

# Jack West

This is March 15, 1994, Lloyd Pierson interviewing Jack West of Moab, Utah. Jack is retired now from years working with Chevron Oil Company as a station owner and operator on Main Street and commission distributor of the bulk plant on the north end of Main Street.

**Q: Okay, Jack West, when did you get here?**

JW: We moved here in 1956 but we first started visiting here in 1947. We were living in Provo and I had a service station there which was close to the Scorup family. They were just east of us about a half block.

**Q: You mean the Scorups from Indian Creek, the ranchers?**

JW: Yeah, old Al, a couple of his daughters and his grandson. They were just up Center Street in Provo from us a short distance. They were always trying to get me to come down to Moab. The offers were fabulous because they would have brought me down, put me up at the ranch, furnished a horse for a two, three or four day trip. I never did do it and I thought, "Well, it's just too far away. Moab's in another world." But actually they impressed me with how beautiful it was down here just by conversations. Also, a Federal Land Bank rep worked down this way. He was headquartered in Provo and traded with me all the time, George Brown.

**Q: Yeah, I remember George.**

JW: He finally talked me into it. We'd go down and I would come back after two nights. I had to bring my own car and he brought his because he was going on to San Juan County. But, in any event, I came with George. We got here one evening and then the next morning we went up the

river in his car as far as Bill Boulden's. He had some business with Bill. This was early morning and the scenery was fabulous.

**Q: The river road wasn't paved then?**

JW: Oh no. It was just real rough and there were low spots in places that would flood before they got it improved. We came back down and went out to LaSal to Charlie Redd's. He had some business with Charlie. We came back into town for lunch and that afternoon he took me out to Dead Horse Point.

**Q: That wasn't paved, either.**

JW: Oh no, I should say not. You had to go in by the present airport and it wasn't even graveled, just tracks in the sand.

**Q: Yeah.**

JW: I stayed in Moab that night and the next day I went on home. Within two weeks I had talked Helen into coming down with another couple. This was in May, so it was a real good time of the year. That's how we got started down here, with just a little pressure from people.

**Q: Did you camp out when you came back?**

JW: No. We stayed in the old Utah Motel on Main and Center which is now the Best Western.

**Q: What turned you on to come down here to run your Chevron Oil business?**

JW: We kept coming down with various friends till 1956. In the meantime, I had this Conoco

Station in Provo that was doing real well. I was really friendly with a Standard Oil of California (later Chevron) rep whose field included the area down here. He was always after me to switch from Conoco over to Standard Oil. He was impressed because my business was very good. I told him no. Earl Moss was his name. I said "Earl, when you've got something better than just a retail station I might be interested because I'm not gonna just trade places up here." In December of '55 he showed up at the station on the 15<sup>th</sup> and said "How would you like to go to Moab?" I said "Well, it sounds good because I love Moab," and asked "What's the deal?" He said "Well, we're going to have a bulk plant available down there. In fact we do now." I said "Well, how soon do you need me? Tomorrow?" He said "Yeah, that's exactly when we need you." The distributor down here was an employee of I. Sander Inc., a big oil and gas company in Salt Lake. He had just quit with no notice to anyone and opened himself a Phillips dealership. He threw the keys in on the floor and all the receipts for the mail. So I was down here the next day. I looked at it to find out what was going on. I made the decision immediately that I would do it.

**Q: Helen didn't dig her heels in?**

JW: Oh, no. Helen had been here a number of times. She was on my second trip down. My daughter said she was not coming and Jim was like me. He says "Well, when?"

**Q: Ann, your daughter and Jim, your son?**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: In the period before 1956, what all did you explore?**

JW: Well, we went mainly.....see, we had a passenger car. I didn't have a four wheel drive back then. We went out to Grand View Point, Dead Horse Point, and .....

**Q: In your passenger car, I'll be damned!**

JW: Yeah, I had a big old 1940 Buick Special with 700 x16 tires on it.

**Q: And you did two tracks across the desert with those?**

JW: It was 1947 when we got into Grand View Point. After that we went to Dead Horse Point a lot. Up the river and into the Arches. The old road into Arches. We spent a lot of time in Arches. Friends were coming down with us. After our first trip into Grand View Point, when we came into town and went to the motel and told the Robertson brothers in the service station there that we'd been out to Grand View, they wouldn't believe me. Curt said "You can't make it out there with a passenger car." I replied, "Well, in spite of that, I did and I have slides to prove it."

