

John Van Schoonhoven

10/14/03, T1, S1

HH: What is your full name?
JV: I'll spell it for you because you wouldn't get it otherwise.
HH: Okay.
JV: It's John and the last name is capital V as in Victor, a-n, capital S as in Sam, c-h-o-o-n-h-o-o-v-e-n.
HH: Alright. Where were you born?
JV: I was born on __ and Main.
HH: You were?
JV: Yes. Actually where the __ live. Just...you know, just two houses down...
HH: Down the corner.
JV: ...on the north side there.
HH: Okay. Wow. And when were you born?
JV: December 10th, 1928.
HH: So were you born on your family's farm? Was there a doctor there?
JV: Yeah. She had a smaller __ twenty-eight.
HH: And did your mother have all of her children there at home?
JV: I was the only child.
HH: Oh, you were?
JV: Yeah.
HH: Was there a doctor that came out to help?
JV: Yes. A local doctor. Dr. Wonderlick. That's, you know, that was about it.
HH: Is there... Is there anything else that your parents told you about your birth? Any interesting incidents or anything like that?
JV: No, not really. I can't... As near as I know there was nothing that...that they told me anyways so I'm assuming it was just nothing out of the ordinary.
HH: Good. Now was it typical in that time for people to be born at home?
JV: I would say most, you know. Of course people who...some people went to La Grande to the Grande Ronde Hospital or to Hot Lake hospice, which was a hospital, too. But I would say that most people was probably born in their home.
HH: And where did you go to school? Did you go to school here in Cove?
JV: Yes. I went to Shanghais School. Do you know where Shanghais School is?
HH: I saw the building, yes.
JV: I went there for the first five years until it closed and then into Cove School, you know, the present __ building.
HH: Do you have any good memories or bad memories of school at that young age?
JV: Oh, I think all good. I enjoyed going to Shanghais. I thought that was the greatest thing in the world. Anywhere from ten to a dozen students, one teacher, grades one through eight. Of course that was all I knew. When they closed it I thought the world had come to an end. I had to go to some other school that wasn't half as good ours. So anyway, yeah, it was a good experience.
HH: Was...with the new school bigger were there a lot more students there?

JV: Of course, the Cove school has two grades for each teacher. First and second were together, third and fourth, fifth and sixth, seventh and eighth. Of course here, at Shanghais, one teacher for all the kids. So, yeah, it was considerable different.

HH: And more divided.

JV: Oh yes. This way I, of course, was frightened at the thought of going – not so much going, but the thought of having to go to a big school and, you know, I thought, you know, what's gonna happen. Of course nothing much happened. It was same...about the same as _____. It was quite a transition in many ways in many ways going from a one-room country school to a public school like Cove.

HH: Yeah. Now you said your family had about twenty acres there on Lance Lane?

JV: Yeah, 120 acres.

HH: And what did they do with those acres? Did they farm?

JV: About two-thirds of it was in cherry orchard. Then we had addition property _____ and some other property where we raised milk cows, had several pigs and, you know, the traditional farm...small farm kind of thing. But cherries was probably the main crop, except that you couldn't depend on it for an income because from year to year you might have a good crop or you might not. So milk cows, having a herd...a small herd of milk cows, separating the milk into cream, selling the cream to the Union County Co-op, which was a dairy in Union. We drew a paycheck of some sort every two weeks. That's what was the stabilizing _____. And of course we...there was a driver that came by every week and picked up the cream. We'd set it in large ten-gallon cans _____ and we'd put it out and he'd come by and pick it up. Then every two weeks here they came with a check for the...whatever cream. I think it was about two weeks.

HH: Did you help out with that as you were growing up?

JV: Oh yeah. I was part of the whole...the whole process, milking and doing whatever else needs to be done.

HH: You said that you enjoyed going to school. Was it because it was a break from chores or was it just the whole...?

JV: No, just bein' with other kids, that kind of stuff. _____ I guess, you know, _____.

HH: Now you had... Did your father run the whole...the whole thing himself?

JV: Yes. Occasionally he'd hire someone to help, but most of the time he ran it. Yes, certainly.

HH: Now did your chores increase as you grew older in what you were able to help with?

JV: Oh yeah. Some...you know..._____ with your age, you know. It varied. I don't recall early chores as much, but, you know, even helping in milking – because we milked by hand for the first several years _____ - so milking the cows was one thing and you had to feed the livestock, get hay and clean out the barn, feed the pigs, all the other kinds of stuff you had to... It's just traditional small town...farm chores. But my dad would allocate them out, I think, as proportionate to my age and that kind of stuff. But I kept busy.

