

Narrator: Mike Kopicky

Interviewer: Leigh Girvin

This is an interview with Mike Kopicky regarding his time spent in Breckenridge. It is being conducted as a part of the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance Oral History Archives. The interview is being conducted by Leigh Girvin, on March 29, 2018, in the BGV Community Center.

LG: Mike, give us your full name and tell us when you first came to Breckenridge.

MK: Matthew Michael Kopicky at your service. Let's see it was 1969, I had just gotten out of high school. I grew up down in Littleton. I got in a little trouble and the judge said, "get out of town, or go to Vietnam", and I said, "well I'll get out of town". I was walking up the road in Littleton, some friends of mine picked me up, and I told them the story and they said, "Well, come to Breckenridge. We're living at The Gold Pan, and we will get you a job and everything". I knew about Breckenridge, growing up in Littleton we came up here quite a bit.

The next thing I know, I'm in Breckenridge and I've got a room above The Gold Pan. I'm washing dishes, and it kind of took off from there. It was quite a baptism of fire.

Eighteen years old, and I couldn't get served in the bar. But I hung out in the bar; and just watched the bizarre things that I wasn't quite accustomed to down in Littleton. The people, they were like a whirlwind in my life. It was a lot of fun, a lot of good people, a lot of changing going on. A lot of culture shock there; the ski bums and the hippies, and the miners and the muckers and the mean mothers, and Nickie and Vern. They owned The Gold Pan, and they took everybody in and treated us good. Old Ada, she ran the kitchen, she was a sweetheart. An old gal made everything from scratch, and Old Walter, he was one of the old miners. A lot of the miners lived upstairs too, but they all hung out at the bar drinking those \$0.25 beers.

A lot of fun, a lot of fun right off the bat. The skiing kind of drew me in. Skiing every day, and in those days, you didn't really need a ski pass, because Alden and Jingles were the lift ops, and they didn't check tickets during the weekdays. I made a \$1.50 an

hour washing dishes and put money away actually. At the end of the season I think I had like \$300 bucks in my pocket, and I thought I was a rich man.

God the people, I think that's pretty much the story. You know, the ski bumism, it was just starting for me, but the people coming and going. I started meeting people left and right, old Mark Emore, we become friends. He grew up around here. He was a lift op, and you know skiing every day, and seeing kind of the same people skiing. That was fun too. Ron and Vickie were my friends that got me going up here. Ron and Vickie Dickens and Timmy Horton, and old Marky Emore, and Harry Baum, and Gig, and Doug Sheldon and CJ, Mark Frieze, Little John and Jingles, Alden and Tiny, and Kalinowski and the Larms, Smokey and Eric Bell, Silver Tooth and Tequila Tom and Shillabear, Henschel, Gordy Crandall, Uncle Milty and the Colonel. Cristy Perkins, she was my first girlfriend up here. We had a good time. Old Spencer, I probably mentioned Jingles.

LG: Is that, Spencer was his real name?

MK: Rick Spencer.

LG: Rick Spencer was Jingles, okay.

MK: No, no, Rick Spencer was a different person. You might have heard of him. He was from Colorado Springs and he was just the wild man; wore a sheep skin vest with nothing else in the middle of winter, and just out there; good person. He died in a car wreck over by Aspen in '73 I think. Yeah, Rick Spencer, [chuckles] and Old Spooner. Annie Fannie the Racer Chaser can't forget her. Speedy Pat, I'll Never Tell, his name was Never Tell, I don't know what his real name was. The Tinkers, the Theobalds, of course, Ackley and Rock and Ricky, Steve and Topper Filer, they were a pair of brothers. Struttin' Hutten and Old Carol Barrel and I guess the list goes on, maybe I just quit.

LG: So many nicknames. So many people had nicknames here that oftentimes you didn't even know what their real name was, or what their last name was. Why do you suppose that was? **[00:06:26]**

MK: I don't know, I don't know. I think it just came naturally, like Silver Tooth and Tequila Tom is kind of obvious right there.

LG: And No Tell, I mean he didn't want to say what his name was, I guess.

MK: Yeah, Never Tell he was one of the Larms. The Larimer County Fun Club, you ever heard of that? They got kicked out of Aspen, and they ended up in Breckenridge. They started in Fort Collins-

LG: Okay, Larimer County-

MK: -yeah, and Tiny was one of them, and Never Tell. Their idea of fun was outraging people, freaking people out. They would eat glass and scream and yell in tourist's faces as they came into the bar. Their big thing was biting girls on the ass, I mean that was their cool thing to do, right? It just outraged people, and I'm sure it freaked a lot of girls out.

LG: So, they would crawl around on their knees in the bar?

MK: Their M.O. was to talk to a gal and then another one of them would come up behind the gal and bite her, on the butt. Then they would just laugh and laugh.

LG: Were they miners or-?

MK: No, these guys were probably a few years older than I was. Well it was obvious, because they were getting served in a bar and I was only 18. Guys just cutting loose, I don't know what their problem was, but they did some really nutty stuff. I think it was all just to outrage people. Sometimes it was funny, but it was scary.

It was scary for me, I didn't quite know how to deal with a lot of these people. They'd get right in your face, and the old miners, they told it like it was. The old timers, I think they were a little bit fed up, well not fed up, but they didn't care for all these new people coming to town. I guess that's natural. Especially the way we looked and everything, you know long hair and bell bottoms and crazy clothes.

LG: - and this crazy skiing thing.

MK: Yes, the skiing was kind of new, '69 the ski area had been open, what eight years? Most of them took right to us. They had no choice, but it was a crazy mix in the Gold Pan there. Sometimes a lot of people were higher than they needed to be. I was probably one of them, and then you put the alcohol on top of it. There was a lot of interaction, social interaction that just, it freaked me out.

LG: You were an 18-year-old pup.

MK: I was 18 yeah.

LG: Now in Colorado in those days we had 3.2 beer that you could get at 18. Did we have any 3.2 bars in Breckenridge? **[00:10:11]**

MK: Yes, we did, the Horseshoe. Or, not the Horseshoe, but it's called the Dredge, and Jim Henschel, his dad owned it and he ran it. It was a 3.2 bar and I could get served there.

LG: It was called The Dredge, you referred to it as the Horseshoe, today we would know it as Modis?

MK: Right.

LG: So, that was the 3.2 bar. Was the AR a 3.2 bar at some point in its-

MK: I don't think so.

LG: Okay, some people have that memory.

MK: No, it was The Dredge, and it was more of a drug emporium than it was a bar. We just used the 3.2 beer to wet our whistle. He had two or three pool tables in the back, it was a gathering place. The All-American Bar, was pretty unique. It wasn't an old timer bar like the Gold Pan; Gig started it. Gig and some of his partners, and it had a pool table. Harvey Wallbangers was the drink. The girls liked to drink that stuff. That was a wild bar, and that was mostly hippies.

LG: So, did the hippies and the miners mix at the Gold Pan? **[00:11:33]** [unintelligible] Oil and water?