**Q: You're lucky you didn't high center it.**

JW: Well, I was worried. Actually the County grader had been out there not too many days ahead of us and had graded the road which helped, but in some places it just stirred up the sand. But that big old car and those big tires, we made it.

**Q: Made it alright? So you got ensconded in Moab. The land of milk and honey. Brought your brother, the dentist, down after awhile?**

JW: Yes. As soon as I got here in December of '55 and decided I was moving, then by the first of January I had picked out the house we now live in. They were just building this subdivision and all that was there at 353 Tusher Street was the footings.

**Q: The Walker Subdivision?**

JW: Yeah. It was ready by the first of March. So we moved in. That summer we visited my brother Ray in Bozeman, Montana, where he had set up as a dentist. He'd just finished school and set up there. Bought an old guy out. We talked, told him all about how nice it was in Moab. All about it. So the next year, early summer, Ray and his wife came down to visit us from Bozeman. He found out that there was an old dentist down here that was going to retire. By that fall he had made up his mind and he had moved to Moab.

**Q: Gosh. I don't know if it had anything to do with the old dentist or not, but I remember I was very happy to see Ray. That was one of the worst things you'd have to do when you moved around like we did was to break in a mechanic, a dentist, and a doctor.**

JW: I appreciate that. I guess it made a real good deal for him because he came down and he agreed to buy the old guy out but Ray, being left-handed, he had to buy all new stuff. So that made it pretty nice.

**Q: Well, the big incentive to Moab was booming at that time because of the uranium boom. It had nothing really to do with tourism.**

JW: No, it was the uranium boom. That's true. But they were as impressed with the scenery as we were. It was so gorgeous that we couldn't resist.

**Q: Crazy place to live.**

JW: Yeah. It was really fun. We came and within months we were involved in the community. The Standard Oil Bulk Plant gave me a lot of connections and socially we started to have a ball. We blended right into this wild time.

**Q: Do you remember the Elks? Were you a member of the Elks?**

JW: No, not at that time. I got real active in the Chamber of Commerce work and then myself and two or three other guys really pushed for a tourism committee which was a branch of the Chamber of Commerce at that time. Ed Claus, Ralph Miler and some others. We figured this country was so beautiful everybody should see it.

**Q: They hadn't done much before then.**

JW: No. As you said it was all tied around uranium and the boom. People weren't thinking about the scenery.

**Q: What did your committee do? What did you do to promote?**

JW: Well, we got in touch with the other Chambers of Commerce up mainly up in northern Utah, around Provo and that area where we knew people. Got talkin' it up. Actually, I think the main thing was getting just the local people interested in all this. What tourism could do. That was what it boiled down to, more than anything from outside.

**Q: I remember you had, one time in the period I was here, when you kept pushing for the people who contacted visitors to town to try to train them so that they knew where the hell stuff was.**

JW: Yeah. That was one of the big programs to get the local waitresses and service station operators and people who had contacts to, as you say, teach them where to send people.

**Q: Because they wouldn't get lost.**

JW: A lot of people were coming as a result of the uranium boom just to see what was going on and, as I stated earlier, Arches was open and there was quite a bit of publicity out on that. But it was a matter of, as you say, to get people to serve them and send them out and get them back into town.

**Q: I remember it was sort of a nascent tourist business, mostly revolved around Jeeps and people who were brave enough like you to drive their sedans out across the desert.**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: The BLM and the Park Service weren't too involved but the BLM didn't really give a damn whether people went out there and died or not.**

JW: No. No, there was no real concern as far as I know.

**Q: What about old Fox, the sheriff? What did he have going for him, do you remember?**

JW: Nothing in as far as search and rescue. But he was a good old timer and he didn't resist us by any means. As far as I know he didn't do much because he handled the crime end of it. There wasn't much of it going on here.

**Q: I remember how once in awhile, we'd go out and do some search and rescue, Bates and I. The only one who worried much about her tourists was Mrs. Redding who had an inn. She used to call us up and tell us when people were late coming back.**

JW: Yeah and that was it actually. You and Bates, you guys did most of it in those days, I remember.

