Judy Bozoski

Layton, UT

An Interview by

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Layton City
and
Heritage Museum of Layton

GOOD AFTERNOON, TODAY IS THURSDAY, MAY 16TH, 2024. MY NAME IS TORI FAIRBANKS, AND JOINING ME TODAY IS JUDY STEIN BEZOSKI. WE ARE AT JUDY'S HOME IN LAYTON, UT, AND I AM INTERVIEWING HER FOR THE VERDELAND PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT.

TF: Thank you so much for joining me today.

JB: You're welcome.

TF: If you could start out by telling me when and where you were born, and also your parents' names, and we'll go from there.

JB: Okay. I was born in Brush, Colorado, and my birthday is August 22nd, 1939. My parents are Henry and Louise Stein. My mom was a teacher in this area for years.

TF: How old were you when you moved to Utah?

JB: About two and a half.

TF: So I'm guessing you don't have any memories of Colorado.

JB: The only memory I have is riding in our car to Utah, and my grandpa riding in the back seat with me. Other than that, I don't remember much.

TF: Did your grandparents already live here?

JB: My grandma did. But my dad got a job at Hill Field in electrical repair, and that's how we came to live here.

TF: Did he do electrical repair on aircraft?

JB: Yes.

TF: What year was that? '41 or 42?

JB: I'm guessing '41.

TF: So that was during war time. I'm guessing he was pretty busy.

JB: He was.

TF: Do you remember anything about the war years?

JB: A couple things. In fact, I have some ration stamps you might want for the museum.

TF: That would be great.

JB: But I remember that food was rationed. And I also remember that there was no way for us to really buy any clothing at that time, partly because there wasn't much around Layton to buy. But my grandma was a professional seamstress, and she made our clothes out of flour sacks, because we would get our flour in these big sacks. So she made our clothes out of those.

But we used everything we possibly could during that time. I also remember my dad buying savings bonds for us during the war. But I think one of the highlights of my life was my dad taking us to the base. And I don't know if there's still something there—probably not the same one, or they've moved it to the museum—but there was an airplane we saw there that was mounted to something, and it just took my breath away. They still take my breath away.

But that's pretty much all I remember about the war years. We didn't have refrigeration back then—we had ice boxes. The ice man would come down our street, and he would let us kids ride on the tailgate as he took ice from one house to another. (laughs) We just thought that was the coolest thing in the world. All of us kids—as many as could fit on that tailgate at the same time—rode on the back of that truck. I remember that very clearly.

I remember topographical kinds of things. There was a big alfalfa field to the east, and a little bit north of Verdeland Park. I'm not sure what's there now. But we lived in A-26, which was close to Gentile.

TF: Was the alfalfa field near Fort Lane? I think other people I've interviewed have also mentioned a similar field, but they said it was close to where the Surf and Swim is now. So that might have been a different field.

JB: Yeah, I think that was a different one. But during that time, Layton was still a farming community, yet people were moving in to work in a totally different industry than they'd ever known in Layton. I remember the little school we went to. There's a stream that runs down through the west side of Layton High, and it ran by our elementary school as well. We all used to go out and jump over it, and one time during recess, I missed and landed in the water. I got in so much trouble. (laughs)

TF: Was this in The Hollow?

JB: Yeah, it was down in The Hollow, but the stream came up somewhere near the elementary school. That would never happen during recess today, but back then, we weren't monitored. We just went out at recess to play, and that was it. But I just remember falling in, and they had to call my mom to come get me.

TF: Did your parents tell you to not play in The Hollow?

JB: I think all our parents told us not to. (laughs)

TF: That's what some people I've interviewed have said.

JB: Do you find other people played there anyway?

TF: Yes—everybody I've interviewed, except for maybe one or two people—obeyed their parents and didn't go to The Hollow.

JB: Good for them.

TF: Carol Trujillo told me how she and her friends would go skiing there in the winter. And during the summer, they would slide down an irrigation culvert that had moss in it.

JB: That's right. I'd forgotten about that.

TF: What are some other things you would do in The Hollow when you went there?

JB: We just played games that we'd make up as kids. We'd chase each other and play things like Cowboys and Indians. But I remember that all of our games involved running and jumping. We had a great time.

