

# Clara Copley shafer

Interviewed by Rusty Salmon, Aug. 15, 2003, at Moab, Utah

**Question (Rusty):** When did you first move to southeast Utah?

A (Clara): I came here in 1952.

**Q: And you came right to Moab first?**

A: Right.

**Q: And was that from...?**

A: The University of Utah (*in Salt Lake City, Utah*).

**Q: Marriages?**

A: Just one. Prommel. He was named for a German geologist that his father was working for at the time he was born. This German geologist had written some papers. I happen to have a copy of them at home. He did, the way I was told, exploration work through the Russian government although the guy was a German....Harold Prommel. Prommel is really a surname, a German surname.

**Q: When were you married?**

A: June 26, 1957.

**Q: And where did that take place?**

A: Salt Lake City.

**Q: Children?**

A: I have six.

**Q: Could you please list them for me in order?**

A: Susan, she is a paralegal now living in Phoenix. Kathy, she is in public relations in Logan, Utah. Lloyd, took over my husband's business when his dad died. Steve is a social worker here in Moab. Paul works with computers in Santa Rosa, California. I don't know exactly what he does. David is an electrical engineer living in Carson City, Nevada.

**Q: Great. And you did move away from Moab after the first time you came here?**

A: I took two and a half years and served an LDS mission in Mexico. After that I renewed my teaching certificate at the BYU and married Prommel so I never used it. In 1960, Prommel, who was working for Chuck Keller at the time, was transferred to Riverton, Wyoming. In 1963, we came back to Moab.

**Q: Let's go back to when you were born in Coalville. Can you tell me a little bit about growing up and the Coalville area?**

A: Well, it's snowy in the winter time and cold in the winter time and very pleasant and very nice in the summertime. It was a small town. The year I graduated, there were 48 seniors and there would not have been that many except they combined two classes through a mistake earlier in the year. They decided these kids needed to be held back in the sixth grade, I guess it was. So we had two sixth grades and they just continued on with us and graduated. Coalville had some ups and downs. There has been some oil

booms and it was a coal mining town. There were at least two coal mines operating when I was growing up.

**Q: Was your father involved in mining?**

A: No, my father was a school teacher as was my mother. Mom only taught during World War II, though, after she married. My Dad was principal at North Summit. Dad taught 47 years altogether. He taught chemistry, physics, geometry and all that good stuff. I had two brothers and a sister. I more or less grew up with my brothers.

**Q: What was the birth order there? Where were you in the mix?**

A: My two older brothers and then myself and then my sister. She is 4 1/2 years younger than I am so I really grew up with my brothers and tagged after them a good deal of the time. I didn't play dolls much. I remember playing mumble peg and kick the can and games like that, and touch football with my brothers. I went ice skating with them.

**Q: Was Coalville primarily rural at that time?**

A: Yes. It was. It still is. We haven't grown an awfully lot but it is growing. Park City is in the same county and it is a lot bigger. Well, Coalville is the County seat. Park City has been arguing over it over the past I don't know how many years. And, they do have tremendous population growth there. Coalville is slowly growing. The city had their booms when they brought in oil or did oil exploration around the area. Then we had booms. In fact, the people from Evanston, Wyoming, couldn't find housing in Evanston, so they lived in Coalville and traveled to Evanston. We had the Portland Cement factory there in Devil Slide. Morgan employed some of the people there. There was mink raising. Some of the Blue Willow Mink I think the name is Buzz Atkins (?) mink.

**Q: Now, was that when you were a girl?**

A: Yes. The Atkins mink has been sold all over the United States. I understand he has even sold mink that have been used for royalty. He didn't like the models in New York so he used to take Utah girls back there to model his mink coats. He said the New York models were too skinny. They had that and dairy farming. We had our own cow and we usually had a pig and some chickens and ducks, and geese once in a while. I didn't like the geese. They usually chased me I didn't like them. During WWII, because most of the boys 16 to 18 years old were bussed to Hillfield and Clearfield to work in the defense industries , I got a lot of jobs mowing the lawns for people and have enjoyed outdoor work ever since.