**Q: How about the Rotary Sign Program?**

JW: Well, the first thing, go back just a speck because it was '56, and '57, the Rotary Club in Price got a hold of three or four of us down here. Myself and Les Erbes had been in Rotary in other towns. That was the first thing we did was set up a Rotary Club with about probably fifteen local people. That got off the ground and it was real active. Some really good people in Rotary. Then the Sign Program was more a brainchild of myself and Ray Anderson than it was just the plain Rotary Club because we, and especially me, were aware that there were no signs to go anywhere. So I talked to you (Lloyd) about what we could do about signing and, being out at the Arches and knowing the road some, you volunteered to make some signs if we would take them out and place them. That's where it ended up. You made a bunch of signs for Dead Horse Point, Grand View Point, and up the river and the valleys up there. You even made a sign for Looking Glass Rock. Ray Anderson and I would take them out and put them down. It really worked out well.

**Q: Yeah, Uncle Sam, I think he bought the lumber and the paint and I used the Park Service router mostly on my own time, but sometimes on Park Service time. It was enjoyable work.**

JW: Well it was neat for us. Yeah, we did, we furnished part of the stuff but you did all our sign cutting, routing, and painting. They were really neat. In fact, the signs we put on the highway were the only signs on the highway for a year or two. Then the Highway Department finally wised up and put in some of those little green and white signs. You could go to Dead Horse Point in the meantime, of course, the new road to Dead Horse Point had been put in.

**Q: That's the one up Sevenmile?**

JW: Yeah, up Sevenmile.

**Q: That they enlarged here a couple years ago.**

JW: They gave us one sign there.

**Q: Who pushed for that road?**

JW: The miners. So they could haul their ore up Shafer Trail. Yeah, that was actually who pushed that road. They were really doing a lot of exploring down below Shafer Trail on the White Rim area, up those canyons, Shafer Canyon, and all.

**Q: Way out to the end.**

JW: All the way around the White Rim and up the Green River.

**Q: When did you get your Jeep? When did you finally get a four wheel drive?**

JW: Oh, let's see, '65.

**Q: What did you use on the roads?**

JW: Well, in the meantime, for these outside trips the guys from Provo were coming down. Six of them had Jeeps, 1956 to 1962 models.

**Q: Your rich friends.**

JW: Yeah and my brother, Ray, had one. He bought a Jeep when he first got here. The way we would work that, I had a flat bed, a three-quarter ton truck for bulk plant use, and I would load all the supplies on that because the Jeeps were small. Right to begin with it was all just little CJ5s and utility wagons.

**Q: Those Army style Jeeps.**

JW: Yeah, the Army style. I would haul the stuff to the base point on the flat bed and those guys would come and, as a result of me doing that, I had rides. They were glad to have me available.

**Q: That was the standard. You had to bring enough stuff because anything you wanted to see was a helluva long way off the hard road.**

JW: Yeah, you had to plan on camping out.

**Q: I remember you guys thought I was the expert because I'd been down in the Needles once.**

JW: That's all right. You were, boy, you.....

**Q: I'd been there once and knew where the road was.**

JW: You knew how and where to find Elephant Hill and various ruins. We were camped this side of Elephant Hill and then would come in and out each day, which was a good deal.

**Q: You always had somebody from Provo or Salt Lake, usually Provo.**

JW: Yeah, Provo was the main place. I had a lot of real good friends there and the guy that bought

my station in Prove, Frank Schooler. He and my brother, Ray, both worked for me at the same time before I moved down here and they were bosom buddies.

**Q: Well, Frank still comes down doesn't he?**

JW: Oh yeah. Two or three times a year. He comes in spring and fall.

**Q: The big attraction, I guess, was the fact that the weather was warm down here when it was still.....**

JW: Yeah. That was so that they could come earlier in the season and later in the season. It was the ideal times for here. Well, eventually we just covered all the country. We went into the Needles area, of course, Lloyd, you took us in there the first trip. You showed us how to get over Elephant Hill and that's when Elephant hill was rough. We didn't know how horses got over it, let alone how we made it in the Jeeps.

**Q: Well, everybody was out chunking rocks and we made it.**

JW: Yeah, that's true.

