

Amber Holland  
Kelly Smith

Interview #1

Larry Danielovich

Mrs. D - Can you tell us a little about what your doing.

2-5-97

Um okay. The Kennedy Mine we're trying to put together a project on the Kennedy Mine. They're trying to restore it and remember everything so they called a couple of students together to interview people that had been alive during the Kennedy Mine, who's parents worked in it, and see what they remember saying about it. Your parents, (Mr. D's) I know, owned a boarding house, right? Were you in Amador County during the Kennedy Mine?

Mrs. D - No, no....you've got the right person to interview about the Kennedy Mine. I came to interview about the Kennedy Mine. I came here in 1937, which was along time ago but those days were even before that. Tell me again who your working for.

Mr. Keith Davis. He's a history teacher at Argonaut High School. Your tea is going.

[Unknown to us after the last statement, the microphone came unplugged. The next statement is when it was plugged back in.]

I've always had exercise and I excercise every morning. I go around the house, I don't run but I walk fast.

Okay, can I ask you a few more questions.

Uh - huh.

Okay. It says, the subjects primary and secondary education, where did you, did you go to school in, did you go to elementary school here?

I graduated from the Jackson High School.

Okay

And two years later, I stayed here and it was very hard to save money because at that time there weren't very many jobs available, period. So two years later I had a passport, I didn't have a passport, what's it called?

Mrs. D - Here's the kids birthdays, I put them in reverse order Duff, John and Jean.

When you have a good grades on your report card. No, that's not what you call it. I did well.

That's good, did you go to any...

I was one or two.

Did you graduate, with a diploma?

Did you go to.....

Graduating in a .... and then I had a, what do you call a gift to go to college?

Scholarship

I had a scholarship at St. Mary's and however I only stayed there one semester.

Was it too far away?

Well anyhow, I went to San Francisco State College for three years. For three years?

Did you get any degrees or majors in anything?

I got a teachers certificate.

Is that what you majored in?

I got a job at Jackson High School teaching and, this is interesting, it's been interesting to me, just what I'm gonna tell you now. After college I worked here and there you know, actually about two years working, just working wherever I could and it was late in August and a High School principal came down in August. There was a vacancy, someone just quit, or went to a better job, wanted to come to the Bay Area. Well this principal interviewed me in Berkley and I was the teacher of Shorthand and Typing. Those were the subjects you know. I said uh, and the pricipal was McKay and well he said I had to do that. I said I can't do that, and I could do the typing, you know, I could do that, but anyhow then I had to, the main teaching was uhh .....

Mrs. D - Bookkeeping! Didn't you have to do bookkeeping? Bookkeeping?

Bookkeeping, yeah, and I knew I could handle that but I had to do shorthand and I said, "Woooo! Shoot! What am I goona to do with shorthand." I told this to the principal and he said, "No, I want you up there." And...

Mrs. D - Let me interrupt you here, he was a beautiful English major and they wanted him to do typing, bookkeeping and shorthand, none of which he had had, well just what he'd had in high school.

What happened when I got there, it was bookkeeping and typing that I had to do. Another teacher did shorthand but, she was going to leave in a couple of months and so anyhow, I got the job and then that whole year I was one lesson ahead in bookkeeping, so I did that every morning and every night.

**Wow! Did you ever work in the military at all?**

Military? No. I was in English basically, never. One teacher, the teacher that taught shorthand, left. I taught myself that year, thank goodness.

Mrs. D - And still uses it, all his notes are in shorthand.

Yeah I still use it, all the time. Everything went well. I wondered why the principal, why he did all this. I found out that at that time there were quite a few Italian offspring and Servian offspring and he had a lot of trouble with them. Too often he would call me while I had a class and you know, it's okay two or three times, but then the students start playing around and talking. Anyhow he left, I was getting a Teachers Credential, over and above, in case something came up and then I saw all the trouble he had while I kept going to USC. Then I quit that because I didn't want to be a principal, I just want to teach. It could be pretty hard, you know the students, even the good students they ... well anyhow. The principal got a job mid-year so the board told me "Take charge." I kept my job, and went back to college to get my degrees. Masters degree, my bachelors.

**In teaching or in principaling?**

In administration and teaching.

