

**Interviewees:**

Catherine Dennison

**Interviewer:**

Antonio Vasquez

**Interview Date:**

October 20, 1997

**Interview Location:**

Redlands, California

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:04] [inaudable] And I tried to interview him, but we just never got a chance to do it, I was really sorry [inaudable].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:09] Yeah. You know, his mind was coming and going and he thought he lived in Yakima, but he'd never left Redlands, except for when he had to go down to San Diego with his stepson for that length of time. But he'd never lived any place else. But [inaudable] I brought his year books from high school, and.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:32] You know, this was Richard and he was whose son [was he?]

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:35] He was [Epimeño] and Jesusita's. He was my dad's brother.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:40] Okay and your father's name was?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:41] Carlos.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:42] Carlos.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:43] Federico.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:43] Carlos Federico that [inaudable] we got the picture out of one of these [inaudable], that's a photocopy of the picture of Richard.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:52] If you want these for any displays for any reason,

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:58] Oh yeah.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:58] You're free to use to display them.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:02] Great, [i may take you up on that.]

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:04] This also is a diploma from Franklin Elementary School, which I did not know that they did this years ago, which just happened to come across it.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:17] [Pretty neat one too.]

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:17] Just that name.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:17] It's really it's just it's, this is bigger than the diploma I got from Cal State.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:23] It's bigger than the high school too.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:24] Yeah, yeah. Wow [inaudible]. And so for first of all, just just [for the sake of] the tape, but you give me your full name.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:43] Catherine Elenore Guzman Dennison.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:45] And you have been, you were born in Redlands?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:48] 1144 Orange Street.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:51] And how long have you lived [in town]?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:53] All my life, except for about year, year and a half when I got married and moved to Washington with my husband when he was in the service, [but] we came right back. I just felt like I was on loan to the state of Washington.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:02:07] Temporary.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:02:09] And that's the first time as a him [inaudible]. And I'm the youngest of five kids.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:02:15] And you said your father's name was earlier.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:02:19] Carlos Federico Clotilde Rodrigues.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:02:26] You now we know already a bit about your family from, you Guzman family, from your previous interview. Can you tell me a little bit about your mom's family?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:02:39] Oh, they came from Florence, Arizona, and my mom used to live out here with my aunt and my uncle, which was Arturo and Vita Andrade. And they lived up on Crescent, I believe. My Mom kind of went back and forth for a few years and then she settled here, Dad met her in Arizona because he was a relative to my uncle Arturo. And so then they got married here and I have pictures of their wedding. This is their wedding day.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:03:15] And it's taken here in Redlands.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:03:17] That was 536 [East Stewart Avenue, at] my mom, at my grandparents. Mom said that they had a chicken dinner my grandmother had made. And these are my grandparents [of] my mom and dad.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:03:38] And now they were married when, again?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:03:40] They were married July 21st. Uh.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:03:47] [inaudible]. Twenty-five

**Catherine Dennison** [00:03:47] Thirty-five. I think, might be on the back. I'm not sure.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:03:53] Your grandfather Jimenio, had a blacksmith shop [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:03:57] He did, in the back.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:04:01] Okay, in the back right. Did your father work for him there? what did he?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:04:02] No, he worked for the city of Redlands. In fact, here's a picture of my uncle and my dad, And this was on like that linen that they used to put on. Um, this is his, my dad's retirement, uh, article. And this is a letter from the White House about my dad's retirement. After Dad went to school, Dad said that he went to the city

hall, and he sat in their lobby day after day until they would hire them. They said that they simply got tired of seeing the space there, so they put them to work.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:04:49] What did he do?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:04:52] He was a, he started out as a laborer and then ended up as the chief city surveyor. He was self-taught, he did not go to school for that. And this was an [inaudible] that he had while he was working for the city [also]. [lets see] he was 63 there. Had to be, um he was born in 1905. This is [inaudible] as a pioneer family that I found at my uncle's house. And from what I understand, my grandmother came here in 1884.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:05:41] And your grandmother was?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:05:43] Jesusita Mm hmm. And my grandfather, Jimenio came approximately 1885.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:05:49] All right. Do you know where they came from?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:05:53] My grandmother came from Mexico, and my grandfather came from Los Angeles, he was born in Los Angeles.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:06:01] So this family moved back there in Los Angeles during their first farm [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:06:07] Right. These are just, these pictures are basically the ones from Rita this is her family.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:06:15] Did you ever find out, or hear from them your friends from their parents? Why? Why they came to Redlands, what their interest was this area?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:06:27] No, I really didn't. When my grandmother died, I was approximately three years old and I was in seventh grade when my grandfather died. Oh here's the picture. My dad and my uncle, my grandparents isn't that great.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:06:46] Yeah, this is a really neat picture. Yes.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:06:48] This was [my dad]. This is what was taken at the city hall. And this picture's taken at my grandfather's house. This is my mom, my grandparents and an uncle.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:04] Do you know anything about the woman in it.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:07:06] Oh, this one. That was my grandmother's sister.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:13] She's like, this is this is actually. So your father worked for the city for...

