

Interview with
RUBY WILLIAMS and DAISY HAMMON

December 28, 2019

**FUNDAMENTALIST MORMON
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**
**UTAH TECH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
ST. GEORGE, UTAH**

#2019-019

Utah Tech University provides access to its collections as an unaltered, authentic historical record to aid in the research and understanding of history, while acknowledging their impact on various peoples and groups. Some collection materials are reflective of past cultures and prejudices, including images or words that are inherently offensive, insensitive and harmful. The University does not support, condone or endorse these harmful ideas, behaviors or attitudes, and they do not reflect the official opinion of the University. Rather, the University embraces a culture that prioritizes diversity and inclusion, as demonstrated in the University's Mission, Core Themes and Values.

Final editing was completed in 2021.
For permission to use any part of this transcript contact:

Special Collections and Archives
Utah Tech University Library
Holland Centennial Commons 330
Utah Tech University
St. George, UT 84770
(435) 634-2087
specialcollections@utahtech.edu

This is a joint project with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Dixie State University.

INDEX

Barlow, John Y.	6, 7
cell phones	45
Centennial Park [fundamentalist Mormon community]	23, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51
clothing	16, 52, 53
Colorado City, Arizona	6, 17, 31, 37, 40, 45, 47, 51
development [of Centennial Park]	48
entertainment	10, 13
Fleck, Fred [welfare worker]	16
Fredonia, Arizona	27
funerals	36, 37, 38, 43
hair [practices]	29, 52
Hildale, Utah	5, 10, 41
Hurricane, Utah	17, 19, 28
Jeffs, Warren	44
Jessop, Uncle Fred	13, 17, 18, 20, 30, 41, 42
Jessop, Joseph Smith [grandfather]	7
Jessop, Lola (Johnson) [mother]	5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 24, 27, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 52
Jessop, Aunt Lydia (Johnson) [midwife]	18, 41, 42, 43
Jessop, Richard Seth [father]	5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 35, 37, 38, 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, 53
Johnson, Uncle Roy	16, 17, 32
Kingman, Arizona	27
LDS [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints]	5, 6, 11, 12, 30, 50, 52
Lee's Ferry, Arizona	5, 6, 7
marriage	5, 6, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 37, 38, 43, 44, 52, 53, 55
missionaries	19, 25, 26
music	13, 19, 33
Neilson Naylor split	47
nursing	27
Pearson family	14
Phoenix, Arizona	15, 16
plural marriage	7, 31, 50
prejudices	30
Priesthood council	10, 11, 17, 25, 26
principle	7, 46, 50, 52

racism	23
1953 raid	15, 16, 22, 31
Salt Lake City, Utah	6, 7, 21, 22, 23, 31
school	7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 26, 27, 45, 46
Short Creek, Arizona	5, 6, 7, 9, 17, 21, 30, 39, 44, 47
Smith, Joseph	7, 12, 50
Snowflake, Arizona	16
split [in FLDS groups]	32, 34, 35, 38, 39, 45, 46, 47
Steed family	14
Theology class	20
Vietnam War	39
work [employment]	6, 27, 28, 29, 49, 55
The Work [term they use for their belief system]	12, 22, 25, 39, 45, 46, 50

RUBY WILLIAMS AND DAISY HAMMON

Content Warning: Contains words that are inherently offensive, insensitive and harmful.

Ruby Williams and Daisy Hammon were interviewed by Stephanie Griswold on December 28, 2019 in St. George, Washington County, Utah. They discussed their childhood, marriages, and raising of children in Hildale, Utah as part of the Fundamental Latter-day Saints.

SG: Okay. Today is December 28, 2019. I'm Stephanie Griswold. I'm here with Daisy Hammon and Ruby Williams, and we are in St. George Utah. Daisy, could you please spell your name and tell us when and where you were born.

DH: My name is Daisy Hammon. It's spelled D-A-I-S-Y Hammon is H-A-M-M-O-N [Thora Daisy Jessop Hammon]. I was born in old Short Creek, Arizona on November the 9th, 1949.

SG: Thank You. Ruby, will you please spell your name and tell us when and where you were born.

RW: Okay. My name is Ruby Jessop Williams [Ruby Mae Jessop Williams]. I was born in Hildale, Utah in 1955.

SG: Thank you. Can you both share with us a little bit about your family; parents, grandparents, anything like that.

DH: Well, our grandfather was Warren Elmer Johnson, that's our mother's father. And he ran Lee's Ferry in Arizona, out on the Muddy. That's where our mother, Lola, grew up. His father, Warren Elmer's father, was Warren Marshall Johnson. In Warren Marshall's time, John Wesley Powell went down the river and the Johnson family took that group of people in. So we say we're part of the history of the Muddy. Go ahead, Ruby.

RW: I was born and raised in Short Creek. Lived there on the same street for my whole life [laughter].

SG: Anything you wanna say about parents?

RW: My parents helped to build Short Creek. They were some of the first pioneers there to build the town. Richard Seth Jessop and Lola Johnson. Both of them lived there until they passed away.

DH: We should tell our father met our mother down at Lee's Ferry. That's where they met, when she was just a young lady. And then they were married in 1935 and the result of that was him being cut off the church.

SG: And when you say the church, do you mean the LDS—

DH: The LDS church, because she was a plural wife. She was the second wife. So the result of him marrying her caused him to be cut off the LDS church. So that was in 1935. And about that time they moved to Short Creek. And lived there ever since. And that's where we were born and raised. We're still there. [Laughter] Colorado City, I should say.

SG: Is there anything that you'd like to share about your father's side, since you mentioned a little bit of your mother's lineage at Lee's Ferry. So, anything on your father's side?

DH: Our father came from Idaho. If we back up a little bit, our father was married as a young man. He was born in 1894. And at twenty-one years old, I believe, he married a young lady and they had six children and then she died as a result of the childbirth of her sixth child. And it left our father without a wife for several years. And then he married a person that happened to be a cousin to my mother and they had a few children. And then they moved to Salt Lake City and from there he went to Lee's Ferry and happened to meet Lola. And they all moved to Colorado City, or Short Creek in that day. And proceeded to build the community; there was very few people there at that time. There were the Johnsons and the Blacks and the Lauritzens and, who else, Ruby? Not very many families.

RW: Some of the same people that came from Idaho.

DH: Yeah.

RW: Carl Holm family and —

DH: A little later.

RW: Some of the Barlows and —

DH: Barlows, yeah. There were Johnsons, Jessops, Barlows, Blacks, Lauritzens.

RW: That was basically the beginning. Those names were some basic [interrupted]

DH: And so our father helped bring water from the canyon down into the community. And so his work basically created the water in the whole community. From the '30s till now. And his sons kinda took over that job and continued to work the water system, bring the water in pipes down outta the canyon, which us as girls helped do, and so we are genuinely a part of the growing of the community.

SG: How did your father end up going to Lee's Ferry? Was there a specific reason or was it because his wife's family was there?

DH: Yes. John Y. Barlow was the head of the Priesthood in that time. And he sent a group of men down there to meet the Johnson family. And my father was one of those men and a

couple of his brothers also went down and met the Blacks and the Johnsons and as a result of that he met our mother.

SG: Were you ever taught about how your father came to know John Y. Barlow and become involved in the Priesthood work?

DH: His father was Joseph Smith Jessop and he lived in Cache Valley, Utah, north of Salt Lake. And they were polygamists, they were Fundamentalists. And my father as a young man thought his dad was a little overly exuberant about the principle of plural marriage. But as he grew up, he studied the principles of the gospel and the life of John Y. Barlow and some of those other men, and Lorin Wooley. And he knew Lorin Wooley personally. And that's where he gained his testimony of the principles of – We call it the principles of the gospel.

SG: We'll start with Ruby. What are some of your earliest childhood memories?

RW: I remember my dad being very industrious. He was one person who knew how to improvise from anything. He moved from the place that he was born up in Millville, Utah, where they had all kinds of, had a lotta water, so they had green fields and y'know a lot of things that had to do with raising farms and stuff with water. And when he moved down to Lee's Ferry and out around Short Creek, it was so hot and dry and there was no water. And he had to be real, he had to improvise and they dug their own wells and he ended up making a very beautiful place out of, y'know they put up windmills, and dug their own wells, and made orchards and gardens, and raised trees, and they built the old rock house. He built several rock structures around the community. He was just very instrumental in building the whole place.

SG: How early do you remember, since Daisy said that you guys helped with a lot of the water things, after your dad had established those wells and things. How early was it in your life that you remember participating in those kinds of projects?

RW: I remember when I was about, I don't know, eight, between eight and y'know when you're just big enough to be a helper. So we did all kinds of things to help everything we could. When we were little.

SG: What other responsibilities did you have as a child? Like, whether it be at home or in the community.

RW: We helped to raise animals and we went to school there and we did, y'know we just did all the things that we pretty much were self-sufficient. We raised everything we ate, almost. We grew up learning how to do everything you could do to be self-sufficient.

SG: How about you Daisy what are some of your earliest?

DH: She's really got my mind going. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

DH: I was born in the rock house that our father built. I was the only one with my mother when it happened. She'd sent for help, but before anybody came she gave birth. And so I really connect with the rock house because I was born in it. But when I was a child, my father had two windmills, two wells on the place. Orchards, grape arbors, animals, everything we did, everything we had we created ourselves, he created, pretty much.

RW: We had over an acre of land.

DH: Yeah. So we bottled fruit. We picked the fruit and bottled it. He grew, he had hotbeds where he grew tomato plants and then everybody in the community would come to our dad and get plants to put in their gardens. He had a little thing that he would do with us kids and that is every spring he would buy pansies and he would have all the children help him plant pansies by the front porch. Which is a very fond childhood memory of Daddy.

We used to play house up on top of the windmill.

RW: Forty feet in the air.

DH: [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

DH: This is a forty-foot precipice where four girls would go up there and play dolls and dishes and just a little tiny four by eight platform; four kids up there with dolls and blankets and we'd play up there all the time and our mothers would just about have a heart attack. I wrote a poem about it because it's so fun to think back on.

That was our life, y'know. We did the chores, we milked the cow, we fed the chickens, we cut the heads off the chickens and cooked 'em.

RW: Yes, we did.

DH: One day I was left home to make Sunday dinner and I had chicken in the pressure cooker. And I took the lid off when there was still two pounds of pressure. Bad news, my sister walked right into the door just as I opened it [the cooker] and it got her full force and scalded her from head to foot.

SG: Oh my gosh.

DH: My brother come along, grabbed her, and put her in the tub with cold water and saved her life. So all kinds of fun things like that happened in our lives. Up until I was thirteen years old we didn't have indoor plumbing, but we had water from the wells that we would carry in buckets. And so I could carry two buckets of water and swing 'em over

my head, y'know, like a dumb kid would. We just had a very down-home country lifestyle.

SG: Both of you mentioned school, what was school like in Short Creek as you guys were growing up?

DH: School was just through the field. Literally, it could take us about two minutes maybe if you walked slow. [Laughter] Just went through the field to get to school. I had the same teacher for the first and second grade. Same teacher for third, fourth and fifth. And the same teacher for sixth, seventh, and eighth. So through eighth grades of school I had three teachers. 'Cause they just stayed forever and just were part of the people. My class was the last class to graduate from the old public school, and that was in 1963, I think. And it was the largest class that had ever graduated and there were eighteen of us. So, that was bigtime.

SG: Sounds about the same as now.

How about you, Ruby?

