Gilmore: This is a Page oral history interview with Mack and Wanda Ward, conducted for the John Wesley Powell Museum, September 15, 1995.

WANDA: You want me to just give it to you? My name is Mary Wanda Ward, and I was born at Virden, New Mexico, which is actually at Duncan, Arizona, really. What else? Oh, I was born September 17, 1922.

Gilmore: And your mother’s name and place of birth?

WANDA: My mother was Josephine Pace Foster. She was a daughter of some of the pioneer Arizonans. She was, herself, born in Thatcher, Arizona, in 1895. My father was James L. Foster, who moved to Arizona in about 1907 or ’8, from Arkansas, I believe.

Gilmore: (unclear) number of children and names, date of birth.

WANDA: Mack and I were married August 13, 1940, and our children were JoEllen Ward, Born 1942, in Freeport, Texas. And then we had David Mack Ward, born in 1945, in Lordsburg, New Mexico. Steven Fred Ward, born July 23, 1948. And then later when we moved to Page, we had Phillip Franklin Ward. He was born July 25, 1960. And then Jane Elizabeth Ward, born April 16, 1963.


Gilmore: Your mother’s name and date and place of birth?

MACK: My mother was Jessie Louise McKinley, who was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1901. My father was Phillip Fred Ward, born in Guy, Texas, in 1895.

Gilmore: When did you come to Page, and from where?
MACK: I moved to Page the first of June in 1959, to open a drugstore. Moved here from Williams, Arizona. I was managing Grand Canyon Drug in Williams.

Gilmore: What did Page look like to you guys when you first arrived? This one you both ought to recall your first impressions, when you first saw where you were going to live.

WANDA: Well, I moved up here in August of 1959 from Williams. I had to stay there and sell our home. It was sand. (chuckles) And no trees, of course. But then, I’m used to the desert. That didn’t bother me.

MACK: I moved here, of course, the first of June—actually, the last part of May, the first of June. We qualified for a Bureau house over on Date Street. No furniture when I got in. The first thing I did was buy a recliner chair with a vibrator and a heat pad in it, and I slept there the first night that I was in the house. And a sandstorm came up the first night, as usual, and the next morning when I woke up, there was about a six-inch-deep string of sand all across the living room. When they put the block down on the floor, there was about an inch space right at the base, that they had to come in and plug up. Of course I had to sweep that sand out before Wanda got here. (laughter)

Gilmore: Where’d you get the recliner in Page at that time? Did you have to go to Flagstaff?

MACK: No, Bill Warner had a furniture department in the old Page Firestone, and I got it from him.

WANDA: I thought you got that from Bud Lippert?

MACK: No, Bud wasn’t in business at that time. Bud was paintin’ those temporary stores down there.

WANDA: Well, I thought it came with that model home furniture, is what I meant.

MACK: Well, Bill, I think, got it from—what was that furniture company in Flagstaff that Bud worked for? (no audible response)

Gilmore: Okay, you can each describe this too. Start with Wanda. What did you with your average day? Start in the morning and how did a typical day progress? Those very earliest days when it was sand, no trees, no lawn.
WANDA: Well, mostly I fought the sand! These houses were new but they were not lived in before—had never been lived in. And the yard was all sand. As soon as we could, we planted grass and put some trees in. The government furnished the seed and the fertilizer and the trees. They would drop ‘em off at the house, and then we put them in. And Mack’s father, Fred Ward, came up from Williams and helped us build a fence around the back yard, and helped us put in the grass and the trees. We had two trees in the front yard and two trees in the back. The first thing I wanted to do was get in grass, to get rid of that sand, and that was my first priority. We did it that fall. A lot of people waited ‘til spring to do that, but we did it that fall, so we could get rid of it.

Gilmore: What was your typical day running the drugstore?

MACK: Running the drugstore. Go down to the drugstore, and we were open from nine to seven, wasn’t it?

WANDA: I thought it was nine—nine to nine.

MACK: Started off at nine to nine, but then when the strike hit, the first two weeks I was really busy from nine to nine. Of course it was your mother was the first employee I had.

Gilmore: Yes.

MACK: Donna would be there from nine ‘til five, and then I would stay on until nine. We had 10,000 people here, and they’d been waiting for a drugstore to open. So, I was really busy that first two weeks. And then the strike hit. We went from 10,000 people down to less than, 1,000 people almost overnight. So from then on I wasn’t too busy, but I still stayed open from nine to seven. Of course before I went to the drugstore I would go over to the hospital and spend two hours over there.

Gilmore: What would you do there, just handle their pharmacy?

MACK: Anything that they needed, any medicine that they had to give out during the evening when nobody was around, I would package it up for them so that the doctor could give it to the patients.

Gilmore: This one we can take turns answering that.

WANDA: When Mack first got here, of course, there had been no pharmacist. It had been Dr. Kazan. And Dr. Kazan, up in his clinic, had some medicines to get him by. And he didn’t have time to take care of it,
because he was too busy. So when Mack got here, he said, “Come up and get it, and figure out how much it costs, and take it off my bill every month. I don’t want to be bothered with it.” So Mack and his nurse, [Sue Enneking?] inventoried it all, brought it to the store, and we had some drugs to start our business with. And then every month, whatever he needed, why, we’d charged it, and then credit it against that until it was paid off. I thought that was pretty good of him.

Gilmore: Okay, here’s some questions you can takes turns answering here. What did you do, say, around, or outside the home, things like entertainment, school involvement, volunteer work, or just hobbies? What was there for entertainment, and what were some of the community involvement things?

MACK: Well, let me start this off. When I came here May 30, Brian Gaasbeck and John Van Gaasbeck was the justice of the peace. And I’d been in Lions Club with him in Williams. So he said that this is the night that Lions Club meets. “Don’t you want to get a make-up [meeting] here, so that you don’t…” I had perfect attendance up until then, for years. So I said, “Sure, I’ll go to the Lions Club with you tonight, so we can have a make-up.” So I went to Lions Club, and they’d already elected me secretary of this Lions Club, before I ever got up here.

Gilmore: You hadn’t even attended a meeting.

MACK: Hadn’t attended a meeting yet.

Gilmore: Gives you an idea of maybe how quickly some of the clubs and organizations formed in Page.

WANDA: And the Chamber of Commerce was already up and running then, too.

MACK: That’s another thing: I’d been on the board of the Chamber of Commerce in Williams. The first thing, Edie Brown snagged me right away--well, actually, it was Dan--and asked me if I wasn’t interested in Chamber of Commerce. So they got me involved in setting up the bylaws of the local Chamber of Commerce here. So I was involved immediately with the Chamber of Commerce. Bill Garrity was in charge of setting up the constitution and bylaws, and I helped him with that.
WANDA: We didn’t have too much for recreation, except things like that. I belonged to the Lioness Club, and we met every month. But other than that, there was no organized—except for like school. JoEllen was involved in things at school, and she was a senior that year. Mack and I have always been interested in all the games, and she was a cheerleader. She had been a cheerleader for three years in Williams, and she was a cheerleader that year, so we made all of the games. I took them to the out-of-town ones, even. Mack couldn’t go always, but I drove the cheerleaders to St. Johns and places like that for the football games that fall, and took our boy, Steven, along with us.

MACK: One of the other things they got me involved in immediately after the strike was when the strike hit we had a Page School Advisory Board. Actually, it was Page Accommodation School Advisory Board. And when the strike hit, they lost every member of that board except Myrtle Kocjan. So the county--I’d been on the school board in Williams--so the county school superintendent appointed me to the school board here. And that was in the third week we were here. So I got involved in the school system right away, working with Ray Bradshaw, who had been superintendent of schools for a year by that time. So that’s another thing that kept me busy, was school.

WANDA: We also, when we first got here, the first party we went to was—I believe it was put on by the Lions Club, wasn’t it? Down at the country club site, where the country club is now. All there was, was a slab there at that time. And they gave a cookout, steak supper, and a dance on that slab, and that was the first social thing that we went to here. And it was a lot of fun. We had a three-piece band, people playing for it, and had our steak supper and everything. It was a lot of … Everybody enjoyed meeting together, because you had no organized stuff. The same way, I went and played bridge some with the women, and we’d have bridge parties, sometimes over in the mess hall and different places like that, as well as at homes, you know, because it was one way you’d get together. We had nothing to do at night, and of course I spent my
evenings at home with the children while Mack usually worked ‘til nine at the store, you know.

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Gilmore: When did you first get television?

WANDA: It was here when we got here. They had just got it.

MACK: They had just gotten it. The first thing they had on TV here was a boxing match. They didn’t have cable to run to the houses yet, so they had a television set, set up on the edge of the mesa, over by the school playground there at Aspen- -where Aspen goes into where the highway is now. That’s where you had the television, set up there, to watch a middle-weight championship fight. And so the whole town- -this was before you got here.

WANDA: I know it was, because we had the television when I got here.

MACK: We all watched that championship fight right there, on that one television set.

WANDA: Of course, you know, in those days it was black-and-white television, too, still. We didn’t have color then. Another organization that we got involved in right away was scouting, with Steven, of course. We had been in Scouts in Williams, and he went into it here, as you know. Was Dick Blake here that first year, Mack?

MACK: He came the first year, yes.

WANDA: Yes, and you had the Scouts. And of course we had quite a few activities in those days. Every monthly meeting was usually sort of a potluck supper for the whole troop. We’d have it up at the school or something. That was another chance for a social, you know. And that type of thing was all we had.

Then JoEllen was in a play. She was in- -we had a very good little group in their drama class. Had a very good teacher. They took a one-act play down to Tucson, and won first in the state with it. And all they had to put it on here with was one of those Butler buildings, with a little tiny stage, and the people settin’ in it. And they would have to come in- -to get on the stage, the actors would have to come in from outside, and walk up the sides of the building, and get on the stage. They just did a great job! They took their play, besides to Tucson and to Flagstaff, they took it to
Kanab. They were very good with it—-with such limited facilities. That’s what amazed us.

MACK: Yes, that was some school.

Gilmore: What were some of the other aspects of living conditions in Page, such as the weather, and….

WANDA: Of course the thing we noticed was the wind, of course, the first year, because of the sand. In the winter we don’t have much wind, but when the spring hit, and the winds blew that sand.

MACK: The problem was that there was nothing to tie the sand down, so any type of a wind would start moving that sand along, and we had sandstorms constantly, until Dan Brown finally put up drift fences, like they use in snow country, just to catch the sand. So he put it at every strategic place on the whole mesa here, to try to stop that sand drifting.

WANDA: They scraped all the vegetation off, see, to build this town, and it left sand. Like us, we lived in, there was 200 Bureau homes here, built, and we lived in one. But across the street from us hadn’t been built up yet, so here’s these empty sand lots.

MACK: You know, we had grass in our yard the next year. The place across the street didn’t, and so we got their sand. So, you kept building up a higher lawn all the time.

WANDA: Another thing was everybody wanted to help their churches. You know that probably. I think the churches here had better participation and help in building than any place I’ve ever seen. Even the construction people that were only going to be here a short time would go in and help whatever church they might be affiliated with, to build ‘em. And they got them all built. They got all those thirteen churches around there built that first year, up and going. In fact, most of us were meeting, even before that, over across the dam in one of the mess halls.

MACK: Some of the churches met up here in the temporary school buildings, but the Methodist Church met in one of the community buildings over across the dam. MCS had a mess hall over there. That’s where the Methodist Church met there on Sunday, ‘til we got our own building started.
WANDA: We actually had a *lot* to do, because we all *looked* for things to do, I think.

MACK: A fellow by the name of Earl Gilmore designed our church for us, and we started building that I guess the second year we were here. We put the slab down….

WANDA: Oh no, the church was built the first year I was here. It was here right after I got here.

MACK: Oh! Was that the first?

WANDA: Yes.

MACK: Well, I was in on the building of it, before you came here, I guess.

WANDA: Well, we came up, the first summer we went to church over there--a hot summer, in that mess hall, with no air conditioning. I remember that. But by the time I came in September, the building was finished, and we started meeting in what’s our building now. (aside) And the other churches were too. By the time I got here in September, actually, is when I got here.

MACK: I was in on laying the floor and part of the building out there, when we first got here. A *lot* of volunteer work, and a lot of contributions of materials. We had a man here, who had a concrete plant, and was in our church, and he donated almost all of the concrete that went into the floor. And then we had a man from MCS who was the purchasing agent for MCS. One day our minister was standing out in front of the slab, and a big truck drove up with a load of lumber, and he says, “Is this the Methodist Church?” The minister said, “Yes, this is it. But what’s the lumber for?” He said, “This is for you.” And he unloaded that whole load of lumber there, and we hadn’t even ordered it. It was contributed by one of the church members.

WANDA: Well, if that man was the one I’m thinkin’ of, he was the church treasurer. Within two months after we moved up here, he left. The minister asked me if I would take over the job, and of course by that time I was expecting Phillip, and I said, “I’ll take it just ‘til next time you elect, you know. I’ll do it *that* long,” because I had done this kind of work before. Well, I took it for twelve years. It was twelve years before I got away from it. So I was treasurer of the church and treasurer of the Women’s Society.
That’s another thing I did that first year. As soon as we came to Page, I got pregnant and we had our boy the next summer. It was quite a change for us, after twelve years, to start a family again, you know.

Gilmore: What was shopping like here in Page? Were there services, was everything well covered? Also, what were the prices like, relative to other parts of the country?

WANDA: We had one grocery store, Babbitt Brothers. They were like us, they had a grocery store in a temporary building, the same way we had the drugstore in a temporary building for the first year. And then at the end of the year—was it the first year that you built…. MACK: Page Market came in that first year.

WANDA: That was the second grocery store.

Gilmore: Al Roueche’s store.

WANDA: Everybody thought the prices were high. Of course, you’re talking to the wrong people. We didn’t think they were high at all. But a lot of people thought they were marked up.

MACK: They were no higher than in Williams.

WANDA: No.

MACK: In fact, George had better prices on meat than Williams did. So that part of it, the groceries weren’t too bad. It was a limited amount of groceries you could get. Some things you couldn’t find. But we found all we needed for our family.

WANDA: In those days, you couldn’t buy liquor here, of course. See, this originally was part of the Navajo Reservation, and you couldn’t buy liquor on it. So they finally had… What did they do, Mack? It was a year, about, before they got that changed, wasn’t it?

MACK: Yes. You couldn’t even bring it up here. The Navajo Tribe, in the first year they started construction, the Navajo Tribe would stop the cars on the reservation, and search ‘em for transporting liquor—beer or liquor, anything. And finally the federal government stepped in and said, “You can’t do that, because that’s a federal highway, and you gave us right-of-way through the reservation, so you can’t do that.” So people would bring their own liquor up from Flagstaff or wherever they wanted to get it. But most of the people here didn’t stock their own liquor. They’d go out to 14 Mile, which
is now the city of Big Water, and they had a liquor store there, Utah liquor store. And you had to buy a club license, become a member of their liquor club out there, before you could buy a drink or anything.

WANDA: Even Utah just didn’t have regular beer. It was the “cheat” beer.
MACK: No, it was 3.2 beer is what they had.
Gilmore: Still is.
MACK: You could take your own liquor bottle out there and stash it, and then you could drink from that bottle, but that’s the only way you could get a drink.
Gilmore: Utah just barely did away with that BYOB, about four years ago.

