

BILL THOMSON INTERVIEW

Diane: Hello, this is Diane Parenti, it's October 25, 2012, and I'm speaking today with Bill Thomson as part of an oral history project for the Mt. Lorne area. We are at the home of Bill and his wife Millie in Whitehorse, where they have recently moved from the Mt. Lorne area. So Bill, I'd like to start by asking you where and when you were born.

Bill: I was born in Kamloops, British Columbia, July 16, 1921.

Diane: O.K. so you lived in B.C until...

Bill: 1979. Pardon me, we lived in, we moved to Whitehorse on Sept. 2, 1971.

Diane: So you lived in Whitehorse for a while before you moved out to ...

Bill: Eight years, eight years.

Diane: So then, you moved out to your farm, or acreage, let's call it an acreage, on the Annie Lake Road - what year was that?

Bill: 1978 we started building, and we moved out in 1979.

Diane: And you built your own home, then?

Bill: Yes we did.

Diane: So in 1979, that's when you started living there, there weren't many people living in that area, were there?

Bill: No, there were very few people living there, and about the only people living anywhere near were the McNairs.

Diane: Where were they in relation to you?

Bill: They were living where Werner Rhein finally purchased their property.

Diane: And your road, we should probably establish where on the road you are – is it kilometer...

Bill: 05 on the Annie Lake Road.

Diane: O.K., 0.5.

Bill: Yes.

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Diane: So then your neighbors were the McNairs, and did you know any other people in the area?

Bill: Oh certainly, I think we knew everybody in the area at that time. Some we knew certainly better than others, but yes, we knew pretty near everybody out there.

Diane: So who were some of those people? Can you recall who any of them were?

Bill: Um, no I can't. Bill Lynn was probably the one that we dealt with and associated with the most. Hon, who else did we associate with when we first moved out there? (pause) We really didn't associate with very many because while we were building our home out there, the community club decided to start a development, and um, some of the people that were members of the community club seemed to think that they were God's gift to the area and were going to dictate to us the terms of our association on the Annie Lake Road. And I made it perfectly clear that I wasn't the least bit interested in, number one, the community club, and number two, their position, and number three, if they wanted to build to go ahead and build any place they felt like it, because it didn't matter to me, I just cut a trail for the dogs right around it anyway, so ...

Diane: Right, so you were ...

Bill: Independent.

Diane: Yeah, so you had your horses - your horses and your dogs were your big hobbies, right?

Bill: That's right, and we had multiple friends in town, a great many of them from the law society, because I became involved at that time with the law society, and so we spent most of our time either going on dog sledding trips, or pack horse trips, or whatever. The pack horse trips you're aware of because you took part in some of them.

Diane: Right, and I want to ask you about those in a couple of minutes. But you mentioned, well, let's just back up a minute. You have had horses for as long as I've known you, so you grew up around horses, right?

Bill: I grew up around horses. My earliest recollections are when I was probably three years old, walking into a barn and going up behind a horse's hind legs, and my dad reprimanding me for getting so close behind the horse's feet. In later years, before the war, I was a big game guide in British Columbia, and I did nothing but pack horse trips. So, the war came along and I joined the air force, and away went the pack horse trips and the horses. The bottom fell right

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out of the tourist market, and I wound up, when I got back from overseas, living in North Vancouver and working for Standard Oil.

Diane: O.K., so then at some point you decided you were going to move to the wilderness, so you did and ...

Bill: No, 27 years after I started working for Standard Oil, they made me an offer of coming to the Yukon, because the Yukon was the largest single distributorship that Standard of California had, and I worked for the Standard of British Columbia, so they asked me if I would consider coming up and looking after their petroleum interests in the Yukon. And we came up here in July of 1971 and had a look and thought gee, this was almost like when we lived in Trail, because by the time our oldest girl was in grade 10 she'd been at 13 different schools, so we were the gypsies in the Standard Oil organization.

Diane: Oh my.

Bill: So we moved to the Yukon on September 2, 1971.

Diane: And, it's been good ever since, right?

Bill: Well, we decided that we would come to the Yukon for a period of two years, and then we would go to the South Pacific, because they were also offering inducements for people to go to the South Pacific for their operations in the South Pacific. So we thought that'd be really an interesting diversion for a while, but after we'd lived in the Yukon for two years, we decided that we liked the Yukon much better than going to the South Pacific. So that's when we decided to stay.