TF: Did you ever build any tree houses, or forts, or have rope swings?

JB: I didn't personally, but I do remember them there. Lots of other kids built them. It was a fun place to play.

TF: What are some of your memories of when you first moved to Verdeland Park?

JB: Just how well we all got along. We came from all different walks of life, and we came because our dads worked at Hill. But we all just hung out together. The Eldridge's, who lived just north of us, had an old touring car—I think it was a Model A—but it was a pretty big car, and we used to play in it as kids. We'd map out trips we wanted to go on on actual maps; but the car itself never went anywhere. (laughs) But we all took turns and planned trips. It was a silly game, but it was fun. It's one of my fondest memories of being in that area.

And we all packed lunches. I don't know if anybody else has mentioned that though, because I think it was probably just on my street.

TF: Where were some of the places you mapped out, that you wanted to go?

JB: Jus different states. California was a very popular one, because that's where Hollywood was. And we also mapped out a trip to Colorado, because that's where I was from. But we planned trips to all kinds of different states, and I learned a lot about geography by playing that game.

Another thing I remember is how some of the people around there had chickens—I actually got pecked by a chicken when I was a little kid at my great-grandmother's—but somebody in Verdeland Park had a rooster. It would clomp up and down the street and crow at everyone, and it would chase us kids. (laughs) The houses had wooden rails on the porches, and I can remember standing on those rails for what seemed like forever, just to get away from that rooster. It was mean! All the kids there had similar experiences with that silly rooster.

I can't remember her name, but somebody on my street also taught piano lessons, and even though none of us had pianos, we all took piano lessons from her.

TF: I didn't know there were units big enough to have piano. She actually lived in Verdeland Park?

JB: Yes, she lived on my street, but I can't remember what her house was like.

TF: It must have been one of the bigger units. Melba Meacham was saying yesterday how small the living rooms and kitchens were, so I'm trying to picture what part of the home the piano would have been in.

JB: We were in her living room when we took lessons, so that's where her piano was. And the other thing I remember is that all of her furniture matched. I'd never seen that before, because we just had whatever we had. But I can't recall anything else about her unit—just that we took piano lessons there. And it's funny to think of it now, because we didn't have any way to practice. (laughs) But it was fun to take those lessons.

JB: Who were some of your friends when you lived in Verdeland Park?

JB: Carol Trujillo. All the Trujillos, actually. They lived below us a ways, closer to Main Street, so my parents were a little nervous about us going down in that area. But north of us,

there was a playground, so we'd all meet there. I ran around with the Trujillos from the time we moved there until we moved out. We moved out before they did.

TF: How old were you when you moved out?

JB: Nine.

TF: And do you remember anything about Raz Trujillo and his wife? I've heard wonderful things about them.

JB: Yeah, they were really neat people. Even as a child, I wondered how she managed all the children she had. She did a great job. She was just a great lady. I didn't know Raz as well. I know he became a friend of my brother-in-law's; they lived in Farmington. But he was always good to us kids, and I enjoyed them, because they were a big family. I kind of hung out with Dave. Have you talked to him?

TF: Yes, I interviewed him. He's wonderful.

JB: Yeah, he is. I mostly hung out with, him, Carol, and Josephine. There was also Olivia, but she was younger. But those were mostly the ones I remember.

TF: I've heard that their mom was like a second mom to a lot of people.

JB: Yeah, she kind of filled that role. She was a cute lady. I often marveled at how well she handled everything. I don't think their house was much bigger than ours, but they had more kids. So it was always fun for me to go there and play.

TF: How many siblings did you have?

JB: Just one younger sister. She's five years younger than me. She was born when we moved into Verdeland Park, and she was two or three when we moved to Centerville.

TF: So she was really young.

JB: She was, so she doesn't have any memory of Verdeland Park at all.

TF: Tell me what you remember about the unit that you lived in.

JB: I remember the hardwood floors. You don't really see wood floors much anymore. But I can remember how I liked to lie down in the summer and put my face on that cool hardwood floor, because we did not have air conditioning. I don't think anybody did. I thought that hardwood floor was wonderful. But I think we had two bedrooms, and the living room and kitchen. And there was a pantry off the kitchen as well.

