

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

With
Richard Montgomery

Conducted By

Tom Miller

September 1993

Today is September 8, 1993. It is about two or three minutes after two o'clock and we are at the home of Richard Montgomery and my name is Tom Miller I will be asking the questions and Richard Montgomery will be giving the answers for the City of Glendale's Oral History Program.

Good afternoon Richard, thank you very much for taking the time here. This is going to be an opportunity for you to tell me and anyone whoever listens to this tape or looks at the transcript get an idea of your life here in Glendale. May we start at the very beginning.

Mr. Miller: When and where were you born?

Mr. Montgomery: I was born in Muskogee in Oklahoma, on Bastille Day, July 14, 1915.

Mr. Miller: And how many years did you live there?

Mr. Montgomery: I came to California when I was twelve years old.

Mr. Miller: What is it that brought your family out to California?

Mr. Montgomery: My father was a mining engineer in Wyoming in coal mining and after the war and the ban went down, he was out looking for another job and came to Los Angeles and he got in with rock gravel outfits which fit right in with his work. He was an accountant. He was an accountant and went to work for a gravel company.

Mr. Miller: He worked for a gravel company, ya.

Mr. Montgomery: Now, at present time it is CalMat, but at that time it was Union Roth Consumers. Several others consolidated and is now CalMat and is owned by a Japanese company and their office is down on San Fernando Road.

Mr. Miller: They are here in Glendale?

Mr. Montgomery: All the time.

Mr. Miller: Whereabouts in the City did you live as a child in those days?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, before then?

Mr. Miller: When you moved to Glendale, whereabouts?

Mr. Montgomery: When we first moved to Glendale, I mean moved to California, we lived on up Alessandro Street. Alessandro Street was just down where the Number Two Freeway passes through there. There was Maxanan Studios and all the other studios were in that

area at that time. I guess we were there about a year before we moved to Glendale.

Mr. Miller: Where in Glendale did you move to?

Mr. Montgomery: Right on the corner of Laurel Street and Brand Boulevard, where the present Red Cross building is.

Mr. Miller: Now we will get back to this later - but your home was at the very site where the Red Cross is at present?

Mr. Montgomery: Actually there were three different places - one was right across the street, one was where Los Feliz Ford is situated, and one was where the Red Cross is, and one right west of there. We had three different addresses there - back and forth across the street.

Mr. Miller: Now here it is many decades later and you are still back down at the Red Cross headquarters.

Mr. Montgomery: Well actually not working there but with the Red Cross.

Mr. Miller: You volunteered there?

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Miller: Is it not some kind of ironic that fifty five years later you end up at the same location?

Mr. Montgomery: I did when I was a kid there we had golf course and the golf course became quite popular and all the other kids in the neighborhood we had our holes and bid all our stuff for a miniature golf course and I have a picture taken from the home where I live overlooking the golf course right down and I gave it to Bill Duckin of the Red Cross so he can have it. A memorabilia that he can show.

Mr. Miller: Is it on a vacant lot next door?

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Miller: Eighteen hole course?

Mr. Montgomery: No, no about eight or nine.

Mr. Miller: How old were you?

Mr. Montgomery: Probably about fifteen.

Mr. Miller: What did you use - did you use real golf balls?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh ya my dad had left hand clubs so it did not make any difference as long as you hit the ball.

Mr. Miller: How many kids did this with you?

Mr. Montgomery: Probably about five.

Mr. Miller: Do you know their names?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh sure.

Mr. Miller: What are their names?

Mr. Montgomery: Well Bill Kline, he was one and I just saw him at the reunion of the Glendale Hoover classes of the 1930s. Also Carl Cam and I saw him Sunday up there at the oldtimers picnic and Peter Bancroft, he was living on north side of Laurel and Brand. Peter Bancroft is still around. That is basically about all I can think of it at this moment. Of course I had three brothers.

Mr. Miller: Were those your five playmates when you were a child?

Mr. Montgomery: Basically.

Mr. Miller: How would you characterize your family's life style when you were a child?

Mr. Montgomery: Well now we are talking about the late twenties and going into the depression and I wouldn't say it was bad. My father worked and my mother was a seamstress down there.

Mr. Miller: Did she take work into the home?

Mr. Montgomery: No, no she worked for a shirt company. It was Baldwin Shirt Company and they were down on South Brand almost at San Fernando Road. So basically it really didn't hurt us as far as I was concerned. We did not really feel it.

Mr. Miller: Did both your parents work all through the depression?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah.

Mr. Montgomery: That was a big help. My father went from one job to another once his company consolidated but he stayed with the job right till the very end. He was never out of work.

Mr. Miller: Did you work as a kid?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah, delivered pamphlets for the Gateway Theater down there and we would get free passes for the movies by scattering pamphlets around the neighborhood.

Mr. Miller: Where was the Gateway theater?

Mr. Montgomery: The Gateway theater was on San Fernando Road above the train station at Cerritos Avenue and the next street south of there.

Mr. Miller: What kind of movies did they show back then?

Mr. Montgomery: Well that was the oldtimers - like the 'Last Remaining Seats' that the L.A. Conservancy put on here recently at the four big theaters in L.A. and those are the ones and Charlie Chaplin, and with Al Jolson and westerns and they always of course had a serial running and never ending and so you had to come back the next week and this would go on and on and on.

Mr. Miller: Were those talkies or just sound?

Mr. Montgomery: Talkies, because Al Johnson was the real first talky that came out.

Mr. Miller: Who was your favorite movie star in those days?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh well, might have been Tom Max? Or some western star more likely.

Mr. Miller: Quite appropriate for a young boy!

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah, and besides this I sold newspapers on corner of San Fernando and Brand right across from Seeley's furniture.

Mr. Miller: What newspaper?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, at that time The Examiner.

Mr. Miller: How much was it at that time?

Mr. Montgomery: Maybe a quarter or more.

Mr. Miller: A quarter! Roughly how many pages were there in the newspaper?

Mr. Montgomery: Well I would not remember but nothing like today. There was a weekend edition which had the comics and so forth and was the best seller.

Mr. Miller: How old were you when you distributed papers?

Mr. Montgomery: I was fourteen or fifteen.

Mr. Miller: Did you ever read the newspaper or have favorite sections you ever read?

Mr. Montgomery: Yes, the comics, and that's about it. Like most boys. Yeah, yeah, that was general. And also I used to and that is when the street car came up Glendale Avenue it was Glendale Eagle Rock Street car and I used to get on it in the evening and ride it over to Eagle Rock and ended at Eagle Rock Boulevard in Colorado Street and there was a theater just above half a block south of the corner of Colorado and Eagle Rock Boulevard and I used to get over there in the night and when people came out of the show I would sell newspapers, and I would give the conductor a newspaper and he would let me ride free and I would ride back down to Los Feliz.

Mr. Miller: Now was this something that your manager asked you to do or was just that an initiative?

Mr. Montgomery: I just did it to make a few bucks.

Mr. Miller: What kind of income would you get as a kid? Two dollars a week, ten dollars a week?

Mr. Montgomery: Probably, maybe two dollars a week.

Mr. Miller: That gave you enough for candy?

Mr. Montgomery: Got a free movie and that would buy ah... living at home and folks did not try to rent in those days and that was enough to get by. Some bubble gum money and soda pop money and that's it. Once in a while and those were for a nickel in those days.

Mr. Miller: Where did you go for Hamburgers?

Mr. Montgomery: Right on the corner of Los Feliz and Brand Boulevard not on the corner but next to it and in those days it was a Library and Fire Station and next to it was the hamburger stand.

Mr. Miller: Richard it seems like this is probably sixty years ago we are talking about and yet you name these places all well like yesterday.

Mr. Montgomery: I cannot give you the dates exactly but I remember these were the events that happened in that area.

Mr. Miller: What about the other significant landmarks - you mentioned the theaters, the burger place.

Mr. Montgomery: Well of course the Cerritos school was a big old building at that time.

Mr. Miller: Where was that?

