MainMic_NoiseReductionApplied_VolumeEdits Applied

Fri, Dec 01, 2023 4:43PM • 1:14:10

David:

00:00

The goal is really to make sure that we have your stories captured because they're important to this community - because of your connection to the land, your connection to us as the community of Broomfield, now I think the soil ceremony is a good example of what we were doing, hoping to do, is develop that, that relationship, so yeah, we'd love to capture that and, and have those stories so we can share it with other people.

00:17

And especially for the schools is kind of the hope, so.

00:25

Chester:

You need somebody to sit over there?

David:

Yes, please.

Kris:

(Inaudible) first speaker is . . .

00:32

Kris:

And 'm thinking it's probably a good time to remind people to turn their cell phones off

00:38

so we don't have a bunch of bleeps and bleeps in the recording.

00:44

Go ahead and just talk normally to me for a moment, just I can set some levels and make sure it's not too loud.

00:50

Chester:

My name's Chester Whiteman. I'm from the Cheyenne Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma.

00:55 And
00:57 I'm ready to do it.
Kris: All right.
David: All right.
01:01 So Chester, thank you so much for taking some time to chat with us. And I'd just like to have you introduce yourself, just share who you are, and
01:10 Chester: I'm,
01:11 my name is Chester Whiteman.
01:14 I'm from the Cheyenne Arapaho Tribes.
01:17 And
01:19 we used to be the
01:22 culture coordinators.
01:24 They made us,
01:27 they gave us a new title, it's called
01:30

resource specialists.

O1:33 And, but we're still doing the same job.
01:36 And
01:39 I'm,
01:42 I'm from Hammon, Oklahoma. That's my, those are my roots, Hammon, and Watonga. My folks came from, my great, my great grandmother came from Watonga.
01:54 And
01:55 so
01:59 today, you know, we, we came up here yesterday and today and
02:05 shared some friendship with everybody and
02:10 looked at some property and
02:14 you know, it was a
02:16 very good, very good experience today for, for me.
02:21 (Inaudible) we,
02:24 we
02.27

pretty much lead the charge in our traditional portion of our tribe.

02:33 And
02:35 it's always, it's always good to get a call from him, because he's, he's gonna quiz me and when I call quiz him.
David: Yeah.
Chester: So we try to keep our
02:46 tradition intact, you know, try to pass it on to those that are coming behind us and we want, we want that way of life to continue.
02:57 Right? It doesn't get you rich.
03:00 But it makes you happy
03:02 to be able to help people when they ask you to, because that's what we did. We sacrificed ourselves
03:12 so our people can
03:15 have a peace of mind when they have a problem or something. They call us and we go do our best to help 'em. When we did that, we became servants of the people.
03:26 We don't get paid for it or anything like that, just from the heart.
David: Mmm.
03:31 Chester: And

today, I want to
03:37 share, some of the migration story
03:41 from our, our side.
03:47 We were up in Minnesota, Wisconsin, around that area
03:52 when
03:55 when
04:00 people discovered us.
David chuckles.
04:06 Chester: And in, in 1825 the,
04:10 we got into the,
04:12 what you would call it,
04:15 a Friendship Treaty with the United States government that we wouldn't fight one another. But you see where that took us.
04:26 Then that, that treaty was signed in
04:29 Illinois.
04:31 So we were still up and around that area.

04:34 Then we 04:36 migrated west to like 04:39 the Black Hills and around that area. 04:43 And then we got 04:46 pushed out by the, by the Sioux because there were 04:53 too many of them. It was a, they had, they had a large, 04:57 large, what they call the 05:00 Seven Council Fires of the Sioux. And then we got around 05:06 Colorado and 05:11 we had 05:13 a treaty signing 05:16 called Horse Creek Treaty in 186, 1851, around Fort Laramie, 05:22 east of Fort Laramie. 05:25 And

there was, I think there was 10 or 11 tribes that were invited there.

05:32

And it never, it never did

05:37

materialize because the, they were (inaudible) on a wagon train that was bearing gifts for all of, all the people that were going to

05:50

sign the treaties.

05:52

And

05:54

the,

05:56

all Indians got restless, so they start moving back to where they came from. So the agents that want, were trying to get the signatures,

06:05

or their mark,

06:08

they had to go out and locate the, the tribes on their own instead of having them in one location.

06:16

So the 18, 1851 Treaty was from, from Nebraska, all the way to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.

06:26

That was our, that was our territory - Nebraska, Kansas, Wyoming, part of North Dakota, Colorado, eastern half of Colorado, some New Mexico. So that was our, that was our roaming area.

06:42

But, you know I always, I always say, nobody owns the land.

06:47

I don't know where this ownership thing came from, you know, start putting fences up and things like that.

06:57

We were in

Colorado, around the foothills area.

07:03

And we tried to make peace with the, with the government, Black Cat on Little Raven, Left Hand.

07:12

They went up to Denver to try to make peace and we, we got moved down to

07:18

Fort Lyons.

07:21

And

07:23

they, they couldn't,

07:26

they didn't know what to do with us, you know. So in, in 18, 1833, while we were still roaming around, the Arapahos moved up to, they call 'em the Northern Arapahos now, they moved up to

07:44

around Fort Laramie, so they could draw rations and different things like that.

07:50

The Northern Cheyenne is what they call 'em now today,

07:54

they were the same, same boat. I think they were drawing their rations from Fort Robinson or Fort Laramie.

08:02

And that's when that Proclamation was out that, you know, to shoot Indians on site. Anything they had, you could be the owners of after you kill 'em. So that Proclamation was just

08:13

rescinded about two or three years ago from the books of Colorado.

08:18

And

after, after they couldn't make peace, then they 08:27 did the Fort Wise Treaty. 08:31 From the Fort Wise Treaty, before they could even 08:35 mark the territory of Fort Wise, 08:39 they moved us to, 08:42 they, 08:44 they made another treaty, 08:46 was the 1865 Treaty. That was 08:53 the 08:56 Arapaho and Cheyenne people of the Little Arkansas. 1865. 09:01 So, then after that, 09:05 which those, those 09:09 reservations were never really occupied by us. They were steadily moving us away from Colorado because we were in the way.

09:20

Then it came, the 18, 1868 Treaty was Medicine Lodge Treaty, which put us in Oklahoma. First it was, we were going to be in Kansas. Kansas didn't want us, so they moved us to Oklahoma. And we had pretty much all of Western Oklahoma. Then the Dawes Act came.

