

# **Henderson Libraries**

## **Southwest Oral History Association Mini Grant Project**

**Virgil Weese**

**Oral History of Virgil Weese**  
**a contributor to the Henderson Oral History Project**

**Southwest Oral History Association**

**Mini-Grant**

**For the**

**Henderson Historical Society**

**conducted by Fredric Watson**

**Paseo Verde Library**

**September 30, 2015**

**Fredric Watson:** *Today is Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015. We are at the Paseo Verde branch of the Henderson Public Libraries in Henderson, Nevada. My name is Rick Watson. I'm a member of the Henderson Historical Society here today to interview Virgil and Gina Weese. Mr. and Mrs. Weese have memories that go back a long way in Henderson history. Those memories are an important part in the Historical Society's effort to preserve the history of our town. Welcome Gina and Virgil.*

**Virgil and Gina Weese:** Thank you.

**Fredric Watson:** *We'll start off and ask Virgil some questions since he goes back farther than either you or me.*

**Virgil Weese:** That's fine.

**Fredric Watson:** *Let's start with a, just about your family and how they came to Henderson. You know, what brought them here.*

**Virgil Weese:** Well, we, my Dad was 4-F during the war, Second World War, couldn't go in, and my Mother's family had all moved to Los Angeles. We lived in St. Joe, Missouri, so my Dad and Mom moved...my Dad went out first by himself to Los Angeles and got work in...he went to work for Sawyer Electric making water pumps for the Navy at that time. He was a machinist in Los Angeles. We stayed out there all during the War and when the War was over his dream was to go back to St. Joe, Missouri and open a little machine shop back there. So, we went back to St. Joe but we forgot how cold those winters got back there. We'd been out there all during the War and, and got back there and he bought all these machine shop equipment. He bought a house with a big garage that he could set up a machine shop. It didn't work out. We didn't have no business; that winter was so cold and my Mother's parents had moved to Henderson in that time because the plants in Henderson here was transferring from war-time use to peace-time use. So my Grandfather told my Mom and Dad to come on out, there was plenty of work out here. My Uncle Pete, my Mother's brother, was working at the plant at that time so he had a house at 18 Nevada Way. You had to be working at the plant to be able to be, be able to live in the Henderson house. The old Townsite houses was all there was. They had Victor[y] Village; they had Carver Park, but the Henderson Townsite houses you had to be working at the

plant to be able to get one and my Uncle Pete was working there. His wife, his wife was from Louisiana. She hated it out here. So she told my Uncle Pete, she says, "I'm going back to Louisiana. You can stay if you want to." Well, my Uncle Pete told my Dad and Mom, he said, "Well, you come move into my house at 18 Nevada Way. They'll, you know, they'll think I'm still working down here at the plant. I'm going to take a vacation and go back with my wife." In the meantime, my Dad got a job at the plant as a painter. Well, he was a machinist. There wasn't any openings for machinist but he took anything he could get just to get to have a house here and get a job. So we moved in then to 18 Nevada Way and I still own that property after all these years. There's two beautiful homes on it now. My Dad was a carpenter and cabinetmaker and that was in 1946 when they moved out here in February and been here pretty much ever since. I went in the Navy but other than that I've been here all along. My history, I went to school here from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade on. The school that I went to start out in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade was in Carver Park. They had a little grade school down there. No outdoor facilities that weren't in the dirt. They had swings and they had to, we played football out in the dirt. You know, there wasn't no...

**Fredric Watson:** *See, I was, I was, I was at the Carver Park School in 1946.*

**Virgil Weese:** Were you? I was down there too. In the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Fredric Watson:** *I was in 1<sup>st</sup> grade.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah. Anyway, that wasn't much fun. I mean, well, it was a time. We were kids. We didn't care. We were all having a good time. You know. But then when we went into the upper grades, you know, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, we were up there where the City Hall is now. The old Townsite school was right there. We had the gym, they had all of the classrooms were all right there. Then you went up above on the hill and they had the football field and the tennis court up there and they had the...they ended up putting another grade school up there on the north end of that field. That's where our kids went to school. It was up there, Jimmy and Anna, when we came here and got married in 1959. We had two children at the time. Gina had been married before, she said, and her first husband was killed in an airplane crash. And when we got married Jimmy was nine and Anna was eight and then her and I had one child

together, Sandra. She was born in 1963. So all these, everything's transpired here but when I grew up here there's so many memories when I was a kid. I mean, me and all my other buddies, you know, Kent McBeth and Norm Craft and on and on and on; Rob and Teddy Blue and a bunch of the people that had been here forever. In the summertime if we wanted to go swimming, we had to join the Red Cross and get on the bus and be driven down to the lake to go swimming. That's...they didn't have no swimming pool until Dottie McBeth, Kent McBeth's mother, Joe McBeth's, well, his dad, owned the drug store down in Henderson, she got busy and started a campaign to get a swimming pool here in Henderson, the very first one that was built.