Mr. Montgomery: On Cerritos between Glendale Avenue and Brand Boulevard and that was a big three story building but the top floor has been condemned so we were on the two lower floors and many people attended this school because it had a fire escape that came down on the south side of the building from the third floor and we kids would climb up this fire escape and slide down because it was three stories high. This is one thing I remember about that. Then of course was the Church the typical Presbyterian Church and that was on Laurel Avenue and Central Avenue and another thing on Central where the Glendale Memorial is, there was The Hi-Bottling Company. They came in there and sold soda pops there before the hospital moved in. Of course I remember the Tropical Feed and Fuel because theirs was a big hay barn and we used to go in there and run through the hay and one time I got locked in because there was a certain danger and kids set fire or you get hurt and normally the gates were wide open you just run through the hay and pitch and toss. One time I got locked in and the gate was opened at five o'clock and had to explain at home why we were late.

Mr. Miller: How many hours were you in there?

Mr. Montgomery: Probably two or three hours - we were all boys.

Mr. Miller: You talked about Cerritos school. What other schools did you attend?

Mr. Montgomery: I attended Cerritos through sixth grade and then to Roosevelt till the ninth, and then Glendale High.

Mr. Miller: What year did you graduate Glendale High?

Mr. Montgomery: 1934.

Mr. Miller: Was that a great year to graduate High school?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, it was a rough year for jobs. It was hard to get a job in 1934 and a lot of people were going into service, and it was kind of rough. But I had a bicycle and I had a friend from whom I could get a ride from and lived on Los Feliz area and Brand. I had Japanese friends - Jo Oka - Jo Oka Florist he was on Los Feliz on Glendale side just on east of the car track and he was a friend of the family and they had a hot rod on the corner of Los Feliz and Brand Boulevard.

Mr. Miller: What kind of hot rod?

Mr. Montgomery: They were a lot of fees. That was really the first time they were hotting things up - that was in the thirties, 1930 or 1932.

Mr. Miller: When you were in Glendale High what extra curricular activities were you in - sports, German class?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, basically I was interested in the machine shop and, and the girls. I used to walk the girls home. Would walk them down to Adams square - my friends lived there and I would walk from there.

Mr. Miller: What favorite remembered projects did you work on the machine shop? Did you make anything?

Mr. Montgomery: I liked working blacksmithing and liked two or three different things.

Mr. Miller: Do you remember?

Mr. Montgomery: Plant stands, and scoop shovels - little shovels like that for the fire place and things and pokers and things like that

Mr. Miller: Did you sell them or give them as gifts?

Mr. Montgomery: In fact I have the plant stand around here till recently not too long ago. The top rusted off of it and let that get away.

Mr. Miller: After sixty years, do you recall any particular characteristics of this student body when you were in school. Was there a lot of school spirit, very little school spirit, football game?

Mr. Montgomery: Of course there was rivalry and then between Hoover and Glendale. The school had probably thirty-one or something at Hoover, I went to Hoover for one year in 1933 and went back to Glendale in 1934.

Mr. Miller: How did that happen?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, I had a very good friend that grew up with down there in the neighborhood and he and his folks moved up to on the corner of Broadway and Central right across from the Galleria and it was an apartment building and is still an apartment building and there was Carpet Door near where the Phone Company is now. On that corner, and these folks had an apartment there so he moved from my district Glendale into the Hoover district and he said if you are a real good guy you will transfer and go to Hoover with me and we were very close friends and I talked to my mom and she made some excuses - while we are looking for another place we may end up in Hoover district to get me transferred. So I transferred to Hoover and went for the first six months and then this guy moved to Pasadena so I went back to Glendale.

Mr. Miller: Was this the Glendale High on Harvard?

Mr. Montgomery: No, this is the Glendale High in its present location.

Mr. Miller: What kind of changes have you seen in the high schools or school district in the past sixty-five years that you have noticed? Are kids any different or kids are kids or they could be changed?

Mr. Montgomery: Kids are kids. I think with now so many different ethnic groups, at that time there were the Japanese and few Mexicans and no others and big supplies of those - Japanese and Mexicans in those days, and not even one percent, and no foreigners.

Mr. Miller: Did everyone seem to get along with each other?

Mr. Montgomery: Pretty well. Of course we used to have our fist fight and then everyone would say fight, fight and rush over and in those days it was fist fights and have a bloody nose, and you did not take any gun. There were certain guys that were bullies. They just stood there and if you were a freshman coming into Glendale High well you were supposed to count hours something that way and if you did not do it they would do it for you or would threaten to beat you up and rest of that stuff. You were a new freshman and you did not know what is going to happen and basically that stuff, and I do not think we had too many problems in those days.

Mr. Miller: Did you ever get to play in those?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh sure!

Mr. Miller: You did?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh sure!

Mr. Miller: Punches?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah, punches. I was best at wrestling rather than fist fighting.

Mr. Miller: Did you wrestle for a team?

Mr. Montgomery: No just wrap him around the neck and throw him down.

Mr. Miller: I bet you were scrappy.

Mr. Montgomery: I did not take anything from them, you know.

Mr. Miller: Before we move on in time, you told me a story last time we were together. You told me about your gold mining days. With your uncle is that I remember right?

Mr. Montgomery: Yes that was during the high school days and that was up in Briggs canyon and some of these canyons up above in La Crescenta right now, he made gold washers. It is a dry washer and he would recruit me to go up there and I would shovel the sand into the dry washer and he would crank it and when you crank it would create a vacuum and air blew up the lighter stuff and would shift and would shook all - we call it tailers at the tail end of it and here at the end of it was streak of gold, black sand and gold, and I really never got into that. Later on I got into more money, five or seven years after that.

Mr. Miller: After high school?

Mr. Montgomery: Yes.

Mr. Miller: Tell us about that. Here in Glendale still - mining

Mr. Montgomery: Well, after I graduated and I have my uncle who knew a fellow in Hollywood that was going to rerun a tungsten tailings up at Bishop - this mine had worked all through the war - 11,000 feet up there in Bishop and my uncle asked me if I wanted to go too and I was out of high school and things were a little rough and so I grabbed it and there was four or five months work up there before it snowed and get out. So I worked for \$2 a day and room and board and never collected but anyway being out there and fishing and all the rest of that stuff. Worked up there during the summer time before the second snow and then when I came home then I worked at a chicken ranch and at that time my folks moved to North Hollywood and I worked on a chicken ranch out there on Burbank Boulevard for dollar an hour or probably less or maybe probably forty or thirty-five cents an hour.

Mr. Miller: This was in the fall I guess - did you go back to their house in North Hollywood?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh ya - because they had moved after graduation after high school.

Mr. Miller: Are you the youngest?

Mr. Montgomery: The oldest of four boys.

Mr. Miller: What are the span in ages?

Mr. Montgomery: Well they were about two years apart for the three of us and three years for the youngest.

Mr. Miller: Were you pretty close together? What were their names?

Mr. Montgomery: Well Lauren was my next oldest, and he died. Robert he was my next oldest he died and my brother Jack lives in La Crescenta.

Mr. Miller: How old is he?

Mr. Montgomery: Well Jack is 8 years younger than I, then he will be 70 years old.

Mr. Miller: Are you close?

Mr. Montgomery: Quite close and we are going to San Francisco next week because he hasn't been there for a long time. He has had health problems and because of this he feels that rather than stay home and die, get out and see something so we are going out to see something. So then I worked up there two summers - the next summer after that and I had to come back down because of the rain I mean because of the weather and still not getting paid and working for a percentage and did not know how much the percentage was but it was O.K. and I didn't need any money so then he went down to Riverside County over by Temecuela, Awanga, and going over towards Warner Hot Springs and there were Tungsten deposits up in there so I went up there with him the same guy again - no pay but ran the bulldozer, building roads down into this place.

Mr. Miller: No pay!

Mr. Montgomery: Well it was another deal - was supposed to get paid when it started to producing something then we were going to get a percentage of it.

Mr. Miller: You got room and board and percentage and clothes.

Mr. Montgomery: And some expenses but then I worked up there for about eight months and it was less than paying and I worked independent for a while up there and he paid me and made about two dollars a week or something that way and so living O.K. on camp site and I had located a couple of claims on my own down there which I thought someday might produce and tungsten was not very valuable at that time. The war was over and most of those materials used during the war were not very valuable so I guess I was down there until about 1938 and I came home and got a job up with my dad where he worked.

Mr. Miller: You say you used to drive - work with cranes.