**Catherine Dennison** [00:07:22] 44 years.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:24] [it says here that] he worked briefly at Kaiser.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:07:26] During the war. He was lent to Kaiser, but he was still actually considered a city employee.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:33] Do you know what he did out there?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:07:36] No, not really. I remember dad saying that he tried to get into the military, but he had five kids. And so they said, no, you're needed more at home and there's something more that you can do here to help wherever uh military was. And so that's been the city sent him to Kaisers.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:57] Yeah, you said that he was a surveyor. what?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:02] Land surveyor. Yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:04] [inaudible]

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:09] Okay. And that's the picture of my dad's family. Or my my grandfather's family, actually, because that's my grandmother.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:18] And could you, from left to right, identify these people for me?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:21] That's going to be hard.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:23] As best as you can.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:23] Okay. That's my grandma, that's my grandfather, but dad called him [tatito], and I. not sure who he was. There's Eleanor and Nana. I think

that might be [Mariceles]. And. I cant remember the other ones name. [have em written down at home]

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:41] And these are your grandfather's children?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:46] Mhm. Oh, no. Those are my.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:48] Great grandfathers.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:49] That's my grandmother. So it's my great grandfather's.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:54] Great grandfather.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:55] Right. And my grandma.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:56] His name was?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:57] My dad called him [tatito].

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:00] You know what [inaudible]?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:01] I don't know if it's on here or anything.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:06] And you think that these pictures were, they were probably taken locally.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:10] I would assume so mhm. Or they could have been in, well. It's hard to say because she was from Mexico and I'm not sure where that was taken and, although all the family came here. So I would assume then, it probably would have been in Redlands. these, you probably already have from Rita, a copy of them. This is my grandmother.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:38] This one? no. [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:41] Oh really? Okay, that's my grandmother's. And this is my grandfather right here.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:48] Okay.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:49] And this is Rita, she. I think, things that belong to Rita, I'll let Lee be a judge of. I don't know if you have this one or not.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:59] No, this one I don't have actually.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:10:00] Okay. But you probably could go ahead and have it then. And this is my grandfather. And I don't know where this was taken, taken in 1910.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:10:14] It's got to be in this.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:10:15] It is in Redlands.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:10:18] Did your grandfather did, his entire family move here from Los Angeles? Or did just a few of them.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:10:24] Seems to me, from what I understand, they all did. There are a lot of relatives at that Hillside, Hillside Cemetery there are quite a few. In fact, well, this is Matt. And he lived out in Sunnymead because his mom was a first [inaudible]. Yeah, that's the senior. Okay. They lived out in Sunnymead and lived on Crescent, so my mom and dad got married at the Sacred Heart because we didn't have St Marys here then. And my dad helped build St Mary's. He surveyed the area there too, the land there. And that's. I used to like working in the, playing in the blacksmith shop because my grandfather still had all of the stuff there, and I think I've got a set of the horseshoes that my grandfather had made.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:11:17] Oh, really?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:11:18] Yeah, because my husband likes playing with horseshoes, they used to pitch all the time. my dad like pitching them too, so he gave them to my husband. So pretty positive that I've got them. I have to check and see.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:11:31] To see one of those. Maybe for, for a display.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:11:33] Okay.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:11:34] Because I'm actually I'm particularly interested in your family because we have lots of evidence of citrus workers in Redlands. We have no evidence, until now, of people that were in trades, that were in either construction trades or particularly highly skilled trades like blacksmithing. And im really interested in finding out, getting pictures of the shop even, because it's such a unique thing. And so I've

been try to draw as much information from Rita as I can. So this is this is very, very interesting also.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:12:06] Now, I can remember my grandfather doing it even though he wasn't shoeing horses anymore, we still wanted to see him do it. So he'd light everything up and and pound everything out first and stick it in the cold water and see steam come up and the whole bit. But it was still there. It was just really neat.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:12:24] Yeah. I have a picture of your grandfather as part of a marching band.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:12:29] He was.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:12:30] Okay, was that band local?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:12:30] Mhm.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:12:33] Okay, great. Good, this was really important because [Inaudible] I should've brought the picture to show you.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:12:39] As far as I know, it was local.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:12:41] Okay, All right.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:12:41] From what I can understand, or remember, the whole family was musical. My dad played clarinet and my uncle in the yearbooks it'll say that he played, uh I want to say the violin and he was in track and things like that too. And my dad, he played football for the high school. And I remember he say that well, he showed us his leg to where somebody had stepped on when he was playing football and he has had like a dent in his leg from the cleat, he says that's when men were men and they got hurt. Yeah, he loved this town. And we grew up on Orange Street. The house is for sale right now, where we grew up. The four girls, we four girls were born in the house and my brother was born in the hospital. He had to be the stubborn one.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:13:33] Did your father build that house? Or did your family build that house?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:13:39] My mom and my dad moved into, my dad bought. It was a duplex to begin with, and he turned it into a single family home after years and years that they rented one side of it out. And then later on, when the kids started