**Fredric Watson:** *It was just up off of Atlantic.*

**Virgil Weese:** That's right. And she's, and her group, my Aunt Georgie became a part of that, Gordon's mom, selling little bricks that they put in in the paving and they're going into the swimming pool so then they put whoever bought one, their name on it, you know, and that's how they raised money, part of the money to build that swimming pool. Everybody bought a brick. But that was a, a big thing, getting a swimming pool here in town for the kids, you know. Because, like I say, before that if you wanted to go...and many, many a time, me and Kent and Gary Van Horn would ride our bicycles down to the lake, believe it or not. Now it was...wasn't too bad going down but wasn't much fun coming back up, you know.

**Fredric Watson:** *That's a hot ride.*

**Virgil Weese:** Oh man, we'd take a jar of water. We never had no canteens. We used to get up and go out, all you wore in the summertime was shorts, you know. You had shorts and tennis shoes on. We'd hike clear up to the top of Black Mountain. I don't know how many times we've been up to the top of Black Mountain. You can see the lake from up there. You know, you get up there you can see clear down to the lake. But we'd go out in the desert hunting rabbits and whatever in our shorts and carry a glass jug, mason jar of water, you know. If you dropped and broke it you were out of water, you know. But we did that many times in the summer. There wasn't a whole lot of organized activities for young people at that time. There really wasn't that I can remember. The first big step in that direction was when Hugh Moran,

who was sheriff in Henderson, started up, took up making junior football and baseball for kids here in Henderson and, I mean, he was wonderful. He did a lot...he went around to all the different business people and raised money to buy uniforms and, and a lot of the stuff was old and donated but we were all happy to get it. You know, shoulder pads and helmets and cleats of any size, you know, and baseball cleats, you know, and baseball gloves. But that was the first organization for young people that I can ever remember.

**Fredric Watson:** *How old would you have been?*

**Virgil Weese:** I was probably, at that time, was probably maybe thirteen to fourteen years old.

**Fredric Watson:** *That got you interested in playing ball.*

**Virgil Weese:** When I got interested, the first time I really got interested in was the VFW, Veterans of Foreign Wars, they had a, you know, tournament, statewide tournament, VFW had going back then. And Darryl Pitts, who was one of the superintendents down at BMI, he was also...he happened to be superintendent at Western Electro Chemical Company, jumping ahead a few years when I came home from college, I was working out at Manganese Ore on the conveyer belts out there. Three Kids Mine over there was still operational then and Darryl Pitts came over to my house one evening and said, "Virg, would you be interested in being an electrician?" And I...and my Dad was a carpenter and cabinetmaker and I'd gone through a carpenters' apprenticeship, you know, from the time I was 7<sup>th</sup> grade on because I was a big kid, you know, 5'10" and 160 lbs. when I was a freshman.

**Fredric Watson:** *In high school?*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *That's a big size for a freshman.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, so I'd gone through the carpenters' apprentice, summertime apprenticeship, you know, all those summers, you know. I really had enough time to be able to go into the carpenters but when I came home from college the first thing I had available where I could go right to work was over at Manganese Ore. But Darryl came over to the house and

asked me if I'd be interested in being an electrician and I said well, sure. So he took me on down at Western Electro Chemical Company as an apprentice electrician and at that time anybody could go in and join the Electrical Union's Apprenticeship Program. You didn't have to belong to the Union or nothing. You could go in and apply and take their apprenticeship course. And Darryl told me, he said, "That's what I recommend you do." So I did; I went in there and signed up for that and it's a good thing I did because after four years in the Navy...I worked down there at Western Chemical Company maybe nine months and then I decided to go in the Navy. So I went in the Navy and I had a good enough grade score when you apply for the Navy, I could pick any occupation I wanted to pick for schooling. Well, at the time, electronics was really big. Television was coming in and all of that stuff, you know, so I told them I wanted to go to electronics school. Well, by the time I got out of boot camp, electronic school was full. The only thing I could pick that I thought I might like was electrical school. So I went through 18 weeks of electrical school and that was the best schooling I ever had in my life.