And when the Dawes Act came it, it gave all the, all the Indians 160 acres a piece. But the access that was left was almost 5 million acres and they took the 5 million acres, you know, without . . .

David:

Yeah.

Chester:

... without question, but

10:02

you know the,

10:07

the Northern Arapahos left in 1830 . . . 1825. The Northern Cheyennes left in 1833.

10:16

So we're,

10:19

the Cheyenne Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma are the victims of Sand Creek.

10:24

Even though the Northern Arapahos and the Northern Cheyennes try to say they were there, they weren't there. The treaties tells where everybody was.

David:

Yeah.

Chester:

You know, so they can't, they can't dispute them treaties, So they're saying, well we're part of it. We tell 'em no, you're not part of it.

10:43

The only only, only, only way you're a part of it is you're descendents, descendancy of Sand Creek, you weren't, you guys weren't actually there. We were the ones that paid the price. And

10:57

you know, that,

10:59

that

was how we became part of Colorado, how this, how this was our home range. When they first came out with the, with the treaty in 1851.

11:13

And Sand Creek was,

11:19

there's an article, Article 6 in the Sand Creek Treaty, it says that the government was going to pay us 50,000 a year for 10 years,

11:35

with 6% interest from the time the treaty was signed.

11:41

We haven't received a penny.

11:44

So multiply 6,, 50 million dollars times 6%, for, since 1885, or 1865.

David:

Yeah.

Chester:

We'd break the United States government.

David:

Right.

Chester:

You know, so we,

12:00

we still

12:02

maintain our way of life, our tradition.

12:08

Fred, he, he,

12:10

he pretty much handles the Arapaho side.

And I handle the Cheyenne side. 12:16 But we work together, we're, we're, we're a team. He feeds off me and I feed off him. Sometimes we get in trouble, but that's alright. We get in trouble together. 12:26 And, and, you know, we, we've done a lot for our people. David: Absolutely. Chester: And in the past six years 12:35 they, they don't know how to deal with us because we come up with things that 12:42 should have been taken care of already. 12:45 We first got put in these, these positions 12:50 and 12:52 we had an agenda, Fred and I. 12:56 But we couldn't start that agenda for about two years, because all the former 13:03 players that were involved before us didn't know what to do. So all their work was piled up in, in an office. And when I moved into the office, they laid all that stuff on my desk . . . David: Goodness. Chester:

... said, you need to take care of this. And I asked, I said why didn't you guys take care of it, you

know, and then

they said, well we didn't know how. I said, you, you ever try to ask somebody?

David:

Yeah.

Chester:

You know, we would help you. You know, that's, that's, that's what we do. We help.

13:33

And then we got in trouble for trying to re-inter

13:38

remains one time and because they wanted as a buffalo butcher, so we go to the buffalo butcher, and our director was kind of under the weather when we got there.

13:52

And it didn't start for another three hours, you know. We could have taken care of that and still made the buffalo butcher. But

14:01

today we're, we're kind of stand alone.

14:05

They don't want to own us.

14:08

But, you know, it's, it's all good. We,

14:14

we're creative.

14:17

When we can't go through our office, then we talk to the governor, and the governor helps us.

14:24

You know he, he does a lot for us.

14:27

And we do a lot for him. You know he does, he's done a good job for all our people. We've, we've,

14:35

David:

That's Governor Reggie Wassana?

Chester: Yeah.
14:39 He's,
14:41 he's moved this forward in six years, like no other governor has ever done.
14:49 You know we, we
14:52 we're gathering properties,
14:55 we're building enterprises,
14:58 causing things to happen, you know that,
and people are starting to look at Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes. Used to, it used to be Cheyenne and Arapahos, and they shy away and turn their back on you. You know today they want to shake their hand. And that's, that's pretty big on his part.
15:16 David: Yeah, I was looking at this too.
Chester: Yeah.
David: Yeah, yeah.
15:20 Chester: Yeah, that's very good.
15:22 That, that was a, that's a big step.

David: Absolutely. Absolutely.
15:28 That's the key for us.
15:31 Our,
15:33 our take on coming up here and that's our justification to come and get,
15:40 recover property and lands, whatever it takes, you know, for us to get back to Colorado. Because I was in, we were in a meeting at Sand Creek with the Interior Secretary
15:52 and he asked the Interior Secretary, what would you think about the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of, of Colorado?
16:00 And kind of,
16:02 kind of went quiet you know, and the Northern Cheyenne and the Northern Arapahos walked out of the room.
David: Oh no.
16:09 Chester: So that was, that was a pretty good hit.
David: Yeah.
Chester: That was good. But
16:15 you know, I'm,
16:17

I'm proud to be a part of this, you know, this small part of what we, what we do,
16:24 what we've accomplished, and it, it wasn't by ourselves.
16:28 We had, we have a lot, a lot of people to thank, like Frank, and Deborah, and Ray Dean, Mary, to always support my brother.
16:39 we'll get different ones to come up here and help us, you know,
16:43 it's, it's always good to, to share that.
David: Yeah.
Chester: It's,
16:50 it's, it's good to share that knowledge and everything that goes along with it you know, it's, it's always,
16:57 always a blessing. You can always look back on it and
17:01 feel it, you know.
David: Yeah.
17:04 So with that
17:06 I'll turn it over to Fred or Ray Dean, somebody
David: Thank you very much, Chester. I really appreciate it.
17:18 David:

Whew! Good work.

There is a break, as they prepare for the next interview.

17:25 - 18:59

18:59

Ray Dean:

I'm not very knowledgeable about our ways way back there, but what little I got I know . . .

19:07

Good. Well we'll love to hear from you, Ray Dean.

19:11

Ray Dean:

My mom and dad were from the older generation. And I traveled with them a lot up north - Montana (inaudible) and they'd talk about stories about Cheyennes.

19:24

One time we were located in Minnesota. Came by this way through the Rocky Mountains down to around here.

David:

Yep.

19:36

Ray Dean:

And we,

19:37

long way, like I always said, we was following that buffalo around. We were with, that's where they was at.

19:44

A lot of the things that we do with our

19:49

spiritual, in our ceremonies, that has to do with that,

19:56

gave us a way of creat, communicating with our

20:00

animals

and how they always avoid slaughter

20:07

as much as they could, from soldiers, (inaudible) and they taught me about

20:15

how they had to go this way, that way. So those guys that are out there (inaudible) they could never figure out what, how to live (inaudible) you know.

20:27

We'd come upm we'd come up here, me and Chester (inaudible)

20:32

Kansas. The land is all, mostly flat.