MK: Yes, there was interaction, and there was probably a lot of fights, but there was--we had no choice. It was overwhelming the numbers of hippie, I shouldn't call them hippies, but just younger people. Skiers, and most of us were skiers, but a lot of people came here for whatever reason. A lot of people were like me kind of getting away from something, kind of filtering into Breckenridge. So, it was a pretty crazy mix. I remember Gypsy and some of those Larms really stirring up some discourse, for no reason. Just to entertain themselves, I guess. It was--

LG: What was your perception of what the miners, or the real old timers' beef was with the influx of newcomers? **[00:12:58]**

MK: I don't know if they had anything in particular. It's sort of like us now with new people coming in; the snowboarders and everything. I think it's just natural. If you're used to a town or a way of living and then all of a sudden, it's getting overrun by different people; I think it was just natural for them to look at us kind of funny, because we were funny looking. I'll have to be the first to admit that.

LG: Maybe they were funny looking.

MK: They were kind of funny looking. Old Walter, you know all of them had a real distinct personality. They'd sit there at the bar and make that personality even come out a little bit more.

LG: Now you mention Nickie, I'm sorry Nik and Vern; Nickie, I assume is the she-

MK: Nik and Vern Bergman.

LG: Bergman? Okay, so they were the owners of the Gold Pan at the time.

MK: Yes, and they sold out to Bill Fiedelman and Stanley, Bob Stanley.

LG: About when was that? **[00:14:20]**

MK: I think that was like '77, something like that maybe.

LG: I'm talking to Fiedelman next week.

MK: Oh good. Yeah, he'll remember a lot of these people.

LG: Do you remember how much rent you paid when you stayed upstairs? **[00:14:35]**

MK: I think it was free, because I was washing dishes.

LG: -working downstairs. How many people lived up there? You said there were miners and you and your friends. **[00:14:45]**

MK: Well Walter lived in the back, the North West corner, and I lived in the middle, then Ron and Vickie lived on the Main St. side, and then Nik and Vern had the whole South side. They used to have a picture window, before the Sterling Block building went up, that looked out South. It was killer, but you know, they built the building right over it.

LG: The friends who encouraged you to come to Breckenridge, did any of them last a while? Any of them still around? **[00:15:23]**

MK: Ron Dickens, he was a real, kind of a redneck hippie. Kind of a tough guy, but we grew our hair long anyway to fit in, right? About '71 or '72 when we were living out in French

Gulch he goes “this town is getting too crowded.”, and I’m going “really?”. He goes “yeah, I’m leaving.”, so he took his wife Vickie up to Montana and he became a gyppo logger up there. He died a few years ago, but he was a good friend from Littleton. He used to drive around in an open-air Jeep, 365 days a year. He was a ski bum, he liked skiing, so we had that going.

LG: You mentioned that you lived up in French Gulch, did you live in an old cabin up there?  
**[00:16:36]**

MK: Yes, in Lincoln.

LG: What was that like?

MK: That was another shock for me, because I was still probably 18 or 19 years old. All my life growing up, I had always wanted to—My old man would drive us all over the state and I’d sit there in the shotgun seat and look at all these old mining towns and stuff and go “man I can go live in that shack”. Finally, it was possible for me, and I just jumped in with both feet; no water, no electricity, but kerosene lamps. I read a lot, but it was five years living up there. Really good years.

LG: You lived in Lincoln, there’s only one building left, well there are some shed type things. The cabin that you lived in, where was it and what was it like? **[00:17:36]**

MK: Well it’s the big two-story house-

LG: It’s the house that’s still there?

MK: Yes, a guy named Slim had the claim. He left in winter to Vegas to do some mining down there and would come back in the summer. I hooked up with him to spend the winters and I got the front room, the best room. He would come back out and sleep in his truck, do some mining and leave. I was paying like \$50 bucks a month to him for that place. Then Floyd lived up the road, and his cabin is still kind of there. It’s a ramshackle fallen down thing, it’s still there. That was just up the road about 100 yards, and he and Floyd didn’t get along. A lot of miners didn’t get along. One, I forget the guys names, but there was a little fight over one of the guy’s girlfriends or something and he sh- I think it was Harold Horn, you might of heard that name. I think he shot this other guy, killed him dead and got off. I think he was found not guilty.

LG: Harold Horn got off?

MK: I think Harold Horn. I think that's who it was.

LG: He had to have been pretty old [inaudible] by then.

MK: Yes. I think that was up in Brown's Gulch, I'm not sure. Then Shillabear shot Gordy Crandall and got away with it. Which is what we all wanted because nobody liked Gordy. He was the kind of guy, if you brought a girl into the Gold Pan, he would be on you. He'd shake your hand and go right to the girlfriend. "Just leave us alone." If you played pool, then it was always contentious; whose break is it? Whose shot is it? You didn't rack them right. This guy was-

LG: Now, Gordon Krandel, didn't he get shot in a Russian roulette game?

MK: No, that was Randy Virgo. Randy Virgo, that's what they said. That's what the guy that was with him, I forget the guy's name, but he said that's what Randy did. There was a drug deal involved I'm sure and- No, Gordy Krandel got shot by Shillabear, because they had a rifle, a 22 rifle. Gordy kept telling Shillabear "give me the rifle, give me the rifle.", and he grabbed it by the barrel, like a dumbass, and he pulled it towards himself. I think Shillabear's finger was on the trigger and so it's naturally going to go off. So, we bailed Shillabear out and then-

LG: Was that his name, Shillabear, or is this a nickname?

MK: Mike Shillabear, but everybody called him Shillabear and he was a bit older than the rest of us. He has this voice that was just "grrrr", you could hardly understand what he was saying. He was a funny guy. A carpenter, a good carpenter.

LG: Now, Slim, what was his name? **[00:21:24]**

MK: Slim? I don't know.

LG: Slim shot somebody also.

MK: Right, back in '65 or '66 some high school kids drove up to Lincoln and tried to turn around in his driveway with snow on the ground and got stuck. He wakes up and he grabs a 45 automatic and goes out, and they had left their vehicle where it was, and jumped in his vehicle and went up the road instead of going back down the road, which I'm sure they wanted to. They went back up the road and got stuck at a turnaround,

where the snowplow turns around, and he follows the tracks up there. He said that the guy came out of the driver's seat to attack him, to hit him, and he shot him. Blew his jaw off, and then put him back in the car, got the car unstuck; it was a '57 Chevy Nomad panel wagon, and he puts him back in there and takes him to the Gold Pan and gets the kid some medical help. I guess the kid lived. There was no charges there either. The law enforcement up here was haphazard probably at best.

LG: I want to ask you about that cabin in French Gulch that you stayed in. It still exists today. I remember there being an old miner, I think it was Floyd, who ostensibly lived there. **[00:23:17]**

MK: After I left a few people lived there, and then that guy that had Fajitas- what do they call that little place? - Anyway, he tried to get Slim to sell him the claim. It's just a claim, it's still just a claim, I think. Floyd and Slim patched up their differences and Floyd moved from that little ramshackle cabin that was up the road into the big cabin with all his cats. You could smell it, I mean you could drive by the thing and smell it after a few years. The guy was just- he took it, living by himself like an old hermit miner to the ninth degree.

LG: Now was he the guy who was sort of the manager for the B&B mines, and would collect rent? **[00:24:44]**

MK: That was Harold Horn.

LG: That was Harold, okay.

MK: He would come around, and we weren't on B&B mining, so he would come by and try and collect from us, because we were hippies, and we'd say no. He figured we didn't know who was who, but Slim, all those guys knew whose claim was whose. Yeah, Harold Horn he tried to get \$50 bucks out of me-[unintelligible] – "who the hell are you?"