**Q: I remember a trip down to Natural Bridges too, just barely. All I can remember is Cap Blohm taking pictures of Mexican Hat.**

JW: Yeah. That was a super trip and you spearheaded that.

**Q: You camped down there.**

JW: Yes. There was some old trailers there that some government group had used. And we

stayed in those. I don't know if it was the geological survey or....

**Q: Probably the Park Service had one trailer down there, I think, out on Bridges itself. We were on another trip that we went up to see Alice Springs and stayed in some trailers up there belonging to the BLM.**

JW: Well, that was into Beef Basin country, and out on Dark Canyon Plateau. But, the first trip was down to the Bridges and there were a couple trailer houses just below Owachomo. Because from there we could see it.

**Q: Those were Park Service.**

JW: Most of you guys stayed in those, but some of us camped out on the slickrock so we could sleep and not listen to you guys argue all night.

**Q: We never argue.**

JW: You should have heard yourselves.

**Q: I've heard myself. There were some secretaries that were really upset with me when I first went to work for the BLM.**

JW: You guys were arguing and hollering at each other, "Who's snoring?" And I was out on the slickrock sleeping. Far enough away that we could sleep. That's when we took the first trip down there.

You took us down into White Canyon and we went under and beyond the three bridges. There were still some wooden ladders to get up out of White Canyon. We went up those and then you hiked back up and drove the truck down. The rest of us were tired and were sure glad

for the ride back to camp.

**Q: I can't remember much about it.**

JW: Yeah, you did and you saved us all hiking back.

**Q: You were involved as a city councilman at one time. Maybe more than one time.**

JW: Well, I had two terms, eight years, two terms, one right after the other.

**Q: When was that?**

JW: '64 to '72.

**Q: That's about when they were talking about the park.**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: What involvement did the city have in that? Were you upset or not upset?**

JW: No. We didn't give it much thought one way or the other. That was the time when the infrastructure in Moab had to be updated. Water, sewer, oh boy. We were so concerned with that. Well, I personally, of course, was in favor of the new road into the Arches.

**Q: Yeah, I know you were. I just wondered.**

JW: No. No resistance in my remembrance of that.

**Q: I wasn't here at that time.**

JW: Yeah. Nearly everybody was in favor of it.

**Q: My conception was that there was no real opposition to it.**

JW: No there wasn't. The groups by then, I'm sure the Lions were organized, and everyone was in favor of the situation.

**Q: We took that trip, the Rotary Club took that trip in '61 down to the Needles area. Remember that one?**

JW: Yeah. We camped at Peek-A-Boo Arch.

**Q: I don't remember any static on that trip. They were all interested in what Bates had to say and what he was figuring on doing. I remember Les Erbes come sidling up to me saying "How come you're not", what he was really trying to ask me was "How come you're going right along with Bates, with what Bates is saying?" I said "Bates and I have already hashed these things out in private."**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: I think he expected me to give him a hard time.**

JW: No. There was no resistance in the community that I was ever aware of. People were really in favor of it. Well, they felt like I did, that it's just such a beautiful area that people should come and see it.

**Q: Should share it.**

JW: Yeah. Then, as you mentioned, they were building a new road in the early '60s into the Arches from this end. That, of course, got finished and everything was really neat there.

**Q: The city council was more worried about getting water and sewer.**

JW: Yeah, we had schools pretty well under control by then but they had to have a new sewer plan to moderate. That was the big worry. Wells, more wells.

**Q: Did the Chamber of Commerce still have their travel organization at that time?**

JW: Yeah. During those days the Chamber, in fact, by then the, let's see, the early 60s, yeah, it'd be, the Travel Council had spun off as a totally separate organization. It just got so big that it had to be handled separately. There was a big group so they grouped probably a dozen, ten or twelve, who were involved in that, and directors were elected. They had a new building north of town that was just devoted to Travel Council alone. But the Chamber stayed real active.

**Q: Wasn't there some resentment because things didn't happen fast enough at Canyonlands?**

JW: Oh yeah. There's still some resentment. They should of stopped that one road out there.

**Q: Where was that, Spring Canyon?**

JW: Spring Canyon. Yeah, but not particularly by me. That was kind of a wishy-washy thing that some of the powers-to-be figured, particularly the people from San Juan County, that should be done. That road should have been done all the way in. When it was taken as far as it was and

wasn't stopped, there was discussion. Yeah, there was a lot of people wanting it to go faster than it did.