**Fredric Watson:** *Yeah.*

**Virgil Weese:** Without a doubt it was the best...I learned more in those 18 weeks than I learned in 3 years of apprentice school that they let me go through...instead of 4 years they gave me 1 year's credit for the Navy. And I came back and went and saw Don Brecheisen. Don Brecheisen was on the E Board for the Union at that time, Electrical Union. And I met him one night and there was about 150 guys standing in line out there. Don Brecheisen came out and says, "Virg Weese?" I said, yeah. He said, "Come on in here." So I went ahead of all them guys and he put me right into the electrical apprenticeship program. But I went through electrical apprenticeship school for 3 years instead of 4 because they gave me 1 year credit for the Navy and I learned more in those 18 weeks in the Navy school than I did in the 3 years of the apprenticeship school. I was teaching the apprenticeship school teachers what to teach in there because I'd learned so much in the Navy. I'm not bragging. I'm just saying that was a fact.

**Fredric Watson:** *Say, I've heard that, that the military schools were just really good.*

**Virgil Weese:** Oh, absolutely.

**Fredric Watson:** *And they were...they didn't mess around because they needed to get people trained up in a hurry.*

**Virgil Weese:** Absolutely, and if you didn't ...if you weren't interested and wanting to do that, they got rid of you. You didn't stay in there. They, they just got you out of school. You went on out and became a fireman somewhere else. But when I was going to the apprenticeship school, I became a night school instructor because I, when I...I carried a 98.8 average for 18 weeks and I'd been a night school instructor. And I got a letter of recommendation from the Naval School Command, Commander for being a night school instructor, which had benefitted me because I go a 72 every weekend for doing that. It was good liberty, you know. So anyway, when I come back here, like I say, I got into the Electrical Union and, but that, that's more recent stuff. You know, like I say, the old time Henderson, so many things, you know, that we did when we were kids, that you can remember that probably wouldn't have been anywhere else. The old dump that they had down there in Henderson. They had a, the Vegas Wash many a time. Me and Kent McBeth and sometimes Gary Van, we'd take our BB guns when we were younger, go down there and shoot and mess around. And we discovered there was a hermit lived down there in a cave down there in Vegas Wash and we got to know him, you know. And he had us come into his cave and he had it fixed up pretty nice. He had a, you know, shelving in there with canned food on it and everything, you know. It was really pretty nice.

**Fredric Watson:** *It would be fun to know more about him.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, you know.

**Fredric Watson:** *What became of him and everything.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, I can't even remember his name. You know, I really can't. And we only probably met up with him a couple of times but I do remember going down there and visiting with him, you know.

**Fredric Watson:** *Yeah, a lot of people.*

**Virgil Weese:** Have commented about that?



**Fredric Watson:** *Yeah, a lot of Henderson kids...*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, sure.

**Fredric Watson:** *Ride their bikes down there.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *One of the, a young lady was married to one of the Horniak kids, told a good story about him and said that he didn't have, must not have had a good starter on his car because he would have to back it up the hill and then push it down...*

**Virgil Weese:** Push it down to get it started? [Chuckling]

**Fredric Watson:** *Yeah, when he got home from...he'd go shopping in Vegas.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *Good story.*

**Virgil Weese:** No, there's...you know, in the plants supplies, well, especially Titanium Metals, supplied a lot of jobs for most of the people and, like I say, the Galb...and BMI, The Galbrath Corporation in 1956 or '55, somewhere around in there, to sell all the Townsite houses. And my Mom and Dad ended up buying that 18 Nevada Way property. I think it was a two-bedroom house. I think the two-bedrooms sold for something like 22 or 23 hundred and the three-bedroom sold for 25 or 26 hundred or something like that. My Grandma and Grandpa bought a two-bedroom on Washington Way and we bought the one on 18 Nevada Way. My Mom...matter of fact, my Mom and Dad borrowed the money from my Grandfather to buy that house and, of course, paid him back right away. But my Grandfather, for years, worked for George Crockett out at Alamo Airways.

