

# **INTERVIEW WITH VINCENT MARTIN**

by Neil Carlson and Elaine Maranise

Interviewee : Vincent Martin  
Interviewers : Neil Carlson and Elaine Maranise

Tape One, Side One

February 12, 1997  
Sutter Creek

There are only two guys left that I know of who worked in the mine when I did. Old Harry Brown, I think you talked to him. Somebody called him. And uh Bakovich. You know Bakovich just left here. He was here just a little while ago, barely could walk the poor bugger he got arthritis so bad he just had open heart surgery I'm the only one that's. (Vince) Hello. (wife) Hello. (Elaine) Hello. (Neil) Hello (wife) She didn't know I had company. (Vince) Faces are familiar. (wife) Oh no it's not familiar Anne you're not familiar she's not familiar you don't 'em. That's my wife. This is Anne Martin. (Vince) I just wanted them to know that I belong here too. (Anne) Well uh. (Vince) Go 'head I'll get out of your way. (Anne) Ya ya O.K. 'cause we gotta talk here. Anne. (Vince) Don't give him any. (Anne) Anne. (Vince) Oh shuss. (Anne) Christ's sake what's the matter with ya. (Vince) What do you want? (Anne) Nothing, don't bother us we're busy. (Vince) O.K. Good-bye. Good-bye (Anne) Good-bye. (Elaine) Bye. (Neil) She's got that Alzheimer's. (Vince) Ya. (Neil) Bad. (Vince) I had a great uncle with it. (Neil) Ooh bad darnit. It's (mumbled) everybody comes here now you can come here everyday for the next ten years and you go out that door and come back in and she won't know ya. It's it's it's a bugger. And then she'll talk and she'll ahh come again my (mumbled). She'll follow you out in the road ah it's it's hell you know it's. . . I got the nurse comin' here this afternoon too. Alright now uh you gonna ask questions? What's what? (Vince) We were just gonna ask off that and it would

be recorded and then we'd also write it down just to get basic information there and then. . .

(Neil) In other words you take this and ask me the questions. (Vince) Ya. (Elaine) Right ya.

(Neil) I don't keep this? (Vince) No, unless you want to just do it that way and we can write it down later. (Neil) Oh no no ya you can write it down. (Vince) O.K. (Neil) You want your

telephone. What do you want here? Subjects full name? (Vince) Ya your full name. (Neil)

Alright, Vincent Martin. (Vince) O.K. well we'll need that to. . . (Neil) You need this? (Vince)

Ya to write that alright. (Neil) I won't be able to write anyways see I the only thing I can't hold a penc. . . See here where I stuck in the table saw and I got arthritis ha ha. (Vince) Oh ya. (Neil)

Son of a bitch. (pause) Well I can write all right, but I'll shake. (Vince) O.K. We need your address. (Elaine) Box 502 Sutter Creek, that's the mailing address now this is 60 Pleasant Drive.

(pause) Did you interview anybody else? (Vince) No, not yet. We had John Begovich was oh we were given two, you and John Begovich, to do. (Neil) Begovich never worked in the mine.

(Vince) He worked for a short time. (Neil) Up on top ya. (Vince) In the Kennedy, but I guess he's having some health problems right now we never did contact him, but it was in the

newspaper. We heard just by rumor that something was going on anyway so we thought we'd wait. (Neil) Ya. (Vince) Ya and the paper said, but I noticed also in the paper that he wasn't

answering any questions his wife was doing all of it. (Neil) I've known him forty years. (Vince)

Really. (Neil) We was both born here my wife was born here too. (Vince) Oh really. (Neil) But she's in bad shape now she interferes (mumbled). She means well, but she'll talk and ask you

questions God you can't oops I'm recorded. (Vince) That's O.K. (Neil) Yes. (Vince) Go on,

don't, just pretend that the recorder's not there that's the whole point of it. (Neil) Kay um I need

your phone number. (Elaine) 267-5976 God 5964 God dammit I don't even know my own

number. (Vince) And do you work? (Elaine) No retired. (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) Retired tired.  
(Vince) I need your date of birth. (Elaine) Uh it's the fifth month twelfth thirteen. (Vince)  
Really the twelfth? That's my grandpa's birthday. (Neil) Is it? (Vince) Born in 1910. (Neil) Oh  
ya. (Vince) Yep. (Neil) And where were you born? (Elaine) Sutter Creek. (Vince) O.K. And  
what day were you married? (Elaine) Uh Labor Day 1950. September the fifth 1950, a wild one  
too! (Vince) And where were you married? (Elaine) Carson City, Nevada Catholic. Went up to  
a judge up there and got married. (Vince) And what is your wife's name? (Elaine) Anne. A-N-  
N-E. (Vince) O.K., what is her date of birth? (Elaine) Uh, August the 28th 1914. (Vince) And  
where was she born? (Elaine) Well, I say Sutter Creek, but Amador City. . . Amador City I  
forgot put Sutter Creek, but Amador City what's the difference, same damn thing. (Vince) Oh, I  
assume your wife does not work. (Elaine) She did, ya she used to she retired from the telephone  
company business rep for the telephone company about 25 years I guess which went to hell after  
she retired she can't hear anyway too good. (Vince) Kay, what is your mother's name? (Elaine)  
Lena. What ya got ya gotta know all that stuff for? (Vince) We were thinkin' the same thing but.  
. . (Neil) And when was she born? (Elaine) Who? (Vince) Your mother. (Elaine) San  
Francisco. (Vince) No, when was she born? (Elaine) Oh, hell I don't remember I don't know.  
(Vince) O.K. (Elaine) Naw, 1888 or something like that I don't know. (Vince) O.K. And what  
was your mother's occupation? (Elaine) Housewife. (Vince) And what's your father's name?  
(Elaine) Charles C. Martin. Engo but engo but it's Martin just like Dean Martin ya know that's  
Italian. He was Italian. My mother's Irish. (Vince) O.K. And do you know when your father  
was born? (Elaine) I don't know the date. No, he was born in Italy. (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) I  
don't know I, I, I'd, I'd have to go up and find out see he passed away he was passed away during

while I was in Germany when he didn't know it until after the war was over that he passed away here. (Vince) Oh, really. (Neil) Ya. (Vince) And what was your father's occupation? (Elaine) Uh, miner here. He ran the pumps here (something mumbled). (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) If he was alive he could tell you more about these damn mines than I could they worked here. I worked about six years there in the Argonaut (something mumbled). (Vince) Now did he work the Argonaut or the Kennedy? (Neil) Argonaut I think I told you that on the phone see. (Vince) Ya ya. (Neil) But I know a lot of the guys at the Kennedy Mine and when it burnt that time on top it was burnt all up it caught on fire and the sheriffs burnt all the logs up and the cars. And everybody's cars, some of 'em they pushed 'em down over the bank. Her father was one of 'em. (Vince) Oh really? (Neil) Car ya. Pushed down over the, over the , dump. Let them go down over the dump. There where they could raise hell up there. Big fire. I think that was in - ooh I don't know. Jesus I'm afraid to say now, it's 1930. I guess around 1930. (Vince) O.K. Do you have any children? (Elaine) No. (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) Didn't want any. That's one damn sure thing I made sure of when I got out of the service there'd never be any goin' blood going through what I did, I'll tell you that. A, but anyway - Oh ya, I forgot (about being recorded) you better stop me. (Vince) Oh, that's O.K. (Neil) Huh? (Vince) That's O.K. No one will punish you for what you say. (Neil) Pardon? (Vince) No one will punish you for what you say on here. (Neil) Ya. (Vince) O.K. Do you have any brothers or sisters? (Elaine) Have a sister livin' - two brothers dead one brother dead one of 'em died here. . . (Vince) O.K. can you tell me the names of your brothers and sisters? (Elaine) Now? Her ma- married name? (Vince) Sure. (Elaine) Angelina Rule. R-U-L-E. (Vince) And do you know what her date of birth is? (Elaine) 1912. I don't know the exact date now. 1912. She's fourteen month older than I. Uh.