HH: Yeah. What was your favorite subject in school? Did you have one?

JV: Oh, I really... English. _____, but anyway, History, probably _____.

HH: And was your parents' involvement in your education, do you think? Did they help you with your homework or ___ to school?

JV: To some... I suppose so. I don't recall. My mother was very much involved in school and helped with various things. She was the clerk for the Shanghai school district. She kept all the things the clerk ___ the same as secretary-treasurer ___ responsibility takin' care of minutes and the financial accounts and so forth. She was involved. We were always involved in the activities...they were involved in all the activities that went around the school, you know, particularly Christmas programs and all the other things that the school provided, you know. And parents worked ___ you know and those kind of celebrations. Yeah, they were both involved. And that was true of most parents. Not all, but most, you know. One way or another they participated. Not in direct instruction, but in the other activities. Yeah, the one-room school has a lot to be said for it. You know, there's a lot of disadvantages, of course. But if... Teachers would assign some older students to work with younger students so that there was a lot of teaching going on student to student. That was, I think, very good because I think both the student teaching and the student learning were both gaining from that process. So yeah, it was an interesting dynamic at the one-room school. It's still... The building's still there, even the chalkboards and much of the things are still intact in that old building.

HH: Oh are they?

JV: Yeah.

HH: Oh neat. I've just seen the sign up.

JV: It was... It was a good start in education.

HH: Now were your parents from here?

JV: Yes. Actually, well, my mother's parents had both come to Cove, but my grandfather had homesteaded up High Valley, my mother's father. And my father's had come here when he was just a young boy in the mid-1890s and my mother's folks had come earlier, about 1880-something. So they ___ one another.

HH: Now did they meet here in Cove?

JV: I'm sorry?

HH: Do you know if they met here in Cove?

JV: Yes, they did. I think this house they bought was probably the first place that they lived when they got married. They had...that was the first place.

HH: Did your father build it or did he buy it?

JV: No. I'd say it'd been built before. It was almost new. One family had lived in it before, but it was nearly a new house. He didn't build it.

HH: Now you said that English was your favorite subject in school?

JV: Mm-hmm.

HH: Did you do a lot of reading before you went to school, or was that a completely new and exciting subject?

JV: I had... My mother'd help me do a lot of memorizing of poetry and that kind of stuff before I went to school so I was sort of into the concept of doing that kind stuff before. I'm not even sure, but I think I could do some basic reading before I started, but I'm not sure on that ___ you know, ___. Right at the corner where ___ Road and ___ Lane join is a house just across the road there where ___ live

now, but the family ____ and their daughter, Dorothy, was my first teacher, first grade teacher.

HH: Wow.

JV: I remember stopping on the very first day of school and her father's old Model-A ____ and she took me to school and explained things to me on the way. And that's the last time I remember ever getting a ride to school. [laughs]

HH: Just on the first day.

JV: First day of the first year.

HH: So did you walk yourself to school from home?

JV: Usually. I rode my horse sometimes.

HH: Oh did you?

JV: Uh-huh.

HH: All by yourself?

JV: Oh yeah. ____ But, you know, I usually walked it.

HH: How old were you when you started school?

JV: Five.

HH: Wow. Now when you went...when you started at the Cove school what grade were you in?

JV: I was in sixth. I spent the first part of it at Shanghais.

HH: And how many grades did Cove school go through?

JV: It went through high school. First through eighth grade were elementary and there wasn't anything like junior high, just a straight seventh and eighth combination and from there you went freshman and took four years of high school. It was just pretty much the format now, although I think I'm not sure whether the Cove school now actually talks about junior high or not. But it does have seventh and eighth grades, you know...the format was pretty traditional, you know. Junior highs, middle schools weren't that common then.

HH: Did they have any sports that you were involved in?

JV: I was involved in every sport I could manage to get involved in. We didn't have... We had, of course, football, basketball and baseball and a little bit of track, but not very much. So those would've been the sports that we played. ____ very important thing. And so I was involved in all of 'em.

HH: What... What grade did they start having teams that you could be involved in?

JV: As freshmen.

HH: As a freshman. So before then it was mostly recess games?

JV: Oh, other than that, yeah. I guess when we were in the seventh grade we got a...we did have a football team that played a few other seventh and eighth grades around, but that wasn't only a few games.

HH: Did you have a favorite sport?

JV: Football was my favorite.

HH: Football.

