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HAMILTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH
MARY HUGGINS

1 (INTRODUCTION)

2 MR. TUCKER: Well, good morning,
3 Ms. Huggins. I am Dale Tucker [sic] the Hamilton County
4 Historical Commission and the Mayor of Hico, Texas.
5 We're here today to interview you for the purpose of
6 preserving the history of Hico and Hamilton County and
7 to provide a media to educate all those who want to know
8 about Hico and Hamilton County.

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1 (INTERVIEW)

2 MR. TUCKER: Good morning.

3 MS. HUGGINS: Good morning to you.

4 MR. TUCKER: Do I need to speak a little
5 louder so you can hear me?

6 MS. HUGGINS: Yes, but I don't know if you
7 can hear me.

8 MR. TUCKER: I can hear you just fine.
9 I'll just --

10 MS. HUGGINS: Okay.

11 MR. TUCKER: So I was talking to Lloyd,
12 and he says you know a significant amount about the
13 early history of Hico and that you were once on the old
14 Hico Historical Commission.

15 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. Yeah.

16 MR. TUCKER: What can you tell me about
17 some of the -- that you know -- or favorite things that
18 you know about the early -- early people of Hico?

19 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, my. Well, in the first
20 place, Hico moved from where it was to where it is
21 now --

22 MR. TUCKER: Right.

23 MS. HUGGINS: -- because the railroad
24 bypassed it, and so the town moved. It just picked up

25 everything and moved. So there's Old Hico and there's

4

1 Hico.

2 MR. TUCKER: There's Hico, yes. We always

3 call that the Honey Creek Hico --

4 MS. HUGGINS: Yes.

5 MR. TUCKER: -- the old one. Yes.

6 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, down by the Segrist

7 place. Yeah. I've been there several times, to the

8 Segrist place --

9 MR. TUCKER: Yes.

10 MS. HUGGINS: -- where Hico used to be.

11 It's kind of interesting to go there and to know that

12 actually people lived there, had businesses there, had

13 homes there, you know.

14 MR. TUCKER: There was almost a thousand

15 people that lived in the old -- old settlement when

16 it --

17 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

18 MR. TUCKER: -- when it moved. Yes. It

19 was --

20 MS. HUGGINS: And when I came to Hico, it

21 was so small. I came -- I came from Dallas --

22 MR. TUCKER: Oh, really?

23 MS. HUGGINS: -- or Dallas County, Irving,

24 and it was interesting. I mean, the first thing that

25 happened before I ever moved here and -- just came on

5

1 weekends, and I went into a grocery store and got a big
2 basket full of groceries and took them to the checkout
3 place, and the lady said, "Will that be cash or charge?"
4 I nearly fainted.

5 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

6 MS. HUGGINS: They just didn't do that
7 where I came from.

8 MR. TUCKER: You didn't charge groceries
9 in Dallas. No, you didn't. You know, talking about
10 groceries, how many grocery stores were -- were here in
11 Hico back then?

12 MS. HUGGINS: Two, I think, and one
13 closed, but there were -- I think there were two when I
14 came here.

15 MR. TUCKER: Two.

16 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. Sherrard's and --
17 not Mayfield. Mayfield got the -- built the other one
18 later. Sherrard's was the one, and he was on this end
19 of town, and I don't remember who had the other one.

20 MR. TUCKER: On -- which building --

21 MR. HUGGINS: McAnally, maybe.

22 MR. TUCKER: McAnally's.

23 Which buildings were they in back then?

24 MS. HUGGINS: The last building on the

25 right going through on the highway.

6

1 MR. TUCKER: Oh, that old rock building?

2 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

3 MR. TUCKER: Oh, that was the early --
4 that was the early grocery store?

5 MS. HUGGINS: Well, yeah.

6 MR. TUCKER: Well, you know, I didn't
7 know. You know, that building is still -- is still
8 vacant.

9 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, is that right?

10 MR. TUCKER: It is.

11 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, that's too bad.