I'd ask her too, but she won't know (referring to wife) anyway I, I, she was born in 1912. I don't know exact date. (Vince) O.K. That's fine. And your brothers names? (Elaine) Joseph P. Martin. (Vince) And do you know his date of birth? (Elaine) September. I think it was September- fifth I think ya nine ya 1915. (Vince) O.K. Did you have any other brothers or sisters? (Elaine) No. (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) You been around here - how long you guys been here? You been here all your life? (Vince) Yep. (Neil) Did you know Babe Martin - the sheriff? (Vince) No. (Neil) I thought everybody knew him. (Vince) No. Sure my dad does, but sure my family knows him. (Neil) Your father's insurance, huh? (Vince) Real estate. (Neil) I forgot I'm on there. (Referring to being recorded.) (Vince) That's all right. That's O.K. (Neil) O.K. Um, what was your primary and secondary education and if you know the names of the schools and the dates that you attended them. (Elaine) Oooh I went to Jackson. I went to Jackson Gate and mostly here. In Sutter Creek - the old schoolhouse down there. And I never went to high school, the depression hit and I quit school. (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) I never- my brothers and sisters they all went through, but I didn't. I was the oldest of the boys, so I went to work and I worked up till I retired in '75 and now I just sit back and let the other guy work. (Vince) Ya. (Neil) Why the hell do you have to know all that for? What's that have to do with the mine? (Vince) Just your background, I guess. Just to separate you from everyone else. (Neil) (Laughter from Vince) Separate me from the colored, huh. (Vince) Suppose so, I don't know. (Neil) Um. What was your job? (Elaine) Well what do you mean, in the mine or what? (Vince) You said you were retired, what did you used to do? (Elaine) I retired a truck driver. (Vince) O.K. (Elaine) I drove thirty years for a lumber - a logging company. American Forest. You don't remember them huh? (Vince) No. (Neil) And you were born in Jackson? (Vince)

Yep. (Neil) It's O.K. (Vince) And you worked in the Argonaut Mine? (Elaine) Argonaut and Central Eureka. (Vince) O.K. Um, did you ever serve in the military? (Elaine) Four years. (Vince) Do you know what dates they were? (Elaine) What date, in years? (Vince) Ya, what years you were in the military. (Elaine) Uh, right after Pearl Harbor. Time I got in (mumbled) seventh. December the seventh. February I was in and I was discharged in uh, January '46. Before we got out hell we wound up we was in Berlin hell you couldn't get out the darn. . . (whispered) Oops I forgot I'm being recorded. (Vince) No, that's fine. Don't. (Neil) Huh? (Vince) Just forget it. Forget the recorder. (Neil) You can cut it out, huh? (Vince) (Vince laughing while Neil talks) Ya, we can cut it out. . . (Neil) Ya I'm usually cussin' you know I do a lot of cussin', I like to. . . (Vince) No, that's fine. We don't want you to like alter your personality just because it's being recorded. (Neil) O.K. What were or are your civic and community activities? (Elaine) None right now. Playing nurse maid here. In other words lodges. See I quit all the lodges when I went in the service I forgot everything. When I was drivin' here for thirty years I been workin' seventy hours a week. I think a twelve hour day was an easy day. Twelve, thirteen, fifteen hours a day. I just to drive for Calaveras Cement (mumbled) thirty years here. And the long hours - I had no activities with the exception, since I retired I done a lot of fishin' and travelin' you know. (Vince) Any other information - just about your background, about your family, or being in the military, or your job, or anything you'd like to tell us? (Elaine) No, I have nothing in the military any good to tell, so ya know..what do you want to know about the military? (Vince) I was just wondering if you had any information that we didn't cover that you wanted to throw in there if we moved too fast or anything. (Elaine) Well, I went through the military (mumbled) islands, Central Europe. We went in there right

after Dday over in the Bulge. Of course, you two wouldn't remember that and it's a good thing you are. (Vince) We only study it. (Neil) Yeah. Ah, it was a bastard. Yeah. (Vince) That's all the questions I have. (Elaine) Huh? (Neil) That's all the questions I have on this paper. (Elaine) OK. What time is it? (Neil) Talking about the mines the mines you know we talk about the mines. All those guys they're all dead. You ever go into the Wells Fargo Bank? You see those pictures on the wall - they got all those pictures in there. (Vince) Not in a while. (Neil) Yeah. I know all those guys. 49 men that, that perished there in that fire. I was going to school there in Jackson at that time and uh I know 'em all - all the kids. You know it was a small community. It isn't like it is now, ya know. They (mumbled) and they're all gosh all mighty. All those guys that - 49 men and the one cracked then I see Cenotto had somebody on there or something in the paper about one Fessel, Fessel was missin'. Hell I know Fessel and his son. His son lives in Pine Grove. I don't think he just died, but he was livin' in Pine Grove. He's the one, you probably read where he was missin'. (Vince) Ya. (Neil) Missin', hell he wasn't missing. I know what happened to him. I, I know because when they had that fire hell I was ooh I was twelve to fourteen years old I guess. And they were up there everyday at that mine waitin' to get him out ya know. Then I heard about Fessel they finally found him. I don't want to say anything 'cause the guys are all dead now ya see, but somebody let him slip. Ya know I don't like to repeat what I didn't see ya know. (Vince) Sure. (Neil) Sure. (Elaine) So, and it's just Brown that worked with me there and (Bochovich?) and (Bochovich?) just had open heart surgery and Brown I think they somebody called him. Did you call him? (Vince) We didn't. Somebody may have. (Neil) I think Cenotto or somebody wanted to interview him. (mumbled) Too many years have passed now ya know. But I worked in the Argonaut - mining. And uh not everything to come back ya