Mrs. D - They thought he was doing a good enough job without the credentials but every summer he would go to school.

**Were you ever in any clubs, Lions club, community service clubs, civic clubs in the county?**

Oh sure, yeah.

**So you were at the Masonic Lodge in Volcano?**

No, in Jackson, that was fifty years ago.

Mrs. D - Well then you worked with Boy Scouts.

Yes, I was involved in Boy Scouts.

Mrs. D - He took them on summer outings all the time.

For a while I was with the Lions.

**Did you ever hold an office? Were you ever President?**

No

**Any offices at all?**

No

**None at all? Do you know if he was in any offices?**

Mrs. D - No. He was going to school all the time with his job. He didn't really have time.

Okay.

I was in the Masons.

**Oh really. So were you in it with my Grandpa? Were you in the Masons with my Grandpa?**

What was his name?

**Jim Fregulia**

I spent summers swimming and teaching youngsters swimming. No payment, It was.....

**It was payment on your body, you got exercise.**

Mrs. D - Yeah, he went down to Red Cross swimming school. We sent him down there to get more training. He and I ran the pool, not to [hey, hey, - laughter] look at us, but we did. We were in charge of it for three or four years.

**Really?**

Mrs. D - We taught a lot of people around here to swim, I did too.

And for fifteen years I was on the board for the Mace Meadows Golf Club. Mainly, I wrote the publication. What were the other things? I taught tennis for nineteen years. That was also no payment.

Mrs. D - And then he helped with the football in the beginning. When you couldn't keep coaches.

And then I drove, after I retired, I drove the bus, a bus ....

Mrs. D - To take the people down to Sacramento that needed help, you know, they ran a bus down. They still do. He did that for ten years.

Yeah, but what was.....

**It's okay if you can't remember. So they drove a bus down to Sacramento though?**

Mrs. D - Yes

**For what?**

Mrs. D - Anyone that needed bus transportation down, a group here in town would send em' to take em' down, and he volunteered to drive the bus.

I think they still have it. Most of them they get some kind of training there. You know I was thinking I drove another bus.

**Oh, you did?**

Yes, this one was early in my retirement and I drove people who didn't have a ride. It was just elderly people who came to the umm, where they serve meals. People from all over the county. They were elderly people who wanted meals.

Was that Oak Manor? Is that it?

Yeah, What do you call that place? Like a soup kitchen.

On New York Ranch Road?

Yes, as you turn there. I was with the beginning of Hospice and I am still active in it. And I helped organize special education programs.

What I'm gonna do is, ummm, If we can we make another date for an appointment and I'll give you some, um, here's some questions.

You don't have to write anything down just think about it.

Yeah, that you can think about. And if you want you can write on these pieces of paper. It really doesn't matter, but these are questions you know. If something hits you in the middle of the night you can write it down and we'll come back and we'll interview you on these questions. If that's okay.

Uh huh.

Yeah, start thinking about it a little bit. Is there anything else that you did that you want to say? What were going to do with the information that you give us in we're gonna .... I don't know if we're gonna open a museaum or I don't know what. We're going to present the information that you gave us about your family for the Kennedy Mine and it's going to be about yourself and your wife and just different things that you guys have done and things that you did when you were a little boy. If that's okay with you. So, is there a day that your free?

I'm free almost all the time, I may start golf.

Mrs. D - Just not this coming Friday, the housekeepers coming.

What about next Wednesday? Do you want to do it next Wednesday at 12 o'clock again?

Uh huh.

**What's the date for that?**

Mrs. D - Next week?

**Yeah, next Wednesday when it that?**  
**That's is the 12th.**

Mrs. D - The same time?

Mr. Davis,

Amber Holland - and  
Kelly Smith

I have the first interview <sup>Tape</sup> but it won't print up. Hopefully I will be able to get it tonight, if not, as soon as possible.

Page 1

Interview #2

Larry Danilovich 2/12/97

**Where was the Boarding House?**

Go past Chicosolas on Jackson Gate Rd. between where Teresa's Restuarant and Bonanza Bar and Grill are now.