JV: Cove now they play eight-man football, but at that time they were even smaller, they played six-man football. That was the format. So it... And of course most of the smaller towns did, Elgin, Imbler, Union, Cove, North Powder and Wallowa, Joseph. Those were the teams we'd usually play. Then they all played

each other. Enterprise I don't think did and, of course, La Grande _____. Most of these small schools around _____ playin' football.

HH: Was that because of the number of participants?

JV: Right. Not enough students and expense, too, of uniforms and all that. But basically _____ to have an eleven team.

HH: I see.

JV: It wasn't _____. So yeah. So that was a very, very important thing.

HH: When you were a senior in high school were you looking to attend college or work with your father?

JV: Oh no, from the time that I can remember I was sort of programmed to go to college by my parents. It was _____ I suppose some calf or something my parents had given me, you know, and I'd raised, that money went in the bank to go to college. There was never a question, there was no decision as to whether I would go to college or not. I just automatically went to college. With a lot of students, you know, do I do that or do I get a job, but I never even thought about anything else. _____ because that's what they had...

HH: Expected.

JV: ...expected. That's just the way it happened.

HH: Now you said that some students it was, you know, do they college, do they not, was that because their parents needed their help or was it just because it was a financial decision?

JV: Probably a combination. Some parents really didn't feel the importance of college for their children. Some of them felt they couldn't afford it. And some students just didn't see that as being any advantage to them. It was more important for them to go out and work. In some instances, ___, you know. So there are different reasons why people didn't go, it's probably a combination of all of those. A lot of... I think a fair number of students, you know, married right out of high school. Not a lot, but quite a few. So there were a lot of reasons why people didn't go. I really boiled down in most cases to them not seeing college as being a benefit to them. They didn't see that as important as married or getting a job where you could bring in money and buy yourself a car and do all the other kind of things, work in the mill or something like that. And they didn't...in my graduating class...three, four...a large graduating class, eight students.

HH: Oh wow.

JV: Five of us went to college. One, two, three of us got one or more degrees. Two others went for a while, but didn't necessarily get a degree.

HH: Their program.

JV: Pardon?

HH: They didn't complete their programs?

JV: Yeah. For various reasons.

HH: Right.

JV: What is it, 37 ½ percent of us went ahead and, you know... That wasn't too bad then because... Of course there was also a sort of select group then. Because when I was in the eighth grade from the eight students in our class there must've been fifteen. And by the time we got to graduation various students had dropped out. Dropping out was a very common thing for students to do for various

reasons. ___ rational why that many didn't go to college. Either they would find school difficult or their parents wanted them to ___ more...they wanted to make money or whatever. But dropping out was quite a...it was very common.

HH: Was it more accepted than it is now?

JV: Yeah, I think it was. It was even expected, I think, which was sort of a sad thing, but that's what it was. Some people just would not...they just assumed that they would go for a while and that was it. I don't know why that was other than going back to the perception of college as being something that they either couldn't do or didn't want to do or didn't see the advantage. And probably they also didn't feel they were probably too welcome. Most of the kids who drop out don't feel very happy there or they wouldn't drop out. But there were quite an ___ from eight grade to twelfth grade. I don't know the exact numbers ___. Fourteen or fifteen or so in eighth grade. And yet there were a lot of people many years earlier in Cove going back ___ who went ahead to college long before I graduated from high school. A lot of students from Cove who went on to college in various places when you look back at the records...at the school records ___ and so forth. So a lot did even years and years ago, but the percentage was always low.

HH: What year did you graduate?

JV: [laugh] I tried to think that up the other day and I couldn't remember. '46.

HH: Okay. Now were some of your classmate, you said, you know, different reasons, were some of them drafted?

JV: What?

HH: Drafted.

JV: Drafted.

HH: Or did they go join?

JV: Some joined. Three...four, I think, eventually ended up in the service. All four of the boys that graduated did and then stayed in three or four years. And I don't think... I believe any was drafted. I think they were, you know, enlisted. I don't think the draft...that was before our time. I think the draft was probably in effect, but it wasn't that demanding.

HH: What about... Do you know about the student boys who dropped out in eighth grade? Did they also serve? Do you know by any chance?

JV: At least... At least some. I'm tryin' to think. One student who was in eighth grade that dropped out of high school was killed in the Korean War. But I just don't remember. Yes, I'm sure many...some did, you know. '46 was after World War II was finished so the need for people in the military had declined quite a lot. It was a different time. A few years earlier there were people dropping out of high school to join the service all the time.

HH: That's what I was wondering.