**Q: You would have been a teenager during WWII?**

A: Yes. I was 11 when it broke out. I was mowing our lawn and the neighbor asked me if I could mow their lawn and somebody else asked if I could mow their lawns and I preferred to work outdoors rather than indoors so that suited me just fine. We had one doctor for a while and then later we had two doctors. We did have a hospital there for a while but I wasn't born in one. I was born at home as was my sister and my two brothers. My tonsils were taken out in the doctor's office because we didn't have a hospital. But, later on we did get one. But now, we just have a clinic again and just one doctor and one pharmacist. We did have two fairly good stores. They weren't supermarkets but they were stores. We now only have the one that is of any size. We have a lot of little corner markets. We had two hotels when I grew up. But we don't have any now. We had two cafés, I guess you would call them. One was an A&W (?) I worked there for a while during the summer time. Another one was called Dean's (?) Café, and it stayed in business up until.....I guess it was 1990 something when it was closed down. We had a train that went up once a day and down once a day.

**Q: Where did the train go?**

A: It went to Park City with empty oar cars and usually came back with full ore cars or sometimes coal because, as I said, it was a coal mining town for a while. There is still

coal in Coalville but it is too expensive to mine it. It's not worth it. It's a good grade of coal but there is a lot of water seepage into the mines and they would have to pump so much and stabilize the mines and it is not worth while. The cars coming back from Park City were loaded with silver from the silver mines. I think they were being taken to the smelter as I don't remember a smelter in Park City.

**Q: When you were in Coalville, now did you go to Salt Lake at all or did you stay right in Coalville most of the time? Did you go to Evanston for big city shopping, or whatever?**

A: Salt Lake was usually where we went. At that time we had a stage that would go in. It would get in Salt Lake about 9:30 and would leave about 2:30. That's how we got the newspapers that would come out on the stage and the stage helped carry freight back and forth between the two cities.

**Q: Was this an auto stage?**

A: It was just a truck of some kind. It had a seat in it so that it could carry about 3 or 4 passengers. And that was the way of getting to and from Salt Lake unless you drove. The roads were terrible in the wintertime. I can remember going to games and having to turn around because we couldn't make it when we went to Park City or Heber or Kamas. Parley's Canyon was closed a good deal of the time because of the roads. Snyderville and around there the wind blew the snow until drifts were over the fences and you would have to go through that area to get to Salt Lake. We did a lot of sleigh riding in those days. Skiing wasn't much back then, not in my area. In Park City, I guess it was, but not in Coalville. Ice skating was. Mr. Geary, a local businessman, would flood his pasture almost every winter and the kids would go down there and ice skate and would haul all the old Christmas trees down there and have a bonfire and somebody would usually bring some potatoes and marshmallows or some hot dogs, or something and we would skate. Most of the kids learned to ice skate.

**Q: So, you graduated from....?**

A: North Summit.

**Q: And then did you go right to college?**

A: I worked one summer after high school and before college in the fall at a tomato factory in Roy, Utah. I stayed with an aunt in Roy. Then I went right to college. And, four years there. In the summer time I worked the cafés, as I said the A&W and then at the Kozy Café, in Echo and saved my money. When I was in college, I was a nanny. The last three years I was a nanny. I worked for board and room that way. I met D.L. Taylor in one of my chemistry classes and we talked about Moab and then I met Sam Taylor in another of my classes and he talked about Moab. I had never been to Moab and didn't know anything about the Four Corners area. It sounded like my kind of town., you know, kind of Western - cattle, sheep, small agriculture. I did not like big cities. I still don't like big cities. Moab is too big for me now. I am a small town girl. I like the ambiance of a small town. I like to know my neighbors. I don't care for big city living.

**Q: Now, when the Taylors mentioned Moab to you, did you come to visit first?**

A: No. No. I had a chance to go back East. Back to New Jersey with a girlfriend of mine that I graduated with. Her husband was stationed back there and her family wouldn't let her go back there by herself and so she persuaded my parents to let me go back. This was right after I graduated from college. We come back through Moab and that was the first time I had seen it. Of course, that was in the early summer of the year when the fruit trees were in blossom and to me it just looked like a little green oasis out in the middle of nowhere. Of course, I had already signed a contract to come here but that was the first time I saw it.