RW: Well, when I first went to school, I was very insecure because we never left home pretty much. We were homebodies, everything we did, we did at home pretty much. I remember the first time my mom took me to the first grade, we didn't have kindergarten then so we started first grade. She took me to the first grade and I was glued to her side and I wouldn't let her leave, she was tryin' to get me to stay there with the kids. Somehow, she slipped out when I wasn't lookin' and I was almost home before she was. I remember that when you went to school in that day, you used the old outhouse. You didn't go to the bathroom, it was just an old outdoor outhouse.

DH: We called it a cranny.

RW: It was, yeah, like three or four holes.

DH: A four-seater.

RW: [Laughter]

SG: Were the teachers in Short Creek from Short Creek, or were they from outside of town?

DH: Well, some came from outside during our time. Before that, before I started school there were people from home that taught school. There was Aunt so-and-so or Grandma-so-and-so was the first-grade teacher and some of those people still substituted when I was in school. So there was a lady named Grandma Hunter and when I grew up she became my mother-in-law, my grandmother-in-law. But she was the first-grade substitute when I was a little kid. I knew her very well. There was a lady named Aunt Rhoda Lauritzen that was just a sweet little old lady and she substituted, too. But, during my school years the

teachers all came from out of the community. But they stayed for years and years, were very loyal to the people. They were good people.

SG: What was church like when you were children?

DH: Go ahead Ruby. [Laughter]

RW: [Laughter] Well it was, kind of a relaxed, they tried to keep things respectable, and everybody came together and tried to bring the whole family to church and sometimes it was a little chaotic. I remember being sick during church one time and threw up in church and I finally ran out of the room, y'know holding your mouth.

DH: Our father was one of the Priesthood council members before we were even born, and so clear until he passed away he was a part of that council. So he was always on the stand. We had a lot of love and respect for him, and for all the men that were, we say, they were called into the council.

SG: What were your impressions of the other men in the council, were they—

DH: We loved 'em dearly.

RW: They were all very respectable people.

SG: As far as their, well what I meant was, I guess, as far as their, like had they played any role in your lives outside of just being members of the Priesthood council.

RW: We didn't know 'em other than that, I mean when we were grew up, they were in our life.

DH: They had a lot to do with the community, with social functions. They were always involved in any kind of social function. They were just a part of everybody, always—

RW: We had fairs and—

DH: Bazaars and Fourth of July—

RW: Programs. The town programs where we had entertainment and movies and dances and things.

DH: Operettas and plays and, we pretty much provided our own entertainment as a people.

RW: Which was good. We totally loved it.

SG: And so, church was organized, obviously. Was there a central meeting place?

DH: Yes. There was a building in Hildale. Up against the mountain, clear up into Hildale, which you might even be familiar with, but that was the church house. Everybody in the

community went there and that was where we had all kinds of functions. It wasn't only church, but it was everything. And so we lived clear down at the other end of town and we would walk. How far? Four miles?

RW: Probably.

DH: 'Bout four miles if we walked. On a hot day it was hot and on a cold day it was cold.
[Laughter]

RW: [Laughter]

DW: We were always happy to go and take part and participate.

RW: I remember waiting until I was twelve years old so I could go to the dances. [Laughter]

SG: What were the church meetings like? Like, what was the structure, kinda the setup, the topics of conversation—

DH: I would say the main thing was to teach us to live according to the principles of the gospel. To be upstanding, good citizens of the United States of America. To be loyal, to be honest and trustworthy. To just be good citizens and to live a good, clean life. And we had a lot of fun. The Brethren were full of jokes and fun. They made young people just really love to be around 'em. So, what else, Ruby?

RW: Well, they went to a great effort to make, we had work projects and everybody helped on projects that were building the community as much as they could round up a work crew to help them. And a lot of the young kids, that's what they spent their time doin', y'know. Especially during summer when we weren't in school, then everybody would help on, like building adobes and things like that because that's what we built our school out of and y'know.

DH: I built a lot of adobes. At the old academy.

RW: Yeah. We definitely did our part to help do whatever we could and still be very local, y'know, stay at home and do what we could at home.

DH: I would say the Brethren and the Priesthood council did all they could to keep the young people gathered in close and just to live good clean lives and be a part of—

RW: Nobody in town that I knew of, when I grew up, nobody smoked or drank alcohol—

DH: Never.

RW: or any of that. It was all really clean and decent as far as I knew.

SG: And, do you feel like that was just personal choices of people not wanting to partake in those vices or did it have to do with what we consider LDS practices of the Word of Wisdom or how did—

RW: Probably both.

DH: I would say both. Definitely, because there were people that came and went. There were people that came and joined, we called “The Work.” I love it being called “The Work,” because it’s work. To live a good, clean life.

RW: It is.

DH: But in my lifetime there were quite a few different people that came and went and they came and participated and decided that isn’t what they wanted so they left. And there’s no problem. If you don’t like it, you can leave. But if you do like it, you’re welcome to come and take part and be a member.

SG: Were there any particular teachings that you recall when you were growing up about what the relationship was between “The Work” and the LDS church?

RW: That’s kind of a difficult question, but I can say that I grew up thinking the LDS church was a little bit, not sure if I can come up with the right terminology. –

DH: A little wishy-washy.

RW: They’d altered the teachings that Joseph Smith had organized the church with originally. So we kind of stayed clear from that.

DH: To me it was almost like they have a way of just make work to keep a person busy, where, if you have a family and you have work, you don’t need a little busy work off to the side. And I guess because I was a busy mother when I grew up, I just didn’t need that kind of input in my life, I had plenty of work to do. I didn’t need a church to come and say, “Well you need to be over here doin’ all this little, whatever they want to call it.” I called it just busy work. Not that you don’t want to bless other people’s lives, but we did plenty of that, that was just part of our growing up. Somebody was sick, you went and helped ‘em. If somebody’s house burned, you gave everything you could possibly give. You just took care of each other.

RW: During the summer when people needed to put up a lot of fruit, which we—

DH: That’s what we lived on.

RW: That’s what we lived on. During the winter, and they had a cannery where they would blow a whistle and anybody in the community that could help would just come and lend a hand.

SG: What were your favorite things about school?

DH: [Laughter] That's not a good one, I never liked school.

RW: [Laughter] I always hated school myself.

SG: That's fair.

DH: I could read and write and I didn't need anything else.

RW: School was good.

SG: What kind of subjects did you have besides reading and writing?

DH: Plenty of math and science and history and geography and social science. Arizona—

RW: History.

DH: Blah is the technical term. Anyway, we had plenty of subjects, and we had reading, but we were not required to read a lot of unnecessary novels and stuff like that. And my mother didn't allow us to read novels. We read documentaries and historical, real things, not novels. Now that was just our mother, that wasn't everybody, other people didn't feel that way particularly. But, y'know, our mother did not let us read a bunch of trash, she was very careful what we had.

RW: They also taught us to be careful what kind of music to listen to, or y'know any kind of things that we thought would be detrimental to our character.

DH: I have to tell ya a funny one about music. One day our older brother, just older than me, was listening to the Tijuana Brass and I went and tattled on him. Told my mother and she said, "So? I like Tijuana Brass." I got told. That shows you what a fun mother we had. Y'know, she liked music.

SG: What kind of music did you guys grow up liking?

DH: Tijuana Brass. [Laughter]

RW: [Laughter] I always loved singing, but I could never get somebody to sing with me. I always thought it would be really fun to just, y'know, be able to develop a, like, a duet or a number on a program or something like that. I always enjoyed our community programs because of music that was my big deal.

DH: Uncle Fred, our dad's brother, Fred Jessop was kinda the head of that kinda thing. He was very musically talented. And he always had an operetta or some kind of a program going where he'd pick people out of the community, and people would volunteer, and put

on homegrown music and programs and that's what we did for entertainment. It was always fun and good.

RW: There were two families that I remember that were almost always on the program when we did some major community thing. One of 'em had 16, 17, people in their family.

DH: Yeah.

RW: Pearson family?

DH: Mm-hm

RW: And every one of 'em knew how to play an instrument, musical instrument of some kind. And they all sang together. Which was a lot of fun. Everybody enjoyed that. And then there was the Steed family who, there were several in their family that sang on a regular basis, almost every program; the Steed girls were on the program. They were pretty good. They could sing and play.

DH: But I could never carry a tune in a bucket. [Laughter] Our mother was a piano player in our home. And she wasn't really accomplished, but she could play the harmonica, the violin, the accordion, the piano, just a little bit, just a little of everything.

RW: The little time that she could spend to learn how. She was so busy, I think she was one of the hardest working people I've met ever in my life. Clear till now. I think she was one of the hardest working people I've ever seen.

DH: Very true.

SG: Was it because of the number of children she had or was there other activities—

DH: Life.

RW: It was a requirement to even survive. Pretty much. She did a lot of gardens and raised the food that we had and then canned it. And then our dad raised animals, like pigs. And when they'd butcher a pig, they'd use the lard off of the pig to make homemade soap and those kinds of things.

DH: We didn't have running water so we had to carry water to a washer outdoors. We had to put the water from the well in a barrel, under the barrel we'd build a fire, then we'd carry the water from the barrel to the washer. Life was just a lot of work and she just carried on for her whole entire life.

RW: And we had an old root cellar that was down under the house, so we had, the house was three stories and it had a basement so it was a place just off the basement that went down even further and that was our root cellar. And she carried so much fruit and things up and down those steps and just, y'know, just worked her little self to death.

DH: But was always happy.

RW: She was a doer. She could outdo any of us.

SG: I know this was a little bit before your time, Ruby, but do you have any recollections, Daisy, of the raid?

DH: Absolutely.

SG: Would you mind sharing?

DH: Might take all night. I'll start off with the fact that when they had the raid in Texas, whatever year that was recently—

SG: 2008.

DH: I had a flashback that just about blew me away. I was sitting right here in this house. It was like, "Oh my goodness. I remember, I remember, I remember." And I hadn't thought about it in years. You see mothers and children and crying babies and all of a sudden, I was there. I experienced it all over again.

So the night of the raid our mother told us, I don't remember this part, but she lived in the basement of the rock house there was no electricity in those days so it was all lamps. So she said a police man came down with his big giant flashlight, shined his light on her and said, "Get out of bed Mrs. Johnson." She's a Jessop now, but they called her Mrs. Johnson. And she says, "Well, turn off your light so I can." And he said, "No. You get up." So he made her get out of bed and get dressed while he stood there and held the light on her. And she said by the time she got all of us kids out, out to the school yard, I only had one shoe on. So she says we got on the bus with Daisy with only one shoe and I was about three and a half. And I remember only having one shoe.

SG: And how many children were you?

DH: I'm sorry?

SG: How many children were you, with your mother at that time?

DH: She was expecting a baby. So, it was July. Myrtle was born in November, so she was big and expecting. So she had, as far as I can remember, she had Oscar, myself, and Richard with her, and then she was expecting a baby girl.

SG: Were there older children?

DH: There were older children, but I am not sure how and where they went. If they were on the bus with her, I don't recall that. We were all down there together somehow, but I

don't recall. But I remember being on the bus with mothers crying, babies crying, and babies needing help, mothers totally distraught. I remember going into a rest home in Phoenix where, and I don't like to use this term, it was housing a lot of crazy people. So there were these men behind screen doors that would rattle and shake the door and say, "Let me out. Let me out." And I remember rows of benches and tables with mothers and little kids and everybody needing help with their diapers and their babies' bottles and crying babies and mothers that just didn't know what to do. I remember sitting there, watching these crazy guys banging their doors and we were just scared to death they were going to get out. 'Cause they were mentally handicapped people. So I do most definitely remember that. I remember being on the bus, and then I remember being in Phoenix in this rest home. We were in there like herded cattle. And that's what made that flashback when I saw the Texas thing with all these mothers and kids milling around like, "What do we do now?" And all of a sudden, I could remember sitting there on a bench with my mother.