JV: Yeah. But we were past that. It wasn't until the Korean War came along that that there was a need again for people to be in the service.

HH: Going back to your parents, you said it was expected that you would go to college. Did they go to college?

JV: My mother went to what was a junior college and went a few years, I think, and would have liked to have been a teacher, but never did, married my dad. But my father did not. My father didn't graduate from high school.

HH: Do you know why it was so important to them that you went to college?

JV: I really don't except, again, my mother had a lot aspirations even by helping me early on before I started school to do things and learn to read. But my dad was equally as strong and I don't know. He had ___ in his mind the importance of an education. Both parents felt very strongly about that. It's just a perception they had _____. Other than that, I don't know why, but they did. [laugh]

HH: So then you did go to college and which college did you attend?

JV: I started at Eastern and actually graduated...I started at Eastern, went a year, went into the service for a year and a half and then went back and finished at Eastern.

HH: And what did you study?

JV: Education, to be a teacher.

HH: How did the year and a half in the service affect your education? Did it enhance it? Did it interrupt it for a short time? What was that like?

JV: It was a great experience...good experience because I spent most of that time, over a year and about three months of it, in Salzburg, Austria.

HH: Wow. What did you do there?

JV: I was part of the...I was in the Military Police part of the... At that time Austria and Germany both were occupied by the...what was then the Four Powers, France, Great Britain, United States and Russia. Each of those countries were divided into zones. So I was in the... While there were local government police, there was still the Occupation force there, military there. I was part of that Occupation force. Basically served as peace in the city of Salzburg. Anyway, and that was pretty _____. I came back and started work at the mill for six months and then started back to school. See, the sawmill in Cove was right where the high school is now.

HH: Oh, okay. Did you work at that mill then? The one in Cove?

JV: Yeah.

HH: Working in the sawmill here before you went back to school, was that to save up money? Or just for the experience?

JV: Working in the mill, you mean? It was for money to go to school. And I had...I worked clear through December because I was...I'd gone enough college before that I suppose I could've graduated earlier, but I decided to work that time, accumulate enough money and then start back to school. And it worked out, you know, so that...it all came out even. I graduated in June instead of January.

HH: Right.

JV: I enjoyed Eastern. It was much, much smaller. Much less sophisticated, but it was still a pretty good school.

HH: Now did your other classmates, the other four, did they attend Eastern also or did they go elsewhere?

JV: Let's see...yes, they all came to Eastern.

HH: Did they all study education?

JV: Let's see..._____. One...of those who graduated, three of the four was in education, one was in engineering. He went on to Oregon State then. He started to Eastern, but most ended up in education. Not probably always by choice, but that time about all you could get a degree in at Eastern was education. So if you went there and got a degree and didn't transfer after a couple years then that was

about all that you could do. So a lot of people ended up in education because it was...the college was here so they went ahead in that field _____. Sort of an interesting side topic, because that was true and because at that time they only graduated elementary teachers at Eastern. If you wanted to be a secondary teacher you had to go to Oregon State or University of Oregon. So there was a really _____ at least much of Eastern, quite a high percentage of men teaching elementary. I wouldn't say it was fifty percent, but it was a substantial number of men who became teachers and principals and so on. And a lot of it was because Eastern, Southern, and Oregon College of Education _____ could only graduate people in elementary. So sort of a poor situation, but it was a good one because it put more men into elementary schools, which I felt was an important thing.

HH: Now what about you? Did you want to do that, or was it...?

JV: Oh, I had bounced around with different career ideas, but, yeah, once I made my mind up I decided _____.

HH: So did you become an elementary school teacher?

JV: That's right.

HH: Where did you teach?

JV: I taught in Milton-Freewater. Was an elementary teacher, a junior high teacher and a vice-principle _____.

HH: And how...how long were you teaching?

JV: Well...

HH: Has it been most of your career?

JV: Most of my career's been education in one form or another, yeah. The last two years I was in Milton-Freewater I was an elementary principal. Then I left there and attended the University of Oregon. Then I... I guess I basically attended University of Oregon during the summers. I was just going to the University of Oregon while I was principal. I'd gotten a Masters at Eastern during my first three or four years when I was teaching. Then from there I went on to the University of Oregon graduate program, graduate courses.

HH: In education?

JV: Mm-hmm. I wound up going to Japan as _____ an international school in Tokyo.

HH: Wow. What year did you do that?

JV: Let's see... I think it was 1960-61 I was there.

HH: How did you stumble upon that opportunity?