coming, then dad just totally changed it. The north side of the house, has like three bedrooms and a den. It used to be four bedrooms because it didn't used to be, mom and dad's bedroom. And then we had the living room and the dining room and the kitchen and the breakfast room. But he totally changed it.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:14:16] Now, I know that that part of Orange street is kind of mixed between businesses and residents. has it always been like that? Or were there more house there back when, when you were a child.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:14:27] When I was a child. Where that [inaudible] is on Orange Street. It's by, is it Ponchos? That new restaurant? That used to be a laundromat there. And when I was in third grade, that went up in smoke. They said that, you know, it was that somebody had seen somebody mess around with the gas there. And then across the street where the teachers association is there, in that area there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:14:53] [inaudible] and orange. Right?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:14:54] Almost. There used to be another laundromat there, too. And where that [inaudible] that, I think it's like [inaudible] or an upholstery shop there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:15:05] Yeah, I know what you're talking about.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:15:06] I used to work at the University ice cream parlor there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:15:10] Oh, it was an ice cream store there.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:15:11] That went way back. Yeah, that was where for since I can remember, since I was a kid, it was there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:15:17] Was this in the, what like fifties, forties?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:15:22] At least the fifties.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:15:23] Really? Cause I, I was not familiar with anything in that town.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:15:27] Oh yeah. [in fact] I was 12 when I started working there as a waitress. Yeah, the Rams used to go there, and so I used to wait on them. Here I was a little twelve year old girl, working there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:15:41] Who were your employers?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:15:43] Peter Roney. He lived in Yucaipa, Pete and Penny, actually, Roney. And so I was the only waitresses there, so he'd come home at night for his dinner and I'd be there by myself. But those were the days where you could trust almost everybody. And my mom and dad used to sit on the porch across the street and watch me, make sure there are no problems. It was fun. And then Baker's was where Poncho's is, because I worked there for a couple of years, too, when I got into high school. Yeah. And then they had Perr's market [up on the] 1200 block where the parking lot is there for the Unified School District.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:16:21] Right, Right.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:16:22] It used to be a market right there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:16:23] Okay, yeah.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:16:24] And see what else? Of course Lugonia School, all of us kids went to the Lugonia School then, the old brick building, that's so neat, and the administration [one, or] where they have the meetings. That used to be the kindergarten room there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:16:41] Oh [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:16:43] Yeah the board room, that was the kindergarten room, yeah because I went to kindergarten there. It is so neat. I really like, it's changed so much here, though. I can remember. Oh, gosh, I must have been. Seven, eight years old maybe. There was a parade that we had, it came down Orange Street, started up on San Bernardino Avenue, and it was a circus parade. And it was either I want to say it was Barnum Bailey or something like that, but it was well-known. So they had the parade coming down, the elephant and the whole bit, [inaudible], started at San Bernardino Avenue. It was really neat. I remember my mom saying that my grandmother brought seats for the ash ashtrees that we have here in town. She brought those from Mexico.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:17:29] Really?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:17:30] Yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:17:32] And. And this was your. This. This was your mom's mother.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:17:36] No, that my dad's, is still my dad's.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:17:38] [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:17:38] Yeah. She brought [them] from Mexico, and they planted them here, and she says that's why we have ash trees in Redlands. In fact, I have um, oh here's family photos here, too. This is what my grandmother wore when she got married. This was her headpiece. Part of her headpiece. Then. This rose this was on her wedding cake. And this little dove was on her wedding cake too.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:18:13] [inaudible]

**Catherine Dennison** [00:18:15] isn't it something?

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:18:15] And [to keep all this stuff. this is impressive].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:18:18] I know.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:18:19] This is really, really special. this is really neat.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:18:21] This is just part of it. And my grandfather, this is my grandmother's cameo. It wasn't one of the really expensive ones, it has a safety pin on the back. And my grandfather used to visit one of his cousins in Los Angeles when I was in sixth grade. He had, he made this, had this made because we always used to call him Tata, Tata and Nana. So my grand kids call me nana now, it's something I always wanted. But I thought this might be of interest. I've always kept this, really being petrified.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:19:05] Of security [inaudible]. And it starts to dissolve or fall apart, you could, coat it in clear resin or laquer.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:19:15] And it hasn't at all. It hasn't been coated or anything.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:19:18] It or anything else [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:19:20] She got married in [1903], I believe.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:19:24] Wow. It is holding up quite well for being that old.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:19:27] January 1st, [1903]. I wrote to the [person] because I thought my dad needed more recognition.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:19:37] how cool.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:19:37] My dad was shocked. He called me he says, did you write to the president? And I said, why? and he says, I have a letter. Well, I was proud. And I thought, you know what? That's. He needed recognition. He was, he was a quiet man. Never wanted to stand out. You know, if somebody else did something not as great as my dad and they have more notoriety for it didn't bother him at all. He was satisfied with what he was doing.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:20:05] Did he belong to any social organizations? Clubs?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:20:09] No, just St Mary's.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:20:11] He was [a lifetime member, helped put the place together].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:20:15] Right.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:20:16] Could you, were you, were you around when they were building St. Mary's?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:20:19] When they were building it?

