

Family History

From: GIFFORDSLAWNCARE@webtv.net
[GIFFORDSLAWNCARE@webtv.net]

Sent: Sun 5/1/2005 9:11 AM

To: Family History

Cc:

Subject: Hi There,

Attachments:

What do you charge,for a copy?
And,what about a copy of,the list of
all,these Fred Adams?Cause,I'm not
sure.Which maybe my grandpa's,brother.
It could be ID no.17916.I'm still working.
On that also.Could you get back to me,
on the cost of,an copies?Thank you.

Julie

TETON ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Ricks College
Idaho State Historical Society
History Department, Utah State University

TETON DAM DISASTER

Dawn Weick

Interviewed by

Doris Shirley

June 3, 1977

Project made possible by funds from the

W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Idaho State Legislature through the
Idaho State Historical Society and
National Endowment for the Humanities

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY & RICKS COLLEGE

HISTORY DEPARTMENTS

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH LOCAL HISTORY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWER AGREEMENT

In view of the historical and scholarly value of this information contained in the interview with

Dawn Weirick, I, Doris Shurley
(name, please print) (interviewer, print)

knowingly and voluntarily permit the Milton R. Merrill Library at Utah State University, the David O. McKay Library at Ricks College, and the Idaho State Historical Society at Boise, Idaho, the full rights and use of this information.

Doris Shurley
Interviewer's Signature
June 3, 1977
Date

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY & RICKS COLLEGE

HISTORY DEPARTMENTS

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH LOCAL HISTORY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWEE AGREEMENT

You have been interviewed in connection with a joint oral history program of the History Department, Utah State University, Ricks College, and the Idaho State Historical Society. The purpose of this oral history program is to gather and preserve information for historical and scholarly use.

A tape recording of your interview has been made by the interviewer. A verbatim typescript of the tape will be made and a final typed and edited transcripts, together with the tape will be made and a final will then be filed in the Milton R. Merrill Library Special Collections, David O. McKay Library at Ricks College, and the Idaho State Historical Society in Boise. This material will be made available according to each of the depositories' policies for research be scholars and by others for scholarly purposes. When the final transcript is completed, a personal copy will be sent to you.

* * * * *

In view of the historical and scholarly value of this information, I, Dawn Weick, do hereby assign full
(please print full name)
and all rights of this material to the Merrill Library at Utah State University, to the Library at Ricks College, and to the Idaho State Historical Society at Boise, Idaho, for scholarly purposes according to each of the institutions governing policies.

Dawn Weick
Interviewee's Signature

June 3, 1977
Date

ORAL HISTORY
INTERVIEW RECORD

General Topic of Interview Teton Dam Disaster

Date June 3 Place Reynoldsburg Length _____

Personal Data:

Narrator:

Name Dawn Weick

Address 260 Apache

Birthplace Idaho Falls, Ida

Birthdate May 26 1930

Occupation(s) Housewife

Interviewer:

Name Doris Shulby (Mrs)

Address 315 Harvard
Reynoldsburg, Ida 83440

Note: If narrator is a married woman, include given name, maiden name, and married name.

Relationship of interviewer to narrator

None

Interview Data:

Estimated Time on Tape Subjects covered, in approximate order (please spell out names of persons and places mentioned)

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Special Instructions:

1. Print all entries.
2. Use the back of this sheet if necessary.
3. Turn this sheet in with your tape.

ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Dawn Weick

INTERVIEWER: Doris Shirley

DATE: June 3, 1977

TETON DAM DISASTER

S: Mrs. Weick, would you please spell your name?

W: Dawn Weick.

S: Where were you born?

W: Idaho Falls, Idaho.

S: How long have you lived in Rexburg?

W: About fourteen years.

S: What does your husband do for a living?

W: He's the manager of the Idaho First National Bank branch.

S: Do you own your own home?

W: Yes.

S: Did you support or oppose the construction of the Teton Dam?

W: I thought it was a good idea because all the farms looked flooded every spring.

S: What do you remember about June 5, before the dam broke?

