GILBERT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW OF

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Edited by Pat Castaneda

Interview by Carol Shepherd
June 9, 1992

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Gilbert Oral History

Interview with Mae Fuller
June 9,1992
Interviewer: Carol Shepherd
Location: 765 E. Baseline Road
Gilbert, AZ

Mae Fuller is the daughter of Arthur Franklin Haymore

Interviewer: Let's go over your family history. I understand that your father's father came here. Can you tell me at about what time did they come here?

Mae Fuller: My grandfather was born in Payson, Utah, and then they went to Mexico.

Interviewer: His name was what?

Mae Fuller: His name was Arthur Samuel Haymore.

Interviewer: What took them to Mexico?

Mae Fuller: Well, I am not real sure what took them there, but his father and his brothers-- he had several brothers. They went to Mexico and they bought a big ranch down there and they raised cattle. It was very lush, beautiful land and they had a big cattle ranch, and they lived in the Mormon colonies down in Mexico and had several sons. And they wanted to work in Mexico because it was a fairly unexplored part of the country at that time. They were down in Oaxaca. My father was born in Oaxaca, and my grandfather and several of his brothers went to Mexico, and he said that they had grass clear up to the cows' bellies. It was a very nice place to live.

Interviewer: Who was his wife?

Mae Fuller: His wife was Abby Jane Scott. They were married quite young. They had a very happy marriage. I should probably tell you now that they had fifteen children, but part of them were born after they came back out of Mexico.
I don't know just how to start, but anyway my grandfather moved back up here and my Uncle Albert, my father and my grandfather went into the dairy business together and had a dairy up in Prescott. We lived down here for a while. We raised hay and we kept the dry cattle down here, and after they calved and were ready to produce milk they took them to Prescott. They had a dairy business up there. Now my Uncle

Albert owned the property out here which is now Freestone Park. This is my grandfather's home place, and my father owned the property, this eighty acres right across the street which is all industrial now.

One thing interesting, I thought, was that they had a chance to buy this forty acres over here across Horne, west of Horne, north of Baseline. Horne wasn't open at that time. It was cattle pasture for my father. He had cattle on the eighty acres, but they didn't want that land because it was too wet. You dug a post hole, it would fill up with water, and it had an artisian well over there. Now that's very unusual to have water that good.

Then my Uncle Albert moved to Prescott and we moved back down here. There was a house on the property that my grandfather lived in. An old house that had a big screened porch on the front and what they called the west porch on the west side of the house. The front porch was the bedroom for the daughters and the west porch was the bedroom for the boys. They had a big silo, not a pit, but one made out of lumber that was quite tall, and they filled that with silage and fed the cows.

Interviewer: For those who don't understand silage would you explain?

Mae Fuller: Yes. Silage is feed made out of chopped corn. In fact my husband was in the silage business. And that's exactly what it is. You grow corn or hay or oats or whatever, and then chop it, make a tossed salad for the cows, and then they put it in the silage pit. Some dug big deep holes in the ground, and others built tall silos. In that day and age it was the thing to have the big tall ones which they blew the silage up into, and it would settle down and the kids got in and tromped it. And then it went through a period where it got "insiled," you know, if they would understand that. But anyway, it kind of cured (fermented) and made really good feed for the cattle.

Interviewer: About the artisian well. Wasn't the water any good?

Mae Fuller: Oh, yes it was good. It was kind of like a spring and it just flowed out of there like I said. You couldn't dig a post hole without it getting full of water, and that wasn't too good to try to raise hay on because it was just too wet. We certainly don't have that problem now, but we had a house across the road. Well, we lived on this side of the street (south) first and then they split up

the dairy. My Uncle Albert came back out, we got this eighty acres here, and my grandfather lived here. We did own a place which they called the East Ranch, which was out on what is now Greenfield Road, this side of the canal, the second canal out there, and all that across the canal was desert. My father said that's how they made their living when they were first newly married, was by shooting the cottontails, cottontail rabbits, and eating those. Times were hard then, but he enjoyed doing that anyway.

Interviewer: That was the first place he and his wife had?

Mae Fuller: Yes.

Interviewer: About when did they move to this place?

Mae Fuller: Well, we moved to Prescott. I went to school in first grade in Gilbert, then we went to Prescott and I went to school second, third and fourth grade up there. Then we moved back down here and lived on this property.

Interviewer: You were born here?

Mae Fuller: Yes.

Interviewer: You said your mother came here to have you, so she was living out on the Greenfield Ranch?

Mae Fuller: Yes. We called that the East Ranch. It was on what is called Greenfield Road now. Getting a little ahead of myself. We lived on a place over here that was owned by the Peck Sisters, which was on Guadalupe...the corner of Guadalupe and Cooper Road. But that wasn't the name of them then. But it was called the Peck Ranch. It was owned by the three Peck sisters who lived in Phoenix. They would come out and watch what you were doing with their property. Probably about forty acres over there at that time. I remember it had a big barn and an old house and everything.

When they (the Peck sisters) wanted fences built, they would come out and count the number of posts that would be in the fence, and they would multiply that by four because they would put four wires on it, and they would see how many staples they would need to build that fence. They were very thrifty, and my father learned a lot of things from the Peck sisters. They were single ladies.

Interviewer: Do you remember the name of their father?

Mae Fuller: No, I don't remember that.

Interviewer: Do you remember the name of the roads at that time?

Mae Fuller: Well, they are Guadalupe and Cooper now, but I don't know what they were called then. You know where the railroad track goes across the road down here on Guadalupe and Cooper? Well our place was just a little west of there.

Interviewer: What brought your father and family back from Mexico. Back to Arizona.