know my memory's not so good as it used to be - never too hot, but uh how 'bout a little cold drink or something? 7 - Up? (Vince) Actually. (Neil) Huh? (Vince) What time is it? (Neil) 7 - Up? (Vince) It's. . . (Elaine) I won't give you any hard liquor. (Vince) That's O.K. Actually, what time- (Neil) It's quarter till. (Elaine) Actually I'm sorry but we're a little short on time. (Neil) O.K. (Vince) We do have to get back to class. (Neil) I don't think you want to talk about the miners, even the names of 'em yet, but I've seen a lot of accidents in them damn mines and uh I got out of it and uh, well, in uh 1940. I went up here where they gonna build Auburn Dam. We went up here runnin' tunnels up there and that's where I signed up for the draft when they started the year of compulsive military training see before Pearl Harbor. And they had to sign up. Everybody was single, I was single and uh when they bombed Pearl Harbor, that was in One-A. They reclassified me because, they put me in One-B and I saed hell I got her made now, but there no war on when they bombed Pearl Harbor (mumbled). I was the first damn one to go out of here. Went out here, cleaned us all outa here. Took uh, one of 'em just died went with me. Week ago there. Cranfill, you know Cranfill? (Vince) Uh - um, not familiar with the name. (Neil) He was a (mumbled) up there for a while, Cranfill. Joe Maroney. John Fitchell. (Soroc?) (Vince) I don't know. (Neil) (Pu Doop?) Ya know him? You don't know any body, huh? Well anyway, uh, they took two busloads of us out of here. Clean us out from Calaveras and Amador County, but I put four years worth damnit I go back today. Ya, but that's the way it goes. I don't dnow if you got much there that'll do you any good. (Vince) Well, actually we'd like to come back and talk to you again, at least once more. (Neil) Ya. (Vince) Just because, well if you'd like we could leave these with you, it's a sheet of questions that they give us. (Neil) O.K. (Vince) So that if you want to read over 'em, maybe to refresh your memory you can. . .

(Neil) Ya. (Vince) . . . think about 'em until the next time that we see you. (Neil) Ya, uh I don't know if he's still alive or not down in Stockton, (mumbled) (Meran?), in Stockton. I don't know if he's still alive now or not. Even a little older than I am, maybe he's not. I haven't seen him for oh heck, seven or eight years, but uh, oh this is Kennedy Mine, Kennedy Mine. (Vince) Well that's O.K. I mean, you can also use it for the Argonaut. (Neil) Oh I guess they got a history of the Kennedy Mine too and they probably want to know about the Great Argonaut Disaster, ya know. (Vince) Right, everything. (Neil) And then when they tunnel through there, I remember when they tunnel through there and get those miners outa there. They tunnel through from the Kennedy over to the to the Argonaut. (Vince) Right. (Neil) Ya know that huh? (Vince) Ya. (Neil) Ya and then they finally found 'em and there's quite a story there, but hell I wish. . . gee I don't know you find anybody that worked in the, have you found anybody yet that worked in that Argonaut or Kennedy? (Vince) I'm not sure. You're the only person that we've contacted ourselves. (Neil) Yeah?. (Vince) But I know that our other people have been talking to. (Neil) See and it's Truskit that worked with me. We just buried him, too, about 3 months ago. Up there, cancer. You probably know the Truskit sons, anyway. (Vince) No. (Neil) Huh?. (Vince) No. (Neil) And, uh..we started to think the other day, the other day it's uh..Bockovich, trying to figure out who in the hell do we know that worked in these mines, before the war or still alive? There's nobody. Me. 'Cause hell ain't nobody lived as long as I did worked in 'em. (Vince) Right. (Neil) Ya know and I didn't have an easy life. Ain't anything at all like when I was your age and 16 to 28 went out every night we knew everybody out. Drinkin' every night, smokin' and raisin' hell..not sleepin'..then we got back from the army and after the war I cut it out. I don't drink or smoke. I cut it out..I hope you do the same. (Vince) Oh, yeah. (Neil) Ya don't ever smoke them

damn cigaretttes. And, uh.(Vince) I hate 'em.(Neil) Huh?(Vince) I hate 'em.(Neil) Oh yeah, they'll do ya no good and, uh..before the war when we got overseas floatin' on the boat we'd sneak out at night, ya know, it was, uh..New York..why American Red Cross was there (mumbled)..coffee, donuts and everything. They give us these knitted caps that you pull down over your face, ya know? Yan know, I could see why 'cause we were cold. Gosh, it was 60 below zero in that Belgium, but anyways, inside of that they had the sewing kit, three packs of cigarettes, and candy bars and stuff like that. Then when you get on that damn ship, ya know, goin' over..you're scared, you know, it was war time. And I swore I smoked 3 packs of cigarettes a day by the time we got to England. And then they were free, ya know. We get over there we get a carton thrown up at us every week. Lot of the guys didn't smoke..used to give them to the prisoners. What the hell, ya got..you're not on a picnic, ya know. And we'd smoke..cover up under your raincoat and just puff on them damn cigarettes, but after a while, I quit everything. Got it all together. Now I can sit and watch television..see anybody inhale a cigarette, it hurts me. Yo know, did you ever smoke at all? I wish I hadn't either, but of course didn't do me any harm. I'm still alive. I went to the doctor yesterday..went and had a physical. Hell, my lungs are good, but I got other problems. What the hell. Lucky I'm not cussin' on here 'cause I like to cuss.(Vince) That's all right.(Neil) Huh?(Vince) That's all right. You don't have to hold back. (Neil) I don't..not at all..no, I never hold it back. I used to never hold it back on jobs either. In the army I got a summary court martial for talkin' back that way, too, ya know. (laugh) Insubordination. What damn poor soldier didn't get it. Patton says "You got anybody's been in, had a court martial, say give 'em to me. That's where all the best soldiers are." He was, too..that guy was a..you think I can talk dirty, he had a dirty mouth.(Vince) Really?(Neil) Who, Patton?

Geez, wasn't a woman here I'd tell ya he said back there in Belgium before they hit the Bulge, ya know..when they went in there. I wasn't with Patton. I was on his flank..rather we were on his flank. I was third army and 9th army. But I know somebody was back there when they were gonna make that drive. Oh, the language he uses! Right 'outa everybody..Wife's heard it. That was behind the lines, though, ya know. When they made that push (mumble)..That's when they had the Bulge. He says, "We're gonna buck 'em if..if I have to come back with truck loads of dog tags". And they did, too. Took about 75,000 casualties in there. I think it was 75, and the Germans got 70. I mean..(mumble)..it was a hell-of-a..(mumble)..what the hell. It's a..they thought that was bad. That Dday, they said..I never landed on Dday, but I talked to fellas that did. And, uh..that come into our outfit 'cause we got casualties from others in use that're around there. They said "Geez, Dday was bad. It wasn't like this. When they hit that Bulge up there in the Ardennes and they hit that Zigfried Line, you just get no relief. We never got build-up. Go back through, you heard 'em. Well, so-and-so's division's back on the relief..ya know, lickin' their wounds. We went straight to the end. Build 'em up on the lines. There was no relief. So I went clear up there and, uh..to the Elbe River. We held on the Elbe, there on Berlin. While the Russians took Berlin. Then we moved in. Then we had to go in there and pre-setup until..we couldn't get out with the high-point men and they took the high-point guys out, which wasn't very many left in our outfit. And I come over with the 29th division gentlemen's 70th infantry. And, uh..78th infantry..they took the high-pointers out and..there was hardly anybody left in the 29th. And I guess they took 'em out..I don't know, and built up the 29th division. That's a blue and gray division, from the South. And I come home with them, I got a book on them. Next time you come I'll show ya..I probably could look it up now but (mumble) you're in a hurry..of my