W: It was a beautiful morning. We had gotten some ground out in Hibbard from one of the teachers that was going to be gone all summer. We had planted a garden and were on our way out to water it. We got there and tried to get this fellow to come out of the field to start the water in the ditch. It took quite awhile. He went down to his home to check the headgate and he came back and said, "I don't believe I'll turn the water into the ditch because I think the whole place is going to get watered. It just said over the radio, and my mother told me, that the Teton Dam is breaking." Of course, we said, "You're kidding?" It was so hard to comprehend.

We'd been up to see the dam and my husband had been with the men that work there. He was their banker and we'd been up there many times. It seemed incredible that it could be breaking.

We stood around for a minute until it soaked in. We decided there really wasn't any point in watering the garden and so we got our things and gathered them up and put them in the car. We started back toward town and turned the radio on. The announcements on the radio were that the dam was indeed breaking. I'm not sure whether it had already broken by the time we really listened, or not. As we went toward town, we began to see cars. It was like an ant hill that had been kicked up--because people were beginning to move. They were all heading toward Rexburg hill as fast as they could go. There didn't seem to be any organization or planning. The day was so beautiful and it was hard to be real about it. As a general rule, people weren't even hurrying that fast.

As we entered and got closer to Rexburg, the traffic got much greater. Up on Rexburg hill, it was like the ant hill that had been kicked. There were people and cars. We came up to our home at the top of the hill, there were cars parked everywhere, even on the school yard. Everyone was watching, looking for the flood. At this point we still couldn't see anything at all.

We hurried. We brought our two youngest girls home and left them here and said, "Now you stay here and we'll go down to the bank and do what we can." Our daughter, Paula, was working at Penny's next door. We wanted to collect her and see that she was all right. As we went downtown, it was very different. There were no people as far as shoppers, or the usual traffic that you see. The store owners were scurrying around trying to think what to do. They were checking with each other and wondering what's the next step and what should we do. We all thought, particularly my husband and I, we had been

in a flood down in Idaho Falls when the creeks had overflowed. We thought we really knew about floods. They come up slowly and you can handle them. We thought if we're really careful we can kind of sandbag the bank and maybe a little leakage would come in. We would block the doors and take care of it. Everything would be all right.

We determined that we would stay in the bank. If the water did come in the bank and if it got high enough, we would lift the file cabinets out of the bottom shelves and set them up on top of the desks. That way we could save them. In the meantime, all of the merchants were scurrying around, sandbagging their doors.

We went behind Penny's and over into the Challenge Creamery place and there was a vacant lot with a lot of gravel. Everyone was gathering burlap bags. I can remember Keith Peterson, Ralph Anderson and Darrel Wasden. All of us were shoveling and filling sandbags and putting them up next to the back of the doors. We figured about two feet would do it. We were putting these bags of dirt up there and then we went to the bank. We opened the doors and forced some rags in. We forced the rags in with knives. We locked it so there were rags down between the cracks of the steel doors and the glass doors. We put some rags at the bottom. I don't believe we sandbagged ours because the doors were steel and they looked like they would be sturdy. We eventually went around to the front of the bank and locked ourselves in the bank.

My husband realized that he'd forgotten the camera so he ran back up the hill and took our daughter from Pennys. She had spent her time over at Pennys lifting all of the clothes up--the bottom of dresses up to the top of the racks so that the bottoms of the dresses wouldn't get dirty. They

kept saying, "You know, you're doing this for nothing. We'll come back and there won't be any water in the place and we'll have to put all this stuff back. We've caused ourselves hours of work." Yet, we didn't really know what to do. We did all these little things. My husband took our daughter home and brought our camera so that we could take some pictures. We locked ourselves in.

We had parked the jeep in the parking lot by the drive-in teller window. We got John Johnson's ladder and put it up to the top of the drive-in teller window. We climbed up there and put the ladder on there. We put it up to the roof and climbed in the skylight so that we could go down into the furnace room and the mezzanine--that's the lunch room upstairs. While we were there I made a call to my mother and said, "The dam has broken, but don't worry. I'm in the bank and we're going to stay here and keep the water out. The children are all home and they're safe and don't worry about it. Maybe I won't be able to call you again for awhile; just be calm." Then we went down and we saw that things were all right. I left my cameras on top of the teller cages, which is where they stayed the whole entire flood, because we never could get to them again.