Mae Fuller: Pancho Villa was on the rampage and my grandfather was on a mission for the LDS church down in Mexico City at the time, and my father and the brothers moved here. Helped Grandma. Grandma had the Scott brothers, who were very helpful and helped support her. They came out and into Douglas. Well, I think they went into Texas and then into Douglas. They settled there for awhile, and then Grandfather came home and they moved on up to Palmorine and then into Gilbert. My grandfather got here about 1918.

Interviewer: That property in Mexico, was that just lost?

Mae Fuller: Yes. You couldn't own property after you left. They all felt bad about that, but there was nothing they could do about it. My grandfather knew Pancho Villa personally, and he had killed other people. My grandfather was lined up to be shot at one time, but he wasn't shot. It was quite important that they get out of there. My grandmother tells of living down there, and she sold biscuits to the Mexican soldiers. And when she canned fruit...they had nice big orchards down there, and she would can fruit in five gallon honey cans and then bury it out in the chicken pens so that the soldiers couldn't see it. You know the chickens would walk over it and they couldn't see it was there. She put it in the honey cans and soldered the lids on. That's the way they managed to live through that. I wished I knew more to tell you about their life in Mexico, because it was really quite interesting.

Interviewer: Let's come back to your life here. When your family came back you were in school in Gilbert?

Mae Fuller: Yes. My grandfather had a dairy here and they produced milk. And there was no refrigeration but they had

big ten gallon milk cans and they had a metal thing that would go down into the cans and they would put the lid on. There was ice in the metal things that went down into the cans, and they would take it out to the train depot in Gilbert and send it up to the mines. Globe, Miami...and that was how they sold their milk here.

Interviewer: What about chickens and other types of livestock?

Mae Fuller: We had pigs, chickens, horses. My husband lived in town, and he said they couldn't afford a horse, so they had bicycles and rode bicycles. I couldn't afford a bicycle because we had horses. We had all kinds of animals.
In this ditch out here, (pointing to the east) was a sand ditch full of sand and it was so fun to play in, and there were big cottonwood trees on both sides of the ditch which made it a really nice shady place to play.

Interviewer: Did you have near neighbors?

Mae Fuller: Our closest neighbors at that time were the Coopers on Cooper corner. You've probably heard of Jim Cooper. Well it was his parents who lived on that corner who were my grandparent's neighbors. The Cooleys lived down here (gestures to the west). Marvin Cooley lives there now. Freeman Cooley, his father, owned a place just east of there now. He had a lovely big home later. He didn't at first. At first it was kind of an older house, and when he passed away they tore the house down and divided that into commercial lots down there. But it was a bigger farm. It was ninety acres, and then he owned the property over here on Cooper Road.

Interviwer: This farm was what? Eighty acres?

Mae Fuller: No. Forty acres. And that's what my grandfather sold us. But my father owned eighty acres across the street. Of course, there was no freeway, and Horne wasn't open and was fenced off, and there were trees chopped off and fallen across the road. It was a good place to picnic. My father often pastured the cattle over there on the road while he irrigated. We had hives of bees. We had horses, cows, pigs, chickens. Everything it takes to be a farmer.

Interviewer: Did you sell eggs in town?

Mae Fuller: Not usually. We had the eggs for our own use, but we did have a separator to separate the cream from the skim milk, and we made butter. We had two or three different kinds of churns, and my mother had a big wooden butter bowl, and we made butter and sold it to Basha's. There was one Basha's store, and it was in Mesa on the north side of the street. Penney's was across the street to the south. Anyway we sold butter for twenty cents a pound. We had a mold and we had the papers and everything we would put it in.

Interviwer: In the summer how did you transport that without it melting?

Mae Fuller: We would put ice around it and take it to town.

Interviewer: Where did you get your ice?

Mae Fuller: We had an ice man. Now, we didn't have refrigerators when I was young. Out on this front screened porch we had an ice box, they called it, and the ice man would bring the ice and put it in the top of the refrigerator, and then it would keep it cold. And it had a pan down underneath to catch the water as the ice melted. He probably came every other day.

Interviewer: What about canning?

Mae Fuller: We did a lot of canning. We canned our fruit. I don't remember canning too many vegetables. Every year we canned. We had an orchard down on this side of the ditch.

Interviewer: What kind of fruit did you have?

Mae Fuller: We had peaches, apricots, plums, figs. Just about every kind there was. We had pomegranates, oranges. Everything good to eat, we grew it.

Interviewer: When you canned, what method did you use?

Mae Fuller: We used open kettle usually. You cut the fruit up, added sugar, put it in a kettle and cooked it, and then put it in the fruit jars. My mother later had a pressure cooker, and we canned things that had to be pressured like meat and fish. My dad liked to go fishing into Mexico, and we canned fish. We canned chicken and all those types of things with the pressure cooker.

Interviewer: Then you canned just about everything you raised?

Mae Fuller: That's right.

Interfiewer: What kinds of crops did you grow? Those just for the cattle feed, or did you grow for sale?

Mae Fuller: We didn't usually sell the feed. We usually baled the hay. In the summer we had a truck and a semi and a trailer, and we went out across the desert and through Wickenburg, up Yarnell Hill. Black Canyon road wasn't even there then. But to go up Yarnell Hill, that was quite a trip. You could get out and walk as fast as the truck could go up that hill. It was a big load.

I remember being on the truck one time when we went up there. We were going with my Uncle Albert and he had a flat tire, and he had to leave the trailer. It was between Wickenburg and Congress Junction, which is where you went up Yarnell Hill. He left the trailer there while he went back to Wickenburg to get something to fix the tire with on the trailer, and my cousin and I were left on the trailer. They had the trailer loaded but they took a few bales out of the top so we had a place to get in back there. I can remember my Uncle asking me, "What were you most afraid of when you were left there?" I was probably about twelve years old. I told him, "Well, I was afraid a bear might come and get me." That was probably the most unlikely thing that would have happened.