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:20:20] Yeah.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:20:20] No, if I, I'm not even sure what year they were. They built it. But if so, I would have only been a baby.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:20:29] What are some of your guys memories about the church?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:20:35] Uhh The sisters. We used to go for catechism classes on 6th street, there was a garage there. And so we used to go to class there. And I remember if we ever missed the catechism, [we'd] see these two ladies dressed in black, walking down Orange street over to our house to find out whether we skipped catechism or if we were really sick. And you really paid attention there, too, because they're just so stern.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:21:04] That was the challenges [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:21:05] Oh, they did. They did yeah. And going to church too, were told, my mom used to tell us. But don't look to the back of the church, because if you do, the devil's there, That's where you're supposed to keep looking at the priest photos [inaudible]. The people in the church were close you could see each other downtown, and, you know, you'd say hi to each other because you knew that just like now, like with the 6:00 mass, I go to that one and everybody's kind of like a family. They always wonder what's happened if you don't see them in church. And I remember my mom saying that, there were times, way back when, when they rented the pew at the churches, they would have like a family pew. And you paid rent for it every month so that you could sit in the same place. But that went with the ages, too. Yeah. Yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:21:59] Do you recall your mother holding any work?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:22:06] Oh, she. She worked at Penney's maybe for a day or two. She didn't like it. And I, seems to me should worked maybe at. I want to see Newberry's or something, but she didn't, she wasn't a, a person who went out to work. She took kids in and babysit them, like with [inaudible]. We had [inaudible] these two girls here, [Lupe] and Rita Acuna. They were foster sisters and they lived with us for 17 years. And then my mom babysat a little boy and a little girl for years on a daily basis while her parents, their parents worked. So she basically bake sale a lot. and [Lee's] Step grand-, stepson lived with us for several years, too. He lived in Fullerton with his wife, with [Donnie's] mother. And I'm not sure of the circumstances why he lived with us.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:23:16] [inaudible] with you for a few years?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:23:18] And. that'd be great.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:23:26] [inaudible] Stuff.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:23:27] Oh, good.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:23:28] Yeah, I can use all of this.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:23:30] Great.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:23:31] Use it all. Um, well, see, let me ask you a couple of questions. What do you recall about any people in the neighborhood?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:23:43] Uh, well, the Least family lived next door to us, and I guess they were there before my mom and dad even moved into the house. And two of the daughters are still living there, still in the same house. They're at 1150 Orange Street. And, it was like family. I remember every Christmas Mrs. Least used to knit us, uh slippers and would carry over packages across the lawn running over to their house to take everything over there for them to see. Because it was just like, you know, we're two families, or one family, but we lived in two separate houses. And I can remember when I was a kid, I used to have water fights across Orange Street with the girl that I went to school with, the Choate family, and they lived there for several years. Oh, and then, too, there was the house. There's that glass house on Western and Orange, and then there's a lot, and then there's another house that has kind of like a pointed roof. And that used to be a flower shop. It was an [inaudible] flower shop. And that was there when we were growing up, too. I remember seeing the ice [man] coming in and taking the ice over to their house and we'd run across the street to get chips of ice from him and the milkman, bringing the milk up and the mailman on their bicycle. In those days, too, they also delivered milk twice a day. For a period of time.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:25:13] For, for many of the people that I've interviewed, there have been certain, certain defining experiences that are common to all of them, for, for, for a lot of people World War Two was a big defining experiences. Is there any particular period of time, event in history that you, that you identify really strongly with.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:25:35] As a child?

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:25:37] Doing good drinking, doing, getting in your teens maybe, a little bit older?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:25:42] When I became aware of Norton Air Force Base, being there and listening to my mom say that, we used to have air raids and she'd have to put up the black curtains and we'd have to all really be quiet, make sure that there weren't any candles lit or lights on or anything like that. I was scared because I thought that we were going to be bombed, because mom said that the Japanese had come to the California coast. And I think they were headed for this area here, but they misjudged and, if I'm not mistaken, they ended up by Santa Barbara, Yeah, but I was real scared about that.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:26:22] Were any of your of your immediate family in military service during World War Two?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:26:28] Oh, you mean like my sister's [inaudible]?

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:26:30] [inaudible] [cousins], anyone like that. That you can.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:26:33] My mom's brother, he was a Army air troopers and. Okay. I'm not sure which war it would have been then. Because he's like, in his seventies right now.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:26:45] That's probably [Two]. Yeah.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:26:48] But he was a paratrooper. In fact, you know, there was something that was going to bring in I forgot, when, when my mom and dad, well when mom moved out of her house and we were clearing everything out. I found a box in there and it had kind of like, I want to say it was like a ration stamp type thing. And I don't know if that would be of any interest, [it] had to do with the tires. Well, you had to get stamps or something for the tires. And my uncle that was a paratrooper, there was something there where he was bringing over, I want to say, German weapon to keep it as a souvenir I suppose.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:27:26] Anything like that, anything like that, it's it's really helpful because because as we're starting to build an exhibit and we're we're trying to get to get into into different aspects of peoples lives and that was a really big, it played a really big role. People that actually talked about ration coupons [in World War Two].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:27:44] Oh, yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:27:44] And they were, it was a really big inconvenience to have.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:27:48] That's something else, too, because my mom said that with her having five kids, the [Lee's], the neighbors that lived next door to us were, their kids were older. And so what they did, knowing that we needed shoes and that we were five kids here, they used to swap stamps, too, and they'd swap it so that we could get milk and stuff, too. Yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:28:10] Right. now you said that your mom came from Douglas, Arizona?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:28:14] No, from Florence.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:28:17] I did, and, and, and i believe you mentioned how she came [to get out here]. Was it a relative she had out here?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:28:25] Mhm my grandparents [were getting divorced] in Arizona. And my mom didn't want to choose between the two of them, so she came to Redlands with my grandmother sister. And so she [you know like i] said she went I think she went there somehow, maybe once or twice and then came out here and stayed permanently. And, uh, my grandfather, he worked, my grandfather in Arizona far came over because [inaudible] he was uh, he worked on ranches. And most of the relatives that are out there, even way back then worked in the prisons [out there] because they had the state and the federal prison in that town. And I think there was a lady named, I want to say, Winnie Ruth Judge, she chopped up her husband or something and sent him to Los Angeles in pieces. And she was in that prison, too. And then the movie 'Riot' that they had on television with um, his last name was Brown. Uh that was filmed there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:29:27] So [inaudible] questions that I had about this. um [inaudible] Asked you said that you went to Lugonia.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:29:39] mhm.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:29:40] And uh.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:29:42] Redlands Junior High.