Everything seemed in readiness and we went up to the top of the roof and watched; the police started coming and they said, "Everybody clear the streets. There's a six foot wall of water coming." Before we saw the policeman I can remember the garbage truck going down the alley. The garbage fellows were having a good time. We thought, "How silly they are." They had their horn on and didn't let it up and were tearing all over town. "There's a flood, there's a flood!" The fire alarm was sounding down at the fire station, the whistle going on and on. It was sort of exciting. Your adrenalin was going. We thought, "It's coming but we don't need to worry."

We went up to the top of the bank and the police were going down the street saying, "Clear the streets, everybody leave. There's a six foot wall of water coming." As we looked across the street, John Bowen came. His building has a little entryway that forms a U-shape from the sidewalk. He and this fellow that worked for him taped plastic across the front of their doorway. They put tape all along the sidewalk so that the water wouldn't go in on their carpet. We all were preparing.

I can remember Darrel Wasden saying, "All right, we've done everything we can do. Let's go home now and wait and come back when it's over." I remember explaining to him, "I always stay with my husband, Henry. I never leave him. I always stay with him when we're doing things like this." We waited and waited and waited on the top of the bank. I remember my husband saying, "We're probably not going to have a flood at all. It's probably just there to the north and gone along the channel. We probably have done all of this for nothing."

There was an excitement you could feel. We looked to the corner north of the bank and we could see the water coming. At first, it followed the gutter and you could see it like a rain or someone was watering. The water that came down the gutter was very muddy. Soon the street was full of water. We saw sheds float by and beds and mattresses. My husband said, "Its here, let's run!" We hurried down the ladder into the furnace room, down the stairway and into the main part of the bank. He said, "There's going to be quite a bit of water--we'd better lift the things up on the desks."

We were hurrying and we lifted all the bottom drawers out and put them up on the desks. We were struggling with the heavy file cabinets. Suddenly, I said, "Oh, honey, look!" Out our bank window there was four feet of water. It was beginning to spurt through the sides of the windows. They're

sealed in windows. It was coming through with such force that it was like it was in a novel. A large trailer house floated by the bank window, about four feet high. Henry said, "Let's get out of here! It's late!" I said, "Honey, I'm not through." He was at the back door when I called him. I said, "Look at the trailer house." He started running. He said, "Let's get out of here." I said, "I'm not through. I don't have all the drawers lifted up." He said, "You're through! Come on."

I grabbed the keys off of his desk to the bank. I ran past the tellers cages and past our cameras, forgetting them totally. I remember the windows broke as I got to the end of the tellers cages. It sounded like a rifle report. I never got wet, but I could feel the water behind me. I don't know whether it was a force of air or what.

The bank shuddered. When the bank windows broke the bank was shaking. I ran up the stairway. As I ran, I dropped a set of keys. I said, "I've dropped my keys." My husband, who was looking back and was at the first landing, which was about five and a half feet tall, said, "Honey, you're through, come on." I went running up the stairs. As I looked down, the water was there just below my feet. We ran up into the mezzanine where the kitchen is.

I was terrified. I said one of the most fervent prayers I've ever said in my life. I knelt down at the couch. I thought perhaps I had made the last terrible mistake of my life. I prayed that my children would be all right, and that Paula, who was twenty-two, would be able to take care of them. I prayed that if it was possible to please spare my life because I was sure the bank was going to collapse. I sat there for a few minutes and then we went to the roof.

I can remember crying and crying. I probably was so terrified. I stood on the roof and as we looked around, we soon realized the bank would probably stand because its a brick building. It was made quite sturdily and didn't have any basement structure so it seemed quite sound. Gradually, my terror began to subside and I began to comprehend, a little bit, of what was happening around me. It was interesting as each one of the windows broke along Main Street. It was like it had been in our bank. There was this great pressure and it sounded like a rifle. They would break and things would begin to float out of the windows.