12 MR. TUCKER: Yeah, it is.

13 Well, can you -- do you know about some of
14 our early -- early leaders of the town?

15 MS. HUGGINS: Oh. One time I knew just
16 about everything there was to know, but I have forgotten
17 a lot of it.

18 MR. TUCKER: Well, I'll -- I'll probe you
19 a little bit. What do you know about Zachariah Medford?

20 MS. HUGGINS: About who?

21 MR. TUCKER: Zachariah Medford.

22 MS. HUGGINS: Medford. I really don't
23 know anything. I've forgotten that name, if I knew it.

24 MR. TUCKER: Oh, okay. Well, that's fine.

1 Old Texas Central Railroad?

2 MS. HUGGINS: It was already closed down
3 when I got here.

4 MR. TUCKER: When you got here, right.

5 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. And I knew several
6 people who went on the last run to Dublin --

7 MR. TUCKER: Really?

8 MS. HUGGINS: -- and back just for the
9 ride, you know. Yeah. Nelda Calder did, and I think
10 Lee Radcliff said that he did, and I forget who else,
11 but several people had told me they did.

12 MR. TUCKER: Really? I didn't know Lee
13 was that old, but I guess he was -- I guess he was. He
14 was born in '4- --

15 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. He's the same --

16 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

17 MS. HUGGINS: -- a year older than my
18 oldest child. So I remember when he was in high school.
19 That's when I learned that he was color blind, because
20 his mother went with us -- we went to Waco or some place
21 on a field trip, and I road with him and his mother and
22 my daughter, and -- and then I learned he was color
23 blind because he couldn't tell a red light from a green
24 light.

25 MR. TUCKER: Well, that's kind of --

8

1 that's kind of dangerous.

2 Well, let's go back to -- to Hico in the

3 early -- and let's go like in the '60s and '70s.

4 MS. HUGGINS: My first impression?

5 MR. TUCKER: Yes.

6 MS. HUGGINS: Okay. I was walking down

7 the street -- this is my first impression of Hico.

8 Walking down the street on the sidewalk and a lady

9 stopped right in front of me so I had to go around her,

10 and she said, "Who are you anyway?" They were so

11 unaccustomed to strangers.

12 MR. TUCKER: Really?

13 MS. HUGGINS: And she wanted to know who I

14 was. And I had a weekend place here that I later bought

15 for my mother and dad to live in. She wanted to know

16 who I was. I had to be kin to somebody or why would I

17 be there, you know.

18 MR. TUCKER: I don't guess back in those

19 days they had many people that moved in or --

20 MS. HUGGINS: No, or visited.

21 MR. TUCKER: -- or visited.

22 MS. HUGGINS: I mean, that -- that was the

23 strange thing. Who am I? "Well, I'm Mary Huggins."

24 "Well, I don't know that name. How long have you been

25 here?" "Well, I haven't moved here yet."

9

1 MR. TUCKER: "I'm just passing through.

2 Don't kick me out of town yet."

3 What about -- so you already talked about

4 shopping in early -- in early Hico and about -- you

5 know, it hadn't been --

6 MS. HUGGINS: There was a dress store.

7 Bess Mingus had a dress store, and she would actually

8 stand at the door and wait for somebody to come down the

9 sidewalk and say, "Come on in here. I want to show you

10 something." And she was a great lady -- little old

11 lady.

12 MR. TUCKER: And then, I guess, you

13 probably shopped at the Ross's? Or what was the name of

14 their store? It wasn't Ross's. What was it?

15 MS. HUGGINS: H&B, and who was the other?

16 Sherrard's -- or Sherrard.

17 MR. TUCKER: Sherrard.

18 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh.

19 MR. TUCKER: But wasn't it the -- the

20 place across the street from City Hall that Pat Ross's

21 family had, what was that called?

22 MS. HUGGINS: Sam and Ross.

23 MR. TUCKER: Oh, Sam and Ross.

24 MS. HUGGINS: Her folks were named Sam

1 MR. HUGGINS: You're thinking of Blair's.

2 MS. HUGGINS: -- Thelma.

3 MR. TUCKER: Blair's.

4 MR. HUGGINS: Blair's Hardware.

5 MR. TUCKER: Blair's Hardware. That's

6 what I'm talking about. What was it like in Blair's

7 Hardware?

8 MS. HUGGINS: Louise. Louise Blair. She

9 was a wonderful person.

10 And she thinks she raised you.

11 MR. HUGGINS: I guess she had a hand in

12 it.