WANDA: What surprised me, by the time I got up here, I found on our freezer out in the storeroom, several cases of beer. And up until that time, we had never bought beer by the case. (laughs) Mack would have it, and his dad would have a six-pack of beer in the refrigerator all the time, and that was it. What are we doin’ with all of this beer here?! Well, all the salesmen, the drug salesmen, were coming up here then, to sell to Mack, and they’d call him and say, “What can we bring you?” and he’d say, ”Oh, you might bring me some beer.” So they’d come in with a case of beer.
MACK: In fact, I got where I told ‘em. “Don’t come up unless you bring a case.” (laughter)
WANDA: But that law was changed within a year or so, and then liquor stores came in here.
MACK: That came in handy, the first party we had down on the slab, too. I don’t know whether you want to go into this or not. At that party, we bought two kegs of beer for the party.
Gilmore: Which party was that?
MACK: It was a Lions Club. Actually, we invited everybody in town.
WANDA: It wasn’t only the Lions- -it was other people, too.
MACK: It was the Lions Club that put it on.
WANDA: And all the Bureau….
MACK: We had everybody there.
WANDA: I’m not sure whether your mother and dad were there or not, I don’t know. I was so new here.
MACK: I was cooking the steaks, and Van Gaasbeck was drawin’ the beer out of the kegs. And those kegs didn’t last us. We started at 6:30, and it lasted us ‘til about 7:30. Two kegs of beer were gone, because it was free, on the house. So we sent Van Gaasbeck out to 14 Mile to get some more cases of beer. He couldn’t get kegs anymore. He went out there to some cases of beer to bring back in, and he didn’t show up ‘til 10:30. He got stuck in the sand.

WANDA: Nobody knew what happened to him.

MACK: Nobody could find him. (laughter) But anyhow, he finally came in. Did you know Howard Ness?

WANDA: You should, he was with your dad, worked with your dad.

(Several talking at the same time, none discernable)

MACK: He was an architect.

Gilmore: His name doesn’t sound familiar as Howard Nez.

MACK: He was here a year after we got here.

WANDA: He was an architect, but he worked for the Bureau, and then Earl and him did this designing on the side. Mostly Earl did it, but Howard’s the one that had the license. I never will forget that night down at the country club. I had just met all these people. In fact, I was just up here for the weekend. He had Mack put his steak on, when we got there about 6:30 or 7:00. And we all finished eating, and were through….

MACK: He said,”I’ll tell you when to take it off.”

WANDA: “I’ll tell you when to take it off.” And every once in a while I’d go say, “Aren’t you ready for your steak?” “No, not yet.” He had that on that fire until 11:00 before he ever ate it.

MACK: I had to keep the fire hot just for him!

WANDA: I’ve never seen anybody eat a steak that well done in my life!

Gilmore: Oh, what a singed (unclear)

WANDA: Of course I think he was more interested- -he wasn’t wantin’ to give up his drinking to eat. (laughs)

Gilmore: How was some of the other shopping covered? What were some of the other stores? Was clothing covered?

MACK: Grant Jones had a shoe store.

Gilmore: I’m going to ask you some specific questions, too, as we get farther into just on the Drugstore.
MACK: Grant Jones had a shoe store, so we were covered with shoes, except that he didn’t carry too much. It was mostly work shoes. So we still had to go out of town to get the shoes that Wanda needed.

WANDA: Well, the first year we had no clothing store at all, until they built the shopping center down here now (unclear). Babbitts built their big store, and then they brought in clothing. But the first year we had no clothing. You had to buy it, go to Flagstaff for it. And there was a Firestone Store for toys and baby things. And there was a little jewelry store: Ernie Severino had it. And what else was there, Mack? And also a barber shop.

MACK: We had a barber shop.

WANDA: There was a beauty shop or two—one or two that first year.

Gilmore: How about restaurants? Were there amenities like that?

WANDA: Bill Lee had a little restaurant that burned by the time I got up here. And there was no other restaurant that first year, was there?

MACK: Well, the first one that was built, they built across from the Page Boy Motel.

WANDA: Bill Lee, but that was after a year or two.

MACK: What do they call that place down there, The Cove?

WANDA: Glen Canyon. But that wasn’t built for a year. That first year, if we wanted to eat, we went out to Wahweap, had these little tiny cabins out there. And in one of them they served steak dinners, believe it or not. It was this little tiny cabin up on the hill, above the Lake.

Gilmore: Construction camp at Wahweap.

MACK: Yes. It was actually a motel that he had up there.

WANDA: And they were just little rock buildings, and you could go there and have a steak dinner. And then if that wasn’t enough, we’d go to Glen Canyon City, which is now Big Water, and they had a little restaurant over there. And then one time we went clear down the hill to Vermillion Cliffs, Cliff Dwellers Lodge, down on the highway.

MACK: Ruth Baker and her family ran (WANDA: Cliff Dwellers Lodge). And she served a real good steak dinner.

WANDA: Now the men, of course, then we had the mess hall for the men, the company. MCS had their big mess hall, and that’s where all the men, that didn’t have family here, ate. And you could go there and
eat once in a while yourself if you wanted to. We had quite a lot of parties there, bridge parties and other kind, where they would serve meals for us too, at the mess hall.

MACK: That’s where we had our Lions Club meetings for the first year, was in the mess hall. Are you familiar with the way the mess hall ran? Has anybody told you?

Gilmore: I am really not.

MACK: Willard Wood had a contract with MCS, and he furnished room and board for all the single men. For six dollars a day, they got their room and their meals. Breakfast was ham, bacon, sausage, eggs, hash browns, two dollars. They’d take lunch with ‘em- -that was two dollars. Come in at night for supper, and it was any kind of steak they wanted- -they had three different steaks, good steaks- -and everything that went with a good steak meal, and it was two dollars. So for six dollars a day, they got room and board.

WANDA: And it was good food.

MACK: So that was a good deal for the workers. So a lot of us ate there when we went out to eat. It was the only place left after Bill Lee burned down.

WANDA: I remember when I went to several bridge parties that were given by some of the women whose husbands were the top Bureau people- -Maxine Wiley and some of them gave bridge parties at the mess hall- -and we would have a dessert bridge. We’d go there about 1:00, and they’d serve us a dessert, and then we’d play bridge all afternoon. It was delicious dessert that was made by the mess hall for us special- -this Willard Wood’s crew. Very good food.

Oh! Right soon after that, too, was the Page Restaurant was built too. I don’t know whether you remember, it was Lloyd Porter and….

MACK: It was the Page Club.

WANDA: It was the Page Club, and it was the first restaurant, really.

MACK: It’s got a new name now, it’s open again. But he had good food there too.

WANDA: Very good food. We ate there quite a lot. That was after the first few months it was built.
Gilmore: What was some health care here?
WANDA: Of course we had Dr. Kazan.
Gilmore: How did that progress? How did medical services start?
MACK: Bureau of Reclamation required that MCS build a hospital, the first thing that they did. That was dedicated the same day that they dedicated the bridge, 1959. It’d been open since 1958.
WANDA: That was here when we got….
MACK: The first time I came here to look it over, was in August of ’58. I flew up with Van Gaasbeck when he was appointed justice of the peace. And we flew into Kanab, and Lem Wiley met us at the airport. He took me over and introduced me to your dad and Jack Reinhold and Howard Ness and Elmer Urban. And he told Elmer to get me an application all filled out so I could fill it out to get the drugstore open in Page. I got the application, but Elmer told me, “There’s no sense in filling out…. Let’s forget about who told me…. Don’t bother to fill it out. we’ve got 200 applications ahead of you.” So I took it back to Williams with me.

Anyhow, Van and I flew over here from Kanab, and that was when Royce Knight was first opening the new airport, where it is now, and he didn’t have gasoline, so we could fill up and go back to Williams. So we had to fly from here then over to Wahweap to fill up with gas. Bill Greene had a runway there at Wahweap, up on top of the hill. The way you had to land on that thing, you came in over the Wahweap Canyon, and then here’s just a little ol’ spot right there, that to the non-flyer, there’s nothing there, just a little spot. Van flew up there, and he raised up just enough to hit that, and boy, I was squirmin’! What happens, that was on a slope. It’s on an up-slope there for a few feet, and then it went down for several hundred yards on a down slope after that. That’s where you had to fill up with gasoline for your airplane.

WANDA: And when you took off, you had to go up that and down right where….
MACK: And drop right off into the canyon.
WANDA: That looked like a canyon. Of course later that became the lake there.
MACK: It was a canyon.
WANDA: They used that, up until, gosh, the Park Service made them tear it up after the lake was large, you know.

MACK: Got to be too noisy.

WANDA: People flew in and off there a lot. But that business of comin’ right off toward the lake was kind of scary.

MACK: That’s now their dry storage area at Wahweap.

WANDA: Yes, they converted it into dry boat storage for people after that.

Gilmore: How did the strike of ’59 affect you? And the questions here are for your husband. You weren’t striking, Mack, but I know it had to have affected you. And if so, what do you remember about that period, and what happened when the strike was over?

MACK: (chuckles) When the strike hit, we were- -like I told you a while ago- -we had 10,000 people in town.

WANDA: We’d just opened up.

MACK: Had just opened up, had been open for two weeks, and gettin’ ready to go big guns. You know, expected to grow- -and they struck. We went from 10,000 people to less than 1,000 people here, is what we had. And that was kind of hard on business- - there just wasn’t any. And the only people who were left in town besides the Bureau people were those construction people who couldn’t afford to leave. So we were stuck with furnishing medicines for those people, and had to extend credit to a lot of ‘em for their babies’ food, the whole works. We charged quite a bit to some of those people, trusting that the strike will be over in a month or so, you know, and everybody will get paid, get back to normal. It lasted for six months. Well, on December 24, we were at a Christmas party, and Al Bacon announced that the strike was over. And I mean, that was a party! That was quite an all –night party.

WANDA: Everybody was happy, driving around, yelling and calling to each other.

MACK: It was quite noisy in Page. (as if on cue, a car horn honks in the background) Van Gaasbeck celebrated by double-loading his black powder pistol and sticking it up over his head and fired it, and it came back, hit him right between the eyes and knocked him out.
Dr. Kazan had to leave the party to go sew up his head. (laughter) But he made a racket!

**WANDA:** Yes, we were pretty happy. Then we had to wait two weeks for the Christmas holidays to be over. And then the men came back, the men that had gone other places to work. They’d had to go find work. And then they all flooded back into town, and then it was pretty busy.

**MACK:** You asked a while ago about the health care. I started to tell you that the hospital was required to be built by MCS. They dedicated it the same day that they dedicated the bridge. I came up on a bus from Williams—Chamber of Commerce came up here and visited with ‘em that day, for the dedication of both the hospital and the bridge. So that’s the first time I met Dr. Kazan, was at that dedication. But it had been opened, back in ’58 they started using it in September or October of ’58. But they built that to specifications that were—the must have pulled it out of a 1928 drawer up in Denver, because it wasn’t quite up to even those specifications for those days. Since then we’ve had to redo a lot of it in order to bring it up to the state’s specifications, and federal specifications. But it served here. We had one doctor. Dr. Ivan Kazan was the surgeon, general practitioner, the whole works. He was a board certified surgeon, so we had good medical care. And then he brought Dr. Washburn in the next year—in fact, in June of ’59 is when Dr. Washburn came, I believe it was. Dr. Gifford was here in the hospital, operating his dental clinic out of a room in the hospital. We had a busy hospital. They had to have a performing pharmacist.

**Gilmore:** (unclear) size of the community.

**MACK:** Yes, they had to have a pharmacist on staff. So when I first moved here, they appointed me staff pharmacist at the hospital, so they’d have coverage.

**Gilmore:** So you filled that position, as well as running your pharmacy and the store.

**MACK:** Later I would have to go for a couple of hours every morning before I opened the drugstore to take care of the …
WANDA: I don’t know whether he told you, but those 200 permits for drugstores never materialized, that Elmer told him, so Earl Brothers came to Williams then, a few months later, asking Mack to come and put a drugstore in. And Mack said, “Well, if you find me somebody to help finance it.” So he went and talked to some men Mack had worked [with] in Flagstaff. They owned two drugstores. They looked it over and decided they would do it. So they came to Mack and they formed….

MACK: They arranged for the financing. They didn’t put in any money in it at all.

WANDA: They didn’t put in any money, but they arranged for the financing, and it was a corporation with the three of ‘em, you know, went into it with a three-way corporation.

MACK: They prepared the financial backing. They went to the drug suppliers, and they advanced us enough to open the drugstore, is what is amounted to. Then we bought some old furniture, old fixtures, from the Moore Drug in Flagstaff, and moved ‘em up here. So we got started on a shoestring.

WANDA: And havin’ that seven-months’ strike was pretty hard. Took us several years to….

Gilmore: And you’d barely opened then.

MACK: Yes, only two weeks.

WANDA: It took us several years to recuperate from that. And by that time, the dam was finished, and then we went back to being a small town again. We went down that time to about 2,400 people, wasn’t it, I think, Mack?

MACK: No, we went down to just over 1,000 people, when the construction phase was over, because we thought we’d be a town-- for reasons we decided this would be a going concern, was the plans of the Bureau was to have permanent employees of close to 300 people. Well that extends out to where there’d be like a town of 3,000 people, with all service personnel needed, and the families of those 300 workers, 300 plus.

WANDA: And the Park Service.

MACK: And the school and the Park Service and all this, it’d be a town of 3,000 to 3,500. That’s just enough for a drugstore to operate--just
enough with the hospital and medical center that we did have. So that’s why we decided that this would be a going concern. And we decided when we moved up here we liked the area, so this is where we’d like to just stay and retire. So it turned out that the Bureau of Reclamation decided that they wouldn’t operate the dam from here. The dam here has a few operators down here, but they don’t do anything. All the distribution is done, they shifted it all up to Montrose, Colorado. So that brought their personnel down from 300-350, down to less than 70. So that would be a town of 1,200 people. So it really hit us hard when the construction phase was over. We dropped down to, actually got down to just over 1,000 people here for quite a while.

WANDA: And that’s why he started workin’ on this road, somethin’ to bring people in here. Also, tourism. Our Chamber of Commerce all this time was very active, trying to get tourism promoted. It started right off…

MACK: We could see right off the bat that the only way we could make this a viable community would be to go out and really promote tourism, recreation, (WANDA: Retirement), retirement, this type of thing. Either that, or bring in some industry that could be operated out of Page. With lack of transportation, you couldn’t have any kind of heavy industry here at all. And the only power we had at that time was one power line coming up from Flagstaff that APS distributed their power here in town with. And then the dam would eventually have a lot of power coming off of that, which is strictly peaking power, not for--it’s really not to be sold to the regular consuming public, because at that time, that’s the way they did it.

We decided the only way that we could bring in any type of industry and increase our tourism, would be to open up another highway coming from the east that would come into Page on the way to Las Vegas. Actually, what we did was went over to Window Rock and talked with--Paul Jones was the chairman of the tribe at that time--and we met with him for a full day in his office there. I finally asked him, “What is it that the Page people can do that will help your people on our end of the reservation? He
said, “The best thing you can do is change the status of all of the 
western end of the reservation.” From Highway 160, west, had 
been designated as a wilderness area on the reservation, not ever to 
be developed. So he said, “The best thing you can do is convince 
the federal government that they need a highway across that area, 
so that we can open up that wilderness area of the reservation.”

There was no way to get from here to Kaibito. You had to go clear 
up to Coppermine and take a sandy trail, or go clear to Tuba City 
and back in a gravel road.

So we came back to Page, and I was appointed chairman of 
the Highway Development Committee.

WANDA:                        …the Chamber of Commerce
MACK:                       Chamber of Commerce. So I started working on it, and after two 
years I was able to get—at that time we had a representative, Duke 
Senner, a fellow actually raised in Globe, wasn’t he? (WANDA: 
Yes.) And he was a lawyer out of Tucson. In fact, he was [married 
to (Tr.)] my daughter’s second-grade teacher in Tucson while I 
was in school – his wife was JoEllen’s teacher. But Duke was 
elected representative from our district. I started talking to him in 
Washington, to see if we couldn’t get something started. He wrote 
up a bill, it was called HR-49, I think it was. But anyhow, he got 
that bill through Congress, to build a road from here to Kayenta. It 
passed the first time he put it into Congress, but he couldn’t get 
any money for it. So it was another year before we got the 
appropriation, And, he got an appropriation to start – they called it 
“Highway X” at that time – he got an appropriation the first year, 
and then went into the Bureau of Indian Affairs funds. And at that 
time, Paul Jones was no longer chairman, so the chairman over 
there diverted the funds to a road from Window Rock to one of his 
favorite fishing lakes. So, all those funds for the next three years 
got to build roads on the eastern end of the reservation.