I remember looking and there was a cow struggling along and it was nearly gone. I said, "Oh, Honey, go get it and save it." He said, "Honey, I can't swim in that sort of thing. I'm worth more than a cow." Of course, he was, but my mind wasn't thinking. Another cow went by and he said, "Honey, let's go to the other side. I said, "What more animals? Let's not look." I looked down the street, what I thought was a body, floated out of the Classic Shoppe and it was on its stomach. As it turned over the arm went into the air. I shouted, "Oh, Honey, there's a body." He says that he can remember thinking, "Oh, please don't let it be a body. I know she'll make me go get it and I'll drown." It was a manikin as it turned over. It was one of their models floating out the window.

We stood on that roof and watched the stores empty. A grand piano and an organ floated out across the street. I thought, "Oh, no." I wanted one so badly and now it's just wasted. There was a little banjo or ukelele that turned around and around in the doorway in a little whirlpool. Things kept going past and across the street. The force of the water seemed to come around the corner of the bank and veer off and go across the street and hit

the Village Shop, Shoe Haus and Johnson's. I don't see how anything was left because there were cars, trucks, trailer houses, poles and buildings, and even the dugout from the park. All of these things floated by and this went on hour after hour.

We went down and decided we had to get our cameras. The water was going through. The window had broken under the stairs and the water was going through with such a force it was like a very strong river. There was never a time where we dared wade out into it and get our cameras. Eventually, the water was deep enough and had soaked enough that we knew the cameras were no longer any good. It was no use anyway. We left them there.

My husband watched his desk float out the window below him. We watched Main Street being destroyed. There were people on the rooftops here and there. There began a series of explosions. I suppose they were the petroleum places, and great pillars of smoke arose. We sat there and wondered what had happened. It went on and on for hours.

I remember, toward the end of the flood, people began to try and come down and see what was going on. There were several boats. There was a motor boat and the motor cut out and they dashed into the buildings across the street. They managed to hold on for awhile and then start their motor and get out. A canoe, across the street, hit a light pole, and bent in half. The fellows clung to the pole. As we found out later, the boy had a broken leg and he clung there for about an hour before someone could come and save him. We saw ledgers and people's collections of everything go down Main Street. It seemed like such a very long time that we were up there. Gradually, the water began to settle and go down. As we watched, it seemed that the stores were empty. We found out later they had simply collapsed and everything had fallen into the basement rather than being emptied.

As the things got lower, it was funny. A terrarium, a very large one with its little figurines and its plants totally intact, was bobbing down the middle of Main Street, completely unbroken. A shelf from Johnson's Drug came out and it had a lot of whatnots and the two shelves on top were still full. It floated down. Things like rototillers were out of the building. The trees were ruined and there were cars everywhere. Our jeep started to float and had crossed the planter in the middle of the parking lot and had stayed there. As it filled with mud and water, it settled down and stayed there.

As the water settled, the National Guard came in and these men waded with their guns ready in water up to their chests. I was so impressed, because just as soon as the water was down, people were downtown going through the buildings, seeing what they could find. I was so shocked, because this happens in other places, not Rexburg. They were going through and picking up things here and there. The National Guardsmen had their guns out and they got their big amphibious trucks and went up and down.

Soon the water was about to a three foot level. Henry decided to wade out. He said, "Honey, I've got to let them know somehow what's happened in Boise." The phones were all gone and the sewers were gone. I said, "All right, I'll stay here at the bank. You go and I'll wait here. I won't let anybody get in the bank." He waded out and went to Ririe and called the people from Boise. He then came back.

In the meantime, he'd brought our daughter, Paula, back so I wouldn't be in the bank alone. Everybody asked if I couldn't get out or if I wanted to get out. I said, "Yes, I'm all right." There was pop and crackers in the kitchen and I was fine that way. We even had a bathroom that I could flush. I was fine.

