trees and plug the artery so it had to spread, so what you had in some cases is many, many acres - in some cases hundreds of acres - of mesquite groves. They came from the artesian runoffs and the flood runoffs. Every few years

the flood runoffs would create enough moisture in the lower areas to create the mesquite thickets, which would tend to expand as they grew.

I'm trying to recall all the major ranches that were here when I came out here in 1951. Lois Kellogg bought this ranch with the idea of growing ;rains and hay for a cattle operation, and she even built a steamroller processing mill for the grain, which is on our south ranch. It still stands, though it was never used. She moved the equipment there, but it was never installed and it was sold prior to our moving out here. We did acquire the building, which included a couple of large grain storage bins as well as the metal buildings; a sheet metal cover with a lumber frame.

When I moved out there I found a roll of the architectural plans for that building in a wall section. They were designed by a Mr. F.L. Wright of Beverly Hills, and knowing the circles that she traveled in, it appeared logical to no that it might have been Frank Lloyd Wright. I gave the plans .to an attorney cousin of mine to try and verify, and in moving from one house to another he lost them. I really feel badly about them, but that structure which is still standing down there, even though it is largely not used, very well could have been designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. How many F.L. Wrights would be living in Beverly Hills in 1939?

RM: Did he live there?

TH: I'm sure he did. Lois Kellogg never married, and she was a rough-hewn type. Once she got out into the country she would drive the cattle truck herself between her places. She supervised directly; apparently she had outside income enough to operate her ranches. I don't think she ever made any income off this place because there was one crop of grain grown, not too successfully, before she died.

She had Russian Wolfhounds and loved her dogs, and it's my understanding that these Russian Wolfhounds would eat the jackrabbits and she contracted tularemia from her dogs. The stories go that a couple of the dogs were fighting and in the process of separating them, she was bitten and didn't seek medical help until it was quite a bit too late. She died in 1941 or '42.

RM: And it wasn't a successful ranch by the time she died?

TH: No, because she was just getting it started. Then it was acquired by Dr. Cornell, who owned the Manse Ranch, who then sold the total property to Elmer Bowman, who resold back to us and Perry Bowman and A. J. Frehner. When we bought our place in 1951 only a little bit of it had been farmed me year by the Frehners to grow a grain crop, so it was basically virgin land in the Pahrump Valley is characteristically very alkaline - a very fine tilth - and as a result has very slow water penetration. You almost have to farm some sort of a crop like rye grain or some other grain for a year or two to get some tilth and humus in the soil so that it will water and leach the alkali down, before you can grow alfalfa or cotton

RM: What is tilth?

TH: The texture of the soil. Some of this soil, when it is in the dry stage, can become very powdery, almost like talcum powder. You could probably place water on top of the soil and it

would sit there until it evaporated. Until you get humus or some sort of organic material into the soil . . . And it's so dry that it is largely devoid of any bacterial action. So you must get some organic material and moisture before you can begin to create a soil that will allow you to grow crops. That impeded Pahrump Valley development too, because the new developers coming in, largely from the central valleys of California, found that it didn't respond as fast as they thought it would and it took more money and time to develop to get to an economic profit.

RM: You started to talk about some of the other ranches when you first came here, and what was happening with them.

TH: The Raycraft place was a small operation. Frank Buol was living here and he really didn't farm, but he had grapes and fruit trees and that sort of thing.

Frank Buol in himself is another full story. When I came out here he was, to me, an old man. Frank Buol had been the assemblyman from Nye County for a number of years. That was probably in the '40s, because I don't believe he was still the assemblyman in 1951. [He] and his brother Peter go deeply into southern Nevada history; I believe Peter Buol was the first mayor of Las Vegas.

RM: Did he also drill some of the first wells over there, or have wells in north Las Vegas?

TH: I don't know that. But Pop Buol had a colorful history and was a real packrat. Although he didn't appear to be, he was quite scholarly. He was a bachelor and lived alone in isolated Pahrump, and you had to be a little different to live out here at that particular time under those circumstances. The thing I remember is that his house was packed with magazines and newspapers from floor to ceiling. That was his filing system; he just stacked. In some rooms, all there were, were passageways to go in among the stacks of periodicals and newspapers. He also had the first, and I believe the only, distillery license in the state of Nevada. He didn't distill liquor, but he did produce wine. It was just mostly a home brew operation - quart jars, pint jars, fruit jars. It was a strong wine, more like a brandy. I didn't really think that it was that great, because I didn't like liquor anyway, but it was a very strong wine. He was a renowned character and was well known all over Nevada.

[Then there was] Stan Ford, who was a jack of all trades. His family are still living here. He goes back into the '40s, and one of his occupations was well-drilling. He drilled an awful lot of the earliest wells out here. He was also probably Pahrump's first mail carrier, working once or twice a week. When it got to be too busy, 3 or 4 times a week, he turned it over to somebody else. But beyond the Manse Ranch, the Pahrump Ranch, the Simkins, the Dorothis, the Brady . .

RR: What do you know about the Dorothis?

TH: Not much. I don't know where they came from. Dale is dead, but Dorothy Dorothy lives in Las Vegas.

RR: No, she is deceased too; within the last year.

TH: I didn't know that. I know she was about 88 years old. She was a character. She was a fairly tall, fairly attractive woman. She had bleached blonde hair and would wear heavy makeup and yet the rest of her dress didn't matter too much; it was kind of put together. She was scholarly and wrote for the Las Vegas Sun and the Tonopah Times. A lot of history could be obtained by going through their files.

RM For many years she wrote a column in the Beatty Bulletin, too.

TH: Various headings she wrote . . . one column was under the title of "The Land of AH's" and "Pumpings from Pahrump."

Her husband Dale was a radio ham operator and pilot with his own airplane. His mother and dad lived out here on the ranch for a while too, while he was here.

RM: You don't know when they came, do you?

TH: NO, but it had to be not too many years before I moved out here, and Dorothys, especially Dorothy Dorothy, were among the movers and shakers who got electric power, got the road over from Las Vegas and exposed Pahrump to the rest of the world. She did an awful lot of good in that fashion; the publicity.

CHAPTER THREE

RM: Were the Simkins here when you got here?

TH: Yes, they were. Paul and Allen came from the Simkins clan around Enterprise, Utah. They are also related to the Shurtliffs in Logandale and Overton. This operation originally was a joint venture by the Simkins and the Shurtliffs. I suspect the Shurtliffs were the financiers, so to speak, with their faith and credit, because Paul and Allen were new out of the service; I think they came out in the late '40s. Allen and Paul were the operators of the ranch and between the Simkins and Shurtliffs, they acquired quite a lot of land up in the northern part of the valley. In fact, I am sure the Shurtliffs still own undeveloped land out here.

Allan met [his wife] Zula at Cactus Springs, where she was working. It's near Indian Springs on the 95 highway. He was well in his 30s when they were married. Paul has never married and is still living here today. The ranch has been converted into a subdivision called Allen Estates, of which Paul has some interest still. Allen died from cancer. I can't tell you when, but it was in his prime of life. It was after that that the ranch was sold and sub-divided.

The Brady brothers, 2 bachelor brothers from California, are extremely frugal and hard-working and were probably the best growers in the whole valley. They were producers. I always said it was because they had no distractions of wives and families, though there may have been other reasons. They sold their property, which is now Cal-Vada Meadows, to Cal- Vada some years ago. Glen died, but Wes is still living here. He moved off, they built a new house and neither one of them ever married. They were great farmers.

The Dollar Ranch adjoined the Dorothy ranch to the south, and that's a project that Ray Van Horn was involved in over the years. It went through a series of ownerships and never did really operate a lot as a producing ranch. There were many attempts, many starts, but when I moved here it was just weeds. Bob Ruud and his partners, coming from Madera, California, purchased the Dollar Ranch and also the Basin Ranch, where Ruuds later farmed. I don't know the whole story as far as the Dollar Ranch is concerned, but I know that Bob Ruud and his partners kind of split and Bob took the Basin Ranch, and the Dollar Ranch was then resold. It's now Country Place II, a subdivision.

RM: Where is the Basin Ranch?

TH: The Basin Ranch is on Blagg and Basin Road, just west of the community center. The Ruuds' Basin Ranch was farmed by Bob and Jacque Ruud for a long time. I don't remember just exactly when they came out here, but Bob Ruud was a county commissioner for a long time, and died in office in July 1983. Since then, Jacque Ruud has been operating the farm. She still lives there.

RM: It seems as if, as far as the farmers in the valley go, there were 2 well-springs, you might say. Some of them came from the Moapa area and then the central valley of California. I guess a few came from Texas . . . Walt Williams came from Texas.

TH: That's true. In 1957 Walt Williams and his partner, Frank Cruz, from Pecos, Texas, purchased the Pahrump Ranch from C. B. Dickey and his associates. They tamed it until 1969,

when they sold. to Cal-Vada. That was the largest operation [in the valley] by far. It was successful, but I think Walt had gotten to the point in life where it was time, and he had a chance to sell it to Cal-Vada and he did well.

RM: Here you had a valley with water and so on, yet it wasn't until the late '40s or early '50s that you begin to see Williams from Texas, the Moapa people and the California people suddenly start seeing the potential here. What happened?

TH: Well, the agricultural era of the '50s and the '60s was good. I think people from the central valley and southern Nevada and Utah were looking for a place to expand, and this was one of the few virgin territories because it had been so isolated. And remember, we didn't get electricity until 1963. As mentioned earlier, the technology of drilling modern wells, even though it goes back before the '30s and '40s, was not really developed until the '40s and '50s. Well drilling made it possible to produce water to farm in Pahrump.

The mechanization of cotton [was another factor]. It was only in the Late '40s that mechanical cotton pickers were developed; that made a lot of difference.

RM: Why? They were growing cotton in the south and in California without machines before that.

TH: Because it is extremely difficult with no facilities and no labor force to harvest that cotton, to try to import those laborers. Without good housing facilities, with the isolation and no electricity, it was a real frontier. So with the advent of the mechanical cotton picker and the automatic tie hay baler, labor became less critical.

RM: And that was in the late '40s? Before that, they couldn't bale?

TH: Well, yes, but it was poke and tie, hand-tied, hand-poked the wire through a wood block.

RM So with the isolation of the Valley, it just wasn't economical to grow cotton or alfalfa on a large scale?