So eventually we were put in a, I don't really recall this little building, but she said it was a one room shack with a dirt floor. She says you could see the ground through the floorboards. She says you could see the scorpions and y'know, just some all wooden shack out in the middle of Phoenix somewhere. She said we were there until she had her baby in November. After she had her baby, and they actually picked her up and took her to the hospital to deliver her baby. And after that they took us to a duplex in Snowflake, Arizona. Her sister happened to be, her name was Lorna Black, was put in the opposite apartment. I very well remember living there, I remember the people, the place, everything about living in Snowflake. I remember our dad comin' down to visit once. I remember Uncle Roy Johnson comin' to visit once, and he brought me a rubber doll. I had that rubber doll clear until after I was married and it just disintegrated. It was just a little baby doll. —

RW: Rubber gets all cracked and falls apart.

DH: So, it was quite traumatic and I remember very well coming home and I started school right after we came home. I think we came home in July and Ruby was born in '55, right?

RW: Yeah, so it was a year and a half.

DH: So Ruby was born in July of '55, so that had been two years. So my fondest memory about coming home was one of our other mothers standing on the back porch and welcoming us home after the raid. And that was a very endearing experience.

SG: Were there any good memories, besides the couple visits you mentioned, while you were away?

DH: We didn't have a bad life down there in Snowflake, we had a welfare man come and took care of us. He would bring us clothing, he would make sure we had food. His name was Mr. Fleck. Fred Fleck. And he had a very sweet wife and they would come and visit. And

after we came home they would come and visit every few years. He came to visit my mother when she was ninety-six, ninety-four or something.

RW: Ninety-somethin', yeah.

DH: And he was an old man, but he was still coming to visit the ladies that he took care of back then, in the '50s. Very kind man. Kept in touch with us all those years.

RW: He was very athletic.

DH: Yes, he was. He'd entertain the kids with all his tricks.

RW: Cartwheels everywhere. Doin' handstands and stuff.

DH: She even remembers.

RW: Well, I got to experience him after, when he came to visit, so.

DH: Right. Right.

SG: You mentioned that Uncle Fred was literally your uncle.

DH: Yeah.

RW: Yeah.

SG: Was Uncle Roy literally related to you, and in what way?

DH: Our mother's father was called Uncle Elmer. Uncle Elmer and Uncle Roy are brothers. Roy is our mother's uncle, so he's our great uncle. But he's been there our whole lives as Brother Johnson. So our grandpa was his brother.

SG: So you mentioned that the men of the council weren't really a part of your lives in a home sense, were Uncle Roy and Uncle Fred were part of your lives in the family sense?

DH: Uncle Fred definitely was in my childhood. I don't know about Ruby's so much.

RW: No, I don't remember doin' much with him. Except community functions.

DH: When I was a kid, the highways didn't go past Colorado City until the '60s when I was a teenager. Everything was a dirt road. I learned to drive on the old dirt roads from Hurricane to Kanab [Utah]. So during those years there wasn't a lot of traffic coming and going from old Short Creek. Uncle Fred would go around to each home in the community and take a list of what they needed from town, once a month or whatever. I'm sure that the brethren provided the income for that. Because Uncle Fred would come to my mother and get her list if she needed a bag of flour, some sugar, some shortening or y'know. As I

got a little older, my father went to town more often. He would get so upset because I could never keep a pair of shoes and he'd say, "I have to take Daisy again." And it's because I was growing so fast, by the time I was in the seventh grade I wore a size ten shoe. And he just didn't believe it. He'd get me a pair of shoes and in two weeks, it'd be too small.

SG: I see a shoe trend from very early on in your life.

RW: Very similar things goin' on.

DH: When you started to grow y'just grew like a weed and I just remember our dad just getting a little frustrated because Daisy needed another pair of shoes. Well, they weren't worn out, they were just too little. But, yes, Uncle Fred had a role where he would go around and take a list from the mothers in the community of what they needed from town. And you were not extravagant with your list. It was the bare necessities.

SG: What about Aunt Lydia?

DH: Aunt Lydia is our mother's sister.

RW: Double Aunt and Uncle.

DH: Uncle Fred and Aunt Lydia were definitely Uncle Fred and Aunt Lydia. She was the nurse from back in the '40s I guess. She was not there when I was born because nobody was there, but she was the midwife in the community at that point in time. And they never had children, Uncle Fred never had any children, so she was pretty open to being the midwife for everybody in town. Before I was married, we would go up and night nurse for the ladies at the clinic that had had a baby. Just some of us teenagers would just, Aunt Lydia would call on us and we'd go in at night nurse for a night and do that every three or four times a month or whatever. And that was just a volunteer, just to help out. And it was a good experience because Aunt Lydia could teach you a lot. She was a very clean, well-rounded, open-minded, individual.

RW: I remember one time I went up to their house and I remember Aunt Lydia being totally just upset and just frustrated because one of the girls that came to help, they had a washer and dryer which was a new thing then. —

DH: An automatic washer and dryer.

RW: Yeah, an automatic washer and dryer. One of the girls put a hose in the dryer and let it fill up with water. They had no idea that's what that was.

DH: They were used to an old ringer washer outside. [Laughter] That's too funny. A new convenience and it was ruined right off. She was a lot of fun. I always had poor posture, ever since I can remember. She would say, "Well, you girls all need to stand up straight like Daisy does." and I'm goin' [inhales sharply].

RW: [Laughter] Something special for her benefit.

DH: [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter] So you guys talked about a lot of your younger childhood years. Let's talk about some teenage years, if that sounds good.

DH: I think we were quite normal kids that got twitter-pated over boys. All of that, y'know.

RW: When I was growin' up, I remember Daisy and all her friends come[ing] over to the house because—

DH: Well, we had brothers that were just older than, there were three of us girls, three sisters that were pretty much the same age. And we had brothers that were about the same age. And the brothers had friends, and they were missionaries together, and so they'd all come over to our house. And we'd just have a big time. Our mom and dad and everybody'd be there and they'd play music and sing. Ruby was a little kid at that point in time.

RW: I remember watching 'em have all the guys make pie because they were seeing who could make the best pie out of the girls and the boys.

DH: One time our dining room table had about ten young men around it and Sadie and I served each one of 'em a whole lemon pie. And our mom and dad was there, Sadie was playing the piano, Rick White was playing his guitar, a few other guys were singing, so we had good times. We did all kinds of stuff.

RW: I was at home. I was married at a really young age so I didn't really have a teenage gap? I don't know.

DH: You didn't have the siblings around you like I did.

RW: By the time I got married most of my siblings were married and gone. Me and my two younger brothers were about the only ones at home.

DH: She was at the end of the list, I was about in the middle. Made for a different life.

RW: Oh yeah. It was quite different after that.

DH: But one time somebody accused me of staying in a motel with a fellow in Hurricane. I felt really, really, really offended because no such thing even entered my mind. But, those things happened. Those rumors happened. The real deal didn't happen.

RW: Our dad used to take us, a group of kids and go fruit picking every summer. They'd go to Hurricane. He'd go picking cherries at the first of the fruit season. Apricots and then we did peaches later on. We got them down through the—

DH: Pears and apples and the whole works.

RW: And one day a couple of our brothers were on the back of the truck and they were fighting on the way home. We had a whole load of fruit and they were throwing peaches at each other from one side of the truck to the other [laughter]. Our dad stopped and made 'em get off and walk home.

DH: How many miles?

RW: It was in Apple Valley, I think it was about twelve miles or so. He took 'em off the truck and kicked their butts. Told 'em to quit fightin' and don't waste the fruit and he'd better see 'em at home.

SG: Between childhood and teenage years, was there a big change in your school lives? Or was it kind of the same?

DH: From elementary school to high school, yeah there was a change there where ya think and act and feel differently.

RW: You start acting like you think you're big—

DH: Grownup. You think you're grown up and you're not quite, but—

SG: But it was still all the same, because you talked about only having three teachers from first grade to eighth grade and being at the public school. Was there a change in the types of —

DH: So in the high school it was all local people, all our own. People from our own community that we knew very well.

SG: And how about how church worked, did that just always just stay the same?

DH: Pretty much, yeah.

RW: When you got into the older grades, you started going to the high school then they had a Theology class every Saturday. Or was it Sunday?

DH: Sunday night.

RW: Sunday night.

DH: So after church you'd have a Sunday night class for the teenagers basically, or maybe different groups. So yeah, we had—

RW: A Theology class which was—

DH: And different people were the teachers. At one point in time Uncle Fred was my teacher in the Theology class. Another time it was Jack Knudson. He was a lot of fun.

I mean, you'd study the scriptures and discuss the gospel. Tried to give you stuff to grow up on, y'know, principles to govern your life by. But nobody was ever forced into anything that I ever saw. Not at all. You hear people talk about forced marriages, I never saw one, never.

RW: We were always, anything I ever experienced, they were always given an option deciding whether you want to or not. Y'know, you could back out or you could, y'know. Once the knots tied, then you're required to be loyal.

DH: We hope.

RW: Some people weren't.

SG: And as far as church, was there ever any, as you were growing up, differentiation between the Brethren and families that were in Salt Lake, versus the ones that were in Short Creek?

DH: No difference really, they just only came down south about once a month or once every few months. They were just as important to us as the rest. They were just as important as our own dad.

SG: Did the people from Salt Lake also come down with the Brethren, or was it just the Brethren?

DH: Travel was a different thing in that day and time, so a lot of people didn't travel back and forth. Sometimes, like my father-in-law would travel. He'd always have people asking for a ride. His car would only hold so many people. So it was a whole different [life], in today's world people hop in the car and go to Salt Lake, don't give it a second thought. In that day and time, that was before the freeways were in, the old road went to every little town on the way to Salt Lake. It was a arduous trip back in the '60s and '70s. That's about when the freeway was put through, was probably in the '70s.

SG: Yeah. Were there any other communities that you interacted with, not necessarily in the neighborhood, but, like, —

DH: Well, the Brethren would say they went everywhere from Canada to Mexico. Her husband came from Canada. But I've never been there. A few people from there came.

RW: They moved down when he was really young.

DH: When Joel was young.

RW: Yeah.

DH: Back in the '50s they moved down.

RW: Yeah. They moved down just in time to be involved with the raid.

DH: But, people from Canada and Salt Lake and I don't know where else. Other places that we were not really familiar with, were involved. And we'd have workdays in the community once or twice a year, or something, where people would come and they'd have what we called Conference in April or in October.

RW: It was in April, usually.

DH: And people would come from far and wide that were part of "The Work," but didn't really live down here. And that was a big time. It was party time as well as work time.

SG: You mentioned that the Brethren would say that they went from Canada to Mexico. Were there ever any, that you recall, like, direct interactions with people that were involved with "The Work" in Mexico? And was it typically—

DH: The people down there pretty much stayed down there. But you hear stories about the Brethren trying to communicate, because they didn't have an interpreter. And the comical things that happened in the places they stayed and the dear people that they went to visit and keep encouraged. I don't recall many Mexicans, if that's how you want to say it, coming home.

RW: To our community, not much.

DH: But they would still go and visit them, periodically.

SG: Did your father participate in that?

DH: Yeah.

SG: Do you recall him ever saying, like where in Mexico he would go?

DH: I don't. He didn't really talk to the children about that. At least not that I'm aware of. I don't recall anything like that. But I know that he would go.

RW: I think at that time they were being careful to not, y'know—

DH: To not jeopardize anybody's position.

RW: Yeah. Because of the raid and other things.