**Q: Well, I admit it kind of went slow.**

JW: I don't think that the community as a whole really minded it.

**Q: They didn't get too upset. Too mad to get upset about things. I remember when I came back, I think it was the spring of '76, they held a meeting and they had Wayland(?) the Park Director and they were talking about that road, whether to build a bridge and how much the bridge was going to cost. It was a fantastic amount of money. By then we were starting to get the hikers. We didn't have any bikers yet, but we had hikers.**

JW: Hikers, yeah. No, it was a kind of bad situation in the way it divided people but in the long run there was so much to see around here that I don't think that, well I know it wasn't a major issue.

**Q: Tell me a little how you got involved with that Natural History Association.**

JW: Well, let's see. Dates I don't remember exactly on that, but that was organized about twenty years before I got involved with it. I guess about thirty years now.

**Q: When Arches, in '61 when I left, the visitor center had material that was being sold for the Southwestern Monuments Association. I don't know what happened after that.**

JW: Well, I wasn't in on the organization of it by any means but it came as a spinoff from that. In fact, the instructions found through the Park Service did a lot of this. It instructed each area like Zions and Bryce and that, to develop their own resale organization to handle the brochures. The Park Service didn't want to get into this money angle and the sales angle and that's how the

Natural History Associations, to my knowledge, were organized, with the blessings of the Park Service. That's what happened here. Let's see, Ed Claus, there were two or three old timers that were in there for about twenty years before I got involved. The directors of the Natural History Association would choose successors if somebody quit or died or something. That's how Russ Donoghue was on the board. He moved away, sold out, sold his trailer court and moved. I guess Don Knowles recommended me to replace him. So that's how I got appointed.

**Q: Are you still on?**

JW: No. No, I had to, let's see, when did I resign? About '86 I quit. I had too many personal problems. Yeah, I got involved in that and it was really interesting. It still is interesting. This past year the Natural History Association sold, at retail, information booklets and film was one thing that they competed with the downtown merchants and water, jugs of water.

**Q: That was something.**

JW: Yeah. Particularly at all outlying places there was no water. It had to be hauled in especially, I remember, Island in the Sky.

**Q: There were people who would show up and not realize the heat wave.**

JW: Yeah. So we used to haul that in gallons and fire pans. That was about it. But they pushed nearly a million dollars in retail sales last year. So it was a very much needed. That included all this area from Price and the Bridges, Needles, the whole works, that total million dollar figure.

**Q: Were you there when they got involved with the BLM and the Forest Service?**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: How did that come about?**

JW: Well, they requested. They came to the Natural History Association (the Forest Service and the BLM) and they were in need of someone to resale their pamphlets and help them. Of course, the profit on this Natural History's material went to the agencies. It was split percentage-wise to the agencies. (END OF SIDE A)

JW: In fact, part of this money was the new money came back to the organizations, the Park Service, BLM and Forest Service in proportion to their volume of resales. They all needed an outlet where they could have this material available. Just like the Park Service did. That's how they probably got in on it. I had mentioned that you could use it for actually building, they built an addition on to the Information Center at the Arches. Just to expand, to have more room.

**Q: Oh, that's where that money came from.**

JW: And, you see, there was so much space going for the Natural History Association material that it didn't leave room for the Park rangers to interview their visitors. It just got out of control. But they have done that and in some places they built whole information centers. So that's how it came about. There's still some squabble with the Eastern Parks. They're still against having other agencies like the BLM and Forest Service in on that. Here it's a logical thing.

**Q: Out here, yeah, out here.**

JW: Where they all border each other, it'd be stupid not to share all this.

**Q: Yeah, I'll clue you in. One time I was back in the Washington office and they were, I don't remember whether, anyway I was telling some Washington office people and they**

**were cussing the Forest Service out. I guess I looked puzzled and they looked kind of funny and they said “Oh, that’s right, you field people don’t have any problems with each other.” “Hell, no! We help each other out. We’re out there by ourselves.” I said “I’ve been up on the forest looking for fires that my boss saw up there while he knew the forest ranger was on the other side of the mountain and couldn’t see it.” But they were really upset about it. What about the local merchants? Did you get any static out of them?**

JW: Oh, a little bit. On the resale of the books and stuff, yeah. Yeah, as each merchant established himself new in town he would immediately start squawking about the competition that he was getting from the Natural History Association. But by the time he talked to two or three of the other people in the same business and was in for a few months, he realized that there’s a lot of interest created by the Natural History Association just from pamphlets which steered these people over to his bookstore to buy more elaborate stories and equipment. So, in the long run, they’ve all decided that it hasn’t hurt them. The ones that are here now.