JV: It just sort of... I just... I was planning to go back...go to university on the assistanceship, but I happened to hear about the job and the headmaster worked in Portland. So I went down and talked with him _____ very last minute. I got everything together, visa and passport, and got there just about in time...about two days before school started. So it was...[end tape]

10/14/03, T1, S2

HH: ...school in Tokyo.

JV: I had students from thirty-three different countries in the school. That was amazing, the variety of students. Many of them from...students...various people would then _____ from throughout the world.

HH: Children of different ambassadors?

JV: Ambassadors and other...and other staff, yeah, and other members of ___ staffs. And a large number of businesses, American businesses, or businesses that were cooperating or working with Japanese companies had a family who could be students ___. There were quite a few missionary families who had children there. But the embassies really provided the majority of the diversity, you know, because you had kids from many, many embassies, of course, in Tokyo and most of their kids went to this particular school. It was an old, old school.

HH: What grade levels did it teach?

JV: It went... It was kindergarten through high school.

HH: Wow. And how long were you in school there?

JV: One year. I was gonna stay longer, but my father's health...it was suggested that...well, demanded that I come home. And so I come back to Cove to be with him.

HH: Now were you married before this all happened?

JV: No. No. I hadn't met Louise yet. [laugh] So then I took a job at Eastern out in the laboratory school. I taught different...math...methods courses in math and language arts and that sort of stuff in the demonstration school there ____.

HH: How'd you meet Louise?

JV: She actually had been teaching herself in ___ and had come home early because she'd become ill and was working in the education office in the spring. So I couldn't help but notice her. [laugh] Wouldn't think of it ____.

HH: So you had to come home early to meet Louise?

JV: Very opportune, wasn't it?

HH: Yes. Now you're talking about this laboratory school or demonstration school, was that to enhance the program there for educators?

JV: Basically it was for students, for student teaching. It was ___ school, called Ackerman School, and they provided opportunities... If you were in the lab school you taught demonstration classes for classes of students ___ and you had students in the classroom, you actually do student teaching there. Some student teaching was done out in schools in the area, but some was done right there in that laboratory school. So teach demonstration lessons every week with students who were doing their student teaching. A combination of both of those.

HH: Was that opportunity provided when you were going to school there?

JV: Yes. The same thing. In fact, I went back and taught with some of the people who had been my teachers ____.

HH: Wow.

JV: I enjoyed also...did quite a lot of graduate courses at the extension service because ____.

HH: So you met Louise and when did you get married?

JV: When?

HH: Yeah.

JV: [laugh] August 22nd. Of what year, Louise?

LV: 1964.

HH: Did you get married here in Cove?

JV: In La Grande, actually. That's where the service was done. Then we left immediately...almost immediately Eugene for an assistanceship. Louise taught in elementary school there.

HH: What was it... Was there a lot of difference as far as the community was concerned? Going to Eugene and teaching there versus teaching here?

JV: See, I didn't teach in Eugene. I was... I was in the graduate program there, but I had an assistanceship so that meant that I worked for the university actually in a ___ center there with the Center for Advanced High School Administration, which was a federal program there. So Louise taught there in the schools. But for me it wasn't too much difference, really, teaching there than...because I also did some work with student teachers there some...than out in the schools. It wasn't too much different than it would've been here.

HH: What brought you back to Cove?

JV: Back here? Well, this is home. Home for me, it wasn't for Louise. But we decided just to come home ___ my career. We thought of going other places, but we didn't.

HH: You said... You mentioned that this property that you're one right now, was that part of the original farm that you grew up on?

JV: Yes. We bought this when I was about forty years old. Some additional property up on ___ that we had bought not long after this. But I went to University of Oregon and then we moved from there to Lake Oswego and I was...worked...director of professional standards for the Oregon Education Association.

HH: Was this after Eugene?

JV: Yeah.

HH: Moved up to Portland area.

JV: And then after a few years there went back and worked for the National Education Association in Washington, D.C.

HH: Wow. So the east coast.

JV: Yeah. We spent quite a few years on the east coast, actually.

HH: Really? How long were you there?

JV: How long were we there?

LV: Twenty-seven years.

HH: Wow.

JV: Started out working for the NEA and then I went into public school...public schools in a district close to...in Maryland that was contiguous with Washington, close to Washington, and worked there as a principal, and other capacities, primarily principal.

HH: What was that like, the transition? Obviously vastly different than it is here.