The roads out there at the time, they didn't have many bridges. They just had washes on the roads, and there were a lot of ups and downs. If the road was flooded, you didn't cross. You just had to wait until the water went down to cross. I have been there when they have done that. The roads certainly have been improved. They did not have this Tempe bridge like they have now. If you ever saw the old Tempe bridge, it was about two lanes wide, but it had little places every once in a while. Kind of a little place you could go in if it was raining. And my grandfather looked at the bridge and said, "That's a wonderful bridge, but they'll never have need for any bigger bridge than that." And yet it was only two lanes. Sure grown and improved since then.

I learned how to swim in the big drainage ditch on the other side of the road. It was about this deep (gestures to about 12 inches) and we would go over there and swim. You'd have to lie down flat to be covered by the water. If you got cold you would get out and lie on the road out here. It was a cement road two lanes wide. Never had to worry about

getting run over because there wasn't that much traffic. Now you can hardly get across the street if you go out there.

In fact we had some Mesa engineers out here the other day and they are going to widen Baseline, which will be three lanes going east and three lanes going west. They will have a median in the middle and a sidewalk on each side. I asked them will it be sort of like the song that says "the railroad runs through the middle of the house?" We'll just about be like that, but not quite. It will cover the ditch and everything, and take out the big pecan tree. It will be quite different. It will probably start in January.

Interviewer: How old is that pecan tree?

Mae Fuller: I have no idea. It has been here ever since I can remember. Grandma used to have a pear tree out here and we picked the pears. We don't have a pear tree now. You could bury them in the sand until they ripened. I remember doing that.

My father was a very fun man. A lot of the kids I went to highschool with didn't like farming at all. They thought that farming was a torture. He made it so you enjoyed doing it and you were glad to be from a farm. I remember we used to work hard all week long to have a couple of days off to go to the lake. He had a couple of boats and a big rubber raft we would go up there and play on. He was a fine man. A hard worker, but he made it so you loved doing what you were doing.

Also, when we had the dry cattle down here...I don't know if you know what I mean when I say dry cattle, but they're the ones that when they're going to have a calf, they dry them up for two or three months until the calf is born, and then we would ship it to Prescott. Anyway, we would milk the dry ones and my mother learned to make cheese, and we would make longhorn cheese. Big cheeses about this tall (gestures eight inches), and had a cheese press and everything, and we would send some of those cheeses to Prescott. Most of the people in the dairy business were up there-- Grandpa and Uncle Albert. She did that. My mother was very hard working. A lovely person, I thought.

Interviewer: How did she make cheese?

Mae Fuller: Well we had a big tin vat. And we'd put the milk in that and warm it. I don't remember how we warmed it, but we warmed it. Then you put a cheese tablet in and let it sit until it all set up firm. Then you cut it and

then cooked it. When you cut it, the curd would separate from the whey and you kind of stirred it with your hand. We had a health permit, as I remember. We had to have health permits to sell butter and cheese and cream. The cream man came and picked up the cream part of the time.

Interviewer: Where did you get your health permit?

Mae Fuller: From the health office in Phoenix. Had to renew it every year to make sure you didn't have....

Interviewer: Tuberculosis?

Mae Fuller: Yes, that was probably it. We were pretty healthy.

Interviewer: What lake did you go to up north?

Mae Fuller: We used to go to Canyon Lake most of the time because it was closer, but we went to Roosevelt, Morman Flat and up here to Granite Reef. That wasn't all fenced off like it is now, and we would go up there to swim and play.

Interviewer: What year did you graduate from Gilbert High?

Mae Fuller: Well, I didn't graduate from Gilbert High. I went to Gilbert until I was a freshman, then I went to Mesa High. I went there because they did not have a seminary, which was a religious education, in Gilbert. I went to Mesa my last three years and graduated in 1941. In fact we just had our fiftieth year reunion last year.

Interviewer: Did you go back?

Mae Fuller: Yes, we had a very nice reunion. It was fun to see all the kids again. It reminded me of this little thing up here. I'll show you. (Interruption in tape.) We all had badges and it was easy to recognize the girls, but not the boys, because, you know the girls were more grown and developed by the time you graduate from high school. Some of the boys you just didn't recognize them at all because they looked like kids when they graduated. We loved Mesa High. Of course, we were from Gilbert, but Lehi kids went to Mesa too. We were the Gilbert hicks and they were the Lehi hicks.

Interviewer: How many graduated from your class?

Mae Fuller: I don't remember, but it was around three hundred.

Interviewer: That was a pretty good sized graduating class.

Mae Fuller: Yes. So was Mesa Union High, and later it burned, the one down town, and we all gathered around and watched it burn and cried. Then they built Mesa High out here. East.

Interviewer: Was it a two story building?

Mae Fuller: Yes.

Interviewer: What did you do after high school?

Mae Fuller: I worked for the telephone company. I was a telephone operator. At that time I worked a split shift. I worked from 9-1 and from 5-9. Then I worked quite a bit of time on Sunday, so I got paid pretty good, and I made $15 a week by doing that.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about how it was to be a telephone operator? Could people still call in and ask for numbers and give you numbers to connect?

Mae Fuller: Yes. We had a big switch board in front of us and when they picked up the telephone to call you, a light came on and you plugged in. You'd say "operator," and they would tell you the number and you would plug it in to somebody else. I worked there during the war. There were lots of boys out here at Falcon Field from England. They liked to call different people, and we would monitor them every once in a while to be sure they were all connected and everything.

I probably shouldn't tell you this, but if they were calling their girl friend and we wanted to let them talk longer, we would. We'd let them talk longer than they had money to pay for. But, if they were just calling somebody we would have to disconnect them, or wait for them to put their money in to pay for the longer period of time and reconnect them, because they never would pay it.

Interviewer: Did they call home?

Mae Fuller: Some of the time.

Interviewer: What were the war years like here?