(mumble) paper, there for my (mumble). Ya know 'ol, uh..(pause)..He's on television every Sunday. 60 minutes , on the end, he comes on at the end, uh..goddammit..oh, you know who I mean. Ya ever watch 60 minutes?(Vince) Not really.(Neil) Uh, Rooney.(Vince) Oh, yeah.(Neil) Ya know..Rooney? (long pause) You know who I mean? He's on television every Sunday. I don't know how he got his..And I never knew it. He must have been with the 78th infantry division. There, just here a while back where 'ol Rooney..When we took Remaugen Bridge on the Rhine. And the night we got in there he went in and they went in, see, and it was all shot anyway. Anyway, and, uh..he gave, who was it? He gave this picture of this bridge to somebody who wanted it. And he never got it back..until just now the guy found out who he was and Rooney got..Hey, I'll let you read it, huh?(Vince) OK. Read what? Actually, we don't have time right now.(Neil) Yeah, I know..maybe I talk too much.(Vince) OK. Well, actually I'm gonna have to cut you off 'cause we do have to get back.(Neil) Oh, wish you'da..I didn't know that.(Vince) Yeah, well, that's OK.(Neil) Hmmm..I'll study this.(Vince) OK.(Neil)

## Second Interview

Saturday, March 1, 1997

Go ahead.(Neil) Now, where do we start from here, or do I go by this?(Vince) She'll go ahead and ask you.(Neil) I'll go ahead and ask you the questions. Did you ever work at the Kennedy mine?(Elaine) No.(Vince) OK. Do you know anybody who worked there?(Elaine) Yes.(Vince) OK. What jobs did they have?(Elaine) Well, miners and, uh..hoistmen, the guys that run the hoist on the top. But they're all dead though. You know, there isn't any more alive. You mean if I know anybody that's alive?(Vince) No,no. Anybody at all.. Anybody that worked there at all.

Can you tell us more specifically what their jobs were, maybe? Well, you said miners.(Neil)

Well, the miner, there's a miner that, uh..he drills and blasts and timbers, ya know, for the..then you have the muckers, to muck the debris (mumble) and trammers to tram the ore out to the stations. And, uh..I think the miners, I think, well..at that time was, well, 4 dollars and a half a day..from collar to collar. Then it went to 5 dollars. I think when Begovich was workin' there it was about four and a half at that time, I think. He worked on top at the Central. I don't think he ever worked underground. Do you know whether he did or not?(Vince) We're not sure just yet.(Neil) Do you know how many hours a day that the people worked?(Elaine) 8 hours from collar to collar.(Vince) And do you know how many hours per week they worked?(Elaine) Hours a week..we worked 6 days. 8 times 6 ..that makes 48, huh?(Vince) Yep. All right. So you already answered my next question. What were the working conditions like in the mines? In the Kennedy and any other mines?(Elaine) What were they like? They were bad, I'll tell you that. Ya know, no unions then. And, uh..pay was bad. They had a lot of 'em killed in there. They, at that time, ya know, they figured men were cheaper than timber. That's the truth, too. And it was pretty dangerous. The average miner didn't last long, though..(mumble)..I had a doctor tell me one time I had six months. He had written there six months to get that silicosis, the rocks, see. But, uh..it was rough hours.(Vince) OK. Would you be able to describe a typical working day at the Kennedy Mine? (Elaine) I never worked in the Kennedy Mine.(Vince) Or, ir the people that you knew, if you had friends or family that worked there. You said that you knew some people..could you describe what they did during a typical day, at all? Give us any information.(Elaine) What they did in the day?(Vince) Yeah.(Elaine) Same as the Argonaut. Just mining. Timbermen, repairmen, muckers, trammers.(Vince) Did they..Maybe more specifically

than just like their job but, I mean, did they have to wake up real early in the morning? Did they have families? I mean, how, I don't know what I'm trying to say. Did they wake up real early in the morning and did they go home real late? Obviously, you said that working conditions were real bad.(Neil) Oh, yeah.(Vince) Did they get breaks? Were they underground all day?(Neil) Oh, underground all day? Oh, yeah. From collar to collar. Yeah, they got to work in the mornin', say, seven o'clock in the mornin'. Then they had grave yard shifts, too, ya know. All depends what shift you were on. Like my father that time. He had just changed shifts when the 49 men burned up, you know. Then a friend of ours from Jackson..the name was Mrs. Cotelli(?)..her husband, he woulda been in there, but he had to lay off because his wife was havin' a baby. And she had twins. You know them?(Vince) No.(Neil) No, you wouldn't know them. She had twins, a boy and a girl. They named 'em Argonaut and Kennedy. And, uh..the boy was teachin' school down in Stockton, or somewhere. And he passed away. And the sister was married, uh..here in Amador City. And, uh..he got sick and passed away. And she went down to Electra Power House, there at the river, and drowned herself. She lived right across the street there. Oh, and that night the Argonaut fire. Yeah, ya know, any of the oldtimers 'round here could tell you about the bottom. Ya know, I know what I'm talkin' about because that mornin' my mother, my father says, Mrs. Cotelli..help! help!..run down there, run down there, run right down there. They live right across the street from the, uh..Jackson offices, off North Jackson, ya know. Main Street. Yeah, up there, by Rule's.(Vince) OK. Can you tell us what it was like to live in a mining town, or in the County at all?(Elaine) Well, I thought it was all right. It was the best place to live at that time. I thought it was because actually, when they had that depression...'Course they felt it all over. But right here, we really didn't feel it too bad, ya know. But, uh..I know when you go down in Sacramento

down there you could see what it really was. Or any of the bigger cities. Oh, it was terrible. Your grandparents probably could tell ya the story a lot. I don't know where they lived, they were livin' then. Not in Amador County, eh?(Vince) No, I didn't have any relatives living in the County at that time.(Neil) Well, I didn't care where they..No, I mean what state they were livin' in. Well, hell, it was world-wide, ya know, that depression. It was bad. Yeah. I went through that damn thing. I quit school. Went to work. Just when it started to pick up, in '41, they bombed Pearl Harbor. I was drafted. It had been four years. So ya know, they weren't very good years. But, I'm.. thank God I'm OK. What's the matter, Anne? (Vince) Nothing.(Anne) Hello.(Elaine) Hello.(Neil) Hello.(Anne) Go over and sit down, Anne. Sit down over there.(Vince) Excuse me. Thank you.(Anne) She's had a...Over there, Anne! She's busy there. Sit over there. She's budged. (Vince) I can sit her in the chair.(Anne) Anne! No, Anne. Will you sit over there, she's busy here! Oh, I had a hard time today..gosh 'o mighty. I go down to the post office today and I says, "Now listen, don't lock the door. 'Goin to the post office, be back in 5 minutes". Do it every time. She locked the door. I kick and kick and kick, she don't answer. I broke the hinges off the damn thing. But I got in. But, uh..she doesn't know what's goin' on here, see. It's bad. Alzheimers.(Vince) Could you describe what a typical day would be for a child, teenager or adult during a work week during the time that the mines were working?..OK. I think they're all right. (Elaine) For a child? I think they were all right. Everybody was workin', ya know? Really no place to go, but they liked the scenery, the hills, they liked it better'n the city. Were you raised in the city?(Vince) Nope. Lived here all my life.(Neil) Oh, did you?(Vince) OK. Could you kinda, maybe, tell us what a child or a teenager, during the time the mines were open and they were running, what types of things the kids might experience..with like, what they could see, or