Mr. Montgomery: I operated cranes. One of my first jobs was on down San Fernando Road here by side of Fletcher where they had a

plant there and they moved a Batch plant in and that's where we loaded the first lexers with concrete and put quite a big bridge, a big bridge down on San Fernando Road so that was my first experience with heavy equipment although I had run a bulldozer down below down in Riverside County. So from now on I was there until I was married.

Mr. Miller: Tell us about your wife? How did you meet?

Mr. Montgomery: Well it was a blind date actually and I was still working at the mine down there in San Diego in Riverside County and my dad used to come down once a month and bring me supplies or something just to get away, and one time he came down with a cousin, my cousin had been working at Lockheed and he brought my cousin down there and the car broke down on this road coming in down there and it was night. They walked down in there looking into my tent at about twelve o'clock in the morning walking through there and of course the old story about the rattle snakes in those days and so on, and we had a lot of rattles coming in, so he shows my cousin then - he told me that he had a friend here who lived next door to a gal and he said if I talked to her and she could get a date for me so I met with her on a blind date.

Mr. Miller: And where did you go?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, where did I go on a blind date? Probably at that time they had a model-A Ford and had a rumble seat at the back and we rode around in the rumble seat. It is kind of like what they do along Van Nuys now and it was like that in those places. Just riding around. Going to Bob's for Hamburgers and the mall and that was a big deal.

Mr. Miller: In those days ...what was her first name - her last name?

Mr. Montgomery: Natalie Snow.

Mr. Miller: She was from Glendale?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah. She was in kindergarten while I was in fourth grade at Cerritos.

Mr. Miller: Did you know each other?

Mr. Montgomery: No. No. No way.

Mr. Miller: So, when you were in the sixth grade she was in the second grade.

Mr. Montgomery: Actually after kindergarten her folks moved into the Horace Mann district - so only the one year in kindergarten that she was at Cerritos.

Mr. Miller: And you didn't find this out until fifteen years later?

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Miller: So you hit it off pretty good?

Mr. Montgomery: When I came in I liked her and everything else. At that time I was working and had a model-A Ford model must be of 28 or 29 - it was like a towing car, that is four door without the top.

Mr. Miller: Convertible uh!

Mr. Montgomery: Not really a convertible - it was a calvatory car in those days - no top. But she worked at the Five and Dime or Woolworth, one of those.

Mr. Miller: On Brand - the same one that is on Brand right now.

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah, and so I would pick her off after work and we would go and we looked at lot of nice places and spent a little bit of money then.

Mr. Miller: What were the nice places then?

Mr. Montgomery: Well one was I always remember was the hotel up there, The Arroyo in Pasadena, is now a court building now - that was a hotel back in those days and they had a beautiful landscaped lower park down in the Arroyo swimming pool, tables all set up, had dancing and music and that was one place and then we used to go to The Old Power Bar which is out on Vermont, used to do a lot of dancing there, and sometimes go down to the beach and so forth.

Mr. Miller: Did you go to Bob's Big Boy down on Colorado?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh, sure.

Mr. Miller: The drive-in?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh, sure and that is the place to end up before you took them home.

Mr. Miller: And a cherry coke?

Mr. Montgomery: No, mall or something like that.

Mr. Miller: Was the Bob's Big Boy there to hang-out after football games?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yes, Bob's boy was in my class - class of thirty-four in High School and he started that about two years later.

Mr. Miller: I see.

Mr. Montgomery: He borrowed some money from his dad. He first built a little pantry and then expanded it up to a regular drive-up.

Mr. Miller: Well, so what is it about Natalie that struck your fantasy?

Mr. Montgomery: Well she was a pretty girl and well brought up and she was a nice person and in fact because I had been working at the mines and was supposed to be a roughneck and her mother was not too pleased her going with me because her mother like all mothers and fathers want their kids to get married to some professional person. So they were not overly joyed until later years that she had married me because they thought that she could do better and so forth. But anyway we had that little tension there but it was O.K.

Mr. Miller: What were her parents' names?

Mr. Montgomery: Clarence and Margaret Snow. She was a summers if you could believe it. Her name was Margaret Summers. Here they had summers married the snow. Of course they had a rough time during the depression. They were hungry - they had to get out into fields and pick up the left over vegetables and so forth. So it was rough and he had little trouble holding on to a job. He was a brilliant man as far as figure estimating lumber, because his father had a lumber yard up in Oregon, but with the depression and things, it was rough and he was out of work a lot, so his wife ridiculed him a lot that you are not a producer you cannot get a job or you cannot keep a job or something that way, so there was a certain amount of tension. Eventually I worked my way in and he liked me but she was more critical.

Mr. Miller: She ran the house all the time?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah.

Mr. Miller: So how long did you and Natalie date before you got married?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh probably year and a half. We were married on September 1, 1939 and the war was declared on September 1, 1939.

We were in the Gateway Theater when they made the announcement. The day that the United States declared war was on December 7, two months before the United States got into the war. So we were there in the theater on December 7 when they made the announcement.

Mr. Miller: Was that the reason you got engaged on that day or was it just a coincident?

Mr. Montgomery: No, no, this is before that of course. This is before the United States got involved in 39.

Mr. Miller: Where did you live when you were called for question?

Mr. Montgomery: Probably up at my folks.

Mr. Montgomery: I had a job there and so I was staying with my folks and we went to our honeymoon and drove up north Oregon and so forth and we did not have a place to come back to and her mother located a place and I forget the number, the number was 1120 East Doran and its down there where the retirement park or Glendale Park or something. They just had that celebration a couple of weeks ago. Doran was right behind it. It was a nice little duplex and we got it for \$32.50 a month.

Mr. Miller: \$32.50 a month?

Mr. Montgomery: Right, right and then they raised the rent by \$5 or something and so we moved on to Briar Lane down south of Palmer over in Adams Square. That rent was \$32.50 and we moved down there to save \$5 a month because they raised our rent by \$5.

Mr. Miller: Five dollars a month. It was big money back then. Five dollars now you can hardly buy a cup of coffee.

Mr. Montgomery: That's right.

Mr. Miller: So at that time you were still with the Rock Company?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

Mr. Miller: And did Natalie work or did she take off?

Mr. Montgomery: She worked at Five and Dime till we got married. She did not have to work and then when the war came along at that part of time and I had switched my company and I was working for Blue Diamond Corporation out in the Valley and that is when they started that double duty shift at Lockheed so you end up at 4:30 and you worked late till 8:30 and double duty and I would do that because I finished at 3:30 and get down there at Lockheed at 4

o'clock and then would work till 8:30 if she would ride the bus off and we worked together.

Mr. Miller: All night long?

Mr. Montgomery: All night long till I went for service. We would have dinner at the cafeteria - Lockheed cafeteria and we worked Saturdays, whole shift on Saturdays and Sundays so we did not have any children at that time so we just worked and put the money away.

Mr. Miller: Worked and worked and worked and saved. Next step is service.

Mr. Montgomery: Well then we had our son before I went to service and unfortunately he was three years old and he fell into a storm drain behind our house down on Briar Lane and he died from the fall. So then I had no excuse as far as family exemption so then I went for Service.

Mr. Miller: Which branch?

Mr. Montgomery: Rangers - had my basic up in Fortville, Washington, and she got pregnant in the meantime - now I am talking about 1944 and she was pregnant with the second child and I was on a furlough to come home and I got on the train and was packed and was talking to somebody else the other day I was riding on the train. Any way, I requested for more time because of the problem with the child and I was on the train heading back to Fort Louise, Washington, when I came through it I was outside of Mojave and he called my name and here I got extension of time so I got into Tehachepi and was about six hours at Tehachepi. You know anything about Tehachepi - it was nothing? and to catch the next southbound train.

Mr. Miller: You were headed northbound so you got the message got off and came back down.

Mr. Montgomery: Right. I went back to work and I had my thirty day leave and the child lived for thirty days and was born prematurely and had a problem. I worked all the time on this home and when I went overseas, she had a foster home for a couple of kids till I came back home.

Mr. Miller: Now basically you were given a vacation of thirty days from the military and you came home and went to work.

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, I went back to my old job.

Mr. Miller: Right, you told them it was for thirty days?