**Q: So you had already signed a contract?**

A: Yes. I had already signed a contract.

**Q: And what year would that have been?**

A: 1952. I graduated from college in June of '52 and came here in September of '52.

**Q: And what grades did you teach?**

A: Well, the first year I was given the second grade and that was another one of the reasons I came here. Helen Knight promised me the second grade and that was what I felt best qualified to teach.. So, as I said, I wanted to know what the Four Corners area was like so I accepted the call and signed the contract. The next year I was given the first grade. I've got to admit that upset me a little bit because I had all of the visual aides and the programs set up and the supplies that I wanted, and then I was given the first grade. I enjoyed it every bit as much as I did the second grade. The only thing I didn't like about it was the number of students I had and that goes along with the boom years.

**Q: And that's right when the boom was starting? So, how were you impacted as a school teacher when these people started arriving?**

A: I started out with 25 first graders, and I could see the progress these children were making from week to week. I could see the progress they were making and I was quite enthused and quite encouraged by it. But then, it seemed like every time I turned around I would get a new kid or a couple of new kids. We ran out of desks. They had to bring in desks that wouldn't fit the children. They were too big. The room space kept getting smaller and smaller and I was getting there towards the last six weeks of school I was getting kids in the first grade that couldn't even read.

As I said, I started out with 25 and I ended up with 40. Mrs. Flint (?) had the other first grade and she had 30. She was given a bigger load because she was experienced in the first grade and I wasn't and she ended up with 50. No parent volunteer, no teacher's aid. You were expected to handle the recesses, you were

expected to handle the lunch duty, the whole works, and I felt like the kids were sitting on my lap. I had no room to move around behind my desk. There weren't supplies. We were just making do. The people were living in tents. They were living in dugouts. The lady that I rented from, rented the other bedroom to two little girls whose parents were living down at Dead Horse Point in a tent. They would come in on Sunday night and the parents would pick them up on Friday night and take them back to where they were living and then before the year was out, she rented her shed, just a shed, to another gentleman who couldn't find a place to stay. She would give us breakfast and supper and then she did my laundry but she didn't have to because I was perfectly capable of doing it myself. But she just picked it up with hers and did it too.

**Q: Where in town were you living?**

A: I was staying with Mattie Holyoak. It is there on 4th East across the street from Milt's Stop and Eat, right by the mortuary (*west side of 400 East at Locust Lane*). The house is still standing. Her granddaughter lives in it now.

**Q: Were all of the classes being affected similarly?**

A: Oh yes, every one of them. As I said, with the first graders I ended up with 40+ and the other teacher ended up with 50 when she started out with 30. They took what is now the DUP hall and made two, and then I understand later, three classrooms in there. Everybody was being affected the same way. People were living everywhere. My brother-in-law, John Henry Shafer, converted the chicken coop into a duplex and rented it out with no problem whatsoever. The first year I lived in an apartment above Riley's Drug Store. It's now a t-shirt shop. I just moved out for the summer and when I came back he'd doubled the rent and wouldn't rent to me. He said he'd rented it during the summer time and he wouldn't rent it to me. So I lived in a room that was in a house that Madge Cunningham Ward had. She just died a little while ago. I think she would be 99 years old. She had a room in the basement. State Farm is there now (*30 W. Center Street*). I lived in that room until she had friends of hers that needed a place to stay and

told me she would rent to them and asked me if I could find another place. That's when I moved in with Mattie Holyoak. That's when all the trailer courts grew up. Anybody that had any extra space put in a trailer and was renting it out.