I remember sneaking out in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve and trying to see all the gifts we got. Looking back now, I think that house was relatively small, so I don't know why my parents didn't catch me, but they didn't. (laughs) But we liked Verdeland Park. My uncle bought a farm in Centerville, and he was from Colorado, so he had us move there and run the farm. So that's why we eventually moved out.

TF: Do you remember anything about the tub in your unit? Was it cement, or was it painted? We've heard some interesting stories about the tubs, like how some of them were made out of cement and were like sandpaper. And how they always had to be repainted when they started chipping.

JB: That might have been, but I don't really have any memories of that. Does the museum have pictures of the bathroom?

TF: I think we have a couple pictures of the bathrooms, but we've heard some interesting stories about the tubs from people who moved in during the '40s and early '50s. It seems like people who moved in after that period don't have many memories of cement tubs.

JB: Well, I think they threw Verdeland Park together rather fast. I recall there were just so many people coming in. We actually moved to Utah before they were finished. We rented a house in Kaysville for a little while—I don't know how long, maybe a few months—before we

could move into Verdeland Park. And I remember my mother saying they had to stand in line to be assigned a certain unit.

But ours was one of the long ones that looked like an Army barracks. But the house across the street that the Eldridge's lived in was just a one-bedroom house. But I loved our pantry. It was a great place to play. It seemed huge to me at the time, although I'm sure it wasn't; but it was my own space to play in.

TF: What color was your house?

JB: I think it was white.

TF: Do you remember anything about your yard?

JB: I remember we had some grass on the west side. I don't know what was in the back—probably the alfalfa field. We played in the alfalfa field a lot.

TF: Did some of the units in Verdeland Park have large yards?

JB: I think for the most part, they didn't. Some of them were big enough to have a few rose bushes, but as far as gardens and things like that, I don't think so. I just remember a strip of grass in our yard up against the house on the west side. In fact, somewhere I've got a picture of myself and my cocker spaniel on that strip of grass.

TF: Carol and Dave Trujillo were always getting into trouble. Did you get into trouble with them?

JB: Well, did Carol tell you about the time we crawled through a window in a house?

TF: No, she did not. (laughs)

JB: There were these people there who had board games, and we played there when they were home, but they went on vacation one time. So, we put a ladder up to the window, crawled in, and we just played with their games. (laughs) It was close to my house. We didn't bother

anything else … but I don't know why we thought we could get away with that. Somebody saw us, of course. (laughs)

TF: Carol told me about all the trouble she used to get in, and then Dave was telling me how he got to be a really fast runner, because he was always running away from his dad. (laughs)

JB: That could well be. We were just kind of free to do whatever we wanted. Parents didn't have to worry a lot about kids. I mean, they had the usual worries, but kids could run and do anything. But the incident with breaking into the house—we thought we'd gotten away with it, because nobody reported it for a few weeks. I don't know if I would do that now. (laughs) Some of those windows were fairly high, and I think the foundation of the units was made out of cement. I don't even know whose ladder we used. I'm sure it didn't belong to my folks. It might have been just lying around. But we managed to get into our fair share of trouble. (laughs)

TF: Do you remember anything else you did that got you in trouble?

JB: Well, I once lost my mother's ring. I took it to the playground, where there were monkey bars, swings, and a lot of sand. But I took it there to show the kids, and I dropped it in the sand. Of course, we never found it, so that was the worst thing. I don't know what that ring meant to my mom, but I could tell it meant a lot to her. She didn't yell at me, but I could tell she was really sad.

The group of kids that I ran with helped me look for it every time we went back to the playground, but the chances of finding it in all that deep sand were never good. (laughs) But I can't remember any other great escapades we had. I'm sure there were more, but I don't remember them.

TF: Do you remember riding the Baumberger?

JB: Absolutely. My grandmother lived in Salt Lake, and I rode the Bamberger a lot to see her and spend the weekend with her. There was an apartment building where the LDS church offices are now, and that's where she lived. But I think about riding the Bamberger when I take the Front Runner. It was a great experience, and I wonder why they ever stopped it. I guess people got cars, and they just didn't need it anymore—I don't know.

TF: Did it stop during the time you lived in Verdeland Park, or after?