SG: Were you taught anything about the people in Mexico being different or being—

DH: No. They were just people that were interested in the principles of the gospel.

RW: That's all. That's about the only thing that I've heard.

DH: Never any differentiation. We were not taught to hate [or], to have a racist mind. Not too long ago, a few years back, I was in somebody's home in Salt Lake City, a person that I think a lot of, a young man, he's about my age actually, a little younger. And he was sitting there at his dining room table and I was a guest, and he was talking about those "damn Niggers." In front of his children. And I didn't take it very well. Finally I just said, "You know what, I'm gonna have to excuse myself if you keep talkin' like that. Because they're God's children too." He just went, "Who do you think you are?" and I said, "I'm nobody. But Negroes are somebody, just as much as I am." And he changed his story a little bit, y'know, backed off from being so derogatory. So everybody's got their own feelings and interpretation—

RW: We were taught that we didn't purposely get involved with other races, because of the keeping the lines clean and pure, y'know.

DH: But if a negro should come and join our "Work" they would be welcome, but we shouldn't intermarry with them, pretty much. But they can come and partake. They're God's children, too.

RW: You don't be disrespectful to them because of who they are. It's just that we didn't partake in—

DH: We don't cross bloodlines is basically what—

RW: Yeah. Bloodlines is important.

DH: Which, if somebody does, that's their business. Not gonna disregard that person, just because, y'know I have, we have, I know a young lady that's married to a black man, and he comes out to Centennial Park and visits her family and okay. That's alright. That's her choice. That's his choice. So you don't be rude and unkind, they're people. And that's our father's teachings as well as the Brethren.

SG: Ruby, you mentioned that you got married somewhat young, so how did you come about to get married?

RW: Well I was the last girl in my mom's family at home. Y'know I had the two little brothers. And I was just alone and I figured that getting married was a step up. [Laughter] Which it was. So I told my dad I wanted to get married and he went and he talked to the other Brethren about it and he actually is the one who performed mine and Joel's marriage. And we did it in the rock house. We just had our 48th anniversary and we went and had a picture in the same room where we got married in the old house, so that was cool.

DH: Fun. 48 years?

RW: Yep.

DH: Jeepers, Ruby. We're gettin' old! [Laughter]

RW: I know! Old, and grey, and slow. [Laughter]

DH: You're my baby sister. [Laughter]

SG: How did actually being married compare to your expectations of, like the responsibilities and that sort of thing?

RW: When I was, well, I guess I can tell you. I was married when I was fifteen. When I was fifteen, I knew how to do everything in a home that you could ever need. At least as far as I could see.

DH: That was our lifestyle.

RW: We learned how to do everything when we were young. I learned how to mix bread when I was twelve years old and I did it for thirty years after that.

SG: I understand. I was making tamales with my grandmother when I was six.

DH: Part of life.

RW: Yeah. I knew how to do just about anything. I reupholstered my mom's dining room set before I was married. There was very few things I actually had to go back and say, "How do you do this?" Because she taught us how to do everything. So it wasn't hard for me to just pick up and do whatever needed to be done. And I learned to really improvise from our dad, because he could, well our dad, Mom did too, but they were very innovative. Just could figure out how to just about do anything. To survive you just have to. A lot of it, so.

SG: Did you know Joel before?

RW: I had only met him a couple of times. I really didn't know him.

DH: I knew him.

RW: Yeah.

DH: He's my age.

- RW: He was a missionary about the same time that all the guys used to come to our house, but he didn't. He lived on the other end of town so I didn't see him, but I remember him as a missionary coming and helping a couple of our brothers replace the linoleum floor in the old rock house and I remember, I was about ten years old and that was the first time I ever saw him. It was, it wasn't something, we didn't seek each other out by any means because I didn't even know who he was, really.
- SG: You both have mentioned missionaries, which is not something that people commonly think about when they think about Fundamentalist groups. To your knowledge, what did it entail to be a missionary in "The Work"?
- RW: As far as I know, as far as I ever saw the missionaries or understood what they did, was they helped the Priesthood council to build up the community and encourage the young people to do the same. I don't remember that they ever went out proselyted or anything like that.
- DH: My husband was in the very first group of appointed missionaries in the community. So he was about twenty-one or nineteen maybe, and there was a group of young men, probably about twenty young men and they just gathered them together and appointed them to a two-year mission for the priesthood work. So they were just called upon by the Brethren or the builders in the community to do whatever project work they needed, whether it was sheet rocking, whether it was ditch-digging, whether it was puttin' a roof on, gardening,
- RW: Or when somebody passed away they would go to somebody's place and help 'em out or whatever—
- DH: Go and clean up people's yards if they needed it or take care of the sick or dig a grave or—
- RW: Whatever, yeah.
- DH: And it started in the '60s and it's still goin' strong among our "Work."
- SG: Were there ever female missionaries?
- DH: No.
- RW: Not that I know of.
- DH: And I say we don't need 'em because females have a role in the home where they get all the experience, like she was saying, there wasn't much she didn't know by the time she was fifteen. She could run a household. She'd pretty much experienced anything it took to run a home. I don't think any of us felt overworked or had expectations we couldn't meet. I mean I'm sure some people did, just because they didn't like the lifestyle or whatever, but we didn't feel that way. It was a good life.

SG: Daisy, how did you come to be married?

DH: Well, my sister Sadie and I were, we had quit high school because we wanted to go help with the waterline comin' down from the canyon. Because I didn't like school. I'd rather be out workin' my hands and my back then, because I couldn't get much to come out the end of my pencil. I could sit there all day in math, didn't happen. No matter how hard I looked at it. My sister Sadie, my same age, so we were in the same class, she was the valedictorian. She had the smarts comin' out her pores. But because I quit high school, she quit with me. Which was kind of a shame on me to make her do such a thing. So we were out of school and therefore when the Brethren needed help here or there or wherever, they put Sadie and I on the job, so you could almost say we were missionaries for a couple of years. So by the time my class graduated from the academy, I was ready to get married, I'll put it that way. And our father came to us one day and he just approached us and he said, "I feel like you two girls are ready to take the big step, how do you feel?" Of course we're all excited and said, "Absolutely." And somebody said, "Well, how in the world did you decide who to marry?" And I said, "I didn't. My father counseled me and I looked to his counsel." Just like she says.

RW: I totally trusted what they did, because they were genuinely interested—

DH: I totally trusted my father and the Brethren to help me know where I should go. And I had prayed a lot, for many years I had prayed a whole lot about marriage and that I would be happy to go wherever I was counseled to go. Because I didn't want to make that choice in and of myself, I wanted my father's help and it was very easy, just very, very comfortable. So he sent me to one of the other Brethren, which happened to be my father-in-law, and he invited me into his family and asked me if I'd like to be a part and I said yes. And most people would think that he was proposing to me, personally, I didn't feel that way at all. He just says, "How would you feel about bein' part of my family?" and I said, "I would love to be." And if anybody had heard him talking to me they would have supposed he was proposing to me personally. I didn't feel that, because I wasn't supposed to. I married his oldest son. And it was wonderful. I was happy to have their support and their counsel and it was great.

SG: Even though there was placement marriage at the time, was there—

DH: Marriages otherwise? Absolutely. There was young people that only wanted to marry a certain person and if that was what both parties wanted then, yeah. I didn't have that. I didn't have that within me. I didn't say I want to marry a certain person. And my father knew that and understood it. So they counseled, it wasn't just somebody sayin', "Well, I want her to go—" Y'know the Brethren, as a council, would discuss it and pray about it, and counseled me to pray about it, so it was all great and wonderful.

RW: They felt like they had an answer, then that's the way it went.

DH: And if they had a disagreement, they would continue to pray and work together to see if they come to an agreement and nothing happened until they did.

SG: So it could take a few days, to months, or years.

DH: It might take years, who knows? With me, I was ready, I was happy with their suggestion. Partly because it came from our father. And I wanted it to come from him, because I had a lot of respect for his feelings and thoughts.

RW: When I first told my dad I wanted to get married, it was about six months.

DH: It's not like, "Oh. Here's a nice guy."

RW: Yeah. It was thought—

DH: It took effort.

RW: It was well thought out.

DH: Took a lot of prayer and effort.

SG: Was there any hesitation from your father when his fifteen-year-old daughter came and said she wanted to get married?

RW: No. He could see that it would be a good thing. And when I look at fifteen-year-olds today, [laughter] it's a little scary, it ain't the same.

DH: It really is amazing how different our lifestyle was. I was seventeen, almost eighteen.

RW: By the time you were eighteen you had went and got a job out at Kaibab Lodge for —

DH: For three years.

RW: And been working in Springdale, workin' in every other place.

DH: Yeah, I'd been around a little.

SG: Did either of you pursue any sort of education or career, even into your marriages?

RW: Not outside the community. I didn't. She went to nursing—

DH: They had a nursing school come from Kingman, the college classes come from Kingman. I took part in the very first nursing course they ever brought up.

RW: I took a few classes from the college, but it wasn't anything like pursuing a career.

DH: Yeah, when I did the nursing course, most of the classes were over to Fredonia. And I was carrying my tenth child at the time. The teacher thought I was out of my mind. I come in there, nine months along. In fact, we were dissecting cats one night and I was nine months along over to Fredonia. The mother cat I was dissecting had five little babies in her and I had to dissect all those five little babies. I went home that night, and I had my baby, and the next night I came to class, carrying my baby in a blanket. The teacher and everybody in the class just about fainted, that baby was not even fifteen hours old. And I was back to Fredonia. But that's what it took to—

RW: Get through that class, yeah.

DH: Do what you had to do, so you just did what you had to do.

SG: Ruby, you said, "Not outside of the community." What kind of work did you do, if any, outside of your home?

RW: Since I was married real young, I was pretty much home, but I got a job in Hurricane and then Toquerville, and Springdale, and a few other places like that, too.

DH: Did you ever work at the store like Sadie and I did?

RW: Yeah. I was a clerk at the store for a little while.

SG: What kind of store?

DH: Grocery store.

RW: Mercantile. Whatever it's called.

DH: The general, only store in town.

SG: What kind of jobs did you have in Hurricane, Toquerville, and other places?

RW: Taking care of elderly people, and then in Springdale I cooked at a restaurant. I don't know, just—

DH: Waitress.

RW: I didn't ever waitress.

DH: Oh.

RW: I cooked. And I cleaned motel rooms and that kind of thing. Then I just took classes at a college. The reason I took classes at the college was because I wanted something that was recreational, something that I just, all my life was work, so I wanted to do something that I enjoyed.

SG: Something for you.

RW: Yeah, so that's why I did that. I took painting and drawing, y'know.

DH: Which she's very good at.

RW: Well, I used to be. I think it dried up [laughter].

SG: What was your experience when you worked at these other towns, with non-“Work” people?

RW: It was an adjustment.

DH: Some of 'em were a big adjustment.

RW: It was an adjustment for me, because I was so used to working with our own people, that when I had to work with other people I realized that there was a lot of adjustment to be made. But, for taking care of the elderly people, I kinda liked that, because, they trusted me and I was there with, like, six elderly people in one house and I just took care of them during the day and I'd go home at night. I don't know, there was several, we took care of a man here in St. George, so I had that job too, and then it was later on but, I don't know. It was just, I took care of several, actually two or like, three, three different people that I worked for, for doing that. Other than that, cleaning motel rooms and cooking—

DH: It's hard work.

RW: Just work.

SG: Daisy, how about you, employment-wise?