13 MS. HUGGINS: I guess she did. You worked

14 for her a long time. She was a good person really. Her

15 heart was in Hico. It was -- there was never any doubt

16 about that, you know. It was her whole life, just that

17 little town. She was a good person.

18 MR. TUCKER: Well, what do -- what do

19 you -- do you know -- what was the old opera house being

20 used for back then when you -- when you moved in?

21 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, it was a car dealership,

22 I think --

23 MR. TUCKER: Really?

24 MS. HUGGINS: -- when I came.

25 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. I heard it's been a

11

1 lot of things.

2 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

3 MR. TUCKER: It was a car dealership for
4 many, many years.

5 MS. HUGGINS: A long time.

6 MR. TUCKER: For a long time.

7 MS. HUGGINS: I always wondered how they
8 got the cars upstairs.

9 MR. TUCKER: They had cars upstairs?

10 MS. HUGGINS: I guess they did. I don't
11 know. I would have. I would figure out a way to get
12 them there.

13 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. Well, you know, a lot
14 of people think -- do you remember from history or
15 anything about the old opera house that used to be in
16 there where the car dealership was?

17 MS. HUGGINS: I don't remember much about
18 it. I never went to it, you know, as an opera house.

19 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. Well, no, it wasn't --

20 MS. HUGGINS: We didn't get here soon
21 enough.

22 MR. TUCKER: You didn't get here soon
23 enough.

24 What about the school then? Everything

25 was still -- the old school was being used?

12

1 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, yeah. And the -- the
2 elementary school was in relatively a new building. The
3 rest of it was old.

4 MR. TUCKER: In the old rock building?

5 MS. HUGGINS: Just what's left there now,
6 I guess.

7 MR. TUCKER: Well, yeah, I -- I heard that
8 the -- at some point in time -- it might have been in
9 your lifetime or Lloyd's -- where they took the top
10 floor off.

11 MR. HUGGINS: That was before we got here.
12 That was in the --

13 MS. HUGGINS: Just a year before, I think,
14 or something.

15 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

16 MS. HUGGINS: It was still --

17 MR. HUGGINS: I don't know when it was
18 done.

19 MS. HUGGINS: It was still there when
20 Nelda graduated. She -- she graduated in '52, I think,
21 and I know it was still there because they had -- the
22 third floor -- they had to carry her grandmother
23 upstairs.

24 MR. HUGGINS: But you worked at the

1 MS. HUGGINS: I did.

2 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

3 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, I did.

4 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

5 MS. HUGGINS: For a long time. I don't

6 remember how long. Then I went to college.

7 MR. TUCKER: Then you went to college.

8 Do you remember about how many kids we had

9 in the school back then?

10 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, no, I sure don't. A

11 hundred and something.

12 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah, I don't think it -- I

13 think it was less than 200 total for all three --

14 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

15 MR. HUGGINS: -- campuses.

16 MS. HUGGINS: And the high school.

17 MR. HUGGINS: And there was only one

18 grade -- one grade per room -- there was one room per

19 grade over in the elementary school. Yeah.

20 MR. TUCKER: Not like it is today.

21 MR. HUGGINS: No.

22 MR. TUCKER: But, you know, back then, in

23 '68 and '70, Hico was really not much bigger than it is

24 now populationwise. It's about -- we -- we have not

25 changed in -- in almost 50 years.

14

1 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, but it used to be -- a
2 long time ago, it was much larger.

3 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. In 19- -- in 19- -- in
4 1904, '05 area, we had over 4,000 people.

5 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. At one point, it
6 was about 10,000, wasn't it?

7 MR. HUGGINS: I don't remember. I don't
8 think -- I don't think it with quite that big.

9 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. It -- we --

10 MS. HUGGINS: Well, maybe 10,000 is the
11 number of people who came for some kind of celebration.

12 MR. TUCKER: We -- we actually had --
13 actually, I think the peak of it was almost 13- at one
14 time, and that was back in the early 1900s.