Mae Fuller: All of our friends were gone to war. I was going to say we used to get out of the drain ditch and lay here on the road to warm, but then they built Williams Field out here, and that increased the traffic a lot. There were boys here from other parts of the country being trained. All of our friends were gone to war. There was a place in Mesa called the Mazona, and they had Friday night dances there. It was really a good place to go to dance. It was church owned and operated. Boys from Williams Field came there to dance, and the local girls were around and it was a fun good clean place to go. There was no drinking or smoking or any of that type of thing, and we had lots of fun there. It was all with Army boys who were here to go to that type of thing.

Interviewer: Did they have live music?

Mae Fuller: Yes they did, with a lady who sang. No refreshements. If you wanted refreshments you left. They didn't encourage kids to leave the dance. They wanted them to stay there, and they had supervisors there to make sure.

Interviewer: Did it cost something to go?

Mae Fuller: It cost a little bit. Fifty cents or something like that.

Interviewer: When did you meet your husband?

Mae Fuller: Well, I met my husband when he moved here. His family, father, was born in Pine and he worked...and his mother was a Tanner, and they worked on the road construction. His mother's brother was R.C. Tanner, who started the Tanner Brothers Road Building. And they lived in northern Arizona during the summertime and his father did the blasting. Dynamiting and so forth. I don't know how they ever raised their children that way. It wasn't easy. When we were married he left the door open when we would go outside quite a bit. I said, "Why do you leave the door open all the time? Were you raised in a barn?" He said, "No, under a bridge." Which was really true.
When they were up there in northern Arizona, the women would, some of them, live in tents. The families would live in tents. His mother liked to live under a bridge because, of course, it was cooler. You know these big square culvert-like things? They had a plan of escape if it ever started flooding down through there. He was never in a bad flood.

That was not very easy to raise the kids out there, but there was quite a group of them. They quilted, played games and visited and all that type of thing. I met him when they moved here. He was in about the eighth grade when they moved here, and we were living here. He was our paper boy. He rode his bicycle quite a ways around collecting for the paper. He asked me for a date once. I didn't much want to go. My folks said, "Sure go ahead and go if you want." So, we started going together then. I think I was fifteen.

Then he went on a mission for the church and he got back. He was gone two years. We wrote all the time he was gone. We dated before he left, so I was almost twenty when we were married, and he was twenty-three. We got married about a month and a half after he got home. We've been very happily married ever since. We've been married forty-nine years.

Interviewer: What was your wedding date?

Mae Fuller: March 31, 1943. That's his mother's birthday.

Interviewer: How many children do you have? Six?

Mae Fuller: Yes, three boys and three girls.

Interviewer: What are their names?

Mae Fuller: Our oldest daughter is Jo Marie and she married Jay Lamoreaux. They were old time Gilbert people too. Our second daughter is Vickie Straddling. She lives out east of town. She has five children and she just graduated from college this year. She decided to go back and finish. Jo Marie is working on her's, too. Our next one is our first son, Steven. He lives in Brawley, California. Next is Robert. He lives over here just off Guadalupe. Next is Dean. He lives in Mesa. He married a girl from Canada and they take care of Laurence's mother. She is ninety-three now. She is in a wheel chair. We take turns taking her on Saturday so that the kids can have time off. Then our youngest one is Ann, and she lives in Orem, Utah, and works for Word Perfect. We have seventeen grandchildren. Very good kids. I'm real, real proud of them.

Interviewer: For a minute let's get back to.... You had neighbors here on Cooper and the Cooleys on the West. What about grocery stores? You went to Basha's to sell your products, but where did you buy groceries?

Mae Fuller: There weren't any stores around the corner at that time. No buildings. No Smitty's. No Safeway. Nothing down on Gilbert Road.

Interviewer: Did you do much shopping in Gilbert? Did you go into Gilbert or did you go into Mesa?

Mae Fuller: We went into Mesa most of the time. There was Sam Lee's out there next to Tom Clement, which is closed down. They were a Japanese couple, and there was a couple who rented Dan's Market. We traded at Dan's quite a bit after we were married.

Interviewer: Where was Dan's?

Mae Fuller: Well, Dan's was where that big furniture store is (Norwood's) on the west side (of Gilbert Road). There was Dan's and then there was the Blakely's. Blakely's owned a garage there you could drive into. You could buy ice there. They had second-hand furniture.

Before Dan's was there, there was a couple named Beamis, older people, who had Dan's Market. I was pretty young when they were there. Then there was Dan's Market, then Charles Blakely, then the Popular Store. That was a clothing, cloth, shoes, all that type of thing. I don't know whether you have heard of Mary "BB" Scott. She worked there. She was a really friendly, nice lady. I think she knew everybody in town. She worked there and waited on people. She always made you feel so good when you went in there.

Let's see. Then there was the drug store, and it seemed like there was a store in between there. Later on, after Laurence and I were married, there was a doctor. Dr. Statler. He was a pretty good doctor and we used to go to him.

Then the drug store. It had a soda fountain and prescriptions, gifts and that type of thing. Then there was Liberty Market. I think there was a little Chinese store between the drug store and Liberty Market. I can't remember the name of it. You know Liberty Market is still there.

Then, an old time man across the street was Glen Martin. He was the barber. He was not on the corner. There was another business at different times there. The post office was downtown by Glen Martin. Other stores on down the street were a beauty shop, along with Glen Martin's barber shop, and a western store which had western clothing. Beautiful, beautiful western clothing. Then there was a dime store, a ten cent store. It was a good little store.

Interviewer: This would have been about what year?

Mae Fuller: This would have been before I got married, and for a little while after we were married. I'd say in the 30's and 40's. There was a pool hall on up the street a little ways. Vaughn's Lumber Yard was there. It was quite a big place. Across the street, Cullumber Street, was Sam Lee's Grocery. A blacksmith shop was where Tom Clement's Garage is now. It was a blacksmith shop. I was there with my father. He would have the forge going heating the irons. nterviewer: Did your dad do his own shoeing and caring for the animals?