**Was there a name for the boarding house?**

Daneilovich Boarding House

**What did the boarding house look like? Was ther anything special you remember? Did it have a kitchen. How about the bedrooms?**

You come around a big turn facing the road you can see a house which was a bunk (6 or 7 Beds) house, behind that was a similar building also a bunk house. Around a turn about 200yards down the road was a vegetable garden. The famaily home was next to the bunk houses. The ranch that belonged with the family is still owned by Delores. The garden was next to the road and the fields had cattle and chickens. Not fancy.

**Was it a successful business?**

A good living but we ran into bad luck a couple times. Bad investments one time. Lost one whole ranch (they had more than one) only about two months that they were in bad shape while the mine was closed. Ralph Milanovich is still alive, he used to have a vet hospital, has a big house.



**Do you remember how old you were when the boarding house shut down?**

1942 when the mine closed. No, yes because of the war. Neither picked up. Took the mines apart because of the war and it was too expensive to start up again.

**Did your family build the boarding house or did they buy it from someone?**

No, my father landed in Angels Camp and then brought his wife over from Yugoslavia and they worked in a boarding house for a year. The Begovich's moved to Jackson and established an eating place for miners. My family came immediately afterwards because they were good friends. The Begovich father came by a lot after my father died to check on my family. My father died soon, I was ten or eleven years old when he died.

**Did you have anybody work for you in the boarding house?**

Oh, Yes! Especially when there were twenty-five or thirty people and of course my family worked. Delores remembers climbing on a stool to wash tons of dishes, me too! Milked cows. Everybodies cows were together and I remember finding our cows all the way in town by the highways because it was free grazing land.

**Where did your parents get the money to build the boarding house and buy the ranch?**

Mr. Begovich lent us the money I think, I remember my mother saying I'll be glad when we don't have to pay anybody any money anymore. I know we were in debt then. There was a lot of drinking I remember. (That had nothing to do with the money being lent.)

**Was there much prostitution downtown on Main Street?**

Yes. I'll tell you a story. The prostitution was about 300 yards from our property near Badaracos. The boarders visited there. A Russian man, drunk, said "You're fourteen, you have to get used to this." I got there, he went in with one of the girls and as soon as he went in I shot out of that place. There were about five women at one point and it was about 7am and they walked in a group up to my mother for some season. She was a good woman and she got the police for them. She was protecting them.

**Do you remember anybody that worked in the boarding house besides yourself and family?**

Yes. A lot of older women. Usually two or three. They weren't married or had lost their husbands. They were Serbian. There were low wages, I think.

**Did anybody in your family ever work in the mine? Your father?**

My father did for a very very short time. He passed away in the early "20's".

**Do you remember any miners?**

We had a church because there were a lot of slaves. We didn't have a minister. They had masons (masonic) and they built a building. We played bocci ball a lot and the loser paid for the drinks.

**Do you remember any names?**

I was gonna tell you they played cards for drinks too. There was Vidoc, Yovo, Damien, Vaso, Milo, Yovan, Petar, Evo, Danilo, Lazad (that's me), Zevco, Yago

**Did you ever go to the mine?**

Yes, a lot. I was curious. I remember the skips. Remember the water being moved to the tailing wheels and the pond.

**Did you ever go up to the main house?**

Yes, we got our checks there. I worked during the summer clearing grass to keep away from fires. I think it was owned by the San Francisco man. Everyone got their checks there in one door out the other.

**Do you remember what the wages were?**

I remember two and a half and three and a half. That was good wage then.

**Was it hard to work there?**

I worked three month. I was really surprised, because of the heat the work wasn't that heavy. When you were done they had a place shower. The Mexican man I worked with used the pick and I shoveled it way.

**You worked in the mine?**

Yes, maybe 1500 feet. It was very hot. They would get a fuse and tamp it down and light it and you'd get the hell out of there. I almost got hurt once cause I was moving to fast and I fell down the ladder. I was green (young, new).

**Do you remember the mans name that you worked with?**

I don't know, he was a Mexican. My mother worried. Many men were killed over the years.

**Do you remember any sound or smells?**

There was a musty dirty smell. You had to be careful. I was picking and quite a bit of dirt fell and hurried and fell and the Mexican said it was okay. It was not tough work it was just hot. Once the men got home and washed they played cards, Briscola, and they drank wine. Because the church didn't have a preacher. I remember a man that had a song book and he sang every night and he new 100's of verses.