So by that time, Sam Steiger had been elected 
representative from our district, and I talked with Sam several 
times, and got him to put a bill through that the monies that were 
appropriated had to be used for Highway X. In the meantime, The 
Bureau of Indian Affairs had an engineering crew out here and
mapped out the road they were going to take from Kayenta to here. Sam was able to get the money that was started, Highway X, at this end of the reservation. The first sixteen miles that year – 1968, wasn’t it?

WANDA: I can’t remember. It seems like…

MACK: [It was] 1963 to 1968, five years before the first construction project started.

WANDA: Yes, it was about ’68 when they had that ceremony where they broke ground and everything.

MACK: This was one of the reasons that they decided to build a power plant here, because that opened up this end of the reservation where they could bring the people, when the road was here.

WANDA: Well, you had the road, and then they could get over to Kayenta to get the coal to use. And yet it was by the lake and water.

[END TAPE 1, SIDE A; BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE B]

Gilmore: In a way, this almost kind of touches, goes with something you brought up earlier. This time we can get into some specifics about the business experience and town development. To you, Mack and Wanda, what were the benefits versus the risks of opening a business in Page in ’59? What made it worthwhile to give it a try?

MACK: The benefit would be, of course, our ownership of the drugstore. Our own boss, this sort of thing. That’s really minor. The main thing is a small town to bring up a family in, plus a chance to help a town grow the way we would like to see it grow. Very few people have an opportunity to come into a new area and help in the development of the new town, to make sure that all the amenities were in the community that needed to be. So this is one of the driving forces that I had, to keep going. I spent a lot of time away from home. Wanda took care of the home, and I was away from home almost every night of the week. Church night, and maybe one other night we had family home nights, but I was out almost every night.

WANDA: At meetings and planning and…

MACK: Helping with some development, planning, development of the community: the schools, everything that was needed.
WANDA: We felt like the schools and the medical facilities, and of course the churches were already set up, but those things were important to get started, and get started right. The school and the medical, to us, was the main priorities. And then of course the town government, too, you know. And of course Mack started thinking about what we’d do when the government left about our schools. So they started working on getting a school district here, because the government would fund the school only so long, and then they wouldn’t. So they started working on the school district, and they got that in, in what year was it, Mack, the school district you got set up?

MACK: Sixty-seven or ’68.

WANDA: Sixty-seven or ’68, somewhere there, they got us into a school district where we didn’t have to depend on the federal government then to run the school. It was on the tax rolls.

Gilmore: What did you see as the risks in doing this: before you came, and the risks you personally thought you were entering? Was it a pretty accurate assessment, or did you get some surprises as far as…

MACK: There were some real surprises.

WANDA: That strike was an eye-opener.

MACK: Real surprises. First was when we came here to open the drugstore, it’s a risk. And then when the strike hit, it was a double impact on us, because we hadn’t expected this. It turns out that—well, you don’t want to go into the history of that, you can get it from someone else that knows as much about it as I do. We hadn’t anticipated a strike. Nobody had. We hadn’t gone into that part of it. We knew that the contract was up that MCS had with the union, but we didn’t know that it would affect us, that the strike might be one or two weeks and that would be it, they’d get it settled. In fact, one of the reasons they hurried me in here to get a drugstore open, was the fact that the only reason this was still classified as a remote area, qualifying the men to a 10 percent extra pay increase, was because they didn’t have a drugstore.

WANDA: As soon as we got here, they…

MACK: I opened the drugstore, and that canceled the remote area (WANDA: Status.). So that was one of the reasons they struck,
was because the status was no longer remote, and the men didn’t agree with that. So the union called a strike.

Gilmore: Considering what Page looked like in ’59, do you think they were justified in calling it a remote area? Do you think your arrival suddenly transformed it into an area that wasn’t remote?

MACK: Well, it gave them the only thing that they didn’t have, as far as services. When we first came here, there was a clothing store and a shoe store.

WANDA: There wasn’t a clothing store.

MACK: Yes, there was, until the strike. He left when the strike hit.

WANDA: Oh, I didn’t know there was a clothing store.

MACK: Right next to Grant Jones’ shoe store, in between him and Ernie, was a clothing store.

WANDA: It wasn’t here when I got here.

MACK: When she got here, all this was gone.

Gilmore: So what business did fail because of the strike?

MACK: Oh, several.

WANDA: Several did. There was a whole row of little stores up there, and there was two or three empty when I got here.

MACK: Bill Lee’s place conveniently burned down so he could build a new one later. It was quite a shock to us.

WANDA: Once you get into it, you try to hold on, thinking it’ll be over with, you know. And it just goes on and on until you just get to the end of your rope, when it finally got settled. So it took us three or four years to recover from that. I mean, we really had problems. And then, as I said, the dam was finished, and we went down again. So we had two disasters.

Gilmore: Population declined then, as you mentioned earlier. It was far greater than you had anticipated all forecasts had been.

WANDA: And then when they finally got the Navajo Plant was going to be built, Mack worked on that too. In fact, talking at their congressional hearings, to get that built. Once they started on it, the town built up again. So we’ve had… And then when that finished, down we go again.

Gilmore: Those are some later questions.
WANDA: We went down again. So we’ve gone through three ups and downs. In the twenty-three years that we’ve had the drugstore, we went through three downs, and then going up again. Then the town would build up from there. It was pretty hard.

MACK: To me, one of the interesting things about the development of the community is the school. We were an accommodation school. You understand what an accommodation school is? Anywhere there’s a federal impact on an area where they have to have a school, the federal government has to furnish all the funds to operate that school. You can’t set up a district, because the federal government owns the property. Just like we couldn’t buy our property when we first came to town, couldn’t buy a home, because it was all federal. We couldn’t buy a place to put our business because it was all federal. The Bureau of Reclamation was going to build a shopping center. Coldwell Banker was going to build a huge shopping center so that we could move our businesses into that. We all had signed our contracts so that could be done. Well, Coldwell Banker had earlier word that they were going to change the operation of the dam, and they pulled out on their contract, so that left us with nothing, except the possibility of leasing land to put a building on for our business. You couldn’t build a building on leased land and get it financed. So finally the federal government had to come in and say, “We’re going to start selling the property in Page.”

So up until then, the school district had no financial base at all, except the federal government. So for years we operated as Page Accommodation School. It looked like there was no hope of us ever building a school district, setting up a school district, because there was no capital base. The dam couldn’t be taxed, nothing around here could be taxed. Homes, you can’t operate a school from small businesses and just homes—taxation (unclear) would be prohibitive. So we had to figure out some way to finance a school district.

In the meantime, we were operating year-to-year with appropriations from the federal government to operate our accommodation school. We’d have to go every year we’d have to
go to Congress to get more money to operate the school. There was always a deficit in every plan that you come up with in operating that school, because the county couldn’t participate in it. They ran it. It was actually run by the county, but they set up a local advisory school board and a superintendent. We ran the school for the county school superintendent.

So every year we’d go back to Congress to get the deficit funds that we needed, and Carl Hayden was the one we had to go to. He was the head of the Appropriations Committee of the Senate. We’d go back to him. In fact, we made two trips back to Washington to talk with him, and a couple of ‘em to San Francisco to talk with the people in the regional office. But after the fifth year of going back to them to get those extra funds, Carl told us, “No more. That’s it. You’re going to have to form a district.” This was after the dam was completed, just after construction in 1964 or ’65.

So then we had to start figuring out a way to form a school district, so it must have been ’66 that we formed the district.

WANDA: I thought it was ’68 when you formed, I think.

MACK: I’m not sure. Must have been somewhere along in there anyhow. I’ll have to go back to my notes. But we finally decided that some way we had to form a school district. We knew we didn’t have enough funds coming in from local taxation, so we had to look at everything in Northern Arizona to see what we could bring into the school district. And at that time they had just built the Four Corners Plant over in New Mexico, and they had a power line (WANDA: Transmission line.), transmission line going from Four Corners to California. And it went across the northern part of Coconino County. And Arizona public Service was operating that transmission, and they were getting ready to build an $8 million transformer bank just below Cameron. So, here assessed valuation on that came out to about $4 million. So we formed a school district (WANDA: Taking in all that.) taking in all that land, eighty-five miles south from the Colorado River to the border of Navajo County.

WANDA: Yes, we took it clear over past Kaibito, over there.
MACK: forty-five hundred (4,500) square miles of land is our district.
Gilmore: Do those boundaries still exist today?
MACK: No, what happened is Tuba City was studying how they could set up a school district at Tuba City. When we formed our district before they did, we took in—they were left a little pocket in Tuba City. So they didn’t fight incorporating that area into our district. We told them that once we got enough assessed valuation in our district, then we would help them with a vote to turn that over to their district when it came along. So that’s when we started trying to get this power plant going, or any kind of industry, which turned out the power plant came up. Stew Udall came in and talked with us about that. A fellow by the name of Alexander, from Salt River Project…

WANDA: Les Alexander.
MACK: Les Alexander used to come up and visit with us, and we’d meet with him, and finally got it goin’. When we got our plant out here on our road, then we held a special election and let Tuba City have all that, south of Tuba City.

WANDA: We had school buses going clear down to Cameron, wasn’t it?
MACK: What we did was made a deal with Tuba City to anybody below the Bodaway District at The Gap, they would bus into there, and we’d pay tuition on those. So we set our bus line at The Gap, and we’d bus people in. That’s forty-nine miles from The Gap. In fact, we went just below that, to bring people in from—Navajo students in. By that time we’d had the highway built, so we were busing the kids in from Kaibeto, too.

WANDA: And every year from that year, from the year that plant was built, and the year that highway was there, until now, every year we have more Navajo children come into our schools. And they have grown just like this. And they’re still doing it. Every fall we have more…

MACK: When JoEllen graduated in 1960, we had three Navajo students in the graduating class.

Gilmore: That’s an important factor to bring up, is in the early days of Page, the Navajo population in the vicinity of Page was very small, wasn’t it?
WANDA: They were all out on the reservation.

MACK: This was a wilderness area, so there was no development out here.

WANDA: But they started moving here to work on the dam, see. And then they started moving in—then when that plant was built, then we started having our communities. They moved in here from other places. And so here’s these new kids, you see. Plus, we had how many buses going out on that reservation?

Gilmore: The school district was funded to handle this migration that’s why it was set in place?

WANDA: Well, once they got their tax base…

MACK: Once we got our tax base…

WANDA: One thing I want to bring up about that, too, the original buildings that we had after the Butler buildings, is they brought in some temporary buildings that were to be temporary schools. You remember those? And the government built… they started building the building which we call the gymnasium, and they called it a multi-purpose building, because they didn’t build gymnasiums, so it had to be a cafeteria and sports room and everything. And then they built this building right up here at the end of Date, which was to be the grade school. And you should remember this: they were trying to get them done, trying to get them done, and just before school ended that year, it burned to the ground.

Gilmore: I watched it burn.

WANDA: So did I. We went out right after lunch and Steven started back to school and he said, “Mom, there’s a fire at school!” I went out, and there… We all stood and watched that building. We were just sick. It didn’t get the high school building or the multi-purpose building.

Gilmore: The junior high.

WANDA: It got all the rest there. I was just sick about it. But they built one, and they built it back real fast, didn’t they? It was done by fall, wasn’t it?

MACK: Structurally it wasn’t hurt. It ruined the roof.

WANDA: It was the roof where they caught on fire.

MACK: This was a boon to the Catholic Church, by the way.
Gilmore: Oh it was?! In what way?

MACK: Yes. Father John made a deal with the contractor that he would have his men take all the materials off of the burned roof if they’d give it to him. So his Catholic men went up there and stripped that roof off (WANDA: The tiles.) everything that was on it, and moved it over and finished the Catholic Church roof. So they got their materials for nothing, and then they just had to replace the structural part of the roof. It didn’t take too long.

WANDA: And it was done by fall. I’m sure you started to school there the next fall.

Gilmore: I think there was little or no delay.

WANDA: Yes, and it was amazing how fast they did get that building back there, because they’d been building on it all year.

MACK: The contractor actually defaulted on his contract up here, and had to bring in the bonding company to have ‘em bring in a contractor to finish it.

WANDA: This happened all over town. That one did it, but ones building homes defaulted, and they had to finish ‘em. We had problems getting homes built here, too. Mack and I were supposed to have had a home built over on the rim here, when all those people did. Well, we were so busy with Steven’s surgery that we didn’t push the contractor, and ours was put off ‘til last. Well, we’d all put money down for our lots, you know. And they finished the other houses first, and while we were gone to Minnesota, he went bankrupt, just before he finished the houses, and the bank took them over and had to have them finished and ours didn’t even get started. And the next year, the Bureau of Reclamation canceled our—they didn’t give us our money back—but they canceled our option to our lot, because we hadn’t built a house on it in 120 days. (laughs) Didn’t have anything to do with the fact we couldn’t, but they did.

So when we came to build our house later, we got one of these others, overall taken up by then, and we got a house in the inner part of town, instead of on the rim. But it took us, what was it, we lived in that Bureau house for three years, before we got ours.
Gilmore: What’s the address on that again?
WANDA: 373 Date.
MACK: 473 Date.
WANDA: When finally the Bureau said, “We’re gonna have to have our houses,” the reason we got the house in the first place was because I was going to go to work for the city. I was assistant city clerk in Williams, and I was in charge of the electric and the water utilities, and all the billing and things there. And so he said, “Well, we can use her here.” So they put me down as going to work for the Bureau, and we could have a Bureau house, see. Well, then of course by the time the strike was over, I was going to have a baby, and I just didn’t feel like I could work. So I didn’t go to work. Until when I was ready to, then they already had all the help they needed. And it finally dawned on ‘em we were livin’ in their house still. (laughter)

MACK: They needed it.
WANDA: They started needing the houses, so they gave us all three months to get out of them. Well, there was no contractor in this part of the country then—they’d all gone broke. So our three months finished up. There was no place to live. I don’t know if you know it, but there was absolutely no place to live. There was no lots, trailer lots, nothing, at that time. And we didn’t know what we were going to do. Well, we finally signed with a man in Flagstaff to build—there were six of these houses built. They were built in Flagstaff and moved up here. They weren’t modular, they were built completed.

Gilmore: Prefabricated houses?
WANDA: Yes. And we got three extra months—the Bureau gave us three extra months extension….

Gilmore: Was Earl Brothers’ house one of those?
WANDA: Yes, Earl Brothers’ house was one.
Gilmore: He lived right on this street.
WANDA: Right on the corner. And the one next door, Keislings is one. And then there were several others. And they moved them up here, and got them on—ours was finished in October of 1962, is when ours was finished, and we moved into it.
MACK: Johnny Keisling next door.

WANDA: John Keisling next door. He was the one that had the Exxon station. So we finally got our houses, and they were small, very small—it’s just this part of the house right here. We’ve added to it since then, of course. But we had problems for so many years here, getting contractors to deal. They couldn’t make enough money. It’s so remote, so far away.

Gilmore: The distance, the remoteness, was a problem.

WANDA: And they didn’t have a pool of labor here or anything, so it cost ‘em a lot of money. They finally brought some people in, what was their name, that built all those brown houses over there later, and they didn’t even make money. They finally quit and left, too. Those were built later.

MACK: Jack Crandall [phonetic] lives in one of ‘em.