LG: Now, Harold Horn, I only really know of him, but there's an old photo in Breck Town Hall; '50's maybe of Main St. You can read one of the signs Horn's Café, I think. I believe, didn't he own a bar at one time? What do you remember? **[00:25:38]**

MK: That's way before my time. Theobalds might know.

LG: Yes, I put that on the list. What I remember about that cabin where you lived was Floyd would always be in his truck listening to the radio, and it wasn't until he was dead years later that I learned the house was full of cats. It's no wonder, he couldn't go in it.

MK: The smell was so bad.

LG: It still smells. All this time later.

MK: They've tried to treat it right? They went in there and sprayed it and tore a bunch of the crap out.

LG: Yes, I don't know how far they got with that. What was it like in there? How many rooms? It looks like a very substantial building. **[00:26:25]**

MK: Yes, for a cabin. It was a stick frame up off the ground with a good stone foundation under, so it was warm and dry. Well not warm and dry, but dry.

LG: Shelter.

MK: Yes, and it took some firewood to keep her warm. Then it had an upstairs that I turned into a bedroom. It was the post office for the town of Lincoln at one time, I guess. So, it dates way back there.

LG: Yes, there's not much of Lincoln left. There was a lot more when I was a kid. There were more buildings there that I recall.

MK: Well there was a really nice log cabin between- you know where Rich Gulch runs right next to it, where that guy built that modern house. There was a log cabin there that dated way back. Big logs, and Mike Terry one of the Larms, and his girlfriend moved into that. They were just squatting in that. They got one of those old cone fireplaces that you could get a dime a dozen taken out, and they stuck it in there, and vented it through the first floor into the second floor, but then didn't vent it all the way out. He was a crazy person, he really was. Anyway, I woke up one morning in the winter and I looked out the window, and you could see the top of that cabin from my vantage point in the big cabin, and I couldn't see the top of the cabin. It looks like snow is blowing around, and I'm going "what the hell is going on?". I was going to town anyway and I drive by the cabin and it's just a smoldering pile. I get down to about the Wellington Mine and Mike Terry and his girlfriend were in a Volkswagen bug stuck in the snow,

and the windows are all fogged up. They had been sleeping in the car overnight. I knocked on the window and I said, "I hate to be the one to tell you this, but your cabin burned down last night". He goes "Oh man I left a fire going in there" and we found out that he had- Ron and Vickie helped him put the stove in, and they said, "yeah he didn't vent it out the top".

LG: That was a big cabin if it had a second floor.

MK: Yes, it was a big one too; real old.

LG: Maybe a boarding house. It's hard to know.

MK: I don't know the things that went on in Lincoln. It was a booming town at one time, I guess.

LG: You have mentioned some of your first impressions of Breckenridge; the Gold Pan and the miners. What about your impressions of the town itself? What memories do you have in terms of wood sidewalks, or buildings or the feel of the town in '69? What do you recollect? **[00:29:40]**

MK: It was so much smaller and so much- the scale was- you felt like you were part of the town just being here. I mean that was the attitude and it was such a small town. I had come from a town called 'Little town' Littleton, which wasn't a very small town anymore, and the people they're pretty friendly. Even the guys that worked for the town and plowed the roads and everything.

We were all kind of gettin' by on gettin' by, you know. Everybody had to work pretty hard to stay warm. I guess you still do. It's hard to describe, it was a feeling too. To be part of that small happening, but it was growing. Like I said, some of the miners and some of the old people I don't think they took too kindly to us, but it was just a crazy time; era in history. There was a lot of political differences. Kay Spilman used to sit at the Gold Pan at the- they had an employee table, kind of back in the corner and she would sit there and read the newspaper aloud to everyone and try to get people to go to protests and stuff. I'd seen enough protesting in Denver and Littleton when I was in high school. We would go, not to protest, but just to see what was going on and that was a real happening.

LG: Alden tells a story of, apparently there was a draft board office in Breckenridge and his number coming up. Did that ever happen to you, or was that part of your agreement with the judge that-

MK: No, the judge fined me and let me go, but he did say he was going to notify the draft board. I was 1-A getting out of high school.

LG: I don't know what that means.

MK: 1-A is like-

LG: Top of the list?

MK: Yes, and then my birthday got drawn pretty close to the top of the list. I thought for sure I was going to get drafted. My old man said, "you better get your act together and go to college or something, and get a deferment, because you're going to get drafted." I said "No, I don't want to do it.", and he goes "Well what are you going to do with your life? What are you going to do?". My old man, he was a pretty brilliant guy; self-educated and then he went to John Hopkins and graduated. He was an engineer, and he was pretty disappointed in a lot of my decisions. His oldest son, and he said, "well what are you going to do?" and I said "oh I'm going to be a ski bum." It broke his heart, I'm sure it broke his heart. He just shook his head and I took off for Breckenridge. Almost every day I'd go to the post office which was next to O'Toole's there and next to the ECDC building. What is it now-

LG: It's Angels Hollow now.

MK: -Angels Hollow, yes, and I would check that draft notice and it never came.

LG: It never came.

MK: Horton and I were driving around Littleton and Englewood years later, and the war was winding down and we go by the draft board down on Broadway in Englewood, and I go "pull in here I've got to go see why they didn't call me". We're a little high, and long hair and beard, the usual hippie outfit; he goes "don't go in there man, they're going to nab you. Don't push it". So, I go in there and I ask the guy behind the desk, I say "Hey I was 1-A in '69 and you guys never sent me a draft notice." He looks me up and down and goes "oh my God, we had a lot of volunteers around here. Good Americans

who volunteered, we met our quota. We didn't need your hippie ass". I went maybe I should get out of here right now. So, I found out that I probably just dodged a bullet. Through my whole life I've dodged a number of bullets. I made some bad decisions, but made the right one at the right time, because literally we were shot at a number of times as kids.

LG: You were shot at as kids? Doing what, or do you want to tell me?

MK: Oh, you know caretakers taking pot shots at us and a friend of mine in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Danny Lamb and I, and Jim Guthry were going 'hunting', and we take this 22 rifle and we have all this ammo and we would take turns shooting a 15-round magazine. We'd fill it up and each shoot five times, and hand the gun off after five shots. So, we get way out at the end of Highline Canal Road, the Englewood Reservoir was out there.

I take the gun and I said, "the hell with it I'm going to shoot off all 15". So, Danny Lamb grabs the gun and he's going to shoot off 15, and Jim Guthry whose gun it was, his brother's gun who- I don't know whatever happened to this guy, but this kid was kind of crazy.- He grabs the gun and he's cussing at us saying "you fuckers, you shot, you shot-.", and he takes the gun and points it at us. Remember the old cowboy movies where they'd shoot at the ground and tell another cowboy to dance? He said "dance.", and he starts shooting at the ground and then he raises it up and shoots right at us, or not right at us, but right by us, at head level. I couldn't move. I wasn't going to dance, I just froze, and he points the gun at Lamb again and he goes "I said dance.", and he shoots him right in the top of the foot. They gave us the gun back. The cops came, or the Sheriff came and said "ahhh you'll be alright, I shot myself in the foot one time.", he's telling Lamb that. They gave us the gun back and took us back to my parent's house and let us go.

LG: Again, law enforcement [said laughing] not stepping in. Wow.

MK: Yes, they should have confiscated that gun, that's for sure.