**Fredric Watson:** *Oh yeah.*

**Virgil Weese:** And my Dad and I, when George Crockett went down to Barstow, California, with that Marine Base, they sold a bunch of the old barracks that they had down there, wooden ones. George Crockett went down there and bought them all and shipped them up here to the

Alamo Airways and put them out there on that empty lots that they had out there. And he hired my Dad and my Grandpa and me, they hired me...I went out there for fifty cents a day or something like that pulling nails out of all that old wood...and my Dad and my Grandpa hauled all of that old stuff into that motel that he had out there. A long time ago, he had that motel and that... well, Howard Hughes used to fly...it was the only airport...he used to fly in there and my Grandma...Howard came in there one time and he had a rip in his pants. And George Crockett took him over to my Grandma's, which they had a house right there that they lived in, and my Grandma sewed up that rip in his pants for him.

**Fredric Watson:** *She patched Howard Hughes' pants. That's a good one.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, she really did. But, you know, that's a lot of old history there, but going back then, like I say, it eventually became McCarran Airport, but back then Alamo Airways was the only airport in town.

**Fredric Watson:** *How's the electrician's craft changed since you first started? I'm thinking the old houses in Henderson, they're still being lived in. Have they had to go back and reissue the wiring?*

**Virgil Weese:** They've got some of the old, original Romex wiring, these old Townsite houses. A lot of them have been rewired, a lot of them haven't. They've still got the old, original wiring, they've got the old original square-D panels on the outside of the houses with the old square-D breakers in them. You know, you can't hardly even find those anymore. You know, one of them goes bad you can't buy one to replace it. I don't know where...used to be a, a junkyard in town, I forget the name of it, but on the corner of Charleston and Las Vegas Boulevard. A big, I called it a junkyard, but it had a little bit of everything in there and I know when I became one of the owners of Roberts Electric, eventually became a master electrician, we used to go over there when we couldn't find parts anywhere else. We'd go over there and he'd have 'em, you know. Maybe you'd pay a good price for 'em but at least you could get 'em, you know. These old, old houses and stuff, these are the only place you could get 'em. But the trade is changed a lot, a whole lot from when I first went into it as an apprentice as far as the materials and stuff that you use. One of the biggest change, years ago when you did electrical connections on the

line, you had a plot full of lead that you carried around, you twisted the wires together and you'd dip them in that lead and then you'd taped 'em; that was the way you made a joint. And then, of course, later on, 3M came out with a twist-on wire nets and stuff, you know, which was a big time saver and made a huge time saver as far as the time it took to wire a house or do any type of construction at all. As time when on more and more electronic stuff came into the electrical field, you know. A lot of your air conditioning, your disconnects and your magnetic starters and a lot of different things came in, all became more 4-way stuff. If you didn't repair it, it had a printed circuit board in it and went bad, you just threw it away and put a new one in there. You know, and that's the way everything's gone, you know.

**Fredric Watson:** *Yeah. Where did people shop? You know, so many people in Henderson were "do-it-yourself" kind of folks and were handy. Where did they shop in those days for parts to, you know, work on their house. I kind of remember there was Von Tobel's in town, I guess.*

**Virgil Weese:** Well, you know, another thing about Von Tobel's, back then Von Tobel's was the only lumber shop in the whole valley. My Dad was a carpenter-cabinet maker, and if he had to buy any kind of lumber that's where he had to go to get it. That was, I mean, years ago now, that was the only lumberyard and they had a big electrical department and everything else. But that was the only lumber yard in town was at Von Tobel's. You couldn't buy lumber anywhere else. That was the only place that had it.

**Fredric Watson:** *That'd make the job more complicated, you have to drive all the way into town...*

**Virgil Weese:** Well, yeah, my Dad did and, you know, when he was a cabinetmaker here in Henderson he did some of the most beautiful cabinet jobs you've ever seen in your life and anybody that's got one, you talk to 'em and it's just as good today as it was the day he put it in there. You know, and he had to drive clear in to Von Tobel's in his truck and pick up the lumber for those jobs and he only charged people five dollars an hour but he never charged 'em for going and getting the material and bringing it back. He never charged 'em for that. He only charged 'em if he was workin' on your job and buildin' your cabinets in your house or in his

cabinet shop, that's all you got charged for. If he had to drive to Vegas to get material he didn't charge you for that.