WANDA: Yes, and they built a few more houses. That was after ours. It was the only type house we could even begin to get in those days. You couldn’t get somebody to come here and build you a house.

MACK: That was just before Janey was born.

WANDA: Yeah, we moved into it just a few months before Janey was born.

Gilmore: What kind of environment was it to raise kids in, in those early days in Page? And how did kids react to it?

WANDA: Kids loved it. When we came here, I was going to stay in Williams a year for our daughter to finish high school in Williams, because we thought it was bad to move her that year, and so I made plans to stay there. Mack was going to be up here for a year. And she came up here to work for Mack in the summertime, help him out. Within two weeks she says, “Mom, sell our house and come up here. I want to go to school here.” So we sold our house down there and came here, and they loved it. The hardships was great for them, just like it was for the people. She loved it.

Gilmore: The kids thought it was fun?

WANDA: They thought it was fun, they really did.

MACK: One of the early things that was built here was the swimming pool.

Gilmore: When was that built, and how was that built?

MACK: Built in ’58, and it was opened in ’59. That’s another job when I first got here, was on the swimming pool board: Manson Mesa
Pool Association. That’s one thing, it was the only swimming pool in the entire county.

Gilmore: Coconino County?

MACK: Only swimming pool in Coconino County!

(all talking at the same time, none discernable)

WANDA: Flagstaff High School had one, but he means public ones.

MACK: Not until later. They built the one in the high school of Flagstaff the next year.

WANDA: Flagstaff and Williams had no pools in those years.

MACK: Just before I left Williams, I had been able to raise the money to build a swimming pool in Williams, but it hadn’t been built yet. Bob Procknow [phonetic] appointed me on the county parks and recreation board, and what we were doing was trying to get the city in Williams to build a swimming pool—but they didn’t have one. The only place you could swim there was in some of the lakes. Or go down to Oak Creek. Everybody went down to Oak Creek, of course. And Granite Dells in Prescott.

WANDA: I used to take the kids all the way to Granite Dells. That was ninety miles, to go to a swimming hole there, and back—from Williams. That’s what I used to do.

MACK: This one up here was the first public swimming pool in this county.

WANDA: That was great for the kids. And it was a busy pool, I’ll tell you. All day long over there. That was a good thing. They had an outdoor skating rink over there, or slab, behind the Exxon station, where they did some skating.

MACK: The old Babbitts slab.

Gilmore: Where did the funding that they built? Was that a community project?

MACK: Community project.

Gilmore: What about the park next to it?

MACK: Well, the park was set aside by the Bureau of Reclamation as a park. They had one little patch of grass.

WANDA: And the city owned it.
MACK: The service clubs is the one that developed the park, actually. Bureau put in the grass, and the Lions Club and the Rotary Club put in the tables.

WANDA: The townhouse we told you was built by donations, and the kids had their money from their recreation thing. They put in that townhouse, and that was our recreation spot in those days, was that townhouse that they built.

Gilmore: Your first full facility—that Townhouse?

MACK: and the park

Gilmore: And by the park swimming pool.

WANDA: If you notice, they built it with the same floor plan of all the Bureau houses, that same one, (unclear) built it, practically used to build that Townhouse.

MACK: The townhouse is from the plans of the Methodist Church, the first part of the Methodist Church, and the country club.

WANDA: All were built with those same plans that your dad….

MACK: Actually used the same plan.

Gilmore: Concrete block was very popular.

WANDA: Concrete block, yes, they used concrete.

Gilmore: The concrete construction seems to have held up well over the years.

MACK: We didn’t have trouble getting concrete for the floors, ‘cause there’s always an overrun down at the plant.

Gilmore: There’s always plenty of spare concrete at the plant, huh?

WANDA: But the kids loved it. My children loved growing up here, they really did. Steven and JoEllen loved it, and then of course they finished growing up here. And then we had our other two that were born here—they were both born in the Page Hospital—and they went all the way through school here, and our son Phillip lives here now, works out at the plant. Janey lived here until she was—she was married for five years and lived here, and then she divorced her husband and went to Phoenix. She’s a travel agent down in Phoenix now. But they love Page. Our grandchildren, JoEllen’s children, want to live here. The daughter lives here. The two boys have to be in Phoenix, but all they do is dream of coming back to Page. All the children loved it. We’ve been lucky. Like
the Warner boys have made their homes here. And the Keisling boys, all four Keisling boys make their homes here. The girls are gone, but the boys are here. They wanted to come back here. We all could see the potential with the lake, you know—that was the thing. Once the lake, in, was it 1963 they closed the dam and it started filling up? (MACK: Finished it.) The minute that got the least little bit of water in it, they all started gettin’ their boats and gettin’ out there on the lake, and it was so wonderful then. It was great, the kids loved it.

Gilmore: And then the lawns and trees got a little greener, a few more businesses.

MACK: Fruit trees were starting to produce.

Gilmore: Starting to look like a town. Starting to be a pay-off for the hard years.

WANDA: Once it got a little green, everybody’d say it was like an oasis in the desert when you’d come up here, you know. It was just desert between here and Flagstaff, and then you’d come and all this greenery here. They liked that. That’s why we hate to see them cuttin’ down on the watering now, because we worked for so many years to keep our lawns and our trees, and now water’s getting so expensive, they’re all urging us to do away with our green stuff and go back to desert landscaping. We haven’t been able to do that, as you see. We still have our big grass out in the back. But that’s what the city’s trying to get you to do now, and the Bureau kept our water bills very cheap all those years. Well, the last three years…

Gilmore: In the early days, they didn’t have the lake then, had to pump it out of the river.

MACK: Pump it out of the river.

WANDA: Pump it out of the river. But they did it so we would plant things. Well, then when the city started running out of money and water and stuff, they started discouraging it, and we’ve been sorry ever since, because I think we need the greenery up here. But…

MACK: There’s a limited amount of water that Page has. That’s the reasons they want us to cut back, so they can build more motels. (laughs)
WANDA: And they keep going up and going up on our water bills, see, until now our water’s pretty high. As soon as we cut down on our water bill, then they bring more motels and things in, which uses it. Which I’m not against it—I think we need so much growth. I don’t want to get much bigger, though. That would ruin the small town atmosphere.

MACK: With limited water, we can’t grow too big.

WANDA: Mack always said that, “Don’t worry, we can’t get too big, because we have such limited supply of water.”

Gilmore: Speaking of community atmosphere, in those early days, what was the community atmosphere? Was Page a wild and wooly town? Or was this a law-abiding town?

(both start to speak, then stop)

Gilmore: Many times you hear stories of construction workers on payday and gambling and everything like that.

MACK: They had that.

Gilmore: But really with this being a...

WANDA: But you know, they didn’t bother us. We had our own little group, and we didn’t bother. But I can remember the wild stories down around the Windy Mesa and around town. We just didn’t go there, you know.

MACK: Before that it was Danny’s Place.

WANDA: And Danny’s Place down there. And they had some wild times with those construction men. And yet where I say that, those construction men were wonderful with helping the churches and the community buildings and everything, so you can’t be upset with them.

MACK: Some construction workers are rough, just really rough, tough men, and have little regard for people and family. But those people didn’t last long—not in Page. If they got out of line, they found their trailer out on the highway, going south.

Gilmore: That was part of Lem Wiley’s policy.

WANDA: Yes, Lem Wiley’s…

MACK: Bill Garrity, the Ranger force. They didn’t put up with anything. If they got out of line, they were gone. The only reason they were here was because they had a job. The only reason they had a place
to park their trailer was because MCS rented it to ‘em. If they got fired, MCS didn’t have to leave ‘em in that trailer spot, so they’d hook onto the trailer and take it out of town. So the Ranger force here had absolute control.

WANDA: Another thing, we had very little crime because people came in here gonna steal or somethin’, why, you could catch ‘em before they got to any other place, you know. They could radio ahead and have ‘em caught. So anybody was afraid to have anything like that going on here. We were too isolated, they couldn’t get away free and clear. So we were pretty good that way.

MACK: There’s only one road in and one road out.

WANDA: Actually it was two or three, but one of ‘em was a long ways to the next town, and there was no other way to get to it.

MACK: There was just a north road and a south road at first.

WANDA: Well, yes, at first, but I was thinking after this Highway 98….

MACK: Once they got 98 built….

WANDA: That was another way into town. It was a good place to raise children, and we enjoyed it. We were never sorry we came here, even though we held on by the skin of our teeth, we were never sorry we came here. We sure didn’t make the money we thought we were going to make. We thought coming here and putting in the first store that we would make quite a bit of money. Well, we sure didn’t do that, but we did make a living for our family. Yes, we did.

MACK: there was a lot for the kids to do in the early days. There was Little League, there was skating, there was swimming, there was picture shows.

WANDA: And lots of Scouting, very active…

MACK: The church has always had activities. It was really a good community for growing youngsters. The bad part, before the plant was built out here, and there was employment available, was once those kids got out of school, there was no way to keep them here. There was limited employment down at the dam. Seventy people a year, that’s all they had on the annual payroll. So there’s no place there for a local person to go to work. A few did, and not very many. The rest of ‘em had to go out of town.
WANDA: Well, and then once the lake got started, there was a few jobs out at the lake. And as it got bigger, there was more and more jobs for them out at the lake. Steven’s worked out there ever since he’s out of high school, you know, he’s worked there.

MACK: But those jobs, if a person wanted to go into engineering or medicine or something like that, just no way that they could come back to Page, because there’s just nothing available for them. If they were satisfied to work with the Greene family out at Wahweap, on the (WANDA: It’s low pay.) low pay scale that they had, they could stay. Steven was satisfied with that, because he really enjoyed it.

WANDA: He loved the work at the lake.

MACK: Just a natural at that sort of work.

WANDA: He went back to school for three years and got within six hours of his degree, and then they talked him into not going back one year, saying, “Oh, yeah, you can go back and pick it up anytime.” Well, he’s never done that, too busy. But he loved his work, and he always has, so that’s it.

MACK: There’s not very many of the graduates from Page High School that have come back here, except to teach, until they built the plant out here. And then a few of them now are employed—quite a few out at the plant.

WANDA: When we first—we had problems with homes for teachers to live in, no places. Well, the first year we were here, wasn’t it, they put in a bunch of temporary apartment buildings around there opposite the churches. Do you remember those?

MACK: Baseball fields.

WANDA: Where the baseball fields are.

Gilmore: Oh, the teachers’ apartments, yes, I remember those.

WANDA: They were teachers’ apartments, and they were temporary buildings, and they were kept for teachers, and they started encouraging husband and wife teachers. Up ‘til then, school districts had said, “No, we don’t want them teaching in the same school district.” Well, they said, “We have to have it, because two teachers’ jobs, one house, one apartment will take care of two teachers’ jobs, see.” So they encouraged the teachers that they got,
to be husband and wife, and brought them in to live in those apartments, then, which was a great thing, until they started finally getting houses, and then the teachers that stayed got themselves a house. At first it was hard for them to give up that cheap apartment living, but then they did. They did, and some of those original teachers, many of them, stayed here and have retired. A whole lot of them stayed.

MACK: In the early days, to attract teachers, our school districts had to keep the teachers’ pay up at a high level, compared to the rest of the state. And Page has always been in the upper 10 percent of pay scale. And they had to do that, because in spite of not being a remote place, it is remote.

WANDA: It is remote, yes.

MACK: There’s no college here.

WANDA: It still is remote.

MACK: Without the college here, they couldn’t get any advanced work. So every summer they’d have to go somewhere else to work toward a master’s or PhD.

WANDA: Mack started working on a community college here years ago. I was just thinking about that, and looking through some of my clippings the other day. We had an election here way back in – was it in the eighties, or before that? –for a community college. And of course Sedona and places like that voted it down. We didn’t get to have it. Mack pushed that, and tried to get it, and they voted it down. Well, a few years ago, then they come back and worked on it. By then, that bunch had quit fussing about it. Well, also, we were going to have the headquarters for it here in Page. They got it with the headquarters in Flagstaff, and then have a satellite school here, you know. But he felt like that would give the Navajo and the white children training here, where they would not go away to get it, and then could get a job here. We had hoped to get it here for our children – Janey, at least was going – but we didn’t get it here. And then she went down to – our school district had to pay for those kids to go to another county.

MACK: The district didn’t pay for it, the county did.
WANDA: The county paid. If you don’t have a county junior college, and you want to go to another one in Arizona, your county has to pay the tuition for you to go there. And it got to be quite a big thing, because all of our children started going to community colleges, instead of the universities the first two years. And that’s the way Janey went, and our three grandchildren all did. They all went down to Mesa Community College. And the county had to pay their tuition.

MACK: This is what finally convinced the Sedona Taxpayers Association and the City of Flagstaff –especially the paper in Flagstaff….

WANDA: That we needed a junior college.

MACK: We needed a community college, because it was costing the county over a million dollars a year in tuition payments to other counties.

WANDA: Well, the first time, you tried to tell ‘em that, and they wouldn’t pay any attention. But they finally caught on the second time and did it. And that’s wonderful for them, and it’s really great for the Navajo children. It’s great for a lot of the adults here.

MACK: We’ve got a lot of people goin’ here. Now we’re getting a complete campus set up up here—branch campus.

Gilmore: (unclear)

WANDA: Yes.

MACK: Once we get the branch campus here, then it can expand to that. Because now we can’t offer a full degree course here. But once we get that, we’ll be able to offer the AA degree here.

WANDA: They get more grown people goin’ back to school all the time there. Just like Steve’s wife’s brother…

Gilmore: (unclear) community colleges, or even full service programs at universities (unclear).

WANDA: Well, Steve’s wife’s brother is with the Park Service here, and he’s taking biology classes. I think it’ll grow. From now on it’ll be wonderful, I think. Something Mack worked for all the years we’ve been here – we finally got it.

[END TAPE 1, SIDE B; BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE A]
Gilmore: This is Part 2 of a Page oral history interview with Mack and Wanda Ward, conducted for the John Wesley Powell Museum, September 20, [1995].

Mack, describe your first store here in Page. What did it look like, inside and out, and kind of what did you stock, if you can remember?

MACK: Outside, the structure itself was three Quonset huts put together. And, I guess it was about forty feet wide and forty feet deep, something like that, not very big. I brought in a bunch of fixtures from an old store in Flagstaff. My partner down in Flagstaff remodeled his store. He saved these old fixtures, and that’s what I brought up – fixtures that were built during the turn of the century – old, heavy, oak stuff. Real nice fixtures, but to fit all those fixtures that came out of a store a hundred feet long and forty feet wide, it was kind of tight. There was no aisle room in the store at all. Of course we had to devote a lot of the store – in order to have a drugstore in Arizona, you have to have at least 300 square feet in the pharmacy area. You take 300 square feet out of that, and that took most of it. We still had cosmetics; big, brand new cigar case; and we even had candy on display – you know boxed candies. It was crowded, very crowded. But we had all the supplies any pharmacy has to have. Of course when you just have two doctors to cater to, then you don’t have quite as much, as wide a variety of stock in the pharmacy area, because you’re limited to what the patients they see, and what they actually like to use. So that’s the main thing that we stocked for the doctors. Then we had vitamins. A full-service drugstore is what it was.

Gilmore: You carried some things like cosmetics, shampoo, filled in the niches that perhaps some of the other stores didn’t have, or wouldn’t have been in the town otherwise.

MACK: That’s right. We brought in several lines of cosmetics, and it was pretty well stocked. In fact, I have some pictures of it, and all you can see is stock. You don’t see where the customer stood when they came in.