JV: Actually, the memories was good. We sort of agreed that we weren't gonna play one against the other, that we weren't gonna say "they don't do things here like they did there" you know, like we used to have. So we stopped comparing 'em and we didn't compare them. There was a lot of value for living back there. It's wonderful, resources, you know, Washington, D. C., marvelous.

HH: The Smithsonian.

JV: Yeah, Smithsonian. Everything that they had. Baltimore, beautiful city. We lived halfway between Baltimore and Washington. It was just a great experience. Quite congested, traffic, lots of people. ____ We enjoyed it.

HH: Did your trip to and work in Tokyo prepare you for more of a condensed city life when you moved to Washington?

JV: I suppose it did. I never thought of that, but it did because of course Tokyo can be very congested, is very congested. It can be almost maddening at rush hour, you know. So in some ways, I suppose...because I liked Tokyo and we liked Washington. We didn't.... We lived outside of Washington, but we still liked the area. So yeah... And I feel as if __ some preparation or readiness or something, whatever. Yeah, but we liked it a lot.

HH: Good. And so you decided to go ahead and head home when you retired?

JV: Yeah. We thought about other places, but... Louise's parents __ you know, that place we have up on __ and they retired...they had retired and so we wanted to be back close to them. So it seemed like a good idea to come back home so we did.

HH: Now when you were away working were you still connected somewhat as far as knowing how the community here was changing?

JV: Oh yes. Yes. Because we'd come back and visit at least once a year and sometimes, well, we usually flew. You know, you weren't as much aware about it, of course, as if you lived here, but I kept pretty close touch, you know. ____ here, you know, and that kind of stuff. So we had a sense of what was going on. Of course with Louise's parents here they kept us posted on everything going on in the community. So it wasn't like we were coming back into something that was...

HH: Different.

JV: ...totally different. We were aware of what it was like. It was good.

HH: How have you seen Cove change since you were a boy?

JV: Quite a lot of ways, really. One of the interesting things I found when I came back...after we came back was that there was still an awful lot of people that I had grown up with here, sort of the old-timers, if you will. But there was a lot of new people in the community who added a new dimension, a freshness. So you had the tradition, but you also had new perspective. It just wasn't someplace time forgot. There was some of that dynamic in the old... I thought that was very good. Not necessarily the old-timers and newcomers always agree, but there was a...and it changed the flavor of the community, a little bit more alive, more of a dynamic community. So it was a good...a good change. We enjoyed coming back. Anyway, it changed __ I think it's growing. There's more people, more houses, through there and more people living here __ people living here now as when was in school. Probably the major change is an awful lot of people who live here now do one of three things, retired and have moved here or retired and stay here, there are people who have jobs here in the schools or farms or whatever, and then you have probably even a larger number who commute to La Grande or to Union or Elgin or someplace for work. So you have three different categories of people, if you will, living here. I remember when I was in high school I can only remember two or three people who worked outside the community. Most people who lived in Cove worked in Cove. They'd have a

little farm or that kind of thing. There was many little farms that people lived on and managed to scrape out a living on. But World War II changed that a lot. A lot of people moved out during World War II to work in shipyards in Portland and all that or for various other kinds of things and then they never came back, you know. So many of the little farms sort of...somebody else bought 'em and houses were torn down and so forth. So there was a whole change and it's sort of something that had started way back when people...before the automobile. At the turn of the century Cove was a very prosperous community and it had just about every business you could think of, jewelry stores, drug stores, doctors, two or three doctors, harness making stores, ___ saloon, meat markets, on and on. Because we were pretty much self-contained. It took a while to get to La Grande. If it was bad weather and because the roads were mud it took...even with a wagon sometimes you couldn't make it in a day. Of course with lighter... So it was necessary to have a lot of the services in the community. Once automobiles came in roads got better, people could go to town once a week, usually on a Saturday, to do their shopping. The need for many of the services were here disappeared and so then the town got less and less services here, depending more and more on _____. So there's been that change and those kind of changes take place rather slowly. I mean, there's that lag. Like I mentioned, when I was in high school very few people would travel outside the community. They could've. There was a paved road to La Grande then. They could go not much slower, forty-four miles an hour instead of fifty-five or sixty, to La Grande, but they just hadn't gotten into seeing that as a possibility for them _____. So eventually they caught up with that and then people began working more out of the community. So the main changes I think are the demographics, the various groups who live here. Also the _____ is so much better maintained, nicer buildings, a lot of nice big homes, large homes. The home that was there...the one they had on that place was I don't know how many bedrooms, a small little one-story house, you know. Beautiful, beautiful yard, but the house was just very small. That was true of many of the houses. The Lance house down below was about half the size it is now. It was still...looked somewhat the same, but it was about half that size. So most people just didn't have the money, the resources, so they lived in small houses. So there's more money in Cove. People didn't realize then, I think, although to some degree they did, the attractiveness of Cove.