Diane: O.K., so getting back to living in the Mt. Lorne area and horses, where were some places that you enjoyed riding in the area?

Bill: Oh, in those days it was, well, even today I think it would be safe to say that you could go for a ride, and the probabilities of running into, well you know, running into anybody else riding were probably one in a hundred.

Diane: Yes.

Bill: Or maybe even more than that. So it didn't matter where you went, it was almost virgin area for Cheechakos. It wasn't virgin area for some of the native people that took part in hunting and fishing and what have you, but for us Cheechakos it was virgin country.

Diane: Yeah, and nice open country ...

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Bill: It was wonderful riding, and no windfalls, very little downed timber, the trails were in some instances still very good, in other instances nonexistent. So, I put in a great deal of time putting in dog trails for the wintertime, because you had to have a free trail in the wintertime, and I put in about 50 or 60 miles of dog trails.

Diane: Oh, so that's an interesting point. So the people that are running dogs out there now are probably using your ...

Bill: They're running right on my dog trails.

Diane: O.K., so a couple of minutes ago you mentioned another horseman named Bill Lynn. Where was he, well you obviously knew him, and he was living on the Annie Lake Road at the time?

Bill: Yes, he was living down about mile, was it 7? You'd know ...

Diane: Past that, we're at mile 7 now.

Bill: You're past mile 7 now?

Diane: We are at mile 7, or no, no, I was thinking of kilometers. Sorry. Yes, you're probably right, he was at mile 7.

Bill: Mile 7 is I think where he lived on the Annie Lake Road.

Diane: O.K., so do you have any particular memories about your association with him?

Bill: Oh many, many. Many, many, many. Yeah, Bill was a great guy. He had his faults, the same as everybody has, but he was a great guy and he was a very, very ardent horseman. The unfortunate thing was that 90% of his knowledge of horses came from Canadian Horseman or one of these publications which were written by dreamers. But Bill had some nice horses, and he loaned me one very nice Quarter Horse to ride, and I rode him for quite a while and then eventually Bill sold him to, I think, Wayne Moulten, and then Wayne in turn got rid of him, and then anyway we eventually bought him from either Bill or Moulten. He was a very nice horse. And he had quite a number of other horses that were, some were well broke, some were just barely broke. We had a lot of fun breaking them and going on pack horse trips and what have you.

Diane: Just the two of you?

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Bill: Just the two of us, yeah, we left the girls at home.

Diane: And where did you go on those pack trips?

Bill: All over, into Rose Lake, into Johns Lake, all into that Big Bend country, north of the Bend into an area where there was just more sheep than you could shake a stick at. You could sit and count 40 sheep any day of the week. Yes, very nice, very ... nobody else, nobody ever seemed to know that it was there.

Diane: So, those were some good memories with him, and I'm sure you've got quite a few more, but you also knew Johnnie Johns ...

Bill: Yes I did.

Diane: the well-known First Nations outfitter and guide who lived and worked in the Carcross Valley. So can you tell me a little about your association with him?

Bill: Well, to start with Johnnie Johns, I should start with moving to the Yukon. We, as I said, we moved to the Yukon in September, and we arrived about 2 o'clock in the afternoon at the Travel Lodge in Whitehorse on September 2nd, 1971. And we picked up a newspaper and looked at the real estate ads, and phoned the real estate company and said we were interested in looking at houses. So they sent a young real estate agent around, and we went and looked and we said, "this is what we want." And we had moved so many times that we had it down pretty pat, what we wanted. It had to have this, this, this, this and this, and the rest of it was just window dressing. So we said that we wanted to have a house in Riverdale, and he insisted on showing us three or four houses in Porter Creek. And we were quite annoyed about wasting all this time looking at houses in Porter Creek when we had no intention of living in Porter Creek. And the reason was that, when we came up here in July to have a look at the area, White Pass was run by a fellow by the name of Marvin Taylor, who was the vice-president of operations for White Pass in Skagway. And he said that it would be preferable to have a house in Riverdale than anyplace else, because that's where the elite lived. Call it whatever you like, but that's where the elite lived.

Diane: The elite?

Bill: The elite lived in Riverdale. Rightly or wrongly, that's the way he saw it.

Diane: Yes, that's what he thought.