**Q: Was there just one school at that time?**

A: There was just one school where the Middle School is now. Upstairs was the High School. Downstairs was the elementary. Kindergarten was held in that building that burned down where the library was. I don't remember but it seems to me that the band and music was also there, although they might have moved the band and music to Star Hall. I don't remember that. But I do know that the kindergarten and cafeteria and music and band was there the first year I was here. And, as well as the gym and the library, PE classes and things like that were over in that area. Shop was held in the basement of Star Hall, I think. When the high school got out for lunch or at the end of the day, I was afraid the little ones would be trampled. The lunch hour and dismissal times were staggered but the halls and stairs were still congested and I worried about the younger ones.

**Q: Did you continue teaching with these crowded rooms or was that when you left?**

A: I left in the spring of '54. I taught two years here only. I was told that they were going to go on half-day sessions and I had worked in half-day sessions in the Granite School District in Salt Lake and I could not see that the kids were advancing; I couldn't see that they were progressing as well as the kids out there in Coalville where I lived and had done some student teaching and I thought, well, I don't want to teach under those conditions. As I said, I wasn't too happy with the success. I couldn't see the progress in the students with having so many. I know Principal Sundwall came in and talked to me and he said, "Don't judge your teaching skills by this." Of course, I told him I didn't even feel I was doing a good job baby sitting and he said, "Well, don't judge your teaching skills by this and don't get discouraged." But I thought I didn't want to work under half-day sessions and I had always wanted to learn Spanish. We came from such a small school that you'd have the 10th, 11th and 12th grades in one class to make enough to

teach and so additional languages were out of the question. I didn't avail myself of the opportunity at the University of Utah so that's when I accepted a Mission Call to Mexico with the idea I would learn Spanish down there, if nothing else.

**Q: That was 1954 ?**

A: I left in the fall of '54 and didn't get back until the spring of '57. And then I went back to BYU to renew my teaching certificate. While I was there, Prommel convinced me that he was the only one for me and we were married in June.

**Q: You met him when you were down here?**

A: Yes. He was at home on leave from the service, and I had agreed to write to him. Well, he was alone in the service and I didn't know too many people down here. So, it was just correspondence more or less for about four years.

**Q: So he convinced you to come and get married?**

A: Yes.

**Q: That's great. And then did you immediately move back down to Moab?**

A: We lived in one of the half-chicken-coop apartments that his brother had converted for a while and then...

**Q: Where was that located?**

A: It's just up above where what used to be the Provonsha apartments are. It's on, I think, 2nd South. At that time it was called Shafer Lane because John Henry donated the ground to the County or the City to make a road and so it was called Shafer Lane at that time. The apartments were owned by my brother-in-law. He had two one-bedroom

apartments that we rented first and then, when the family came along, we moved down west and he had two two-bedroom apartments and we moved into one of those. But we were transferred. Prommel was working for Mr. Keller as a mechanic. Keller had ore hauling contracts in Moab and in Riverton, Wyoming.

**Q: Here in Moab?**

A: Here in Moab. He had an ore haul out of the Gas Hills in Wyoming and Prommel was spending more time in Wyoming than he was here in Moab and so we moved to Riverton, Wyoming. We lived there for three years. Apparently, Keller lost the haul, or something, I don't know. Anyway, we were transferred back to Moab which suited my husband because he was the kind that had to go back and count the Court House steps if he was gone too long. So, he was very pleased to be back here near his mother, and, of course, his father, cousins and friends.

**Q: During that time, when you came back from BYU, after your mission, the town had probably changed a lot.**

A: Oh yes. Definitely. They had the Helen M. Knight school then. When I was here there was the LDS Church where the MARC is now (*100 East and 100 North*) and then the Baptist Church had where Seekhaven was (*200 East and 100 North*). The Catholic Church used to have a man come down, a Father come down from Price. I think he came once a month and they held services in the different homes. The Seven Day Adventists people would go to Grand Junction and if there were any other denominations, I wasn't aware of them. Yes, it had changed an awful lot and grown up an awfully lot. The hospital when I was here was a little bit west of Pasta Jay's (*south side of Center Street between Main Street and 100 West*). It had been a home at one time. That's where that motel is. And, at that time, Continental Trailways came through Moab and it stopped right across the street from Riley's Drug at Mom's Café, which was open 24 hours a day at that time. It got in here at 4:00 in the morning which was an unearthly hour. If there were passengers that needed a ride anyplace, usually the Sheriff met them and would take

them wherever they needed to go. It left Moab about the same time, too, which was also an unearthly hour. Then Continental sold out to Greyhound and I don't know what happened to the schedule. It kind of got fouled up after that and then for a while we didn't have anything until we got this Big Horn Express, a ten-passenger van that runs between Monticello and the Salt Lake airport..