JB: I'm pretty sure it was after, because we were living on the farm in Centerville, and my grandma didn't have a car. So she would ride the Bamberger to our house. That was in my later elementary school years, or maybe junior high.

TF: Do you remember what it was like when the war ended?

JB: I just remember how excited and relieved my parents were. But something I recall is that when Pearl Harbor was bombed, my mom and dad and I were sitting at the table. We had one of those radios that stood about this high, and they were broadcasting about it on the radio. But even though I was so young, it was such a traumatic event that a little bit of that is still stuck in my mind. I can just remember the trauma of it, and how upset my parents were.

TF: Right. It totally changed everything.

JB: Oh, it did. I remember my parents talking about what they would do if they bombed the mainland, that kind of stuff.

TF: Yeah. And you were still really young at that time.

JB: I was. I don't think we—even the grownups—had a good idea then of what could actually happen. I just remember my parents were scared. Everybody was scared.

TF: I can imagine. What did it mean to you to live in a community like Verdeland Park, where everybody came from different backgrounds, but you were all in the same boat, financially? And in the sense that all your parents worked at Hill, or the Naval Supply Depot.

JB: I think it was mostly the dads. I don't remember any of the moms working at Hill at the time. Maybe they did, and I just don't remember, but I think most of the women on my street stayed at home.

TF: I'm guessing Verdeland Park had a strong sense of community, where you all shared that background.

JB: Yeah, we did. We all had to get along, because that's just the way it was. But I remember learning—my mom really pushed this—about people, and about different cultural celebrations they had. There were Native Americans who lived next door to us.

TF: Do you remember their last name? I know of one Shoshone family who lived there.

JB: I don't know what tribe they belonged to, because I was so little at the time. But you know how there used to be fountain pen ink in a bottle? Well, one of the kids leaned out their bedroom window, which was by my bedroom window, and threw ink at our house. It ruined my mom's curtains, and she was not happy. (laughs) But it was just a kid being a kid.

TF: Were there Black or Hispanic families there?

JB: I don't remember any Black families offhand, but there were a lot of Hispanic people. Of course, the Trujillos were the ones I knew best, but I went to school with others. And hearing Spanish being spoken was my first ever experience with a different language, although I'm sure I heard other languages later on as well.

TF: Do you remember the names of any of the other Hispanic families?

JB: I don't.

TF: Well, the Trujillos were a good family to know. They were so central to Verland Park.

JB: Yeah, their dad did a lot of stuff. I think his name was Erastus Moses, but I don't remember their mom's name. She hasn't been gone too long.

TF: Yeah, Carol and Olivia mentioned her to me.

JB: They took care of her towards the end. I think Carol moved her out to California to be with her.

TF: Yeah, because I think Carol made a promise to her dad, right before he passed, that her mom would never have to sleep by herself—that she would always have somebody there to watch her over.

JB: Carol and I kind of lost contact. We'd go to class reunions, but we always seemed to go to opposite ones. Like she went to the 50th, and I went to the 60th. Then two summers ago, they had one that she went to, but I didn't. Then last summer they had one, and I was there, but she wasn't. I don't know if they're going to have any more now or not, but that would be a good place for us to talk about Verdeland Park.

TF: Right. Do you remember the winter of '48?

JB: Definitely. We got snowed in. I think that was the first winter we moved to Centerville, and the wind blew a lot. I'm not sure that the snow was as deep as I thought it was, because I was just a kid, but the wind blew the snow up against the doors, and people had trouble getting out. Nobody could get into their cars. It was. It was pretty crazy, actually.

There was some fun in it too. Mom gave us bread pans, and we used them to make bricks out of snow. And we'd use the bricks to build snow huts, and things like that. I think that was the first winter we weren't in Verdeland Park. But it was a horrible winter.

TF: Yeah. I read that they used aircraft from Hill Air Force Base to drop bales of hay in the foothills for the elk and deer, because there was so much snow.

JB: Yeah, we had a lot of deer. The farm we moved to was a fruit farm, and the deer would eat blossoms off the trees, which was not good. But what else do I remember about that winter? I'm sure things would have been the same, had we been in Verdeland Park. Has anyone talked to you about that?

TF: Yeah, a few different people. Dennis Jacobs was telling me how they would slide off the roofs into the snow, because it was so deep.