WANDA: Didn’t you have a little front step on the front with a covered porch?
MACK: Covered porch in front of the store.
WANDA: Where you sat out there.
MACK: During the strike, that’s where we all sat out there and visited.
Gilmore: It was that quiet?
MACK: It was that quiet, yes.
WANDA: Each of these little quonset hut stores were side-by-side, you know on this dirt, gravel (unclear).
MACK: Right next to me was a restaurant, Bill Lee’s Restaurant, and he had just one Quonset hut for the restaurant, and just one little counter up front. That’s all he had. So he served a lot of people.
Gilmore: The first little restaurant was Bill Lee’s?
MACK: Bill Lee, yes.
Gilmore: Later he had other businesses in town.
MACK: After that burned down, then he built what’s the steak house now, Bill Lee’s Steak House. Bill Lee was a pilot, you know. During World War II, Bill trained Chinese pilots. They brought ‘em over here, and he trained ‘em down in Phoenix, at Luke Field. He trained a lot of Chinese pilots during the war. He had a habit they hated down at Sky Harbor, because when he got about five or ten miles out of the base, he’d holler over his radio, “This is Bill Lee, I’m comin’ in!” And then they had to pick him up right quick, because he meant it, he wasn’t gonna wait for them to tell him when to land – he just came in and landed. (laughter) Everybody else had to get out of his way. (laughter)
Gilmore: Mack, when did you move to your second store?
MACK: 1960?
WANDA: October.
MACK: October of 1960, before we got it finished. We were the first one to move into the new shopping area after it was started.
Gilmore: And that location was approximately where?
MACK: Elm Street.
WANDA: 629 Elm Street, right in the middle of the shopping center down there.
Gilmore: What did that store look like, and how did it compare to the first one?
MACK: It was thirty feet wide by a hundred feet long, so we had 3,000 square feet. And it’s considerably larger than the other one. And it was a complete pharmacy. We even had veterinary supplies. There was a lot of demand for veterinary supplies in this area. People used to come over from Kanab, even, to buy veterinary supplies from us.

WANDA: Navajos for their cattle…

MACK: And then the Navajos, of course, yes – sheep docking stuff.

WANDA: Lots of horse trade, because people had the corrals here, too, you know.

Gilmore: So it was kind of a dual pharmacy in that respect then?

MACK: Well, it’s just we did have a veterinary department. There was a big demand for it. There still could be if we had a private pharmacy in town. But when the chain stores moved in, that just squeezed the individual owners out – can’t compete with ‘em.

Gilmore: How long did you have that store at that location?

MACK: We closed it in 1982, November of ’82, so twenty-two years in that location.

Gilmore: It was…the permanent store was it concrete block?

MACK: Concrete block with all glass front. And one side had a huge plate glass window. The entire front of the store was plate glass, so the entire store was on exhibit from the outside.

Gilmore: There was more room in the aisles in this one?

MACK: Much more room in the aisles, yes. Still the same cigar case, though. Just moved it over. That’s about all we moved over there. We got all new fixtures after we moved into that store, put in all new Streeter fixtures.

Gilmore: What was the business environment in Page like in the early years, working with other members of the business community? How did the business people relate, and how did they work together in the early days?

MACK: We worked very well together. We had a strong Chamber of Commerce. Virtually every business in town was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, so we all worked together. By the time we were able to buy the land and put our buildings on it, we had been – I don’t know whether I told you before, but we had been
expecting to have the Bureau of Reclamation develop a shopping center.

Gilmore: I think you mentioned that previously.
MACK: When we were in the temporary buildings, the Bureau of Reclamation contracted with Coldwell Banker to come in and develop a shopping center so that we could lease from the developer. Instead of having to have privately-owned land, they wanted to control all the land. So they were going to have it developed by Coldwell Banker. So we all leased--made arrangements to lease area from them to put in a drugstore and anybody that wanted to put in a business –Babbitt Brothers, Al Roueche at Page Market – we’d all contracted with them to lease part of the shopping center. Well, it turned out what happened is the Bureau of Reclamation decided not to have Page as the center for distribution of their power from Glen Canyon Dam. Instead, they’d have Montrose control that on a computer bank. So then they lost their employees down here at the dam, went from a potential 350 down to 70. So that brought the town way down. Well, we businessmen didn’t know about this. But apparently Coldwell Banker got wind of it.

Gilmore: Before the business community….
MACK: Before they were able to develop the business community. And when they pulled out, that left us holding nothing but a dry lease there, there’s nothing to do. So the Bureau of Reclamation then had to make arrangements through Congress to sell off the land to the individual businesses so they could build a building.

WANDA: They did develop the land and the streets and the parking lots.
MACK: Yes, they developed the area streets and the parking lot and all of this, but they had to sell lots within that, so that each business could develop their own building.

Gilmore: When Coldwell Banker pulled out because of that, how difficult did it prove to get a loan to construct a new building?
MACK: Fortunately, it was after the strike was over, when this occurred. And with the potential of 10,000 people here for the next four to five years, it wasn’t hard at all to find somebody to finance the
buildings. It was easy, in fact. So we didn’t have to worry about that.

WANDA: But each one was separate, instead of being built as one shopping center.

MACK: Each business had to find their own. But it wasn’t hard to do, because the business potential was fairly great for the next four to five years, however long it took to complete the dam and the powerhouse.

Gilmore: And so individual lenders and individual businesses didn’t take that longer view that the town was going to be much smaller after construction than during?

MACK: Well, yes, they did, but we had to pay off our loans a lot faster.

Gilmore: Oh! That’s how it worked! They put you on a higher payoff schedule.

MACK: Instead of having thirty years to pay off a commercial building like that, they only gave about ten years to get that done.

Gilmore: How big of a factor did that prove to be, after the construction was complete and the town went down?

WANDA: It was hard.

MACK: It was tough. It was rough. Go from 10,000 people down to 1,000 people, you have one-tenth of the business potential there. So you really have to pull in your horns. Actually, it’s one-tenth of the business you were doing, so we went down to where it was just almost mom-and-pop stores on everything that was running.

Gilmore: Did that cause some businesses to fold, as a factor?

MACK: Yes, it did. There’s a lot of people had to leave.

WANDA: In fact Page Market was one, wasn’t it?

MACK: Well, Page Market eventually folded, yes. (WANDA: Al Roueche’s.) Not right off, they didn’t. They was able to sell to someone else.

WANDA: He was closed before 1970.

MACK: He was, yes. Then by that time we had, the plant out here, was startin’ the construction was in the foreseeable future, that we were going to develop that. But there was about a six-year lag there that we didn’t have that. So business was low for a long time.
WANDA: Had to renegotiate your loans and your payments and everything a lot.

Gilmore: Were lenders fairly cooperative with businesses here?

MACK: Yes, they were. The First Interstate Bank, at that time it was – what was it called?

WANDA: First national.

MACK: First National Bank of Arizona was very cooperative in helping us.

WANDA: So were the drug companies, they were very good about it, too.

MACK: Yes, they were. They…

Gilmore: They could see the long-range potential.

MACK: Yes.

Gilmore: In the period of the late sixties, before the generating station was built, were there any other factors that did help business? Was there enough tourism to help?

WANDA: It was beginning to come up some.

MACK: You could see the potential in this very, very well, because from 1963 until 1973, the people coming in to utilize the lake and its facilities was growing every year. Every year we’d see a 20 or 30 percent growth in the number of people coming up. So by 1973, we were having almost 2 million visitors a year. So that was fast – very fast.

WANDA: The minute the lake started filling, they started coming.

Everybody in Arizona has always been interested in water, and as these lakes fill up, they just flock to them, you know.

MACK: Not just Arizona, but California people. We used to have more California people than we did Arizona. They knew where Page was before Phoenix did.

Gilmore: Is that right?!

WANDA: Actually, we had far more visitors from California than Arizona for many years, before Arizona realized that we were in Arizona. You know, the lake isn’t, of course, but the town is, and the headwaters of the lake –I mean the dam – is in Arizona. It took ‘em a long time to realize it was here, but finally they did. Meanwhile we had lots of Californians and Nevada and Utah and all those people –Colorado.
MACK: Most of our thrust in the Chamber of Commerce advertising for the first few years was to let people know that Page was here. We had a hard time selling it to people.

WANDA: Now you see it on the Phoenix news all the time. When we first came here, well, there’s a lot of people here that are Utah-oriented, you know – from Colorado and Nevada – and not too many people Arizona. Mack and I, of course, are Arizona-oriented, because we’re from … But a lot of ’em didn’t even take Arizona papers, they didn’t take the news or anything. But Mack and I kept track of it.

Gilmore: That is an interesting factor, then, isn’t it. Many of the early residents were from a place like Nevada and Utah, more so than Arizona.

WANDA: A lot of them from somewhere else even were – their family was from there. They moved back there to be near their family, see. So we kind of felt a little isolated there for a long time, and we felt like Phoenix and that area were ignoring us, you know, and we had to fight that quite a bit.

MACK: The Salt Lake Tribune was about the only newspaper here besides the local weekly paper. It took a long time before the Republic finally started coming in strong.

Gilmore: But that situation has reversed now?

WANDA: It changed.

MACK: Now it’s reversed. We don’t even get The Salt Lake Tribune distributed.

WANDA: It isn’t distributed anymore here in Page. We still have lots of Utah people, and Colorado and Nevada come to the lake, but Arizona’s found us too.

Gilmore: What was a typical business week like? I mean, what days were you open? Also, were there any days that were particularly busy or particularly slow for any given reason?

MACK: Payday was always busy, yes.

Gilmore: Which day was that, usually?

MACK: I can’t recall what day. They paid on Thursdays, but Thursday the bank was real busy.
WANDA: That was Salt River Project. With the dam, I can’t …that wasn’t their payday was it?

Gilmore: Was that MCS?

MACK: MCS was on Thursdays.

Gilmore: Now were they on a complete pay schedule?

MACK: Weekly pay schedule.

Gilmore: What about Bureau of Rec.?

WANDA: I think they were twice a month.

MACK: I think they were twice a month.

WANDA: The fifth and twentieth or something like that

MACK: (agrees) Theirs was by date, and came in with their checks. But MCS paid off every week. Seems to me like it was Thursday, but I’m not sure. It wasn’t Wednesday, because the doctors took off Wednesday afternoons.

WANDA: As we grew and became a school district, why our school payroll became a little factor too. I mean, that was…. 

MACK: It was the largest payroll we had in town.

WANDA: Larger payroll for our schoolteachers that lived here too. They became a factor in our businesses, too, real fast. And of course your Park Service people, same as the Bureau of Reclamation, you know.

Gilmore: When did that start…the Park Service start having an economic impact?

WANDA: Right from the start, wasn’t it Mack?

MACK: Well, they had (WANDA: They kept growing.) fifteen or twenty employees right off the bat, developing the park itself, putting in their facilities that they had out there. The tourists didn’t start becoming a real factor until 1963, when the dam was starting to back up water, when they closed the diversion tunnels and started to back water up in the lake. Then it started the tourism and fishing industries started to develop then.

WANDA: And it brought more Park Service employees in all the time.

Gilmore: So all of those…. 

MACK: I guess it was ’62 that they closed it.

WANDA: January 1963, when they closed the gates and started backing up water. And within, oh, four months, we had quite a nice little lake
out there, you know. It’s nothing like now, but the people were out on boats already.

MACK: Seems to me like though it was 1962 that *The Greatest Story Ever Told* was here, and we had the baptismal scene.

Gilmore: That was in December 1962. In fact, they closed the spill gates of the dam while they were finishing the last parts of it in January.

MACK: They had to hurry and finish that baptismal scene up at Padre Creek, before it was a lake instead of a creek.

WANDA: They were baptizing all those people: John the Baptist baptizing Jesus there, and they had to hurry, and just barely got it done. The next day, where they had done it was underwater, ‘cause they closed the gates.

MACK: And it was cold! Boy, it was cold that day.

Gilmore: What were your memories of that movie? That was kind of a big event is early Page’s history, the filming of *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.

WANDA: We all went out to the picture sites, yes. They had a great big place where they had camels and all of the animals. That was the favorite thing for everybody in town to do, especially on weekends, to go out and see the animals and the picture sites. Everybody did it. We took our kids out to do it, to see it.

MACK: It was very interesting for me, as a pharmacist here in town, because we had to take care of those people that were – the little community itself was set up in Utah, but they came into Page to trade. And then Dr. Kazan set up a clinic out there one afternoon a week, and I would go out and take orders from him for what they needed, take some of the supplies along. It was a little bit extra-legal to do it that way, but we catered to them as much as we could, of course. But they came into town every day. They were all over town when they weren’t shooting. In fact, I got to be quite friendly with Ed Wynne. He would come in the drugstore just about every night. He and I’d get into a political discussion or something just about every day. He was quite a character.

Gilmore: I understand many people locally did work as extras.

MACK: Yes, they did.
WANDA: They did some in that, but as the years went on, they worked more and more as extras. But we had some in that. I had forgotten…

MACK: Our granddaughter was one of the babies that the centurion was chopping her head off.

WANDA: She was born in November, and they did that in January, and she’s the one that they took out there to have the scenes when they were told to kill all of the boy babies. Well, she was a little dark-haired baby, had black hair, and they used her there for that, and shot the scenes. They had some still pictures, plus she was in it. Of course you don’t see it in the movie, it’s too fast, but she’s the one they used.

MACK: She got her, what do they call it, film actor’s card, when she was three months old.

WANDA: She’s still got her hundred-dollar check, I think it was, she got for that day’s work, too. They still have it for her. And, of course, she’s grown and has children now, you know.

MACK: In fact, she’ll be a teacher up here at school after this [fall?].

Gilmore: You mentioned how it was hard for a business to survive, and that the post-construction period was tough on the business community. How did it affect the rest of, outside the community, community life, day-to-day life and things like that?

MACK: Page was different from any other community. We were isolated. Any way you look at it, we’re 135 miles from the closest town in Arizona – the closest town bigger than us. Of course Fredonia’s in Arizona, but it’s ninety miles away. But south, to Flagstaff, is 135 miles. So we were really isolated during those days. You couldn’t go to the next little town and shop for something you couldn’t find here. Most of the groceries, everything we needed, we found here. But a lot of the people didn’t like to trade with Babbitts, so they’d get in a group and have a buying trip to Flagstaff or Phoenix and bring back a whole truckload of groceries. This happened just about every weekend. And of course they’d buy some of their drugs down there, because they thought that we were ripping them off up here.

WANDA: They thought because we were isolated that you’re naturally uping the prices.
MACK: One item that came along during the construction period was birth control pills. We sold ‘em at twenty-five cents above our cost. They cost us $1.75, we sold ‘em at $2.00. For a long time, it was only ten cents above our cost. We’d sell ‘em at $1.85. So people got used to buyin’ ‘em at that, and the drug company went up another fifty cents. So I wasn’t going to give them away for less than it cost me, so I went up to $2.50, and they’d go to Flagstaff and buy their birth control pills. (laughs) Thought they could get ‘em cheaper.

WANDA: This happens. They don’t have a choice, they have to shop at this store, you know, and they think that you take advantage of them. And we ran into a lot of that.

MACK: Now those same pills sell for $24.00.

WANDA: Things are much higher now.

Gilmore: As parents with several children, how did that decline in population after the dam was finished, how did that seem to impact the children?

WANDA: I don’t think it hurt them at all. They had a great time.

MACK: Our school really didn’t suffer in attendance.

WANDA: We were getting Navajo children all the time, too.

MACK: The older we became, the more students we brought in off the reservation, the longer we were here. So our schools actually maintained a high enrollment all during this period.

WANDA: We’ve always felt Page has had good schools, and our children in those days…. I don’t know how parents do nowadays, but Mack and I always went to anything our children were in. We were up at the school all of the time, at functions that they had, because our children were in them. Maybe you wouldn’t be in a big city. I don’t know, we’ve never lived in a big city, so I wouldn’t know that. But the school was a big part of our life, all of our whole family.

MACK: The whole community.

WANDA: And that’s the way it seems to me, like people were closer to their churches in those days, because it was a place to go, you know, and you had your churches people were very interested in; the
schools they were interested in. I don’t know whether you were
still here when we did finally get a little movie theater.