Mr. Montgomery: That was emergency leave until the baby died.

Mr. Miller: So then you went back, where did you serve?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, I ended up in Germany as an engineer outside of Heidelberg and at that time we were bringing in all the construction equipment in from Belgium, and Holland and France and so forth and we were rebuilding a lot of it that needed to put together because it was all taken apart for ship on rail and we were putting together.

Mr. Miller: These are bull dozers and cranes and construction equipment, and how long did you serve over there?

Mr. Montgomery: About eighteen months.

Mr. Miller: And then you came home?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, I came home and the war was over and got back in my same job again and we have Craig here my third boy he was born 1947 and I went back to work and I worked till about 52 and then an opportunity came up for me to work overseas for the hydrogen bomb over there. We have a home here which is in 52.

Mr. Miller: Is this the home here?

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah. This home by the way is built in 1950.

Mr. Miller: You mind if I describe where it is. It is right across the street from Verdugo Park completely covered with Sycamore trees - about eighty or eighty-five years old. So you have this home and you are going to go overseas to hydrogen bomb testing. So did Natalie go with you?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh no! Oh no!

Mr. Miller: Did she stay here?

Mr. Montgomery: She stayed here and then she took the boy to a foster home for boarding and her folks were in Glendale and they watched out for her, and her father helped her to keep this place up. I was over there for eighteen months and then came back and we ordered a Studiobaker from Don Packard in Glendale. He was the Studiobaker dealer and we ordered a Studiobaker from him and went back to south Indiana and went all down to Mississippi came up to the north coast to go back and across Highland Park up the state.

Mr. Miller: Was it a vacation?

Mr. Montgomery: Yes.

Mr. Miller: How long did it take?

Mr. Montgomery: Thirty days or so.

Mr. Miller: About a month! Gee!

Mr. Montgomery: Then I did not go back to work for the Rocks and Gravel Company. Then I went to independent contractors so I would get on a work list and contractors who did not operate and my name would come up on the list and I would go to work and from that time and in fact just I got a fifty year pin from the Union here the other day - actually fifty-one years in Albert and Engineers.

Mr. Miller: Overall at that time must be an awful lot of construction.

Mr. Montgomery: They started into the freeways and so forth and some of the high rise downtown was starting up.

Mr. Miller: Are those the type of things that you worked on? High rises etc?

Mr. Montgomery: Basically I spent more time with a contractor who did underground storm drain work. I swear we put a storm drain up in every street in the valley. Storm drain work in Chatsworth, Van Nuys and all that area. It even floods even though we put all those storm drains in there.

Mr. Miller: Why is it that? Are they getting stopped up these days?

Mr. Montgomery: They paved so much of it you understand they paved so much of it and everything is a parking lot and there is just no?... it all runs away and you get a lot of rain and all intersections are flooded and another thing is catch basins and that is where the water goes down in to the storm drain and the debris goes all over the catch basins not that too many can't get in there so it goes out into the streets. Anyway, those were good days and I really enjoyed my work.

Mr. Miller: Let us get back to some of your socializing of your old early days. You mentioned you liked to dance, you still like to dance? Did you go out two or three nights a week?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh, I wouldn't say that - just once a week.

Mr. Miller: At least once a week? Have you always been a dancer? You said you and Natalie used to go to the hotel and dance.

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah I would always like to dance.

Mr. Miller: What is your favorite, favorite dance? Well right now is the long dancing in fact we never did get together on the jitterbug - it was just modern dancing.

Mr. Montgomery: Fox trot and waltz. Right fox trot and waltz.

Mr. Miller: Jitterbug that is a dance that fits in a time frame, Waltz and Fox Trot people would do those for centuries. People don't do the Jitterbug so much anymore.

Mr. Montgomery: Well I did see some of it over here at the parks on that Wednesday night when they had the concert which hit the park and they would play some of those tunes from the 40's and the 50's and some of the young were doing that - they were Jitterbugging and a lot of whipping and throwing around.

Mr. Miller: How would you describe the Jitterbugging to someone who is listening to this and has never seen it? How would you describe the jitterbug?

Mr. Montgomery: Well I would say it is very fast. The music is very fast and there is a lot of twirling in it and spinning around and the girl would go down between your legs and you whip her up in the air.

Mr. Miller: Put her up on your head and put her on your hip?

Mr. Montgomery: Yes, yes.

Mr. Miller: Jitter bug, and a lot of fast foot motion?

Mr. Montgomery: You could of course dance with the music.

Mr. Miller: Now the kids back in the 60's and the 70's started doing weird wild dances - are those really that much different from the Jitterbug days - jumping around?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, no I think it was probably about the same, it was just a period of time when they were more active in the different things that they did - like throwing them up in the air and the girl would slide down between your legs and twist her around all that stuff. Well those were the real Jitterbug days, and then it cooled off a little bit and it kind of went into rock and roll and that was just like of a swing.

Mr. Miller: How about other local organizations, clubs, groups - I know you are very involved in the Historical Society and certainly with the Red Cross but over the years have you been a Kiwanian, a Rotarian?

Mr. Montgomery: I was a Mason, I joined the Mason in 1950 at Glendale. This time was Unity down on South Brand - Unity Lodge.

Mr. Miller: Which degree in Mason did you get?

Mr. Montgomery: Well I had all my degrees in the old temple down on South Brand.

Mr. Miller: What did you enjoy with the Masons?

Mr. Montgomery: Well this was in 50 and my father was the Master of San Fernando Lodge at the same time and because it is not like now and television was new and more people were joining like we used to have so many people join and put on degrees on Saturday afternoon we might have three or four degrees on Saturday afternoon because there was not enough during the week and our lodge had expanded at that time and I enjoyed the fellowship of it. I got into doing some coaching and to advance in Masonry you have to learn a certain amount by memory some of the aspects of Masonry and then you go before the lodge and you are asked these questions and you answer and it is a question and answer deal and you have to pass that before you get the qualifications certificate and before you can advance to the next grade well you have to do this and after you have that you studied more about the next degree and became a Master Mason that is third degree Master Mason.

Mr. Miller: Is this the history of Masonry - is it that kind of stuff you learn?

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah basically that and if you wanted to go beyond that say to the shrine which was the most popular one, you have to be a third degree Mason - Master Mason, before you could advance on in to the shrine. There were two other ways to go, one was the Scottish rite and one was the York rite and these were all the degrees to get to go up to the shrine - which is equivalent to thirty second degree Mason shrine.

Mr. Miller: Pardon me I've never asked such a question.

Mr. Montgomery: Sure.

Mr. Miller: How about what civic organizations or community service organizations stand out as being big back in those days?

Mr. Montgomery: I think you heard more about the Red Cross than anything. You can hear about the American Heart Association and you can hear about the American Lung Association, Arthritis and American Red Cross and because of the war and so forth. That was really the basic civic charitable organizations.

Mr. Miller: When did you first start getting involved as a volunteer with the Red Cross?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh almost ten years ago, eight years ago, nine years ago.

Mr. Miller: Do you remember any names of the people back then in the 30's 40's or 50's in the Red Cross?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, basically they are about the same ones still in there. Bill Dutton of course he has been the head of it for many years and he has been a director. Pauline Berg she just got into the ward. Did you hear her the other day she got some awards because she was really active in the Red Cross and in fact she was representing the Red Cross. If someone got hurt and of course I worked for Pauline for all the time that I helped with them. My dad was an Elk besides being a Mason and that is the only organization I worked with.

Mr. Miller: Glendale's transportation system back when you were a kid and in the earlier years you mentioned the street car - that was the red car? Was it?

Mr. Montgomery: No, this came out of L.A.

Mr. Miller: Did you take the red car also?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh sure because it stopped near my home.

Mr. Miller: Were those the forms of public transportation? Did they seem pretty efficient and pretty effective?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh sure.

Mr. Miller: Do you suppose we've changed a lot in the past forty, fifty, sixty years? Do you think that those kinds of public transportation would work in today's world?

Mr. Montgomery: Well they are promoting around in different cities and I was up in Portland last year and Portland has a trolley car that runs through. There is one in San Diego that runs up to the border and they are talking now about Century City. I don't know the line will come from Norwalk to Century City its gone be a rail and of course Glendale and Burbank is working on the rail system - its their first time.