David:

Yeah.

20:40

Ray Dean:

I was thinking, how did those soldiers miss our Indians? How do they, they couldn't see them. So that's why I said these animals used to warn 'em.

David:

Oh yeah.

Ray Dean:

Tell 'em where the soldiers were.

David:

Hmm.

20:53

Ray Dean:

So they'd go around 'em like that.

20:55

(Inaudible)

20:57

20:59

We have a lot of

stake in

21:03

Minnesota,

21:05

coming around this way to Montana,

21:08

South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and down through here. Then we ended up in Oklahoma with, that wasn't by choice but

21:19

we ended up down there.

21:21

Been there

21:24

so long that we're used to that, we're adapted to that

21:28

way of living there. A lot of (inaudible) things that we went through; we experienced through warfare, we experienced through ceremonials, and learned from a lot of our things like that. Our chiefs were a guidance in our ways that (inaudible).

21:52

When the soldiers got a hold of the Cheyennes

21:58

in Montana they sent 'em back down. A lot of that, my dad used to say, the ones that stayed (inaudible) those two groups,

22:08

the ones that came back, all of a sudden, we had a division like that land right there.

22:14

Northern and Southern.

22:16

Language wise, ceremonial wise, are the way we (inaudible) taken to living was still the same. Somewhere down the line they all kind of changed a little bit.

David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: Our language, dialect, our
22:32 sun dance. We (inaudible) we can. And during that time
22:40 the Northern Cheyennes, they split up. Everybody knows about Fort Robinson.
David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: So
22:48 it all came down to unity. They had to get back together. And when they talk about that they talk about
22:56 Little Big Horn,
22:58 and
23:00 they, Custer was gonna wipe everybody out, he was gonna
David: Yeah.
23:04 Ray Dean: kill all the
23:06 Indians.
23:08 (Inaudible) didn't happen. The Indians got together as one. They combined together as one.

David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: There was no such thing as well we did this, we did that, it was a (inaudible) effort, taking care of that what happened there. And
23:24 so all of a sudden the federal government didn't like that, we'll retaliate, we'll retaliate. But during that process they made treaties prior to that. And they stepped all over 'em.
David: Yeah.
23:38 And now we have to fight over who's who, who to believe. (Inaudible) our Indians are
23:46 educated in the ways that
23:49 what we say, I was telling that, I can't remember,
23:53 that lady over there, I said,
23:56 our word was, when we talked, it was, that was good enough. We
24:01 smoked pipe,
24:03 today is contract, you have to sign it or they'll put you in court, and (inaudible) so when we were told something, we believed that.
24:14 But a lot of the, a lot
24:16 of that kind of went by the wayside. That's why we have these like Sand Creek, Washita
David: Yeah.

Ray Dean:

All the, everything that took place we were

24:29

told one thing and it didn't happen that way.

David:

Right.

Ray Dean:

There was a (inaudible)

24:35

but they went back,

24:38

there was a.

24:40

the government was to file charges charges on Dull Knife and Little Wolf, because (inaudible) they said they killed cattle

24:49

(inaudible) but when they made it back there was so many lawyers in DC one of 'em pinned 'em. (Inaudible) the federal government didn't (inaudible) have their own wording, and these treaties, they stepped all over that.

David:

Just moved past, yeah.

25:00

Ray Dean:

So they didn't do, they didn't get to file charges on 'em. They didn't get to, we never had (inaudible)

25:13

prisons, at that time.

25:20

Today it's just, just common, I just,

25:24

you get drunk, get a wreck, you're going to jail, no matter what. But then at that time they didn't have that. They had management, but only if you killed another Cheyenne and,

and that's just the way that, that's the way the Cheyenne, they respected that. That's our, that was how our rules were.

25:47

Our, how do you say, our governing body made their own, way back their, way a long time ago, like

25:52

sweet medicine. (inaudible). And

25:57

today they're trying to implement that in our Constitution.

26:03

Well, we were here before long, long before (inaudible) came around.

David:

Right.

Ray Dean:

We,

26:09

we wonder why, when the, there was some old men, I can barely remember some of their names, in Oklahoma, who my dad used to go with to meetings, talk and be with the governor, I don't mean that governor,

26:26

the state representatives, over, Fort Reno, over

26:33

David:

North of . . .

Ray Dean:

Sand Creek.

David:

Yeah.

Washita, and they talk about, they're gonna work with us,

26:43

change.

26:45 That was the 1960s, 70's.
26:49 Still that way today.
David: Still the same. Yeah.
Ray Dean: And where we come from, we fought a long hard battle with the
26:56 government, then ourselves, and then
26:59 trying to survive.
27:03 People were,
27:07 do we, our, our way life back there was all ceremonial. Nobody went out like partying and stuff like that everyone (inaudible)
27:18 repatriation. Those people that they find, they had not a
27:24 lot of
27:28 like, ceremonial backgrounds. And when we tried to work with 'em, we lost all of that.
David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: What little we know, we try to use that,
27:39 we try to add on, or try not to leave anything out. Yeah.

David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: So we try to work that way and help them go on.
27:47 Frank and Fred, that's who we all went to. (Inaudible) about a year ago, year and a half ago, like a year ago, we did, we did the same thing over there. I always
28:00 ask for forgiveness for my part because I don't know, I might be doing something wrong. But I just do the best I can.
28:07 And a lot of our teachers that we learn (inaudible) he's a, he's in a, (inaudible)
28:14 that's where I met Stephen. And
28:20 he called a meeting about a year ago, Watonga.
28:24 Talk about our way, that we know. There were a lot of people there. But
28:30 he was talking about one, one (inaudible) that's on the table. Still there today. So hopefully, that'll come about.
David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: But the only thing is,
28:43 where I live, that (inaudible) it's not big enough. They, you know, got a fence there and they fenced off, farmers got leases, and there's not enough room there.
David: Not space enough.
Ray Dean:

Where they're at,
28:55 there's, there's plenty over there. And heaven. But they were looking at sites
29:02 about six months ago
David: Okay.
Ray Dean: January or something like, and
29:06 trying to get one back together. We know it's not gonna happen right away, but it used to be like at Watonga. We all got there. We've had one a year. A lot of our ways that we were taught, we try to hang on to them. That's, that's what we're going by right now.
David: Mmm-hmm.
Ray Dean: And the, this (inaudible) took place here, last, yesterday. Today, you know, it's good to recognize 'em.
29:31 Native American history, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and what are our other tribes? We got
29:38 the city government, federal government, I mean the state government, making like they did that proclamation last night and stuff like that, recognize, we did a lot of good things yesterday,
29:51 today,
29:52 people that started that meeting, and I'm glad that we, I got to sit in on that, got to look at that. Because

that's

a step forward from what I seen from when I was growing up. My mom and dad, I never did ask 'em, . (inaudible) just kind of fall into place. And it took a while, but I slowly started picking things up. And

everything that, what, (inaudible) in Oklahoma, same way. Northern southern relatives, same way, but we got a big problem.