LG: Those good old days, well that's a little bit of a sidetrack, but that's a great story. So, what were some of your other first jobs? You probably didn't last at the Gold Pan that long. **[00:38:02]**

MK: No, I think one season was it. There used to be a Texaco station at the end of town, it was where the brewery is at now, and it was run by the guy name Bill Dyer. I'd worked at Texaco stations down in Littleton and so I was kind of drawn to the place. He gives me a job there pumping gas and working on cars, but he was kind of hard to deal with. He was a Deputy Sheriff and always carried a .38 around on his hip. He was hard to deal with and he didn't like hippies that much. Then, I think after that- then I moved up to French Gulch and I think my next job was the ski area. I worked in lift maint- not lift maintenance but vehicle maintenance. That lasted one season is all. Then the best thing to come along was this old guy named Wells Dunbar; you heard of him? He was a painting contractor in town, great old guy. He was like an old Indian or something. He was real soft spoken, but he had a lot tied up in this town as far as painting. Everybody loved old Papa Wells Dunbar. So, he gives me a job and that was after the ski area and I've been painting ever since.

LG: How long have you had your painting business, or been in that profession? **[00:40:08]**

MK: I think I started to work for him, probably '74, and then in '75, boy he was probably seventy some years old and he wanted to retire and he says, "if you want this, give me something for it, because I'm going to California". He left, or I bought him out. I bought all his old paint wagons and his ladders and spray guns and everything. I bought a trailer from him out in the Little B trailer park and I lived there for about 7 or 8 years.

LG: So, it was your first place that you bought to live in, on your way to being a homeowner?

MK: [chuckles] Yes. Oh yes.

LG: Do you still have ZL or ZR license plates? **[00:41:11]**

MK: I've got a ZL motorcycle plate, and I've got one truck that still has an old ZL-846 and it's still road worthy.

LG: Uh huh, you have it titled still?

MK: Yes. I think I've got an old ZL-111 that was off an old truck-

LG: -and you kept it? It's on the garage wall or something?

MK: Yes, I should have transferred it to another truck, but I just put it on the wall.

LG: What did people do for fun in town; music, other culture, entertainment? Skiing of course, what else do you remember; summer activities? **[00:41:58]**

MK: There was kind of a music scene. I was just starting to learn to play guitar and I wasn't near good enough to join in with some of the jams, still am, but there was a music scene. After hours, or not after hours, but in the back of the Gold Pan there was an old piano and the guy that- Tinker knew this guy real well. I can't remember his name, but he was a hell of musician and he would play the piano. He went on to start that band called Morphine; you ever heard of Morphine?

LG: Yes, I think I have heard of them.

MK: Yes, they had a couple hits and he was part of the Swan, the town of Tiger group. They weren't tribal or anything, but if you lived in Tiger, y'all became friends. Well not everybody, but, sharing rides to town and stuff. He was part of that group. That was Tony Harris, and Annie Harris and Tinkers and Ackley and Bien and a lot of people lived out there.

LG: Some people have mentioned Ackley, was that his first name or his last name?  
**[00:43:33]**

MK: Boy, I'm not sure.

LG: Yes, no one really seems to know, he was just Ackley; kind of like Never Tell.

MK: Right, right, and he was a good guy. He cooked at the Gold Pan for a few years, and just a real personable guy. Old Ackley.

LG: Other culture things, like do you remember the bowling alley? Did you ever go bowling? **[00:43:57]**

MK: Yes. Well, the few times we went in the bowling alley, the few times I went in there; it was kind of a getaway for the older people, and the miners and the established people. I remember going in there a number of times and getting the cold shoulder and the evil eye, because we were kind of strange looking.

LG: How about the Quonset Hut Movie Theater? **[00:44:36]**

MK: Oh yeah, that was a good time. I remember it was kind of crowded in there. You had to kind of squeeze your way in. I remember the movie *Paint Your Wagon* that one Lee

Marvin and Clint Eastwood; the only musical I ever really cared for. I saw that there and went "Wow, old miners, we're in an old mining town. This is, this jives."

LG: Cool. What about any early Ullr Fest memories? [00:45:20]

MK: Oh yeah. My first Ullr Fest was probably '67. I was still in high school and we heard about this thing going on in Breckenridge; some big party, so let's go. We jump in Jimmy Guthry's-the guy that-

LG: Got his foot shot.

MK: -the rifleman.

LG: No, he was the shooter.

MK: He was the shooter, he was the trigger man. Anyway, he had this old Ford Falcon and we went down. Danny Berg was riding shotgun and Guthry was driving, and I was in the backseat with a couple cases of Coors banquet. We had a bottle of whisky and drive over Loveland Pass, and over Swan Mountain Road and into Breckenridge and by the time we got here it was dark and everybody was in the bars. There was nothing going on and we were expecting some big festival. We drive through town way too fast, because it was almost- you could blink and kind of drive through town and not notice. A cop was- they used to sit on Lincoln Ave. there facing Main St. just to watch what was going on at the Gold Pan mostly. We drive by there way too fast and they pull us over. They're going to let us go, but I was only 17 and the cop goes "that's a problem, you guys are going to the pokey." So, they take us to the courthouse and take us down and put us in those little, little jail cells, and take all the booze. Then about midnight, they go "let's let 'em loose". They give us the beer back, they kept the whisky bottle. [laughs] They gave us the beer back and they said, "you guys get back to Littleton." It's snowing like crazy and we're in this Ford Falcon with crappy tires, we made it home, and that was my first Ullr Fest. [laughs] This wasn't that much fun.

LG: How about one that was fun? [laughs] Do you remember that?

MK: I think the first one I really remember having a really good time at was years later. It was just a party. I had been living here a few years, so just partake in the partay, you know. [sic]

LG: Do you remember the parade, or floats or anything like that? **[00:48:02]**

MK: I don't think the parade came along until the late '70's, I can't remember for sure. By then, I was working ski shops. The Maverick ski shop in the Sterling block there, and we would throw snowballs at the parade and they'd throw them back. It was a much lower key affair.

LG: How about things like No Man's Land? **[00:48:42]**

MK: Yes, I remember that, you bet. Going up to Carter Park and boy there was skeet shooting going on; guys with shotguns. Some of the hippies were freaked out; gunplay going on. The hunting around here, the hunting culture was always pretty strong. The hunting is still pretty good.

LG: Do you still hunt?

MK: Yes, elk. Fishing and hunting, that's my mainstay.

LG: Do you have a freezer full of elk?

MK: Yes. You've got to have a ski pass, a wood pile, and a freezer full of elk and you've got it.

LG: [laughing] That's all you need right?

MK: Some years, yeah.

LG: What about more recent festivals, parties, like Fatty's Golf Tournament or St. Patty's Day? **[00:49:40]** Do you have any memories around those?

MK: Oh yeah, lots. You know that Fatty's Golf tournament was pretty funny. It kind of got a little too rowdy, hitting balls through town, through traffic, through the construction site. I think Main St. was being redone the first few years, and a lot of construction was going on, but everybody was just trying to have a good time. We weren't trying to freak people out, but I'm sure it freaked people out. Then the pub crawls, and St. Patty's day was- this town was a little different. It was off the wall on occasions like that. People really brought it out into the open how outrageous we could be.

LG: Usually that was in the bars, and then it was out in the streets?

MK: Yes, when we took it to the streets it was pretty obvious, we were out of hand.