types of things that they would smell or taste in the air? Any types of things like that?(Elaine)  
From the mines, you mean? No, I couldn't tell you anything about that. I don't know what you mean. You mean from the bodies they took out or what?(Vince) Well, just that there were a lot of chemicals because of the mines, right? And (Neil) Arsenic.(Vince) Right. Was that in the air, would kids be affected by that, would they..I mean, would they grow up smelling that and being around it and always seeing it?(Neil) Naw, they're talkin' 'bout that arsenic, I think. Nas, I never heard of anything like that. Just until lately, they're startin' to.. (inaudible)..these sandpiles. If that's what ya mean. But, uh..you go down to the post office in the wintertime now. The mines fill with water, they shoots out there by the post office. And that smell's terrific, ya know. But they don't know what they can do about it. Can't do anything about it.(Vince) OK. What was it like to travel from one town to the next?(Elaine) It was history! (laughs) One time it was history. Ya know, I go to Jackson to see somebody. They used to write in the paper, "Vince Martin was a visitor in Jackson at Tuesday 5 o'clock on business." And hell, I wasn't in Jackson at all. I was up someplace else. Ya know, we used to take off and go all over in hell. I'm goin' back now to the early thirties, see. But, uh..of course..but then I hear my folks talk about it in the early days before I...that was the horse and buggy days, ya know. When they had it a little bit rougher, too. That was history, when they got to Jackson from Sutter Creek.(Vince) So then, people stayed in their towns unless it was big business?(Neil) Yeah, and it was just like a big family affair, ya know.(Vince) You were always welcome?(Neil) Oh, yeah.(Vince) And everybody knew each other?(Neil) Unh huh.(Vince) If you were doing any traveling, like, say you were traveling from Sutter Creek to Jackson..how long would that take you?(Elaine) In my day?(Vince) Yeah.(Elaine) Oh, 10 minutes, maybe 15 minutes. You went down in a car, you know. I always

had a car, since I was 16 years old. I bought a '23 Grant for little or nothin'. Hardly no miles on it. At that time, ya know..When I got a license I think I was sixteen at that time, sixteen in 1929. Yeah, (good until revoked?) But, uh..it wasn't too young. But I think what you're referring to is the early days, huh? When they had the buggies, what-have-you. People go..I used to hear my folks..their folks,too.. to go to Jackson, I don't know! They'd go up to the ranch. They had a ranch up at Clinton. And, uh..up at, uh..Tabeau. You know, and I'll bet it take 'em half a day to get there with a damn buggy. Horse and buggy, ya know. But, uh..that was before my time. I remember the first time I ever rode in a damn car was in, uh..1917. Molfino has that hotel..hotel up in Pine Grove had a Model T Ford and I went to the funeral in it. You know Joe Marroney of Jackson? Huh? Well, his brother drowned over there at that damn over..and they had the funeral. And right now I go up..Every time I go to see 'em I says, "See this here. I came to this funeral in 1917. (inaudible) Marroney drowned up there in Dry Creek.(Vince) OK. Can you tell me what kind of entertainment ther was in Amador County and can you remember any specific events that occurred?(Elaine) The Gold Rush Days..had the big gold rush, and the Italian Picnic. What else could they have up here, ya know. The Gold Rush didn't last too long. But, uh..Italian Picnic. That was a big deal in those days.(Vince) What were the other main industries in the County at this time?(Elaine) Now, what year's you talkin' about, my years?..(Vince) Yeah.(Elaine) Well, there was the mines, and ranching. That's about all.(Vince) OK. There were many different ethnic groups in Amador County?(Elaine) Yeah, yeah. Italians..which I'm part. And, uh..Slavon..Slavs. Then there were, uh..Mexicans came in. They got..and the Mexicans worked the mine at the time nobody else would work in 'em, ya know? Yeah.(Vince) Where did they live?(Elaine) They lived in rental homes, in the town, ya know.(Vince) So they were really

mixed in, everyone was mixed in. They weren't like separated in different areas?(Neil) No, no. They lived, I lived, down here, I lived there, ya know. They lived mostly on Sutter Hill. (mumble)..up there. And they had them Nickelodeans and little bars they had and they were..everything up there. Had the bordello's goin', ya know.(Vince) Do you remember the gambling halls and other businesses that were in Jackson before 1942, when the mines were closed down?(Elaine) How well I do, how well I do.(Vince-laughing) We make about five dollars a day and spend a hundred. Don't ask. You know how you get it, workin' in a gold mine (ha-ha-ha)? Never saved a dime. Went in the army flat broke, in 1941. We had a good time, though.(Vince) Can you tell me where the gambling halls were located? And what their names were?(Elaine) Yeah. There was the Bridge Cabin, that was right down where the Bank of America is now. Then there was the, uh..uh..Cellar. Then there was, uh..ah..gosh, ya know, I can't even think about them. I lived in 'em. Spent a lot of money in 'em. (laughs) The Louver. The Bank Club. And then there was the, uh..well, there was about five of 'em in Sutter Cre..er, Jackson at that time. All prosperous, too.(Vince) Did you know anyone that worked in the gambling halls?(Elaine) Yeah.(Vince) Can you tell us a little bit about those people?(Elaine) Well, I don't know of any of them alive right now. There was ..named Charlie Highgrade. We called him Charlie Highgrade. And, uh..well, I better not mention any names, 'cause we got relationships, too, ya know. I better not mention any names, because..(Vince) That's alright.(Neil) Yeah, well.(Vince) Just tell us a little bit about the types of things that they did.(Elaine) Thomas, and, uh..oh, gosh. Geez, I figured all their names now, easy. There were quite a few. The, uh..Morvino(?), Mercer.(Vince) OK. Do you think the mining industry helped keep the gambling halls in business?(Vince) The mining? Sure did. Well, uh..'course a lot of

people come up from below, too, you know. They come up to gamble. It was, I guess, the miners probably more or less the little tourists, too, I think.(Vince) (tape cut off)

Tape One, Side Two

March 1, 1997  
Sutter Creek, CA.