30:30

Alcohol and drugs.

30:33

And what made matters worse was when COVID hit, man, that knocked a lot of our people out. We lost a lot of 'em.

30:42

But we fought, we survived that, and so far, we're,

30:49

we're doing well on that - COVID. But alcohol and drugs . . .

30:52

I used to do alcohol a long time ago, when I was young.

30:55

I had a

30:57

rude awakening. I landed in the hospital. That's when I made my mind up.

31:04

I (inaudible) all this time. But all this Cheyenne history, it's a lot to, I just can't get into detail because I don't want to say (inaudible) but

31:17

like (inaudible) I'm adding or I might not even know the whole details. Just what little I know, that's kind of where I'm talking from. And

31:28

we're in a

31:31

(inaudible) situation with that right now with

31:33

tribal, tribal government.

31:39

We're expanding. And we were, we're doing good. That's the way I see it. Everything's

31:47 looking good on (inaudible) they just happen. 31:51

And 31:52

one of the guys that was spearheading it, he died a

31:57

couple of weeks ago, lieutenant governor, that (inaudible) and

32:05

we, there was a (inaudible) you don't stop.

32:11

So it's not out of disrespect, but go on. And if I can get our tribal government to all work together, there are a lot of kids coming up. And it's for them.

David: Yeah.

Ray Dean: It's not for us.

David: Yeah.

Ray Dean:

You know, they're coming up. Our language, they're

32:31

teaching that in the (inaudible) Cheyenne. And you guys (inaudible) Arapaho. (Inaudible) the main thing is, keep the (inaudible) cuz if we don't have our language, we're not Cheyennes.

And we try to hang on to that and keep it going. A lot of those people, when they were around, (Inaudible) language, Cheyenne. And the natives and other things like that

33:09

but we come, we come from a generation that, we were lucky, we got to listine, we go to work with them. And I remember 'em saying, my mom, she said to always listen, someplace, somewhere downline it's gonna help me. Maybe I heard it more than once, or 2, 3, times, but always just listen . . .

David: Yeah.
Ray Dean: have respect (inaudible) so I always think that way. Anyway, I just want to bring that out and thank you guys for listening.
David: Thank you very much, Roy Dean. I appreciate that.
Ray Dean: Thank you.
33:43 David: Yes, absolutely.
33:51 I was sorry to hear that as lieutenant governor, Gilbert Miles, he died recently. Yeah, sorry to hear that.
Unknown: Thanks.
33:58 David: Yeah.
34:06 Thanks, Tara.
34:12 Thanks for coming over Marty, by the way.
34:14 Marty: Yeah, sorry I'm late
David: That's alright
34:24 Thank you, Fred.

Good to have you here. I'd love to have you just share a little bit about yourself and
34:31 we'll go from there.
Fred: My name is Fred Mesquita.
34:36 I'm from Oklahoma. I'm a Southern Arapaho. I was born in Canton
34:42 and grew up half a mile from,
34:48 south from (inaudible)
34:50 where our people settled after one day they were moved into Oklahoma.
34:54 I grew up there and went to school.
34:56 My mother didn't want me to go to boarding school.
35:00 So I got to go to 12 years of public school,
35:04 and graduated from public school.
35:07 But
35:09 I was growing up, we grew up there,
35:12 and my grandmother, my uncle,
35:16 and my mother, they spoke fluent, fluent Arapaho. And me and my brothers all, the ones that are older than me, I

think that was probably pretty close to our first language. We would speak Arapaho.

35:31

And then when, you know, when my mother knew we had to go to school, so

35:36

And she.

35:38

she, she told us that we didn't need this language, because she remembered being in trouble when she went to boarding school, and you know, being in trouble for speaking our language. Our grandmother didn't care. She, she continued to speak Arapaho to us all the time.

35:57

But later on, my mother finally

36:02

said that, we should, we needed to know the language, and then she started to speak more and talk with us, you know, so

36:13

I've been working with

36:15

Chester, and

36:17

we had a program where that we did a lot of

36:22

outreach for the people, you know, we looked at things that the people needed to know, we looked at the history, you know, of our people

36:32

close, close to where we're at now. You know, the Sand Creek Washita, other, other battles that were there.

36:42

Some people here in Colorado, right here, helped us with some of our, some of the things we didn't really know.

They helped us with some of the battles, and after they started talking to us, well then

36:58

my brothers over here, Roy Dean, Chester, they remembered, you know, something going on there. So we, they would tie them battles back in. And that's what we was trying to do with our people, we was trying to teach them our history.

37:12

Not, not from the schoolbook side, but from, from oral history. And we'd lis, we'd tell the stories that we hear. And you know we would always ask each other, what do you, what do you know about this, or what do you know about this, and we talk about that.

37:32

You know, one thing that, that's scary

37:35

is that, and I think it was said best by Chester, he said, there was a time when

37:42

we used to do something, and we could turn around and say, is that right?

37:48

He said, now we turn around and there's nobody there, because we're the last of the ones that are trying to do this. So that's, that's the kind of a part it

38:00

was like, you know, we just the little bit we know, we've lost so much in our trip to where we're at now. But we're trying to hang on with everything that we have. And so we try.

38:13

That's, that's our job at the, at the tribes. You know, when the

38.10

lieutenant governor put me in there he told me, he said, we're losing out

38:26

on so much. He said, try to bring it back. That's what he told me, so that's what we try to do.

38:37

David:

I'm just thinking about that kind of impact and the education and carrying on traditions. And

just, I'd love to hear a little bit more about some of the ways you've been able to do that, whether here in Colorado or in Oklahoma, just some of the things you've been working on recently.
Fred: Well
38:57 we started out, we looked at
39:02 we looked at, again, we looked at the history and how it was being
39:07 portrayed.
39:09 And so we went,
39:12 we went, our first big battle, I think, was at Sand Creek. We went there. And it was all
39:19 the Northern Tribes. The story was all from them. There was no Southern Tribes and, and you know, the Southern Cheyenne, were almost completely left out of the story. The Arapahos were completely left out the story.
39:34 You know, when I asked them,
39:37 where's the Arapahos? They said there was only two there and both of them was killed. End of story.
David: Hmm.
Fred: Nobody cares.
39:46 You know, and so
39:49 I turned around and I said, well, you, you're going to have to learn to care.