[00:29:43] [it was] Junior High, What are your memories about [the school system]?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:29:49] Then?

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:29:50] Yeah, then.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:29:51] Oh, it was fun. It was. I felt, well I didn't like having anybody ask me questions for one thing, but yet the teachers were really kind, they were patient. They did a lot more as far as, I can remember specifically in third grade. We did a thing on Hawaii, one on the Indians, the Pueblo Indians, and we would in classroom, we made like a pueblo out of boxes and paper. And I [can] remember being the old Indian woman. And they did sand painting around me, too. And then my mom, she made a raffia skirt for Hawaiian uh, class because we had it was going to be like around May when we did do that because we had like the May-day and the May dances and things like that at Lugonia school, which is really kind of neat. And Mr. [Hillson] was the principal, at the time, and I used to go in in the office and help make cotton swabs,

because they didn't buy the cotton swabs then, we just had the sticks and made them ourselves and rolled them ourselves, yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:31:02] [inaudible].

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**Robert Gonzalez** [00:00:02] I was just to ask you actually, although, although your family didn't seem to have a strong connection with the citrus industry, what were your impressions growing up in a citrus town?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:00:14] Oh, I thought it was really great because I remember my dad saying that this was the naval capital of the world and uh he, working for the city, did go to the citrus areas quite frequently, too. And the emblem that was on the truck, on the city workers trucks was that of navel oranges. And of course, eventually that changed because the trees went with the construction [of homes] and such. But I, I really liked it because it was citrus around here, where I live on [Judson] and College, um it used to be orange groves across the street from us, and that was the reason I did move there, because it was quiet. We didn't have a lot of traffic or anything like that. Then they took those down several years later and put the houses up that are there now. In fact, i came across some pictures of the construction of that, too.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:05] Oh yeah i'd like to see those also.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:07] Okay.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:08] and, I mean [anything like that] they're searching for the [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:11] Right.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:13] People, now often times you'll see towns [over periods of time] but not people, and this time we have a lot of people [inaudible].

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:19] Right. Oh I've got the construction of it, but um, I think I probably could come up with some pictures that showed the orange groves there, too. Actually, there was a connection with the citrus, too, because my brother used to go, filling smudge pots.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:34] What was your brother's name?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:36] Carlos Guzman Junior.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:01:38] And when did he do this?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:01:41] He was in high school, he graduated in '53 I think. But uh, he used to go smudging all the time. I remember him coming home with all the black on him, I can remember smelling the smudge in the morning too. When we were growing up, see the smoke. There's that layer of haze. Of course, you always blow your nose first thing in the morning, everything that comes out is smudge. You're breathing this and you're living with this. But there were so many orange groves that were close by. And my uncle Joe Munoz, he grew up in Redlands, and he used to be the head gardener for Kimberly Crest, he worked for Mr. Shurka up there. And so he worked all the orange groves around there too, yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:02:30] Now he is, this is you [inaudible]?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:02:31] He's my um, my mom's sister's husband. My mom's brother in law.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:02:36] Is he, is?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:02:37] He's deceased, yeah hm.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:02:40] And they fought [inaudible] back at the mansion. Um, what about any people that you knew? Did you know, people that worked the groves? worked in packing houses?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:02:56] Um Lloyd Young?. I did know him. That's because every, what was it? Every day, especially Wednesdays, but every day he would go down to the university ice cream parlor with his wife. And they always had, he had uh, chocolate soda with chocolate ice cream. And his wife always had a small chocolate sundae with chocolate syrup. And as soon as I saw them come into the driveway at the ice cream parlor, I started it already. I knew exactly they would not change. They did this, it was a ritual every day, day after day, they had the same thing. They would not change. And if they had friends go in with them, then they stumped me. Yeah, I knew him, he was a nice man, very respectable person.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:03:45] Yeah, I was watching [inaudible] the picture. [I can't remember, likely who I got it from]. I might have got it from Rita, I might have got it from Connie. But it's a photograph copy, of a picture of the whole band. And then, just recently.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:04:02] That might have been Rita then.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:04:04] Just recently I acquired some other pictures of a marching band, actually marching.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:04:10] Oh really?