JB: Yeah, it was. I remember later in '92 when we moved into this house, it was also a bad winter, but I would say the snow we got in '48 doubled what we got in '92. It was horrible.

TF: How would you say the winter of '48 compared to the winter we had, what, a year and a half ago, when we got all that snow?

JB: I feel like it was worse in '48. I don't know if that's because people couldn't get around then or what, but things were just so different then. There wasn't all this wonderful equipment like we have now.

TF: Right, like snowplows and snow blowers.

JB: Yeah. I still remember my dad being home from work for a few days, because the roads were just impassable.

TF: Yeah, that would be a lot worse than the winter we just had. We could still mostly get around, after the snowplows were out.

JB: Has anyone mentioned the Halloween carnival they had every fall?

TF: I don't think so.

JB: It was a city thing, but they held it at Verdeland Park Elementary School. We'd dress up, and that was the big highlight of fall for us—something we all looked forward to. We'd do things like bob for apples, and it was so crowded that you could hardly move. (laughs) At that time, there wasn't much entertainment outside of what was put on locally. But I still remember vividly how much fun that was, and how all the moms from the neighborhood would go and help with the different activities they had.

TF: Do you remember what you dressed up as?

JB: A clown. (laughs) My mom had this clown costume, and it was really a nice one, but she insisted that I dress up in it every year. I wasn't always happy about that, but what I didn't realize is that she probably couldn't go out and buy anything else.

TF: Right. Did you go trick-or-treating, in addition to going to the carnival?

JB: We did—just on our street, though. I think my dad always went with us, and probably some of the other neighbor kids.

TF: Speaking of neighbors, do you remember who your neighbors were?

JB: Frank and Dolores Eldridge lived in a single house next to us, and the McEwens. Carol McEwen. Have you run on to any of them?

TF: I don't think so.

JB: Who else? There were the Grants … and there was one little boy who always got made fun of because he liked dolls, and that was a bad thing in the '40s. But I can't remember his name. I don't remember many of our neighbors, or many of the kids I went to school with. I've been away from there for so long.

TF: I don't remember a lot of the kids I went to school with either, and I only remember a few of my neighbors.

JB: Well, you don't always interact with all of them. You're usually selective, especially at a young age.

TF: Do you have any memories of Riata Days on the 4th of July?

JB: Not really. If there was a celebration, we probably went to it, but I don't have any memory of it.

TF: And do you remember much interaction between people in Verdeland Park and people who lived outside of Verdeland Park? Aside from church and school?

JB: My dad made a few friends from his job at Hill, and I remember going to their house every Christmas Eve. I don't remember their names, but I remember they didn't live in Verdeland Park. But I think when we lived in Verdeland Park, we mostly stayed in our neighborhood. We were not LDS, so there was a bus that came every Sunday to pick us up and take us to church. That's now the Clearfield Community Church.

TF: How far was that from Verdeland Park?

JB: Just a few miles. It's the old junior high that's still at the end of Highway 193.

TF: Maybe North Davis Junior High?

JB: I think so.

TF: Was it difficult growing up in Verdeland Park, surrounded by so many people who were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints? The church was tied to so many social things.

JB: I don't remember it then, but I do remember when we moved to Centerville, because there was just us and one other family who were not LDS. So it was different there, but I don't remember much of that in Verdeland Park.

TF: Some people I've talked to who weren't members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints during that time have said that it was difficult for them to be on the outside of all the social events that were tied to the church.

JB: Well, yeah, because that's most of your social life—both kids and adults. But I think it's also that way in my neighborhood now. There's a group of LDS people who get together and associate with each other.

TF: Did you feel like you were still included in social events and stuff like that in Verdeland Park?

JB: In Verdeland Park, we definitely were, but not so much in Centerville.

TF: I've heard there was very little diversity in places like Kaysville, Centerville, and Bountiful.

JB: Yeah, and they only saw things one way. If you were on the outside, you were an outsider. I remember someone saying once when we were in Centerville, "You can't participate in that because you're not one of us."

TF: Did you know Ruby Price?

JB: Yes.