And so we've turned around and, and took the knowledge that we can get from our

40:00

elders and those that we can speak, that speak about it, and we put it back into that, you know, we were there with the

40:09

History Colorado, Chester and I was there. And that was a battle in itself, trying to get the story told in the proper way that it should have been. But we got it done.

40:24

Not as good as we'd like, but it's, it's better than it was.

David:

The exhibit turned out well, I thought. But yeah, it's probably what? 8, 8, 9 years of work to get there.

40:37

Fred:

It wasn't overnight.

David:

Yeah.

40:44

Fred:

You know the,

40:46

the Cheyenne Arapahos are together today. But at the beginning they weren't.

40:52

You know, they came from,

40:54

more from the east. We came more from the north.

40:59

You know, there's stories of us,

41:01

coming from across an ice bridge,

(inaudible) an ice bridge there.

41:13

A young child seen a horn sticking up from the ice and he told his grandmother,

41:17

I want that horn. So she reached down and cut it. And when she cut it, it began to bleed.

41:23

And it began to melt the ice.

41:27

So part of our people had to stay there. The rest of the people came into this country, where we're at.

41:35

I don't know where that ice bridge is at. But we just know that as we began coming, we moved into the Plains area. When we got here,

41:47

you know, we came in from the north, and we were with the Gros Ventres. The Gros Ventres were here with us. As we moved into the Plains area, then we became allies with the Cheyenne.

42:00

And the Cheyenne, since recorded time,

42:04

just like my brother said, the Chevennes and Arapahos

42:09

controlled the Great Plains area from Wyoming, you know, to the foothills, you know, to the east, to the Black Hills, and a little further, all the way out to Nebraska and Kansas. That was our area. 1851 Treaty said.

42:28

it kind of outlined that whole area for us anyway and said, you will live in that area, you know, we're going, we live there now, you know.

42:38

But yes, that's where we started. And that's how the government recognized that we were here, and . . .

David:

Yeah.

Fred:

. . . and we're always glad to come back, you know,

42:48

to be part of this, this, this, this part of the country. It still talks to us, still, still feels like home.

43:01

As, you know, the Cheyenne Arapahos, we, we stayed together and we, we assigned,

43:08

other than the 1825 Treaty,

43:12

I'm sure that, you know what, after they signed that treaty, they came and told the Arapahos, hey, we live inside the United States. We didn't know that, you know. We're supposed to, we're supposed to not fight no more. But they probably told us that as they were crossing into the mountains to go fight the Utes. So, you know, we didn't really

43:32

pay much attention to that, that treaty, I don't think.

43:36

But I'm sure they told us about, you know, the, the tribes themselves have been so close together that

43:43

in our government, with the chiefs,

43:47

there's, there's two Cheyennes that are Arapaho chiefs. There's two Arapahos that are Cheyenne chiefs. And these chiefs, when they sit together,

43:59

then they can go back to their people and tell each one what the leadership's gonna do. And we still have those,

44:08

those positions. They're not, they're not filled yet, but those positions are still there for our people. They're our leadership, our traditional leadership.

44:18

So that's how, that's how close the tribes are,

44:21

in their ways. Even though we're separate.

44:25

We speak a different language. You know,

44:29

we, we have different ceremonies. We do different things. We even have different songs.

44:36

You know, there's a lot of difference between us. But yet, somehow we've continued to stay together. And that's the way it is.

44:51

Maybe Kris:

So I had a quick question. So you talked about growing up trying to keep the Arapaho language alive. I'm assuming the Cheyenne are doing the same . . .

Fred:

Yes.

45:00

Maybe Kris:

. . . with their language. But now that you're all kind of together more, do you share languages with each other?

Fred:

No. The languages are still different . . .

Maybe Kris:

You keep 'em separate?

Fred:

. . . and taught separate. Yeah, they're not, I don't believe there's anything

45:17

that even we even,

45:20

no, we don't even,

45:22

you know, like some, some people are close together, they can put parts of their land, well ours is not like that. We still, the only thing that we'd share would be the sign language.

Maybe Kris: Right.
Fred: Yeah, we would still share the sign language.
45:35 Maybe Kris: Interesting.
45:37 Fred: No, the languages are still separate.
45:51 David: Thank you very much, Fred. Really appreciate
45:55 your time.
45:58 David, speaking to someone else: Hello, sir.
Frank: Hello.
46:01 Unknown: Sorry for the delay.
46:19 David: Thank you all again. This is just
46:23 incredible to hear your stories and to have these recorded. I really appreciate it.
46:29 Yeah. So alright, Frank Medicine Water, thank you so much for coming and chatting with us for a little bit. Would you do a little bit of introductions of yourself?

Frank:

Sure. My name is Frank Medicine Water. I guess my

46:43

birth name was Frank Reynolds, but it, Reynolds was a name that was gotten from the boarding school. So I took my name, my last name, from one of

46:55

my family members that I thought was ostracized through the years. And

47:02

so, yeah. But originally we came to, back to Colorado, in 1959

47:11

through a Relocation Act, and lived here, I met my wife here.

47:19

And I grew up in the Globeville area, and then a place in Westminster. I guess,

47:30

when we moved there, it was called

47:32

Goat Hill. It was a old

47:36

Latino community. And since then, the town has grown around it and into it. So it does still exist. But, you know,

47:48

that's where a lot of my family calls home.

47:55

Left in 1986

47:58

to go work and, well the economy collapsed in the mid 80's. So I headed to the northwest to work, and

48:10

retired. In 2013 I had to get my knees replaced, and 2015 we headed home.

48:22

And I work for the tribe. I just, I'm not the type of person that can sit still.

48:29

So I went back to work for my tribe. And a couple of years ago, Fred offered me a position.

48:37

I didn't think I was ready for it. But I really have felt privileged since then, working with Fred, Chester, Gordon Yellow Man, and those guys really have a lot of history.

48:52

Like I say, it's a privilege to sit around and listen to 'em talk. And they have,

48:59

you know,

49:02

they have it all locked up in their heads.

49:05

And like I say, it's a privilege to work with them.