15 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

16 MR. TUCKER: And then after the boll
17 weevil hit and eradicated all the cotton crop, it just
18 kind of went, you know --

19 MS. HUGGINS: Yes.

20 MR. TUCKER: -- downhill from there.

21 MS. HUGGINS: It was cotton country all
22 right and then it became peanut country.

23 MR. TUCKER: Peanut country?

24 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Well, up -- up this

25 way, but down the other way from Hico, it was just black

15

1 dirt, but it was sand up this way.

2 MR. TUCKER: Up this way.

3 MS. HUGGINS: Towards Stephenville. And
4 sand is, of course, good peanut soil.

5 MR. TUCKER: Well, they were still growing
6 a little cotton around this area when y'all moved in,
7 weren't they?

8 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. I don't remember
9 who -- who had cotton, but I know they did have some.

10 MR. TUCKER: Because I think there was
11 still one gin operating back in the '60s, but I don't
12 think it was in Hico. I think it was in --

13 MS. HUGGINS: In Hamilton?

14 MR. TUCKER: In Hamilton, yeah.

15 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah. Now, I don't think
16 anybody was in Hico. I'm trying to think who it might
17 have been. I don't know. I'm -- I'm almost sure nobody
18 was operating a cotton gin at that time. There was
19 ToeGen Feed Mill --

20 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

21 MS. HUGGINS: -- named for Toe and
22 Genevieve.

23 MR. TUCKER: Well, let's talk about the --
24 through your 50 -- actually, I guess, it is 50 years

25 here in Hico. What -- what would you think would be the

16

1 most significant event that's happened here in your
2 lifetime?

3 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, that happened in Hico?

4 MR. TUCKER: Uh-huh.

5 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, jeez.

6 MR. TUCKER: Or Hamilton County.

7 MS. HUGGINS: I don't know. I used to
8 always go and participate in -- what's the annual thing
9 they have?

10 MR. TUCKER: The Old Settler's Reunion?

11 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Yeah. I used to
12 always go, and I always did something, and I remember
13 one of my children saying, "Do we have to be on a float
14 again?" And I said, "Thousands of kids would give their
15 eyeteeth to be on a float in a parade."

16 MR. TUCKER: Yeah, they would.

17 MS. HUGGINS: And they got tired of doing
18 it every year. I know one time -- Louise Blair from
19 Blair Hardware always had a float and she would have one
20 of my kids on the float every time, and one time Chester
21 was a -- a priest on the float, and so I glued three
22 Reader's Digests together and put a back cover on them
23 and -- and put a black cover on them with a cross on it,
24 and -- you know, so it looked like a Bible, and -- but

25 they got tired of being on the float every year.

17

1 MR. TUCKER: They got tired of that, huh?

2 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Jeez, that's funny.

3 MR. TUCKER: I guess in some -- in some
4 ways Hico's pretty much the same as it was when you
5 first moved here?

6 MS. HUGGINS: So far as I can tell. I
7 don't go to town very much anymore, of course. I worked
8 for Louise Blair for 12, 13 years part-time. I worked
9 full-time for a little while while she was in the
10 hospital, but for the most part, it was a part-time
11 thing. Then --

12 MR. TUCKER: There was -- I mean, a lot of
13 the -- the old stores that were in town, some of those
14 weren't even -- were still -- were already vacant --

15 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

16 MR. TUCKER: -- back -- back then.

17 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Sam and Ross closed
18 shortly after. I don't remember what year they closed,
19 but that was the big deal in Hico. It was the only
20 place you could buy clothes or boots or a hat or -- you
21 know, was Sam and Ross. And, I guess, after the Sammons
22 both retired or died or whatever they did, I guess that
23 Pat tried to run it for several years, and then she
24 quit.

25 MR. TUCKER: Uh-huh. It was -- when that

18

1 store -- when that store closed, that was a real

2 significant loss to -- to the city of Hico.

3 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Yeah.

4 MR. TUCKER: Because --

5 MS. HUGGINS: That was keeping the town

6 going.

7 MR. TUCKER: Well, actually, I -- you

8 know, I've been told that it -- when that closed, it

9 devastated downtown --

10 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh.