**Fredric Watson:** *He was a good man...people don't, don't do things that way now.*

**Virgil Weese:** No, they sure don't. And...

**Fredric Watson:** *Where'd, where'd he learn his craft?*

**Virgil Weese:** He learned it on...actually, from my grandfather. My grandfather was a carpenter, the one that he worked at Alamo Airways with George Crockett and everything, that's where he started pickin' up his carpenter trade, and he got into the Carpenters' Union and he joined the Carpenters' Union. He and my Uncle Buck both did. But when they had the gas station down in Pitman, they thought they were gonna, you know, be able to make a livin' off of that and that didn't go well at all. They ended up putting a bait shop down there and all kinds of things to try and get customers. The reason they decided to put the bait in the gas station in Pitman, they could have bought a piece of property over on Las Vegas Boulevard, the same place where the Sands ended up buildin' the hotel, they could have bought that piece of property for the same price they paid the one in Pitman. The reason they took the one in Pitman is because there was more traffic going to Lake Mead and Boulder Dam than there was coming in and out from Los Angeles at that time.

**Fredric Watson:** *That's something.*

**Virgil Weese:** There was only two things on the Strip, that was Last Frontier Village and the El Rancho Vegas. They weren't casinos, they were rest areas and spas for the Hollywood movie stars. They weren't casinos and Last Frontier Village had a western village there. You know, with horseback riding and all kinds of stuff, you know. You know, they had a bar there, that old western bar and they had a few old things like that in there. You know, it was an attraction for the tourists. Anyway, that's the reason they built down there in Pitman because there was more traffic going to Lake Mead and Boulder Dam.

**Fredric Watson:** *You mentioned earlier, before we started the camera, that you used to work down at your Dad's gas station in Pitman.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, but...

**Fredric Watson:** *What do you remember about Pittman from those days?*

**Virgil Weese:** Well, a lot of the old timers from Henderson lived down there, the Fosters and well, like we was talkin' about, Dick Olvers Market was down there, you know, and the clientele that my Dad's gas station ended up depending on was more locals than it was travelers. I mean, he had more local people that ended up coming in there for gas and even bait and stuff when they wanted to go fishin' than he did tourists coming through. But, I mean, they ended up being more of his clientele than the tourists did really. It...I'd go down there and work on the weekends and stuff. Of course, I was busy in sports, you know, when I got into high school I was...I played ever...I was always in sports; played football and they played basketball and then they played baseball, you know. And I was in on all of 'em.

**Fredric Watson:** *We...the library's got a picture of a softball team at the plant and I think one of your uncles is on that team, what was your Uncle Buck's last name?*

**Virgil Weese:** Weese, but there was a Cecil Karaker that might have been, Karaker, because he worked now at the BMI years ago. He was pretty involved with the teenagers for the, at the time. They had the tennis court up there by Water Street and Basic Road on the corner and he started teaching tennis to the kids up there for free. He'd just go up there at night, turn the lights on and the kids would come up. I even went up there and started taking, learning tennis from him.

**Fredric Watson:** *Really.*

**Virgil Weese:** And a lot of the kids did, you know. But he was pretty active with the kids and at Christmastime he'd go down and the sheriff's station was that little teeny building down there where the Rainbow Club is now, right in the middle of that empty lot.

**Fredric Watson:** *That's where that was, huh?*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, they had that little teeny square building, I bet it wasn't 12 feet square. That was the Sheriff's Office. And that's where Hugh Moran had his office to begin with and

stuff. But at Christmastime, they'd have Santa Claus down there and they'd open up the window on that Sheriff's Office and they'd hand nuts and stuff out of there, nothing fancy, but, you know, mostly nuts and oranges and things like that for the kids. But, and playing Christmas music out of there, but he was always down there doin' that at Christmastime. He was pretty involved, my Uncle Cecil. He was an accountant down at BMI, at that time when they first started out down there. He was here when my Grandma and Grandpa lived, they lived on the corner of Basic Road and Water Street on the southeast corner of Basic Road and Water. That was their house. My Uncle Cecil, when you down Basic Road on the left hand side, his house was the third, third house down which would be right where the jail is now, the City Jail.

**Fredric Watson:** *There on Water?*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, that's where my Uncle Cecil lived. When Gina and I came up here in '59, we ended up right across the street at 19 East Basic Road. You know, that's where our house, that's where the taco place is now.