DH: Well, I can tell ya, I've cared for elderly people for over forty years now. And many years ago, I figured out that, that I being me, and looking like I do and just being who I am, I had to tell people, “I'm comfortable in my own skin. So if you will accept me for who I am, I will accept you for who you are.” And that was a difficult to come to have the ability to say that to people. It took quite a few jobs before I could get over people looking me up and down, eyeing me y'know, “What's she wearing?” Lookin at you like you were—

RW: Alien?

DH: Something they didn't want to get too close to. And I had to train people to the fact that I'm just a human being, just like you are.

RW: Probably nicer.

DH: I have emotions and feelings, just like you do. I might dress a little differently, I might do my hair a little differently. People would say, "Why don't you cut your hair?" And I'd say, "Because my husband likes it long." And that is a fact. I've never cut my hair. Because he liked it long. He's been gone for twenty years. He died of a massive heart attack before he was sixty. So that's why I keep my hair long, other than the fact that that's what I was taught as a child. We were taught that. But, that doesn't fly anymore, everybody does whatever they do and that's their fear [decision], not mine. But it took a few years to get so that I was comfortable out in the world, so to speak. But I experienced some pretty mean, nasty, things growing up. Like, in St. George, walkin' down the street when I was about fourteen, a bunch of kids'd walk by and they'd spit in your face. People say, "No. Nothin' like," Yes, you had to wipe it off your face. And they'd say, "Polygs" and they'd walk way out around you for fear that they's gonna touch ya. And that was all the time.

SG: Did they think they were gonna catch polygamy? [Laughter]

DH: Yeah. One of the main offenders was young boys in trucks. They'd be drivin' down the street and they'd bang their doors "Polygs!" and they'd swerve way out around and they're goin down the road in a pickup. It's like, well, I'm just me, they can drive off the road if they want, but y'know. That was common to our childhood, to our bringing up.

SG: Did you have experiences like that, Ruby?

RW: Some. I think, as time went on, y'know, getting older, people in our own community have taken up some really rotten habits. And some of em I've seen, I saw a couple of girls walking down a sidewalk, and a guy in a truck ahead of me drove over close to them, then punched the gas, and it just left 'em in this huge black cloud.

DH: Rude.

RW: And they did that several times. And I was so disgusted.

DH: Somebody at home?

RW: Oh yeah. People at home.

DH: But, see, something that we grew up with, now I kinda lost my train of thought, just a second. The people that our parents and their generation were part of the LDS church. As time went on, they were all cut off [from] the church. That created a prejudice between all the people in old Short Creek and the surrounding communities, who they used to be a part of. Because my father was a very close associate with all kinds of business people in Southern Utah. They all knew Richard Seth Jessop and Fred Jessop and everybody knew each other. As I grew up and became an adult a lot of those older people were dying off, that generation was dying away. And so a lot of the prejudice went away with them. But there's a few die-hards, a few young people that were more my age that just hung on to those prejudices, and yet they didn't even know what they were. It was just something

they learned. And as they got older, that went away, too. So now there's enough people that have come into these communities around Southern Utah that they don't know the difference, they, we're just those funny people out there and they don't know anything about those old prejudices, they're all gone. Pretty much. And so life's much easier. I even have people compliment me on my daughters and how they look, and how they're dressed and how kind mannerly they are. But there's still a few old die-hards that wanna come up and call you "polyg" and ask you all kinds of rude questions.

RW: I run into people even now, goin' to Costco or any other big stores, there are some people that stand and look at ya like they wanna spit on ya. And other people—

DH: Yeah, but they don't do it anymore.

SG: Now, it's assault.

RW: Yeah.

DH: But they can still treat you rude. And it's just a few, there's not many people left around to do that. But it's, they're still there. But you learn to ignore it and there's the population of Utah has exploded and you kind of become—

RW: Just part of what goes on—

DH: And there's so many people from Colorado City that commingle in St. George and all the communities that, who's who, who knows?

RW: So many of our people that don't look like they used to, so they're just mixed with the world now. There's no differentiate—

DH: Yeah. So the old nasty prejudice that you used to experience is pretty much gone. Which is great. But we've had to learn to accept other people as well, and to treat them like they're somebody. 'Cause when we were kids, because of the raid you were taught not to tell who your father was or where he was, because it would get him in trouble because the law would come after him, and that went on for many years after the '53 raid. And one day somebody knocked on my mother's door and I, it was dark and I answered it, but you couldn't see anybody, and I opened up the door and a voice out of the darkness said, "Where's your dad?" I said, "Oh, Daddy went to Salt Lake." And my mother smelled cigarette smoke and she came and grabbed me and shut the door, and she said, "Don't you know that's Fonzo and he's tryin to arrest your dad?" And this was years after the raid, after we'd come home. But they were still after people, if they could possibly incarcerate 'em, they were happy to do so. So we were taught to just be quiet and keep to ourselves. You didn't talk, you didn't tell. And that's a habit that has carried over into adult life. So it's still hard for me to just talk about everything personal, our father's experience.

But I can tell you a few things about plural marriage that's a good thing. And one of those things is, our father had some young ladies in his life before I got married, Ruby remembers 'em all, and nobody's perfect, everybody has to have a chance to grow up and mature in their life. Not that these ladies were young, they were mature women that married him. But, by the time I got married, I could say to myself, and nobody taught me this, I just observed it. I will do this to my husband and I will not do this to my husband and I don't like the way she treated my dad, so I will never do that to my husband. So when I got married, like I say nobody sat me down and taught me this, I just observed it, and I could say there's ways to treat a husband nicely and there's way's that's kind of rude and I don't want to do that. So I had a really good marriage, thanks for those examples that I had to be and not to be. How to be and how not to be. And I appreciate those, I appreciate those negative examples, I guess you could call 'em.

RW: Lessons in life.

SG: Can we talk a little bit about the things that led up to the Centennial split away from, well, into geographically the new space where you all live now?

DH: Well, there was a time when my husband went to a priesthood meeting like he always did, and I can't remember the date, and he came back home in about ten minutes. He was about a ten-minute drive and walk from the church. In a little bit he came back home and I said, "You're back home." He says, "Well, they asked me to denounce Brother Hammon and Brother Timpson and to, whatever language they use, about Brother Johnson." And he said, "No. I won't do that." And they said, "Then you can't come into priesthood meeting." That right there was the beginning of—

RW: My husband was at the same meeting.

DH: Where they were stopping people at the door, which normally everybody just goes in to meeting there's no gate, you just go in. If you want to go to meeting, you go to meeting, you don't, you don't. There's no big record keeping and if you want to partake, you do. Well, they stopped the people at the door and said, "You have to denounce so-and-so."

RW: You're not allowed in here.

DH: We won't allow you in. That didn't fly. Some people, it did. Some people did denounce those men. This was my husband's own father and what he did was he had already counseled with Brother Johnson what to do and he was doing it. He said, "You go and you support your father in whatever he does. And Uncle Roy told Lloyd that when he was totally sane and sound. So that's what he did. And after that when they called the men off the stand, and you probably heard all those stories, then people began to meet somewhere else. And we took part in that. I think you did, too, right?

RW: Mhmm

SG: Did you have family members that stayed?

DH: Not within my personal direct, husband's family. Not within my own personal family. But my siblings, yes, yes. I think her and I are the only ones of our father's family that didn't stay in there. I think it took some of 'em a while to figure out which way is which.

RW: A lot of people were just confused. Just didn't know what was goin' on and why —

DH: It took years. It just blew people right out of the water.

RW: There was a certain group of people that were getting more and more control in the community. They put a lot of pressure on people to be a part of their little group—

DH: Which, to me, was a very uncomfortable feeling.

RW: There were so many people that didn't like what they were doin' but they kinda went along with it. And a lot of intermarriages that were involved with it, then they couldn't just drop their families, so they just kinda went along with it. Then, I don't know, it turned into quite the can of worms.

DH: It's like when my husband passed away, our baby [little] brother, Clyde, came to my house. He wanted to help me do the right thing. I didn't need his help, thank you very much, I was a big girl, I could go the direction I wanted to go. He gathered family and friends and came to my house and tried to convince me. People in the community were comin' and puttin' their arm around me that hadn't looked at me in fifteen years and all of a sudden, they're all my best friends and they loved me. It's like, sticky, get off. I don't need this, thank you. And that was kind of a hard situation, but I didn't need what they were offering me.

RW: One night, just after the breakup, then they had a dance up in the parking lot of the new grocery store. And my girls wanted to go to the dance, they didn't grow up going to dances like we did, and so they really wanted to go to this dance. I said, "Okay, but I'll go with you." So I went to the dance with these girls and a lady that I had never said a word to in my whole life, I knew who she was and she knew who I was, but we'd never y'know, interacted at all. During this dance, it was dark and of course they had the parking lot lights on and so people were dancing to the music and stuff out in the parking lot. My girls went off to dance, because their partner had come and chose them and they were dancing and this lady walked up to me and put her arms around me like she just best old friends, I had never said a word to her in my life—

DH: It's very obvious what she was doing.

RW: Yeah. I just thought, ugh look, it's nice to be friends but, this is a little too much. She says, "Oh! I'm so glad to have you back with us!" Said all those things about being part of 'em, and I'm just going, "Really?"

DH: Didn't ever go anywhere.

RW: Yeah.

SG: I still live on the same street.

RW: To this same day, I've never had another word since then. You did your deed, I guess.
[Laughter] That was some weird stuff.

DH: Yeah, it was.

SG: Over the years after the split, with the siblings that stayed, has there been a change from this, for lack of a better term, I guess, love-bombing that you had at the beginning of the split—

DH: There are some that are very friendly now and there are some that still hold to that old, they don't talk to us because we're apostates. Our very closest siblings still do not speak to us.

SG: Closest in age or closest—

DH: In friendship as children.

RW: Some of our own mothers wouldn't give you the time of day.

DH: We had some siblings that were cast out and told to go away and repent and after ten or fifteen years they now befriend us. And they're very honest—

RW: As time has gone on and they've realized what kind of transaction took place. they start to realize where that all came from and where it's goin'.

DH: It's like what one brother says.

RW: Don't wanna have anything to do with it anymore.

DH: We have one brother that now says, "Dad didn't teach these things. This is not the things that our father taught us."

RW: It's true.

DH: But it took him a while to have—

RW: Process that.

DH: And being out for ten years, and cast out of his own family. All of that stuff that's gone on over the years and he finally come to the realization that he needs to just get out, and live life and he's doing it and he's doing very well. And that Dad did not teach those kind

of things when we were growing up. And that the Brethren didn't teach those things that people are now doing.

RW: There are some of our siblings we don't have a clue where they are. I don't know where we'd ever find them.

DH: Some we've tried and tried to find, Ruby and I have, to try to just go visit and tell them that we love them. And if their family finds out that we're looking for 'em, they go move them. Which is nonsense, I mean, what are we going to do to 'em, other than give 'em a hug? So it's kinda sad still.

SG: Were any of your parents still alive during the split?

DH: Most of 'em.

RW: Our dad had passed away just before all that broke loose, but our mothers were still around.

DH: Was it '78? Did Daddy die in '78?

RW: I think so.

DH: He was eighty-four in '78. And our mother lived twenty more years, she lived to be ninety—

RW: Ninety-six

DH: Ninety-six and a half. Living with our youngest brother, and that got to be so that they wouldn't let us go see her.

SG: So she stayed?

DH: She stayed.

RW: She's definitely, she moved out of the rock house because she was there by herself for quite a long time.

DH: So she moved in with our youngest brother.

RW: And she moved in with him and then, things went along just fine for a while, for a couple of years.

DH: Until he became so very staunch.

RW: A part of the FLDS was really thick and heavy at that time. Then we went over to see our mom and they just wouldn't even let us in.