**Q: When you and Prommel came back from Wyoming, was the town still growing at that point?**

A: Oh yes. This was back .... we left in '60 and we came back in '63. And it was still growing. Shortly after that, my husband and Jay Carter bought out Bill Osborne and they had Skyline Garage and Diesel where they now have Ya Gotta Wanna, behind McDonald's (*west of ~600 So. Main Street*). My husband and Jay Carter bought that out in....I'm thinking it was 1964. But Skyline had been out there since about 1954 or somewhere around in there because my husband said he had helped haul some of the stuff out to build it. At that time it was in County limits, I think. He drove a truck for a while. He drove a truck for his brother-in-law out of Mexican Hat. Then he went into the diesel repair business for Chuck Keller and then he bought into this with Jay Carter. When Jay Carter died, he bought Jay's share and he ran it with his boys, as soon as the boys got big enough to be any help he had them down there. He said his kids weren't going to run the streets after school. They could help him until supper time. By then it was time for homework and bedtime.

**Q: Did you come back to teaching when you returned?**

A: No. My husband always said that if he couldn't make enough for us to live on, I had to learn to live on what he made. We had enough to argue about without arguing about that. So I let it go. Like I said, we always had a big garden and I bottled everything I could, and froze a lot. He was the kind that insisted on home-made bread so I was baking at least twice a week. There towards the end of my father in law's life, he came and lived

with us so there was six kids plus my father-in-law. Of course, my oldest girls were old enough to go away to college but they were still here in the summer time.

**Q: Where were you living at this time?**

A: Well, when my father-in-law was living with us, we were living where we live now which is the property that I am living in now. It has been in the Shafer family for at least 100 years. The house that we are living in was built about 30 years ago. The house that was there before, I lived in for a year. It had one bedroom and I had four children at the time. That was..... the kids were always sick. They were always sick. They just kept the germs circulating and circulating, circulating. They were always sick. That house was moved somewhere up where Alco is. I was shown where it was but the people that moved it off the property remodeled it so much that I can't pick it out now. No, we moved into a house that was built for my mother-in-law. I don't know just when it was built. But, Sog always called it the "white elephant."

**Q: Sog is...?**

A: My father-in-law. He was one of the town characters. He got his name because he was always in the sorghum barrel and, at that time, it was the only sweetening they had and he always had it all over his face and Philander Maxwell started calling him Sorghum Shafer and it just got shortened to "Sog."

**Q: You also told me an interesting story about a grave on the property.**

A: Well, my father-in-law told me this and my mother-in-law told me this. But, during one of the times the Shafer property was rented out (this would have been John Henry Shafer - the one that the house was remodeled in honor of - and his wife, Essie, who lived there for a while) and Sog told me that they rented it (I don't know if it was because Grandma Essie had already moved to Fruita to live with her daughter or whether when they lived up on Wilson Mesa, cause they would go up there a lot because of the cattle up

in that area. That's where they run the cattle.) But, they rented the house out to a school teacher. I'm telling you the way Sog told me. The last name was Johnson but he wasn't related to any of the Johnsons around here. And he had a little girl that died, and he asked Grandmother Essie's permission to bury the daughter in her flower garden. The first thing I ever heard about Grandmother Essie was what wonderful, beautiful flowers she grew. (She also was a wonderful quilter. She dried a lot of fruit that her boys would run to cover or gather in when it rained. I think Sog told me she sold the dried fruit to the cowboys.) And so he asked if he could bury her (*his daughter*) in the flower garden. Now, Prommel said that he knew where it was, but I have no idea. The old house that was there has been torn down. We've plowed it up several times; we have gardened there. I have no idea where it is now.