[laughter]

LG: The cops just let it, that kind of stuff just slide by generally?

MK: Yes, we used to talk about getting a ride home from the cop. Rather than arrest you they could just take you home. Which is a good thing, which is the way it should have been. The drinking and the drugs, it was a big part of the '70's; late '60's and all the '70's. Then in '82, I kind of scared myself with all the drugs and alcohol. I said, "man you can't keep doing this, you've got to stop." Then I met this gal, my first wife, Jackie Miller and I always wanted a family. So, I said hey this would be a good time to- because she was from Ft. Collins and she wasn't part of the scene up here. As Jim Henschel used to call them, she wasn't a 'coke whore'. [laughs] He called every chick a coke whore, but obviously he was wrong. So, I settled down a bit. Then Frieze died, I think that year in that avalanche and that kind of sobered me up a little bit. Especially to the skiing we were doing. We used to boot up anything. We didn't have skins and AT gear in those days, so we would just boot up and ski the nastiest thing we could find. I'm surprised he lived as long as he did, and I'm surprised I survived it, because we were really walking on thin ice, a lot of that stuff. Then Priest, Mikey Priest was part of it and he was always pushing it a little bit further, a little bit higher, a little bit steeper as if it could get any steeper. He's the first guy I knew that ever skied Shit for Brains over there beyond the East Wall A. Basin. They might have named it after him. [laughs]

LG: Yes, he was the first one.

MK: Yes, I would never ski it.

LG: I want to ask you about Mark Frieze; a number of people have mentioned him. Where was the avalanche? Where did that take place? The one that killed him. **[00:53:50]**

MK: In the Steep Gullies.

LG: Outside of A Basin?

MK: The second Steep Gully there. The one that looks like an hourglass.

LG: Okay, and do you remember how he spelled his name?

MK: You know, I never saw it in print.

LG: I know it was a little bit of an unusual spelling, I'm having a hard time tracking that down.

MK: Jaime Frieze, his sister she lived here for years. Her name is probably printed somewhere. I think I saw Mark Frieze's name printed different ways maybe.

LG: Okay, yes. Then Doug O, Sheldon, not the same avalanche?

MK: No, it was a different avalanche.

LG: It was around the same timeframe?

MK: I think it was the year before. He and Harry Baum were skiing something over by St. George's, I think. Over in the Keystone Gulch.

LG: I'm hoping to talk to Harry.

MK: Yes, oh yes, you bet, while we still can.

LG: You mentioned that you're a hunter and that you've been doing that for a long time. Do you have any observations around wildlife, nature, environment in the time that you've been here? **[00:55:21]**

MK: In the last- I mean all my hunting buddies will attest to this, we used to have a hell of an elk herd up here. We had the ski area herd and the Peak Seven herd and that's really gone downhill. We just don't have the numbers we used to, that's for sure. The fishing stayed pretty good, probably got a little bit better. Except for the lake, the lake isn't much of a fishery.

LG: When you say the lake you mean Dillon Reservoir?

MK: Dillon Reservoir, yes.

LG: What happened? Or what was it that it's not now?

MK: It used to have a pretty good population of brown trout, and they used to come up the river a lot. You could really catch some big ones in there. I guess it's still pretty good. It's still fishing.

LG: What do you suppose is going on with the elk herd? Encroachment of development or-

MK: Yes, I noticed, we used to hunt the ski area pretty hard, and we didn't put a dent in the numbers. We were pretty aware of what was going on up there as far as the elk and the numbers. Then when they built Peak Seven that really broke that herd up. Then of course Peak Six didn't help much. Now there is still elk up there, not in the winter, they come back in the summer, but the numbers we used to see up there like on Claim

Jumper. We called it, the run Claim Jumper, we call it Elk Jumper, because they used to herd up in the middle there and eat that re-veg stuff and we had our pick. Peak Seven just drove them further North and then Peak Six drove them- So I guess any herd we have now would be the Whatley Ranch herd which we used to- used to have its own kind of numbers. The development down in that end of the county, or that end of the valley I think has put a damper on them. A lot of guys are bow hunting and muzzle loading hunting now and I think that really puts pressure on the herd from September all the way through the end of the rifle seasons. They're pretty resilient animals so hopefully they'll come back. I think they're wintering here this year. There is a lot of them up in the Swan that didn't go over to the Park County side. You know there is always hope for the elk.

LG: That kind of leads me to a question about climate, snow, cold. How have things changed? What do you remember in the earlier days? **[00:59:13]**

MK: It seemed like the winters were a bit harsher back in those days. I remember '83, the first year I bought my house, I had to shovel the roof several times. I said "what have I gotten myself into with this house? I've got to work on it around the clock." I think I still burn the same amount of wood every year.

LG: How many cords is that?

MK: Oh, about two or three.

LG: That's a lot of wood.

MK: Yes, but I think the climate has changed. I think Global Warming is for real. No matter who or what is doing it, the sun comes up every day and warms her up. I mean you can- here it is the end of March, and we got a storm last night, but that's the only snow that's on my roof. Usually in March and way into April there would be big ice dams up there and I'd be shoveling.

LG: Well I want to switch gears to, town culture; changes in town. Are there any significant changes in town that stand out for you? [sic] The stoplight is one thing that a lot of people mention, so you can mention that if you would like, or if there is anything else. **[01:00:58]**

MK: Yes, the stoplight, that was- We used to hang out at the Sterling Block building on the front porch of the Sterling Block, when it was the Maverick ski shop. After skiing, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, the traffic coming off Ski Hill Road would just back up there.

LG: There was no Park Ave. then?

MK: No. So, the cops would have to go out there and direct traffic. The shadow that the Theobald building would cast at that time of day. This lady cop made the mistake of standing in that shadow. She's directing all her direction at Ski Hill Rd. at oncoming cars and there was a car pulling out from Lincoln and didn't see the cop and was going to try gas it across Main St. to get across and get out of that traffic and hit this lady cop right in the back of the legs and flips her right up onto the hood and windshield of this car. It was an old wagon, and almost kills this lady cop. It goes bedlam, the traffic starts trying to jockey around, she's laying in the road. Jim Henschel, one of the guys I mentioned, one of the crazy people, he gets out there and pretends to be directing traffic. He just laughing his ass off, and he's telling people to go when he shouldn't and he's laughing and waving his arms and the cops just freaked out. They did not like this lady being hurt like that, of course. I think it wasn't six months after that we had a light.

LG: So, you observed this? You were watching this happen?

MK: Yes, the cops came and talked to us all. I went to the court and told them what I saw.

LG: Wow. She was okay.

MK: I think she was.

LG: Yes, I heard this story recently from someone else. Pretty banged up but-

MK: Oh yeah, I mean just blindsided her from the back.

LG: That's significant change.

MK: Yes, it was needed, because like the traffic is now, it was out of control.

LG: It was just a stop sign, so everyone coming down Ski Hill Road had to stop, and then Main St. didn't have a stop sign so that always had the right of way. I remember visuals of it. Any town-wide controversies or challenges that you remember, especially in the early days; anything stand out? As a painter you might have had some notice of the

Historic District standards. Some people say that was a big deal when that came in.

**[01:04:36]**

MK: Yes, I'm a libertarian kind of person and never took to all these rules and regulations but I think it was a good thing; 20/20 vision we've got what we've got now. I'm kind of glad that what's her name-

LG: Rebecca Waugh.