DH: Wouldn't even open the door. And then when she passed away, we just happened to go see her one night, it was my birthday and Ruby and I got together and we went to see her. I was home from here and we just thought, hey, y'know, we're gonna make this happen, we haven't seen her for a long time, what'd it been about a year-and-a-half or so?

RW: Yeah. It had been a while.

DH: Since we'd seen her. So we got our older sister to commit to—

RW: Showin' us where she was.

DH: Figurin' out where she was and helping us to go say hello to her. Well, they brought her outside on a cold November night and visited with us outdoors.

RW: She was in a wheelchair.

DH: She was in a wheelchair so we got to say hello to her and give her a hug and she died that night, later. And then we heard that she, well, it'd been a week or —

RW: Yeah it was about— [a week].

DH: Ten days or something.

RW: They had taken her to the mortuary after she passed away and she was there for ten days—

DH: She was there for ten days, then we heard that she was there. And then I called Ted, because I do flowers for the mortuary, Ted Spilsbury. I said, "Is my mother in your mortuary?" And he said, "Yes she is." I said, "Can Ruby and I come and see her?" and he said, "Absolutely." So we went there and he said, "I guess you know you're not welcome by your family." And they kept her for thirty days before they ever buried her. He called the fellow; do you know Dwayne? Dwayne Barlow?

RW: Mhmm.

DH: He come to our house not long ago and he told the story of he was in St. George one day and Ted Spilsbury called him and he said, "I've got Lola Jessop in my mortuary and she's been her for thirty days, what do you think I oughta do about it?" So, he let us in three times during those thirty days. Just Ruby and I, but he says, "Your family says you're not welcome."

RW: They said that the family told them that if he let any of people that they didn't consider worthy or whatever, in then they would send the law enforcement in.

DH: So after our mother, Ted Spilsbury will not deal with people that have that attitude. He says, "If you don't let all your family in, then I won't take you." He'd been very kind.

SG: Do you know why they waited so long to bury her? That seems unorthodox.

RW: Our sister called me. I had been asking her where Mom was so that we could see her. And when she passed away, she knew that we were gonna be checking, so she called me and specifically told me that I was not welcome to come to the funeral or the viewing.

DH: Which is so unlike—

RW: It was not like her, you knew it was someone else talking when she said that. But she says, "I called to tell you that you're not welcome to the funeral." And I said, "Well, do you know, can you even tell us when she'll be buried?" I had called many times after that to see when the burial was gonna be, and they kept sayin', "Well, they haven't told us yet." Because they were waiting for the church officials to tell them when they could do it, I guess. And it just kept goin' and goin' and goin', they didn't ever tell us. And the only reason that I knew she was buried was because I happened to drive past the cemetery and saw the whole group of people gathered around the grave and they just, they told us that the funeral was supposed to be at one o'clock, and they hurried and buried her about eleven so that we wouldn't be there.

DH: That was a really hard thing to deal with.

RW: Such nonsense.

SG: What year was it that she passed away?

DH: Was it '13, '12?

RW: '12. 2012.

SG: Was she buried there in Colorado City?

DH: Here's something that's really odd. And that is, our father is buried there, and our grandfather, her father, is buried there in the same—

RW: Plot.

DH: Kind of in the same vicinity.

RW: In the same area.

DH: Instead of putting her by her husband, they put her by her dad. She should have been by her husband. So this is something that's unusual. I mean she was married to him for fifty, sixty—

RW: Sixty years.

DH: Sixty plus years. Why she was put by her dad, I can't figure out, that's an odd one.

SG: That is interesting—

RW: They did us a lot of burials, a lot of people that around that same time they had some weird thing goin' on where they didn't want anyone else to be involved in the funerals.

DH: So they wouldn't have 'em.

RW: So they would just hurry and sneak 'em and go bury 'em before anybody even knew that they'd passed away.

DH: Yeah.

RW: So you couldn't go to the funeral or—

DH: Couldn't even go to the burial, let alone a funeral.

SG: Did either of you experience any of your mothers trying to bring you back into staying during the split, since they were still alive?

RW: No.

DH: They knew better.

RW: They knew that we were pretty solid in what we think and I don't think they— In fact they had so much pressure from the other side I don't think they would have even tried.

DH: I think that a lot of 'em didn't stay because they wanted to, but stayed because of other reasons like, they can't see their own children if they're out. And in order to keep in touch with their own children, they had to pretend to be a part.

SG: Do you know of any of them, specifically, or your own mother, being remarried to other men after your father passed, or after the split, specifically?

DH: Yeah, I know of a couple of 'em. One of 'em married my father's brother, who was an older person, but he wasn't as old as my dad. So one lady went there. Who else?

RW: Susan.

DH: Susan. She went to Canada. Married somebody up there.

RW: She was the youngest.

DH: Very nice girl. Lady. And none of 'em have ever really kept in touch with us, with Ruby and I. They've been not friendly, but not rude in passing. Which, like if I see 'em at the post office or something I'll say hello and, some people don't—

SG: And they're still in the church? In the FLDS church?

RW: Some of 'em, yeah.

DH: Some of 'em, I don't have a clue where they are. I think they're out, doin' their own life now. I think they've been pushed around for so long, that they're finally coming to the realization that they don't have to take it, they can go do whatever they choose to do. Isn't that what Lucy's doin'?

RW: Pretty much.

DH: I think some of 'em are coming to that.

RW: Yeah, she brought her mother out just about a few months ago, brought her out for her ninetieth-somethin' birthday.

DH: Oh! Wow. She's still a spry little thing.

RW: She is.

DH: That's her mother?

RW: Yeah.

DH: Huh. Amazing.

RW: But she was only here, whenever they come out, they live in Wisconsin so when they come out here they're only here a day or two and then they rush back.

DH: Because she's ninety-what?

RW: She's ninety-two or three or somethin'. I'm not sure.

DH: Gettin' up there.

SG: Beyond the split, there's been a lot of national news, national catastrophes in the history of the United States in the last, fifty-sixty years. How did things like, say the Vietnam War, the Kennedy Assassinations, those kinds of movements and events, register in Short Creek?

RW: A lot of our young men, they went to the military.

DH: To Vietnam. We have a brother who was shot in the head and to this day he has a metal plate in his head where he was shot. It went through his helmet, but it didn't kill him. He was in the Vietnam War. He bowed out of "The Work" many years ago as a teenager after Vietnam. But, y'know, we still love him. He lives around here somewhere. But he's not real sociable with us. He's taken on a different life. There's a lot of men from our community that have been in the service. Since World War Two until now.

RW: True.

DH: A lot of men. And we support the United States.

RW: It's important to us. It always has been, to our people.

DH: The Brethren have never told people, "Don't support our country."

RW: We're encouraged to do our civic duty and just, y'know get in and be a part of whatever you have to do.

DH: I don't think that we ever feel like, "I told you so" when bad things happen. I think a lot of people think that's how we take catastrophes. It's like well if you'd've just—

RW: Yeah.

DH: No, that's not the case at all. When I watched 9/11 and when I watched the shuttle—

SG: The Challenger.

DH: Yeah. Oh my goodness, your heart just goes out to people. In fact, our little group of people, when there was a flood down here—

RW: It killed all those people.

DH: And it washed all the homes away down on the creek bank, our people came down and donated time and effort for several days. Just a big group of people, to just help people in need. That's not everybody but—

RW: There's a certain amount of open mindedness—

DH: Absolutely.

RW: That people, y'know, they sympathize with other people's problems, just like, y'know—

DH: A catastrophe is a catastrophe, it's not, I mean there's been a lot of things out in Colorado City, like Truman Barlow's family. Years ago, his wife was heading to town with about eight children to go to the dentist and whatnot and they had an accident and it killed four

people in one family. Tragic. The whole community, everybody comes together and tries to bless people. When my husband passed away, we had so many people come and just work on our home, bring food, whatever they could do, just anything people could do. We were delivering *The Spectrum* in Colorado City at the time and the lady that would come to our house she'd say, "Where'd you get your new couches? Where'd you get this?" I said, "Just the people in the community. Just come in and they bless you." She was totally shocked. Because one family came in and they brought new furniture for the living room. Just out of the goodness of their heart. People donate money, people donate food. It took me months to write all the thank you notes for the people that I knew of. That we had record of, there's a lot of stuff that we have no record of who it came from or where, y'know, yeah, people care. Even a lot of people that no longer, should I say, claimed me came to our home. Like, Uncle Fred Jessop. He came through, which shocked me, I mean I love the man, and he always loved me, but there had been that separation, but he still came. Five minutes, but he came, which I really appreciated.

SG: You bring up Uncle Fred. How did the relationship change as far as he and Aunt Lydia being your literal family, but also as he grew older and kind of, what happened towards the end of his life was probably—

DH: They ran the clinic.

SG: Right.

DH: The medical, maternity, whatever, and Aunt Lydia did everything. And Uncle Fred took care of the people in many, many ways. And as time went on, backtrack a little bit. I went to El Paso to learn to be a midwife at one point in time, so I had some experience. So people were coming to me, wanting midwife help, because they would no longer serve them out to Hildale. I'm going, "You've got to be kidding. Did you go talk to 'em?" And they said, "Oh, yeah, Aunt Lydia turned us away."

RW: That wasn't like her at all.

DH: It just shocked me. But it was true. They were beginning to turn away anybody that did not stay—

RW: With their group.

DH: And, so, that's kinda how that separation with them, with Aunt Lydia and Uncle Fred, pretty soon you'd go up there and they treated you totally different. I mean, if I went up with a sick baby or something, they'd put you off and put you off and put you off, until you felt like, "Well, I might as well go home because they're totally ignoring me." And the people they had working there had all changed, different people, different attitude, they treated you like you were not family like we used to be treated. And so, the clinic changed dramatically. It got to be very uncomfortable, I was having some health issues that I had been going up there for and pretty soon I'd just rather not go up there at all

because of the way they treated me. And it wasn't outright, "We don't want you here." but it was just the little, subtle—

RW: They just didn't, wouldn't talk to you. Pretty much.

DH: Just treated you like you were somebody they'd rather not deal with. That was different. That was real different than what it used to be. And the fact that they were turning away people that were gonna have a baby, that were already on their list, now they're turning 'em away. That didn't fly.

SG: Do either of you recall when Aunt Lydia passed away?

DH: Yeah, I remember.

RW: Oh, yeah. She was very much a part of their FLDS group.

SG: How did that loss, as far as how the group treated you or treated other people—

DH: Totally changed.

SG: How was that in comparison to the situation you talked about with your mother?

DH: Well, Aunt Lydia changed years before, she was changing, Uncle Fred was changing. But when they were gone, out of the picture, —

RW: The whole thing took a flip-flop.

DH: It was not the same at all.

SG: How far apart did they pass away from each other?

DH: I [don't] remember the dates—

RW: A few years.

DH: It was several years.

RW: About five years or something.

DH: I don't remember. I'm not a date rememberer.

RW: Yeah.

SG: It's just good to have, kind of, like, and idea. Like, a ballpark.

RW: Yeah there's definitely a—

DH: Five years is probably in there somewhere. But Uncle Fred was out of the picture long before he passed away. He disappeared. So he wasn't there either.

SG: But as far as funeral services for Aunt Lydia, did you know of them doing it the same as what happened when you tried to see your mother?

RW: Pretty much.

SG: That was already standard procedure by then?

DH: They had some funerals that I went to their viewings that I wished I wouldn't have. Like Aunt Lucy Barlow, Aunt May Jessop, —

RW: I didn't go to either one of those.

DH: I came away just being sick at heart, just sick. Just because of so many things—

RW: Stupid changes that they'd take 'em away from one man and marry 'em to another when they're so old they wouldn't know the difference. It was just ridiculous. Totally ridiculous.