Mr. Miller: You think people will use it in the Cities?

Mr. Montgomery: Well Metrolink seems to have worked out pretty good. S sure does right and of course the subway helps because that people uptown where people have to get in the bus or

something get up town from the Union station. It was very efficient I thought and of course it came down on Hill Street there near the subway building -mile and a long tunnel and something would come out on Hill Street.

Mr. Miller: Back in the early days do you remember if Glendale was a pretty much self contained city? That is meaning were there jobs, residence here in Glendale or did most people work in Los Angeles or the valley.

Mr. Montgomery: Glendale really they did have a certain amount of industry and that was along San Fernando Road and of course around Grand Central which is now a Grand Central Industrial Park, and all along and even south across the railroad track that was all industrial down there

Mr. Miller: Was it light industrial?

Mr. Montgomery: Some of it was heavy industry.

Mr. Miller: Do you have any recollections what they manufactured down there? Bricks or tiles?

Mr. Montgomery: No. Of course Peter Albera he has been down there for fifty sixty years. He is still over the tracks down there on Colorado and he makes concrete. Of course he has done quite well because he had a dealing with the City. You go out in the streets there and the lot on the corner, he looked down the contractor used to put his name press his name to the concrete lab and Peter was out there general contractor so they still have their business as far as I know. As you go further up then there was staffing - staffing I guess making parts and then there were two General Controls - General Controls was just about on the edge of Burbank and Glendale, lot of stuff was going on there, and Monasco some of these others that made parts.

Mr. Miller: Any idea what population size say in the 1930 or 1940?

Mr. Montgomery: I wouldn't know up to maybe the last seven or eight years.

Mr. Miller: Now it's 180,000.

Mr. Montgomery: That's right.

Mr. Miller: So you think probably most people would work outside of Glendale?

Mr. Montgomery: I would say most of them did, because then you had your stores which hired people, but there was no industry for poor people to work.

Mr. Miller: No high rises except for Security Pacific Bank six stories high and first in line.

Mr. Montgomery: That's right.

Mr. Miller: I guess until Glendale Fed.

Mr. Montgomery: Well of course there was Bank of America which came down to which was on the corner of Broadway and Brand, and was across from Strouds.

Mr. Miller: How tall was it?

Mr. Montgomery: Must have been as tall as Security.

Mr. Miller: Six stories? Oh boy Oh boy, Now we've got 28 stories in the middle of Glendale. What about politics in Glendale? I won't necessarily ask you about your impressions of today's politics but past years' politics. What were your impressions?

Mr. Montgomery: Well that didn't really concern me earlier. I was working and providing the family and so forth. My wife she was an active a very active person and she was on her toes about things and a real activist in women's rights and she really pushed all that up. I was working.

Mr. Miller: What year are you talking about?

Mr. Montgomery: I am talking about the 60's, after the Vietnam war. She went to jail for 28 days - she was arrested for protesting at the Induction Center down in L.A. and she would not get any bail and she spent 28 days. She got out of there and this was during the Vietnam war.

Mr. Miller: You had served in World War II?

Mr. Montgomery: Well she had a lot of school friends and some were even killed in the Vietnam war and that was another thing that really hurt her more when the people and fellows that she knew and were in their 25 and 30 and were killed in Vietnam. She was an activist and she knew what was going on. She bought a lot of property while I was gone overseas and lot of expensive properties. At that time you could buy a lot on Los Encinos where the fire was the other day. She bought three lots worth thousand dollars.

Mr. Miller: For each?

Mr. Montgomery: No for all the three. So I went to my parents and I don't know what happened and she fought Caltrans about taking the lot that we had up at the end of Los Encinos there where the fire raged yesterday. She went down to court and all that and got a little more out of it. But I was still working and I couldn't really get involved in politics.

Mr. Miller: Given that you were not really involved in politics what kinds of controversies came up in the City back in, for example today there is development i.e. redevelopment in downtown, there is the San Fernando Corridor - there is all kinds of controversies and you cannot please everybody all the time. What kinds of controversial issues came up back in the 30's or the 40's?

Mr. Montgomery: I really don't remember. I don't think that there were controversies like they are today. I think the Mayor and the City Council and they didn't have the problems like they have today. On elections, there was no big deal on that you know you had twenty candidates running for Council or something and so there were just no problems like today. These problems seem to have risen here for the last ten to fifteen years or more so.

Mr. Miller: Aren't these problems we see today - are they worthy of all the trouble that is coming up or these problems are around us all the time and we just dwell on that too much today?

Mr. Montgomery: I don't think things are getting any better.

Mr. Miller: Really!

Mr. Montgomery: I think each year it gets a little worse.

Mr. Miller: In what way?

Mr. Montgomery: In Redevelopment. People that see how the City spends the money and one example is what they did on East Broadway where they paved all the streets there within the five blocks and everything and the big Palm trees right in the front of Brown's Place right near the entrance to that monstrous Palm trees I wrote in about that and I used to get up for the City Council whenever certain problems arose like that.

Mr. Miller: Problems like?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, you know people should have something to say about it. The Commission where the Glendale Beautification did not really have anything to say about the Palm trees. Well, they said we will put Palm trees OK well God they were going to put these here six-foot diameter and even the people in Glendale Beautification they were surprised at the size and they got a lot

of people out of business down there along Brand when they tied that up.

On another thing the people are complaining about what they are doing with North Brand, and also paying \$250,000 for an outside firm to come in here and give the City audit. People are writing in and what's the matter the City cannot do their own audit.

Of course, Larry comes up and says it is a way to save money something and we are spending \$250,000 to save all the money and of course you know with the work that was done along North Brand with the bus base which was actually ridiculous where the bus has to stop in one lane to pick the people up and of course that's all coming out and lot of criticism about the trees.

I remember McMahan's furniture store down on South Brand they want the trees out of there because the trees have blocked the front of their building. So you have always something going like that and it doesn't seem to ever finish. You have the Montrose Parking Lot - they moved the oodles out of there and they were going to build the parking structure there and irregardless of what the people said even though they didn't want them to build it though they needed it because of the economic situation they didn't build it. So that is another example of some of the things that have happened.

Mr. Miller: Well that was a good example.

Mr. Miller: Has water always been a problem in Glendale? I mean the water problem due to the drought situation.

Mr. Montgomery: We didn't really have the water problem there till about the second or third year in the drought, and when it became more of a concern.

Mr. Miller: These things go in cycles related to the weather situation. Do you remember water rationing and problems back in the 30's and 40's, 50's?

Mr. Montgomery: No, no, there weren't enough people in here. Glendale probably had their own water at that time because they had their own wells along San Fernando Road and they get this water from the L.A. river and did not have that many people, and of course you had wells up Glorietta - there were reservoirs up there and they were pumping up to La Crescenta so there was not a problem then with the population.

Mr. Miller: On recreation you've given a couple of examples of recreation as a kid, your own miniature golf course example.

Mr. Montgomery: Well we had baseball in those days too.

Mr. Miller: Sandlot baseball - did you play hard ball or soft ball?

Mr. Montgomery: No, No, softball that was always fun always after school you go out in the field - play baseball and it was a good thing to do.

Mr. Miller: Did the kids all have mitts back then or gloves in those days?

Mr. Montgomery: I don't remember I don't think they did.

Mr. Miller: Just bare hands?

Mr. Montgomery: And soccer was another good thing in those days too. I don't think we play soccer any more, kickball and those were rough days for soccer in those years because everyone hurt their shin and chin.

Mr. Miller: Just playing in vacant lots?

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah right.

Mr. Miller: What was the worst injury you remember as a kid - break your leg or arm or!

Mr. Montgomery: Skinned chin was the worst thing. My neighbor lives two doors from me and I have a picture over there and we were both in fourth grade together and he had to wear his old army pants which were leather. I don't know. I will show you a picture he would wear those and when you played soccer you are kicking right into the guy's chin to come in together to kick this ball you know and with those shoes it will break your chin all the time bleeding that was the real injury that I ever had. This will give you an idea of how we dressed in those days.

Mr. Miller: How would you describe these clothes for the tape?