Gilmore: The Mesa Theater.

WANDA: Was it before that, that we had the drive-in theater?

Gilmore: About the same time.

WANDA: That lasted just a few years. But that was a place to go. And of
course right away we had the rodeos every year. The Saddle Club
put on rodeos every year. That’s always interesting. And so we
had things like that. It seemed to me like we went out — of course
we went out a lot more in those days than we ever do now.

Gilmore: A little more free time because of slower business.

WANDA: Yes. We just don’t get out much now anyway.

Gilmore: You brought up Mesa Theater. I heard that…someone else had
mentioned, and I wonder if you’d confirm this, that for a while
even the Mesa Theater was closed down.

WANDA: Oh yes, it was closed for several years. We had none. Another
thing we had to do — you have to understand — is that there were
very few clothes to buy here. And so like when you go in the fall
to buy your children’s clothes, you either had to go to the catalog
or you had to go to Flagstaff or Phoenix. And Flagstaff really
didn’t have very good shopping. So, most of my children’s clothes
came from the catalog. Or once a year maybe we’d get to Phoenix
for a drug show or something like that. Well, I’d spend my time
down there stocking up on that stuff for the whole year for the
family. All the time we had the drugstore I did this, I did my
shopping once or twice a year when we went to Phoenix for things
like that, that you had to buy for a whole year. ‘Cause you
couldn’t just run to town and buy it when you needed it. If you
had something coming up you needed something for, you couldn’t
run to town and get it. Had to anticipate it. A lot of it was done
over the phone, too, by mail.

MACK: We didn’t have any problem getting our supplies in, our
merchandise in for the store. There was no problem.

WANDA: Good truck service.
MACK: Good truck service in those days. We had about four different truck lines that came in here: two from the north and three from the south. So there was no problem with delivery.

WANDA: Also we had the overnight delivery on drugs that was emergency, by the airplane. We’ve always had an airplane comin’ in, so that was a help, too.

Gilmore: Can you describe the effort and your part in getting the Navajo Generating Station in Page? We already discussed briefly, or previously the construction of Highway 98, but when did the generating station…

MACK: The best place to get all of the background on the generating station itself would be from someone from Salt River Project not from someone here in Page.

WANDA: Yes, but he wants…(Gilmore: But there was a community effort…) there was community effort, plus we also had that fight with the Hopis and the Navajos which you can tell about.

MACK: That was interesting. We had some congressional hearings, after it was decided that this was the place to put the plant, because of our proximity to water. The Navajo Tribe had 50,000 acre-feet of water that was allocated to them from the dam itself, from Lake Powell. So the logical place to build the plant was where it wasn’t too far to pump the water. So in Stew Udall’s visits with Alexander – what was his first name?

WANDA: Well, it doesn’t matter.

MACK: Les Alexander. But anyhow, all these negotiations were going on, and they asked us for our support in this. So the Chamber of Commerce gave them all the support that they could, plus by that time we had the Page City Advisory Council. I was chairman of that for about five or six years, something like that – I’ve forgotten how long. This was when I was chairman of it, was during these negotiations. So Stew Udall would come in quite often, and Les Alexander would come in quite often and ask for our support. So they finally had the congressional hearings here, Senator Fannin held them in the (WANDA: Mesa Theater. That’s when it was closed, I think.) Mesa Theater. It was closed at that time.
WANDA: Yes. You have to understand, something we forgot to tell you, is in the meantime, before that came, a company associated with APS had decided they were going to do some coal mining up on top of the Escalante Mountains right up here. And if they did, Page would be the headquarters for it. And all of us thought, “Oh! This is going to be wonderful!” And of course we were all for it. Well, then we had the environmentalists come out. Mack, you can tell this better than me, of fighting this, you know. And so we went…

MACK: You’ve heard of the Kaiparowits coal deposit up here. But this was going on concurrently with the development of the powerplant out here.

WANDA: But by the time the powerplant started, they had already killed that plant. The environmentalists had already killed that mine. That’s why they put the plant over here.

MACK: They had virtually killed any development on Kaiparowits at all. But the coal mines were already going over at Black Mesa. So they could…they were taking the coal down to southern Nevada, to the power plant down there. And, they were pumping water out of the ground to slurry that. They built a big pipeline to slurry the coal down. So they knew they had a world of coal on Black Mesa. So, that’s where they decided to bring the coal in, from there, by rail, instead of slurring it. It was cheaper actually to bring it in by rail (WANDA: To build a railroad.) than to use more water from the Hopi supplies.

WANDA: So, the Hopis fought it.

MACK: The Hopis and the environmentalists and everybody and his brother from that part of the country was fighting it. Navajos weren’t.

WANDA: When we had those hearings, that’s what a lot of them were fighting, the plant even being built here, because of that, see. And that’s one other reason.

Gilmore: Because of the water issues?

MACK: The proximity to the water.

WANDA: Yes, the water….

MACK: For steam generation.

WANDA: The Hopis were the ones that was really fighting it, because of…
MACK: It wasn’t the Hopis as much as it was ...(microphone jostled, a few words obscured)... so much. They had AIM, the AIM group of Indians.

Gilmore: American Indian Movement.

MACK: The American Indian Movement. We’ve got another name for ‘em, but I won’t mention it on this. If you’ll turn it off a minute, I’ll tell you what we call it. (tape turned off and on) The AIM movement and the environmentalists were the ones who were really against developing this plant, because all the different imagined things that could go wrong. They don’t have any scientific facts, they just hypothesize something, and then that makes it a fact. If they say it could happen, it’s a fact. That’s the way everybody looks at the environmentalists. That’s all they have to do is mention a hypothesis, and that makes it a fact. So you have to fight that. And when we held our meeting here, each one of those people had an opportunity to get up in front of the Senate hearings and talk about why they shouldn’t build it. Well, right in the middle of all these people, Paul Fannin called for me to come up and give my testimony. So I got up and started talking, and all the camera klieg lights were goin’, and they had about three groups from Los Angeles were filming it for their people there. But, all of ‘em were goin’, and I got up and started talkin’, and as soon as they saw what I was talkin’ about, all the klieg lights shut down. (laughs) They quit filming it.

Gilmore: They were expecting someone to get up …

MACK: Oh, yes, they thought I was with that group. So I gave my fifteen- or twenty-minute speech, and Paul thanked me, and I went back to the drugstore. Gosh, it wasn’t thirty minutes later ‘til this whole bunch of photographers were down there, tryin’ to get me to give my speech all over again, because it was accepted very well by everybody there, except those people. I showed that the city of Page, through their representative, was all for this development of the plant. So I refused to do it. I didn’t have time to spend, standin’ on my front porch, goin’ through that speech again, but I gave ‘em a copy of what I’d said.
WANDA: By then, we were getting busier, so the store was pretty busy, and he said, “I can’t give any more time up, to give a speech again.”

Gilmore: That’s an interesting point, was business picking up (unclear).

MACK: By that time, we’d gone up to about 2,000 people in town, so I was busy. I was the only druggist in town, so….

Gilmore: What brought the additional people in before the generating station started?

MACK: Tourism.

Gilmore: That was beginning to take off?

WANDA: Yes.

MACK: By that time, see, that was four years after…. Tourism started building up by 20 and 30 percent per year. So, it was a lot of services…

WANDA: He was the only one in town, and there were times of the day when he was very busy. The doctors would let people go all at once to get prescriptions, and he’d be the only one, you know. So the mornings were very busy, and that was a busy morning, and he had to close up and go over there for an hour. We were watching it on television, they announced that he would give the next speech, and everything just went off, the whole thing went off, the lights were turned off.

MACK: That’s after I started.

WANDA: That was it, you know.

MACK: When they saw what I was talking about.

WANDA: So Mack just said, “I can’t take any more time away from my business to give you the speech again. You should have listened to it then!”

Gilmore: So this was a very pro community effort?

MACK: Oh, yes.

Gilmore: For the generating station.

WANDA: Well, it was for the business community. We did have a few people that fought it—environmentalists. Some people from the Park Service, for instance, were very much against it. We’ve had a few of those.

MACK: There was a lot of stipulations that we as a community put into it, too. We didn’t want pollution. We didn’t want massive amounts
of anything coming out into the atmosphere, because it would ruin our whole area, because we sell our area on the atmosphere, how beautiful it is, clear the skies are. Out on the lake at night you can see the stars, and we certainly didn’t want any smokestacks out there, belching out smoke. So we actually laid down some restrictions that if we approve it, you must meet these specifications. Those were built in.

WANDA: I was noticing in those old papers from the town, where Les Alexander and those people from Salt River Project came up here, and there’d be whole things in the paper telling the people in town what they were doing to ensure we’d have none of that pollution. There was quite a few meetings about that.

MACK: A lot of meetings with that group that was developing it.

Gilmore: So, ultimately it was approved.

MACK: Yes. In fact....

Gilmore: A lot of support from the town and from the Navajo Tribe.

MACK: The original, the way they built it, we had very little pollution. We still have very little pollution. There are some sulfur dioxide – there’s quite a bit of sulfur dioxide going off, but you can .... There’s some days you can see it, some days you never see it, because it’s very little. In fact, as far as harming the environment, the only thing it does is change the...puts off a little film into the air, so that you don’t get true light coming out.

WANDA: Have you ever been here in the wintertime?

Gilmore: Oh, yes.

WANDA: Have you ever noticed that out at the plant there’s steam coming up? (Gilmore: Yes.) Well, we have seen papers, we’ve had sent to us, newspapers from all over the country, and especially a big one down in Miami, Miami Herald, with a big picture, “pollution at Lake Powell.” And, what’s coming out....

Gilmore: A photograph of the steam coming out?

MACK: The steam.

WANDA: Not a thing out of the stacks, but it’s...

Gilmore: There was no attempt to explain that that’s water vapor?

WANDA: Oh! Big articles about how terrible it is that we’re polluting the atmosphere. We had ‘em sent to us. Our son Phillip was going to
school down there one year, and he’d send ‘em to us. So we gave them to the Salt River people, so they could try to refute this. I can remember one from Las Vegas. Remember? We even saw one from Las Vegas one time, doing that, too. And they should know better in Las Vegas.

MACK: The amount of sulfur coming off there is a tremendous amount of sulfur coming out of the stacks, and if it was anywhere else in the world, it would cause sootification of the lakes and all of this. But our lakes are so basic in nature. Basic, that’s all you can say – acid and base. Well, sulfur dioxide is an acid, so actually in our environment, the sulfur dioxide improves our soil content, improves the water quality, because it takes it from a basic, high pH – our water down here in the lake is about 8.5 pH, and that’s highly basic. So, actually the sulfur dioxide would improve the quality of the lake, this lake. And also the soil. The soil here is highly basic. It has very little acid in the soil. It could use the sulfur dioxide. But it does cut down on the light quality at times. The Grand Canyon is the one they made the big fuss about, because maybe three days a year the wind is blowing towards the Grand Canyon, so the sulfur dioxide from here gets down there. But most of the sulfur dioxide getting into the canyon and that they take pictures of, is coming in from Southern California and Nevada. But they’re claiming it’s from the Page plant.

WANDA: Most of our winds here go the other way.

MACK: Could actually blow the other way, yes. They tested it (unclear). They tested it, they put some tracers in the stacks out here, so they could actually pick up to see where it was going. And they did pick some of it up down in the Grand Canyon – those traces showed up. But that tracer is so sensitive, that one molecule will show up in their instruments. It actually travels clear around the world and is picked up again. So, it’s that sensitive. They picked up some of it in London.

Gilmore: What was the effect of the generating station construction, and how quick did the community, and then the business community feel …. You’ve said there was already some growth due to tourism, but when and how fast did things start taking off?
MACK: Once they let the contracts, it was almost immediate they started moving in.

Gilmore: What year was that?

WANDA: In 1970, I believe – ’71 or ’72. I can’t remember exactly.

MACK: I think it was 1970 is when they finally got underway.

WANDA: It was in full swing in ’72, yes.

MACK: In ’68 is when they finally started building the road. And then that was finished finally in ’71 or ’72, ’73, somewhere along in there. By that time, though, the plant was going full blast.

WANDA: The first thing Salt River Project sent certain men in here immediately, as soon as they were going to have them. We had quite a few men that came in right immediately. Some of their top management people were sent here to get them places to live and get them settled.

MACK: The first thing I had to do was – this is very interesting, they were studying the impact on the school district – they were saying they had a factor that they were using, a per-family factor, to see what the impact would be on the school, and how many people would come in with each family. So they had a factor of every family would bring in five people. In other words, a family was two plus three. And that didn’t work out under anything that ever happened during the construction of the dam. It averaged about one child per construction worker. So, they figured if there was a factor of three there, instead of one, that we had figured, that that would impact the town tremendously. Therefore, the town itself should develop all of the facilities to house these people. So, they were demanding that the people in town build the houses or build the trailer park or whatever you wanted to do to house their people. Well, we went back and got the statistics from the dam, and showed them that they were way off in their …and they weren’t going to build anything at all. And we showed them the statistics from the dam the average construction worker only has one child, so it’s not going to impact the school or the community enough so that we’ll have a surplus of capital that we can invest in that – especially if it’s going to be torn down in three years, after the construction. There’s not that much capital available from their impact so that
we could do this. So we finally convinced them that it was up to
them to build a trailer park to house their people.

Gilmore: Which is the present-day Lake Powell Mobile Home…
WANDA: I don’t know whether you remember, it was called Vermillion
Court before.

MACK: It was Vermillion Court. They sent in an engineering group here,
and they laid it all out and built it. The impact then on our school
system, up until the time they started hiring operating people, was
just what we had predicted it would be. It averaged about one
child per family. But then, of course, once they started hiring
operating personnel, that changed quite a bit.

Gilmore: So, if you would have agreed to their plan, gone with their
numbers, you would have way overdeveloped Page.

MACK: Oh, way overdeveloped Page. It wouldn’t have overdeveloped
Page, but it would have strapped the capital of the community
tremendously. And they are the ones who needed the housing, not
us. And there wasn’t enough potential revenue from that housing,
since the contract said they had to tear it down at the end of
construction. So when the construction was over, the city council
asked them not to tear it down, that the city would take it over, and
develop it from there. So, they just left it the way it was. It was
quite an addition to the city that way.

[END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A; BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE B]

Gilmore: From what you’ve indicated, it sounds as though the operation of
the plant may have had a bigger impact on population than the
construction.

MACK: Oh, yes! It didn’t have as much impact as far as volume of
business, because during construction we had 10,000 people here.
So volume of business at that time was up quite a bit. The hospital
was busier. It was just that many more people, so there’s much
more utility of the community’s offerings.

Once the power plant was starting to produce power, and
bringing in operating personnel, then we had a steady, (WANDA:
And homes began to be built.) and man, it was steady. Homes
were being built – going from trailer living to actual home
construction, this sort of thing. The community started to grow,
and this growth was more gradual and not such a sudden impact. As it turned out, it was a continuous growth. We dropped down to about 4,000 people, but now we’re back up to close to 8,000 would be my guess now. So, we have a continuous growth that’s better for business, actually.

Gilmore: Than the rapid up and down, construction cycles.

WANDA: You saw more homes just being built all the time. People had been living in trailers, they got a home then, you know – a lot of them, for the first time.

MACK: And this type of permanent population, then your factor impacting your schools is up to that 1.3 that they were talking about. These are local people now, and their families are larger. And most of the operating personnel coming in off the reservation, those families are always bigger than ours. The average Indian family is quite a bit larger than the average Anglo family – certain of the population excepted, of course. (laughter) I know some of the LDS families that have twelve and thirteen people in the family. I’m speaking of the average.

Gilmore: Actually, studies have shown in recent years, size of LDS families, at least in Utah, is starting to decline.

