

Henderson Johnson
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Cannonville

INTERVIEW WITH: Parley Henderson Johnson
INTERVIEWER: Jay Haymond
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JH: Okay, tell me about yourself. Where you were born and the family in which you were born.

PJ: My mother died when I was born.

JH: I see.

PJ: I was born over here in Cannonville.

JH: Sure.

PJ: And, I just lived with aunts, uncles, and grandmas, and all that for years and years. Then they sent Dad on another mission. When he got back, he got married and then I lived with him.

JH: Was he on a mission when you were born?

PJ: No, shortly after.

JH: I see.

PJ: After my mother died, why they sent him on a second mission.

JH: Sure. What sort of work was he involved in to make a living?

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PJ: He worked in the coal mines.

JH: I see. He went up to Price to work?

PJ: (He nods yes)

JH: Your aunts and uncles, what sort of work did they do here in Garfield County?

PJ: Oh, this and that . . . everything I guess. (Laughs)

JH: Sure. What work did you finally do when you got to be a young man making your own living?

PJ: Oh, I worked in the coal mines for a while. And then when they got married, I came down here and I worked for the Garfield School District.

JH: Sure.

PJ: As a custodian. That's what I retired at.

JH: I see. A custodian is a . . .

PJ: Janitor.

JH: Sure, part of the staff. What sort of relationship did you have with the students, the children?

PJ: Oh, just a friend. I got along real good.

JH: Yeah, I bet you did. What did your work consist of besides sweeping? Did you have complicated maintenance projects?

PJ: Yes, I done lot of maintenance. It got so, I done more that then anything else.

JH: Sure. What about the heating plant that you worked on?

PJ: I run that all the time.

JH: Was it a coal-fired stoker?

PJ: Yeah, when I first got there it was coal-fired. Then they gradually went to electricity.

JH: So they heated the buildings with electricity? Wow, that's interesting. What sort of . . . I'm thinking about the water system. What was the main problem with the supplying water for the building? Was there a problem?

PJ: I never had any problems with it.

JH: Did it ever freeze up on ya?

PJ: Oh, very seldom, if ever.

JH: They always made me feel a sense of dread when winter came, fearing that the pipes would freeze.

PJ: (Laughter) No, they're pretty good buildings. You know, I never had much trouble that

way.

JH: Yeah. Did you ever get in on any new construction?

PJ: No, very little.

JH: Planning?

PJ: No.

JH: You just took what they gave ya?

PJ: Well, that's all I could do.

JH: (Chuckle) Sure. That's right. Another thing that I think that a custodian does is get along with the principle. What was your experience like with the principle?

PJ: Most of them... I kind of chased around with them.

JH: (Laughter) Oh, did ya?

PJ: Yeah. Harvey Moore. I chase/around with him for years and years.

JH: I see. So you guys were friends as well as employer-employee relationship.

PJ: Oh, had a good relationship.

JH: That's good. That makes for good work.

PJ: It does.

JH: What did you do with him after working hours? Was it a social relationship like? Like hunting?

PJ: Yes. We went to ball games and things like that.

JH: That's great. What was the most difficult part of your job? Or was there something that you felt was difficult?

PJ: Oh, I never had any problem with it. Oh, you know, new buildings, there is always a few bugs and stuff, like that . . . till you got them worked out.

JH: Sure.

PJ: There wasn't much problems.

JH: Well planned then?

PJ: Yes.

JH: That's good. One of the things that a school represents for the community, is more than a place of learning, it's like a community resource. Did they look to you as a part of that resource? In other words, was it a prestigious position?

PJ: Oh, yeah, yeah. I always got along pretty good.

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JH: Great. That's good recommendation.

PJ: They had a big new gym and I kind of supervised that, you know.

JH: Stayed late when they had games?

PJ: Oh, sometimes, yes. I didn't mind it.

JH: No, I'll bet. Did that create any problems with your family? In other words, you had a wife and family by then, I guess?

PJ: I had a wife and two boys.

JH: Did they...?

PJ: They fit right in. No problem. They all liked the games and things like that.

JH: Sure, that's wonderful.

PJ: They weren't very good athletes either one of them, but they liked to go watch or participate.

JH: That's nice. Part of the family activity.

PJ: Oh, yeah.

JH: What kind of activities did you do in the community? Were there community things that you did - service, community service?

PJ: Oh, just went to church and things like that. And when they had ball games, why I supervised them, help coach them, things like that.

JH: Sure. Did you come away from that experience with people that you think of as friends yet?