Where did you buy your groceries? (Elaine) Well, at that time we could buy right at (Sirocco's?) in Sutter Creek. And in Jackson they used ta, well there was uh. . . 'Course there was Spinetti's. And there was uh most of 'em would get out to (Chickizola's?), out Jackson Gate. And then there was uh, couple little (mumble) come in here at that time. But uh, there wasn't too much, ya know. Too many different places to buy groceries. (Vince) Where did you buy your gasooline? (Elaine) Well, gasoline here. The Shell station in Jackson. Standard. Then they have uh, one in Sutter Creek here. I used to buy mine in Standard Oil in Sutter Creek. Then I had a Shell card in Jackson. (Vince) Who was your doctor and where were they located? (Elaine) Well my doctor was Lynch. He was located in Amador City. Ol' Doc Lynch. He's the one that delivered me and Anne. And his son is a doctor, the one that just died now. You know Doc Lynch? (Vince) I'm not sure. (Neil) Heh? (Vince) Doesn't sound familiar. (Neil) Heh, it was only 'bout four, five years ago. Died here. Him and Bussi were together. Ya know Bussi. (Vince) Bussi I - (Neil) Well, Bussi and Lynch was the two doctors, was our doctor too. Then young Doctor Lynch and Wakefield. Dr. (Click?) in the early days. Ohh hell that was in 1920, 1919. Ol' Dr. Click was here then he went to Sacramento. Got a little doghouse down there. (Vince) Where did you buy your clothes? (Elaine) I buy all my clothes at Tam's in Jackson. Tam's Store. That

is most of my clothes, like the hard sha- I always wore hard shafer, marked shell suits. But uh, how they don't wear suits. They wear sport coats. Heck, I don't even put a suit on for a funeral. Very few people do, do they? Sport coats, oh I do if I have to. But, all right? (Vince) Were the boarding houses operating when you were here and where were they located? (Elaine) The boarding houses? There was one of 'em boarding house on Sutter Hill. And there was one down at uh, two of 'em down in Sutter Creek, which is Belotti's now. I can't remember the name it had before Belotti. And then uh, there was uh. . . Oh gee, how many in Jackson? There were several of 'em in Jackson. Small boarding houses, ya know. (Vince) What could you expect at a boarding house? (Elaine) What did you expect out of a boarding house? I never lived in a boarding house - always stayed at home, ya know. What do ya mean what do ya expect? (Vince) Do you know what they were like? What it was like to live in a boarding house? (Neil) Oh yeah. It, all they had a room. And then they'd have their meals there, their meals. Ya know. That sorta thing. And at that time, ya know, like here in Sutter Creek, when they had this boarding house down here in Sutter Creek. Tramp miners would come in here wrestlin' for a job. Maybe they'd get a job, maybe they wouldn't. Well, hey, they could get a room, eat here. When ya get a job you pay. Some of 'em never got a job they'd pay and if they never they left. Went somewhere else. Some of 'em would send them the money and some probably some fellers wouldn't. But it wasn't like it is now, ya know. (Vince) Kinda loose? (Neil) Yeah. (Vince) Do you know how much they would charge? (Elaine) I think, how much they charged? Oh, I think if I remember right, I think it was fifteen of twenty dollars. Or somethin' like that a month. Twenty dollars, yeah. Well you could buy, rent houses herein Sutter Creek for fifteen, twenty dollars. In Sutter Creek, Jackson. And I'm goin' now in the thirties, see. And then things

boosted up after after the war. But uh, you could talk to anyone who'll tell ya what written rents paid there. I don't know of anyone ever paying thirty dollars, for a month for rent. Ya know, place like this here at that time would rent for probably fifteen dollars a month, ya know.

Unless you were in a mansion. (Vince) Not many people were. (Neil) Huh? (Vince) Which not

too many people were. (Neil) No, not at that time, no. (Vince) Do you know if most men and

there families had a car? (Elaine) No, they didn't. I know nobody had televisions, 'cause there

wasn't then and then you had radios. 'Cause in my time everybody had radios and when they

start comin' out everybody had a radio in their car, ya know. 'Course now, that's, I'm goin' bak

now to early thirties, see. But uh, (pause) yeah. (Vince) So, it not too many people had cars,

then would most of them still use horse and buggy then? (Neil) Oh, used to. . . Yeah, lot of

these miners ne'er had it and they lived here in Sutter Creek they go to Jackson. Five dollars a

month to ride with 'em, ya know. (Vince) They just hitch a ride and go up and work with 'em

and then - (Neil) Yeah. (Vince) Ride back and kinda pay 'em like a taxi? (Neil) Well they,

they, most of 'em charged five dollars a month, I think. At that time. And five dollars a month

was a days work. See. Roughly, it was whether it was four or five dollars at that time. It was a

days pay. Money went a long ways then. Hell, I bought a new Oldsmobile in 1936 and I payed

twelve-hundred dollars for it. And my friend bought a Dodge sedan and he paid a thousand for

it. Then we totalled it out, goin' up to Tahoe one night. I think he paid eighty, ninety, I think

they charged him ninety dollars difference for a brand new car. We all drinkin', raisin' hell.

(Vince) OK. You mentioned before that ranching and farming was a big industry in Amador

County at that time. Can you tell me who some of the main ranches or farmers were? (Elaine).

Well, ranchers & cattlemen. I'd say Allen was a big cattleman rancher. And, uh, Boskovich. You

know Boskovich? And, uh, Cassinelli. Big cattleman who,uh, butcher, ran the butcher shop here. And, uh, actually farming, you can't actually say farming. Though there were some ranches here, you know, there were no big farmers. You'd have to go down to the valley. Yeah. (Vince). Was the timber industry large in Amador County? (Elaine). The What? (Vince) The timber industry. (Elaine) Wasn't any. Oh, there was little mills, like Berry's Sawmill and, uh, Winton had it in my day. But there was none right here in Amador County, to speak of. Winton wasn't in Amador County, you know. It's in El Dorado. Right on the line. You know where Cook's Station is? (Vince) Roughly. (Neil) Up 88? (Vince) Right, yeah. (Neil) Well, in Cook's Station you step off the road, you're in Calaveras County to the left. You go to Hamm's Station up there on 88, splits right there. And the mills are over there. But when you mention Amador County, there were no big lumbering industries in Amador County. (Vince) OK. Can you tell me what you remember about the Argonaut Mine fire? (Elaine) Uh, huh. Can remember just about everything about it. Even though I was ten years old. And what I didn't know, ya know, hear 'em talkin' 'bout it everyday, everyday, everyday. And knowin' everybody, uh, it uh, it was quite a history. They had at that time, ya know, if an airplane flew over Sutter Creek it was news. And the same air..where the airport is now, it was a grain field up there. I think that if I..you'll have to have somebody else verify that. I think there must have been 75 or 100 planes come in there. Right on there. And they raised hell about it. All reporters from all over the United States come around. It was a big deal, was that disaster, you know. You can go to the library, get the history of the Argonaut disaster, you know. Did you know that? Yeah, yeah I knew, won't say all of 'em. I, biggest part of those kids went to school, can't remember. (mumble) (Vince) OK. Can you tell me what you remember about the later strikes against the mine owners? (Elaine) Yeah, well, that was pretty