Mr. Montgomery: Short pants for the boys. You see we had snickers -this is my neighbor up the street you see the pants that he is wearing at the bottom they had straps the straps went around and you can see there are several kids that wore fatigues.

Mr. Miller: That protected your chins? Where are you in this picture?

Mr. Montgomery: I am up here about next to the last right here and I am wearing blue jeans turned up at the bottom I don't even know what shoes I am wearing in those days.

Mr. Miller: You are wearing high ankle shoes looks like.

Mr. Montgomery: I don't know about that.

Mr. Miller: And long pants that are rolled up to the cuffs and a tie that is about four inches too short isn't that right?

Mr. Montgomery: This is probably dress up day for the picture, you see, this is fourth grade at Cerritos.

Mr. Miller: Fourth grade.

Mr. Montgomery: The girls were fairly nice there in their dresses.

Mr. Miller: And this is January 4, 1926 and some boys have little caps on, and one boy has a cap on with a coat but no tie. Here is another one with a three piece suit - the little boy next to you.

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah, that's right. One has the snickers and one has the long pants here.

Mr. Miller: Girls are wearing little frocks and little strap shoes.

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah, yeah - this one fellow here John McKirdy - and I just read about him just the other day when I went up to the reunion of the Hoover classes. He is still around and I haven't seen him for a long time. Most of these I just lost contact with.

Mr. Miller: Fourth grade?

Mr. Montgomery: Most of them must be around and if I went through Bill Homer's computer files I could find the names of some of these people.

Mr. Miller: Gangs - on this list there is a reference to gangs. Were there gangs?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, no not like they are today. The gangs really came in probably in '65. I remember for a while I went with a gal down in La Tuna Bell. La Tuna Bell is from the tracks from Chevy Chase and we had kind of a gang down there. No tagging or tearing up things but there were about half a dozen of us and we would gather around together.

Mr. Miller: So you remember this?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah - because of this gal that lived down there. Then TVR which you see around now taggers - Tuna Bell Rascals, or Tuna Bell Rats? or something that's become more popular here in the last fifteen or probably twenty years. Before that it was just Tuna Bell.

Mr. Miller: So that's the gang that was around back then?

Mr. Montgomery: Well you might say we were gang but we were all from slams. We used to do things together.

Mr. Miller: Not violent like they are now.

Mr. Montgomery: No, no.

Mr. Miller: What about wild animals? Were wild animals problem in this city?

Mr. Montgomery: Well, of course, those days were the Coyotes were the main wild animals around and you could hear them up in Forest Lawn where they were sleeping, and not more than two or three blocks from Forest Lawn of course and there were Coyotes up in there and of course Griffith Park - Coyotes there. I remember as kid going up in Wyoming, how frightened I was of Coyotes and I would hear these Coyotes at night and they would trap them go up to the heights and bring them in.

I will give you one example. I was up in -- my grandmother lived up in La Crescenta up in Highway Highland now part of Glendale and I used to spend some times up there helping the McDonald brothers that was Ronald and Scott. Scott McDonald, he was in my high school class as well - they were contractors and they built a lot of little houses along First, Second and Third street up there, and I would help them. We had a girlfriend down Boston down by La Tuna Canyon Road - I guess it is, and the place was just all brush that time - thick brush - rubble and there was a trail at the north of this girl's house down there.

This Scott McDonald and I went down there one night, he rode his bicycle down and why I don't know but anyway, it is always easy to get out here with the bicycle so as we came out that night little later and it was pitch black and came up on to the corner of Boston and the first street light was up on about Fifth Street at that time and those Coyotes started to howl and we swore those coyotes were right on our heels - right on our heels and here he is pushing the bike and here I am running trying to leave that street light.

Mr. Miller: As fast as you can.

Mr. Montgomery: Right, so every time I hear Coyotes and I haven't for quite some time up here and we used to see Coyotes - Coyotes used to walk my lawn through here, wild deer used to walk along the street and they were heading up - and we had several and then they would go up the mountains on this side but even today as I hear those Coyotes up here and I still become tense because I will never forget going up there in Highway Highland.

Mr. Miller: How old were you?

Mr. Montgomery: Well up here it happened.

Mr. Miller: Up here in Highway Highlands.

Mr. Montgomery: Well probably it was after school, after high school, probably about 25, 24, 25 somewhere there.

Mr. Miller: And they still petrify you?

Mr. Montgomery: They still petrify me when I hear Coyotes.

Mr. Miller: Wild animals?

Mr. Montgomery: Wild animals.

Mr. Miller: But not so much with skunks and possums?

Mr. Montgomery: No. I don't think so. I don't even remember we had rats in those days like we have - we have quite a few rats around.

Mr. Miller: How about law and order? Did you ever get in trouble with the police? Or did you know someone who did? Were things pretty calm?

Mr. Montgomery: Basically. They were pretty calm.

Mr. Miller: What was the biggest crime you could remember in Glendale?

Mr. Montgomery: Petty theft is probably one of the largest crimes. Petty theft - it is shoplifting basically and it is still a crime. Now they have to put tags on everything - keeping people from carrying out the store but I think at that time petty crime was one of the crimes and those times were hard times. When times are hard people do things like that and I think we are going through same thing now. People leave with money in their pockets and go in and steal something and they could pay for it half a dozen times. I think it is the economic situation. So I really do not remember too much crime.

Mr. Miller: Bank holdups?

Mr. Montgomery: No. I don't remember that. I don't even remember we had automobile insurance in those days?

Mr. Miller: No auto insurance?

Mr. Montgomery: No. If you cracked your car up you paid the guy and took it to some guy and fixed it up and you paid for having

fixed it up and paid as far as it went - so I don't remember about too much crime.

Mr. Miller: How about the reporting, the news of the day. Was the Newspress pretty much the well read paper of the City - back then?

Mr. Montgomery: Well I don't even know there were probably other stuff after I was married - looking more to a family life. Single guy. But there were still a lot of issues around the Newspress in those times. I am talking about the 20's and the 30's and so forth.

Mr. Miller: What about the extension of the 134 freeway? Can you tell me when that came through Glendale? I don't know when they built that it came a long time ago.

Mr. Montgomery: Oh no. About twenty years. Well that was battle here because actually before they decided which way to go they wanted to come the other side of the park here and they were going to take quite a few homes out. They came the other side of the park in the hills - just the other side to the park - Verdugo park, and a lot of that was developed at that time, up all those streets, Opechee, Woodside and all those streets, Capistrano and that's where they originally intended to go because it was going to be very expensive to cut through the mountains up here - they did a lot of blasting - they had to do blasting up there by mountain to cut all that grove through up through there and it was quite of a tense situation about it. Quite concerned about it, of course it wouldn't effect me right here.

But at that time Canada Boulevard was state highway too and there is 26-foot easement here on the Boulevard which they intended because the street car used to come up here and used to stop at Verdugo Woodlands and then go to Montrose and they intended that being State Highway too they may widen it at some time, but of course after they put the freeway they would leave the traffic here.

Mr. Miller: I was going to say there used to be a lot of traffic here before the freeways.

Mr. Montgomery: Yeah.

Mr. Miller: You didn't work on the freeway here?

Mr. Montgomery: No, no.

Mr. Miller: How long roughly - how many years did it take them to finally execute this part of the 2 Freeway joining the 210?

Mr. Montgomery: Ventura went through first, and then they connected the 210. I would say that was in the 70's probably may be about 75 when they started the bridges up coming south from Foothill Boulevard, and then they were coming south and that took them eight to ten years to put that through.

Mr. Miller: And yet now we drive this freeway in five minutes, and it took ten years to complete it.

Mr. Montgomery: Well of course you are talking about four miles, five miles plus all the bridges up there by Verdugo Hills Hospital - always a slow project and of course all the blasting that they had to do right up here, but now - but that was really a slow job - they had to move awful lot of dirt out there.

Mr. Miller: Now I noticed that only on Saturdays and Sundays and holidays like past Labor Day how wonderful the freeways are when they work - when you can drive there. Ya they are just wonderful. Oh Boy! sometimes they get stacked up with Friday afternoon traffic or any afternoon traffic, what kind of a reflection you have on the freeways?

Mr. Montgomery: I don't even want to drive anymore.

Mr. Miller: You don't!