MK: Rebecca Waugh. I think that was some forward thinking there, and it's good. You could imagine what the rich people would have done, had they had their free hand. They would have torn a lot of this stuff down.

LG: When you started out you mentioned some names of some colorful characters. There are a number of colorful characters that have come up consistently in other people's stories, so I try to see what I can suss out. Memories of Gunther Hofeditz and the Ore Bucket?

MK: Oh yes, Gunther I should have mentioned him right off. There is a character there. The Ore Bucket was almost as eccentric as it is now under Michael Cavanaugh. He went up there occasionally and listened to Gunther pour you a drink and cook you a meal and rant and rave.

LG: What would he rant and rave about?

MK: Oh, just about anything. He was kind of grumpy, you know in a good way.

LG: Okay, George Johnson.

MK: Oh boy, he's on the list, he should be on the list. He was one of those guys that come to town with the idea, like I did, that you could be a mountain man; live in a cabin, trap and hunt and fish. He trapped his share of fox, which we still have plenty of fox, I don't think you could; you couldn't over trap them. He had a horse and he flaunted that lifestyle in your face 24 hours a day. He was funny, he tied the horse up in front of the Gold Pan. He was the guy that Randy Virgo, they were friends and lived together up in that cabin up on, going up Boreas.

LG: Now which one was that? The hut at the curve there?

MK: Yes, right above the curve, right above the Wakefield curve, right where the cut off goes to all the other condos. The Wildflower, there used to be a cabin that sat on the tailing right there. That was where Virgo and Randy and where George lived.

LG: Okay, and he would have had his horse up there?

MK: Yes, I don't know how that horse survived all the winters.

LG: George Johnson must have moved around a lot, because people have memories of him being many different places.

MK: I think he- when he didn't get along with Virgo there, which was probably a lot, he moved around. I don't ever remember him working a real job. He did a little stone masonry, but not a lot. Randy Virgo was more of a concrete, stone mason kind of guy and he- I think George used his tools a lot. I think that's where some of the problems arose.

LG: Yes, that will do it. A couple of restaurateurs who made a mark in town. Mike Jarvis, any memories of that guy?

MK: Yes, yes. He was a little older than me and ran with a different group up there. He was established and that kind of differentiated us from those people. If they had a going concern, if they were successful- that was commercial, that wasn't the hippie way. [laughs] We all got along, and I remember him. I remember when he started Mi Casa I was hired to paint. I painted the inside of the thing and Tom Abernathy was the contractor. God there was a lot of people on that job. That was kind of the first new restaurant I remember working on.

LG: Still a going concern, all these years later. How about John Hawn, he had the Miner's Camp?

MK: Yes, I remember Miner's Camp. I think I met Hawn a time or two, but like I say we had our own groups to pal around with. I remember going to the Miners Camp a lot. That was kind of a pretty wild place. It was a family restaurant for most of the time, but once it started getting late then it got out there.

LG: What does that mean, "it got out there"?

MK: Drunk and disorderly. [laughs] I remember- I don't know if Mark Brower ever came up in anybody's list of characters in this town, but he used to do this thing where he'd say "I'm gonna do a lawn mower." I'd go "ahhh no, not again", and he'd stand up in a crowded bar and just start spinning with his arms out, knocking stuff over and hitting people. He got beat up for doing that, but that was one of his many things he wanted to do; called the lawn mower. I said, "just don't do it, just don't do it!" "I'm gonna do it, I'm gonna do it", he would just-

LG: One of those outrageous things that people did to get a rise out of—

MK: Yeah especially in the Miner's Camp, because they had the little bar tables. That's the only place I ever saw him do it.

LG: How about Sheriff Bob Farris?

MK: Yes, we want our Sheriff Black. He was a good-

LG: That was a bumper sticker someone said.

MK: Yes, I think so, and that was right around the time that *Blazing Saddles*, the movie *Blazing Saddles* came out and you know "we want our sheriff black." He was a used car dealer in this town when I first got to town. That little, what is probably the concrete park now, was kind of his lot. He would buy and sell cars, and then all of a sudden, he becomes the Sheriff. I go "wow, that's a pretty good move." [laughs] He seemed like a pretty fair guy. I never had any- I had a little trouble with his predecessor, I think his name was John Holt, I know his last name was Holt, but he shook us down a time or two.

LG: The previous Sheriff? Looking for drugs, is that what [unintelligible] he shook you down.

MK: Yes. "Must bust in early May, orders from the D.A.". Every spring they'd come down on somebody.

LG: Why spring, because it was quiet?

MK: I don't know. "Must bust in early May, orders from the D.A.". I always wondered about that. How Bob Dylan could know what was going on in Breckenridge. [laughs]

LG: Okay, so that's a Dylan lyric. Oh interesting, maybe it's a law enforcement thing. I'll have to ask the next time I talk to a law enforcement person.

MK: Yes, ask. Well, Bobby Farris is gone now right?

LG: Yes, he is; Shamus O'Toole?

MK: Oh yes, good friend of mine. I first met O'Toole probably in '75 when he first came up. Frieze introduced me to him. He had a hookah on his coffee table and we would go over there and say hi to O'Toole. Then he bought the old, it was the ECDC building, which is now the theater. Before it was O'Toole's it was Dan's Dairy Depot and before it was that it was the Clipper Gap. It was a pizza joint.

LG: What is ECDC, what does that mean I've never heard it?

MK: Eagle County Development Corporation, and that was their garage for their equipment. They are the ones who started, you know right across the street from the Texaco station—

LG: Umm the Bell Tower Mall?

MK: No, they might have had their hand in that too, but it was the whole subdivision there. It goes back in there.

LG: Oh, The Four Seasons? I think Inner Circle and those condos back in there?

MK: Yes, well before those condos were even built, I think the subdivision went back in there, and there was houses, single family houses in there. [sic] Don Rider was Eagle County, or what did he call his – Don Rider and his partner Veeneman. Wayne Veeneman, and they built a lot of those houses in there, and I was painting by then and I was-

LG: Warriors Mark is that what you mean? That subdivision?

MK: Warriors Mark yeah that's it yes. ECDC started that, or they were contracted. I don't know who the developer was. That was, we were talking about O'Toole—Once O'Toole started his bar, and that was what '76, '77 and that was a fun bar. In that era, we were all coming of age, you know we're a little bit older and a little bit less wise and the drugs were really hitting this town. The cocaine and anything else you wanted. That was a pretty dangerous time, and this bar just fit right in. You could do whatever-

anybody was welcome. He thought he was a biker, and you know he was. So, it was kind of a biker bar, kind of a fern bar, kind of everything thrown into one.

LG: A fern bar?

MK: Well it didn't have ferns, but the Harvey Wallbangers were still going strong, and the Gold Chains. I remember Rixon working there, and a lot of different bartenders, they'd dress the part with the gold chains and the Hawaiian shirt, or the biker attire. Anything went there, just about anything went.

LG: A lot of music too.

MK: A lot, he was big on booking the music.