MACK: It is declining, yes. And so is the Catholic family.

Gilmore: Describe the effort for Page to go from Bureau of Rec. to self-governing, and your part in it. And, also, why did it come about as quick as it did? I mean, Boulder City, Nevada, was a Bureau of Rec. town. It didn’t become self-governing until twenty years after completion of Hoover Dam. Page did it in ten years.

MACK: Because the Bureau of Reclamation had been through this at Boulder City and several other places in Nebraska and here. They were determined that we would be self-governing and incorporated by the end of construction of the dam. This was their goal. That’s why they set up the advisory council. Our first instruction was to incorporate the community — study toward incorporation. And some of ‘em were gung ho, like the Bureau of Reclamation man was all for it. You’ll be talkin’ to him in a day or two. But his instruction, of course, was, “Let’s get this going so that we can get
WANDA: But meanwhile, you had the Park Service that had decided they were going to run it from Montrose, so the Park Service....

MACK: Not the Park Service.

WANDA: The Park Service was going to keep Page as merely a camp here, to run the Park Service. So we didn’t have any help from them, see – business. We were all here, we’d put our money into this town. We didn’t want it to become like Grand Canyon Village was.

MACK: And like Boulder was for several years.

WANDA: But that’s what they wanted – the Park Service wanted it to become.

MACK: But the Bureau of Reclamation was insistent that we incorporate as soon as possible. Nobody had really studied what it takes in Arizona to incorporate a community, what type of revenue you have coming in order to operate a community. So the first thing that – well, I don’t know how many of ‘em did it, but I started studying immediately, traveling to every tax meeting that I could go to in the state and county, to see what taxes would be available to us. Because I knew that because of my experience in school districts that you have to have a tax base in order to operate any type of incorporation. So I started studying what our tax base would have to be before we could afford to incorporate. So the more I studied this, the more I knew we weren’t ready for incorporation. So I kept dragging my feet for several years, until we got what we needed in order to be able to afford incorporation.

We met with Stew Udall on several occasions to see just exactly what the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Interior, would be willing to turn over to the community once we incorporated, and when we got ‘em down to where the only thing they were gonna keep was the Bureau warehouse here in town. Everything else would be turned over to the city, intact. Of course they reneged on this a while back. The one building over here by the hospital that’s now the Western Navajo – whatever they call that – the old city office. That was agreed to by the Bureau of
Reclamation to turn that over to the city of Page. Somebody found a loophole somewhere. I still don’t understand it. I was talking to one of the city fathers last night to see why in the world that was turned over to them instead of to the city, because we could have used it at the hospital.

WANDA: They gave it to the Park Service.

MACK: Well, Park Service was temporarily using it. That’s all they had, was temporary use.

WANDA: That’s what they used it for many years, is the Park Service headquarters.

MACK: But they didn’t own it. It wasn’t in their docket at all.

WANDA: It was still owned by the Bureau of Reclamation.

MACK: Still used by the Bureau of Reclamation.

WANDA: I didn’t realize that. But, I mean, who had the ownership, though?

MACK: Bureau of Reclamation.

WANDA: That’s what I was going to say.

MACK: But it was one of those things, we allowed them to go ahead and have Park Service use that. This was my understanding, that the Park Service could go ahead and use that for their office buildings until such time as they got their headquarters. But I’m no longer in the city government, or I’d have been fightin’ against turnin’ that over to the Navajo, because they have no prior claim on it whatsoever. They claimed that they had first rights: if the Bureau of Reclamation wasn’t going to use it, they had first rights because this land was turned over from the reservation. Well, that doesn’t hold water.

Gilmore: Wasn’t there a land trade for Page made for some land along the San Juan River?

MACK: Way up in Southern Utah.

WANDA: Actually, we wanted that when the Park Service finished with it, which was just a few years ago, for something to help the hospital, you know, expansion. But they gave it instead to the Navajo.

MACK: The Navajos claim that if the Bureau of Reclamation wasn’t going to use it, then they had first claim on it because this used to be Navajo land.
WANDA: If that’s the case, they could take every piece of property in town.

MACK: Everything. If somebody moved out of a house, they could claim that too.

WANDA: Of course some of the Navajos say that!

MACK: Well, that’s not so. They were well compensated for the land that they turned over to us. But be that as it may, they’ve got it now, and I don’t think we’ll ever be able to get it back. Anyhow, we kept putting off until we good get exactly what we wanted from the Department of the Interior, before we’d be willing to incorporate. Well, we finally determined that we had enough revenues coming in from gasoline tax rebate from the state—communities are entitled to so much of the gasoline tax, so much of the sales tax, (unclear) and just all sorts of little items like this—but still not enough to operate a community, and certainly not enough to develop the hospital up to standards. So one of the demands that we made, they put $50,000 operating capital into the bank for the hospital, plus to spend $50,000 bringing it up to date. We had to have a new warehouse storage area built onto the hospital. So they did all this and put $50,000 in the bank for operating capital. They gave the city a flat sum as the starting capital to use, and then turned over all of the land, intact, so that we could use that land sales as a capital base for the city.

WANDA: All that hadn’t been sold yet.

MACK: All that hadn’t been sold, and that was most of it. There’s only about two sections that’d been sold, and it is seventeen sections, is what we have, that we took from the Indians, that they withdrew from the reservation and traded it for about 1,700 sections up in Southern Utah. It’s a big piece of land up there, a whole bunch of land. I think it’s 1,700 square miles is what they gave ‘em. And that’s [unclear] and grazing lands, is where they were up there.

And finally we determined that we would be able to operate the city on the income that would be coming in. You can’t depend on tax base in this community, if you’re talking about property tax. There just isn’t enough assessed valuation in the community to
make a dent in the operating costs of a city from property tax. So one of the first things that we insisted when we incorporated, that there would be no property tax. So we didn’t depend on that in order to operate the city.

Plus the Bureau of Reclamation then turned over a block of power to the city. And this was the big thing that they turned over to us. We got that at 6 mils, and then we could turn around and sell it to Arizona Public Service for a cent and a half. There is quite a profit there in that turnover, and we didn’t have to “wrap the package and mail it,” you know. So we were making $1.5 million a year in the sale of power. And that could be used in the city coffers as part of the cost of operating the city. So that was the biggest revenue that we had coming into the city. So we figured then we were able to – financially we were able to go ahead and incorporate. So then I started backing incorporation immediately. It wasn’t just my efforts, everybody’s efforts by that time.

WANDA: The year when it finally became incorporated, Mack was off the advisory council for the first time. That last two years, he was off, he hadn’t really got out and campaigned for it.

MACK: I didn’t want it.

WANDA: Didn’t want it, and he wouldn’t get out and campaign, so he lost that election and he wasn’t on those two years that they were doing the final.

MACK: I was still on the school board.

WANDA: He was still on the school board and everything else. So he wasn’t there. When they list the first council, why, they’re listing the ones that were on the Page Advisory Council that did the incorporation. He wasn’t on that. But when they elected for the first real council, he ran for it then, and was elected on that.

Gilmore: But Page was incorporated then in….

WANDA: March 1975.

Gilmore: And you’re on the first….

MACK: Elected council.

Gilmore: What was it like, the first couple of years of self-governing? How did things go. Was it smooth, was it rocky?
MACK: It was tough. Within six months the entire council, except for one person, was (WANDA: Involved in a recall.) on a recall election. That was six months after we were elected.

Gilmore: Why was that?! I imagine this transition had to have been rocky, but that sounds pretty extreme.

MACK: We had a man here in town that was stirring up all sorts of trouble. Our newspaper got behind that man, and one of the councilmen was in on the same committee, and he was the one who wasn’t on the recall.

WANDA: And our mayor was recalled.

(all talking at once, none discernable)

WANDA: But he was the only one that it worked – the others were not recalled.

MACK: Larry was recalled.

Gilmore: What was the alleged reasoning for that?

MACK: There was no reason. All made-up reasons. It was ridiculous. I wish I had some of those articles they put out.

WANDA: There in the paper. We still had some construction people here then, a few. And some of those people were always unhappy with the business people in town. The Salt River Project people were brand new to town, too. They were new, they didn’t know anything about…. The Salt River Project people still thought that Page merchants were gouging. So they were against anything that the Page merchants were…. And I don’t know whether that’s natural or not. This group of people, a whole bunch of ‘em, were very adamant that they were being gouged.

WANDA: Three of our council members were merchants. Three or four? Three, and so that was something. Then there was also the bitterness that had been over – before they became that, they had the franchise come out for APS, and a lot of people wanted the town to take over APS. They had to let a ten-year contract. And there was a lot of those Salt River people that thought we should run the power, instead of selling it to APS. And when it didn’t win, why, a lot of them were very unhappy with the council, see, for that.

MACK: And I led that fight.
WANDA: And Mack made a mistake and led that fight, and of course they held that against him.

MACK: (unclear) And they held that against me. I was really the only one they held that against. I still feel that (WANDA: We did the right thing.) I did the right thing. And I still think that a municipality operating a power company like this is wrong. I don’t think a municipality should…

WANDA: They let them have a ten-year contract, and then at the end of that ten years, they had that come up again. Of course Mack and I by then had just – we wouldn’t have anything to do with anything like that. It lost, and they got the power system. And they’ve done a good job. Since they got Kent Romney as the manager of it, they’ve done a great job.

MACK: There’s no way that it can’t make money. When you start depending on …. The one thing that we were able to convince them of was they should not use the revenues from the power company to operate the city. If they start depending on those revenues to operate the city then they’re lost. They have to develop other revenues to operate the city. The city of Williams did this for years – let the power company run down to where they couldn’t afford to bring it back up to snuff. So then they had to turn around and ask Arizona Public Service to come in and buy them out.

WANDA: See, I was working for the city, and I realized though, that by running their own power, they could have cheaper garbage, cheaper sewer, cheaper water. See it subsidized those things. Well, when they fixed this with Page up, they fixed it up where that couldn’t subsidize those things. So ever since they set up the utility company, our water and our sewer and our garbage has been going up constantly. Our power’s cheaper, but the other things are higher. See, they didn’t set it up the way it should have been set, I don’t think. Public services just…the electric company is just amassing a lot of money that they haven’t any use for right now, and the city could have used some of that to help keep our other services down, you know. So, it wasn’t set up …

MACK: I don’t like to see the city depending on that type of revenue.
WANDA: Yes, but if it helped the people. That was the idea in Williams, it helped the people to have that.

MACK: And use those funds to subsidize something, but don’t ever let the city start depending on it. The City of Mesa for years had no taxes. They bragged about it. Because their power company was making so much money.

WANDA: For Salt River…

MACK: No, that was the City of Mesa owned the distribution in Mesa, for years. And they did real well, no city sales tax, no city property tax. They were really making money. First thing you know, they started losing money in the power company, and they almost had to sell it to Salt River Project, because of losing so much money. So then they started taxing in the proper places to operate the city, instead of depending on the revenues from the power company. And now the power company is still owned by Mesa. But they’re not subsidizing everything in the city with the revenues.

Gilmore: Were there any particular problems at first, just running the infrastructure, that transition from Bureau of Rec. to (unclear).

MACK: That was very smooth. That went very smooth, yes. One of the rangers retired, of course, Don Kofford quit. But the other captain of the rangers was McAlister…

WANDA: Well, Don stayed for a while.

MACK: Just a short while, until he could retire.

WANDA: That was why those people got mad, was ‘cause of him.

MACK: But Don retired, and McAlister took over. So, most of the rangers just fell right into the city.

WANDA: Into the police.

MACK: Police Department. That was smooth, that part of it. We had to hire a city manager and a city clerk, go out and hire a complete new staff of city employees.

WANDA: Actually, if there hadn’t been this other controversy, I think it would have been really great, but that controversy came right along and spoiled it.

Gilmore: We discussed the Chamber of Commerce before, and it was very active in the early days in promoting Page. What were some of the
other things that the Chamber has done, such as promoting the motion picture industry in the area?

MACK: When they brought *The Greatest Story Ever Told* to town, to start the production, they couldn’t move to Arizona, they had to stay in Utah, because of the compensation laws, Industrial Commission of Arizona, which at that time was the insuring agent for all industrial accidents. No other insurance company could sell industrial insurance in the state of Arizona – it had to go through the State Industrial Commission. And during the filming of *The Searchers*, John Wayne and John Ford made out on the reservation, they had a terrible accident, and one of their stunt men was killed, and it cost them millions of dollars to compensate that family for his death. So John Wayne and John Ford said that was the last movie they would ever make in Arizona, until the laws were changed. So when *Greatest Story* came in here and were discussing with us what facilities we had to accommodate them and everything, they couldn’t move their 1,100-person town into Arizona, they had to stay in Utah, so they’d get away from the Industrial Commission in Phoenix.

WANDA: They had their own industrial insurance that they already had, see, but Arizona didn’t recognize it.

MACK: And Utah at that time allowed it, and Arizona didn’t allow them to bring their own insuring agent in. So this is one thing the Chamber of Commerce immediately…. What was the guy’s name that produced that?

WANDA: George Stevens.

MACK: George Stevens. I had a long conversation with him and asked him if there wasn’t something that we could do to change this so that we could get the filming industry back into Arizona. And he said, “That’s the only thing that’s holding it up, is the Industrial Commission’s regulations.” Every year during the early days we had what they call the Flying Farmers of Arizona, and we’d have them fly all of the legislature up to Page.

WANDA: The new legislators.

MACK: The new legislators up to Page, and we’d meet with them, and hold a dinner for ‘em, and really treat ‘em royally, you know. So by
that time, a friend of ours from Williams was President of the Senate, Fred Udine. So we made sure that he came up, and I got him cornered while he was here, and we took him out on the lake, and I got him up in the cabin of one of the boats that we had out, and talked to him about this problem that we had with the movie companies. And we had about a four- or five-hour discussion on this, and he went back to the legislature then, and they passed a bill that would allow private industry to come in and start writing industrial insurance. And it was the Page Chamber of Commerce has been given credit for that change in our state laws. And almost immediately then, the movie companies started coming back into Arizona.

WANDA: Not only did they come in here, but if they had industrial insurance somewhere else (MACK: They could bring it in.) they’d bring it in, and it was good in Arizona. Before it wasn’t.

MACK: They did away with that regulation.

Gilmore: Brought Hollywood back to Northern Arizona then.

Both: To all of Arizona.

WANDA: It wasn’t just here, it was all of Arizona. See, before that, they used to make movies down in Old Tucson and all of that, and then they had quit because of that. Well, now, that’s a going concern down there at Tucson, that Old Tucson Movie Set, where they make movies all the time.

MACK: They were still making small movies, (WANDA: Not many.) inexpensive, a few. But they didn’t dare come in with anything that had any danger involved in it, where the industrial insurance would be....

WANDA: They built up gradually over the years since then. There’s just more and more being made in Arizona now, because of that. And not only here, but all over Arizona.

MACK: In fact, right here in Page there’s been several large movies produced here since – several westerns and several TV shorts and all that sort of thing. It’s been quite a – movie industry has come back to the state. Page Chamber of Commerce has been given credit for that.
WANDA: And then we have an Arizona Film Commission now, which they belong to. Steven and the Chamber of Commerce manager are members of the Arizona Film Commission, and they all work on that.

MACK: There’s another thing that we were able to do through the legislature too. At that time, we were quite influential with the legislature.

Gilmore: Huh. That’s kind of hard to imagine. This little town way up …

WANDA: I think they saw the potential of this area, the legislature did.

MACK: And then we had friends in the legislature. Paul Fannin was one of our good friends. He was governor of the state. We were able to influence him quite a bit.

