

ROBERTA CHILDERS.

Summary of OH0689. Recorded on November 2, 1994. The interviewer is Marilyn Mull Fead.

[A].

012 Birthplace: Denver, 1939. Mother born in Denver. Father born in Boulder. One female sibling. Died in 1986.

028 Moved Nederland 2 yrs. Grew up there. Initially lived in rental log cabin (Landon's). Later family moved to another log cabin west of town (?1941) - 2 bedroom, no running water. Coal. Furnace.

057 Preschool. Sister's birthday party.

066 Family moved to Nederland because father purchased grocery store from Ira Tanner. Father owned grocery store 9 yrs. Father also owned or leased drugstore across street from grocery store. R.C. recalls reading all the newly arrived comic books on the shelf before they were sold - benefit of family ownership of drugstore.

081 Family tried running restaurant in Eldora - unsuccessful. Not enough business.

091 Severe poverty among inhabitants of Nederland (customers mostly former tungsten miners) made running grocery store there difficult. Most bought on credit. Local economy improved with onset of WWII - tungsten again purchased by govt. R.C. remembers army soldiers coming to Nederland during the war to collect used newspapers and tinfoil for the war effort.

119 Soldiers also came up from Lowry in a jeep and gave the town kids a "wild" jeep ride.

122 Began school (1st grade) in Nederland. Recalls first teacher - Mrs. Mary Holder. She was a very strict disciplinarian. R.C. details experiences she and other students had with teacher.

163 Close friend, neighbor, and early playmate - Carol Ebersol. Ebersol family quite large - 8 children. Always something going on at their house. Old chicken coop converted to playhouse.

171 Later playmate - Annie? - when R.C.'s family moved to a different log cabin in front of the lake. Now at junction of 1st and 3rd. Father converted attic into two bedrooms for his daughters because house had only 2 small bedrooms. R.C. could hear the sound of running water in nearby creek while in her bed - very peaceful.

193 Nederland School: Grades 1-12. Principal Warren Smith. R.C.'s uncle (O.L. Dever) county superintendent schools. Called to the principal's office to see her uncle when he visited school. Many school activities - students had lots of fun. R.C. completed 7th grade there then family moved to California.

225 Irene Smith (5th grade teacher - still lives in Nederland) married to Joe Smith who was county commissioner. Their son got polio - only child in Nederland to do so. Survived but has paralyzed limb.

251 Nederland population only 500 when R.C. lived there. School quite large. Students brought in from Sugarloaf, Rollinsville, Magnolia, and Pinecliff. Bus trips to out-of-town basketball games - supporters allowed to ride buses to games - potluck on bus. Recalls they had a square dance after Evergreen game.

268 Dances - well attended by folks from all over. Gym (? Evergreen), Fireman's Ball, Christmas Ball, etc. Drinking and fighting outside. Bingo game in separate room while dance was going on in gym.

290 School picnics held in meadow near Nederland (Caribou Ranch?). "Greased pig" contests.

325 Town celebration when Germany surrendered during WWII. War hardships recalled. Afterwards 12 "displaced persons" (POWs) brought to Nederland - German, Polish, Czech, and Russian. The Russian's name was Muspan. R.C.'s father was good at languages (spoke German). They all seemed to trust him. He helped "smooth the way" for them to be accepted by the community. R.C. didn't know why they were relocated there. They eventually married girls from the town and were accepted by the residents. Victor Lecinschinski was among the 12 - very intelligent.

356 Eldora: As children hiked up to Eldora Lake. Parents of all the kids worked during the day so the children frequently went on hikes by themselves. Eldora Lake formerly a resort area with abandoned lodge and cabins. Lodge had large fireplace. Scouts. Fire in fireplace out of control - lodge burned down. Swimming nude - rafts - island. Fun exploring.

387 Nederland: (growing up in) 1940-1947 - roads all dirt. Strong winds. Main Street Buildings: Hodgson's grocery store, pool hall, Harry's place - fast food, snacks and shuffle board, Goldie's restaurant. Goldie Cameron - quite a character. Was a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show for the last year it existed. She was a lady wrestler and fairly large physically as well as quite strong. Was her own bouncer. Great talker. Mrs. Stuber - another character. Walked around town everyday (all day) always dressed in black. Not sure why she did this.

452 Weekly trip to Denver for grocery store supplies. Auto accident - 1944 (?). Flares - Univ. Students - father's leg caught between auto bumpers. Ankle crushed - eventually recovered but was on crutches for several months. Father only had one kidney - other kidney destroyed by sulfa drugs used to treat infection. Physically a very strong man. Cold meat locker incident.