LG: One last name that comes up often is Andrea, of Andrea's Pleasure Palace. Do you have any memories of her, or that place? **[01:17:40]**

MK: Yes, the guy that used to own the drug store, Jim Wright I think his name was lived there, and he had a son who was about our age. I think he was still in high school and he was selling pot. We went upstairs and tested his pot and bought some pot from him and his dad kind of ruled the drug store down there; was kind of the judge and jury in the drugstore. It was a soda fountain kind of thing, and we went there quite a bit, because we couldn't get served in the bars. Then Andrea she buys the place and wants to turn it into a four-star restaurant with a sexual motif. She has this grand opening party, and we're all invited. Mark Frieze and I are sitting at the table and we have a really good meal and the drinks are flowing, and I'm sure people are sneaking off to the bathroom to get higher. The desserts come out; the dessert cart comes out, and the desserts all have sexual connotations to them. They all look phallic or whatever. Mark Frieze has got a handful of this dessert and he's about to eat it and he goes "you know this thing it looks too good to eat.", and I look at him and I go "well maybe you 'oughta take it home and fuck it.", as he's putting this whip cream concoction in his mouth. He laughs and blows whip cream all over our table and all over everyone sitting there. I said, "I'm sorry man, it just came out", and O'Toole goes "what's wrong with you guys? Look you got it on my leather coat." I think that was the first memory of Andrea's Pleasure Palace was the name, I think.

LG: What about year was that?

MK: That was probably like '77, '78, I would think.

LG: Okay, so a little bit later in your time here. I was never allowed to go there, needless to say.

MK: Well, with good reason. [both chuckle]

LG: Now you mentioned some other names when we started out, some colorful characters. A lot of names that I've heard and a lot of names that I haven't heard. Is there anybody on that list that you want to immortalize in your story; that deserves a little bit further exploration? **[01:21:01]**

MK: My good friends were Frieze and Priest and Horton; Horton came up from Littleton about six months after me. Snortin' Horton they used to call him and he was in that car wreck when Rick Spencer died over by Aspen. When Rick Spencer was working out at the Tiger Mine, he got too close to a downed power line, and I guess he went to reach for something and the electrical shock blew his arm up and he had to be amputated.

LG: He's the one-armed guy.

MK: He's the one with the hook yeah. A year later, this is probably '74 or something, Public Service Company pays him a settlement of like a quarter of a million dollars, \$250,000. So, Spencer comes into the Gold Pan and he's waving the check around and he goes "tomorrow we're going to go to Cripple Creek and we're going to put hay up for my sister's horses and it's going to be a party, and I'm paying for everything." When you said free food and free drink in the Gold Pan, you got the attention of every ear in the place. So, the next day there was a caravan of us, cars and trucks full of hippies, and I rode in the back of Gig Giger's old truck all the way to Cripple Creek. On the way we would pull into a place, there's you know, half a dozen cars, and Spencer would get out and start throwing \$100 bills. He went and cashed that check, he started throwing money at the party and it was the funniest thing. We got booted out of several bars in Cripple Creek just for the noise we were making. That was Ricky Spencer.

LG: Did he manage to spend all his money before he died?

MK: He probably got pretty close. He had that house, that little A frame out by Deadman's Curve in Blue River. That was his place, and it burned down I think like three months after he died. Danny Grier, I think he was staying there or something, he got Spencer's guitar and that's the only thing that he got out of that house from the fire. Yeah Spencer, how'd we get to Spencer?

LG: I asked you if there's anyone on this list whose stories you wanted to be sure to share. Is anybody else on there? You mentioned a Mark Emore he's from the Emore family. He's a long timer, they were ranchers over in Dillon.

MK: His dad was a – the Emore family goes way back in Dillon, they were in the old town and his grandma lived up on the hill. They moved her house up on the hill.

LG: Ruby Ranch.

MK: No, in the new town of Dillon, there are quite a few houses up in there that got moved up. The Emore family that was probably a real anchor for me up here because Mark was so mellow. He knew what he was doing, he lived up here his whole life and he was working for the ski area. His family, I think his dad's name was Gene, he worked for Public Service walking the power lines, keeping an eye on the power lines for years and years. His brother's name was Gene and he had a brother Mike and they all worked for Public Service, and Mark worked for Public Service after he left the ski area. Yeah, he was a good man, he's still a good man. I think he moved down to Arizona.

LG: Anybody else on your list?

MK: Oh man, Christy Perkins, I probably mentioned her.

LG: She was your first—

MK: First girlfriend yeah. She was going with the Colonel, but he was way too old for her. She was still in high school, still at Summit High. I'm not sure how exactly we got together but I was just taken with her and we had a great time. She took me to several graduation parties from Summit High and I had graduated the year before or so. I remember some of the Summit High boys looking over at me and making sure I heard them say "who are these guys coming up here and taking our girls? We're going to

have to kick some ass.” I remember going to Christy saying, “We better get out of here right now, just get me out of here before I get my ass kicked”.

LG: Who was the Colonel?

MK: Colonel Mike Frushberger or I don't know how he got the name Colonel. I don't know if The Colonel, the ski run up there on the hill is named after him. He was another barfly. We hung out at the bars and he was always in there, in the All American or the Gold Pan. We're across the street you could bounce back and forth. The Colonel, yeah, and he didn't like to be called the Colonel, that's what Christy told me. I don't think he was any kind of a Colonel. I don't think he was in the army or anything.

LG: It's a good nickname. Winding down on my questions; what would you like the people of today, or people in the future who might be listening to this tape or reading a transcript, what would you like them to know about Breckenridge during this time frame; your early years? **[01:28:23]**

MK: I have to say it was really a special time in the world, especially in this country; you know the Vietnam thing going on. The culture was changing, and it was so much fun to be part of it. Looking back is kind of the only way to get that vibe, to get that feeling, to get that thing in your head. It's hard to explain when you're living it. What I try to do now a days is appreciate what's going in the here and now, because I know in those days, I was pretty selfish and kind of I guess self-centered and just looking out for myself. Even though I was kind of a hippie and they were talking about peace and love and understanding and all that I should have bought into that more, but I remember just not really buying into the counterculture. I was living it, but I couldn't appreciate as much as I do now what was going on. It was a really special time in America, especially in Breckenridge. It was a unique little town that was just feeling this influx of new culture. The mix was interesting to watch, the miners and the muckers and the hippies and the mean mothers and I'll keep it clean, mixing with the old folks. I can see where they could be outraged by our appearance and our showing up. We didn't take things over we just kind of overran the town. People now a days squawk about all these new people, and the young people, the snowboarders and everything they've changed it.

There's nothing we can really do about it, it's a free country. You can come here and do whatever you want, a lot of people have. They didn't last long.

LG: It reminds me of Biff America "this is America, I can do whatever I want." It was kind of like that in those good old days. Do you have any recommendations for other folks that we should maybe talk to that are still around?

MK: Not a lot of old guys around, you talking to Rixon?-

LG: Soon.

MK: - he remembers a lot of it. Eric Bell.

LG: Oh, yes. Was he around, you're not the first person to mention that name.

MK: Yes, he's still around. He works the ski area. Bertaux was here for a lot of that, and you say you're going to talk to Fiedelman. Fiedelman was right in the mix there, owning the Gold Pan I mean he couldn't be more mixed up with it than that. Harry, you gotta talk to Harry, I mean his dad owned the ski area. Harry was a true hippie, he looked the part and he lived it. Pyetzki, he's pretty much gone.

LG: Any contact with him?

MK: I haven't seen him for a couple of years now since they ran him out of his claim up there.

LG: Yes, no one's heard anything about him for a while. I've made contact with Jeff Baum and will- easier to get a hold of him right now.