49:10

My history, I guess, you know, I'm half Cheyenne and half Arapaho.

49:16

In the 1850's, I'm a descendant of Little Raven, and they lived right in the

49:25

downtown area.

49:29

I guess he was a trader. And I, you know, I could imagine that it was a crossroads, and that they did a lot of trading. He was friends with the Bent's.

49:42

But they got moved out of there.

49:45

And then on the Plains, my

49:50

great-great grandfather was

49:52

Medicine Water. My, his daughter,

49:57

Measure Woman, my

50:00

great-grandmother, was a survivor of Sand Creek.

50:03

She was one years old at the time of Sand Creek.

50:08

And I imagine, I imagine her mother is the one that carried her to safety. And she was five years old at

50:18

Washita, and she got shot in the hip.

50:24

So that's where we come from. But Medicine Water, during that time, after Sand Creek, met a woman, well one of, one of the survivors of Sand Creek named Buffalo Calf Woman, Mochi, and they

50:39

rode around the Plains for a while, you know,

50:42

keeping with the tribe as much as they can, but they were, to me, what I consider, what a lot of the

50:52

survivors, and those that were murdered at Sand Creek,

50:57

they were heroes. And what they did is they did the same thing to the settlers as what the settlers were doing for us, you know, if you killed, if you killed an Indian, you could keep what they had. And I imagine during their,

51:16

during their

51:18

life they ran across a lot of,

51:22

you know, scenes where they had come up across, upon

51:28

bones and what was left of

51:31 our tribal members. But they ended up
51:37 probably getting tired of running, and they were taken to Florida, to prison. And
51:46 they came, they came back after that and
51:50 I guess you would say they tried their best to fight. They were ornery.
51:59 And we're the product of them. I'm very proud of them. I'm proud of all those people that were murdered at Sand Creek and Washita. They really were
52:10 heroes. They didn't,
52:13 they didn't go out and start trouble very much but, you know,
52:18 they tried to feed themselves. Keep alive.
David: Yeah. Yeah.
52:24 Frank: That's about it. All I got to say.
52:27 (Inaudible) you have questions?
David: Yeah, I have one question. Kind of switching to a little different gear, but we were looking at a map earlier and you mentioned that you had worked in Broomfield for a while
Frank: Yeah.
David:

\dots nearby. I just wanted to hear a little more about that. What, what kind of timeframe that was and what you were doing there.
Frank: That was probably about 1977, was right at the interchange of
52:57 where, I don't know, where, that road that came up through Federal and turned
David: Uh-huh.
Frank: whatever that main drive was.
David: Yeah, yeah.
Frank: And then you hit that highway going across, and it was just right over an industrial park.
David: Yeah, yeah.
Frank: On the western part, I guess at that time it was the western part of Broomfield.
David: Yep.
Frank: And they had a little
53:19 chrome, chroming shop, and they fabricated
53:23 bumpers.
David: Wow.
Frank:

And they would buff them up and,

53:28

well before that, what I would do is I would weld 'em and give 'em their shape, and then they would shine 'em up.

David:

Wow.

Frank:

And that went on for maybe about a year. I don't know what happened to the,

53:41

to the company. But I found a little better paying job in town. So . . .

53:47

David:

Down in Denver then?

Frank:

Yeah, yeah. I was living in a, living in Denver.

53:52

David:

Mmm-hmm. And then did, and when you were up to the northwest, you were doing the same kind of thing, welding and . . .

Frank:

No, I was a,

54:01

after that, what I did after that, what I did is I got into the ironworkers, and I worked around Denver. The economy tanked in, started turning about the early 1980's.

54:14

And they stopped, pretty much stopped all the

54:18

heavy iron that was going up, like on high rises and bridges and stuff. And so what I did is I switched to the carpenters. Well, I really signed up for the operators, the electricians and the carpenters. And the carpenters were the first ones to give me a call. So I did my apprenticeship,

54:37

and there still was no work. After about a year and a half I asked, I asked the

54:46 my instructors, I said hey,
54:51 I'd like to go ahead, and if you give me my journeyman card, I had been in there a year and four months, I said, you give me my journeyman card and I'll go someplace else and find some work.
55:00 And they said, sure. So I went up to Washington. I was up there for a weekend. I went out on a Monday to look for a job, and I got hired.
David: Wow.
Franks: So that kept me busy for 30 plus years.
David: Wow.
Frank: And
55:16 that gave me the opportunity to work in
55:19 Alaska and Hawaii,
55:22 Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and
55:28 the Alaska jobs, what I'd do is I'd work up there during the summer. And during the winter I'd be able to head back to Seattle, and drive around
<i>EE.</i> 40

western parts of the US visiting reservations, talking to other Native communities.

David:

Frank:

Wow. That's great.

Yeah. I enjoyed that.

Kris:

Okay. Yeah, he was talking about the . . . (Maybe) Fred: (Inaudible) Ralph . . . 56:56 57:00 I went to a ceremony, 57:03 and Ralph, he was the, he was the lead guy. 57:07 And that night he prayed, 57:10 he prayed in Arapaho. That 57:12 morning he prayed in Cheyenne. 57:15 Kris: That's powerful 57:24 (Maybe) Fred: (Inaudible) that medicine wasn't that strong. They all laugh. It was good. And June, June Black used to be like that, too. 57:28 She was an Arapahoe. She's married to a Cheyenne. 57:32 But she kind of, 57:34 he kind of kept her around, Cheyennes are,

57:37

while she was
57:39 married to
57:42 her husband. Yeah.
David: Huh.
(Maybe) Fred: The good old days.
57:56 David: Yeah.
David (to the next person up) All right, would you please introduce yourself to me?
Pauline: My name is Pauline Medicine Water. I'm married to Frank Medicine Water.
58:08 I'm a Diné Navajo.
58:14 My story, as far as my Native side goes, is
58:21 my great-grandfather was on the longest walk and he was separated from his parents.
58:30 How he got separated is a lot of guesses.
58:36 I don't think it was a nice way, but
58:39 we've done everything in our,
58:42 our,

58.44

power to find out

58:46

who he was.

58:49

He was adopted by the, we have an adoption paper that says the day he was adopted by the, from the Navajos, by a Catholic church. We also have an adoption paper that says he was adopted by a man named Maximilian Martinez. So that's how I got my maiden name.

59:13

We've went to the church, but the church burnt down, so we have no way of knowing his clan name. We went to the people who raised him. They said they remembered him but he was very young, and at his age they say he was around seven years old when they got, when they adopted him.