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:04:11] Yeah, they're actually marching down Colton avenue, and looking at the two, because there's two pictures to compare, and see any individual who look similar. The outfits are the same time. I'm very curious [inaudible]. About it or, heard about it, I guess, is important. and try to, I'm trying to get more information on this band.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:04:29] Gosh I'm not sure. I didn't know that, I hadn't heard that they had been marching or anything like that. But I knew that they had the band, in fact, going to my grandfather's house. He used to have a piano player piano there, too. And so we used to use it, we used to play the piano there and then for the rolls on and, you know, pedal so that the music would come out. It was really neat. But he was very musically inclined.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:04:57] How long did [inaudible] do it?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:04:59] Oh, gosh. I'd say most of the married life. He died in '58. So when he died, he did live there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:05:07] So he was there [inaudible]. And uh, I think Rita had mentioned that his brothers had all pitched in or [somebody had pitched in] to help build the house?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:05:21] No I hadn't heard that.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:05:22] [Construction on it], just kind of curious about that. Um, well let's see, what, now, now a bit about you. What uh, what has been your your experience? Your work or otherwise, what is your experience?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:05:38] I work for the Redlands School District for 20 years as a teacher's aide until we got laid off. Which was, that was hard because I was, that was the last thing ever wanted to do was to work with kids. I hated babysitting. I didn't want to do that, I want to do other kinds of the things. But I ended up working with kids, in a classroom. There got to the point where I was working with 210 kids a week because I was one aid for one track and they switched me to, around all the classes, so I had to work with all of them. I still see a lot of the kids now, even the ones when um, I, my first two years were at [Mentone] school and the kids from then, I still see some wait on me at uh, like at Albertson's or some of their kids are going to school. Which, really makes me feel bad, but I still see them. I love working with the kids. And I work at Griswolds. Cake decorating was a hobby of mine. But then they hired me there and then after I got laid off from the school district, I worked at Griswold and Ms Gerard's for just a few months. I didn't have enough hours there, so I just went into that, had some surgeries anyway, so it was kind of like in the way. And then, of course, working at Bakers on Orange Street when it was there and then working at the ice cream parlor.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:07] Now, I know you, you mentioned St Mary's. Are there any other things that could be things that you've been involved with.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:07:15] I uh, well I helped with, well, I was the group leader for Brownies when my kids were in school, and uh, blue birds. And, um. I was a principal for the CCD Sacred Heart for a couple of years, while my kids were going to CCD there, Brother John and Brother Michael asked if I would do that and I'd call the parents of the kids who were absent and things like that. Yes, that's what I thought at the time. Checking up on them, except I didn't walk to their houses. Uh huh. And I was in Girl Scouts too, brownies.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:07:57] And were these troops based out of the school or out of the church?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:02] Schools. They just recently started a Boy Scout group at Saint Mary's. I think it started last year, the year before. And I think that was the first group that they've ever had.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:14] How many, how many children?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:16] I have two. I have Suzanne Marie and Brenda Ann. Susie's last name is Stark now, and Brenda's is Ward. And I have I our grandchildren, two grandsons and two granddaughters, and my youngest one is 20 months old, and he had open heart surgery a year ago this month, Dr. Bailey did open heart surgery on him.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:36] Oh really?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:08:37] Mhm, he had two holes in his heart that needed to be sealed. They wouldn't seal on their own. And so he has kind of like an exclamation mark coming down the front of him, because he has the line and then the dot, the drain was. His doing pretty good. He's got a hernia started, though, where the drain was. He could see it starting to protrude. And so they're kind of watching that, yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:08:57] He still has a bit of a road ahead of him?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:01] Real good. And then my granddaughter Ashley Stark. She's the first altar girl at Saint Mary's Church. Yeah, so that's kind of a privilege for her. She kept asking Father this game of when can I do this? And Father this thing we kept saying, patience, Ashley, you have to have patience. And one day she said, Father [inaudible], when can I be an alter girl? He said, now Ashley and she goes to, what? She was shocked. In fact uh, her birthday was on the 11th and father was telling uh, the congregation that she had been there, she'd been served as uh alter girl for five years now. And she just loves it.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:51] So your family's got a pretty deep connection with St. Mary's, because Connie.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:53] She plays the organ.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:09:54] She's the organist there.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:09:55] Right. And my daughter, Suzanne, she um, she's a CCD teacher now. She was the CCD teacher, I think, for a year or two at Sacred Heart for a while before she went to England. And uh, she's the oldest server coordinator too. Yeah, and my mom, she used to be in, I think it was the Guadalupanas or something. Years and years and years that. That's a Catholic group at Saint Mary's. In fact, I think Connie was in it for a while. It's kind of a service club. They help raise money for improvements on the church, because it's not a real rich church. Its more on the poor side. And so they don't have a whole lot of donations and such. Nothing like Sacred Heart.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:10:48] I can remember, although I was, I grew up in a different church. [inaudible] St Mary's was. I can remember the [Jamaicas] when i was a kid.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:11:02] Yeah.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:11:03] Do they still do [any activities like that]?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:11:05] They just had a barbecue there this past weekend, and then they [jamiaca] their um, gosh, I want to say it was in the summertime. I think they had one then sometimes they have a barbecue in the park. I don't know if the barbecue is at the park this time or not. I'm not really sure I forgot all about it. Yeah, they did that, it was so much fun. And mom and dad, they always went to this church to sit in the same pew, always, think it was like the sixth pew. So when my mom and dad died, the priest said, Well, the pews empty now because they both gone.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:11:49] What do you remember about uh, social life in Redlands? What was there to do when you were a kid, when you were a teenager?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:11:59] We, on tuesdays we were allowed to go to the Redlands plunge to go swimming. And before that we couldn't, my dad said that the Anglos were able to go there all the time. But because of they emptied the plunge out on Tuesday, Tuesday evenings, then the Blacks and, and the Mexicans were allowed to go there because the water would be emptied out. But we could not intermingle. So we could go swimming. And then we had the movie theaters. Fox. I love it at Fox, so pretty in there. And then we had another one that was down on State Street, I can't remember the name of it. There's another theater there. And when they stopped using that, they use at Christmas time for Santa Claus. We would go in there to see Santa Claus. Yeah. And then we had the roller rink, which was across the street from the Rainbow Theater. And that was really fun. And then we had uh, putt putt golfing over on Church Street and Colton Avenue. There's a boys home there right now. And I think it's Father Pete's boys, and there used to be a putt putt course there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:13:11] Oh really? I didn't know that.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:13:12] Yeah, it was fun. We used to go there Friday nights. Yeah, and of course we have our regular ice cream parlors and things like that. I remember on Saturday mornings the Fox used to open up the show to the kids in town and we didn't have to pay to go in, there was a free show. And so we'd walk down and my grandfather would meet us at Dylan record in the pool hall. So we'd go in there and I remember as a little kid, he lift me up, set me up on the bar, and he'd have a glass of beer there, [and i'd be] pouring salt into it, he didn't care because I like seeing the bubbles.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:13:44] Now, where is this at?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:13:45] It was right, you know where the shoe uh shop is? I don't know if they still have that on the corner there. That's where that Dance Horizons is. Right there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:13:54] I remember that place.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:13:54] Yeah. And then some, if he wasn't there we'd meet him at Bank of America, which was down on that next corner and State Street and Orange Street, that was where Bank of America was. And so we see him there. And during the week, maybe on Friday's, I'd walk over to my grandfather's when we lived on Stewart Avenue and my sisters would meet me there when they were coming home from the junior high. And we'd go there, and then there was a store on Church Street where the overpasses is, on church, there was a store that was run by Germans there, a German family. And so we, my grandfather gave us a nickel or a dime to go spend on the way home. And I think that's probably what we were looking forward to. Yeah, we always had Dinny Moore stew and those candy gum drops we always that. Yeah, a little Charlie McCarthy puppet that they used to let's play with that all the time. It was my grandmother, I don't have a whole lot of memories, I remember the day that she died, even though I was young. But I remember she didn't like the way my mom combed our hair. yeah, so we went over there, she'd undo our braids, and she sit down with one of those thick manila colored combs that they had back then. She comb our hair and she put some green goop on our hair to make it stay. But there were a lot of fun things to do here, and it didn't cost anything, and yet you really enjoyed it. We used to go down on maybe Friday nights, Saturday nights and walk through town, look at the store windows without fear of something happening. And those were the days when my parents could trust other people with us, that they knew nobody's going to hurt us.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:15:38] You mentioned the the segregation of the plunge. Did you see much of that spilling over into your relationships with kids in school, or anything like that?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:15:51] No, because we were all pretty much natives here and there were very few Black people at the time, which I couldn't understand too, and it seemed like when we starting the problems its when people from out of town were coming in and it was more like they were instigating. But I didn't see any problems at all. I didn't think that there was um, like with a lot of the kids I grew up with they were Anglos and I didn't see any prejudice there either. So I think it was probably very much taught to a child.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:16:23] So more institutional thing, is what I've seen. Did you? Now, in familiar with plunge and theater. Where you exposed to any other incidences or any other places where this occurred?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:16:39] Segregation or Discrimination.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:16:42] Yeah discrimination?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:16:43] As an adult. I think I did. Um. It was back when, I don't know if you remember when they were having all these slashes with razor blades and stuff like that at the high school, it's been quite a few years now. They say that the Mexican girls are walking around with the razor blades between their fingers and slashing people, it was on television in fact too. And I remember there's that fish market or that fish place that was on the boulevard by the high school. I can't remember which one it was. Okay. I remember going in there on a Friday night, and there were a lot of Anglos in there, and I walked in, all of a sudden it was like they all separated. And I I'm standing i'm like, you know what's going on? And people were ahead of me moved to the side. So I could go order my food first and it was like they were afraid of me. I went home and I mean, it was something that just really brought tears to my eyes because I thought, I never experienced this before here. Not at all.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:17:49] This was when?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:17:49] Oh, gosh. How do you see [inaudible]... It had to be at least uh, gosh, i cant even estimate it's gotta to be at least twenty years, maybe.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:18:06] It's been it's been fair fairly recently.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:18:08] Fairly recently. I think I saw a lot of that, too, in the school district working with the school district. I see a lot of it there. For they, lot of times I feel like they, I don't know whether it's because I was a teachers aid and i didnt have the credentials, but I did the work that the teachers did, along with them. And uh, some the teachers, it was like they thought that I was stupid or something or like they shouldn't listen to me. They'd listen and then all of a sudden they wouldn't react to what I said and they just turn away and continue talking about something else. it was like i wasn't even there.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:18:44] I knew and that uh that, when I was in school, I don't I don't recall having to many teachers weren't white, working in a district for a long time