Mae Fuller: He didn't shoe the horses, but he did a lot of his own blacksmith work and welding. That sort of thing. Laurence's father owned a welding shop when we were first married. You know where the big water tower is? Well, he was just across the street from there. He had a welding and farm repair shop. Plus they built trailers and that type of thing, semi's. He has pictures of the semi's they built. That's where my husband worked when we were first married. Well, he worked out at Williams Field for a while, welding.

Interviewer: How did you get from there to here? Living on the family farm?

Mae Fuller: Well, we lived out in Gilbert on Main Street. You know, there is Cleo Lewis' Bookkeeping. Then we owned the house next to it, south. Mr. McClure, the druggist lived next to us. Then the Henderson's lived south of there. There were four houses along there. We lived in the second one. When we first moved there, there was no street through the alley. There was nothing in back of us much until they put an alley through there. We built a fence to keep the kids in, and Franklin and Cleo Lewis were our neighbors. We lived there quite a long time. In fact, we just traded it to Fred Martin, the chiropracter. He needed more parking space and he wanted to trade us that. We traded our place there for the home he lives in now. We still own property there.

Interviewer: And then you moved out here?

Mae Fuller: My grandfather kept coming to Laurence wanting him to buy this place. Laurence said, "Well I can't right now." Laurence did combining and thrashing, silage chopping. We had three combines, grain combines, and five choppers. We did custom farm harvesting. Laurence came to

him and said, "Well, Grandpa, I can buy your property now. I think I can pay for it." Grandpa was ready to retire, so he sold it to us. We paid for it. At first I thought that looked like the national debt...almost to have to pay for that.

We bought our house in town from Mr. Creed, who was a really nice town gentleman. We paid $3,500 for the lot. We were suppose to pay...he made it real easy for us. We were suppose to pay $35 a month. Instead, we paid a hundred a month so we could get it paid for. We've always been that way. When we buy something we want to pay for it as soon as we can so we don't leave anyone holding the bag for us. We've lived here about thirty-six years now. Probably going on thirty-seven this year. We raised most of our children here. They all went to Gilbert schools and graduated from there.

Interviewer: You've seen a lot of changes since you moved here and were a child. What are some of those changes?

Mae Fuller: Gilbert is quite a nice little community to live in. It certainly has grown a lot since we started. My grandfather was asked to be the first bishop of the LDS church in Gilbert. He looked around and found some property and built the old church on the corner of Gilbert Road and Elliot. It's been added on to three or four times and he signed the notes personally, himself, and went around and met with all the people who belonged to the church and they started attending there. John Allen was one of them. He had a lot of nice friends.

Interviewer: That was quite an undertaking for him, wasn't it?

Mae Fuller: Yes, it was. He'd buy the two back lots but it didn't include the ones out on Gilbert Road. He decided that he had better buy those so that they didn't put a service station in there right by the church. It is a good thing he did since it has been built on to several times since then. They bought the property behind for a parking lot, which wasn't there at that time.

Interviewer: That was the first LDS church in town wasn't it?

Mae Fuller: Yes, it was. Now I think there are about eight buildings.

Interviewer: At least. Isn't the ninth one going in?

Mae Fuller: It's almost to have an open house down on Cullumber Street. There are lots of nice parks in Gilbert now, and the library. I don't know if they still have a swimming pool or not.

Interviewer: Where was the pool your kids went swimming at?

Mae Fuller: Down by the library.

Interviewer: That's at Gilbert Junior High now and they are getting ready to put one in by Mesquite Junior High. You were there when that pool was built then?

Mae Fuller: Yes, and my children attended Gilbert Elementary when there were individual little buildings out there on Elliot Road. Mr. Shumway was the principal. He was certainly a nice man. Now that is changed a lot. They have a big road going back into the back, and they have built the new high school. Of course, on out there they have many elementary schools. When I went to school, when I was in first grade, we had, you know where the Gilbert Historical Society owns that (referring to the Gilbert Historical Society Museum on the corner of Gilbert Road and Elliot Road), they had that, and then the high school building which is newly remodled. Then they had the Mexican School. The Mexican kids and the white kids did not attend the same school.

Interviewr: Why was that?

Mae Fuller: I don't know. That's just the way it was. They all rode the same busses. The teachers were very sure that the kids got good attention, the Mexican kids. I remember I admired them for what they did at that time.

Interviewer: What about your children? Did they ride the school busses?

Mae Fuller: Yes, they did. When I went to school I rode a semi bus. Mr. McFrederick lived right next door to us and he rode in a seat and opened the door and pushed a little button so that the man who was driving the cab of the truck would know when to go. We had that semi that started out going north on Gilbert Road, then it turned at what we called "Pine's Corner," which is now Guadalupe, then went

out to Greenfield, down Baseline clear down here to McQueen, then back home. Hauled a whole semi load of kids.

Interviewer: How did you get into the trailer? Did they have a little ladder or something?

Mae Fuller: Just little steps.

Interviewer: What did you sit on?

Mae Fuller: We had little bus seats.

Interviewer: They had regular bus seats in the semi?

Mae Fuller: They had seats along the side and a couple of seats this way then around the sides. It was different. I've never seen one like that again.

Interviewer: No windows?

Mae Fuller: Oh, yes, it had windows.

Interviewer: It had been converted into a school bus?

Mae Fuller: No, it had been built that way.

Interviewer: When you lived in Gilbert in the downtown area...they talk about the floods. The water that came through. Did any of that occur when you lived down there?

Mae Fuller: Yes, we lived on the south side of the railroad tracks, and the track was quite a barrier for that. It flooded one time, and Laurence and I went down and it was all on that part north of the railroad tracks. We weren't flooded in our area. There was quite a bit of flooding in the main part of town. There was a railroad track and there was a depot there. Across the railroad track on the sidewalk was the newspaper office. The Gilbert Enterprise. My husband used to set type there. Then that burned. Now they have a fire department just west of where it was.