Bill: So anyway, we said we'd be interested in a house in Riverdale. And he said "Well, this is a pretty expensive house," and I said, "I didn't ask you how much the house is worth. I just

wanted to have a look at houses.” So to make a long story short, by 5:30, we had met the people that owned this particular house on Gladwin Drive, had been invited in, and he was a person after my own way of doing things. He said, “The house is worth this much money, and that’s that, so don’t argue one way or another. If you want it you can have it and if you don’t want it, fine, we’ll find somebody else.” And I thought that was a very straightforward and frank approach. So anyway, by about 5:30, quarter to 6, we had bought ourselves a house. And which seems to be almost unheard of. You know, people want to think about it and all the rest of it. There were things like another set of washer and dryer, and stuff like that, and some tables and what have you in the rumpus room in the basement. And I said, “Well, I’m not really interested in those.” And he said, “I don’t really care whether you’re interested in them or not, they go with the sale of the house, so suit yourself.” Anyway, we bought the house. He was leaving the next day to go to Kelowna and was going down on the train, and I was going down on the train too, to Skagway. So, I’d already started working for White Pass, so I’m on my way to Skagway and have a look around down there. So that was the story, we bought a house.

The people that lived across the alley had a family, and they had a little girl about the same age as our youngest one that was going to school, was going to go to school. Anyway, these kids met, and of course it’s inevitable kids get along much faster than adults, and so they became real good friends. And the next thing we knew, we became friends with their parents, Shirley and Bucky Koepke. So we started associating with Shirley and Bucky, and it was a great place to live because it was a wonderful party town in 1971. I mean, all you had to do was pick up the phone and say, “I got a bottle,” and you had five friends, almost immediately. “Uh, not quite that bad, but it was a great party town. And so, one weekend they said, “We should go to the Kopper King.” And so I said, “Well where the hell is the Kopper King?” And they said, “Oh, it’s a place on the highway, just north of town. We’ll go up there and see what’s going on. There’s good Chinese food, and lots of music and what have you.” So anyway, we wound up at the Kopper King. And we hadn’t been there very long, when a very distinguished looking Indian came in with a young fellow, and the Indian had a great big cigar in his hand, and a cowboy hat. He seemed to know everybody in the place, and everybody seemed to know him and like him. And he had the most dynamic speaking voice of anybody that I’d heard for a long time. And so, nothing would do but they introduced us to Johnnie Johns. So somebody said, “Johnnie, recite ‘Squaws Along the Yukon’”, and so Johnnie said, “Well, I’ll just do that.” So he recited “Squaws Along the Yukon”. Not that I - I didn’t know that he wrote it. It was, the way that he could recite it, it was absolutely spellbinding. Not politically good language, but you know, it was very, very well done. So that was my introduction to Johnnie Johns.

Well, I never had anything to do with Johnnie for a long time. And I don't really remember when I really began associating with Johnnie Johns, but I believe it was over a pack horse trip, I believe. And I wanted to know how to get to this particular piece of country, and somebody said to me - oh I remember, I was in Carcross doing a court circuit in Carcross. And somebody said to me, "Johnnie Johns is the man that can tell you, because he put the trails in." So I went over to the hotel, and Johnnie was sitting there having a beer. So I introduced myself, and we talked for a while, and I said, "Would you be able to tell me how I got from this point to that point?" And he took a napkin off the table, and a pen, and he drew a map, and he handed me this map, and he said, "There is it, right there, that's how you do it." Well I wish I'd kept all the serviettes I got after that, because I mean, he could draw the most interesting map on a piece of paper and hand it to you, and it was accurate, much more accurate than what the government would produce in six years of surveying. I mean, he knew every rock, every tree, every stump, every willow bush, everything along the way. So I became quite infatuated with Johnnie Johns.

Well, one of the interesting things was, that Johnnie was a, a very straightforward type of individual, except he was the greatest storyteller you ever met. And he would tell stories and tell stories and tell stories, but the only thing that you could say, by the time he got done was, if you could sit down and look at some kind of a record, Johnnie always told you the truth. Except he said to me one day, I asked him a question, and he said, "Bill, I'll tell ya, I'll give ya the answer to anything that you want that I know, except nothing about my women - nothing about my women, O.K.?" Well, this "Squaws Along the Yukon" opened up a whole new segment of Johnnie Johns. And I'm not sure whether it was Hank Carr or whether it was Oster, had their orchestra playing at the Kopper King that night, and I think that it was Hank Carr. Anyway, somebody sang the song - they had put it to music by then - and somebody sang "Squaws Along the Yukon." But Johnnie was one of these kind of people that if he liked you, he'd bend over backwards, and if he didn't like you he'd just ignore you, and that was that simple.