59:34

My mother tried to, my parents tried to get us registered as, as Navajos, but when she wrote the government, the government said because they didn't know his clan name, or the, you know, the people he came from, that they didn't have enough evidence. And the pieces of paper that they had weren't weren't enough for us to be registered, just with,

1:00:00

with the tribe.

1:00:03

When I was young, it was something we didn't talk about. We just didn't know. I didn't find out 'til later in age that I was even,

1:00:14

had, had native descent in me.

1:00:18

It was just something we didn't talk about, I guess because we didn't know our whereabouts. But I always felt in my heart, closeness to other Natives. I've always, if I seen one on the street that was homeless or something, my heart reached out to them. If I heard somebody ostracize or put one down, it always reached my heart and my soul deeply. And it was later on I found out that I was actually Native myself.

1:00:47

To hear the stories and the history of my husband, that he can go back so far, it's, as it goes, is just an honor to me to, to know that his, he can trace his family that far back, where my family history just stops.

1:01:08

It's a sad story, but it is. I grew up in Denver my whole life. I was born and raised in Denver. I grew up in the north side of Denver. Then we moved to the, guess what you call the east side of Denver - Montbello.

1:01:24

I've got four brothers, I'm the only,

1:01:28

the only girl in the family.

1:01:32

When I went out to work and I

1:01:35

finally left home, I went out to work, I didn't know much,

1:01:39

you know, times are changing. So I knew construction a lot. My brothers helped my uncle fix, fix a house. And I guess that's what I learned to do. I learned to be a tomboy, and so that's what I went out to do in my life. I went out to do what they called non-traditional jobs for women. It was a hard life, because at that time women weren't wanted in construction. So it was a struggle, but I, I did it. I became a, in the HVAC. I did that. I really enjoyed it. I love taking sheet metal and fixing it up. And

1:02:19

I went through four years of

1:02:23

apprenticeship. And when I got to my very last month, when I would be getting my journeyman's license, the company decided to fire me.

David:

Hmm.

1:02:33

Pauline:

If I would have known then what I know now, that I could have fought for my rights, I would have, but many years ago and it was just a hard struggle for a woman in that, in that field, or line of work.

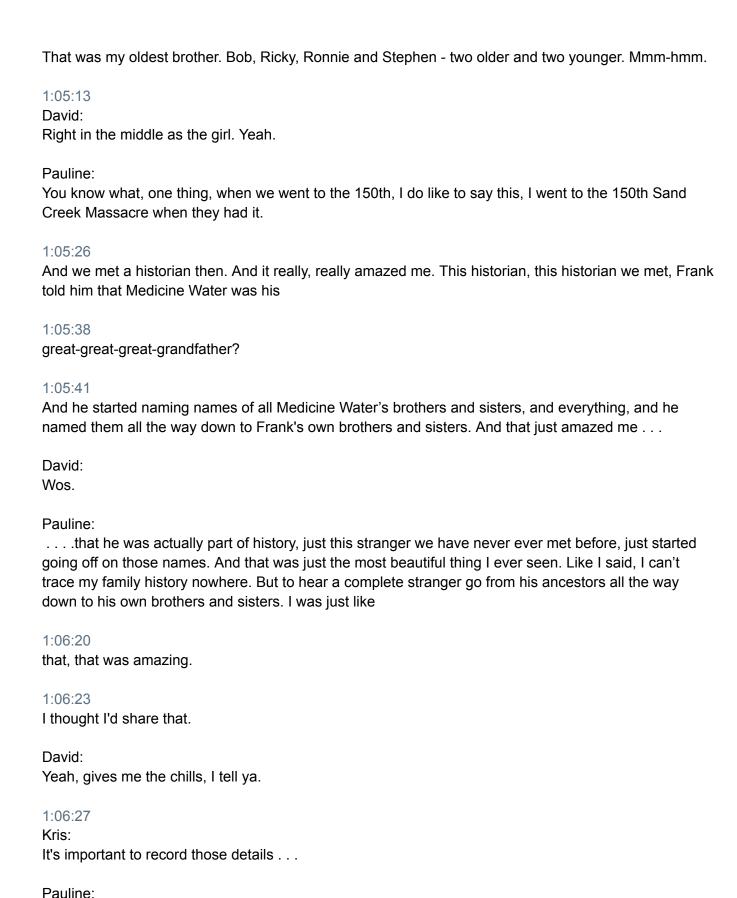
1.02.47

Before I even got home from work, I had phone calls of people in Boulder and everywhere else wanting to hire me, but none of them wanted to pay for that last month at school.

David: Mmm.
Pauline: So I refused to go to work. I knew, I knew my job, and I knew it good, and I got phone calls before I even applied for another job, so Then
1:03:07 my, It was something my boss had prepared to do. So I just never went back into the field and
1:03:15 I ended up working in a mailroom.
1:03:23 Worked in a mailroom, and I don't know what I did after that.
1:03:28 I ended up fine just not working. I ended up moving to Texas and living with my daughter and
1:03:38 helping her with her, my grandkids, and taking care of my grandkids, and it just finally left to a life of taking care of others. So now I take care of my mother and my son, and
1:03:51 my husband and my family, and
1:03:55 that's my story.
David: Absolutely. Well, thank you so much.
1:03:59 Pauline: Mmm-hmm.
David: Beautiful story. Yes, Marty?
1:04:01 Marty: What high school did you graduate from?
Pauline:

I graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School. But I actually went to North, South, East, Manual, and TJ.
Marty: Did you really?
Pauline: But I graduated from that's when they started all the busing, and all the rioting and everything in, school, and we were, we were everywhere. I mean, there was actually days
1:04:23 that I went to three schools in, in one day. I probably spent just as much time on the buses as I did in, in a class because they bussed us so much back then.
David: Well
Pauline: Yeah, but I graduated from Thomas Jefferson.
David: Sounds like a self serving question.
Pauline: In 1976.
1:04:45 It was bicentennial year. I got two tassels. Kind of proud of that. Nobody else gets two.
David: There you go.
1:04:54 Kris: You had mentioned you had four brothers. Do you want to put their names on (inaudible).
1:04:58 Pauline: My brother's name is
1:05:00 Bob, he died in January. He was hit by a car.

1:05:05



Hmm?

Kris:

It's important to record those details because, you know, the, the historian that you talked to, if he didn't write that down, you're the only one that knows it.