TH: Then we still had a problem of ginning the cotton, but that was addressed by the ingenuity of some people before me. They would take an 3-wire hay baler, going back before automatic baling ties, and they built a hopper to dump from the mechanical picker into this baler and hand feed the bale chamber, and bale up the cotton into 3-wire bales. You think that may be screwy, but it worked because in the ordinary hay bale that would weigh 140 pounds, you could compress 220 pounds of cotton into the same size bale. You could stack those bales on a truck and get all the load weight you wanted to make it justifiable to truck that cotton to Arvin Bakersfield for ginning, whereas, just dumping into racks on a truck, you couldn't compress the cotton enough to get any weights on it. So the freight factor with little weight on a truck was a lot more expensive than bailing even though you had to go through that baling process.

RM: Was that a valley innovation?

TH: I'm sure that developed here. Maybe somebody heard about it some other place, but it worked. Cotton was ginned until 1959 in other areas, mostly Bakersfield. This process tended to compress bits of leaves and sometimes, on the edges, where it slid on the bale chamber, it would compress the cotton seed and break it, which is a little detrimental to the ginning process, but the end product, the quality of the lint, was offset by the fact that there was almost a homogenizing effect of that cotton being in the bale. The lint came out in a more uniform, whiter, good quality situation, which offset some of the damage. It was a practical thing and worked very successfully. And the gins were able, with very little modification, to handle the bales. In fact, the wires were just clipped and the broken bale was kicked off the truck and sucked up through the suction pipes in the same fashion as they would suck the loose cotton off the cotton trailers brought to them. There was no big modification required.

RM: What were the differences between the well drilling of the '50s as opposed to that of the '30s?

TH: [There were differences in] experience, technology and equipment. Most of the early-wells out here were drilled with cable tools; that is, the well was just hammered down through the ground. The rock was broken up by a large, steel stem, called a bit, and then they had what they called a baler that would go down after it was broken into small pieces and, through a suction device with a check valve at the bottom, would actually pump the stuff that had been broken up with the bit into this tube. It was then pulled out and dumped in that fashion.

Most of the wells are drilled 500 feet or more in the valley floor. The ones along the fan are drilled in the range of 700 to 900 feet, and it takes a fairly good well rig, a little more modern than what was available in the '30s, to do that. Just physically carrying the cable of sufficient diameter to lower the bit, which weighed maybe a ton, required bigger rigs. In order to crush the rocks and so on those bits were heavy. The point of the bit was in the form of a cross, but that cross was sharpened so that as you went down the cable would tend to rotate the bit somewhat and the driller made sure it kept rotating so that as you hammered, the cross rotated in the hole and pulverized it. An experienced well-driller could feel the cable with his fingers and tell you what that bit was doing down there, 800 or 900 feet underground - whether it was going through clay or rock - just by the feel of it.

RM: What were the innovations in the 40's?

TH: There were no big innovations.

RM: Are they still hammering?

TH: A lot of wells are still drilled today by cable tool rigs, but of course, the rotary rigs that are used in the oil fields could be used for irrigation wells as well. But you have to remember that a rotary rig in those days was a huge machine. It took several truckloads to transport them to the well site and then a lot of setup time, so they were just too expensive for irrigation wells. The oil field rotary rigs normally went in the thousands of feet deep. They were just too big and

expensive to move in for hundreds of feet, so the cable tool was used an awful lot. Here again, the technology has developed to where a lot of the rotary rigs are now using nothing but air pressure and a foam that will float the cuttings, the pulverized material, out of the well. They bring it to the top and float it out of the well. This technology and machinery are used today on small domestic wells. They are fast and they do very well with it.

Things have changed. Back in the '30s you hardly had mechanical farm tractors that were really successful - they were cumbersome and big and expensive. It was a matter of the whole machine technology advancing, plus Pahrum remained isolated so late in modern history.

RM: Could you talk a little about what was involved in starting the ranch here? What were the stages you went through working on virgin ground?

TH: We had a lot of good help from neighbors who had gone through some of this, but the method of irrigation was entirely different from what we had used. Over in Mesquite, we flood irrigated from a canal system, from water out of the Virgin River. That was a coarse-textured soil and we would just flood it over and leave it, kind of guide it if you had to, for the first irrigation in a new planted field, but it would soak in rapidly because of that soil. Here you had to leave the water from 24 to 48 hours in one set, that is, running down the same furrow. [It had to go] that long LM order to get enough penetration to do any good. And since it was so fine and powdery you had to really control the flow of water in that furrow so that you didn't erode and lose control of the whole thing. So we used siphon ;tubes.

Even though the land looks level, there is quite a lot of fall to the west generally, and there can be side fall to the north or south. The highest elevation of the valley is the east side and the lowest is the west side. I didn't even know what a contour ditch was, but since we didn't have the money or the equipment to level the land, I got Elmer Bowman to help me with his surveyor's instrument level. You just make the ditch level by following the contour, or same elevation, of the land. Sometimes it would look like a snake going across the land, but when you would fill it with water it would be level and the water would be level from one end to the other, and then you could use a siphon. The principle of the siphon is, water must be higher in the ditch where you are taking it out in order to draw over and flow out the low end of the tube in the furrow. We had never used siphon tubes, but you learned what size to buy and to use, depending on soil texture and how long the furrows were. Most of them were quarter-mile furrows and a very small stream of water would run all the way to the other end fairly rapidly, but you had to leave it for it to soak into the soil.

RM How did you know you were level?

TH: Elmer Bowman showed me with his instrument. It was like a surveyor's level; you would just move the ditch line east or west, remembering the fall was to the west. If you encountered a high spot you moved farther west till you got the whole thing level, or east if you encountered a low spot, and then you made a V-ditch and put the water to it.

RM: Did you have to clear the land?

TH: Yes, of brush. It wasn't much of a job. In the areas that had been previously farmed there were huge tumbleweeds. We hooked up a long cable to a railroad rail about 16 feet wide. By trailing a second rail 3 feet behind the first one hooked up with a chain, you could set the rail afire and drive through those tumbleweeds, and the tumbleweeds would pull up. They were dry, of course, and very brittle; they would pull up by just the force of the rail dragging over. If you varied the speed of your tractor and kept tumbleweeds loaded on those rails all the time, you had a continuous fire and burned them as you went. Day after day we ran around with the rail burning tumbleweeds, and it worked quite well. The brushland was short brush, and if you just disked it a time or two it pulverized it right into the soil. A scraper sometimes worked to fill the holes, but generally we used a land plane, a large scraper-type thing 40 to 60 feet long, which would cut the high spots and dump [the dirt] into the low spots.

RM: How did you decide what crops to put in, and what were they?

TH: Our neighbors had already grown crops and cotton was the most profitable. We got a lot of advice, mostly from the Bowman family. Alfalfa and small grains were also grown here. In the farming business you need to stay with a crop that is a known factor, because you can more closely determine economic factors as well as production factors. On strange crops or new crops, you need to go cautiously. We just grew the crops that were grown at the time, but cotton was the thing that, during the '50s and '60s was generally profitable. Alfalfa has never been highly profitable. We are not growing cotton anymore because the world's supply depressed the prices during the early '80s into the 60-cent bracket. In 1960 we were getting 60 cents. With all the other costs rising, we finally got to where, because of over-production worldwide, we couldn't produce cotton economically anymore. We all made the decision [to quit] after a year or two of losing money, knowing that once we quit, that would also fold the cotton gin, and we would never start up again. It was a kind of joint decision of the growers still remaining in the valley. In 1983, we stopped growing cotton altogether.

RM: Was that when the gin folded?

TH: Yes. But even prior to that the old Pahrump Ranch, which was one of the largest producers, had gone out of production, being sold to Cal-Vada for a subdivision. The Dorothy Ranch had gone out of production, being sold to Cal-Vada Bradys, Simkins . . . those had all gone out. We had, in effect, probably lost 60 percent of the cotton production by 1980 anyway, so the remaining cotton producers had an arrangement with the owner of the cotton gin where his cost of ginning the cotton was higher than surrounding, competing areas. It was still less expensive for us, because to truck it out was expensive. We had an agreement whereby we all could kind of see that cotton was going to stop someday, but in the meantime we tried to live together and keep the gin going. It was a joint decision, but it was a decision that had to be made.

RM: Initially, then, you planted alfalfa and grain and cotton?

TH: My first crop was in the fall of 1951. We planted 40 acres of alfalfa, which was a big field to us. Of course, cotton is a summer crop, so the following year we planted 100 acres of cotton in April and produced a bale of cotton per acre, which was good. The price was pretty good and we had a whale of a successful year.

We hired our neighbors, who had purchased a new cotton picking machine a year or two before, to do our harvesting. The only problem was, back in those days, we didn't use dessicants and defoliants and so we waited for the frost to kill the plant and the leaves to shed before picking. There's too much staining and too much trash if you try to pick cotton with green leaves still on the plant. Sometimes the killing frost didn't come along until well into November. [Our neighbors] picked their crops first and then came down to us and hell, we were into February picking our crops; it was extremely cold. We had gone through a lot of weather damage on cotton by February, so in 1953 we bought our own cotton picker. It was probably the biggest single investment we ever made machinery-wise. We bought a one-row International cottonpicker through Clark County Wholesale, there in Las Vegas. They were the International farm machinery dealer.

I look back and wonder how they ever sold that to us on credit, but they did. It cost us \$9,800 - big, big money. That same year, with my dad's credit and co-signing for a Farmers Home Administration loan, we borrowed \$7,000. We almost bought a complete set of machinery. So you can see that one machine for \$9,800 was a pretty good investment; that farm tractor was \$2,600 back then. The same horsepower class, which is about 35 HP, today would be \$16,000.

RM: Did you plant cotton. on virgin ground?

TH: Not quite on virgin ground. Back in 1941, Lois Kellogg had grown a grain crop, and then the year before we came out here, Frehners had grown a grain crop on that same land. We probably grew cotton on that particular piece of land for maybe 10 years straight before we were able to rotate crops. But after the 2nd or 3rd year we began to grow same grain crops as well and we planted more alfalfa in order to expand our operation and to bring in more land and get it prepared and developed for future cotton. Also, a grain crop is planted in the fall and irrigated in the fall, winter and early spring; it doesn't compete with summer water usage for the cotton crop, which is planted in April and harvested that fall. In effect, you could expand your production with the same amount of water using a winter crop and a summer crop.

RM: Were there any tricks of the trade that you had to learn to grow cotton?