11 MR. TUCKER: -- and a lot of other things

12 just kind of fell to the --

13 MS. HUGGINS: That's right.

14 MR. TUCKER: -- fell to the wayside.

15 MS. HUGGINS: Well, how is Hico now?

16 MR. TUCKER: Well, you know, we --

17 MS. HUGGINS: Is it picking up some?

18 MR. TUCKER: It is. And I'll tell you,

19 we -- as far as downtown buildings, we actually only

20 have three buildings that are vacant --

21 MS. HUGGINS: Boy.

22 MR. TUCKER: -- in the downtown area.

23 MS. HUGGINS: I was sure glad to see

24 what's her name move into that big --

25 MR. TUCKER: The old opera house?

19

1 MS. HUGGINS: No. Cattywampus across the
2 street from where the Western Auto used to be.

3 MR. HUGGINS: You're talking about Linda
4 Stern's building.

5 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Thank you. Thank
6 you.

7 MR. HUGGINS: Where Linda Stern moved in.
8 Didn't they -- it used to be Cheek Furniture at one
9 time?

10 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, it was cheap --

11 MR. TUCKER: Oh, the old Conley building?

12 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

13 MS. HUGGINS: It was Cheek Furniture --

14 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah. It was Cheek
15 Furniture when we got here.

16 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

17 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

18 MR. HUGGINS: You could go in there and
19 buy furniture. You can't buy furniture in Hico.

20 MS. HUGGINS: I bought this carpet there.
21 I got this carpet at Cheek --

22 MR. TUCKER: Yes.

23 MS. HUGGINS: -- that long ago, and it's
24 still --

25 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. The -- yeah, the old

20

1 Conley building, and -- but like I say, right now, the
2 only buildings that are still vacant are on the railroad
3 over by where the washer -- washateria is.

4 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. Yeah. It's just some
5 vacancy over there.

6 MR. TUCKER: And that's it. And they
7 just -- they need to be remolded.

8 MS. HUGGINS: You know, there is a -- a
9 place over there on that street -- is it Railroad
10 Street? -- where one of the Malones was shot dead in the
11 street.

12 MR. TUCKER: Really?

13 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. That's, Lord, long
14 ago, long, long ago.

15 MR. HUGGINS: Was that at the saloon?

16 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, the saloon, and it
17 still says "saloon" in big letters on top of the
18 building if you can read it.

19 MR. HUGGINS: Back in the alley, I think.

20 MS. HUGGINS: Well, no.

21 MR. HUGGINS: There used to -- it wasn't
22 in the alley? Okay.

23 MS. HUGGINS: It's on that street --

24 MR. HUGGINS: Okay.

25 MS. HUGGINS: -- that it faces on.

21

1 MR. TUCKER: I think -- you know what, I
2 think it's the middle building of those that -- that --
3 yeah, it's almost on the -- the middle -- the last three
4 buildings on the -- going east -- or west have the same
5 facade, and I think it's --

6 MS. HUGGINS: That's right.

7 MR. TUCKER: -- and I think it's --

8 MS. HUGGINS: That's right.

9 MR. TUCKER: -- the middle building that
10 has -- that -- you can barely read it anymore or I think
11 all you see is the "on" --

12 MS. HUGGINS: I think you're right.

13 MR. TUCKER: -- of the "saloon." Because
14 one of those buildings also used to have, I think --
15 wasn't that where the pool hall was, or was it a pool
16 hall?

17 MR. HUGGINS: The one I remember was --

18 MS. HUGGINS: At the other end.

19 MR. HUGGINS: -- was next -- close to the
20 old --

21 MS. HUGGINS: At the back of the bank,
22 where the bank used to be, wasn't it?

23 MR. HUGGINS: Well, the one I remember was
24 over there somewhere north of the hotel on that side of

25 the street. You wouldn't let me go in there.

22

1 MR. TUCKER: That might -- that might have
2 been -- that might have been the old Segrist building.

3 MR. HUGGINS: I don't remember that one.

4 MR. TUCKER: You don't even know what the
5 walls look like, do you?

6 MS. HUGGINS: Never saw it before.

7 MR. TUCKER: Never saw it.

8 MR. HUGGINS: There was a domino hall over
9 there somewhere, too.

10 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. Well, actually, I
11 thought they were next door to each other.

12 MR. HUGGINS: I think so.

13 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

14 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah. Yeah.