**Q: I don’t know what the policy was then, I guess, getting stuff to sell at the Parks. You had some parameters, didn’t you?**

JW: Oh, yeah. For the materials?

**Q: Yeah.**

JW: Oh, yes. Every book that came through or booklet or printed material that we even financed ourselves had to be reviewed by the Natural History Board and passed on by them. It was amazing how many good books were turned down because we didn’t think it was too good a job or they had some little errors or there was something wrong.

**Q: They didn’t fit to the area, huh?**

JW: That's right. They didn't contain ...or we found some with actual errors in them.

**Q: I knew John Hoffman.**

JW: Oh, dear, isn't that sad.

**Q: I heard that John's about to get that thing published. I don't know if that's a rumor or not.**

JW: Well, I haven't heard anything for about a year and that was the idea that by now the book would be finished.

**Q: Maybe most of that stuff's at Milt's.**

JW: Well, Milt's still got some money in the deal, you know.

**Q: Well, you know, I'm the only one that got paid, I think, on that whole deal. I got \$1500. for a chapter on archeology which is now totally out of date.**

JW: Yeah, yeah, but even so that was great.

**Q: That was crazy. Too bad, because John had a lot of good information. He did all the research. His Arches book was great. I guess his Grand Canyon one was, too, but Canyonlands could use one. There seemed to be some of the people working on stuff for Canyonlands who were knowledgeable.**

JW: You mentioned about the squawking in town. Well, when we decided to build that

Information Center in the middle of town that brought a lot of resistance. But, the Natural History Association collects all the tax of the city and county so with that didn't hurt that part. That kind of mollified them.

**Q: Mollified them. There are good parking places downtown, too.**

JW: Oh yeah.

**Q: And old Miller, old Ralph Jr., he kind of hung in there with it and didn't get too excited about the whole thing did he?**

JW: This is a little bit of bragging but I was made the first contact on that. We discussed it in the Natural History Association Board and I went up and met him in his office in Miller's Store. Told him what we had in mind and told him it would take some time. He said "Well, I've got a couple of prospects." That's before anything had been done. He said "I'm not in any hurry." As you say, he hung in and ....

**Q: And you won.**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: There were a lot of people like that in life who have been hidden under a bushel who have done some good. I think Mitch Williams is another one, he and Mary were promoting the park and the area. Maybe we've overdone it What do you think?**

JW: Well, there's a point when I go downtown I think we have, but the development in the area is keeping up with it at this point. I think eventually we'll be in trouble to some extent but at this point now I don't think so.

**Q: What do you think is going to be a problem?**

JW: Oh, just the shortage of facilities and water and infrastructure. But there, five minutes from town, they got this big water project going right now. I know they have a proposal in to expand the sewer plant and that was designed to do that specifically. It's engineered, that's all set. All they've got to do is give it the okay and call for bids.

**Q: That was part of your thoughts back in the sixties.**

JW: Yeah. We planned it ahead.

**Q: Amazing amount of far-seeing people.**

JW: Well, as far as names are concerned, one of the main reasons we always plan was Winford Bunce, the mayor.

**Q: Oh, when old Bunce was in the hospital the same time I was over in Grand Junction, a year, a little over a year ago. Well, I didn't know it. I would have crawled down the hall to see that man.**

JW: He's sure been in there a lot. Bunce was a really dressy guy.

**Q: He was from out of town, wasn't he?**

JW: He came here from Vernal.

**Q: Vernal, Utah.**

JW: Yeah. When he saw that little city market in the center of Moab, he just got involved in county politics and then eventually County Commissioner and then Mayor.

**Q: It was an odd mixture, the old timers and you people. Not necessarily all LDS or any particular religion.**

JW: In fact, the minority was LDS. Actually of the town leaders. But we sure got along with everybody.