and there have been, there have been instances of people that i've talked to that have reported that they had, they had problems trying to advance within Redlands school district they get jobs at one level and not move any more. What's your what's your take on that?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:19:15] Uh, well being the teacher's aide, though, there wasn't really a lot of room for advancement. Although when we got laid off, even though we had tenure with the school district, we had to start at the bottom if we want to continue on working in a different classification. We had to go through the whole thing over again, I felt like we should've been given a little bit of leeway since we had so much experience with that.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:19:41] Were any of the aides encouraged to go to school to get credentials? Was that ever part of having a program?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:19:51] Um. I think the only took a certain amount of people to do that, like maybe one or two could do it. So when you have like 30 instructional aids or something, they're not going to be a lot of people are going to be able to do it.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:20:07] Um. Did you ever perceive any difference? There's a there's there's a rather rather widely debate over the differences between north Redlands and south Redlands. And there are those that there is no line, there is there is no difference. What's what's your perception?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:20:32] I always felt like there was there's a division there. In fact, there used to be a joke saying that, you know, if you have a group of kids standing together in the north side, it was a gang. If you had them standing on the south side, then it's a club. So that was a distinction. People were afraid of us on the north side. And they literally really didn't want to have that much to do with you either, because um they felt like you were lower than they were. And not had as much money. But, you know, actually, I think about within my own area on the north side of town we felt prejudice from the Mexicans there too.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:21:09] Really? tell me about that?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:21:11] Being on Orange Street. That was one of the things, they thought that we were trying to be high class Mexicans living on Orange street, trying to be better than the rest of them. Because, you know, like living on Sixth Street and out and all that. Well, I didn't think anything about it, it was just our whole area. We were just all together. But they thought that since my dad, like, not working in the