rough. And then it lasted quite a while. And most of 'em went back to work again, ya know. That's when I started to work in the Argonaut. Broke that strike, ya know? It wasn't a strike. It was just a, it was just a radical, it was a union deal, ya know, these racketeers that come in here and cause a lot of trouble. They kicked their butts clear outa town. Ya know, at that time labor unions was out, ya know. They're all right, labor unions was all right, but, uh, if they're managed right. But these ones we had at the mines here..I don't know what the hell to tell ya about them. But they weren't much. (Vince) OK. Can you tell us anything else that you remember about the Kennedy Mine, or the Argonaut Mine? Anything that happened during the time when you worked there? Or when you were a child? (Elaine) Anything of significance? (Neil) Huh? (Vince) Any events of significance at all that you remember. (Neil) No. I remember several that were killed there in the mines when I worked there. But, uh, other than that..Hank, he's uh, I don't know..and right here. Fella that I knew real well. My brother was tending the skip there and uh, it was goin' down there and the cable broke. And they say that we can hear them guys screamin' when they went by the station. They went down and banged. Killed a whole bunch of 'em right here in this mine. When uh, the Central Eureka..then at the Argonaut Mine. Ah, we worked there. My brother worked there, too. And uh, somebody was in the dickey(?), see. And the skip up here, see, we have a biggy. And uh, he flipped his head out lookin' down, and then the skip pulled up. Took his head off, took his head right off! Went down on the dickey, right down with his father. And his father seen it! That's the truth! I, I, Aguilar, was his, he got killed there. I don't think there's too many people that remember that, you know. The ones that were actually there, you know. When it happened, I wasn't there, 'cause I was on a different shift, see. (Vince) OK. Can you, do you remember anyone getting seriously injured while working at the



mine? Just doing their job? (Elaine) Oh, yeah. (Vince) Can you kinda describe the different ways people may have been injured while working and if it resulted in death or if it resulted in just the fact that they weren't able to work anymore because of their injury? (Elaine) Oh, well, I can only speak of what happened on my shift, but I know they had a cave-in up there. In the (stoke were running a raise?) and the shift went on there. Couple of Mexican fellas, nice guys, too. Were up and they got her barred down, ya know, barred down so they can timber, ya know, it's all hangin'. There's stuff hangin' up there. And boulders come down on him, had him pinned there. Had him pinned, boulders on top of him, one on his back, cut his back. But he said, gosh...He survived too, ya know, but it was dangerous. Fellas went up there and had to get him outa there worked around him to get the rocks through to get him. While all that damn stuff is hangin' up there, ya know. It was dangerous. And, uh, oh I can't remember 'em all. We had quite a few. And here in this mine..this mine was bad. (Vince) Do you..Can you tell us what made you want to work in the mines? Or, if you know, why other people wanted to work in the mines during that time? (Elaine) For the very same reason that the parents of my neighbor here, kid, we grew up together. He was in college. He died just a few years ago in Las..uh, Ione. In Lodi he was an attorney and he worked with me, in the mine, 50 cents an hour, 50 cents a day less than I did. He was muckin' down there. But he didn't last long, he got the hell out of there. But it was the depression. He had to quit school, ya know, to work in the mine. It was just the depression. There was nothin', ya know. And here the mines were goin', but yet you had, oh, several hundred guys applyin' for jobs. I seen 'em here at this mine. When I worked at the Kennedy, Argonaut lined up, clear up to the other side of the hill up there. Waitin' for..they'd hire 'em and fire 'em the next day. Hire one of 'em and fire 'em. It was rotten. (Vince) Can you tell us any other memories

that you have about living in Amador County, or in Jackson? (Elaine) Any memories? Well, some of 'em aren't too good. (Vince) It's all right. (Elaine) Ah, I don't know, just what memories..(Vince) Just the types of things that you remember about the county back then, when you were younger, back when the mines were open, that may be different than things are now? (Elaine) Oh, sure they're different now. Yeah, big difference now. Speaking of the pay, when you figure it out. What are they gettin'? Well, the mines..I think when they shut down they were only gettin' maybe 6 or 7 dollars a day then. 'Course that's back durin' the war. Uh, but everything was cheap. So dollar for dollar, they were just as well off, I think. Money, a dollar went a long ways then. It don't go far now. (Vince) Can you tell us, maybe the appearance of things in the County? Um. like, the way the roads were or like the way you notice now how some houses may be really large and right next to that house would be a small house..if maybe houses were all the same? Um, have the same type of appearance, or..(Elaine) Well, there's an example..yougo right down Main Street in Jackson. You see the houses on the left there? Them old houses there, but they're nice houses, but they're old. This is one of 'em. This one was built in uh, 1939. Ya know, but its built. Sure, see how this house is built, ya know. Uh, I don't know. But uh, I don't know what to tell ya. (Vince) I don't have any more questions. (Elaine) I have just a few, just from what we've already asked you. Maybe if you could go into a little more depth. When we were talking about the hours people worked. (Neil) Yeah. (Vince) And you talked about people working different shifts, and there were graveyard shifts..did the mines operate 24 hours a day? (Neil) Oh yeah. Un huh. Had three shifts. Two shifts had three shifts. Graveyard, day shift, graveyard again. I mean..(Vince) Which, you worked for a short time in the mines, right? (Neil) Seven years. (Vince) What shift did you work? (Neil) Uh, night shift and day shift. (Vince) And those were

each eight..(Neil) When you did work two weeks of day shift, then you go night shift, see. They call that a long change..get a day off, then we go up to uh, Carson City. Go up to uh, State line and (laugh) gamble it. Boy does Carson ever forget the depression up there. This guy I run around with, we went up there, just bought a new Dodge, in '36. And I had a Roseville(?) in '36 now, went up to Carson City, up uh, State line, Tahoe. I played a machine and hit the fifteen dollar jackpot, thought I was rich. Ha Ha! 15 dollars. Then I thought, oh well, I got a 30 dollar gazeel(?). And the 30's comin' up there. I thought (mumble) again. I went up Sharkey's Monday. Up, took her (Anne) with me. Just got her outa the house for a change. Hard to do, though, but I got her out. (Vince) OK. Um, you said that you dropped out of school to work. Were a lot of people doing this at the time? (Neil) Yeah, but I was too young to go underground, so I worked different little outfits like runnin' the windows on the top, see. Just freakin' around here like Quartz Mountain. And then, uh, when I was 18, I got my license and I drove a truck a little bit..hailed for the miners down to the smelters, and down at, um, what the hell you call it, the smelters down by the uh, Selby(?). You know, Selby Smelter(?). Huh, you know where Carquinez Bridge is? Where you go from Carquinez to across the Carquinez? The highest chimney in the world. The big, wood chimney? They condemned that 'cause they used to dump all that iron and stuff out in the water, buildin' up in the water. They condemned it. I heard now they blasted that big chimney. Oh, that big son-of-a-bitch. That must of went up four, four or five hundred feet. You haven't been down that way, huh? (Vince) I don't think so, it doesn't sound familiar to me. (Neil) An old building too, like me, huh? (laugh) (Vince) I guess you could say that. Were a lot of people doing the same thing you were doing..dropping out of school to help their families? (Neil) Oh, yeah. Well, I didn't like school, anyway, ya know. And, uh, I never got

along with the principal, 'cause the principal did (mumble) to me. His kind and I used to fight and you know, uh..the oldest brother died in Jackson. God damn, you know I can't think of his name now. He lives in Jackson. Oh, anyway, I'd ask her but I know she won't remember.