HH: Really?

JV: I think they enjoyed it and they didn't see that as a reason to live here.

HH: It's got a beautiful view.

JV: Yeah, a beautiful view. _____ because back when it was first formed it was Forest Cove and eventually, along in the 1860s or somewhere along in there, the post office department wouldn't allow the name because it was too close to Forest Grove. So they had to change the name and rather than have some other name besides Forest they just dropped it to Cove. So people enjoyed living here, but that, you know, wasn't why they came here. Now a lot of people coming through the area looking for a place to live area attracted to Cove because of the mountains and the fact that it's sort of sheltered back away and they like that kind

- of stuff. So it's become a place to live because of the surroundings where before it was a place to live because that's where you could make a living, a job.
- HH: Right, or that's where you grew up.
- JV: Yeah. So anyway, it's changed it that sense. It still has some of the same characteristics as before, but a lot of difference as well.
- HH: Now I've noticed in the time that I've been around here in a Cove that there's a large Mennonite community. Was that true when you were a boy?
- JV: No. The Mennonite community came in while we were gone. I'm not sure how many there's still. But, no, it's a relatively new development. I honestly don't know how many years, but my guess is twenty years probably, more or less. I'm not sure why the Mennonite family...___ family chose to come to Cove. They've sure been a wonderful addition to the community. They're great people. We have dealings with a number of them in town. Just fine, fine people. But I have no idea why. There have been other groups that have sort of...religious groups, over time one or two, that have sort of saw Cove as a place they want to concentrate members of their group. So it's not the first time that you've had a cluster of people, but I don't think as much...not as many as you do have in the Mennonite families. I should ask that question, but I haven't, of some of my Mennonite friends. Just walk me through what was here initially that got it goin'. Because, of course, there's...there are areas throughout Oregon or the Northwest where you do have a concentration of Mennonite families, you know, Amish or whatever. I don't know what...how it got started, but anyway...
- HH: But it wasn't that way when you were a boy.
- JV: No, no. Not at all. Not at all. What else is there that you want...that you would like me to talk about? I've rambled on here or there. [laugh]
- HH: That's good. That's what I wanted you to do. I think...I'm trying to think if there's any other questions. I just wanted to know about your life and your experiences here in the community. And I think we got a pretty handle on 'em and, of course, you were able to provide more history as far as Cove is concerned and it's changes and that's what I was primarily interested in. I don't think there's anything else I can...any other question I can pose. I guess, when you were a boy did you see any influx of, like you mentioned before, you'd seen other religious groups chose to congregate here. When you were a boy did you see that or was it more when you were older?
- JV: There was... When I was growing up one of the religious groups that tended to be attracted to Cove was the Seventh-day Adventists. There was...evidently, Cove for many Seventh-day Adventists members was seen somehow special place. I'm not quite sure whether it had religion connotations or what. But that would be the other religious group. And of course you still have quite a large contingent of people who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist who live in Cove. But that was another concentration of people of one particular religion.
- HH: Was that when you were younger?
- JV: Yes. That was particularly when I was younger, a kid, a young kid. And of course the Episcopal church and the Ascension School. That's attracted a number of people who are Episcopalians. Not only those who come in the summer, but some people who live ___ are...have come to live here because of the church and

the Ascension School. That, I think, for the most part I think people come and then find the church that is there that they want to go to, but some people come because the church is there or the group is better. The sociology of how people go where they go and do what they do is a fascinating thing.

HH: I think I'll ask you again about your childhood. You had different chores when you grew up. Is there any one incident or memory that sticks out in your mind as creating an impression on you as a small boy in learning the ropes of a dairy farm?