My daughter came and we sat on the roof. People began to ask questions and to visit around town. I guess they hadn't yet comprehended what had happened. There was a tone of excitement as people looked at it. They were looking around town and it was so big. I think we couldn't really understand. As it began to get dark, my daughter looked at the town and the water was still, maybe three feet deep, going down. It was still running like a river. She looked at the town and said, "Mama, did Rexburg die today?" I didn't know the answer. I guess I thought it was entirely possible as I looked from the roof of the bank.

At ten o'clock, my husband was still gone, trying to get things back together and contact people so they would know what was going on. He was a bishop and was trying to find out what his ward members needed. At ten o'clock, the National Guard said, "We're roping off the town. No one can come in or out. Come down and let us take you out. We'll guard it overnight and we won't let anyone in to see it."

I went home to my children and to a hill full of people that had no place to stay. We began to take care of the aftermath of the flood. My girls had done a good job. They'd made a big bunch of stew and filled everything we had with water so we would have fresh water. We had our own bed and we were fortunate. We had people in our home and we were grateful to be able to take care of them. I suppose it still was too early to understand what had happened.

I remember we listened to the radio and watched television as the world was trying to tell what had happened. They said that the water had gone over the town and it was equivalent to the Columbia River. That was their first guess. It was sort of exciting to be on world news and to have been there. Yet, there was this overwhelming feeling, that we had lost everything. Perhaps the town had in fact died. Maybe there would never be a Rexburg again.

The next day we got up early without much sleep. I baked some bread and put a roast in the oven because I was fortunate. I had my home and my oven and tried to make sure that everyone was okay and that there were things here for them. I went down to the bank and as we rode around town in the jeeps and the motorcycles we saw that it was terrible. Many houses had been totally taken away and the bank had five feet of water in it, four foot eleven inches to be exact. Nearly everything was gone and there were mountains of mud. Everything that we had taken out had been lost and ruined. I guess it was exciting, yet, as we look back at it, it was probably the dumbest thing we've ever done, to stay in the bank. I suppose that if my husband ever decides to do something like that again, I'll go home and take care of my children. I think I learned a good lesson there.

Boyd K. Packer spoke and said, "The reason why so many people weren't killed is because they obeyed." I felt quite foolish, because I stayed. I thought I understood a flood. We'd been in a flood before and I thought it would rise slowly. I didn't understand a tidal wave. In retrospect, I feel like we did everything wrong. It was something we couldn't comprehend. Hind-sight is wonderful. We should have opened the doors of the bank and let it run through. We should have left the files locked in. If we'd have left the drawers in the desk, when the desk was found, the drawers would have been locked in. We wouldn't have lost all the files.

When we went down, I took a scrub bucket and I was going to go down and begin to mop up. I'd forgotten about the mud. I did take some putty knives. I knew they would be necessary to get the mud off the shelves. I took a few things. When we got down there, we saw that the mud was two and a half feet deep in almost all the bank. It was very slick and there was still a fish flopping around in the lobby of the bank. It was up past our knees in many

places. We sunk into the floor, the mud was so deep. We got some of our shovels.

The bank president came from Boise. He was flown in with several other people. We ran over to the Co-op and got some shovels and some wheelbarrows and began sorting through the papers and saving everything we could. The men took the shovels and the wheelbarrows and began to shovel the mud out into a pile in the driveway. Paula and I were down there and we began to pick up the files and the papers that were around the bank. We tried to save them. We would spread them out. They cleared the sidewalk off and scooped the mud off of it and made a little place in between a couple of cars and some posts that were there by the advertisement sign. The things we found in the bank, we spread them out and thought maybe we could at least read what was in them. All of our personal papers, everything we had were in my husband's desk, and they were all gone. We have never found them.

We began systematically piling up all of these files as the men shoveled. Fortunately, we began right away, because as the mud dried, it became hard and heavy and it was very difficult to get it off. Fortunately, for us, we had a great deal of outside help. Our bank president called a construction company and sent some people out. He stayed with us all day and shoveled. In fact, I hear he's the fourth highest paid man in Idaho. He was in my house eating bread and roast that Sunday afternoon and very gracious about it.