Pauline:

So now I tell my great, I tell my grandchildren, you're part of history, you're literally part of history. I've seen it in the making. That's a nice thing. So now, now we, we, we're raising,

1:06:51

help raising two of our grandchildren. They came into our life shortly and we're trying to get them involved in the tribes as much as we can, and and teach them because they don't even know the ways of their own history and their own people, and we're trying to get them involved and get them to know as much and they're, they're enjoying what they're learning and it's helping teach us ourselves, so . . .

1:07:18

Now my children are part of history. That's pretty cool.

1:07:25

David:

Absolutely. Thank you very much, Pauline. I appreciate it.

1:07:29

(Maybe Fred)

(Inaudible) name at Craig . . .

David laughs.

1:07:35

Unknown:

He's gotta be in our community almost.

He's right up in Firestone.

David:

Yeah.

Marty:

Is he really?

1:07:42

Retired right?

David: Yeah.
1:07:47 Marty: Maybe we can have him come be a guest speaker.
Kris: Yeah.
David: I think we should. That sounds like a really good idea. That'd be, that'd be
1:07:57 Unknown: That guy has, he's just oozing with history.
David: Yeah. Sounds, sounds like when, when I try to listen to Rick Williams, he's the same way. He'll just keep going.
Unknown: But only, but only on the Cheyenne side.
1:08:06 Oh, really?
Unknown: Yeah. He don't know (inaudible)
David: Yeah. Yeah.
1:08:11 Unknown: Yeah, Rick's like that too.
1:08:14 David: Yeah.
Unknown: Rick is good.

David: Yeah, he knows a lot. That's for sure.
1:08:22 Mary, would you like to, would you like to share anything?
Mary: No.
David: All right, fair enough.
Unknown: She's stingy. My sister's stingy.
1:08:39 David: Well I, I just want to say too, I'm, I'm just humbled and honored to be able to listen to these stories and be able to be here with you all. It's, it's real, really my pleasure and, and
1:08:53 it's really important to have 'em recorded too, I think. You know, we can share those stories out. So thank you for that.
Unknown: What Roy Dean was saying about history changing, times are
1:09:03 changing and stuff like that,
1:09:08 used to,
1:09:09 a woman couldn't get up and talk on a
1:09:12 microphone.
David: Mmm.
Unknown:

1:09:16

Had to get, had to get permission.

David:

Yeah.

1:09:18

And when they got permission, it was only for that one time.

1:09:22

When you go to any meeting today and the first one up there's a woman, you know,

1:09:28

spouting, spouting, spouting. It's, it's kind of disrespectful, if, you know,

1:09:36

where we come from, they're our own people. They should know that.

1:09:42

But they don't.

1:09:44

It's like they go to school to get a,

1:09:48

a degree.

1:09:51

And I got in trouble for this.

1:09:54

The, the first governor, the first governor we had

1:09:58

he said, I got a master's

1:10:00

in this. I said,

1:10:02

how, how long did you stay in school? Because I was in school for four years. I said, all that tells me that you sat in a classroom for four years. I said, it doesn't tell me anything else. He said, but I got a piece of paper I said, just piece paper.

1:10:17 What we have
1:10:19 I said, it's in here.
David: Yeah.
1:10:21 We learn them, we learn them, that way of life.
1:10:26 To carry on.
1:10:28 Our kids, grandkids, great-grandkids, teach them that life.
David: Yeah.
1:10:33 Unknown: I said, used to, we could look behind us and there was
1:10:37 old men back there.There's
1:10:42 nobody back there now.
David: Yeah.
1:10:45 Unknown: Nobody back there.
David: Yeah.
Unknown: So we, it, to me, it's like I'm

1:10:51 almost at the panic button, you know,
1:10:53 almost got to push the panic button.
1:10:56 Bet we try. All we can do is teach 'em, tell'em
David: Yeah.
Unknown: what we know. It's up to them to carry it on. We can't make 'em.
1:11:05 They have to do it.
David: Right.
Unknown: They have to earn it, though
1:11:10 It's not, it's not like 007.
1:11:14 It's shaken and not stirred.
1:11:19 They have to earn it.
David: Yeah.
1:11:22 Unknown: But we have, we have our (inaudible)
1:11:26

that are out here someplace.

1:11:29

They're high ceremonial people, but have never been through the ceremony.

1:11:35

And that's, that's the scary part.

David:

Yeah.

1:11:38

Because if one of us went, run into those folks that they

1:11:42

(inaudible) and they want to do something.

1:11:45

The way we know how to do stuff. I said, well that's not the way, you know, this guy did it.

1:11:51

Well, who's this guy you're talking about?

David:

Yeah. Yeah, that's important.

1:11:56

There's, there's a bunch of that out there.

David:

For sure. For sure.

1:11:59

(Maybe Matt):

I think I 100% agree with that. You know, no matter like how much schooling or how much you pay for school or what you've done in your life and everything, it doesn't give you any precedence or space to talk to anybody or tell anybody that, they don't know what they're talking about. Or you know better.

David:

Right.

1:12:14

(Maybe Matt):

And my dad, that's something my dad used to teach me a lot when I was younger too, is like, no matter who you're talking to, respect them.

David: Mmm-hmm.
1:12:22 (Maybe Matt): No matter what they're saying. And give them the time of the day, you know, it's karma. It's real. I totally agree with all that.
David: Yeah.
1:12:34 All right everybody, thank you so much. I really appreciate it. I think, if you all want to go back and rest at the hotel for a little bit, that's probably the next thing we got until, until at supper with the Lutheran Church.
Unknown: Six o'clock.
David: Yep. So what I think I'll do well, oh, before I do that, so part of the,
1:12:56 what we'd like to do is add these oral histories that we just did to the Broomfield history archive. And so what, what, so I have basically a permission form for that. And you know, if you decide you don't want it to be part of the, you know, archive that have, that we can, we make it publicly available to everybody on the internet kind of thing, it's, we have a portal that people can go in and they can look up any artifact that we have in our collection, any, any oral histories that we've recorded over time. And we've recorded numbers of them over the years, even just since I, I've been in this position for years and we've probably done, well Marty's done some for us and with us, and I did an oral history with Serr over there and I was actually the first one I ever did, talk to Serr. But yeah, so if, if you want these to go into the archive, if you'd like to do that, I've got the paperwork to sign. It basically just
1:13:55 allows the, the Broomfield history archive to collect it and use it. So here's that, and then we'll, then we'll head on back.
1:14:07 Unknown: Thank you.
David:

Thank you all, yeah.

End of interviews.