15 MR. TUCKER: Well, what else can you think
16 of that you'd like to --

17 MS. HUGGINS: Well, I'm thinking -- or
18 trying to remember who it was that died playing dominos
19 there. Who was that?

20 MR. HUGGINS: I don't know.

21 MS. HUGGINS: They lived over here by us
22 on the highway.

23 MR. HUGGINS: Tell him about AC and Clyde
24 McElroy. They were the most unusual characters you ever

25 saw in your life.

23

1 MS. HUGGINS: I heard on the grapevine
2 that they went into Fort Worth and bought a car with
3 cash.

4 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

5 MS. HUGGINS: I heard that on the
6 grapevine. I don't know how true it is, but they --
7 they drove along about 20 miles an hour on this road.

8 MR. TUCKER: On this road?

9 MS. HUGGINS: And now everybody drives 80.
10 Who knows. There's a 50 mile an hour speed limit on it.

11 MR. HUGGINS: But they lived in a log
12 cabin.

13 MS. HUGGINS: And they did. They lived in
14 a log cabin.

15 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

16 MS. HUGGINS: It's too bad -- too bad that
17 it fell down.

18 MR. TUCKER: Was it out here in the
19 country or --

20 MS. HUGGINS: Well, it was between here
21 and --

22 MR. HUGGINS: Back over toward --

23 MR. TUCKER: Oh, really?

24 MS. HUGGINS: And then they -- on that

25 dirt road, and then they had siding put on it -- some

24

1 kind of siding so that it looked like -- it's supposed

2 to look like brick, but it wasn't.

3 MR. TUCKER: And it was an actual log

4 cabin, huh?

5 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, it was a log cabin. I

6 mean, it was where they were born --

7 MR. TUCKER: Oh, man.

8 MS. HUGGINS: -- the two of them. They

9 were brothers, and they were born in that.

10 MR. TUCKER: I don't guess they ever

11 married? They were just bachelors all their life.

12 MR. HUGGINS: Clyde got married.

13 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, he did.

14 MR. HUGGINS: Remember? He married --

15 MS. HUGGINS: He did.

16 MR. HUGGINS: -- Linda Rue.

17 MS. HUGGINS: He married that --

18 MR. HUGGINS: So then he bought her a

19 house.

20 MS. HUGGINS: -- Linda Rue Cunningham and

21 bought that little round house.

22 MR. HUGGINS: Bought a house that was

23 eight sided. It used to be a gazebo up in Stephenville

24 or some place, and it was turned into a house. And they

25 moved it in down there.

25

1 MR. TUCKER: Oh, my gosh.

2 MR. HUGGINS: And I guess AC stayed in the
3 cabin. I don't know, but --

4 MS. HUGGINS: I don't know either.

5 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah, it was -- they were
6 characters.

7 MR. TUCKER: What was -- what was their
8 last name?

9 MR. HUGGINS: McElroy.

10 MS. HUGGINS: McElroy.

11 MR. TUCKER: McElroy?

12 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

13 MR. HUGGINS: He was a fiddle.

14 MR. TUCKER: Huh.

15 MR. HUGGINS: He taught a bunch of people
16 how to play the fiddle around here.

17 MR. TUCKER: Well, I guess -- I guess
18 they're more Irish -- Irish than -- than anything else.
19 It's funny -- I mean, even in the -- in the '70s, you
20 know, there were still people who -- who were similar to
21 those who still didn't even have running water in their
22 houses.

23 MR. HUGGINS: I don't think they did.

24 MS. HUGGINS: There was no running water

25 here when we moved here.

26

1 MR. TUCKER: No? You just had a well?

2 MS. HUGGINS: Had a windmill, and you had
3 to go outside to get water.

4 MR. HUGGINS: We didn't have a bathroom in
5 the house. We had a four-holer outhouse.

6 MS. HUGGINS: There was an old, rotten
7 porch where the bathroom and your room are, and my dad
8 and brother tore it down and tore -- tore out the old
9 porch and built the bathroom and utility room.

10 MR. TUCKER: That is kind of funny, you
11 know, in some of these old places like this that didn't
12 have running water in the house, they actually had a
13 building underneath the windmill, and they would have
14 their bathroom and their shower and -- underneath -- in
15 the building underneath their -- their windmill.

16 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, my. What was the
17 reason?