DH: Lee Bistline's funeral was very sad to me, too.

SG: What kinds of things were causing, or what in your mind—

DH: What is it that made you feel bad?

DH: Aunt Lucy Barlow and Aunt May Jessop are our mother's sisters. Her full sisters. [Laughter] Everybody is! No. Mother had about thirteen sisters. And they're all part of the community. Now there's one, Aunt Emma that always treated us good. You remember Aunt Emma?

RW: Mhmm.

DH: She always called us by name, she always treated us very well, even though she's over there and we're here. But at Aunt Lucy Barlow's funeral, she had been Louis Barlow's first wife. Here they'd kicked Louis out, then he died. And here's Aunt Lucy, an elderly lady, and they married her to a man with a young family, huge family, and they had pictures of them together and all this stuff that just made me gag. It's like, she didn't belong there. They'd brainwashed her to make her think she was happy bein' put there. And they had all these love notes and all this, I mean it just literally made me sick. 'Cause this was Aunt Lucy, this was my mother's sister that was the first wife of Louis Barlow that had been there—

RW: Ever since we'd known her.

DH: True and faithful her entire life. And they portrayed her as this, I don't even know how to say it, it just was gross. It was disgusting to me. Yet everybody was praising how wonderful she was. And you go to the funeral and she's with this whole different family; she didn't belong there. Y'know they line people up, each side of the casket at a funeral, it wasn't her family. Made me hurt inside. I don't know if I should tell all those kind of things, but it was really disturbing. And the same with Aunt May and same with Dan Barlow's wife, that was married to our brother. That wasn't right, in my estimation. So, you see some of those kind of things, and it's like, "I'm so grateful I'm not in the mix. I'm so grateful."

RW: Sometimes I wonder how we ended up being so lucky.

DH: For sure. That we're not in that scrambled up mess. I mean it's one thing if your husband dies and you go remarry or whatever, but to just leave a man that's still alive and you've always been true and faithful and you've had a wonderful life, and go get in the middle of another one? It didn't sit well. At all. But that was Warren Jeffs' business. That was his way of doing things. Didn't happen until he come along. At least not like that. And I never met Warren Jeffs so I have to be careful what I say 'cause I don't know the man. Never even seen him in real life.

RW: Well, you know what he did.

DH: I know things that have happened. And a lot of things that I did not believe until I started to hear 'em firsthand from some of our own siblings. It's just so outlandish, you just shake your head in disbelief. So, just grateful that I'm where I am.

SG: What are some of the hallmarks, for lack of a better word, of life in Centennial Park in the last twenty or thirty years? Or how have things changed in Centennial Park in the last twenty-five years?

DH: I'll start with this. I'm a dinosaur no matter where I'm at [laughter] and I feel it. Even in Centennial Park. Because I'm not a modern woman. I'm just me. I'm an old Short Creek kid. And I'm still just me and I'm different from most of the young adults in Centennial Park. But it doesn't mean I don't appreciate them and love everybody. But like I said, I'm just a dinosaur. And there's a few other people I know that feel the same way. Because we've become a very modern people, a very up-to-date in the world, and I'm still living in old Short Creek. In here.

SG: Except for Cash App.

DH: [Laughter] That's pretty wonderful and I've only had it for a few months and it's like, "Love this!" I'll tell you why. I do flowers for the Christmas program, you're probably aware of that Centennial Park just did. I did all the flowers, all the body flowers. And so here's about, let's see, I did 280 roses, three times, three nights in a row.

RW: Wow.

DH: Because it was eighty, eighty plus students for the college, plus all the academy students, which is a hundred and, anyway, over two hundred, it was about, like 250 roses each night. Well, the people had to pay their own, and guess how I got my money? Before I'd never get paid until January, February, March, never. But because I have Cash App, just about every single person has paid, somebody paid me today that hadn't paid yet. It's like, "This is great!" I'm all for this! You didn't have to go beg or anything. It just popped up.

SG: This is not an advertisement for Cash App, just to be clear. [Laughter]

DH: I'll tell you what. When I first got a cell phone I was embarrassed. Somebody said, "Why in the world would you be embarrassed to have a cellphone?" And I said, "Because it's an extravagance that you can live without." And I'm so used to being old school that I don't have to have a cellphone, but guess what, I use it a hundred times a day!

RW: Everybody is, the whole world is adapted—

DH: So Ruby and I have kept in touch with our cell phones, otherwise—

RW: That's right.

DH: We hardly ever see each other.

RW: As far as the Centennial people, in Centennial Park, I've seen a change comin' over the people in the last ten years. That a lot of the young people, a lot of 'em are quite rebellious, you might say, I guess. It's kind of a little bit of a harsh word, I guess, for it.

DH: They have a different take on life.

RW: Yeah, they do. And I feel the religion is changing a little bit to where they're almost goin' back into the same thing that split the people in the first place, in Colorado City.

SG: Such as?

RW: Like they're kinda clannish, they believe in one man. I dunno, it just feels like it's drawing closer and closer toward that. It's kinda the same thing that happened with the people in Colorado City in the '70s, '80s.

DH: I can say this about Centennial Park. And that is, when we were growing up, if people came into the community, came into "The Work", came and joined "The Work," pretty much the people that came in and joined, took on the characteristics of the people that were already there, the habits, the styles. And as time went on, it became just the opposite. People come in and join and they bring with them their—

RW: Old habits.

DH: Their habits, their characteristics, and our people take that on. And it's kind of a flip-flop.

RW: It's turned around. That is how it's happening.

DH: So, the people of Centennial Park are not the old school like I am. But we're still trying to follow the same direction of principles of the gospel. People have quite a varied idea of what all that is. And yet we have some men, some brethren, that are doing their level best to teach the people according to correct principle, what we consider to be correct principle. But a lot of what they use is the former brethren's teachings, which is the Priesthood discourses that we have. So there's a lot of our dad in there. There's a lot of my father-in-law in there. There's her father-in-law in there. There's y'know, just giving talks and whatnot in there. And those men lived by the teachings they gave. And so a lot of that is what the men of today are trying to teach the people. But they're not catching on like we did.

RW: Well, they didn't experience a lot of the things that we did then, too—

DH: Their lives are so different. Today's world is so different from what we, I mean it's no different than you and your parents, y'know. Each generation's got a whole new—

RW: A whole different life.

DH: A whole different lifestyle.

SG: And you were saying about people joining "The Work," have you found that, not immediately after the split, but as people started getting pushed out of the FLDS, have joined "The Work" in Centennial—

DH: Very few.

RW: Okay. There was a split when the Barlow boys did their little power struggle,

DH: Which was about '70—

RW: In the '70s there was one—

DH: Late '70s.

RW: Then later on the FLDS. So it was two or three splits goin' on at the same—

DH: Right, right.

RW: It's hard to say where The split is, I mean, it's—

DH: And it's bound to happen where we are. It's bound to happen over and over and over.

SG: Well, and that brings me to my next question. In the early days of Centennial organizing locally where they are now, it's my understanding that what is colloquially called the Neilson Naylor Group split away from society at that time. How did that impact Centennial Park?

DH: In a big way. Those people were all in Centennial Park, part of the group, when Brother Timpson died, a lot of their hopes and aspirations died, too. So they broke away. There was Brother Timpson and Brother Naylor and a few of the older men that are now gone and Ivan Nielson just died. And I'm sure that that group of people's gonna have a whole new experience with him gone. Very soon.

RW: Things will be changing a lot—

DH: It's just bound to happen. Because not everybody admires the same person in the same way.

SG: It's my understanding that as Ivan Nielson got older and debilitated, and then when he passed away, like, some of the people in his group had already started kind of closing ranks. So it makes sense to keep seeing this at the death of leaders.

DH: And I'm sure that's going to happen in Centennial Park with the Brethren that are there at this point in time.

RW: They are getting pretty old.

DH: Some of 'em are getting along in years. It's bound to happen.

SG: Are you aware of any other splits either geographically within the Short Creek, Centennial area, or—

DH: There's the people—

SG: Or just within your group even.

DH: There's people in Colorado City that some go with Willie Jessop and some go with Willie Timpson and y'know there's different little factions over there. But I don't get into it, so I don't really know and understand.

RW: When our dad was still around, he predicted that it would be like dropping a ripe watermelon on the ground. It would just go every direction. Which is now happening. That's how I see it. But it's definitely happening.

SG: Do you see the young people in Centennial Park feeling that sort of—

DH: Yes.

SG: Dispersion?

DH: Definitely. One will ask another, “Do you really think there’s a god?” and I’m goin’ “Where did you get that question?” Because they’ve never been taught that. And yet, yeah, it comes up all the time, those kind of, or they’ll say so-and-so doesn’t have any authority over me, and if you don’t want ‘em to, they don’t.

SG: Well, that’s the thing about authority, is that you give it to somebody.

DH: You give it to them. So here’s young people that are turning away from their own parents, which, like we said, we’re the only ones that stuck with what our dad taught pretty much. They’re not wicked people. Our siblings are not wicked people. They just didn’t follow the teachings that our dad gave. We did. Ruby and I have tried. So it sets us apart from the rest. You don’t hate each other, you still love all your family, your siblings. You see these young people in Centennial Park kinda dropping away like flies and it’s goin’ “Darn! What’s goin’ on here?” But it’s a normal process of life, really and truly, no matter who you are or where you are. You have to grow up and make your own decisions.

RW: I have to say that the community in Centennial Park, there’s a certain amount of people who actually are working together. Because last night I went to the play of *On Borrowed Time*, —

DH: I didn’t go.

RW: They did such a good job. It was really enjoyable and they did a super job. But there’s a certain clique of people who work together. The rest of ‘em don’t get a part of that.

DH: But it’s that way anywhere in any community on any street in any home, I wanna say. I always say people think they know who’s the good, the bad, and the indifferent. Just depends on who you’re talkin’ to, which house, which street, which city, which state. Depends on who you’re talkin’ to. I mean Ruby and I think we know who’s the good, the bad, and the indifferent. But if you talk to our siblings it’s a whole different story. She’s the good, I’m the bad and the indifferent. [Laughter] So my feeling is we can’t just judge one another, that’s God’s job.

SG: To kinda circle back around to something you said at the beginning that your family is really part of the local history as far as geography goes. How have either of you experienced the development and modernization of Centennial Park in a physical and geographical way, not necessarily—

DH: I just go, “Wow!”

RW: Where’s all this comin’ from?

DH: How'd this happen?

RW: They've been definitely upgrading fast. It really is. It's just, exploding.

DH: The reason it's so shocking to my system is because growing up we did not have money. And it takes money to have buildings and houses and jobs, and it takes money to make money and yet it's happening. Y'know there's so many people there at home now that it's just amazing. In past years everybody's had to go out and find a source of income. That's what I had to do as a young person. I went out to work at fourteen years old. I'm still working. So it's amazing, truly amazing.

RW: Centennial Park is definitely, in the next few years it's gonna be a whole different place. Because, like, when you drive down the highway, you see where the big new Bees is gonna be. As soon as that gets together it's just gonna go crazy.

SG: I was here two weeks ago, three weeks ago, and the amount of work that got done between then and now. And the time before that that I was here. I was like, "Oh my gosh, this is gonna be enormous, for one."

RW: And then there's the new—

SG: The clinic just opened.

RW: And the big, another building that's being built—

DH: The PRMI building.

RW: Yeah, the mortgage building that's a big new one comin' up.

DH: Have you seen that one that's inside of Centennial Park?

SG: No, I haven't, but I think I saw the crane.