Interviewer: Wasn't there a barber shop there, and wasn't that where the Gilbert Enterprise was?

Mae Fuller: I don't know about that. Glen Martin's barbershop was down the street. That was there for years and years. After the Enterprise wasn't there any more, it was a furniture store. Then you could buy cute little

knicknacks there. But a long time ago it was the newspaper office.

Interviwer: You had a volunteer fire department then, didn't you?

Mae Fuller: That's right. My husband was the fire chief. We slept in the back bedroom, and they would blow the fire whistle and he'd jump up and...he had his pants down over his shoes, he wore those high top shoes, and he'd ride the bicycle over to the fire station. Most of the time he could be the first one there. But it was an all volutneer fire department, and everyone was real diligent in being there. And they met there once a week to practice and learn and know what to do. A lot of the fire problems, my husband said, in Gilbert people would just get excited and scared. Say a frying pan full of grease caught on fire, they would just run. They wouldn't do anything to try to put it out. They didn't have a lot of fires, but some of them.... They'd all show up for them.

Interviewer: Did you ever have picnics and things with the other volunteers?

Mae Fuller: No, I don't ever remember doing that.

Interviewer: Just curious. Some small towns do that. How long was he fire chief?

Mae Fuller: I don't remember. Shall I go ask him in there? I would say about three or four years. He was very diligent about doing it. He worked at a welding shop. He wasn't afraid. Didn't get all excited and everything like other people did.

Interviewer: Did you ever work outside the home?

Mae Fuller: Not after we were married. I felt very fortunate. My husband didn't want me to. He wanted me to stay home and raise the kids. I did the bookkeeping for our harvesting business. We'd sometimes have in the silage business thirty truck loads of silage with different trucks. I'd have to figure each truck and their tonage separate and put it all together. I usually did that at night so they would have it ready the next day. I enjoyed doing it. I learned to be a better bookkeeper.

Interviewer: I'm sure you did. One thing we didn't cover when we were talking about when you were born. Your mother coming home. Did she come home just because she wanted to be home to have the baby? Or was there a reason she came back home?

Mae Fuller: Well, I think most babies were born at home. Grandma had had enough that she knew what to do.

Interviewer: So your mom just came home?

Mae Fuller: Yes. My father said...well, in the first place, he and my mother lived in some little shacks over here across the street on the eighty acres. He said he used to come and stand out by the side of the road and see all the kids at home having fun and playing and everything, and there was just he and Mom. He was lonesome. Of course they were very happily married, but he just missed all of the hustle and bustle at home. But he did work for Grandpa after they were first married.

Interviewer: She had how many children?

Mae Fuller: Well, she had just three that lived. She spent a lot of time in bed trying to carry her babies through, but she had several miscarriages and lost babies, so she didn't have a very big family.

Interviewer: How many sisters and brothers do you have?

Mae Fuller: One brother and one sister.

Interviewer: What are their names.

Mae Fuller: Jane and Grant. Jane is my sister. She just passed away on the 28th of December. She had cancer. She managed to live long enough to raise her family.

Interviewer: Growing up, what are some of the fun things you remember?

Mae Fuller: Well, my dad liked to go fishing. One time we piled everything on one of the hay trucks. Put a bed up there and we went with Uncle Albert to a little place. I just heard it announced on television the other day. We went up to Lake Kicknick, someplace up in northern Arizona, and caught fish like you wouldn't believe. We used to fish at Canyon Lake. I love to fish. I haven't gone fishing

since we've been married because my husband is not a fisherman.

Then we rode horses when I went to Mesa High School. I belonged to the Boots and Saddle Club. We had different club activities. We rode horses up to Coon's Bluff, which is up here on the way to Canyon Lake. Sponsors of our club brought the food and their cots and everything up there, and we camped out while we were up there.

Interviewer: How long did you stay?

Mae Fuller: We just stayed overnight. We rode up there, stayed overnight, ate there, played games and everything then rode home. I rode a horse we called "Dee." She had been a race horse. She was my favorite horse, and when we were riding on the roads coming home, or any other time, you couldn't stop her until she got ahead. You could pull on the reins and everything. So I just let her go, and when she got ahead she'd be happy. Then we could start slowing down. That was a fun thing to do.

My father, like I said, had different boats. He had this one great big rubber raft that would hold ten or twelve people. We took that along with one of our other boats and kids could dive off from it and climb back on. I never did go with him hunting, but he loved to go deer hunting. We all got excited about that and helped him get ready and everything. Like I said, my father was a fun man. Even working, it was fun.

Like I said, we had these big cottonwood trees and the wood pile was right out here. It was my job to get in the wood. We cooked on a wood stove, plus we had a wood heater in here, and we had a lot of scorpions in that wood. My brother would sleep in there in the living room, and it seemed like every night he got stung by a scorpion. Evidently they weren't the poisionous kind, 'cause finally we'd say, "Well Grant, go on back to sleep." Isn't that awful?

Interviewer: What about snakes in the woodpile?

Mae Fuller: I don't remember seeing any snakes. Mostly scorpions. We all got stung by scorpions quite often, but they weren't the fatal ones. We were all alright.

Interviewer: What did they do for a bite?

Mae Fuller: I got stung on the back of my leg one time when my folks were gone and we had this lady staying with us.

She was an older second cousin, I think. She was so upset because I got stung. My aunt and uncle lived in a little house up here by this pecan tree. We ran up there to see what we were supposed to do for a scorpion bite. They said, "Put some rags on it with some kerosene on it. Dip your rags in kerosene and wrap the leg." We left it on all night and, boy, by morning I had the biggest blisters you ever did see! Never had any effects of the scorpion bite, but it took me quite a while to get over those blisters. That's what they said to do. We didn't know what to do.