**Q: How else would you describe the infrastructure of the town changing during the boom years while you were raising your children. Were the schools still very crowded or had the boom tapered off?**

A: I think shortly after we went into business the boom started tapering off. I know, when we first bought Skyline Diesel in 1964, Prommel had at least 14 trucks that he was keeping in good repair and he had at least two other guys working for him and then later on he was able to do it with just the help of his sons. The boom started tapering off, I think, in the late 70s and early 80s. A lot of the people from here went to Pioche, Nevada and Panacho, Nevada, and places like that because they were miners and that's where they were still mining. As I said, we had the old hospital and then they had the new hospital and it has been enlarged time and time again since then. We had, I think, two doctors. We only had the one drug store; we had Miller's Supermarket; and Fear's Market where Poplar Place was when I came here. Miller's Supermarket was where the café is (*Slickrock Café, northwest corner of Main and Center Streets*). I can't remember the name. They are off of Center Street anyway. We had one bank. It's approximately where the bank is now but it was little. We had one theatre. It was called the Ides and it was where the bank parking lot is. I could sit there in apartment above the Riley Drug Store and listen to the movie, but I could not see it. I just needed to open my door. The

drive-in was built during the boom years. They put in a roller skating place during the boom years. There was an old swimming pool on the library lawn, somewhere around that area. (*east side of 100 East between Center and 100 South*)

**Q: The current library?**

A: Yes. And they put in a swimming pool down here at the park. There are a good number of churches that have been built.

**Q: Were you and Prommel active, socially, in the community?**

A: No. He never was active socially in anything. His father wasn't either although his father always was a member of the Chamber of Commerce. He said it was always good for the community. They changed the road. The main road used to go up Center Street between Milt's Stop and Eat and the house that was - is there - and then out past - towards the old cemetery - and then take a turn there and on out south of town that way. They changed the road and squared up the corners and some were still gravel roads when I came. The road that goes down by the hospital now was still gravel when I was here. I remember one time that the kids could not come into school because the creek had flooded and those that lived on the other side of the creek could not come into school that day.

Although I have not been active in the community, I have been active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. When I first came to Moab, I served in the Young Women's Auxiliary as a teacher of the 12- and 13-year-old girls for one year and for another year as drama director. After marriage, I worked in the auxiliary for children (the Primary). I served in this organization for 30 years. I taught the 10-year-old boys for 14 years, helping to prepare them to enter the Boy Scout organization. I also served as secretary, pianist and teaching other age groups. I served in the nursery four different terms.

I have served 3 different times in the Relief Society as Educational Councilor. The Relief Society is the women's auxiliary. I have also been secretary, teacher, and

pianist in this organization. For a few years I was serving in the Primary and the Relief Society simultaneously. I have also been a teacher in the Sunday School, and at the present time I am working with the teachers of the various auxiliaries in a special calling in the Sunday School.

**Q: Where were your kids going to school?**

A: My kids all went to school here.

**Q: Was that Helen M. Knight or ...?**

A: When we came back from Riverton, Wyoming, about the time my oldest girl started kindergarten, she .... Well, some of my kids went to kindergarten in the old LDS church house, which is now the MARC (*Moab Arts and Recreation Center*). I can't remember how many did. Whether they went to kindergarten and school, some of them in the southeast and then we moved down there on Moenkopi and my kids went there until my oldest daughter was a junior in high school and then we moved back up to where we live now but my kids mostly went to the Helen M. Knight school.

**Q: Were there classrooms very crowded still?**

A: I don't think so. No. In my opinion they were not crowded. You talked to the teacher now days and they would say they were. Back when I was teaching school, the classrooms of 34 - 35 were normal. That was normal. I mean anything over 30 - 35 they figured was crowded but anything under 30 - 35... they tried to keep them around 24 but, you know....

**Q: Now was it pretty transient or was it a pretty stable population once they came here for the boom?**

A: It depended on where they lived. If they lived in apartments or trailers they were pretty transient. But if they had moved into a house they tended to be more stable. When we moved to where we are living now, we moved into one of the older areas of town and there weren't too many children my kids' age. They were just in that area - mostly older people.