One time I went into the hotel at Carcross, and you have to understand I used to go down to Carcross quite often to do court circuits, and after court I'd wander around and B.S. with some of the locals, because there were some very colourful characters. And Johnnie, years and years and years before this, had taken a party of Americans, a fellow and his wife, on a hunting trip, and the guy had since died, and she had fallen madly in love with Johnnie Johns. And she arrived in Carcross one day with her son, who was an adult, and they had been to Alaska, and

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she said to her son that she would like to go to Carcross and see if anybody, if Johnnie Johns was still alive. So as the story goes, she went into the hotel, and if you've ever been in the bar at the hotel, it's just like walking into the sitting room of a hotel, and she said, "Does anybody in here know a guy by the name of Johnnie Johns?" And Johnnie said, "Yeah I do, I'm Johnnie Johns." So they started a relationship, and I don't know how long it lasted, but Johnnie had a little house across the river from Carcross, and they lived in this little house. And she was quite a good sheep artist, she could draw sheep like a son-of-a-gun, but she also had a very serious heart condition. And so, one day I was down there, and I used to go over pretty near once or twice a month anyway and have coffee with them. And Johnnie was telling me that she was down in the States checking out a ... it appeared that she had a very serious heart condition. And Johnnie was really worried because she was going down to the States to have it checked out, and her deal was, it was a 50-50 deal whether she had the operation whether she lived or died, she'd take the 50-50 deal. Well, she lost on the 50-50 deal, and that hit Johnnie very hard. About that time, Barry Stuart decided he would write the life history of Johnnie Johns and acquired some financing from the Feds and what have you. And so, it was agreed, that there was a group of us that were going to go into Rose Lake, that Johnnie was the one who started Rose Lake when he was 17 years old.

Diane: He started Rose Lake which is now the government camp – is that what you mean?

Bill: Well actually, no. He started the one at the mouth of the river going out of Rose Lake. He built a cabin, and then in later years he built a cabin at Rose Lake where the government has a camp now.

Diane: Right, yeah.

Bill: But he sold that to (Dennis) Callison. He sold the outfitting business and everything to Callison. And then, prior to selling it to Callison, he built a cabin right down on the – well, you know where it is ...

Diane: Yes, I remember.

Bill: Right down, just above the lake shore. Anyway, it was agreed that they would fly Johnnie and Wolf Reidl, who was the principal of the high school in Haines Junction, and Barry Stewart, would all fly in, and Howard Frotten and I would take a bunch of horses in.

Diane: Oh, and could I just interject here, Howard Frotten was living on the Annie Lake Road at the time, wasn't he?

Bill: He was living on the Annie Lake Road at the time.

Diane: Right, so there's another early resident.

Bill: Yeah, Howard and I fraternized a lot, dog sledding and pack horse trips. Another guy that if you had a million dollars and you wanted to find somebody to protect it, give it to Howard because it would be there when you came for it. He's a wild little man, but a great guy. Anyway, they flew in and we took the horses in, and when we got there, it was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. And you know the layout of the cabin at Rose Lake - you can sit at the table and look out across the lake at the beautiful, beautiful mountainsides, and in those days you could sit there and count 25 or 30 head of sheep any day of the week. And if you look straight north to where the bluffs are, on the river, there'd be maybe 35 or 40 head of lambs and half a dozen rams in the pastures up on the mountains, and it was like that for years and years and years. The last two or three years I've been in, it's been nothing like that. I don't know whether the sheep are dying off, or if they're getting slaughtered, or what's the story. It doesn't make any difference.

Anyway, Johnnie was talking about some of the people he'd taken hunting, and all the rest of it. And Barry (Stuart) had taken two boxes of books in, and they were Field and Stream and Outdoor Life and all these hunting magazines and what have you, and every one of them had an article about Johnnie Johns in it. And some of the articles were photographs, some of them were just stories. And Johnnie Johns was a man - I asked him one time, I said, "Where did you go to school?" And he said, "I never went to school." And I said, "Well, you read and write." And he said, "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. I taught myself." And it turned out, from my observation, that he had a photographic mind. I mean he, he could remember the damndest things. It was like, he'd look at a picture of a guy on a hunting trip and say, "Oh that was so-and-so, and I think that was taken on the 15th of August, 1914, or 1917, or 1918. He shot a 42 inch ram, and a couple days later he shot a moose, and he got a grizzly bear on the trip too." And he'd go on like this for dozens and dozens and dozens of pictures you could produce, and it's not like as if he'd memorized it or anything, it just came natural and that he remembered. Well, you've looked at the cabin at Rose Lake, and number of hunts that are written on the logs in black pencil - Johnnie could start at one end and tell you the names of all these guys and who they went with and how much meat they got - I mean, it was absolutely awful.