We had most of the mud out by Sunday night, at least the major part so that you could walk through. By the end of Monday most of the heavy mud was gone. It was still in the cabinets, but they had a construction company come and with a lot of their help they helped us and we got it out. Eventually, the water was restored to downtown and we were able to wash things down. We tried to take good care of these files.

One of the major problems was we couldn't get the vault open. There's a policy that no one person in the bank can open the big vault. There are two sets to the combination and they don't usually even learn them. They're in their desk, or some place like that, with half of the combination. Someone else has half of the combinations. One of the employees, from the bank, lives across the river and the Sage Junction Bridge was out. She lives in Plano and she couldn't come in. One of the employees was in California on vacation and one was in Blackfoot. There we were, unable to get into the vault. A trip had to be made to Ririe again to use the phone and they had to do some scrounging around in the bank, where they kept a master copy of the combinations. It was late Monday before we managed to get the vault open. We didn't have any idea what to expect. As we got in there, there was virtually no mud, because the vault was so tight. Perhaps only two or three inches of water. There really wasn't a lot of damage in there and the safe men were called because this is fine steel. They were called and they rubbed it down with oil and everything to keep it from rusting. They did this with all of the banks. Idaho Bank and Trust had been totally destroyed. The manager had moved here the day before the flood. They were having their banking, they're our neighbors, in their living room. We kept their money and helped them with theirs. We had the food stamps for the community in our bank until they could get Safeway's straightened out to be able to give people food. This vault was quite critical. It was interesting.

People were in there frantically, while we were there. "What's happened to our things?" Many people didn't understand the problem of banking, and they thought because it had washed away they had lost all of their money. In fact, very little change is kept in the bank. It's kept in the Federal Reserve

instead. People wanted to be reassured that they hadn't lost their savings accounts, their checking accounts, and documents. As soon as the vault was open, it got very busy in banking. We had a trailer house brought in sometime before noon on Monday and it was put into the parking lot. They set up the bank and were able to reassure people that everything was okay. They reassured that even if the papers that had their mortgages and all of these deeds and vital things were ruined, there was a copy of them on microfilm. For the first few days, banking was carried on. People had to be reassured that they were all right.

Eventually, we were able to get into the coin vaults underneath the tellers cages. It was fun. Henry said, "Get the auditors here. I need their help." Of course, auditors are dreaded like the plague in a bank. You don't ask, you say please send the auditors. We didn't know what else to do with papers all over the sidewalk. These auditors came and took all of our papers to Idaho Falls. They rented the old Blocks building. They took all of our papers, dried them, brushed them off and managed to save a great many. We found out that the file cabinets that had floated away were all of the closed loans. There wasn't anything vital there. We felt we'd gotten even with the auditors for anything they could do for the rest of their lives to us.

We opened the money counters underneath the tellers cages and scooped the money into a wheelbarrow. We wheeled it out into the driveway and turned the hose on it and washed wheelbarrows full of money. We kept the money during the day in the oven of the trailer house. You had to have jokes or you'd cry. The joke was, "It was laundered money and then it became hot money as we put in in the trailer house oven." We counted and cleaned it up.

Little by little the bank did get straightened out because there was no basement and it cleaned up rather nicely. The windows had to have boards

put over them. We were going to do a carpentry project, and we had a bunch of four by eight boards in our garage. We were able to put them over the windows and the doors and keep the bank safe and locked up. It worked out quite well at the bank. The auditors took care of it. It was a funny thing. They decided that because we had so much outside help that it wasn't quite fair. Besides we didn't really want to have things nice when everything was so awful outside. It would ruin it all. They were ready to put the carpets in quite soon, even when the bank still felt quite damp. We decided, absolutely not. The bank was not going to be better than every other place in town. The irony of it was that all of the contractors got busy and the bank was one of the last places to be fixed up. They gathered up furniture from all over the system and brought it into the bank. It looked like early antique or early borrowed. It was a funny looking bank.