**Q: Were you involved in any of the political functions here? On Boards or ....?**

A: Prommel was pretty much involved with the American Party. It wasn't Republican or Democrat. It think it was called the American, at that time. He never ran for office. He was the kind that liked to stay out of the limelight. But he was very conservative in his views. And the candidates that he usually supported were usually the conservative ones. Prommel was not involved in much of anything.

**Q: He wasn't a joiner?**

A: No. He did his own bookwork up there at the shop, as well as ordering the parts and everything owning the business, he was very good at he did, I'm told. I had my brother up in Bellevue, Washington, tell me about a friend of his that broke down in Moab and they had a diesel engine and he was asking around where he could get it repaired and he was told, "Well, it's a good thing you broke down in Moab. We've got one of the best diesel mechanics around" and, my brother-in-law heard this story up in Bellevue , Washington. No. He was good at his business. And he would work. It was not uncommon for him to go to work at 9 o'clock and to come home at 9 o'clock at night so he didn't have time to do anything else.

**Q: And then you had all of the kids so you did not have a lot of time.**

A: I was involved with 4-H. I wanted my own kids involved in the program. I had been involved in it when I was growing up and I could see some benefits for the kids. So, they were involved and because they were involved I was involved too. I led 4-H for a while.

My kids have always been involved in Scouting. I have two Eagle Scouts. I insisted that the kids take swimming lessons. They used to go fishing with their father-in-law and I just felt more comfortable if they knew how to swim and then, of course, they always had the life jackets on. Two of the boys were involved with Little League baseball and one of the girls was interested in baseball. That and swimming was all that was offered then.

**Q: Where did you take them fishing...on the River or on the Mountain?**

A: On the Colorado River, in a boat. Sog always knew where the good holes were and, in fact, Mel Dalton (he was chief of police at that time) had been told about this drunk man who was driving down the wrong side of the road on the Potash Road. It was Sog. He was just looking for good fishing holes and he was driving down the wrong side of the road to see them. He got so he would park the truck a half mile up from where he was going to go fishing because people would see where he was going to go fishing and then they would go fishing in the same area. He had a boat and when it was stolen Prommel wanted to buy another one for him. I told him no because Sog was over 80 and I was afraid he'd tip the boat over and drown. He would say he had many a meal of the catfish and he figured he owed them one.

**Q: Do you think you were affected differently by the boom than your husband, since he had grown up here? Did it bother him more with this influx of people?**

A: Well, it was good for his business as a diesel mechanic. It really was. But, he's like me. He didn't like a lot of crowds. Did not like neighbors too close. He liked the small town atmosphere and the small town area. Changes come. It's either that or move. And where do you move to nowadays??

**Q: What do you consider the best and the worst things about living in Moab?**

A: Well, the thing that has always bothered me is that it is so far away from anything. I have a sister that lives right there in Salt Lake and she tells me about going to see "Les

Miserables” and I would love to see it. And she tells me about seeing the “Phantom of the Opera” and I would love to see that. She tells me about Ballet West and things like that. When I was going to college, I was right there and could attend these things.

**Q: The cultural events?**

A: It’s not there anymore. The Music Festival is very good and I go to as much of that as possible but I miss that and shopping. My husband always said if I couldn’t get it through the catalogue, or couldn’t get it in Moab, I probably didn’t need it. That has not been a big deal with me although, yes, it does bother me. I needed a pair of ladies dress shoes and where do you go in Moab to buy a pair of ladies dress shoes? I wanted a white shirt for my grandson, where in Moab do you find a white shirt for a 12-year-old? That bothers me. But I think it is the fact that it is so hard to get out of here. I mean, you go to Green River for the train; you go to Green River for the bus. The airplane used to fly to Salt Lake; it doesn't anymore. Thank goodness for the shuttle. It’s helpful. But it’s the cultural events and the shopping for special things,

**Q: And transportation?**

A: And transportation.