Interviewer: That must have been very painful.

Mae Fuller: Yes, it was. I used to get sunburned when I would go up to the lake. They used to peel me off. My gosh. I should have worn a shirt, but that was a miserable experience. Being blond I sunburned easy. I didn't have sense enough to wear a shirt or something. I learned a lot from it.

Interviewer: What kind of chores did your folks assign to you? You said you had to take care of bringing in wood?

Mae Fuller: Wood and the kindling. I had to gather the eggs and help with the milking. I used to help milk cows before I went to school. We just had cows who didn't give much milk because they were just coming fresh or just drying up. So I'd milk a few cows before I went to school. I was always afraid I would get on the school bus with my milking shoes on, but I never did. That was good chores. Then I helped my mother a lot with the canning. One time when she was in bed trying to carry a baby, I canned plums. I think I canned sixty quarts of plums. I couldn't even look at those plums for a year. They turned out all right.

Interviewer: You feel that way when you wash that many jars. Before air conditioning canning could be a hot chore.

Mae Fuller: That's true. Our house wasn't really tight and we didn't have refrigeration. Like I said, I slept out on this front screened porch when we lived here. It had just screen, and my bed was down on this east end and it had canvas flaps that you rolled down when it was rainy. I flaps on the east side and flaps on the front side. I thought that was really neat, but in the winter it would get so cold and my bedding was so heavy that I could hardly move. But it kept me warm. I never did worry about things

like that. Everybody did things like that. Everybody was kind of poor.

We were not poor enough that I had to worry about where my next meal was coming from. We butchered pigs and scalded them out here in a big barrel of water. Pull them out, scrape the hair off. Then we had a walk-in refrigator box out here. In fact it's still this little tin building out here. Then we would butcher cattle. Butcher a beef and hang it in there. Mom would say, "Go get some meat for dinner." I would go cut a piece off, and when we got married I didn't know how to buy meat. I just had gone out and cut a piece off.

Interviewer: If it was thick it was a roast.

Mae Fuller: Right. I use to sleep outside in the summer. Right out here. We'd put a mosquito net over. It was a bedstead with the metal bars down it. Like the old ones. Then we'd put a mosquito netting over it and tie nuts or bolts on to it to hold it down so that the mosquitos didn't get you. Never had to worry about anyone "going to get you," 'cause I don't ever remember worrying about that. You just didn't have those kinds of problems then.

Interviewer: Did your family ever hire extra help at specific times of the year?

Mae Fuller: It was mostly done by the family. I had an uncle who used to come down from Prescott and stay with us. He was about the same age as me. Maybe you were going to interview him. Floyd Haymore. He used to come down and stay with us. He was my good buddy. We had so much fun together.

In fact we were old enough to drive, and we drove a load of hay to Prescott. He and I. And there was a big place out here on the desert. It was an overpass on the railroad tracks. I didn't want to shift gears going up over that thing with a load of hay while I was driving, so I got it going fast enough to get it over that thing. I was a very careful driver. It didn't seem dangerous to me, but when I think about it now...I just didn't want to shift gears going up over there. Must have been just fifteen, 'cause I had a drivers license. Then Floyd drove up Yarnell Hill. Didn't have any problems. We knew we could do it.

Interviewer: Did you have any kind of a relationship with your neighbors as far as trading work, or helping out?

Mae Fuller: I can't remember any. We were pretty self sufficient, I believe.

Laurence remembers the first time he saw me. I was out back driving a tractor. I was planting corn, I believe. I was driving the tractor with the planter on. I had a shotgun over my shoulder 'cause the crows were coming along eating the corn before I could get it covered up. He was really quite flabbergasted to see me out driving like that. After we moved over here, my dad had geese and ducks and turkeys. My mother made absolutely delicious chicken and noodles, but when we had chicken, I'd take the gun out and shoot the chicken and clean it and everything. It was my job to get the chicken ready for the chicken and noodles. And she made it so good, well, I didn't mind that at all.

Oh, and one other thing I wanted to tell you about. Up here on Southern there was kind of a ranch, a guest ranch, past Horne. During the war that became a prisoner of war camp, and my dad found up in the hay barn...some fellows had come down the ditch, they had gotten away from there. I don't know whether they were Germans or what, but they came down the ditch, 'cause they had mud up in the barn, and they had moved some bales of hay out like I told you we did on that trailer, and made them a room up there to sleep. He saw they had camped up there. They had left a few things behind when they went on, so I felt we were quite fortunate that they didn't come in the house.

Interviewer: They took nothing from you?

Mae Fuller: No.

Interviewer: When you talk about the ditch they came down. Where was it?

Mae Fuller: It was down Horne. It was an irrigation ditch. The water didn't come in there. The extra water drained out of the end of the field there. They came down there, and I am sure they did that so no one could see them. It was quite a deep ditch.

Interviewer: That was kind of a famous escape wasn't it?

Mae Fuller: I bet it was, but we didn't know they were there.

Interviewer: How long did your dad think they had stayed?

Mae Fuller: Well, he figured they stayed a couple two or three days. They may have come down and gotten milk out of the barn at night. Something to eat. You certainly couldn't blame them. I would hate to have met them. Our house wasn't that tight. I don't think we ever locked our house at that time when we went any place.

Interviewer: I suppose there was someone there all the time.

Mae Fuller: Generally there was, unless we were all at church or something.

Interviewer: Did you sell garden produce or anything to the camp?

Mae Fuller: No. My mom usually had a garden, but we didn't sell anything.

Interviewer: Did she have much success with her garden?

Mae Fuller: Yes she was a good gardner. In fact my hands are sore today being out here transplanting flowers around here in the front. We have a nice little garden in the back. We get up and go out there and break our necks every morning while it's cool. We don't really break our necks, but we enjoy it.