TF: I'm not sure what year it was, but she set up her own Cub Scout troop for boys who wanted to belong to Boy Scouts but weren't members of the church. At that time, if you didn't belong to the church, you couldn't be a part of the local Boy Scout troop.

JB: I hadn't heard about that. I didn't have any brothers though, so I may have been less aware of that than some other folks. When you're a kid, you're not as worried about what everybody else is doing; you're just focused on your own activities. But I think the biggest

takeaway I had from Verdeland Park was the camaraderie of people who lived there. Everybody seemed to get along.

TF: What are some of your memories of Ruby Price?

JB: They're not very vivid. I partly remember her because she was the first Black person I ever saw. I know she fought for what she thought was right, and I remember she'd tell you what she thought. She had a huge impact on the communities around here, and that must have been difficult to do at the time. I could pass for white, whether I belong or not; but it'd be a little harder for her.

TF: Right. One Black family I interviewed—Tommy and Mary Tucker … Tommy was a Korean War veteran, and he talked about how bad discrimination was in Texas as he was growing up.

JB: I'm sure it was horrible.

TF: When he moved to Utah, he and his father worked at the Hotel Utah in Salt Lake, and they had to use a separate entrance than white employees. And their daughter, Eileen, was saying what an experience it was for her, years later, being able to go through the front entrance of the hotel, then eating on the top floor, knowing all that her father went through in the past.

But they lived in Verdeland Park until the '60s, and it was difficult for them to get land to build their own house on. Realtors wouldn't show them any properties because they were Black, or they would only show them properties at night. And when they finally did find a property and started building a house, there was a petition that went around the neighborhood saying they didn't want Black neighbors. So they experienced racism here, once they moved out of Verdeland Park.

JB: I wonder if those feelings are still there—I don't know.

TF: I think it's gotten better. The diversity on Base helps. I have a toddler who goes to daycare on Base. He has a Black teacher and Black classmates, and every day on Base, he sees Black people, Hispanic people, Asian people.

JB: Yeah, I'm sure there's a lot of diversity on Base. I took one of my grandchildren out of public high school, because he has a learning disability. There were too many kids and not enough teachers. I put him in Layton Christian Academy, and they have every race in the world there. But the only Protestant church I remember growing up was the one that we got picked up to go to, which is now the Clearfield Community Church. Other than that, I think it was mostly LDS churches. There were probably other churches. I know there was the Cathedral of the Madeline in Salt Lake that's been there forever, and there's a historic Presbyterian church on that same street.

TF: I know about the Greek Orthodox church in Salt Lake. Which reminds me, did you know any Greek families when you moved to Centerville?

JB: Yes, the [Ganushios?]. They were farmers. In fact, my sister-in-law, who was my friend in Centerville when we were younger—some of the kids were going to have her go to primary, but she didn't like that. So, she got into a fight with them, and she dragged me into it. (laughs) But she did *not* go to primary.

TF: It sounds like she stuck up for herself.

JB: Yeah. But in Verdeland Park, I don't remember anything like that ever happening. Maybe it was because I was so young—I don't know. But I don't ever remember many discussions about religion either. There must have been missionaries that came in though.

TF: I don't know, where it was government housing. It would be interesting to find out. I know the White Chapel was such a big fixture back then, but I've never heard whether or not missionaries came in.

The Tucker family talked about attending New Zion Baptist Church in Ogden. It's a little all-Black church there. And they would go to Ogden for different social things.

JB: When I was teaching at Weber State, I had a Black colleague there, Forrest Crawford, who actually lived in Salt Lake. Well, in fact, we had a Black dean for a while too; but they both lived in Salt Lake. They said, "There's nothing in Ogden for us. There's no social life." But

TF: Well, the reason I found Verdeland Park so interesting when I learned about it is because Layton was a mostly white farming community before WWII. But then Hill Air Force Base was built, and it brought in so much diversity with its workforce. Well, a lot of those workers lived in Verdeland Park, and government housing projects like Verdeland Park completely changed the landscape of Layton. But not many people outside of Layton know about Verdeland Park.

JB: Interesting. I don't know if my kids know anything about it or not.

TF: We have a couple of history books at the museum, and there's, like, a paragraph written written about Verdeland Park. That's it.

JB: Then this is a great project, isn't it?