18 MR. TUCKER: Well, it's closer to the
19 water. They didn't have to run a pipe.

20 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, I see.

21 MR. HUGGINS: Mother, what -- what did my
22 brother, Henry, say when we got the bathroom?

23 MS. HUGGINS: Oh, "We are uptown."
24 Anyway, we had two bathrooms now. One inside and one

25 outside. He was like three years old.

27

1 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

2 MS. HUGGINS: He was so excited.

3 MR. HUGGINS: This was a -- this was a one
4 bedroom board and baton house probably built around the
5 turn of the century.

6 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. Well --

7 MR. HUGGINS: They had no insulation and
8 the walls were one inch thick.

9 MR. TUCKER: Yeah, because it was that --
10 I can't remember the type of -- but it's just board on
11 board.

12 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah, and it was all
13 wallpaper and newspapers.

14 MS. HUGGINS: Upright one-by-12s --

15 MR. TUCKER: Right.

16 MS. HUGGINS: -- and cracks were covered
17 with what they called batton. It's narrower boards.

18 MR. HUGGINS: Had five kids and two adults
19 living in here.

20 MS. HUGGINS: You had --

21 MR. HUGGINS: It was a close --

22 MS. HUGGINS: -- your bedroom in the hall.

23 MR. HUGGINS: Yep.

24 MS. HUGGINS: And everybody else was back

25 there in the bedroom. Except Pop and I, we were in here

28

1 on the foldout sofa.

2 MR. TUCKER: You know, that was a lot more
3 fun back then than it is now.

4 MR. HUGGINS: It was cold.

5 MS. HUGGINS: It was damn cold when we
6 moved here. The snow came in through the window.

7 MR. HUGGINS: Well, you could see daylight
8 under the walls.

9 MS. HUGGINS: Boy, this house was in
10 terrible shape then. Well, it's in bad shape now, but
11 it was terrible when we moved in it.

12 MR. TUCKER: Back then, did they -- did
13 they have -- other than the grocery stores, I heard that
14 we used to have a farmers market in town where a lot of
15 the farmers would bring in their --

16 MS. HUGGINS: Well, they -- they did, but
17 I never went shopping there. So I don't know, you know,
18 what they had.

19 MR. TUCKER: Did you grow all your -- you
20 probably grew all your own fruits and vegetables -- or
21 not fruits but vegetables and stuff?

22 MS. HUGGINS: We had some peaches, I
23 think.

24 MR. HUGGINS: Granddaddy grew

25 blackberries.

29

1 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah, that's true.

2 MR. HUGGINS: Strawberries.

3 MR. TUCKER: Did y'all --

4 MR. HUGGINS: Every kind of vegetable in
5 the world.

6 MR. TUCKER: Y'all probably butchered your
7 own beef and stuff like that or --

8 MR. HUGGINS: We didn't eat beef. Hardly
9 did we eat.

10 MS. HUGGINS: Well --

11 MR. HUGGINS: Chickens -- chickens and
12 rabbits and ducks and goats and --

13 MS. HUGGINS: Little stuff.

14 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

15 MR. TUCKER: Little stuff.

16 MS. HUGGINS: Yep.

17 MR. HUGGINS: An armadillo or two.

18 MS. HUGGINS: I had forgotten that. If
19 you ever want to know how to cook an armadillo, ask me.

20 MR. TUCKER: Oh, Lord.

21 MS. HUGGINS: Well, they're okay. They're
22 good meat.

23 MR. TUCKER: I heard they're a little
24 greasy, but anyway --

25 MS. HUGGINS: Well, that's -- if you get a

30

1 fat one.

2 MR. TUCKER: Well, you know -- so, you
3 know, you had to live off -- I mean, it was poor times
4 back then, even being in the late '60s.

5 MS. HUGGINS: Well, it was for us. That's
6 for sure.

7 MR. TUCKER: So what brought you to Hico?
8 Other than -- I mean, you said you had a weekend place
9 here.

10 MS. HUGGINS: Well, we bought a place for
11 my mom and dad -- a little place at Duffau for my mother
12 and dad to live here, and we were in Dallas -- or Dallas
13 County. We were in Irving actually at the time, and so
14 I don't remember why we came to Hico.