DH: If you go past the Bees store, the little grocery store and go down to that next corner, you can't miss it.

RW: It's where the crane is.

DH: It's a four story, PRMI building.

SG: Wow.

DH: When they put those buildings in that the store is in right now, it was amazing. I had the flower shop in there for a while, in one of those buildings. The rent was more than I could afford. So we moved into a little trailer. But it's movin' along at a high speed.

RW: It really is.

SG: I guess I can backtrack before I start this last line of questions. Is it safe to assume that both of you have lived the principle?

RW: Yeah.

DH: I have. But my husband passed away, so life changed.

SG: In what ways, if you don't mind me asking?

DH: The woman that was my sister-wife divorced my husband before he passed away and that made a great change in our life. At this point in time we're becoming friends again, I'll put it that way. It's been twenty years. But she's still around. She went and remarried and then that didn't work so she came back home, so she's in the community and we're becoming friends again, which we weren't for a long time. We weren't enemies, we just, ways separated, parted ways because she went a different direction.

SG: Do you see your children's generation, or even your children specifically, continuing in "The Work" and in plural marriage?

DH: Not all of them. Some of them. Some of them definitely, some of them definitely not. Which, it's their choice when it comes right down to it.

SG: One of the common misconceptions is that the big difference fundamentalist groups and the LDS church is just celestial marriage, or the definition of celestial marriage. What are other doctrines and policies that Centennial Park still holds from the early church that distinguishes Centennial Park from the LDS church?

RW: Hmm, not sure where to go on that one.

DH: I'm not either. Just common good principles. Gospel principles, I call them the Principles of the Gospel that our father taught are still being taught by the Brethren in Centennial Park today.

SG: And what are some of the most important principles?

DH: To adhere to the teachings of Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith. And there's so much in the world today against Joseph Smith that it just is amazing to me. Because of the good that he accomplished in his life. But I see that going away among the young people too, they don't have appreciation for that. But it's still being taught. The principles that Joseph Smith taught and that Brigham Young and all his men, that set of brethren taught, are still being taught among our "Work." Which are pretty basic. Which I think the LDS church tries to teach those same things, but I think they've kind of—

RW: Veered off to a different angle.

DH: Let go of a whole lot of it.

SG: So growing up, or even in Centennial Park, was there things like, Law of Consecration, Adam-God doctrine, those kinds of Principles that other Fundamentalist groups

DH: Don't believe anymore—

SG: No. Most of them do, I think.

DH: I think people have the same general idea but people go at it from a different angle. And this is what turned me away from some of the Colorado City people, is they just started veering off to the left instead of holding steady to the course that our brethren in that day taught. I can't even say what it was, but it was like, "I don't like this anymore. I don't like—"

RW: It's changing.

DH: So-and-so gets up in church and talks and it makes you just go, "Now, what?" Because there's just a tiny little bit of takin' you over here when we're supposed to still be goin' straight and they went off the track. But they do it in such a way that they're so loving and so kind and so squishy.

RW: Gently blow you off.

DH: It gets so uncomfortable. And right now you get told what you get told and it's the truth and if you don't want it you don't have to take it. But it's the straight path. I'm not a preacher so I don't do very well with religious things. I have it in here but I'm not good at giving it to somebody else other than my kids.

RW: I've never seen a better sermon-giver than your daughter, Thressa, [laughter] even when she was like six years old she could give you a sermon like nobody else.

DH: She's still doin' it and she's just turned thirty-one. Yeah, she's a talker, she's a doer. But to me the principles of the gospel are unchangeable. And when people start makin' 'em into, just love each other.

RW: That's all you need.

DH: It's like, there's more to love than just bein' lovey-dovey. You know, there's—

RW: There's principles—

DH: There's principles, there's tough love, you don't love your kids by giving them Christmas presents, you love them by teaching them how to be a good person and expecting them to

do it. So many people are so lazy anymore that they have no expectations. I said to one lady, “Why don’t you expect your kids to do such-and-such.” and she said, “Oh, hell. I hate that word.” I’m goin’, “How do you raise children without expectations? What are they gonna learn if you don’t expect them to do what needs to be done? They’re not gonna learn to clean their room if you don’t expect them to, even though you say it to them. And I get kinda wound up and I’m kind of a strict mother—

RW: That’s why your kids are as good as they are—

DH: I have to back off a little bit, y’know, and not get too strict with grandkids and everybody else’s kids because I’ve already had my turn. My kids are all grown up, married, I have to learn how to just let them have their turn. Because I see the young children, I mean I’ve got a little granddaughter right there and she’s an absolute sweetheart. But I’m not her parents. So I have to remind myself to back off and not tell Olivia what to do and how to do it, in every aspect. Although she and I have a special connection. She loves to be with me and I love her to be with me.

RW: Talented little squirts. [Laughter]

SG: That’s kind of all I have for—

DH: There’s one thing I wanted to say about our bodies, our clothing, our style. And that is, our father used to say, “Our bodies are not secret, but they’re sacred and you don’t just share it with the world.” Therefore we clothe our bodies. And that’s where I come on real different to people, I go in and live with people. This family’s known me for over ten years now. I’m part of the woodwork in this family, I’m with their mother way more than any of them are. I know her better than they do. And they have totally accepted me, but in the beginning I had to say, “I will accept you for whatever you are, will you please accept me for whatever I am?” And I dress differently and I, well, I don’t comb my hair anymore. Y’know, I’m totally an alien compared to their lifestyle. I mean, they come in here with their little granddaughters that are that age with little short shorts on, and I don’t do that. But that’s their choice. That’s okay. But my father, our father, taught us, “Your bodies are not secret, but they’re sacred so cover them up and keep them for a special purpose.

RW: Clean and decent, yeah.

DH: Therefore, we dress the way we dress. And I don’t think other people feel any different, but they just haven’t been taught the way we’ve been taught. And that’s okay. I can accept that for somebody else. They’re not bad people, they’re not wicked, they’re not gross, they’re not perverts, they just do differently than we do. Because that’s what our dad taught us, and our mothers. And a lot of people don’t understand why we dress the way we dress. That’s why. And a lot of people never heard that little phrase, y’know. Because everybody’s got a body, man, woman, child. Everybody’s got a body and they have to learn what it’s about and what it’s for and what you do with it and we do, too. We’re no different. But we’ve been taught to clothe our bodies and keep them sacred,

that's why the LDS used to dress the way they dress, but they no longer wear the garments and all that, they kinda lost that, part of that principle. But we still do it a little differently. For whatever that's worth.

SG: Well, that brought a different question to mind. If you don't mind, well, whatever you're comfortable sharing about garments. Because there's a lot of differentiation, even amongst the fundamentalist movement, but in all of Mormonism, of y'know what they are for, when they're worn, y'know that kind of thing and their relevance to people's, I guess spiritual journey, but also their everyday lives.

DH: Well, I can tell you what I went through as a girl, and this is quite personal so I don't know if I want it recorded, but—

SG: Well, for the purposes of right this moment, if you are comfortable sharing any amount please do, otherwise we can move on from there.

DH: Okay. Like I said, we had several sisters that are all about the same age. And when we were teenagers we decided we wanted to wear long underwear. That's what our parents did and when you grew up that's what you did. I used to say, "Why does a girl grow up wearing long socks, long undershirt, long sleeves, long slip, and they get to be a teenager they take everything off and they just wear panties and a little skinny skirt?" I was just like, "How does this work now? Aren't we supposed to be keeping our bodies sacred, and yet we're exposing them to a degree." So my sisters and I, this was when Ruby was still just a little kid, we decided we wanted to wear long underwear, so we did. I've been doin' it ever since. Nobody made me, nobody forced me, nobody said don't, nobody said do. There was examples around us that we wanted to be like, that were good. And so, here I am. Nobody's ever told me to do any different. And I've always been comfortable with it. I think everybody has their own take on it, some people put it on and say, "Hell no! I'll never put that on again." That's fine. They can do that. I don't care what other people do. It's their right, it's their body, I'll put it that way. So that's just a little experience of mine.

SG: Makes sense.

DH: Everybody does something a little different, whatever they do. I've tried to teach my children to cover their bodies and keep them sacred, which they've done a pretty good job, all of 'em so far. I don't think any of 'em have been in trouble and done bad things, none of 'em have gone off and got connected before they were married or anything like that. So, they've all done well, which I appreciate. They're all still around, they all still claim me and I claim them. We have a great family. And I think, I attribute it to the principles that my father and my husband taught. Like I say, "Life's good, can't complain."

SG: Ruby, any last thoughts or comments on the last couple questions?

RW: Yeah. In our family, when my oldest kids were comin' up, they were like ten or twelve and that. We taught them to keep their bodies covered and modest like she was talkin'. We had a little three-and-a-half-year-old boy pass away in our family. The community came together and helped us. They knew that he was gonna pass away, so he was in the hospital and his mom was gone. While she was gone, the community came together and they were gonna help us with anything that we needed, because they knew that he was gonna pass away. While she was gone, they came in and took all of the kids' clothes and they wanted to replace them with new ones. Well, they replaced all of the clothes that we considered modest with things that were totally not what we would ever put on the kids. That was a turning point. That was just something we couldn't correct after that. So that's what the kids started wearing and that's just something that turned us around. It's not something that I appreciated at all. I appreciate the fact that they were willing to come and help and all that, but they didn't bother to do it how we—

DH: To consider what you felt.

RW: Yeah.

SG: So these were outside people—

RW: No. It was our own community people. That was the hardest part, was that we, some of the people that came to help, that's how their kids dressed so they just brought us what they thought—

DH: That just shows that every household has its own standards. Every family's different from the next, even though we're all one group of people.

RW: And even though the parents dress modestly, it was a turnaround, there's so many of 'em that are grown up now, that's just how they are. I mean, you can't reach in and fix 'em.

DH: Can't change 'em.

RW: So that's one of the things that, there's such a huge difference between how people do things, you can't. I guess I could have threw a fit and made 'em take 'em back and change, but you just don't do that when people are willing to come and help.

SG: Yeah, trying to be kind.

RW: It's kind of put us in a bad spot. Kind of has been ever since. [Laughter]

SG: Thank you both so much. Any last—

RW: Yeah. It's been good.

DH: Just hope we haven't exposed anybody or, which I don't think we have.

RW: Said something we shouldn't have.

SG: I think the names were pretty limited.

DH: I mean, you get into personal life and it involves a lot of people, and a lot of things. But, I think that's what helps outsiders understand. To get some idea of where you're comin' from. They're weird, y'know. You might think I'm weird, but you ought-ta look in the mirror.

SG: I was just gonna say, we're pretty weird, too.

DH: I've learned to appreciate people. In my work, doin' this kind of work for forty years now, plus, I don't know how long it's been. I've been married for over fifty, so it's been over forty years since I've been doing this kind of work. You learn that everybody's got goodness in 'em. If you want to find good in a person, you can find it. If you don't, sorry, because every person's got good in 'em.

RW: That's true.

DH: Even the criminals, y'know, people make mistakes and go over the edge because of drugs or something when really, they're genuinely a good person. So I've learned to just allow people to be whatever they are and appreciate whatever good I can see in 'em. And that's been a good experience of goin' out into the world for me, because I'm still me. I've got enough rocks in my pockets to still be me. Whatever that means.

RW: I lost my marbles. [Laughter]

DH: [Laughter] No you haven't. They're still in your pocket.

RW: That's what's weighing me down. Yeah, there's a lot of good things you can learn about other people.

DH: So, when do we get to see what you've recorded?

SG: Well, —

DH: Some future day?

SG: I'm gonna have to turn it off so we can have something to send in.

[END OF RECORDING. END OF INTERVIEW.]