The other thing that we had problems here: Arizona had a law – and still has a law – that if you move into Arizona, the day you start work, you have to buy that a license for your automobile. Not tomorrow, you have to have that the day you start to work, or they can pick you up and give you a ticket for working in Arizona and having an out-of-state plate. So that’s one of the things. We had a lot of people coming in from Utah, working at the plant, working at the dam. The plant wasn’t here then, but working at the dam. And they were being ticketed by the highway patrol. And there was a lot of turmoil among the workers coming in from Utah about that. Glen Canyon City, just out here fourteen miles, and people living there and coming in. And they all had to have a Utah license, ‘cause that’s where they lived. So we were able to go to the legislature and get them to pass a law that anybody who lives within twenty-five miles of the Arizona border could have a special dispensation to come in and work within the state without having to license their car in the state. And that passed. So now anybody living in Kanab, they only live seven miles from the border, even though they drive eighty-five miles to go to work.

Gilmore: Seventy-some odd miles from Page, it’s only three or four miles from the Arizona border. That was a clever piece of legislation, it sounds like.

MACK: We were able then to get that. It didn’t just affect here, because where we were raised, people living in Virden, New Mexico,
worked in Arizona, and they were required to have a dual license on their car.

WANDA: They all worked in Morenci, Arizona.

MACK: That cleared them too. Then Yuma had the same thing.

WANDA: Every place where there was a border.

MACK: [Ames?], California, a lot of border….

Gilmore: Page has had a strong, very active Rotary Club since the very earliest days. What are some of its significant accomplishments?

MACK: Rotary came later. The Lions Club was the strong one there for the first few years. Lions Club was the only one here for several years. But then the Rotary Club came along, and of course we Lions used to say “that’s the old man’s club. Lions is for the active ones.”

WANDA: Wasn’t it here by about ’63?

MACK: It was about ’63 or ’64 – after the dam started building up, the Rotary Club was formed. By that time, the Lions Club had died because construction people left. In ’65, there just was no more Lions Club left, ‘cause I was the last one left. No, Dan Brown and I were the last ones left.

WANDA: So they ended up joining Rotary so they could….

MACK: But anyhow, we joined the Rotary Club, and tried to keep the Lions Club going. We eventually just became Rotarians. I guess that’s ‘cause we got older and (unclear).

WANDA: Well, later there was a Lions Club, became active again. But meanwhile, the Rotary Club has been the most active.

MACK: The first thing that the Rotary Club – one of the first things that they did – was the Lions Club challenged them to build a townhouse. We would jump in with …. The townhouse was built by the Page Recreation Association. That was the people behind it that were doing it. But they were getting help from all over town, so the Lions Club challenged the Rotary Club to take on projects. And we put in a lot of effort and time and money into developing the townhouse. Got it built in, oh gosh, way less than a year.

WANDA: The Rotarians were the first ones that put the little ramadas to eat there in the park. And now after all these years, they’ve been
replaced by new ones, which I think the Rotary Club has done that too.

MACK: That’s another thing about that: the Rotary Club put the tables in. And, the Lions Club were going to go them one better, so we put the covers over the tables.

WANDA: And, of course, you had to put everything, you know, that would stand lots of hard use. And so I think in the last few years those have been replaced by (unclear).

MACK: Citizens Rotary Club has really taken over a lot of projects in the community. We’ve done a lot of things.

WANDA: I think we told you the other day about some of the projects they’ve done, but we didn’t mention the fact that they’ve bought equipment needed at the hospital. You know, when they needed some special equipment, they’ve done that, too, which is a wonderful thing too. Rotary Club has done lots of good for Page.

MACK: The Rotary Club put in the first scoreboard for the ball field, too. We developed the cemetery.

Gilmore: In the early days that was a terrible (unclear).

WANDA: It was very, very primitive.

MACK: During the time when there wasn’t much activity uptown, I used to close every Wednesday afternoon, ‘cause Dr. Kazan was closed. There wasn’t any sense of me …. So I closed on Wednesday afternoons. And for two or three years, a fellow by the name of Arlet Lane – he was one of the early construction workers on the dam – he was their safety officer.

WANDA: He worked for Bureau of Reclamation. He came here from Boulder City.

MACK: He and I would go down and start workin’ on the cemetery. We shot in all of the lines for the walkways and the roads. We built the sidewalks and all this sort of thing. It was just a whole bunch of graves, that’s all it was. So we lined it up the way it was supposed to be. We used some of the boards from the old – tore down some buildings that the Bureau of Reclamation had, and used the lumber to line the sidewalks in, so we could demark ‘em, so eventually we could put the sidewalks in and the road in, and curbs. So after doing that for a couple of years, and getting it all
lined up, then one of the first projects that the Rotary Club did with their annual party – what do they call that hundred-dollar-a-plate…

WANDA: Stag party.

MACK: Now they call it the Bill Warner Memorial Party. But some of the first money that we used was to put in the sidewalks, and put in the road and gutters, and build a building down there that houses all the equipment that they use in the cemetery.

WANDA: And they put that memorial (unclear).

MACK: Plus that big memorial wall back…. Have you been down to the cemetery?

Gilmore: Yes.

MACK: That was the first thing we built, was that memorial wall there – memory wall, we call it. And they call that the Harriet Smith Memorial.

WANDA: Harriet Smith was a nurse that worked down on the dam with the men, and then later she worked up in the hospital, and then later at Dr. Kazan’s clinic, and everybody loved her very dearly. And she died along about that time.

MACK: She had an aneurysm on her kidney.

WANDA: And so they dedicated it to her.

MACK: That’s one of the first projects that the Rotary Club had, was developing that.

Gilmore: What changes have you seen since the very earliest days, say, coming up to present with the Navajo Tribe? Population changes, cultural changes. What was their role in the early days versus say what it is today?

MACK: When we first came up to Page, most of the transportation into Page – there were no roads from the reservation, except to Coppermine. So most of the people who came into Page were in wagons – wagons and horseback. There’d be, across from my temporary drugstore, was a florist’s shop, where he sold plants for people for developing their lawns and such. Well, he would have eight or ten horses tied up to the fence over at his place. He called it the Green Thumb. A fellow by the name of Lamoreaux [phonetic] had it.

WANDA: From Cedar City or St. George.
Gilmore: Scott Lamoreaux.

MACK: Scott Lamoreaux.

WANDA: Scott was a boy in your class wasn’t he?

Gilmore: [Yes?]

MACK: But these horses would be lined up over there, tied up to his fence. And that’s their means of transportation, wagons and horses – very few pickups came in off the reservation. And since then, we’ve watched the means of transportation has increased to where it’s gone from several pickups to vans and now (WANDA: Trans-Ams.) sports cars. (unclear)

WANDA: Now it’s up to Broncos, now.

MACK: Now it’s up to four-wheel drives, Broncos, (unclear).

Gilmore: Is that any indication of a change in prosperity?

MACK: Change in their living style.

WANDA: Several years ago we got…. We got a Page Ford coming in here now, but several years ago we had one come in, it was about seven or eight years ago, and they sold more Ford pickups for about three years than anywhere else in the whole – his name was Bob MacIntyre out of Salt Lake City – he sold more Ford pickups than any other dealership in Arizona. But then it died off, and he went out of business and left. And then this one come in, and they just sell Ford pickups and Ford Explorers and stuff just like mad. You’ve never seen anything like it. This man keeps one of the biggest inventories there is of new vehicles down there.

MACK: One of the biggest changes in the Navajo Tribe, though, coming into Page, is in the early days we only had three in JoEllen’s class in school, graduating in 1960. Since then, each year, they’ve increased in numbers, and their style of dress has become more anglicized every year. Even the older people – not all of them – but most of the older people now are even wearing regular clothes.

WANDA: And our school system now is about 67 percent Navajo. Sixty-seven percent Navajo!

Gilmore: That’s an important point to make in Page’s early days. This was a sparsely populated part of the reservation.

WANDA: Now they’ve all moved in here.

MACK: It was actually designated as wilderness area.
WANDA: Have you been out to Lechee since you’ve come back?
Gilmore: Yes.
WANDA: I think they claim that’s close to 2,000 people out there.
Gilmore: Incredible change, it used to be…. 
WANDA: It was nothing to start with. Maybe one family lived out there, and then two or three families lived out at Coppermine. Well now that’s just all built up. They’ve all moved in here for the work.
MACK: When we first started the school here, we had one school bus that went out to Coppermine. We wore one school bus a year out on the Coppermine Road. And it would bring in thirty kids from that entire district. Well, now we have four or five buses that run out that way. In fact, on each of our lines we have four to six buses. So we’re bringing in a lot of youngsters off the reservation.
WANDA: They finally paved that road all the way to Coppermine in about 1985, sometime along then, they paved it all the way out there.
MACK: Of course the one to Kaibeto was finished in about ’73 or somewhere along there.
WANDA: Our buses go clear out to the… you know where you turn off to go to Kayenta? The buses go right close to there, is how far. And the rest of ‘em now go to Kayenta.
MACK: I don’t know whether I told you about Highway 98.
WANDA: You told him the other day.
MACK: Did I tell you the background on how we were able to get that with the state?
WANDA: Isn’t that on tape?
MACK: I didn’t tell you that Wanda’s cousin was the Northern Arizona Highway Engineer for the State of Arizona.
WANDA: And that was another thing that helped.
MACK: Yes, we had a lot of pull in the highway department at that time. When we dedicated that, he was the one who came up from the state. I guess I was emcee on that, and we had several highway presentations.
WANDA: The interesting thing about that might be to you is that he came up here for when they had that ground, when they dedicated it. He was going from here on up to St. George for the dedication of that new highway there, he had been the…
Gilmore: Oh, the Virgin Gorge portion of Interstate 15.

WANDA: They were just starting or working on it, or finishing it, one.

Gilmore: Seventy-three.

WANDA: Yes, that’s when that was. And then after that he worked on that new Copper Canyon Road down on the other side of Camp Verde, and then he retired soon after that.

MACK: He built a lot of roads in this state, definitely.

WANDA: He was engineer in the State of Arizona for about nearly forty years when he retired. And the man that was over him all those years was a man from Fredonia, of all things. Can you imagine, a man from little ol’ Fredonia. And of course my cousin was raised over in Duncan, which is a little town, too. They were the top engineers for the State of Arizona for many years in highway building.

Gilmore: This was a question I’ve also had on the list. How did…say, going back to the earliest days of government under Bureau of Rec., and now under civil government, what are some big differences in how things are done between those two styles of government? Are there any real major differences in how the community is run, between the two types of government?

WANDA: One difference you might want to know is the difference in running the hospital after they became a city, and then until it become a hospital district. That’s something you might bring in on there, too.

MACK: That we haven’t talked about yet, (WANDA: Very important.) and this is one place that….The Bureau of Reclamation had a contract with the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, out of Illinois, to operate the hospital. This is after the construction of the dam was completed. MCS no longer ran it, so they contracted with the sisters to come in and operate our hospital. They ran it until the time that we incorporated, did a good job. In fact, they were autonomous. The Bureau furnished the money that they needed, and the sisters ran it the way they ran hospitals. And as soon as the city was incorporated, then the hospital…they didn’t want to run the hospital for the City, because they knew they were no longer autonomous. That was the major reason they left. And they knew
that there would be all types of birth control and this sort of thing going on in our hospital, as well as all types of operations I think they didn’t approve of. So they didn’t want to run it for the City. There was no way for them, operating for the City, to keep the City out of the operation. So, they left, and left it up to the City to operate it.

The first thing that the city council, the first elected council, had to do was to take over the operation of the hospital. I figured that some way we had to get control of the hospital so that we could operate it more efficiently. So our city manager that the first city council had hired said that he could do both jobs: he could operate the city as well as operate the hospital. He didn’t know that there was quite a job in managing the hospital. He did it for the first year, and I think we put in a whole $300,000 that we had to supplement. So the next year we decided we’d better go out and hire a group to come in and take over the hospital to operate it.

The City would guarantee funds. So we got the (WANDA: Lutheran Hospitals…) Lutheran Hospitals and Home Society out of Fargo, North Dakota. We gave the contract to them to operate the hospital. They said that they would operate it, as long as we subsidized their losses. So that’s the contract we had with them. So they came in and operated very efficiently, but they lost $300,000.

WANDA: For three years, wasn’t it?

MACK: For three years straight. Each year it was losing at least $300,000 that the city had to subsidize.

WANDA: Plus there was no growth in the hospital, either, no…

MACK: Well, the City couldn’t afford to put any money into it at all. We had to put the $300,000 in. Some of that was for capital improvement, but not very much. So then a group of us got to talking about incorporating this northern part of Arizona as a hospital district, so that the district could come in and be a taxing entity that could develop the hospital too.

WANDA: Still had to hire somebody to run it.

MACK: Oh, yes, a hospital district can’t run a hospital. The only thing they can do is capitalize it. So you have to either form a separate
corporation to operate the hospital, or go out and secure an operator. So what we did was we got – by forming a district as a taxing entity, you can raise a lot of money if you incorporate enough capital assets into it. So we naturally took the plant into it, took Wahweap into it.

WANDA: We should, they all use it.
MACK: That’s right, it’s worthwhile to them. But then we had a big tax base to operate the hospital. So we set it up and contracted with Samaritan Hospital.

WANDA: Good Samaritan Hospital.
MACK: Samaritan (WANDA: Health Systems.) Health Systems. We contracted with them to come in and operate the hospital for us, and we improved our contract quite a bit. They would absorb any losses. We would have to furnish all capital.

WANDA: Any profit the hospital [made], the hospital got back, too.
MACK: At that time, our contract said any profit that you make during the year, any excess funds that came in, we’d split it fifty-fifty. They’d take 50 percent, we’d keep 50 percent, to offset some of the capital outlay that we’d had to make.

So since then, we’ve been operating it every year, and we’ve averaged a million dollars a year in capital expansion every year since then. The hospital has really grown.

Gilmore: It’s a much bigger hospital.
MACK: Much bigger.
WANDA: Much better. Plus all fixed up. We had to remove asbestos.
MACK: That costs a lot of money to take out all the old asbestos.
WANDA: Bring everything up to standards. Hospital rules have gotten very strict. They had to do all of that.

MACK: So we were able, as a city, to do these things, because we had the power to do it. Where, under the Bureau of Reclamation, you’d have to go to them and ask them for money, and the sisters would have to make up a budget and then go back and re-do their budgets for the Bureau. It always depended on appropriation from Congress to operate. Now the City can do what they want to do.

Gilmore: Streamline the process…
MACK: Since we incorporated as a hospital district, it’s even run more smoothly.

WANDA: Then they have an elected board of trustees, you see, that run this and decide on this. And Mack’s always been on it, of course.

MACK: Two more years to go.

WANDA: Plus the capitalization that they’ve done, they’ve also gotten some profit back from them, haven’t you, Mack?

MACK: Every year but two since they took over.

WANDA: Every year they’ve gotten that, but two years, was that it? (MACK: Yes.) They’ve gotten a little bit of profit back.

MACK: We’ve renegotiated the contract since then too. Now it’s about sixty-fourty: 60 [percent] for them, and 40 [percent] for us. Plus we pay insurance. The original contract, they had to pay the insurance and everything. So now we pay all of the insurance and don’t charge them any wear and tear on the equipment.

WANDA: It’s been a very good deal for the people of Page.

Gilmore: It’s a very good hospital.

WANDA: And they’re hoping some day to have a home health care system, I mean, a health care system set up. They have a home health care, but health care for the elderly. Somebody called Mack on about yesterday.

MACK: The hospital district can’t operate a home like that. The hospital district is restricted to what they can do. We can’t build an old folks’ home or anything like that. It’s strictly for hospitals.

WANDA: No, but you can spearhead a drive to get one built.

MACK: Oh, yes, spearhead the health care for the community.

WANDA: Because we’ve had lots of seniors move into Page. In the last ten years you can’t imagine how many retired people have moved here. And now they’re getting to be….

[END OF INTERVIEW]