TH: Mostly, ask a lot of questions and watch what your neighbors are doing and try to understand what is going on. We made a lot of mistakes. It's like anything else. If you've never planted a lawn, you'd probably make mistakes, but if everyone around you has planted a lawn, then you pick it up pretty fast. It was a good learning experience. There are field days sponsored by the universities on various aspects of insect control, weed control, planting and irrigating. The first year or two we spent a lot of time collecting information from the universities.

CHAPTER FOUR

RM: What were your housing problems when you moved here?

TH: When we knew that we had purchased the ranch in the spring of 1951, we knew we had to move our own house, because one thing that was just non-existent in Pahrump was housing; you had to provide everything yourself. We purchased an old 1944, 25-foot house trailer from someone in north Las Vegas - probably from a newspaper ad. We paid \$400 for it and it wasn't a bad trailer, but it didn't have a bathroom. That was my first house. I pulled it out here in 1951, and lived in it, bathed in the stream, the ditch from the well.

RM: Did your wife care with you?

TH: Yes. That winter we bought an old oil-burning water heater and built a little sheet-iron shower outside. We'd turn the water heater on and heat the water before showering and then turn it off when finished. In the wintertime, it was a little bit cold running between the shower and the house.

Then in 1954 I got word that in Boulder City several little houses that had been built during the construction of Boulder Dam were being sold and I took a look. At the time, the ones being sold were little one-bedroom cabins. They had been dismantled because they were built in 8-foot square sections. The outside dimensions of this little house were 16 feet wide by 24 feet long, but it had a kitchen, living room combination and one bedroom, a bath and a large closet. It was all stacked up in piles and they were selling the complete unit for \$54, including the bathroom fixtures. But they were sub-standard construction, and by then it took a lot of fixing up to move them in Clark County. Living in Nye County, that was a natural; that's why we were able to buy them cheap Substandard construction [meant] the interior partitions and that sort of thing were made out of 2-by-2s and in Clark County by then you had to have 2-by-4 stud walls. We poured a slab, set it up out here and by gosh, we had inside plumbing and a closet. Really living.

Then in 1957, some Bureau of Reclamation houses went to auction. These were 3-bedroom houses, and the total dimensions on those, if my memory serves me right, were 24 by 32, which is 768 square feet. Again, they were units you had to move and they had been vacant quite a while and they looked terrible. Windows were broken and the roof was a composition shingle roof and they needed redoing. I bid \$562 and won one of the houses. They were wood frame outside and wood siding and it cost me \$650 to get someone to pick that house up and move it to Pahrump and we set it on our own foundation and this thing had a kitchen, living room, 3 very small bedrooms, a bath, plus a small closet in each room, but by then we had a family growing and that was quite modern; we all had a separate bedroom.

We lived there until 1963, when we bought this ranch which had a house that the Frehners had built, the house I live in right now. It's a large, nice house. It had a flat roof and we built a pitched roof over the top of it, because we couldn't keep the flat roof from leaking rain, but that's where we live today.

RM: Where was the original part of your ranch, where your first 2 houses were?

TH: Just south of us a mile.

RM: Are the houses still there?

TH: Oh yes. We have employees living in them. Bowman owns the ranch in between our north and south ranches.

RM: And that's all part of the original Kellogg Ranch?

TH: Yes. There was even some land beyond, south of our farmland, that belonged in the Kellogg portion. It was sold to various people but was never developed into farmland.

RM: What about help in these early years?

RM: That was a real problem because of the isolation and you had to also furnish a place for employees to live. When that person came out here he was kind of captive because it was hard to get out of the valley. A lot of times our employee didn't have his own transportation so we'd take a day once every 10 days or 2 weeks and we would all go to Las Vegas and buy whatever we needed to buy. In the meantime, any social event that would happen, or going to the post office, you and your employees would all go together. Farm employees are usually lower paid, and a hell of a lot of them didn't have transportation. It was rough, and not too many people enjoyed living and working on a farm under those conditions.

RM: Did you get them in Las Vegas?

TH: Every place.

RM: Were they usually single men?

TH: Usually. Then later on . . .

RM: Were they white?

TH: Yes. Then later on the Mexican people began to learn about Pahrump. Of course the farmers coming, especially from the central valley of California, would bring Mexican people with them and that's what we have used mostly since the late '50s and early '60s and we find . . . We've used wetbacks and we've used people who have a visa or green card, or in some cases, they are actually citizens, but the people have come out of deep Mexico, most of them with almost no education. It's painful for a lot of them to even sign their name to their paycheck. But they are intelligent people and they are here for one reason, and that is to escape the economic conditions in Mexico and to raise their family in an environment where they would have an opportunity.

It's been amazing, over the years . . . you can take a little Mexican kid and put him in the 1st grade prior to when we had kindergarten, with no exposure to the English language, and by Christmas time you can't even detect an accent. They pick it up that fast. The 2nd generation families integrate into the mainstream very well, play sports, and in many cases are excellent, honor roll students. Now they are integrated into mainstream America and that's what their parents, most of my employees, have worked a long time for.

RM: Are they long-term employees?

TH: Yes. We furnish housing, but they bring their families here and raise them. Their kids work on the farm in the summers and some of them go on to college, some don't. They usually get into the construction trades and they do well. And that solves a problem: farm work, even though it pays a lot better than a lot of vocations today, is the type of work that is generally hot, dirty and physically tiring. The Mexican people have been raised in that environment and they know that's what they are content to do, and it gives us employees with no absenteeism and with extreme loyalty. They are just darn good workers and good people.

RM: Are you able to keep them year round?

TH: When we were growing cotton, it was a year-round thing, and we kept them year round. But now, just growing alfalfa, we are seasonal, so there are about 4 months during the winter time that some of my crew, even though I furnish housing and utilities for them year round, work off on other jobs. I have one who works up at Saddle West in the landscape, outside maintenance department. They are able to find part time jobs, then they come back in the spring, so it has worked out fairly well.

RM: What did you do about housing initially for your employees?

TH: We just acquired housing one way or the other. There was no other place to live in Pahrump, so you had to furnish housing.

RM: You just had a small trailer?

TH: Yes, that's right. And then we moved in another trailer and then over the years as I moved up in housing, they took the old one and a lot of these . . . that house across the street is a Boulder City house, just like the one I lived in. And when we bought this, there were 2 old Nellis army barracks converted into houses out here that we are still using.

RM: Could you discuss the problems that lack of services in this isolated area presented in the early years?

TH: When I first came out here in 1951, we had just one little trading post, the Pahrump Trading Post. They did what they could with the limited amount of people living here, but they only made a supply run to Las Vegas about once every 2 weeks, so you kind of watched, and you'd

buy milk and freeze it, or we would make a trip into Las Vegas once every couple of weeks and buy a lot of groceries. You could do a lot of preserving with a freezer.

RM: You had a freezer?

TH: Well, after a while.

RM: You must have had power then.

TH: Yes, or 24-hour generation by then, in the late '50s. One of the things that I remember distinctly really missing out on when I first moved out here was that there was no place I could get a hamburger and milkshake. And for our supplies we needed nails, bolts, parts, sparkplugs . . . we couldn't buy it in Pahrump, so we'd keep a list, which would get to be fairly long, and every couple of weeks we would go to Las Vegas. We'd get up early in the morning so we could spend all day running around to the various supply places trying to get your list completed. We'd use a pickup and have that thing loaded; maybe we'd want to buy a couple of fruit trees and we'd have to pick up a few sacks of fertilizer, and a few sacks of seed and a barrel of oil . . . You talk about looking like the Grapes Of Wrath, we had a pickup load of everything.

And then, of course, you couldn't have a community prior to electricity and telephones, because people weren't going to move out here to live unless there was a reason and of course not very many people could farm or afford to farm, or come out here for that reason. But it was still a good community to live in, especially once the road to Mercury, to the Reno highway, was paved. That was 1966, and it opened up a whole new era of Mercury employees being able to live only 35 miles from Mercury. But you couldn't have that unless you had central electricity and telephones, because everything [depends on] wells for water systems, and that is a pretty severe thing to try to operate off a generator - to keep a water pump running with water pressure all the time.

But finally, as we grew, a few more things came along and we had a few small businesses develop and more supplies became available to us. It's ironic; Clark County Wholesale used to be one of our biggest accounts because they sold fertilizer, seeds, auto parts, all welding supplies and everything. We are still very good friends with the owners of Clark County Wholesale today, and they still honor our credit account, even though we may only buy something from them once every 2 or 3 years, because it's all available right here in Pahrump. We've grown to that point and I like that; I think all the early people who lived out here strove to create enough of a community to become more self-sufficient and have things available to us without having to go outside the valley to get them. It really took some planning and if you ran out, you had a problem. Maybe your neighbor would have enough of that particular supply that you could go borrow from him until you got to town to replenish the supply, but it was different.

In those days we were so isolated that when we had people come into the valley to see us it was an event. And today we live at such a hectic pace that times have changed to where private time is what we really cherish; when we don't have anybody coming to see us. Back in the '50s the only way in [to the valley] was from over Johnnie Summit and you could see the trail of dust of anyone coming in to the valley. It only happened 2 or 3 times a day and you could

follow that dust and generally it would stop up in the center of town around the old Pahrum Ranch and the Trading Post. But if that dust trail left there and started south toward the Manse Ranch, most of the time it stopped at the Manse Ranch, but if it passed the Manse Ranch, since we were the southern-most ranch, I'd leave the field and go to the house to make sure that I didn't miss whoever it was. It was different, but it was good; those were the conditions.

RM: You had to be a mechanic because if something broke down, you couldn't take it to a garage.

TH: Yes, you also had to do an awful lot of your own mechanic work. On something major, we would have to have a mechanic travel from Las Vegas. It was very expensive, so we learned to weld and we learned to do carpentry work and we learned to do an awful lot of equipment repairs.

RM: Were your brothers or your dad caning over and working with you?

TH: The first few years, the younger brothers would spend same time in the summers helping us get along. My dad, after the first 2 or 3 years, kind of backed off because of his involvement with his own place, plus by then we were getting a little more settled. However, he did [care help] during the wintertime since his farming operation there of course slacked up then. Even though milking cows is a 12-month operation, he would truck the cotton in the wintertime to Bakersfield for ginning. From 1952 through 1958 Dad was on the road at least 2 months of the year, trucking our bales of cotton to Bakersfield for ginning, and he had a truck he could do that with. After 1958, with our own gin, it got to be that Dad was no longer needed as much. It was 1966 when Dad severed his relationship with the ranch. We made a deal where I paid him for part of it and he gave me part of his interest.