**Do you remember any of the top people like the superintendant or foreman?**

Yes, and the men liked their bosses. One guy always placed his friend where there was good ore. I remember as a kid watching 3 or 4 men pocketing the gold. The bosses were aware of it though. It was tricky. There were three different houses to take the ore. They always called me Lally.

**Did you ever get injured?**

No.

**Do you remember others getting injured?**

Yes, they had diseases I can't remember what it was called. (Tuberculosis or Black Lung - miners two different diseases). There were six people in our field in a tent with this disease. A lot of them went to Arizona for the sun. We had 4 or 5 die in the boarding house.

**Do you remember how your father died?**

He died in three days. It was raining and a calf was being born. He drank but that wasn't why. He was a heavy man but did not have a heart attack. Not shingles. A lot of what he had was going around. (ago died from it too. Pneumonia

**What made you work in the mine?**

Desperation. Wanted to know what it was like.

**What was a typical day at the mine like?**

I just got up and worked and came home. I walked. It was an eight hour work day.

**How long did it take to go to Sutter Creek?**

I don't know, I went to school. I walked two miles each way.

**What other ethnic groups were there? (Other than Mexicans, and Slavs)**

Italians, English they used to call them Cousin Jacks, Mexicans. Not any Asians. Just one black man.

Irish.

**Did those groups have different jobs?**

No. They integrated. Not many French.

**Did they get along okay?**

Yes. I don't remember any conflicts. They were all here for the same reason.

**Do you remember any gambling?**

There was a lot. Here (the boarding house) they played cards for liquor. There was so much that people from Sacramento came up on weekends sometimes.

Amber Holland -and  
Kelly Smith

Page 1

Interview #3

Larry Danielovich 2/19/97

**Where was the grocery store? What was it like?**

Chicozolas store. It had everything, clothes and food. There weren't many. He brought a truck around full of goods and merchandise. Later on there was Casanelis and Tan.

Spinnetis hardware store was one of the first stores.

**Where did you get gas? Or did you get gas?**

Chicozolas used to have gasoline. There was one where Coast to Coast is now. I don't remember what it was called.

**What about doctors?**

There was only one. He went to peoples homes. Gall, he was the oldest one.

**Did a lot of families own vehicles?**

No. People mostly walked.

**How did your brother get a car?**

Well, he worked for Chicozolas. He had an old Ford to haul around food and other things. There weren't any cars at the high school. There wer some that rode horses to school around Prevetali Road.

**Was there a lot to ranching?**

It was principally ranching in Amador County besides the mines but, the mines closed during the 40's. Wood, ranching and farming were the main industries after that. The mill was near Bank of America.

**Do you remember any loggers? Your family?**

One of the Mondanis was a logger. I went to school with Julio and Henry. Their father was a miner and then he got a ranch where the casino is now. They sold a lot of wood. I don't think any of them went to high school.

**What sports did you play in High School?**

Football, I was capitain, basketball and baseball. Later in life my wife taught me to play tennis. When I was principal the tennis coach left so I said I would do it and I ended up doing it for 19 years.

**Do you remember the Argonaut Mine fire?**

Yes, there were about forty trapped and one body they never found. My mother never wanted me to work in a mine because of dangers and a mine because of dangers and miners consumption. When we had the ranch and the boarding house ther were six miners with the consumption and they lived in a tent. That was the only thing they could do for them, was to give them fresh air. I stayed away form them, I was afraid.

**Do you remember the labor strikes?**

Yes. I wasn't involved but, I supported the strikers. Our boarders were strikers and that hurt us. It lasted less than a year, I think. It seperated friends like a cleaver. It was really sad.

**Is there anything else you remember about the mine? How about the Pelton wheels, do you remember how big they were?**

Cybil Arata's house used to be a boarding house. The Raggio family, maybe it was a rental house. Mostly, what I remember is that they had a big dog and I was afraid of it. I think there was an auxiliary shaft where your thinking the Pelton whells were.

**Are there any more living siblings other than Ralph Milanovich and Delores Shealor?**

I have the Mondani's (not family) Ralph and Delores. Evo Vasilovich, his father was a miner all his life. Barber shops have changed you know.