**Q: What’s the best things about Moab then? Either now or back when you first moved here?**

A: Well, I don’t know. I had a chance to buy my dad’s house there in Coalville and I was really tempted to do it but my kids said, “Just remember how cold it gets in the winter time and in Moab you don’t have to shovel snow.” So, the growing season, I guess. Because when we first came here, when I first came to Moab there was peaches and pears and cherries and apples and you could... as I said you could can an awful lot. You could grow tomatoes, cucumbers, the watermelons, the canteloupes, but now who gardens, who grows? I put in four tomato plants this year and three of them have died already. I guess

I am not the gardener. But, I think the accessibility to fresh fruit when I first came here, and then everybody went out of their way to try and make me feel at home.

**Q: Do you feel Moab has been a very friendly place?**

A: Well, it was, I think, before the boom. But after that, I don't even know my neighbor. Before, you know, yeah. You usually knew everybody in town. And, like I said, something happened and the whole community would pitch in to help. And now, you don't even know your neighbors.

**Q: So Prommel stayed at the diesel repair until he retired.?**

A: He stayed there until he died of a massive heart attack. He had suffered a stroke about a couple of years before and then he couldn't go back to work and then, as I said, my son took it over and then moved the business out south of town. He moved it out there because Darcy's Truck Stop was out there. But now they are gone. He still maintains the business there. I don't think he employs anybody but himself. He does have his wife do the bookkeeping for him.

**Q: Your other kids are scattered around? Do you get to visit much?**

A: Well, I try and see them about twice a year. I usually go by train. I love to travel by train. Or by bus. I was flying out but since 9/11 it is such a hassle .

**Q: Do they like coming back to Moab? Do they like Moab as it is now?**

A: Oh yes. But I think they would like to remember it as they were growing up. I have two daughters, if they could find work in Moab, they would be here in a minute, I'm sure. I don't know about the boys. I have one son that I know would because he's "Oh mom, I'm a desert rat," he said. "I can't get acclimated out here." He's the one that lives in

Carson City. Every time he comes home, he heads to the Arches or up or down the River. He guided his college roommates through the Fiery Furnace out there by himself.

**Q: So they liked growing up in Moab even though it was a crazy time?**

A: They liked it. They were very much involved, as I said. They took swimming lessons; the girls and boys were involved in 4-H. The girls were in the dance programs here; the boys, as soon as they were able were out helping their dad. They have enjoyed it, I think. They still feel like Moab is the place they want to be. As I said, if there were jobs for them here, I think most of them would come back.

**Q: Well, I guess that is as good as you want to say.....that people want to return there.**

A: But, what is there for an electrical engineer? Now, the Paralegal could find work here, but her husband can't. My daughter that is a publicity manager, said, "What is there? Motel work and café work?" She said, "My talents, my degree couldn't be used in that kind of work."

**Q: So, you say that one of the problems with Moab now is the fact that it is a very specific job market and so the young people really can't stay here.**

A: The money-paying jobs that were here during the mining - is not here anymore. And you have to work two jobs to make a living nowadays usually because they are just tourist-oriented.

**Q: Are you keeping busy now? Do you have hobbies?**

A: I love to embroider and tat and knit, and crochet and needlepoint and quilt and, like I say, I like to garden a little. I enjoy going to D.U.P. meetings (Daughters of the Utah Pioneers). I am working at the Family History Center. I have volunteered in the schools.

I started volunteering as soon as my youngest boy was in school so that I did not have to leave little ones at home. And I volunteered until he went to Middle School and then I offered, but I was never called. I have worked with the Spanish speaking children in school. When I was going home so much and my Dad was within two weeks of being 102 years old, I was up there taking care of him for six weeks and then down here for six weeks. When I was up there I was helping with the Spanish speaking children up there in school also. I am volunteering in the schools an hour one day a week and thoroughly enjoying it. I also work one day a week at the Family History Library. They are teaching me how to use the computer over there so I can help others do their family history.

**Q: I really appreciate your taking the time to come in and do this interview with us. It has been wonderful talking with you.**