There was one thing . . . this has been an area that raises an excellent quality melon and my dad loves the crenshaw and casaba melons. So from year one we grew a melon patch, because it was so easy to do, right alongside the cotton field. You took care of it just like you do cotton, and it just grew. When he sold me and gave me his interest in the ranch, he retained lifetime melon rights and that stayed all these years. Every fall we'd take him from 2 to 5 full pickup loads, and by pickup load, I'm talking about a ton to a ton-and-a-half of melons. And he was king of the hill because he had friends that he would distribute them to. Oh, he loved melons, he'd store those casaba melons until Christmas.

RM: Yes, I've been told you are kind of the melon king of the valley.

TH: We never did really sell them commercially. We tried that a year or two, but it's extremely difficult to get your marketing channels set up. Our melons come off late, in late August and September, and by then everybody has had melons all year long, and the price is down. Too many areas are producing melons and it's very difficult to sell them profitably, even though we have an extremely good quality melon.

We even tried to break into the hotel trade. But if you can't give the buyers and produce brokers a long term supply, they would rather not fool with you because they already have

their channels and connections set up. The crenshaw melon especially is such a premium quality that we thought we could sell to the hotels or to some of the grocery stores directly, but it just didn't work out. Had we been large enough and maybe capitalized enough to set up our own broker and distribution setup [it might have], but, again, you only produce for about 4 to 6 weeks and then they've got to go buy melons from some other source. It's very tough to do.

RM: Did you experiment with any other crops or attempt to make it with any other crops in the first 10 years or so that you were here?

TH: Sure did. We tried to grow alfalfa seed and we made a good, honest effort for several years there. Most of the problem with alfalfa seed, which is a good crop in most areas, is that in the summer time, when you are forming the seed, it is so hot and dry here that you get what we call "blasting," which is a natural shedding from the heat stressing the plant and shedding, or losing, some seed. The other big problem was trying to get pollination under those conditions. Alfalfa has to be pollinated by a bee, or it won't produce the seed; the blossom will just fall off. We tried the alkali bee, which we put in an artificial, moist, salty, soil . . . they are a soil-burrowing bee. That was marginally successful. The honey bee is not a good pollinator. But after years, we were only so-so successful; it didn't really work out.

We grew sugar beets for seed, and it was very successful for 2 years. This was for the sugar beet companies, in this case in Phoenix, but at that time they had an abundance of seed and since we were the new growers on the block they cut us off and we were never able to get back in it. We've tried various grain crops and safflower, which is an oil seed crop, but have never been really too successful. A few years ago lettuce was grown by a lettuce company very successfully, but that's a thing that is very specialized, very capital-intensive, very market-oriented and an individual just has no business getting into that on a year in, year out basis. The market is so volatile that 2 out of 3 years you probably just lose. The big lettuce companies grow lettuce year round, so that if in the month of October lettuce prices are depressed, that's OK because in the month of November they may not be. But for us to get in on that October market we've got one shot at it, and it's just too risky.

Cattle feeding hasn't been too economic. It's really better to process the alfalfa and sell it than it is to put it through cattle out here. The Manse Ranch dairied for a number of years very successfully, but here again, you need a milk base, you need to have a marketing channel, and you almost have to buy out somebody that's existing in order to get into it. It's capital-intensive, and I go back to my teen-age days when I milked cows twice a day; I don't want anymore of it. So although we tried a lot of things, right now we are at a loss to determine what would be better than alfalfa, even though alfalfa is not good. Too much of it is grown worldwide, and that's the story of most agricultural products; that's why agriculture has been in such a tailspin the last few years. Our ability to produce is so great that there just isn't enough demand, not enough consumption.

RM: What about fruit trees? Pop Buol, I guess, had some pretty good trees on his place.

TH: Again, that's a specialized crop. We all have our own back yard fruit trees and grapevines and that sort of thing, and they do fair, year in and year out, but it's something that's never

been developed over here. It possibly could be, but that's a long-term commitment. Most of us haven't been economically in a position to go into something like that; it takes a big investment. But the future of Pahrump Valley is probably not going to be in agriculture, because we are developing into a bedroom community for Las Vegas, a retirement community, and I would suspect that is the direction that we are going to keep going.

RM: Would you say that agriculture is always been kind of marginal here, economically? Has it been a tough row except maybe for the heydays of the cotton?

TH: I think that's a generally accurate statement. There were some years that cycled up and down, but on balance more years were not good than were good, and it's only been the few very efficient, very stubborn farms that have stayed in existence; that's just the economics of farming.

RM: Is there anything special about the valley aside from the general economics that every farmer faces - anything about the isolation, the climate or the soil?

TH: This is called a high desert area, so when it's irrigated we do produce a very high-quality alfalfa, and that helps; it brings us a little more price. We produced a very high-quality cotton which helped bring us a premium price. We are isolated so that we don't have as many insect pests as other areas. Some of those things definitely work in favor of agriculture.

The other thing I want to go back to that we've not touched is the large scale development in the '50s and the early '60s. The drilled wells [of that era] were pulling down the artesian pressure, and the artesian flows have largely diminished, so everything is pumped. So energy costs are a big consideration out here. The electricity to run the pumps is one of the things that has helped the demise of agriculture; the high cost of electricity is our biggest single expense . . . we've got wells that run at \$100 a day to pump, just for electricity alone. Even though energy costs in this valley are moderate for the average time owner and so on, it's still a high cost in the agricultural world. And fuel and oil have gone up, even though some of that has come back down, but that helped create a debt load and accelerate the downslide of agriculture.

CHAPTER FIVE

RM: I've got a bunch of questions we could go through if you want. Could you talk about the development of the cotton gin? For instance, how did it get started? Initially, you had to bale your cotton and truck it to California.

TH: Yes, the cotton was put in a 3-wire hay bailer in order to get weight enough to load the truck with, and those bales would weigh 200 pounds or better, so you'd get plenty of weight. It was still an expensive, cumbersome operation and as the cotton industry grew and flourished from 1948 to, say, 1958, it attracted a company called Arizona Cottonseed Products Company, out of Phoenix, Arizona, and they decided to build the cotton gin, which was built in 1959. In fact, the first cotton was ginned in the fall of 1959. I don't know all the details, but Walt Williams was one of the prime movers in inducing that cotton gin into Pahrump, and in fact, he either sold, or at least made available, the 40-acre parcel where the gin was built and sits, at a very attractive sale price or some other arrangement. I don't think Walt Williams ever had an interest in the cotton gin or the ginning business, but he was very instrumental in attracting it here.

By the way, to my knowledge that's the only cotton gin ever in Nevada. Partly because cotton is a southern-belt crop, meaning that it takes about so many heat units per year to mature a crop of cotton, so the only place cotton will grow in Nevada is in southern Nevada. Years and years ago I am sure there was a little cotton grown by the Mormons in Mesquite, Virgin Valley and Moapa Valley. It was probably trucked to the town of Washington near St. George for ginning, but I'm positive this is the only cotton gin in the state of Nevada, ever.

RM: Do you know how much it cost?

TH: I don't have any idea what it cost. It was built by Arizona Cottonseed Products Company and they owned and operated it.

RM: So farmers in the valley didn't have anything to do with its operation?

TH: That's true.

RM: What difference did it make to the valley?

TH: It was quite a saving to us because we could get our cotton ginned right here without the additional expense of trucking it to Bakersfield and putting it through that hay bailer which was almost a hand-feed type operation. You couldn't use automatic conveyers like you did with hay because the bale chamber . . . in order to make a square bale with cotton, you had to feed about the right amount into that bale chamber each stroke of the piston, so that you didn't have more cotton on the bottom than you did on the top. You had to keep the chamber full, and that required doing it by hand with a pitchfork. It's no big thing - you could catch on fairly fast on how to feed - but it did take a man feeding the bale chamber from a hopper built over the bale chamber, then it took 2 men on the ground, one poking wires through wooden blocks

and the other one tying wires, and then those 2 men moving the bales away as they were finished baling and putting them in a rick or stack, so they would be ready for transport.

RM: Did you ever cost out what it saves in terms of a pound of cotton, comparing the gin and the old hand system?

TH: I'm not sure we did. But even though we probably paid a little higher ginning rate here than some areas might have, due to competition in other areas, ginning rates here were generally comparable to the ginning rate that you would pay, for example, in Bakersfield or Arvin. Once we had a gin, we just dumped into trailers. We purchased 30-foot-long trailers with wire racks, regular cotton trailers, which would hold about 5 bales of cotton. It takes about 1,600 pounds of field cotton to make a 500 pound bale of lint.

RM: I didn't realize the ratio was so low.

TH: Yes, your cottonseed will weigh generally 1.6 to 1.7 times the weight of lint. In simple figures, if 1,500 pounds would make a bale of cotton, which sometimes it would, 1,500 pounds of field cotton would produce 500 pounds of lint. So it would produce about 800 pounds of cottonseed, leaving about 200 pounds of trash and moisture that were removed from that 1,500 pounds. That's about how it works. Returning to the cost, it was a lot less expensive to dump it into those wagons from the cotton picker and than trail those wagons to the gin, and leave them for ginning, than it was for a three-man crew to put the cotton in hay-size bales, because that only took generally less than one employee.

RM: How long was the cotton gin operational here?

TH: It operated from 1959 to 1983. We grew cotton through the year 1982, so the last year of operation would have actually been for the 1982 crop.

RM: After that, there was no more cotton grown?

TH: No, no more grown in the valley. By then cotton acreage had diminished by probably 60 percent in Pahrump Valley. The old Pahrump Ranch, which is now Cal-Vada, the Dorothy Ranch . . . Wilcox ranch . . . later became Cal-Vada North. Brady Brothers sold to Cal-Vada. It was down to where some of the larger ranches had quit producing cotton, having been sold for other purposes, so it was only a matter of time anyway. Everybody could tell the cotton industry was going out, but what really accelerated its demise was the fact that world production of cotton was large through the early 1980s, and price was in the 58- to 60-cents range, which was not that economical for us. That's why we finally quit; because we could not produce cotton for 60 cents.

RM: Had cotton prices stayed high, do you think they would still be growing cotton here?