Interviewer: What were the holiday celebrations like?

Mae Fuller: I remember going to Prescott for the 4th of July after we moved down here. While we were living there, on the 4th of July, they have the Rodeo Days, Frontier Days. They usually have them for four days. We would ride in the parade. My grandfather bought a little buggy, and they had Shetland ponies. The kids would ride in this little wagon in the parade, and we would go out to the Rodeo grounds and watch the rodeo. That was really exciting to me. My kids have never really been to anything like that. That was fun. Real frontier rodeo days.

Then, when we moved back down here, we often got to go up and stay with my grandfather. There was my Aunt Millie. We were about the same age. She always treated me so nice. We lived down here, and she'd paint my fingernails. My goodness, I never had that experience at home alone. It was fun to go up there to the rodeo. They had the big square with the courthouse in the middle. They'd have band

concerts and a lot of entertainment there. It was a fun experience too.

Interviewer: How long did it take you to drive to Prescott?

Mae Fuller: I can remember three big incidents in going to Prescott. We'd go to Phoenix. I don't know how anyone remembered how to get out of Phoenix. Then we'd go to Wickenburg. Then there was more desert the other side of Wickenburg. Then we'd go to Congress Junction. Then up over Yarnell Hill. It took about four hours. That was fun for me too. Such a beautiful view after you get up on Yarnell Hill and look down and wonder how you ever did it.

Interviewer: What about other holidays, special things that you did.

Mae Fuller: I remember Christmas. I was so excited. One year we got a Christmas tree. Nobody had much money to buy Christmas presents, but we strung popcorn on strings to decorate with. But then we had a few Christmas tree ornaments. We always had a nice Christmas dinner plus a nice big Thanksgiving dinner. All the relatives came lots of times to the Thanksgiving dinner.

In fact one time we had a family dinner, and we had it out here on the front yard and got the big side boards off the trucks and made the table. We set this great big table and all the aunts, uncles and cousins and everybody came. We got tubs full of water and washed the dishes out there. It was so much fun. My aunts were all so sweet and good. I loved every one of them. It was really a special occasion to have that type of thing. Then, later on, we had one across the street. A big family dinner with all the relatives. It was fun.

Interviewer: Do you still have family in Prescott?

Mae Fuller: Yes, I have some relatives. Not as many as I did have. My father, after my mother was killed...she was killed in a car wreck. They moved to Yuba City, California and bought property over there. That was fun to go over there because they had such big tomato fields. They rented this place one time to a tomato farmer. He told my dad to help himself. He could go out and fill a lug box from one tomato plant. There was a big river that ran by over there. It was fun to go down and play on the river. Got to visit and play with all the relatives.

Interviewer: How old were you when your mother was killed?

Mae Fuller: I had just had my fourth child. Let's see, he was born in 1952, so I was about 30.

Interviewer: One thing we haven't touched on is your husband's family. Who was his father?

Mae Fuller: Roy Fuller. His mother was Donnette Tanner Fuller.

Interviewer: They had how many children?

Mae Fuller: They had four. Two boys and two girls.

Interviewer: Your husband was?

Mae Fuller: He was the oldest.

Interviewer: The next youngest was a boy or a girl?

Mae Fuller: A boy. Melvin. He was a pilot for Pan American. He just retired a few years ago as a captain on the big ones. What are they?

Interviewer: 747?

Mae Fuller: Yes.

Interviewer: His sister?

Mae Fuller: Frances Fuller Otte. Then Joyce Fuller Elsberry.

Interviewer: Spell his (husband's) name for me?

Mae Fuller: Laurence, Roy. His dad was mayor of Gilbert at one time. That old fire truck that's over there in the museum has Laurence's name on it because he was fire chief and we both went to California and got it and brought it back.

Interviewer: So that's how it got over here? Where did you go to get it?

Mae Fuller: Los Angles. We stayed as guests of the man who was selling it to us. He was really a nice fellow. We stayed at the Pacfic Coast Club as his guests. I had

breakfast in our room, and he and Laurence went down to look at it. It didn't have any air conditioning, so we put a block of ice on the floor and opened the vent and had that blow on us, and we sucked ice on the way home. That's when you could only drive so fast, you know, until it got broke in. It couldn't go really fast. We went over on the bus. Took our lunch. It was probably the first vacation we had since we got married, but it was a fun thing.

Interviewer: Who kept your children while you were away?

Mae Fuller: My mother. She took care of the kids. She was a fun lady, too.

Interviewer: Did Roy Fuller stay in Gilbert? Didn't you say that Laurence grew up in Mesa?

Mae Fuller: No, he grew up out there in Gilbert. That's where the welding shop was. And it's gone now. They have a big parking lot out there north of the water tank. The boys used to go up on top of that and sleep when it was hot. They'd go up there where the breeze would blow.

Roy was a very community minded man. He liked to go fishing down at Rocky Point, Mexico. Some of his old buddies there would go down. On one trip he brought back some great big fish, and he didn't want to have them done in the locker, so he told me if I would do them he'd give me half. So I had a nice big old wash bench out back. I'd never done fish like that before. So I cut their heads off. You know they'd be that big. I finally learned how to cut out the back bone and make really nice fish steaks. Filled our locker with it. It was so good, I was glad I got to do that. He had about five or six fish.

Interviewer: Is that where your dad liked to go fishing?

Mae Fuller: Yes. He used to go to Rocky Point too, to go fishing. In fact, there used to be what they called the Gilbert Navy. There was Tom Clement, Benny Cotter, Verl Brown, and Laurence went with them this one time. They had more fun. Came home with all these stories about Laurence's feet. They called him Submarine Fuller because he couldn't get up and water ski. They had fun doing that. They were a fun group of men. They didn't fish as much as they just went boating down there. Laurence's dad really went down to fish. I will never forget how good those fish were.