Towsley? Ya know young Towsley? (Vince) No, I don't think so. The name's not familiar. (Neil)

He lives right up by the high school. Know the street up by the high school? I think it's the first house on the right. You go up that street like you're goin' to Pardee Dam. You don't know him, eh? (Vince) I don't know. (Neil) I'll be darned. Well, he'd be about..youngest one, I think he's about sixty five, I guess. Sixty years old. (Vince) I don't really think we asked you how your

family was growing up. Were both your parents alive and living with you and all your brothers and sisters? (Neil) Oh, yeah. My mother was born in San Francisco. My father was born in Italy.

He came here when he was 17 years old and never went back. But I went over. My brother's not Italian, but I went over and visit his folks when I had (tents?). I had my 8th birthday there, in

1921, in Italy. I was a year out of school. Then I got shot in the eye with a goddamned BB gun and (mumble) couple years and I thought, ah, the hell with it. When I was 15 the depression hit and I, I just quit. Went to school, I don't miss it. Not a damn bit. Financially, I'm set, so I don't

give a damn now. You know (laugh), ah, the hell with it. But I worked 70 hours a week the last 30 years. I did. I worked 70 hours a week. Now, any truckers will tell 'ya here. I worked here. I

drove Calaveras Cement 3 years without movin' a shift. I came here in 1947. And I drove here a loggin' truck and hardly a week that we didn't work 70 hours a week. All overtime, all overtime.

I done good, ya know, invested a little bit. So, what the hell, I'll never be a millionaire or anything like that, but, uh, I don't have to take a back seat for all these guys that did go to high school. Ya know, biggest part of 'em mined, got married early, and they divorced, and they

turned out to be alcoholics, or uh, everything, ya know. And uh, I don't know, now that they're all gone. 'Cause we're here. (Vince) OK. Another question I had..you talked about your friends, drinking and driving, you totalled a car. What were, what was the law like? Law enforcement then. Like were you punished? (Neil) Hell, used to run us all over the County. We run, hide from 'em. They (mumble) the power you had. But you mean what was the law like? They only had two, one highway patrolman in the whole County. And they got two and, uh, Folleg(?). You don't remember Folleg. I know you don't (mumble). He gets a call one night. He's comin' up from Ione on his motorcycle and right there by the uh, you know where Swingle's market is? Well, that was Highway 49. That wasn't there then. He's comin' up there doin' about 80 miles an hour. And the superintendent of the mine's kid (?) Howe, was drunk. He had a Dodge. He was drunk and he hit that motorcycle head-on. And, oh, the highway patrolman flew out there went, what would be right there. He landed right about where Swingle's market was. You can ask anybody who remembers, tell you that. Busted him up pretty bad, but he finally went back and he stayed on the highway patrol till he retired. (Vince) Huh. So there was law enforcement. It wasn't like everybody brakin' the law? (Neil) No, no there was nothin' wrong. You never had no dope. Nobody gettin' into trouble, ya know, really. Heck, we used to go to the show, leave your keys in the car at that time, ya know. You didn't have to lock 'em up. I'm serious with it. And before my time, from what they tell me, hell you could..you never locked your house. We use to go away and leave our house, when I was down home. We'd go away and leave it, lock the doors. Once in a while a neighbor'd come in and make a long distance call or somethin' like that, you know. Wouldn't tell ya, but ya know. (Vince) So the County in general was pretty safe? (Neil) Oh, yeah. Yeah. God yeah. It is, it would be now 'wasn't for these damn dopers. You gotta be seein'. You

read that Ledger every day, that cops, the police? In the Ledger everyday? Every week? Gee, its terrible, ya know. God a-mighty. Tear-up stuff. Sneak in, steal and tear it up, ya know. You see where that highway patrolman hit that 37 year old guy on a bicycle? See it, it's in the paper here. Today, not here though. (Vince) Oh? (Neil) Sacramento. (Vince) No, I didn't read that. (Neil) Highway patrolman, wasn't on a call or anything. And uh, this guy, a 37 years old, 37 I think it was. And uh, he had somethin' wrong with his motorcycle, he was pushin' it. Standin' along side of it on a two-way street. And uh, highway patrolman didn't see him, and killed him. If you read the Bee, do you? (Vince) We get it. I..(Neil) Yeah, you see it. It's in there today. Yeah, but them things happen too, ya know. Yeah, oh I don't know what else I can tell ya. (Vince) OK. Any more questions? (Neil) They tell ya the bordellos are all gone in this town then, in Jackson? (Vince) Oh? (Neil) Huh? (Vince) I'm not familiar with the name. (Neil) (Vince laughs) One of them red-light districts. The gamblin' bordellos. (Vince) Oh, u,m one other thing that just came to mind is, you'd talked before about Fasso(?), I think his name was. (Neil) 'Bout who? (Vince) Fasso. Wasn't that his name? The guy in the paper. (Neil) Oh, oh, uh..(Vince) Cenotto reported on. The guy that died. He died in the mine and you..they thought that he was missing, or something, and you said that you knew how he actually died? (Neil) Oh, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Well I don't know how he actually died, but I knew that he was missin'. And uh, for a long time, and they thought maybe he left with uh, uh,..writes in the paper 'bout it, but Cenotto. And, uh, well, Cenotto got the story the way he got it. They give it to him, I guess. They never did tell..I don't know if they told where they found him. But I know where they found him. I won't mention names because..Now see, I was 10 years old. And then I know the story from everybody talkin', but (mumble). They were talkin' 'bout it everyday, what happened. When they were loadin' the

bodies into the skip to take 'em out, this was slimey, ya know. He just slipped. Now, that's the way I get it, now. You can make up what actually happened, and he went down the sump, so they just didn't say anything about it, I guess. In them days, ya know. Yeah, but they, they thought maybe Fessell, that was old Fessell. Maybe he figured he mighta started the fire and got away. They couldn't find him. But he wasn't 'cause he was a helluva nice guy. And I know his kid, Pine Grove. Fessell, he lived right there, if he's still there now. Just before you drop down..you know where that Pine Grove School is? (Vince) Yeah. (Neil) Well, just as you pass there you drop down to that Aqueduct, the house right to the right there. The last house there. But, uh, old Fessell. Oh, I shouldn't say anything because, hell. I don't know. All I know is what they, the old timers, were talkin' about it, as it happened, ya know. Said Fessell, old Fessell, they knew where he was. Huh. But somebody else probably knows too, ya know. I don't know who the hell you could ask, that's any older'n I am. (Vince) OK. (Neil) You know? (Vince) No more questions? (Neil) No. (Elaine) OK, unless you have any. (Neil) How about a, a 7-Up to drink? Nice, cold 7-Up? (Vince) Well, if we have time. (Vince) Huh? Can I get this thing offa me? (Vince) Oh, here, we'll go ahead and stop. (Neil) Oh, no. You want me to take it off? (Vince) Yeah, we'll go ahead and stop. (Neil)