TH: Yes. If the cotton price would have risen along with the cost of production . . . remember that energy prices in general went wild for a while. Machinery and equipment costs really accelerated. We sold cotton for 60 cents a pound back in the early '60s.

RM: So if it was \$1.50 now, there would still be plenty of cotton grown in the valley?

TH: That's true.

RM: Was the drive to use the land for other purposes, namely subdivision, driven by itself or was it driven by the price of cotton?

TH: I would say both. Farming has always been a fairly tough proposition here in order to make a profit, as compared to other industries. The farm economy accelerated from land going into subdividing but basically most farmers would have preferred to farm. Most farmers don't particularly like to see their land go for subdivisions, but it's a matter of economics. That's where the money was. The subdivider could pay the price and purchase the ranch when you couldn't resell it during those times for agricultural purposes for nearly that much money. So it was just a natural occurrence.

RM: A person just about had to own the land in order to make a profit farming, didn't he?

TH: Yes, that's true. If you had expanded and improved and borrowed money on the land to finance those improvements, it made it very tough. The farm economy now, in 1988, shows some signs of improving, and perhaps it has bottomed and has started up. Generally speaking, the farmers did not owe mortgage debt were able to survive and the ones who had high mortgage debt because of acquisitions or other things didn't survive.

RM: Was the cotton gin a profitable operation for the company that built it, as far as you know?

TH: Yes, I think so. I think they did all right on it for a number of years and then when the cotton acreage started to diminish, Arizona Cottonseed Products Company sold this gin to one of their employees, Elroy Greer, who lived in Phoenix. Part of the reason they sold it to him was that acreage was diminishing, the profit potential had of course also diminished considerably, and the whole cotton economy wasn't that good. The parent company was not doing that well and in fact it later disbanded and sold assets to other companies.

Generally the cotton industry was not good during those years, but Elroy Greer did all right. He made a little money by frankly telling the remaining growers that, based on his estimates of that year's production, he would have to charge ginning rates in a certain amount in order for him to come out. We knew that and we were willing to do it because it was still better than trucking it outside the valley. The Arizona Cottonseed Products company, for their own reasons, converted to ACPC Investment Company sometime after they built Nevada Gin, then sold to Elroy Greer and the deed shows December 16, 1975.

Greer subsequently sold it, after the gin was no longer operating, in September of 1985 to Joe Bob White and Anthony P. Ford from a small town in Colorado - Arriva. Elroy Greer had

already removed the machinery and, as in most industries, the technology had advanced to a point that the ginning equipment was pretty much obsolete. However, he was able to sell some of it in smaller cotton-producing communities in the United States, and also I think he sold part of it in Mexico.

RM: What was left after these other fellows bought it?

TH: That 40-acre parcel was one of the best land investments in Pahrump. RM: Oh, they bought it for the land?

TH: That's the reason they bought it.

RM: Could you talk a bit about the history and economics of alfalfa in the valley?

TH: Alfalfa has been grown since day one. It's never been a good crop because, especially since we've pumped water, energy costs are high; that's the biggest single cost we have in growing alfalfa. Alfalfa is fairly water intensive so that's the highest cost we have, even though we have what would be called a moderate electric rate. It probably costs us in the range of \$125 an acre to irrigate an acre of alfalfa just for power and that doesn't cost the maintenance nor the investment in the well. When compared to some of the big canal irrigation projects like the Central Valley Canal in California that came into the Lancaster Antelope Valley area, whose costs are in the range of \$80 to \$90 an acre foot; our costs of about \$20 to \$22 an acre foot look fairly reasonable. We use 5 or 6 acre feet per acre. However, we are carpeting with areas like Needles, Blythe and Imperial Valley that have canal water from the Colorado River and probably their total annual cost for an acre of alfalfa for water is in the range of maybe \$20 to \$25. So, even though we grow a good quality alfalfa, those are the areas we are competing against and alfalfa has never been a really good money-making crop.

Before we quit cotton, alfalfa had been grown as a secondary crop because it's a good soil builder and so it was used as a rotation crop for cotton. Since we quit growing cotton, we've been producing alfalfa-hay cubes and exporting them to Japan and that market has been a little better than the domestic market. That's one of the reasons we've been able to stay in business, although that's getting tough, because even though the Japanese demand has been increasing rapidly, so has the supply. Other growers have recognized it and gone into producing for the export market. Alfalfa price, of course, all depends on the supply available and the last 2 or 3 years, there's been an oversupply. It bottomed last summer at \$80 per ton, f.o.b. the ranch. To really survive with alfalfa, we need \$110 per ton. Three or 4 years ago, it was \$110 per ton and it's up a little bit now. I don't know what the future will bring there.

RM: What is the protein content of your alfalfa?

TH: It is good; it's high, depending on the cutting and how it's harvested. It can go in the range of 16 to 20 percent or above. It's a good quality alfalfa.

RM: You get the high protein in what cutting?

TH: First and last cutting; the slow-growing cuttings. That's because the stem is finer because it grows more slowly so you have more of a leaf-to-stem ratio. Your summer crops, during the heat, grow fast and tend to be more coarse-stemmed.

RM: Could you say a little bit about the financing challenges that farmers in the Valley have faced in the years you've been here?

TH: Any time you are in a new area, and this was a new, untried, unproven area, it's very difficult to get financing. Most of the financing came from cotton gins; that was a common practice and it still is. Cotton gins would finance a grower just like a bank would, and most cotton gins borrowed that money from a bank, but guaranteed it to the bank in return for a contract that you would gin your cotton at their gin and that you would sell them your cottonseed at prevailing market prices. They would process that cottonseed - and that was another process in itself - and they could make a little money on it.

That was a common practice, so that's really how Pahrump Valley got started, and that's why it was able to kind of boom during the '50s and '60s; the availability of financing from cotton ginning companies. Depending on the grower and his credit standing, they would loan you some money on other crops, but the banks in southern Nevada were always very reluctant. This was different from northern Nevada and other areas where you had long-standing cattle operations. It was a custom prevalent in northern Nevada that the southern Nevada banks never adopted, because the agricultural financing volume was small.

So the financing came from the gins until the late '60s and the early '70s when the cooperative-type organizations known as Production Credit Association would loan short-term crop financing and intermediate financing for some improvements up to a few years, and then their sister company, the Federal Land Bank, would loan mortgage money. Around 1970 most of the growers shifted to the Production Credit Association because their interest rates were better. All they do is lend to agriculture, they understand agriculture lending and were easier to work with, their process of lending and repayment fit farming better and so to this day, that's the organization that is lending most of the money here in Pahrump to the remaining farmers. Those cooperative lending operations were started with some seed money from the federal government back in the Depression, but that money has all been paid back and in spite of the fact that one of them is called the Federal Land Bank, they are not connected with the federal government. They are a private cooperative-type financing company that pledge the credit of their borrowers to the bond market. Over the years they have developed a very good rating and are able to loan money at very attractive rates.

RM: But prior to 1960 or so they weren't in here?

TH: No. Here again, it was untried and it took until about 1969 and '70 before they would take the growers on as borrowers.

RM: Have there ever been efforts to form co-ops here in the valley for marketing or buying?

TH: Not really. There was some talk of forming a co-op and buying the cotton gin at one time. That would probably have been a pretty good idea, but when you are talking about a cooperative among the growers, somebody has to exert some strong leadership, and the situation wasn't that critical. The gin operated pretty well as it was, and even as a co-op costs would have been about the same to the grower, so there was no real need to form a co-op. As far as marketing cotton, most of us joined what is called Cal-Cot Limited, a marketing association headquartered in Bakersfield. After ginning, our cotton was all taken to Bakersfield to the Cal-Cot warehouse and then marketed world-wide through the marketing co-op. Today, agricultural production in Pahrump is so small that an alfalfa co-op probably wouldn't be practical.

RM: You were very active in bringing power to the valley, weren't you?

TH: Well, there was a constant push from all the people living in the valley. I remember going to meetings in the early '50s and even forming a little utility company in a strong attempt to get power in here. In about the middle '50s we formed what we called the Pahrump Utility Company. It was incorporated and it cost you a \$10 membership fee to belong to that utility company, and that was how we raised a little seed money to explore bringing in electricity. Elmer Bowman, who owned the Manse Ranch and who we talked about earlier, as well as Walt Williams, were two primary movers in getting power in here.

I remember that board, and attending meetings in Las Vegas with Nevada Per Company, which would have been in the middle to late '50s, trying to induce them to build power lines to Pahrump, which they were not interested in doing because it was too new, too untried and too unproven. They did agree, though, to sell us power in the area of Blue Diamond if we would build our own transmission lines through an REA loan. The price that they were giving us to sell us power at Blue Diamond was completely prohibitive and they knew that. What they really wanted to do was wait, I am sure. Their board of directors wanted to wait until the area was ready, and then they would move in.

Local people weren't willing to do that, so we did find a block of power that was available from the Colorado River system from the Parker and Davis dams from the federal government. We were able to get that through some help from our congressional delegation and that power cost in the range of 1-1/2 to 2 mills per kilowatt hour. Nevada Power was quoting in the range of 6 to 8 mills. In 1963 we were paying about 10 mills or one cent for power at the meter - at the house - and that's by buying 2 mill power off the Colorado River system. This valley and the surrounding valleys were so spread out, so many miles of line compared to the number of customers, that you had to have a reasonable cost and a feasible system to show to REA. And in order to make a feasible system you had to convert all irrigation wells to electricity and if you got in the range of a cent-and-a-half to 2 cents, people would have remained on diesel. You had to have an attractive rate. Finding that block of power, which was done in about 1961, made it practical. And at the same time Amargosa Valley was working in the same direction we were, and they had what was known as Amargosa Valley Power Co-Op going in the same direction, looking for the same sources of power. When this was found, it was the opinion of REA and . .

CHAPTER SIX

RM What was your utility company called?

TH: Pahrump Utility Company. The loan was granted in 1962, the line was constructed in 1962 and 1963 and we had power starting in March of 1963. We picked up power at Henderson at one of the Bureau of Reclamation sub-stations. Our allocation came off the Parker and Davis Dams, lower down on the Colorado, but through a trade arrangement our power is produced at Hoover and someone else with a Hoover allocation picks up the power at the other dams. The initial system served Pahrump Valley, the Ash Meadows-Amargosa Valley area and Beatty. A line was built to serve Sandy Valley at a later date.

RM: Did it also go to Fish Lake Valley?