groves, he was a surveyor and worked for the city and had a job like that, they thought we were a bunch of snobs. And that was one reason why my mom dropped out of the club at church, now that I think about it. Mhm because they treated her differently. But even within that, and then when I was in high school I got the Frank Arroyo scholarship, and I can remember some of the kids at school, after I got out, they were spitting on me and I said, Why are you doing it? And they said, You're just trying to act like you're better than the rest of us. And I told them, I said, If you would have wanted to get a scholarship to go to school, you could have done the same thing that I did. But I felt it even within our own race.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:22:12] That's [inaudible] I'm glad that you touched on that, because I haven't had, I'm aware of this but i haven't had anybody really touch on that personally. Thank you very much.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:22:25] I forgot all about it.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:22:28] Bring this out.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:22:29] That true.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:22:31] Overall, to go here [inaudible] in spite of whatever problems or concerns you may have had living this town um, your experience here, would you characterize it as a positive experience?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:22:47] Oh, definitely. Definitely. I don't think anything's perfect and I don't think that the kids ever had problems with are the same now. I think it was just something at the time that maybe it was a little bit of jealousy. But, I feel like I really worked hard for it and I felt like they could do it too. But I think they got passed it and I passed it too.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:23:14] Do you recall when, approximately I dont need an exact date, but appoximately when you start to seeing some of the, some of legal barriers like the segregation of the plunge or seeing white trade only signs in town when did that start winding down?

**Catherine Dennison** [00:23:33] With, thing with the plunge, though, I guess, I just really wasn't aware of it until my dad started talking about it and then it just kind of like fell into place. And that was the as an adult. And then as far as like the people moving, when I went into that restaurant, that was uhm, that has to be at least -- now I'm 53. So it has to be at least, 20 years ago, something like that.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:24:00] So from when you were a child up this used to be a pattern, this used to happen. And it's it's it's very, very interesting to look at that over a period of time. Mostly, I don't have too many more questions other than if you have any other comments or anything we didn't cover, anything you'd like to close with.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:24:24] I've raised my kids here because I felt like this was a really good town, there's a lot of history in this town. There are a lot of family up at the cemetery. Like when you go in that gate, my grandparents are on the left side as you go in, that was a Catholic section right there. And then on the right, there are a lot more relatives over there, too. And I think Rita's uh parents are buried on the right side, too, where they have all those headstones there. I think maybe um like with my dad, he built himself up, it's just like the Redlands being built up too, he built up along with it. And he didn't let anything stand in his way. He was a strong man, a quiet man. I can remember, my friends saying um when I introduce some new friends to my dad's, like Karen that lived across the street from me, Karen [Cho]. She'd said, Don't worry about him he's a quiet man. But he says wait till you get to know him then he's not quite so quiet. He was a good dad. Mom was a good mom too. Dad, he brought a lot of laughter to the family. Because my mom, she was more the serious type. And so she kept us in tow. And when dad came home from work, that was it. There was noise in the house. But I, if I had to do it over again I'd raise my kids here again.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:25:45] And it sounds to me like like like your daughters have decided to make their home here.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:25:51] They have too.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:25:52] Do. Well, thank you very much for your time and for these pictures. Some of these, if I could get copies, that would be great.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:26:01] Sure. That's fine.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:26:04] This has been very informative, I've enjoyed it.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:26:05] You can let me know whatever um you're through with them and I don't know which ones you want or what. Okay.

**Robert Gonzalez** [00:26:12] Very much.

**Catherine Dennison** [00:26:13] You're welcome.