**Q: It would be a textbook on how to keep a small community from submerging.**

JW: Well, that's true. You look around the various areas, and I look at the Irish and the way they fight themselves. We got a lot more reason from the standpoint of diverse people to have people in Moab fight.

**Q: Yeah, we got a few hard nosed characters but nobody's burned anybody's barn down lately.**

JW: Right from the beginning, these people have all got along real well.

**Q: Well, I think a lot of it is the feeling of we're so far out in the woods and away from Salt Lake and Denver and Albuquerque, we've got to stick together to survive. It was that at the very beginning and it carried on through.**

JW: That's what I think too.

**Q: The church wasn't particularly helping at all.**

JW: Nope.

**Q: They didn't send anybody here.**

JW: No, that's what happened. And it's still the same feelings for religions in town. WE a;ll get along really good.

**Q: I agree. Maybe that's why we came back. That's why my mother and father-in-law came here. They saw how quick people were just, like you and others, within a short period of time were involved. The old timers were always willing to get the new people involved and put you to work.**

JW: That was it. We didn't get any hassle from the ...well, the word progressive is the word to use.... but you take old timers like Cece Thomson and Butch Christensen and the Millers. They were all glad to see new people come in with new ideas. Of course, you got a few of the old dyed-in-the-wool Mormons that are still here that are still resentful. I could name some of those but I won't.

**Q: There's always got to be a few old... what does that sign read on the one town, 2000 happy people and 1 old grump? You've gotta have a few old grumps.**

JW: Yeah. It was so easy to get along when we first moved here that I can't believe it. Everybody you met was friendly, including yourselves, you remember when we met you.

**Q: Yeah, I remember when we came into the community it was that way. We felt basically we were even considered old timers because new people came in and pretty soon we were an old part of the community. Not the oldest, but....**

JW: And we were having coffee together and every time anybody showed up, that was just part of the system.

**Q: If it hadn't been for coffee I don't know what we'd of done. Well, you think the Park Service is kicking along all right these days or being kicked around?**

JW: Yeah, well, I really do. I think for the bureaucracy that they have to go through to get something done that's above the local level, I think they're doing really good. I really do. I think with what they've got available and I think the BLM is, too. You see a lot of things that we know and the local people know could be done easier and better but that isn't the way it goes.

**Q: At least we've got a lot of Park Service people who've retired in town and nobody's run them off!**

JW: Oh, no, there's a helluva lot of old friends and you bet. No, everybody's... well I wouldn't say everybody but nearly everybody's in favor. But it's a slow moving process as you know. We tell them just get the development done at the Needles and that's what upset people but that's the system.

**Q: Look how long it took for Arches.**

JW: That's the system, you bet.

**Q: It was made a national monument in '29 and it was '56-'57, about '58 before anything really happened.**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: Then it happened all of a sudden.**

JW: Yeah. Then before it was converted from a monument over to a park ...

**Q: When I was working for the BLM a couple times I made trips to Washington and met Bates there. Just accidently. I knew what he was up to. He was stealing the land from the BLM, expanding Canyonlands and expanding Arches. My heart really wasn't in the BLM yet. I'll tell you. I had to keep my mouth shut.**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: Well, they didn't care. That was the thing that got me. The BLM was perfectly happy, most of the time I worked for them, to have somebody else take care of the problems and there's still a lot of that in the BLM. They'd rather have placed it off onto somebody else than to do it themselves. It makes for an easy job.**

JW: Yeah.

**Q: Then all you've got to do is go out and ride your horse once and awhile.**

JW: Yeah. Well I think it's worked out real good.

**Q: Is there anything about the good old days you want to say?**

JW: Oh, I, gosh. Just the fact that I've had a while to say it right now. The fact that I got acquainted with you right early and you and Bates were doing the exploration work on the national park.

**Q: Good thing I got acquainted with you because I didn't have a Jeep or a four wheel drive vehicle.**

JW: Yeah. As a result of that we got into a lot of places that we never would have. You took us over the Maze the first time we were there.

**Q: You took me over the Maze into the canyon there where the petroglyphs were.**

JW: Oh, down.

**Q: Yeah. We'd never gotten into there if it hadn't been for old Kent Frost down there. We didn't know too much about that country. The old cowboy, Ekker?**

JW: Ekker. Yeah.