TH: Fish Lake Valley had obtained a loan for themselves and had a system operating by then for a short period of time, 2 or 3 years, called White Mountain Power Co-Op. They were buying power from Southern California Edison out of California, but they were at Southern Cal Edison's mercy and rates were higher and they weren't making it. They made overtures to merge with Amargosa Power Co-Op, and it was agreed by these boards of directors to do that, with some urging from REA, because REA's loan was in jeopardy. That merger formed what is now known as Valley Electric Association, and still, today, we don't have physical lines to Fish Lake Valley. We were able to trade power with Southern California Edison in return for furnishing power to Fish Lake Valley, because Southern California Edison needed power for Death Valley, Shoshone and those areas. Since we had lines right to the California line, we made a switch out with them and Fish Lake Valley was able to get our rates. Valley Electric territory goes all the way to Montgomery Pass in Nevada, near Bishop. That's the northernmost area.

RM: How about phone service? What was involved in that?

TH: Well, telephone service, again, was non-existent. A year or so after Amargosa Valley Power Cooperative put power in here, the board of directors made application to obtain a loan to build a telephone system. That was in early 1964. They did get a loan commitment from REA to build a telephone system, but as happens in many of these instances . . . Everybody wants electricity and wants electricity under any circumstance, but once they get it, and the cost or service is something a little different than they thought it would be, and along with the problems of a new company, just normal bugs that occur, and maybe a lack of public relations on the part of the board of directors and management of Valley Electric, then many people were not enchanted with the management for a year or two after power arrived here.

So when a telephone loan was obtained and the commitment was announced by REA, Bell Telephone came running in here with a whole flock of public relations people trying to convince the people that they could do it better, and that the management of the power company maybe weren't really that good as managers in the telephone field, so Bell Telephone passed around petitions and letters of intent that people signed saying they would rather go with Bell Telephone. Then Bell Telephone could take that to the Public Service Commission and

say, "We would like to serve this territory," and, "The people are favoring us," as the people did at that particular moment in time. Bell Telephone did get Public Service Commission approval and they did build a system in here and as a result, Valley Electric Board of Directors cancelled their REA loan.

But it was, of course, the REA loan that forced Bell to do something when they did. They were like Nevada Power, which was waiting until it became a lot more economical. In the case of Bell Telephone, they couldn't wait any longer. The Amargosa story is something different concerning electricity, because once the loan was made to Amargosa Valley Power Co-Op, then since Amargosa was not a protected territory by PSC, Nevada Power announced that they were going to do the same thing in Amargosa that the Bell Telephone Company did in Pahrump; not as successfully, however. But they did get a certain number of customers to sign with them and they built parallel lines with Amargosa Valley Co-op in Amargosa. Nevada Power served their customers and Amargosa Power Co-op served theirs.

In any case, Bell Telephone came in with a used system which I was told they took out of Battle Mountain. It was kind of an obsolete system, but it was something they could put in Pahrump very inexpensively. We had 4-digit numbers; ours was 2061. Everything started with a 2. I think there were 76 subscribers in the first telephone book. It was kind of a mickey-mouse system, not too reliable, and within a year or so, people were very disenchanted with Bell Telephone. You know, timing is everything. However, Bell Telephone over the years upgraded and changed that system and every time they did, the local people would say, "We're going to grow fast, you're missing it, you're not planning far enough ahead." That happened with about 3 different systems, until Bell is convinced now that we are going to grow and we are here to stay, and they have a good system. So it worked out fine in the long run, but these are some of the things you go through.

With the 4-digit system you could call long distance from Pahrump easily, because you had area codes and prefixes, but you couldn't dial into Pahrump. What you had to do is go through an operator and when you'd say, "I'd like to call Pahrump 2061," it took quite a lengthy explanation to convince the operator that she could do it, she just had to learn how to do it. Actually, the operator used prefix 836, and talking with the Bell Telephone people, they said, "Well, give them the prefix when you give them the number, and it'll go right through." Which is true, but they didn't publish that. But the 4-digit system was only here for 3, 4 or 5 years.

RM: Could you talk a little bit about the development of LDS Church in the valley?

TH: You could find people more expert than I. When I moved out here, the Bowman family, the Frehner family and the Simkins brothers were Mormons. Services were held here on this ranch in one of these barracks buildings that still exist on the ranch. However, once we got power and telephones and roads and people began moving into the valley, the membership of the Mormon Church expanded to the point that there was a piece of ground acquired from Larry Bolling where the church now sits. I think he donated one acre and sold one acre to the church. Since then they have acquired some more. I wish I could tell you what year that was, but there was a fund drive and of course the intent was to build a church building, and it was done. Of course some help came from the Las Vegas LDS Church.

RM: Was it the first church in the valley?

TH: I believe so. And probably the Community Church was second. And, of course, over the years the Community Center, built in 1966, has been used by various church groups until they were able to build their own building, but I can't recall the periods of time and dates on those.

RM: Do you know much about Johnnie in the years you've been here?

TH: Apparently it was quite a boomtown during its mining boom. When I came out in 1951, the only thing that was left of Johnnie was a couple of small buildings and a couple of large cottonwood trees right along the road generally where the highway goes right now. There were some small seeps or springs there; the pipes were still there . . . the system was still running water. There was an old sourdough named Matt Kusik who lived there by himself. He was the only resident of Johnnie when I came here. Usually, when we drove by (which wasn't very often), you could see him sitting out alongside the road under the cottonwood tree in front of his house. He wasn't really that sociable, although if you had a problem or needed water or something like that, he'd accommodate you. Today that building is all gone and the trees are gone. They were big cottonwood trees, but I think either the springs dried up or the water system went kaput and the cottonwoods died. Once Matt Kusik died, nobody kept the old buildings up and they were destroyed.

Beyond that, I don't have any knowledge of Johnnie. I've been to the old Labbe Mine up there a time or two and the mill is quite a system; that still exists, I believe. Today there's kind of a resurgence of development at Johnnie with the Gold Pan Restaurant and cocktail lounge, and there's an attempt to take the old Johnnie townsite lots and get them out of the county's ownership and into private ownership. Some of that has taken place. It will be interesting to see what happens.

RM: What do you know about Sandy Valley since you've been here? TH: Sandy Valley was primarily an agricultural development. They grew cotton down there off and on most of the years that the cotton gin existed here, but to trail cotton wagons from Sandy Valley over the graveled roads to the highway to Pahrump was quite an ordeal, and then Sandy Valley probably didn't produce quite as good a cotton as Pahrump, so it was marginal.

Sandy Valley, in my opinion, is going to continue to develop as a residential area, a bedroom community for Las Vegas. Even though there is still farming going on, Sandy Valley also has the disadvantage of being about half or more in California, so you've got a divided entity there. Part of it is in Clark County and part of it is in California. Part of Sandy Valley is served by Nevada Power Company, part of it is served by Valley Electric and part of it is in the California area and is served by Southern California Edison. For all those reasons, plus the restrictions in Clark County of building, subdividing and zoning, I think the development of Sandy Valley has been restricted. I foresee a similar development in the future as is happening in Pahrump, but it's slower, and for some reason, has never caught on, probably due to governmental regulations.

RM: Is there plenty of water there?

TH: There appears to be, generally speaking, water of quality enough to support residents. Really this is one long valley and Sandy Valley is actually one and the same with Pahrump Valley, except, according to the engineers, there is a divide barrier, a dike-type geological structure, that sits at the north end of Sandy Valley and the extreme south end of Pahrump Valley and the 2 areas [are thus] in a different water basin.

RM: Why has there never been any development farther south in the Pahrump Valley?

TH: Because of not being able to get irrigation wells in producing quantities. The water is in tight formation and you just can't pump it economically. Hidden Hills is in the area where you go across to Tecopa on the Tecopa Road. Roland Wiley has owned thousands of acres there for a long, long time, and there have been many attempts to develop that agriculturally, but the water wells produce very little; a good producer down there may be 300 gallons a minute. Not only that, but it's very deep and you may have to lift water 500 or 600 feet, whereas the average well lift in Pahrump is probably 180 feet and even though these are not big producing wells in the valley floor, you are looking at 500 or 600 gallons to 1,200 gallons a minute. That makes them a lot more economical and generally speaking once you get south of what's being farmed now, the water development just is tough. Water is there but it's in such thin stratus that it just doesn't produce.

RM: Tim, could you talk a little bit about what you see as the natural stages of development in the history of Pahrump?

TH: Well for a long time, due to the artesian springs at Manse and Pahrump Ranches, there's been some activity agriculturally as a way stop for freight going to northern California, southern California and so on. But then there was some agricultural development started in the '40s because well-drilling technology was better and more available, and there was a little recognition then, but that was limited. Then about 1950 the word got out that Pahrump was developing and also cotton was first produced in 1948 and by the early '50s, it was recognized that cotton was a viable crop and could be financed. The big thing was that cotton could be financed. It attracted central California growers over here. So we had the pre-1940 era, we had the 1940s with a little limited growth, Lois Kellogg being one, Van Horn and his associates up in the northern part of the valley being another who came in during those periods, and some limited development. Once cotton was proven, the '50s kind of bloomed, and continued into the middle '60s.

Once we had a road to Las Vegas in 1954, that was another threshold. Electricity in 1963 and telephones in 1965, the road out north over Johnnie summit to the Reno highway in 1966, the road to Shoshone opening up that route into California in about 1956, gave us ways in and out. With cotton, then, things bloomed and the boon period was the late '50s and the early to middle '60s, especially after electricity, although there was a lot of development that took place with diesel engines for pumping.

Then you had Cal-Vada, which came in here in 1969, bought the old Pahrump Ranch and started to promote and subdivide in 1970; that was another era. That brought literally

thousands of people into Pahrump Valley, and whether they bought the land or not, they were then acquainted with the valley. By then, we had the ingredients to make a community with highways, roads, power and telephones.

RM: You had the infrastructure.

TH: Yes, and then with the decline of cotton through the late '70s and early '80s it's developing now into a bedroom community for Las Vegas and a retirement community. Of course Test Site employment is an important factor because Pahrump is only 35 miles from Mercury. Pahrump is the second largest privately-owned land mass in the southern 200 miles of Nevada, it's in the sunbelt, and if people want to live on the fringes of Las Vegas in a little more rural setting, they move to Pahrump, even from Las Vegas, and drive back and forth to work.