510 Goldie Cameron - Parents were in show business. Mother (Madame Russell) - dog trainer. Father sold patent medicine. Goldie, originally got into show business as wrestler. Later

performed in several Hollywood westerns. Was member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show for the last year it existed. Later joined another show. Married (Mr. Sterling) a member of the Wild West Show in Madison Square Garden. Marriage attended by Annie Oakley and Buffalo Bill. The day before she was to be married on horseback she was injured in a horseback riding incident. Went through with the ceremony as planned - very determined lady. 2nd marriage to Mr. Cameron. Moved to ranch near Caribou Ranch. Divorced. Worked at the Silver Dollar cafe then started own restaurant.

545 R.C.'s parents. Father, in addition to being butcher & grocer, taught ballroom dancing. Mother formerly in vaudeville - Mary Mann of the Mann Sisters. Mother and Aunt got scholarships to go to New York for dance training and then were expected to go into vaudeville. In her late teen yrs. and early twenties Mother was on vaudeville circuit. Taught by Will Rogers to do rope twirling. Incorporated into sister's dance act. Later Mann Sisters had dance studio above Hurdle's Jewelry store. Mother met R.C.'s father on blind date. Married in "gingerbread house" in Boulder - belonged to R.C.'s aunt. Couple borrowed \$1000.00 and moved to Nederland where father bought grocery store. Sister was 4, R.C. was 2 yrs. Mother gave dance lessons & rope twirling lessons.

588 Childhood in Nederland - R.C.'s father had old Desoto, model T Ford with clutch & gears (R.C. learned to drive in this). Drag racing with model T Ford. Nederland great place to grow up. Beer busts. Hiking incident (finding way home), old scout trail across cliff edge of lake, swimming nude in 2nd gulch. Few wild animals seen by kids on hiking trips.

636 Nederland winters: deep snow, shoveling, chapped legs. Choir practice at Presbyterian church. Ski equip - clamp on skis. Sledding on school hill - sheet tin.

671 Mining at Caribou - started mining uranium. Ore brought to mill in Nederland. Ground still radioactive around Caribou.

682 Pinecliff - ice skating near railroad tracks. R.C.'s father great with children. He was always taking kids places. Father responsible for organizing Kite Flying Day, Nederland Lions Fireworks display on July 4th, Miner's Day (rock drilling contest with barbeque).

737 Old Timer's day: organized in 1983 or 1984 by R.C. and Pearl Tregay (grew up in Sugarloaf).

[B].

017 Old Timer's day continued: First reunion of various classes of graduates of Nederland High held in Boulder now yearly reunions held in Chipeta park in Nederland (last weekend in July). Well attended - now have 500 names on mailing list.

102 Families in Nederland (1940-1947): all quite large. Ebersols (8 members), McMillens - meadow where shopping center now located, Rileys (4-5 children) owned much property in Nederland which has now gone into housing develop. Lawrences, Hodgsons. Got to know whole

town - like family. Did things together. Ownership of pets known. Cranky man in town had garden. On Halloween the kids took all the vegetables and made Mulligan stew. Terrible tasting. County garage bldg. - outside light - on at night - town kids would play there until 10:00 or 11:00 in the evenings. Crime was minimal. Fire Nederland - accidental death.

207 Town's water source. Sewage - individual septic tanks. Running water after mid-40's.

241 R.C.'s family financially comfortable compared to other town members. Probably related to business: Sold what others in town had to have. Had minimal outside expenses - family members worked in store while mother ran drugstore across the street.

282 Outhouse initially when family lived by lake then had bathroom with tub. Treat to take bath in bath tub - formerly used metal tub. Bubble Bath - friends came over to use bath tub.

291 No public transportation in Nederland. Most people walked. Were old cars in town. When needed town's people helped each other out with rides.

317 Two lane dirt roads in canyon - very bad. Father took family down to movies in Boulder almost every Saturday night in winter. Treat after movie was to go to Bush's Drive-In (where Mustard's Last Stand is). "I had chocolate milk shakes made from chocolate ice cream and chocolate milk - huge." One snowy night after movie father took wrong turn (road to Sugarloaf) and had to back down to get to main road up canyon.

344 Family cars - Desoto, Hudson. Most family had at one time was 2 trucks & car. Texaco Gasoline station across from grocery store.

360 Local fight - two town boys - evenly matched. Fought all day - whole town came out to watch. No clear winner. Bloody.

368 Disputes settled among schoolchildren - "meet you at bottom of the hill"

End of interview.