Mr. Montgomery: Especially at that time of the day.

Mr. Miller: You avoid them?

Mr. Montgomery: I avoid them because I drove so many years actually on the side streets before the freeways went in for my jobs all over Southern California and then the freeways, Santa Monica freeway went in and Harbor Freeway, Santa Ana freeway was murderous to travel if you connect to Newport Beach or worked on a job somewhere out there and drive home on that freeway.

Anaheim Telegraph Road which parallels the Santa Ana freeway was basically the main road before the freeway went in, it parallels all the way and that was one way you could avoid some of the traffic by getting on the side streets but it is getting worse even though with the Metrolink and buses and commuter busses handling - it is getting really very bad.

Mr. Miller: Very time consuming.

Mr. Montgomery: It is and people are getting upset about it - very upset about it and that creates shootings I might say and all the rest of that stuff and cutting in and out. People everybody is upset and ready to get home.

Mr. Miller: Boy, I tell you. My wife and I used to live just a couple of years so, that we were married, way out on the west side and I worked in Glendale and the traffic just killed me and when we moved back here to Glendale because we both worked here, when we moved back I got to say I never enjoyed commuting so much because we lived in the Highway Highlands what you were talking about in ten minutes on City streets if I want to - quicker than on the freeway.

Mr. Montgomery: They have more or less signals regulated so that you are not stopping at every other street too.

Mr. Miller: I live and work in the same city which is really wonderful.

Mr. Montgomery: I did one job at a refinery down in El Segundo and I tell you that was not a pleasant drive. We go down Santa Monica Boulevard or we would go over to Cahuenga Path and finally traffic down to the airport and get to El Segundo and then finish the job at 3:30 in the afternoon and would take hour and a half to Glendale because that was the way to do it. So I don't know - they are widening all of them. Specially when the 118 comes into 5.

Mr. Miller: I am almost finished. I got one or two questions left. One of them I hope you'll answer it but if you don't feel like it don't say it - it involves Natalie. When did she pass away? How long ago?

Mr. Montgomery: She died in 86, June 1986.

Mr. Miller: If you like to, tell me the one thing the best thing that you remembered about her - your best memory.

Mr. Montgomery: Well some of the best memories about her led to the worst memories about her because she was a manic depressive person and when she was in the Manic Stage she was queen for a day. She was in the Dollar Ninety Eight Beauty Show, and she put herself on the stage with a suit, swim suit and dress and dancing and she was dancing the Saturday Night Fever and she was great to a certain point. Pretty soon, and money was no object and she thought she was the richest person in the world and would spend money right and left and there is no end to the money and not to consider what are we doing here - what do I need this for but she was looking at a property she was trying to buy property all over the place.

We eventually sold one when she became so depressed we sold it and didn't make any money - couple of lots three lots in Mount Washington - but that's what she liked to do and would go out and look at these places and any time there was a new law or new

development or new homes she was ready to go -it was just a good idea because actually she really did more on the planning stage of this one than I did - we worked together all of it. She had gone out and picked up a scrap book and all the different things she wanted in a home, so that worked and she loved to travel - we have a lot of memories - we really went everywhere in the 60's and 70's and have marvelous and beautiful friends and we still correspond after all those years.

Mr. Miller: United States or around the world.

Mr. Montgomery: No all over the world. Great people. She was always writing them and she was just ready to go. One time I remember we were in Warsaw-Poland and she was not the one to wait for the bus. Bus driver and the guide told us that everybody be here at 1:30 so everybody get there at 1:30 and she said where is the bus, well, it is late and she is not the one to wait so she walked away in Warsaw and as soon as she walked away then the bus came and we all piled on and here I see her running and I tell the bus driver let's go you know, and he put it in the gear and scoot for life you know for a little bit, but anyway she was fun really fun to travel with.

Mr. Miller: He stopped.

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah sure it was a whole plan she was not there she was not gone waste a few minutes - if she had something to see - she was a great sport for travelling and more fun and we always mingled with other people and made a lot of good friends. She was really a fun person to travel with and she became so ill that she was trying to do some of it herself and she would have the laughs and it was sad and very tragic.

Mr. Miller: You seem like to be a pretty easy person to live with.

Mr. Montgomery: Well she didn't think so.

Mr. Miller: No!

Mr. Montgomery: I did not agree with her on many things that she - specially when she was in the Manage Stage and she was spending money and you will have to believe the things that we...and the things we would discuss earlier or live for it and then she would buy things like investments. They were not practical.

Mr. Miller: I don't really have anything about the Historical Society - tell us something about your involvement with the Historical Society.

Mr. Montgomery: Well, before I retired I was doing leaded glasswork. I took up classes in La Canada from a couple of ladies

because we always admired leaded glasswork and wherever we travelled to the old churches and homes in England and you name it we saw these glasses, tiffany glasses and so forth and so actually I took classes in glasswork and so actually I could get going with myself on the patio and I must have done maybe two hundred leaded glass. There are several of them here in the house. There are a few here in the house but the best of them I gave to my friends and they are scattered all over town and pieces that I did and the lady I talked the other day that I made one for her and she said it was gorgeous.

Some fifteen years ago huge things and they are still hanging in the window. That was a good feeling about me that here I have created something to be enjoyed over the years - many people - lot of them have sold their homes and they got more money for their homes because they had this glass in it. I never made any money on it because I was always putting it in the back, and supplies and stuff and trying to figure out how much I made dollar an hour. I was lucky, so well that was fun but it's not worth it.

Mr. Miller: You seem to have an awful lot of friends - every time I see you at the Chamber you mix with others and always talking - how much and what percentage of your waking hours are you at home that versus that visiting or doing something. You are out an awful lot aren't you?

Mr. Montgomery: I am out awful lot and there are a lot of things to pack. Yesterday I went with the art group down to see the IMAX.

Mr. Miller: Which show?

Mr. Montgomery: Well it was supposed to be the fire and quake it was great, but they changed the program. We got there at 10 o'clock and saw the guerrillas which was excellent and they saw the blue planet which I had seen it before. They were there to see the fire and quake but there was a separation in there and didn't start till one. So then we had lunch at the old spaghetti house over on Sunset Boulevard.

Mr. Miller: The spaghetti factory.

Mr. Montgomery: Oh yeah that was part of the deal and had the ball things there, we had spaghetti meat balls and we had mostoiani, and I went to my lodge dinner last night -spaghetti and meat balls and mostoiani. So to get back to the historical society when we first read about the Doctor's house down there that it was going to be moved or demolished or so we got involved in that at that time and I was hoping to create some windows so that's what I obligated myself to do it - to create some windows So we got down there and we worked there tearing the brick off the

foundation so I guess than I worked for years or so in the Doctor's house - all the brick that we took off down there we hauled up in and put them in the foundation in front along the Doctor's house up in Brand Park and my wife was active there and we both worked there until the house was completed. We had a big benefit and paid off about \$30,000 that we owed Gangi, that he had advanced to move the house.

Frank Howard began the excavation on it and Gangi paid to move the house, so we have fund raisers trying to pay him off and I remember I was treasurer at that time and we had a celebration the day we were going to pay him off \$30,000. At Verdugo Club we had a dinner dance and we rented some English busses (double decker busses) and we transported people then from the Verdugo Club up to the Doctor's house back and forth and that was a really a grand affair.

Mr. Miller: How many people were there at that night?

Mr. Montgomery: Gosh we could have 250 or more. So we gave Gangi the check. That was a good period of time. Good friends but still you know with the modern time too - Walli, Carol Daugherty, you know her Carol Daugherty - home up there and Ana Marie Loughton - we all see each other - we would like to get another project going but anyway the City does not have any financing to do that anymore. We wanted to build a gazebo up there below the Doctor's house like a bandstand and drew our plans for it and everything else but we couldn't get enough financing to do it.

Mr. Miller: Let me ask you - this is for the future of Glendale. What do you see - hopefully some good things in our future for Glendale. Things are getting lousy now but what would you like to see that would make this a better place?

Mr. Montgomery: Well I don't think it is going to get much better. It is my feeling and I tell friends here I've got eight years till the year of 2000 and if I can make the year 2000 on my birthday I am out of here because I feel we have ruined it, we have ruined it for our generation and my son's generation. There have been so many problems with...my son was in the class of 65 and that is the story that they always tell what happened to the class of 65 because that was the Vietnam War and people were going to Canada - burning their cards everything else and it was a bad period of time. I don't see how we can straighten this out.