What I see in the future is fairly rapid rural [to] urban, residential development. One of the reasons that I see this as a future growth area is because of the natural resources available. Las Vegas Valley is predicting that they are going to be looking for outside alternate sources of water for peaking purposes in less than 10 years. Not only do we have a large privately-owned land area, there are currently about 39,000 names that appear on the property tax rolls, of people owning property in Pahrump. Probably two-thirds of those are people Cal-Vada has sold land to. But that gives a tremendous diversity of ownership that in trade land, and people retiring move here. A lot of things can happen, but we have a climate very similar to Las Vegas which is very attractive, and we are still in Nevada, which is attractive to a lot of people tax-wise.

Our development is rapid - on the order of 10 percent per year population growth. Compound that out and in 10 years we are going to be a community of 16,000 to 20,000 people, which is a major community in the state of Nevada. Our agricultural industry is probably going to continue to diminish, and as it does it frees up more water resources for people. People don't use as much water on an acre basis as agriculture does, but we have a large amount of water recharged into Pahrump Valley each year. We have a tremendous amount of water stored underneath the valley of Pahrump, and we could become a very large community in the future without running out of water even though we would have to use some of the stored water underneath. For all these reasons - the pressure that's going to be exerted on Las Vegas Valley and the lack of private land ownership in the southern half of the state of Nevada - I see Pahrump as a growing residential community, because we have all the natural resources and ingredients to do it.

RM: Could you, again, contrast social life now versus social life in the earlier years?

TH: I know that the population of Pahrump today is quite community-minded and I think quite community-loyal. If you want to be a joiner, you can join organizations to the point that you don't even have time to sleep. In the early '50s, of course, there were few people and few activities. My first experience with a social event was [shortly] after I moved out here July 2nd, 1951. I moved here by myself, leaving my wife in Mesquite and we had a daughter 3 weeks later. Allen and Paul Simkins came by on the morning of July 4th, introduced themselves and wanted to know if I'd be interested in going up to Carpenter Canyon here on the Pahrump side

of the Charleston Mountains because the valley people were going up there to have a little picnic. I think there was probably a total of 20 or 25 people on that picnic. I didn't go because I had just arrived and I had too many things to get in order, but contrast that with today, where the biggest problem I have is being able to stay home an evening and read, or watch the news or catch up on things.

We used to play baseball, just as we do today, the difference being that you knew everybody. It was a big thing when somebody had a new baby, or when somebody moved to the Valley. Today we've lost track of that, and I kind of feel badly about that. Whenever I go to the grocery store, for example, I look for someone I know now. It used to be that we were just one big family, isolated and somewhat dependent on each other.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RM: Did you know Bill Thomas?

TH: Sheriff Bill Thomas? Yes, I met him a time or two. I believe he was sheriff when I first moved out here in 1951. I'd heard of him and knew him and I am sure I met him a time or two, but back in those days the distance between Pahrump and Tonopah was so great that you only saw a law representative once a year.

RM: You mentioned last time that it was tough for the women in the early years out here. Could you talk about how you saw the woman's role in Pahrump and what kinds of things they faced that might have been a little different from what the men were facing?

TH: I think generally the men here at the time that I moved out were involved in farming and ranching, so their work occupied the major part of their time. Women, even though they participated some in the paperwork and the field work, generally found that they were faced with very primitive living conditions. No television, probably a radio that worked some, no electricity, no telephones. In some cases your closest neighbor would be a mile or two [away]. No grocery store, no shopping. Under those conditions, it was, I think, a difficult thing for women in the early '50s because remember, 1950 was modern civilization everywhere else, but not in Pahrump. It took a hardy type of woman with some determination of eventually making a community or making herself economically better to put up with and endure those kinds of situations.

[And there were] little things like washing clothes. I remember our first child. My wife used a scrub board in an old No. 3 tub and we decided to buy a washing machine, even though we couldn't afford it, when she convinced me that I ought to help her wash the dirty diapers on the scrub board. After going through that experience, I decided we really did need a washing machine. In fact, the first washing machine we purchased was from an uncle in St. George, Utah, who was in the appliance business. It was a Dexter with a Briggs and Stratton gas engine. It was engine driven and it cost us \$90, which was a huge expenditure for us back in those days, but he let me pay for it \$10 a month, and that was really living because now we had a washing machine. I'd have to fire it off for her in the morning, but then she could do her washing.

The loneliness that some women experienced was great, depending partly on how much family you had, whether you had employees and other things. Your employees almost became part of your family. You felt like they were and it worked two ways, you liked to talk to somebody, also.

RM: What did an evening consist of? It's hard for modern people to imagine what you'd do in an evening without TV and electricity.

TH: Once or twice a week we'd make an event with one of the neighbors and go play canasta. Other evenings you spent at home with your wife and family and a book, or doing bookwork, accounts.

RM: I have a philosophical question and I don't know whether you would have anything to say on it or not, but Nevada is a unique place in terms of the United States, particularly in terms of its wide open spaces. I know some writers have suggested that there is a kind of a unique character in Nevada. The wide open spaces and our special history has given rise to a certain type of person out here. Being a native Nevadan yourself, and having spent so much time in the valley and seen it grow, I wonder if you have any thoughts on the Nevada personality, the Nevada character. What is it that makes people in Nevada different and perhaps special from other areas?

TH: It's kind of hard to define, but I think a state takes on the characteristics of its people, and why the people in Nevada were different from neighboring states, I don't know. But Nevada is different. Nevada was the only state to have gambling for many, many years. That was entirely different from the rest of the U.S. The whole character and flavor of Nevada is different partly because it is a small state in population; very small. Wyoming is another very small state in population and you probably would see a lot of the same characteristics in Wyoming, except that Nevada, by adapting gambling, got into a very fast growth mode, especially southern Nevada, with the access to southern California people and their markets.

Because of gambling and gambling taxes, which have been able to support government to quite an extent, we have a tax climate that is very favorable when compared to most states. In talking to our daughter who lives in Michigan, there is a tax on services in Michigan. I forget the percentage - I think it's either 6 or 8 percent. Any time you pay your attorney, your accountant, your doctor, your dentist, there is a tax for services. Even though that has been discussed in Nevada, it hasn't taken place. You see a natural rebellion from people to a personal income tax and to taxes in general. Part of that is because we have been able to finance our government through either property or sales tax, which is a modern thing, but gambling taxes really supported the state for a long, long time.

I moved from Clark County when it was a lot different, 30-some years ago, but Nye County today has no zoning and no building regulation enforcement. In the town of Pahrump today there are no business licenses required. It's wide open; it's really a frontier county as Nevada has been a frontier state and for some reason or another that tends to attract a certain breed of people who tend to keep the state and Nye County less restricted. I think an awful lot of people have moved into Pahrump simply - and in fact they say this - to get away from regulation.

There are people today who say, "But we need to now plan and control future growth," and so on. The other side of that coin asks why - what's the matter with Pahrump as it is? We must have been doing something right, because it has become a very attractive place for a lot of people. Many investors and a lot of people want to move out here. But primarily any time you create regulation you create costs. If you look around the nation trying to cope with the homeless and with lower income people and trying to find a way to provide housing . . . We have low-cost housing primarily because you are still free to build your own place.

And peer pressure is strong. I've seen people move out here in a used 12-foot-wide [trailer] and for a year or two their place looked terrible. I can point to several examples [of people who] have been here now 5 or 6 years, and they have just moved into a new double-wide, their yards are all grass, their yards are fenced, they have pipe corrals and their way of life

and living standard is very good. They were able to get a start, and I think that's great. It's hard to say what is different about Nye County or Pahrump or the state of Nevada, but it's different. I'd have to say it's the people involved.

RM: To me there's an attitude. It's diminishing over the years, but it really used to be strong, that you can do anything that you're big enough to do as long as you don't step on somebody else's toes in doing it.

TH: I think that there are many philosophies existing around this state. I'd like to compare Elko County - from what I know about Elko County - with Pahrump, or Nye County. In Elko County when McCullough moved in and sub-divided a large area south of Elko, there was a lot of resistance and there still is today. In fact, Elko actually almost exhibits a non-growth policy and you wonder why, because it is made up of rural people. But it's a different type of people who have the ranches, and they have been there for generations. They see a way of life that they feel very strongly [about] being changed by this development and they don't like that.

In Nye County that doesn't necessarily exist because you don't have generation after generation after generation of people who control large areas of land, so Nye County encourages growth. Look back to Reno. Reno used to be the major city in the state of Nevada but they became very parochial. They wouldn't allow gaming to move out of the downtown area and Las Vegas was an upstart, down here in the desert, with nothing to support it. Even today I think a lot of the Reno old-timers believe that Las Vegas is going to fail.

But Las Vegas did adopt the attitude that if you can do it, we'll let you do it. And today the official government attitude in there is, bring on the growth and bring on the people; we like this economic vitality and we'll find resources. That will probably change as resources get scarcer and scarcer, but it's still an attitude and it's pro-growth, bring it on, if you have money enough to do it, go ahead. We still have that very strongly in Pahrump. It's very pro-growth. Maybe it's being diluted as people move in. Maybe it's being diluted because a lot of people like to close the door behind them and keep it a rural area.

RM: Weren't you in the state legislature?

TH: Yes.

RM: I'd like to talk about your political career and how you got into it and what it meant to you.

TH: Well, having been here from the early development and always being interested in developing a community so we would have services and better conditions and better schools and being able to go out at night and buy a nice dinner, and that sort of thing, it kind of naturally evolves that you get interested in county government. My first political experience was when I ran for the school board around 1960. And of course the school board is a non-paying [position], so I didn't campaign much. In fact, I was defeated soundly by Arlene Berg. What I failed to realize is that Arlene Berg is well known and has a lot of family ties in the Tonopah, Round Mountain, Gabbs areas.

That smartened me up a little bit, but I think I really got involved in politics when I was foreman of a grand jury. This would have been in about 1963, and it really introduced me to county government. It was a real beneficial learning experience and then in 1966 the state party came down and asked me to run for the assembly. Glen Jones from Tonopah was the incumbent and I think he had been in for about 12 years. He was pretty well known, but he was getting on in years and wasn't that aggressive or that much of a campaigner so, foolishly thinking that the state party was going to finance my campaign, I agreed to file. And of course once a person files, it's like a racehorse in the paddock, you start getting nerved up. You're going to run your best race regardless.

RM: What party did you run with?