He told me one day that, pretty near everybody that worked for him was native. They were related to him in one way or another. His sisters did the cooking and looked after all the catering, and the nephews and the grandsons and the grandchildren and their grandchildren were outfitters and packers and horse wranglers and what have you. I said, "Johnnie, how many horses did you have on, the most horses did you ever have on a trip?" and he said, "Well one year I had 96 head of horses in the bush at the one time."

Diane: That's quite a few!

Bill: Ninety-six head of horses in the bush at the one time! Well, we had a great trip in there. But about four o'clock, Barry was making supper and he needed mushrooms. About four o'clock he said, "Gee, I wish I had some mushrooms, and Johnnie said, "Hey you young guys, you know where that trail goes north along the edge of the lake?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Just off that trail, about a hundred yards back in the bush, you'll find a whole bunch of mushrooms." And sure enough, we went out there and we got a great big box full of mushrooms.

Diane: What kind of mushrooms?

Bill: Well, they're these field mushrooms or what – just exactly the same as you buy in the store. Excellent. Anyway, he told stories until 11 o'clock at night, and Barry recorded them. He kept changing the tape in the tape recorder. And Johnnie kept telling stories, one after the other after the other after the other, until the wee hours of the night.

He took Barry by boat, because there was a boat in there at the time, with a motor, and they took the boat and motor and they went down, and he showed Barry a cabin that he had built with his photographer, when he was 17 years old. And the doors still opened in the cabin, the roof was still on it, and I mean, some of the stuff ...

Diane: So it had been really well built, in other words.

Bill: And when he was 17 he took this English photographer out for three months, and all that they took were four big pack dogs, and all they took with the pack dogs was flour, salt, sugar and tea. And I said, "What the heck did you live on?" And he said, "Oh, sheep meat." They'd shoot a sheep every time that they needed more meat, to feed the dogs and what have you. Sheep were so thick in there that they were like herds of domestic sheep.

Diane: So did Barry ever write the book?

Bill: I think he started it and I don't know what happened. It fizzled out, and the way I understand it, he paid the government back, and that's another story.

Diane: O.K. Bill, a few times that I went riding with you, you mentioned "Oh, Johnnie Johns' trail is over there, and there's another one over here, and so did you actually use a lot of his trails when you went riding?"

Bill: When we went into Johns Lake, it was absolutely amazing to me that we saw – well let me put it this way, I think I made 31 consecutive trips into Rose Lake or Johns Lake, or into that

country over the years. And the number of times that we ever ran into another horse, or another pack horse, was probably three. And I don't think I would be exaggerating if I said that nobody ever seemed to go in there. And for the first 15 or 20 years, nobody went in there, not a soul, except me. And you would think that by then, the trails that he had used would be completely washed out, they'd be gone. Well, you and Bev and I sat on the edge of a little, well quite a large meadow, watching the horses one time, beautiful, beautiful country, and we looked right across the lake, and Johnnie Johns – and there was a gate on the meadow, if you remember - and Johnnie Johns put the gate up there to keep the horses from crossing the meadow. But the horses would go across, walk down that long sandy spit into the lake, walk down about, oh I don't know, two or three hundred yards from the shore, and then they'd have to swim for 15 or 20 feet, and then they'd be on ground again, and then they'd start up that mountain. There's a canyon there, and the trail was so obvious that you could sit in the cabin and watch stuff walk up the edge of the mountain, right up to the top of the mountain. So I said, "How do you get from this point to this point, from here to Johns Lake?" So he told me. And he drew a map, you follow this, and when you get here you gotta cross the river, and then follow along through here, and when you get there you gotta cross the swamp. The trails were as good in those days as I think they were when he was using them. And that was 20 years, or more than 20 years since he'd been using them. So there's some of the most beautiful country.