After I got the bank pretty well in order I left Paula there to help her dad because there was nothing she could do at Pennys. Their store had been totally destroyed and the Penny's company had decided to not do a thing about it but gather it up and haul it off in trucks. She stayed at the bank and helped him. I went around and looked at who needed help. I helped for a little while down at the Golden Living Center. I got a call to go up to the college and help with the nursery. The people from the Family Living Department at the college had been handling the nursery. It would get your attention, because there was an average of ninety to a hundred children there every day between the ages of six months and ten years old to keep track of. These people had many classes to prepare and besides they were exhausted from the initial week immediately after the flood. We began to be called in along with the volunteer help that came from the many communities. We kept this center

open for the children until it was not needed. It was open for five or six weeks. All the calendars were destroyed and we lost track of time. We didn't know what we were doing.

I remember little children would come up and they'd hold your hand. They felt so insecure because they were living in dorms. Their homes were gone, their parents were upset, trying to find a home, waiting for trailers, standing in lines hours after hours with the government people, and trying to put some semblance of order into this. It seems the little children took kind of the bunt of it, even if they had a place to be taken care of. I remember a little boy came up and took my hand and said, "Do you know, I don't have any toys. All of my toys are gone." I guess that seems like a little thing, but to him it was his life.

The volunteer help came in--I remember we were so tired. For awhile you could really work. I guess the excitement, the pitch of everything, you were able to cope with it, but it was so good to have the volunteer help.

One of the jokes that we had as, "If you want to go to the lavatory on Main Street or on the sidewalks you have to go to Paris, because I understand that's the way they do it there. We just have to go to Rexburg because we have latrines on our Main Street too." We felt very continental about that.

Downtown we were fed in a Red Cross line. A banker's wife was fed by a Mexican boy. We were very grateful for all of this help and the good things that we had. Afterwards, after they phased out the nursery school, I was called over to the Bishop's Storehouse where I spent the rest of the summer until it too was phased out and taken to Ucon.

One of the things that fascinated me there was someone that would come in and they would say, "You're so lucky. The people we feel sorry for are the old people. They've lost everything, they don't have anything. They

were ready to retire, they were settling into their life and now at their old age, they're all unsettled." "Yes," we would agree. "It was the old people who had it the hardest." Right away, someone old would come in and they would say, "You're so lucky. We have everything so nice. The ones we feel sorry for are the young mothers with the babies. How can they take care of babies."

I remember one little girl came in, very pregnant. All she had to wear that was maternity was the pair of pants and the smock she had worn to the top of the hill that day. We found some pants that would almost do. I had some little front panels for maternity clothes that would do. They had been brought up by the manager of Pennys garage and he let me have a couple. I took them home that night and put a couple of panels in. I took them to her the next day so she'd have something to wear. We put her in a too large couple of blouses so that she could be in her smock.

It was kind of exciting to see what you could do to make do. To see how people could cope, how people could carry on and how they could go on. They were so tired they could hardly pick their feet up and yet they went on. They encouraged each other and lifted each other up.

My husband was a bishop and a week after the flood they decided the bank was in fair shape and that everyone should go home and have a rest. At last the bishop could go home and spend a whole day with his flock. He had been given the assignment of helping unload, along with the Sixth Ward, all of the trucks that came in night after night, and day after day, full of things from the church welfare. Big sacks of sugar. Often, in the night, we would get a call. "Bishop, a truck has come in." The phones were out so we would both put on our clothes and go around the ward knocking

on doors at two o'clock in the morning. "We need you to come help unload a truck." They would unload for a couple of hours and go home and get what rest they could.

This particular Saturday, our assignment was to assemble seven hundred and fifty wheelbarrows. With the optimism people have, we thought we'll get that done. I remember Henry was really upset. I guess it was because he's a farmer and he knew what it took to put things together. They went around the ward three times that day, trying to find people to come help. We were up at the college in a parking lot by one of the buildings where they were unloading and loading the supplies. Here was this mountain of boxes of wheelbarrows. It took an hour to put the first two together. There were two sets of instructions and everyone was following the one that was in the box which was the wrong one. It was the one between the handles that we were supposed to use. The parking lot was full of wheelbarrows and women, children and a few men. We had all of our tools up there and they got rather scattered. We haven't seen many of them since. We began to put those wheelbarrows away. What had been a hot, hot week had turned into an ice cold day with wind and rain and we stood up there and put those together the best we could. Little children were putting as much as they could and we were tightening them up.