JV: I don't know. There's so many. I can think of only one that really, at the moment, but that was when I was about twelve. Of course when we put up hay then it was totally different than now. As I got, you know, as I got older, of course, it was different, but when I was a kid you mowed hay with horses, two horses and pull a mower that had a twelve-foot blade, a sickle in it, you know. It took you ___ to mow a field. But after you mowed it and you let it cure there then you had to go in and rake it with what we called a dump rake, which was go along, gather it up and then you get it with a footpedal, whatever, that lift up these tines and leave a pile of hay. Then you'd go through by hand with a pitchfork and turn that into shocks, the mound, so it would be protected somewhat if there was rain. Then you'd go through with a wagon and horses and a hay wagon and put that hay on by hand. They put into the barn by hand, we didn't have a ___ system ___. But anyway, I was...one time when I was raking hay up the high place ___ ridin' horses back home to the place on ___ and when I got the corner of my road and ___ the bridle broke on one of the horses and they ran away with me. [laugh] By pulling on the one horse who's bridle was still intact it...what happened was that one wheel of the rake ended up in the barrow pit and by the time I got down just about to our driveway the double-tree, which holds it, the rake together, came loose and the horses ran on and skid me down the road for a ways. But the...when Dad came up when he saw the horses to see what had happened to me, why, there I was and the rake wheel, which normally is about four feet high, the one that had been in the ditch was only about two or three inches beatin' it down. [laugh] It was almost humorous, you know. But we found another wheel for the rake and that was it. But, you know, you have those kind of things or your horse bucks you off and that just happens, it's part of it. I thought I was half cowboy when I was growin' up even while I was workin' on the farm ___. ___ had cattle up on the timberlands in the mountains so I fancied myself, cowboy or ___boy. [laughs] In my mind.

HH: Was that... Was that fantasy fed by books that you read as a boy?

JV: Oh yes. Zane Grey and all of that stuff. I had to have my spurs in my saddle and all that, you know. It was just one of the fantasies a child had. It was part fantasy, not all. I used to help my uncle and a fella who worked for him run cattle back on the Minam and that kind of stuff. So I did some of that, but it was more, you know, a childhood...

HH: World.

JV: Yeah. Occasion, if you will. [laugh]

HH: Right. What about... Was there a local rodeo that happened?

JV: There's always the Stock Show in Union which, of course, had the rodeo. I don't know of any in Cove. I don't remember. There were times when Cove used to have a town team in baseball when they'd sometimes bring out horses and people'd get on 'em and ride 'em, you know, sort of a ___ or something, but too much of that. The only organized rodeo really was the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in Union, which, of course, has been going for...oh, I don't know how long, but at least eighty years. It's the longest show of it's kind, I think, but certainly in Eastern Oregon.

HH: Were you able to participate in that, or was it too far?

JV: In the rodeo part, no. Of course we were very active in 4-H and had livestock, dairy cattle and sheep and so on and beef cattle. Very active 4-H clubs in Cove and we all showed over there, showed our stock, that kind of stuff. But as far as rodeo and that kind of stuff, nah, that was another era. Very, very active 4-H. That was the main thing that got me out of Cove was 4-H to go to the livestock exposition in Portland, you go to summer school at Oregon State University for summer school. Many kids, boys particularly, almost all boys...generally it was only boys in the club. It really provided a way to sort of have another view of life because of the many things we did outside the community in Eastern Oregon, but also like going to Portland and going to Corvallis and so forth. So it was a great kind of a living experience. And so many kids from Cove it scared 'em the big crowds here. ___ a nice thing for young people to get involved in.

HH: You said back then it was just boys that could participate?

JV: In livestock clubs, yeah. And not any...I don't think it was by any restriction, it's just that girls didn't get involved, you know. Sort of individual as a boy. And yet when we would go to places like Union County Fair or to the Eastern Oregon Livestock show there were girls showing beef animals and so forth. There in Cove I don't think there was any girls during the time I was in there involved in the livestock activities. I just don't know why, but...

HH: Do you know of any clubs that were geared for girls back then?

JV: Oh yeah. There was a lot of home ec related, cooking, sewing, that whole range. But I think at that time for the most part they were still...pretty much the boys do the outside things and the girls did the homemaking kind of things. It was that sort of small farm, small community, farm community mentality. It wasn't anything else, it wasn't any restrictions, it's just the way people perceived them.

HH: Was it surprising for you boys when you went elsewhere to see girls involved?

JV: I don't think so. No, it wasn't. I never even thought about...I'd not even thought about that really, truthfully. I might say that I knew...thought about the boys, you know, but I never thought about the combination of going to other places and girls being involved and none from Cove. I didn't make that...I was too close to stand back and see that. I don't know why that was.

HH: That's interesting.

JV: Yeah. It's, again, comes back to what we perceive, you know, what the frame of reference in which we live. Sometimes we get captured in that, we don't take that three big steps back and look at the broader picture. We do what we just seem like, rather than thinking about it, there might be another way to do it.

HH: Neat. It's interesting. I think that's about it.

JV: Okay.

HH: If you want to go ahead and see if you can find...[recording stopped]