He told us one time, I said, "Johnny, how do I get on the mountain where the waterfall is?" Uh, if you remember riding into Johns Lake, you could get to one spot in the swamp and you could look up and there was a waterfall. I said, "How do you get to that mountain, or the top of that mountain?" So he told me that you follow along the base of this mountain and cross over there ... anyway, anyway, to make a long story short, we tried it one day. We packed up, and we decided – there was a fellow by the name of ... well, Bill Lynn was with us – I'll think of it in a minute. Anyway, Bill Lynn and the other fellow and I started out in the morning and we hit this trail, and geez, the trail was just as good as you could please. And so we rode until it was lunch time, and we stopped at a little slough of a lake to have lunch, and the trail appeared to go around the end of the lake, so we followed it. And, by about 2 o'clock in the afternoon we were gloriously lost away back in the bush and no trail. So we decided that we'd cut across and see whether we couldn't hit it further up. So we cut across, and we did hit the trail. It was about 18 inches wide and a foot deep, and it was zigzagged right up behind this waterfall. So, we thought, it's too late to keep going today, so we'll go back to camp and then tomorrow have another run at it. If we follow this trail down, we'll have to find it where you cross. So anyway, the next day, well that day, we followed the trail back down again, and he'd crossed on a beaver dam at the end of the lake. And of course the beaver dam had been washed out and what have you, but that didn't make any difference, that's where he crossed was on this beaver

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dam. So the next day we headed up, and sure enough, zigzagged right up and we came to a fly camp, and the fly camp overlooked the world. It was the most beautiful setting that you ever saw. And there was probably a thousand dollars' worth of empty liquor bottles. The most exotic liquors you could think of were laying around this camp. And it turned out that it was Johnnie's fly camp, and when the weather was bad they could get up there and they'd set up their tent and everything and then they'd party. There's no point in going any further than there. So we partied.

Diane: To keep up the tradition.

Bill: Yeah, but he used to draw me a map on a serviette, and then like a fool I'd throw the serviette away.

Diane: And you don't have any of them, do you?

Bill: No, I don't have any, no.

Diane: Well those are some great memories you have of being with Johnnie, and thanks for sharing them with us. Oh, I remember another time, just getting back to the Annie Lake Road, where you and my husband Rick and I were riding one day, and we were looking for a way to get from – we were riding down the Watson River Road, and we wanted to cross over to the Alligator Lake Road without having to go through Steve Holey's property, so you said you knew of a way to get through and it was a section of Johnnie Johns' trail. Do you remember the day that I'm talking about?

Bill: No I don't remember, but I did know that there was a way to get across.

Diane: Yes, well you found it that day.

Bill: Johnnie Johns' trails, well in those days, nobody ever used Johnnie Johns' old trail, but it was quite useable.

Diane: But do you remember crossing ...?

Bill: Oh yeah, I remember. Oh yeah, I remember.

Diane: So you showed Rick and I, and after that ...

Bill: Everybody started crossing there, all the dog teams crossed there.

Diane: There were still some really old blazes on the trees.

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Bill: Yes there were.

Diane: And you found that for us, so that was an interesting ...

Bill: Yeah. Oh, it was a great experience, living out there, for one, and but knowing people like Johnnie Johns and Bill Lynn. Bill Lynn had a very, very hectic trip one time, after he left there, but he died a sad death.

Diane: Yes, but you were good friends for a good many years.

Bill: Yeah, we were.

Diane: And your horse Belle, didn't she originally come from one of ...

Bill: That was Johnnie Johns' stallion, was her father.

Diane: Oh, O.K.

Bill: Yeah, and the mare was Bill Lynn's, the Appaloosa mare.

Diane: Right. The mare was Orchid, right?

Bill: Orchid, yeah.

Diane: We were living across the road from where we are now, and I remember Orchid coming for visits.

Bill: Yeah, yeah.

Diane: Well, I guess we should start thinking about wrapping up, but do you have any final comments about living in the Mount Lorne area?

Bill: I hated to leave, but like everything else, time goes by, and it's the smartest thing I've done for a long time, I guess, is recognize the fact that you can't live forever and you may as well enjoy some of the time you have left. So here we are.

Diane: So it was a good experience, living there.

Bill: Oh it was! It was a great experience. We made some very, very good friends and had a lot of very interesting trips. Yeah, it was really worthwhile.

Diane: Yeah, well we enjoyed having you out there. It was great for us too.

Bill: Oh yeah, I'm sure. (mutual laughter)

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Diane: Well, I really want to thank you for sharing your stories with us today. It's been a pleasure.

Bill: Well you're very, very welcome.

Diane: And I'd also like to thank Claire Desmarais for her technical assistance.