

Oral Histories

Number: Oh 51

Date: Sept. 14, 1990

Condition:

Holdings:

Initials: DP

Good

WP Library

Interviewee: Ranta, Elmer/Perina

Abstract: Side A

00- 30 History of Elmer's parents. Elmer's father was a tram boss for Black Bear Mine

30-44 History of Black Bear Mine.

44-61 History of Fox Farm on Turkey Creek.

61-109 Description of his parent's homes on W. Pacific St. They moved to house on Main Street when he was 7.

109-235 Saturday nights were sauna nights. Finnish customs and holidays celebrated at Finn Hall. Description of saunas.

235-262 School years in Telluride. Elmer spoke only Finnish when he started to school. School memories

262-341 Talks about the championship basketball team he played on. Describes the recreation hall they practiced in. names the boys on the team. His team went to state playoffs, but lost to Cedaredge.

341-412 Describes the placer operation he worked on after graduation from High School. History of years spent in California and the Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

412-439 He returned to Telluride and married Perina in 1947. Speaks of children's birth and later years in Telluride.

439-507 Elmer worked for Al Smith in Ophir as a plumber and for Harry Lowe. Later he bought the shop from Lowe. History of his many years working for the State in the Driver's License Department. He retired after 23 years in that department.

507-600 Depression years. His mother took in laundry and also did laundry for the Poor Farm. Describes how the Poor Farm worked.

Side B

04-44 History of Perina's parents and their arrival in the United States from Italy. Parents were married in Italy, but father came over first and mother was detained until World War I was over. History of Perina's birth and early years in Telluride.

- 44-63 Perina's family moved to Ophir when she was 5 years old. History of father's work at the Carbinerro Mine.
- 63-94 They moved to Telluride when the bank went broke and father worked at the Smuggler Mine. Her father died when she was 15 and siblings were 13. Mother was left with \$50, so she took in boarders to make a living. Description of the building they lived in on Main Street, the San Juan building.
- 94-118 Speaks of the many jobs she held while growing up. She worked for 25 cents an hour. After graduation, she worked for Frank Wilson at the drug store as a pharmacist's apprentice.
- 118-149 Describes the accident at the Smuggler Mine when her brother burned his hands severely.
- 149-159 History of her many years working as part time treasurer for the city and later as deputy treasurer for the County for Don O'Rourke. She retired in 1985.
- 159-177 Speaks of living next door to Perina Hedlund during growing up years. Names different students in her class.
- 177-194 Speaks about Tommy McMahn, who was first casualty from Telluride in World War II. Named the Veteran's post after him.
- 194-283 Speaks of the many parties and picnic the Italian Community enjoyed. Talks about the different communities in town such as Finnish, Swedish and Italian. Christmas memories.
- 283-312 Elmer gives history of belonging to the Fire Department for 29 years. Early July 4th celebrations sponsored by the Fire Department.
- 312-360 They speak of all the dances through the years. A dance for every holiday. Names the individuals who played in the dance bands, especially the Foot Warmers.
- 360-375 Mentions their children that were born in the American Legion Hospital.
- 375-430 Elmer speaks of the train and the important part it played in his life as a young child. Lou Long drove the wagon to pick up freight from the train and deliver around town. Speaks of the train schedules.
- 430-528 They speak of their courtship. Perina names different mayors she worked for through the years. Talks about the drugstore and Frank Wilson, Swenson Bowling Alley and Gustafson's Grocery Store.
- 528-560 Mushroom picking on Lizard Head.

560-603 Perina's life in Ophir.

Description: sound cassette (90 minutes)

Subjects: Side A

Elmer's early history

Black Bear Mine

Fox Farm

Sauna & Finnish customs

School years

Basketball

War Years

Marriage & children

Depression & Poor Farm

Side B

Perina's early history

Ophir

Mother's boarding house

Employment years

Brother's accident

County Treasurer

Perina's friends

Tommy McMahn

Italian customs

Fire Department

Dances

Their children

Train

Various memories

Mushroom picking

Ophir