I am glad to see the transportation going in and I was certainly pleased to see the Red Lion which was ten years late in coming. They built that over in Pasadena they built the Double Tree, they built the Hilton at the airport in Burbank, and here we were losing all of that. In fact I was down there for the ground breaking for the Red Lion and they brought the lion down and the

lion was in the bulldozer...and Wally Forston...and I had our picture taken that day.

Mr. Montgomery: I was there that day. Ground breaking OK, and Ginger was there and there and they put a little carpet around to settle the dust and everything.

Mr. Miller: Right.

Mr. Montgomery: So that was the thing that really pleased me. I don't know.

Mr. Miller: If you could waive your magic wand what would you change and maybe how would you change it? Probably maybe you could talk all day.

Mr. Montgomery: I won't talk all day. I just don't know. I know some of the parks are overcrowded at times. The City does not have the funds to keep them up - people are being robbed along the street, car jacking that is another thing, elderly people I think I read in the paper just the other day that some one had \$50,000 and he thought he was a winner and was told he was a winner of that clearing house and poor guy sent a check for \$50,000 -most things go on. People they are not thinking. They are thinking more how to make more money. What about the lottery tickets a lot of times they cheat a lot of people out of lottery tickets - they say this is a winner and I will sell it to you because I cannot go down. People are gullible and I just feel very bad, very sorry about all of the people that are being taken in these days.

Mr. Miller: When did people who don't think they could get something for nothing?

Mr. Montgomery: I could never guess.

Mr. Miller: You could never guess?

Mr. Montgomery: What do they say. Tom now we say if it sounds like a...

Mr. Miller: That's right.

Mr. Montgomery: Some people still fall for it and makes me to read in the papers here in the Newspress about the robberies going into people's homes and robbing them and telling them that they are the roofer or something like what is the latest here today it is something glass cleaners, window cleaners.

Mr. Miller: Window cleaners.

Mr. Montgomery: The guy comes in and robs the people. I think it has got worst in the last four or five years and I don't see how

it is gone get better - until people develop - what about the tagging. Now they are tagging freeway signs so great you can't even tell where you are going on it anymore.

Mr. Miller: You are so right, you are so right that you can't even read them.

Mr. Montgomery: I think they've got to get stricter with that and the graffiti idea. Then well the ones that you picked up the families are poor and they can't even pay for the cleanup anyway. Well I think the parents are responsible for those kids and I know how my dad would have felt if I was brought down from the Police for tagging or something, demolishing. My folks would beat me. We got whippings in those days.

Mr. Miller: And then you go and clean it up?

Mr. Montgomery: That's right, that's right.

Mr. Miller: And then after the whipping you go clean it up?

Mr. Montgomery: They took off the belts in those days. I had a whipping myself. My dad pulled his belt off and I've been over and he whipped me a few times. I am just sorry to say Tom that I don't know how it is going to get any better - I just don't.

Mr. Miller: Let me give you a last opportunity for something that you like to remember. I have asked you a whole bunch of questions here we have been talking for an hour and a half? Is there anything I haven't asked you - something you would like to say that you haven't said yet? I haven't asked the right question.

Mr. Montgomery: No, no, basically that is pretty well but I've enjoyed and even though I have been alone for almost seven years and that is another thing that I had friends that are retired and they were not ready for it and I was ready for retirement and I worked enough years, I have a good pension and I have a good health benefit and I was ready for it but I've seen quite a few of my friends who are not ready for it and real complications and they are just like a dodo.

They don't do anything - couch potatoes or something. Well times like I feel I need a nap I lay down here too, but an hour later or few minutes later I say this is to be done, I've got to do it - but that is another thing that we are not prepared for it for which I am. One of my dearest friends that grew up here in Glendale, one of my wife's oldest friends and after she died, they moved to get out to get away from here and lived on South Street started to get all these new things down there and so they moved to Mesa, Arizona, not to Colorado. They wanted to get out of here even though she was in the school even though he had a good job

here - General Patrols - most of his time out there and it had gone so bad that they just sold the place on South Street and bought a mobile home in Mesa and they had a daughter up by Grand Junction and three months ago she died of bone cancer and because he was never prepared and he always depended on her so much we used to play bridge and get into fights - and would say what's the matter with you, what's the matter with you, don't you see he's dropping you or you dropping him or throwing away my good cards - we had a lot of good fun lot of fun so he has - it has been really rough for him because he is just nothing.

I've been active in lot of things and just happened and I kept active in fact I've even expanded a lot in several things. That poor guy and after his wife died back there he had to go through mental hospital because he was not able to take care of himself - now friends I just talked to in fact on Friday I talked to her one of the oldest friends and she went back to see her before she died, and she was concerned about her husband because she always was so much concerned what will happen to him. He had hopes that he would be able to go back to his home eventually. So that is one of the tragedies of older age. As you get older one passes away and how you manage it to make life for yourself go on because it is either that or just curl up.

Mr. Miller: Richard I sure have enjoyed this.

Mr. Montgomery: If you could pick some of that if it helps.

Mr. Miller: Got it all.

This concludes the interview. It is now about 3:40 in the afternoon.

Mr. Miller: We are back with Richard Montgomery. We've picked up a slate dirigible story. We are looking through pictorial history right now. There it is.

Mr. Montgomery: Anyway, this dirigible slate intended this plan was, I would show you this brochure here he was going to fly over the Glendale hotel and lower people down in a basket you see the basket going down here to the Glendale Hotel at that time so when he brought it out one day it was a metal a light metal outside and when he brought it out that day it was very hot and it expanded. The gas inside expanded and blew some of the ribbits out and opened it up and so then that was the end of that, so he shoved it back into the hangar and this shows it in the hangar here this picture.

Mr. Miller: That was down by Grand Central - the hangar.

Mr. Montgomery: Right near where the recycling station is down between the river and so they shoved it back into the hangar and

that was the end of the slate. The story is interesting here - there is a little more of a detail here in this pictorial.

Mr. Miller: This is an all metal dirigible and this is a brochure - do we have a date on this?

Mr. Montgomery: Sure, this would have.

Mr. Miller: December 1925 he first leased the space at Grand Central Airport and on third try on December 1928 he completed an aircraft 212 feet long, 58 feet in diameter. I see in December 1929 the fuel intake valve stock allowing excessive pressure to build up which popped up the dirigible ribbits destroyed the structural integrity and then it was over. He's got a brochure here even on all metal dirigibles. How he makes them. Isn't that interesting - right here in Glendale.

Mr. Montgomery: You could say what he intended to do there with this basket there drawing in the basket with people waiting down and how he figured it out how to keep it stable. I guess dropping those lines here something down to the ground to.

Mr. Miller: This is something like a ride - you ride up and sit up here.

Mr. Montgomery: No I think that he intended that passengers were going to go there and stay at the hotel - I think that was the intention.

Mr. Miller: I see.

Mr. Montgomery: Where he was going to pick them up I have no idea but anyway but that was what his intention was and it might say that on the backside of it.

Mr. Miller: Now but Glendale Hotel is that at the corner of Maryland?

Mr. Montgomery: Glendale Hotel is at the corner of Glendale Avenue and Broadway.

Mr. Miller: Oh Glendale and Broadway.

Mr. Montgomery: Right across from street from Public Service.

Mr. Miller: Oh yeah of course is it still there?

Mr. Montgomery: Oh sure.

Mr. Miller: So this is looking down on Brand and that is Broadway.

Mr. Montgomery: It could be now this is probably what they intended to do was to build some more hotels. But this was the hotel on the corner. This was well occupied basically by low rent. I just happened to run across this - we were talking about the freeway here. Now that has some dates on the back of it.

Mr. Miller: 1953 January 9th, 1953. This is 4/1936. This is not 1936 Verdugo Canyon. This must be 1953 before the freeway. This is the valley right where we are.

Mr. Montgomery: That's right - well here the trees are here - Canada Boulevard across is right, and this is Sizzler this is the parking area and your house is right there.

Thank you Tom.

Nice talking to you.