PJ: Oh, yes. I've still got lots of friends.

JH: I think of a guy by the name of Lowell Mecham. Do you know Lowell?

PJ: You bet!

JH: He's over in Tropic?

PJ: Tropic, yeah. He's the principal over there, he was.

JH: I think he's retired too. What sort of teacher and principal do students like? Could you describe a typical, good teacher?

PJ: Oh, teachers . . . the ones they really respected is somebody that really taught them something- showed them how to do things. Really worked with them, participated in the things they should.

JH: Showed a personal interest.

JP: Yeah, showed a personal interest in the kids.

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JH: Sure. Well, you have to feel good about the kids, to do that.

JP: Oh yes, you bet!

JH: Is there some quality in a principal you think . . . specially makes a good principal?

JP: Oh, I think so, I think it's somebody that can get along with people, that understands people. That likes kids, and kids like him.

JH: Sure.

JP: That's what it takes, I think.

JH: I do too. One of the things that impresses me about a principal is that they not only have social skills, they have leadership skills.

JP: Oh yes, they have to have . . . you have to have that to get along in a school. If you haven't got a little bit of leadership you're in trouble.

JH: Yeah, I think that's true. There was another person here in town that I use to know. They had a café on Main Street, and the name has escaped me, temporarily.

PJ: Where did he work?

JH: Well, he was a County Commissioner for a while, and his parents ran the Café.

PJ: Oh, Bill Bruin?

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JH: Bruin, there you go. Did you know the Bruin family?

PJ: Yes, you bet. Nice people.

JH: Very nice.

PJ: Very good people.

JH: Yeah, I thought so too. Try to think of some others that I know.

PJ: I knew about everybody. Pretty good friends with most.

JH: Yeah, that's good. That's a good record.

PJ: There was a Harvey Moore here that was a principal for quite a while. Him and I used to kind of chase around together.

JH: Oh, yeah.

PJ: (Laughter)

JH: I was just looking at a name up here, by the name of Moore, yeah that says Ruby. Ruby Moore.

PJ: Yes, she's still around.

JH: Is she related by marriage to Harvey?

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PJ: No.

JH: Different Moore family? Yeah. Well that's mostly the kind of things I wanted to ask you about, your experience here in Panguitch. You've seen quite a bit of development here in town. The towns kind of grown into a tourist community.

PJ: Oh, yeah.

JH: What kind of community was it when you first came to town?

PJ: Oh, just a small farming community.

JH: Yeah. Livestock?

PJ: Livestock. There's a few people that owned sheep and some owned cattle, and things like that. Most of them are just small farmers.

JH: Yeah, I know what you mean. Well, it's changing.

JP: Oh yeah, it's changing. The world's changing.

JH: That's right. It is, it is. What question have I failed to ask you so far? Is there another bit of information that you think I should have, but haven't asked you about?

JP: Oh, whether I liked the job, or . . .

JH: Did ya?

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JP: Yes, I enjoyed it.

JH: Great. That's good to hear.

JP: I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed the kids, and I think the kids most of them liked me.

JH: Yeah. Did you particularly like the principal, and the staff, and the teachers?

JP: Oh yes. You have to learn to get along with people. Principal, staff especially.

JH: Is there someone that taught you that idea? Or did you learn from your experience?

JP: No, I just kind of worked into it.

JH: Experience?

JP: Experience.

JH: Yeah, yeah that's good.

JP: There's one fella, the principal here for a lotta years . . . Harvey Moore. He's Kirk Moore here . . . it's his brother.

JH: I see.

JP: Him and I used to chase around together, and go places, go to games, go hunting, fishing together.

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JH: Oh yeah. Where did ya fish?

JP: Panguitch Lake, or Panguitch Crick or Otter Crick, or Tropic Reservoir.

JH: Yeah. When you went to Otter Creek, did you go north on 89 or did you get over to Bryce Valley and around?

JP: We went both. Sometimes we went one way, sometimes the other way.

JH: Sure. I'll bet it was good fishing.

JP: Good fishing

JH: Yeah. And when you hunted, what hunting ground did you go to?

JP: Oh, we used to hunt up to Panguitch Lake, and then we got so we went out by east Hunt Crick, and out into thru there, sometimes over on the mountain; Boulder top.

JH: Sure. Yeah, that's a beautiful mountain.

JP: Oh, you bet. Beautiful.

JH: Well, I appreciate very much you taking time to talk to me.

JP: No problem, no problem.

JH: Great.

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JP: I like to visit with people.

JH: Great. Thank you very much.

End of Interview