MK: Yes, I saw him this morning, he was skiing this morning. He still skis pretty good. I skied with Harry a while back even with his lung transplant and everything, he was up there skiing the good stuff. The steep stuff.

LG: Okay well I've got to talk to him. I left him a phone message. I know I can get a number for Harry from a number of different people. I left a message on his home phone, but maybe if you run into him again you could mention 'hey this interview', hopefully you thought it was cool. We would love to get his stories.

MK: Yes, I enjoyed it because it means a lot to me. I'm glad somebody's interested in it, because it's just one guy's story. It was so involved, it was so complicated, and it was so beautifully complicated.

LG: This town?

MK: Well, my perception of this town yeah. That's all it is really is perception, because you talk about the old days and it's just memories and stuff. My kids tell me all the time "dad you should write a book, you've got all these stories." I go "well I'm going to call it ski bumism" [laughs]

LG: I love it, do it please.

MK: I'll be a preacher and it'll be tax free.

LG: Exactly start your own religion, ski bumism. We could use more of that, I think.

MK: Yeah, I hear the term thrown around all the time, in conversation and publication, people talk about "oh I moved to Breckenridge and I was a ski bum for one winter.", and I go "Wait, it takes more than one God damn winter to be a ski bum.". You can't live in your daddy's condo and be a ski bum, you've got to work, you've got to do something. That's just my opinion.

LG: Again, that's that person's perception of what a ski bum is, but I like your idea. Any final stories, thoughts, anecdotes you want to share?

Mk: No, it's just been a great journey. It's been a long strange trip and I enjoyed pretty much every minute of it and if I didn't shame on me because I feel pretty blessed to have found this place and to survive this place and to survive the good and the bad decisions I've made. It's been the people, that we were talking about, all these names, it's good that somebody remembers them. Not that I'm doing good, but somebody besides me is remembering them, because that's all a man has left after he's long gone is the memories. That's what I tell my kids, I say "don't throw my stuff away and just remember all the good times when I'm gone."

LG: How old are your kids now?

MK: My son, my oldest son or my only son is 37, 36 and my daughters are 34, 32 and 30.

LG: You're a granddad too?

MK: Yes, four grandsons, and they're skiers.

LG: Awesome of course they are. Well thank you.

MK: Well thank you, absolutely. Like I say it's good that somebody's interested in those days, because they were interesting days, very interesting. The love that went around, there was a lot of relationships, I mean they didn't last for a darn, but there was a lot of them. The girls, you know people used to say, "there's no women up here", and I go "okay whatever you say", it seemed like it was free love to me. I never had a problem with the girls, they were always really good to me, and helped me through. Some kind of reason to live, you know you'd go out every night hoping to meet another girl.

LG: You must have been good to the girls too if you didn't have a shortage of them.

MK: Right, well they didn't have a shortage of attention, but the odds were slim, and we just dealt with it. It just been such a good life for me. I'm so glad I got out of Littleton when I did and found this town.

I left one time in '73 I think it was, I was with this gal Terry Minacko, and she was just a little hippie gal from Portland, Oregon and she hit town and I just fell in love with her. She wanted to live in a cabin up in French Gulch, and I helped her secure this cabin and fix it up a little bit. I didn't want her to do that, I wanted her to be mine. She wasn't into it, and kind of broke my heart. When she left, I go "man I got no reason, this town sucks I hate it here I'm leaving". I had an old Jeep and a dog, of course. I don't think I mentioned dogs the whole time, but there was a lot of dogs. Anyway, I get in this old Jeep and I was going to drive to Alaska and never come back. I was going to make it unique by taking all the back roads from here to Alaska, and I drove a lot of crappy roads from here to Dawson's Creek. It was so wet up there once I got into BC, I go "man this is not for me. If it's this wet in Alaska I don't want to be—" and I hightailed it back to Breckenridge.

LG: How long were you gone?

MK: Oh, the summer.

LG: Do you want to tell me about any of your dogs? Everybody had dogs.

MK: Oh yes, lots of them. Ron and Vickie who got me up here, they had a St. Bernard, Backula, and then Vickie had a little dog named Guinevere after the song. Then this guy had a kennel down by Farmers Korner and he was raising sled dogs and had wolf in

them. He was abusing them and wasn't feeding them. I think he went broke and left town, and so somebody busted open the lock and let these dogs out. We got some of them to come into town with us. You couldn't really pet them, they weren't an indoor dog at all, they weren't really a pet. We were just feeding them and trying to get them to do what we wanted by feeding them. We had this one named Eeyore and you'd walk out in the woods with him and he'd get a porcupine and he knew somehow, instinctively to roll it over on its back so he wouldn't get quilled and he'd eat the guts out right in front of you. I'd go "whoa", but he'd still get quills and stuff. There was a lot of dogs, just too damn many dogs, shit eating dogs.

LG: Do you remember when the little girl got killed by the dogs up on Peak Seven.

MK: Yes, that's just up the road from where I live now. I think it was the year before I moved up there, or the year after. They started coming down on dogs as well they should have, they were everywhere.

LG: That was probably around '76 '77 somewhere in there.

MK: I didn't move up there until '82. Dogs will be dogs.

LG: I've heard several stories about that.

MK: It's tragic. I can't imagine losing a child, especially that way, God.

LG: Yes, horrifying.

MK: There is an old story out there in Muggins Gulch, all the hippies were living in Muggins Gulch and Jim, big Jim, he's a plumber around town, he remembers a lot of this stuff too. I'll think of his name, I'll get it to you. I think some of those people had Irish Setters and that's a real good area for elk and elk hunting. Some good old boys, some redneck boys saw those Irish Setters chasing elk, and there's an unwritten rule, or there's a written rule if you see a dog chasing wildlife, pull the trigger, and they did. It was pretty contentious there for a while, because they weren't secretive about it. They were pissed off that these dogs were running elk and Bunting, Jim Bunting is his name, he'll know that story. He'll know a lot of those stories because he was a part of the Swan Drainage Tiger folks.

LG: That's good to know. Okay well we we're going to shut the recorder off a few minutes ago and found some new stories.

MK: Well, I've got a million of them.

LG: I'm sure you do, and we can always turn this back on. If you think "oh I really need to tell the story of, whatever" We can always do this again.

MK: Oh cool.

LG: I know you want to go skiing.

MK: Right, what time is it?

LG: Probably 12:30, no it's almost 1:00.

MK: Oh, okay. Well it's the Thursday afternoon club. There's another good story there. The Thursday afternoon; it's not a club, it's just all these guys have a tendency to be skiing on a Thursday afternoon and we go right to where they shut down the Imperial Chair and then right to when they shut down the T bar, and then as soon as the lifts are done we go to the picnic table there at the bottom of the Front Bowl and sip a little and bullshit.

LG: Reminisce, talk about the good old days. I've heard of the Thursday afternoon club.

MK: Yes, and you are more than welcome.

LG: Thank you, I may have to start doing that.

MK: Yes, bring Carl by, he's probably been there before.

LG: Yes, I think he has. It's probably where I heard about it. Awesome well thank you again for sharing your stories. You bring a different very colorful perspective to some of the early stories that I've heard. So, I really appreciate that.

MK: Cool, good. I hope I did it justice, because you know I think about it all the time. You think about that stuff, memories come back, and you just go "ahh that was fun".