TH: I've been a registered Republican. The territory included Nye County, Esmeralda County and the Mina, Luning area of Mineral County. I was successful in that race and then reapportionment during the 1971 session changed the territory to include all of Mineral County in this district. I served 4 terms in the assembly and 1973 was my last session - the end of 1974 was the last date of my term. I chose not to run again because every campaign had to be a strong campaign. In those 3 counties the registration at that time was almost 3 Democrats to one Republican. And 1974 was the Nixon-Watergate year, which didn't reflect well on Republicans.

By then I'd been speaker pro tem, I'd been on Ways and Means, on Taxation - all the important committees - and I'd been on the legislative commission that meets between sessions, and I didn't have any strong desire to go further in politics. And it was burdensome. It was a large territory, with a little over 50 percent of the voting population residing in Hawthorne, in Mineral County. That was 290 road miles, so to go to lunch to speak to the navy wives, for example, was a 2-day affair. It just became too burdensome, and even though the farm was doing OK at that time I had to make a living, and farming is a thing that you can hardly delegate, so everything considered, it just got to be too burdensome at that time and I decided not to refile.

RM: You rose to a pretty powerful position in the assembly. Could you talk about what you remember about it in terms of your accomplishments and some of the challenges you faced?

TH: There were only 2 sessions when the Republicans had control of the assembly, and I think it was about 28 years prior to that since Republicans had had control, and Howard McKissic was the speaker for the first session, which would have been 1969, and Lawrence Jacobson was speaker for the next session in 1971.

After you've been there through 2 or 3 terms you begin to get your feet on the ground and you develop relationships with the other legislators and you get a feel about what you can do and what committees you can get on. It was a good experience, though speaker pro tem is kind of like Vice President of the United States - it's kind of a non-entity, except it does give you a lot of good experience, because certainly you conduct the assembly during the absence of the speaker, or when he decides that he would like you to do it that day. It was good experience,

and acting on all the major committees was also good experience. You really get an insight into the governmental process.

I think where government really moves is in your various state divisions - with the rule-making process. A lot of legislation allows a department such as the department of conservation and natural resources authority to do certain things, and then also allows them to set rules and regulations of how you do that. How these rules and regulations come out is very important because they have the same force and effect as law, except that through the hearing process the people running those departments are able to largely convey their own philosophies into these rules and regulations. Really, government is quite a process. It's amazing that it operates as well as it does. Personally, I gained a tremendous education and even today I have very strong philosophies that have developed from that experience.

RM: What are some of those philosophies?

TH: They tend toward the conservative side. Simply put, the closest government to the people is the best government. The least government is also the best government, because I find that so many, many times, what we commonly call bureaucrats are the people running the various agencies through their rule-making or their interpretation of rules in existence. A part of their job after they have been there awhile is to make sure that you jump through the proper hoop to accomplish something, and a lot of the strong regulations are designed for the convenience of the regulator and are so frivolous that I kind of detest them.

I see this going on in all governments; in Clark County in the zoning and the building matters and some of the things that you have to go through just to do the simplest of jobs, and for no real purpose. These philosophies are my strongest ones and I'm probably one of the few more vocal in Pahrump in telling our local government, "Go slow. Go slow." We don't need an ordinance for everything that comes along. Just because you get a few people parking along the street from out of town and peddling fruit a weekend or two, we don't need an ordinance for that because once you get an ordinance anybody who sells fruit in a grocery store has got to run and get a permit to sell produce or whatever.

RM: What can you say about how business got done in the legislature? You go there with an idea that you'd like to put across. How does it get done, aside from the formal, Obvious elements?

TH: I found my main job when I was there was not initiating a lot of legislation, because these rural counties don't require a lot of legislation, in my view. What I did find was protecting my territory against the more urban counties' philosophies was important. It's hard to point Out good examples, but things that sound like a good thing to do in Las Vegas might be a very bad thing to impose on the people of Nye County, for example, so there was a lot of lobbying between legislators.

What I find is that you develop a kinship; you get to know legislators very well and you get to the point that when they talk to you, it's not a political thing with them; and usually you need to listen. Then there are others you don't depend on. Your word needs to be your bond. If you will commit to vote on an issue that somebody has asked you to vote on, you don't renege

because if you renege, word gets around and pretty soon you don't work with that legislator, period. So a person who does that has no clout - we call it, "he's broke his pick." He has no clout and, as a result, becomes very ineffective.

RM: What's another way to lose your clout?

TH: Oh, taking 'on legislation that is so frivolous and so purely political that everybody else is disgusted with you for cluttering up the process with that kind of thing. Or in the approach, the relationship between legislators, you get to where you know who you can depend on. That's primarily the whole story.

RM: How does a person get clout, aside from seniority?

TH: I think a person gets clout simply by his personality and his integrity and, of course; his ability. Senator James Gibson was in the assembly when I first went up there and I have never known James Gibson to give anything but an honest answer, whether you liked to hear it or not.

He is extremely studious, very even handed, even tempered, and you knew that when he said something, it was worth listening to. I think that's where the clout comes from and, of course, you develop allies with other legislators, ties that of course than help propel you into leadership positions.

RM: Are allies based on common interests, or are there other things? TH: Common interests, common personalities, common integrities, philosophies . . . a lot of that.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RM: What role did lobbyists play when you were there, and do you think it has changed much?

TH: Well, I am not sure it has changed. However, the nature of the legislature has changed. My first 2 sessions were in the old capitol building. That was back when the total state budget for the biennium - the 2-year period - was \$280 million dollars. And the interaction between the senate and the assembly, since you shared common restrooms, common hallways and common meeting rooms. It became an extremely close-knit group of legislators. And the business of the state was a lot smaller than it is today.

Some of the lobbyists who were operating then are still operating today, but lobbyists don't last unless they're very straight with you. When you ask a lobbyist something that may be contrary to his interests the good lobbyists, who are there year after year, will give you the straight answer even though it hurts him. But you can depend on him, so you know the next time he asks you to do something and it is something that fits with your philosophy or isn't contrary to interests in your area, you support him.

The new legislative building was built and occupied in 1971 for the first time, and I served 2 sessions there. That was a lot different because we had chambers in separate ends of the building, separate rest rooms, separate meeting rooms, and we lost some of the closeness. But the state is growing fast and today it's entirely different. There is lots of pressure on the legislators, and big budgets. I forget what the budgets are today, but they are probably 10 times what they were then. Lobbyists still play a large part and probably the legislators don't get to know them as well as we used to, because there were less of them and there was less state business.

Another thing that is different is that Clark County has the majority of the legislators up there and as Las Vegas grows, you tend to get legislators, I think, who may have different philosophies than their forefathers, the old-time legislators, had. That's good and bad, but it's a different ballgame.

RM: Do you see dangers in the state becoming overwhelmingly dominated by Clark County, particularly the rural areas?

TH: Yes I do, because there are differences of philosophies and needs. There are going to be things happen down the road that will be detrimental to rural counties just because of the overwhelming need of Clark County. Most legislators have integrity enough that they won't do something that is going to hurt a small area, unless it's just an overwhelming need; we have to rely on that.

RM: What accomplishments are you proudest of, that you look back on with the most pleasure, in your legislative career?

TH: That's hard to say. I think I worked very well with county governments, keeping the county offices well informed with legislation that had been introduced and seeking their guidance and counsel. I think that I was able to be an effective legislator among my peers, and therefore was

in a position to help my district simply from that standpoint in legislation that may have been against the district's interests.

As far as landmark piece of legislation, it's hard to pinpoint because an awful lot of legislation that was initiated by one person was also commonly co-sponsored by other legislators. He went to other legislators and asked them to co-sponsor, because if you had a majority of legislators co-sponsoring something you almost had a lock on it. I provided the first funding for the University of Nevada Field Station here in Pahrump, and that still exists, and it has been a good thing. That was, I feel, because my influence with other legislators allowed me to provide the funding necessary rather than the pure economics and philosophies of having a field station in Pahrump.

I kept all my old billbooks and records. I was always interested in water legislation, and today I remain interested in water affairs

Taxation and water were 2 of my fields of expertise because I was interested in them. I think I did well up there.

RM: What do you look back on as your biggest frustration, if any?

TH: The biggest frustration was trying to keep in touch with the electorate. With such a big area you just couldn't stay in touch closely enough to really do an effective job of representation. That was another reason that I finally got out of it, because the territory was going to expand and keep expanding That's a real deterrent to going back into politics, because now instead of 3 counties there are 5 or 6 counties in the assembly district and more than that in the senate. It's just horrible.

RM: Do you think you'll ever go back into it?

TH: I wouldn't say never, but as long as I have the farm to operate and I am as involved and as busy as I am, I don't look for that to happen.

RM: Do you think they should go to annual sessions?

TH: No, I don't. Annual sessions would evolve into nothing more than what we have at each session today, because legislators will more than fill the time allowed regardless of the time allowed. I go back to my basic-philosophy - less government is better than more government. k with annual sessions we are going to have more government. We have a good mechanism with the interim finance committee where the legislature appropriates a pool of money that can be used for emergencies, and I don't think it's all bad to make the departments use 2-year projections anyway, in their planning. I think it tends to make them plan more for the future. No, I don't like annual sessions.

CHAPTER NINE

RM: Tim, we haven't said too much about your family in this interview. Would you like to discuss them a bit?

TH: Going back to day one . . . as I've said, I was born and raised in Mesquite. My parents were Max and Estelle Hafen and 13 brothers, Gary, Bryan and Douglas. I married Eleanor Cox, who lived in Bunkerville, in 1950, and we moved to Pahrump in 1951. We had 3 children - the eldest is Vickie Ann, then Gregory Tim, then Jane Marie.

We divorced in 1960, and then I married Jacqueline Kay McJunkin Hibbert, who had moved to Pahrump from Blythe, California. She came in here and kind of co-managed and did the bookkeeping for the Nevada Ginning Company, and that's how I met her. We were married in 1961. She had 2 girls - Paula Kay and Sandra Gail - and then we had one girl, Lisa Dianne. We claim them all, so there are 5 girls and one son.

RM: How does she spell her maiden name?

TH: McJunkin; it's Irish. And she was married to David Hibbert. RM: And are all your children living in the a right now?

TH: Vickie lives in San Diego, Gregory in Las Wisps, Paula in Pahrump, Sandy in Las Vegas, Janie in Oakland, and Lisa in Pahrump.

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