**Gina Weese:** 15.

**Virgil Weese:** 15? Okay. 15 East Basic Road, yeah. Yeah, that...

**Fredric Watson:** *All these addresses are good for us to have because they have maps to Henderson to be fun to show where people lived and that's something that a lot of people have lost track of.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *They have some of the old phone directories...*

**Virgil Weese:** Oh, do ya'?

**Fredric Watson:** *...which help with addresses and stuff like that.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *Don Bittles had one. Some of those old phone directories, they told who the kids in the town were and what the dad and mother did for a living.*

**Virgil Weese:** Oh, really. [Chuckling] Yeah, Don, he went all through school here. He was just...him and Bob Herman were just, I think, one or two years ahead of me in school and they both ended up being teachers back here in Basic High School.

**Fredric Watson:** *That's right.*

**Virgil Weese:** When they got older they came back here and became teachers. Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *What do you remember about the Henderson schools? Do you remember the names of any of your teachers or people that might have made an impression on you?*

**Virgil Weese:** Oh, man, well...

**Gina Weese:** Mrs. Milleck.

**Virgil Weese:** Well, I was gonna say when her and I got married and came back up here in 1960, I rented a house from Mrs. Milleck, that was 15 East Basic Road there. That's where we rented a house from her and I remodeled it and fixed it all...I asked her, I said would you...'cause it was just a bare old Townsite house, no cabinets in the kitchen, you know; no vented air cond...swamp cooler that came down right in the middle of the kitchen. That was it, you know, and no light switches in the bedrooms. You had a little switch you twisted to turn on the lights. So I rewired the whole house and vented the air contion, the vents into the bedrooms, put cabinets in the kitchen for her. I asked her, can I...I says, if you'll pay for material I'll supply all the work over there. And she agreed to do that. So I deducted whatever material I bought off the monthly rent that we were paying. I think it was...how much were we paying her a month.

**Gina Weese:** Sixty-five dollars.

**Virgil Weese:** Sixty-five dollars a month, you know, so, anyway, we stayed there, you know...

**Gina Weese:** A year and a half.

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah, a year and a half until we bought the house down on...

**Gina Weese:** Behind the hospital.

**Virgil Weese:** Behind...Lowry Street, we ended up buying a house down there, the first house that we bought.

**Fredric Watson:** *All right.*

**Virgil Weese:** Paid \$10,500 for it, you know. And I completely remodeled that house too. Every house we've lived in I've completely remodeled it.

**Fredric Watson:** *Those, those houses were plaster, stucco on the outside and lathe and plaster on the inside there. When I was a little kid, they'd seem like palaces, like really nice houses and...*

**Virgil Weese:** When they built those houses down behind the hospital that was in like, maybe, 1953, '52 or '53. I graduated in '54. Kent McBeth's mother and dad, Joe and Dottie McBeth, bought a house on Church Street and they remodeled it all up before they ever moved into it. It was really a nice house, you know, nicer than any of the rest of them, it was really fixed up nice because Joe owned the drugstore uptown, blah, blah, blah. So Kent and I got the bright idea when they built all them houses, just bare dirt yards and they were full of rocks and everything, you know. So Kent and I got the bright idea we'd go down there and get a trailer and I borrowed my Dad's truck and we'd go down there and pick all them rocks, rake all the yards and get all the rocks and everything out of them, haul them off for 'em. I forget what we charged them. But we did several houses and made a lot of money doin' that, you know.

**Fredric Watson:** *Yeah, landscaping.*

**Virgil Weese:** Yeah.

**Fredric Watson:** *Boy, there's a lot of rocks in that neighborhood.*

**Virgil Weese:** Oh, yeah. But we made quite a bit of money doin' that surprisingly. But, but, you know, the teachers and stuff, I'm tryin' to remember. Well, Coach McDoniel, of course, is the one that stands out probably in everybody's mind my age.

**Fredric Watson:** *He's young, young then.*



**Virgil Weese:** When he first came here, he was. He came right out here right out of Arkansas College and became the football coach and boy he was a stern coach, I'll tell you what. But he was a stern principal, he became principal, you know, and but he was fair, you know. Anybody you talk to, he was stern, but he was fair and I mean he really... It was a pretty knit community among the school and I don't care whether you was a freshman or a senior, there was only so many kids in school and if you was gonna have friends of any kind you had to, you know, be friends with everybody. There wasn't no such thing as, "Well, you're a senior, I can't associate with you. I'm just a freshman, or, you know, I'm a senior, I can't associate with you." I mean everybody was pretty much friends with everybody.