TF: It really is. There's nothing about Verdeland Park, Sahara Village, The Anchorage, Washington Terrace, or The Arsenal.

JB: The houses were all the same—I do remember that. (laughs) I have an article here that talks about some kids in Layton doing an oral history. Do you know about that?

TF: Yeah. There were some students at Northridge High School, or some other high school in the area, who did a small oral history project in the late '90s, I believe. We have a copy of the

interviews they did, but they were really short. They actually interviewed Raz Trujillo, but the interview was only, like, three pages long. I really wish I could have interviewed him before he passed away.

JB: Here's the article about that oral history project. Somebody sent it to me—it's a little battered. But I just wanted to get everything I could about Verdeland Park. So that's why I haven't been able to find much then—because there isn't much out there.

TF: No, there's hardly anything. I've seen some blog posts here and there, and we have some stuff at the museum, but that's about all. Luckily at the museum, we have the ability to scan photos. So we can scan things, then give them back to the person who owns them. And we can use them for our digital collection for everyone to see online. (Judy and Tori look at some of Judy's photos)

JB: That looks like our house right there. I don't remember any trees around it. But I often thought in later years how the government must have said barracks were the easiest thing to build, because that's exactly what our units looked like.

TF: I've heard Sahara Village units were just cinder block units built on sand.

JB: They were. And Washington Terrace was just like this. Gosh, I probably haven't read this in forever.

TF: I think two different oral history projects were done by high school students. I know one was in the mid to late '90s, and we have copies of those at the museum.

JB: Well, the people who moved in there originally would be like my parents, who are long gone. So, you have to rely on those of us who were their children. I'm sure you've gotten a lot of different memories from people.

TF: I have. Oh, I was going to ask if you have memories of scandals, or anything like that happening in Verdeland Park.

JB: I don't know if there was really any crime in Verdeland Park initially, because people were all just busy getting their lives together. That's my theory about crime—sometimes when it happens, people don't have enough to do.

TF: Right. And after the war, people were still just trying to pick up the pieces from that, and that took time.

JB: Oh, it did.

TF: Were there any stories of ghosts in Verdeland Park?

JB: No, not that I remember.

TF: I've heard a lot about The Hollow, and also that there was an area not far from there that was really sandy. And I think someone told me once that there were, like, caves or something like that there.

JB: I hadn't heard about that, although I know this whole area was sand. And there was the alfalfa field I mentioned, and on the other side of that was a bunch of willows. There had to have been water on the east side somewhere, for the willows to have grown there. But the reason I remember the growth over there was because my mom used to send me there to cut my own willow when I did something wrong, so she could switch me; but she never did. I think that walk from our house to the willows, cutting that willow, and then walking back, was the actual punishment, because I don't ever remember her hitting me with one.

TF: Just that threat.

JB: Yeah. I think I was a little bit of a handful. I mean, anybody who can crawl in somebody else's house … (laughs)

TF: One question I just thought of: what is the furthest you ever walked? I know everybody walked everywhere.

JB: My mom and I used to walk downtown. I remember walking to the Farmers Union building. It was a store at the time. Then of course, we all walked to school. But that's as far as I remember walking. We did have a car, but my dad had it during the day at work, and nobody had two cars. It was a really old 1939 Plymouth, or something like that; but going downtown is about the furthest I remember walking. But I loved the Farmer's Union building. And I remember going to Barnes Bank too. It used to be across the street, on the west corner there.

But after we set up the interview for today, I was trying to think of where we bought our groceries.

TF: It wouldn't have been at Kowley Drug, because that was a drugstore. There was Adams Market, and there was Danzie's.

JB: My dad used to go there and have coffee, and he'd take me with him and buy me a milkshake.

TF: At the museum, we have the bar stools and the counter that came from Danzie's.

JB: That's what we sat on. That's all there was. I remember being this little kid sitting on that bar stool. I never got through an entire milkshake—I could never drink it all. But my dad would meet his friends there and visit with them. I was sorry to see that gone completely.

TF: Well, is there anything we haven't covered in this interview that you would like to include?

JB: No, but this has been fun. How many people have told you that? (laughs) Probably a lot.