**Q: Art Ekker. He was the guy to talk to. I've got to talk to Kent Frost one of these days, too. Yeah, it kinda of just by word of mouth is how the word spread in the early days. They didn't get much advertising, I know that. We did get a lot of advertising but it was in places like National Geographic. I don't think Denver or Salt Lake read the National Geographic.**

JW: Well, I think that they thought it was so far away. We used to go back to Provo and people actually would say "When you come back to Utah, come and see us". That's a fact. Even after we'd been down here five or six years.

**Q: Well the isolation factor was pretty good because the roads weren't that great. That road, you remember the old one, coming down the hill in front of the Arches there?**

JW: Oh, the old road. You ain't a-kidding!

**Q: You hauled some stuff around this part of the road.**

JW: Yeah. The old road before it came down through the middle of the canyon. Around those curves near the top and those big transports, trucks, and trailers that used to bring my stuff in. I don't know how they made it, let alone pass somebody up there. Yeah, the road situation was really desperate. And particularly, as you mentioned earlier, the road up the river. Boy, that....

**Q: Where all did you haul? I know you hauled up into Polar Mesa country? Did you haul down into San Juan County, too?**

JW: Just to San Juan County, well, a little bit over. I could get into some of these, some parts of the LaSals that were in San Juan County, but the other area out in the Needles all came from out of Monticello. But west, I drove as far west as I was on the Hanksville road a number of times, back in to drill rigs in that country.

**Q: Oh yeah. Did you ever go down that old road from Green River south.**

JW: Oh yeah. Before they put that new one in down, that went down by the mailbox.

**Q: I remember your truck sitting up there on the highway burning. I gave you a picture of that.**

JW: Oh yeah. That was the one that I first had when I came down here. That lasted, what, '61, I was '56 to '61 before it burned up. But hell, that was just off the Dead Horse Point road.

**Q: What happened to that thing?**

JW: Actually where they disposed of it?

**Q: No, what happened to it, that caught it on fire?**

JW: Oh, when they built the darned thing they put, between the frame, a big welded tank. It fit just in between. I guess it held 30 gallons of gas but it had a seat tank on it and behind the seat that was the factory equipment was there. That was the main tank. So to increase the capacity they run a pipe from a connector below the seat tank down to the top of this other tank outside. It had a three-way valve there so you could either pull out of the top tank or the bottom tank. But in the process of installing it, they put on copper tubing and didn't even put a loop in it. I never thought of it but, eventually, the day when it got on fire going up the canyon, vibration broke this tubing off. Just down below the connection as it came out of the cab. That was right over the exhaust pipe. This was on an August day and that exhaust, by the time you hit Moab Canyon, was just so hot the gasoline immediately ignited as soon as it hit that exhaust pipe. He made it up to the top and over there where it burned before he found a place to pull off. There just wasn't any place without maybe tipping it over and it was on fire, right by him.

**Q: Who was driving it?**

JW: Dale Swanson.

**Q: Oh yeah. I remember that.**

JW: He got stopped and by then it was that whole side and corner on fire and the gasoline in the other tank there was no way to cut it off. We couldn't. It just was an endless supply dripping down there.

**Q: You had to have that extra tank because you were hauling out to areas beyond the capacity of the standard tank.**

JW: Yeah. That was the reason it was full.

**Q: There was a lot of that. That Jeep I bought off of old Dan O'Laurie had an extra tank in it and a lot of people did that.**

JW: I had two tanks in both the black and white Jeep and the gray Jeep, underneath. In fact, if they'd used a flexible line instead of the rigid copper there, it wouldn't have been broken.

**Q: I remember seeing that thing and I knew your truck. I'm sure I gave you a picture of it.**

JW: Yeah, you did. I've got it. Because I never thought and I was too upset to even take a picture.

**Q: Well, the logistics of getting around this country was something else.**

JW: Oh yeah. Any place you went when we first came was, other than the main road, was just gravel. Up the river, up to Polar and down towards Hanksville. It was just gravel road.

**Q: Those were the so called good old days. We ate a lot of damn dust. And I'm going to chop this off.**

JW: Yeah, that's good enough.

END OF SIDE B AND TAPE.