I remember Jay Risenmay was up there and Janet got some sand in her eyes under her contacts. Jay took her home to get some wetting solution and get them straightened out. While Jay was gone, two psychiatrists came wanting him. He was going to get some lunch for us while he was gone. I said, "I'm not sure where he is, but he'll be back soon. I would suggest that you wait here for him." They decided they would. Not knowing that

they were psychiatrists, I said, "While you're standing put a couple of wheelbarrows together." I guess when you're tired, you have all kinds of courage. I went around the ward looking for some more help. When I got back Paula said, "Nom, do you know what you did? They were doctors and you told them to put the wheelbarrows together." My husband's motto in life is, "Don't use force, get a bigger hammer." You know how he put the wheelbarrows together. The psychiatrists put it together like a psychiatry test. They had it all laid out and the plans all laid out and had figured it out and never used a bit of force. They had beautiful technique. She said it was fun to watch. As I look back at that day, we only got about two-thirds of the wheelbarrows done. We were so tired we could hardly endure. It was Dante, who led the world to believe that hell was fire. Maybe it was really a flood and seven hundred and fifty unassembled wheelbarrows.

I remember as I went around that day, I talked to Venise Leishman. All of her children's homes, five of them, had been destroyed. Their businesses had been destroyed. She was telling me about it. I said, "Venise, I've got to hurry." She started to cry and said, "Dawn, I'm so tired, I can't go another step. Can't we even, after this hideous mess, have time to just talk." That was the way it seemed that particular Saturday.

After that Saturday all of the volunteer help began to come in great big busloads. I've thought about it and I'm not sure that if I had heard that somewhere down in Utah, California or wherever else the Church was, that there had been a terrible flood, it would have occurred to me to get on a bus at four o'clock in the morning and travel such a long distance, shovel and work as hard as I could all day and then go home that night. I'm not sure even if the idea would have occurred to me if I would have done it. I promise you now I will.

I learned a great deal from the flood. I guess all education is expensive. This was very expensive. I don't suppose we'll ever know how much it cost in human effort and dollars, yet, it was a good and lasting experience. It brought out the best in people and sometimes the worst in people. I don't think there were any heroes, just bigger and better heroes. I think that time in Rexburg from now on will be counted before the flood or after the flood. I suppose all of our lives will be measured by what happened in the flood, what we lost in the flood, and what we no longer have because of the flood. Perhaps also, because of the flood, we learned to love each other and take care of each other. I can handle a lot now and I'm grateful.

S: Did you suffer any forms of vandalism or other lawlessness?

W: Yes, many of the things around the bank that weren't locked in were taken. Equipment that was left out at night, things like that. We didn't lose anything up here on the hill. I don't think anything was touched at all. Just downtown. Perhaps the children, if they saw it laying in a pile and they thought it was garbage. Perhaps someone thought we were discarding it. Perhaps it wasn't vandalism at all. Maybe someone thought, "Don't throw that away, I can use it."

S: Without divulging any names, do you know of anyone who filled fraudulent flood claims?

W: No.

S: Do you feel that the flood was a divine punishment, a natural disaster, or a man-made disaster?

W: I think it was a man-made. I don't think we can blame God for everything.

S: Do you feel the dam should be rebuilt?

W: Perhaps. The flooding is still there. A great many people have bought a great deal of equipment and things with the hopes that the dam would be

there. I don't know how they stand financially at this point, but I think there should be a great deal of thought and study before it's thought of again.

S: Do you think it should be rebuilt in the same place?

W: Apparently not, from what the geologists say. We'd better look for something a little bit more solid to built it on.

S: Thank you very much, Mrs. Weick.