TF: I think almost every almost every single person I've interviewed. They're so happy in the end, because like I said, nobody knows about Verdeland Park, but it was so crucial to Layton's history. We need to get it recorded, and we need to interview as many people as we can.

JB: I remember how It must have been difficult for this area to accept people form different backgrounds coming in, because when I was young and married the first time, my husband was a volunteer firefighter. We went to some conference in St. George, and Governor Rampton came and talked to us. He said, "Please accept the people who are moving into this area. They are our future." And I thought, "How awful that the governor has to come and tell the fireman to please accept people." I think that was when I was in my 20s.

There was not much acceptance, even then. When I was married the first time, my first husband's grandpa had a trailer park in Clearfield, and we lived there in a chicken coop that they'd converted to a house. It was a community kind of all unto itself like Verdeland Park was, and there were lots of Air Force people, because Area C hadn't been built yet. And there was no base housing. So people had mobile homes, and they moved from place to place. So that was another one of those little communities that was pretty nice.

TF: What was it called?

JB: I don't know. Pullum was Grandpa's last name. It was in Clearfield, and it's called Lakeside Square now. There's a coffee shop there. But my first husband's family owned all that property there, and there's a pond behind it. It was kind of like Verdeland Park. In fact, I hadn't thought about that until just now—how similar to Verdeland Park it was.

TF: But like you mentioned, I've also found in doing some of these interviews that when all of these military housing units started coming in, sometimes members of the local communities had a hard time accepting people of different backgrounds moving in from different places,

because they didn't belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Sometimes it was an "us-versus-them" mentality. But there were different groups. You had families on the west side who had farmed the land for generations, then you had kind more affluent people surrounding Verdeland Park, whose families had also been here for generations. But it seems like some of them struggled to accept people who moved in because of Hill Air Force Base.

JB: They'd never been exposed to anything different.

TF: Right.

JB: It's interesting—when I was teaching at Weber State, I had the opportunity to go to the Navajo Reservation and help train teachers, because the Navajo tribe had sued the county and won. So, we needed to hurry and get Native teachers in the schools. But those folks down in Blanding, Bluff, and those areas, were sent there to be totally independent and not let outsiders in. And I think it's still like that. It was really interesting to me, when I first went down there, how suspicious they were of me, as well as other people who moved in and out. But I loved it so much. I bought lamb when I was down there.

But I find it interesting that it's hung on all these years, and I'm sure it was similar here when people were moving in to work at Hill Air Force Base. They were told to develop the land and be independent, and that's what they were going to be. I mean, I don't know that for sure, but that's my guess.

TF: I think that's similar to what Raz and his wife did. I'm not sure what year it was, but they went down to New Mexico—I think with Job Corps—and they worked with Indigenous families there so the kids wouldn't have to leave their homes and go to boarding schools. They would work with the whole family, helping the parents learn a trade while the kids went to school where they lived. I don't know how many years they did that though.

JB: That's good. I would go out to Navajo Mountain, which is only accessible on the ground driving over 150 miles on a bad road. So, I would fly in. And seeing all those little kids who had been taken out of their homes and put in this boarding school … I would go at night and sit in the commons area to read to those kids, and it occurred to me that that's an experience they should've been having at school, but they didn't, because the teachers went home. They didn't stick around. And there were attendants at the school, but they didn't sit and just read to the kids either. And I thought, "This isn't right. There's something terribly wrong with this whole picture."

TF: And can you picture your own children being taken away to go to a boarding schools?

JB: I don't think I could give my kid up; but on the other hand, the families knew that getting an education was the only way that their kids would have any chance of making a living. But they were mistreated in so many ways, like the [Intermountain School] in Brigham City.

TF: Yeah, in fact, Ruby taught there. It might have been before she met her husband, but I know it was before they moved to Verdeland Park. I don't know how many years she taught there—maybe two or three.

JB: I didn't know about that, but that means she probably knew all those stories too.

TF: Yeah. Her two daughters still live in the area, I believe. I hope I can interview one of them. I have a list of, like, 90 people I need to interview. (laughs)

JB: That's good, because you're going to get a lot of different perspectives.

TF: There are so many people who have already passed, but I'll get as many as I can.

JB: I'm glad you're doing this project. (Tori and Judy discuss where the museum is, recording stops)