15 MR. HUGGINS: Well, we drove through here
16 all the time going down to Marble Falls.

17 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. My mother-in-law was
18 at Marble Falls.

19 MR. HUGGINS: We'd stop and eat at the Old
20 Coffee Cup right there on the highway.

21 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah. That's true.

22 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah.

23 MS. HUGGINS: I forgot that. And then we
24 started going to Hamilton, to Edmonston's, to eat.

25 MR. HUGGINS: Well, I think that's kind of

31

1 why you knew a little bit about Hico, though.

2 MR. TUCKER: Well, you know, and that
3 brings back another question. I -- there was a question
4 on -- on Facebook the other day. You probably don't get
5 on Facebook, but -- and they asked how many
6 restaurants -- or favorite restaurants did you have
7 growing up that no longer exist, and I could count --
8 and I got to counting, and, I mean, just in my lifetime
9 up until I graduated high school, I counted eight
10 restaurants that had closed in my hometown, that had
11 come and gone.

12 MS. HUGGINS: Oh.

13 MR. TUCKER: And how many -- I mean,
14 there's a lot of -- Hico's had a lot of restaurants
15 that's come and gone.

16 MS. HUGGINS: Well, Hico had the Coffee
17 Cup downtown.

18 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah, it was down there.

19 MS. HUGGINS: We used to stop there and
20 had coffee, didn't we?

21 MR. HUGGINS: Yep. You asked them to cook
22 you an omelet one day.

23 MS. HUGGINS: That's right.

24 MR. HUGGINS: Remember that?

25 MS. HUGGINS: "What's an omelet?"

32

1 MR. TUCKER: "What's an omelet?"

2 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah. So she taught them
3 how to cook an omelet.

4 MR. TUCKER: Well -- and you talked about
5 this -- Edmonston's was another restaurant.

6 MS. HUGGINS: Edmonston's. That was in
7 Hamilton.

8 MR. TUCKER: Oh, that was in Hamilton.

9 MS. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. We'd stop there
10 after -- it was sometimes on the way to Marble Falls.

11 MR. HUGGINS: Uh-huh. You're right.

12 MS. HUGGINS: You had to go down 281 to
13 get to Marble Falls.

14 MR. TUCKER: Yeah. Yeah. That's the only
15 way to get there from here.

16 Well, it's -- it's been a pleasure to talk
17 to you and to -- and to talk about, you know, your early
18 life here in Hico and all -- all your experiences. Is
19 there anything else you'd like to share?

20 MS. HUGGINS: Well, I will never forget
21 that lady stopping in front of me and saying, "Who are
22 you anyway?" That will stay with me until I go to my
23 grave.

24 MR. TUCKER: Do you remember who she was?

25 MS. HUGGINS: No. I didn't know at the

33

1 time, and I still don't know.

2 MR. TUCKER: Well --

3 MS. HUGGINS: She was a middle-aged woman.

4 That's all I know.

5 MR. TUCKER: Well, you know, Hico's motto

6 is everybody is somebody in Hico. So...

7 MS. HUGGINS: Yeah.

8 MR. TUCKER: That might have been pre

9 that.

10 MS. HUGGINS: Who do you want to be?

11 MR. TUCKER: Who do you want to be?

12 All right. Well, listen, Ms. Huggins, I

13 sure appreciate you giving us the time to come in here

14 and to -- and to talk to you and kind of invade your

15 home and -- and we really do appreciate it.

16 MS. HUGGINS: Well, that's okay. It's

17 nice to meet you.

18 MR. TUCKER: And thank you, Lloyd, for

19 allowing --

20 MR. HUGGINS: Oh, you're welcome.

21 MS. HUGGINS: I probably would not have

22 met you otherwise because I don't go to Hico very much.

23 I don't go anywhere very much. Sometimes some ladies

24 come and pick me up and we go to Stephenville to eat.

25 We're going to do that Friday.

34

1 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

2 MS. HUGGINS: You know, that sort of
3 thing, but that's it.

4 MR. TUCKER: Well, they need to take you
5 into Hico next time. We've got -- there's a lot of
6 things growing.

7 MS. HUGGINS: Well, the --

8 MR. TUCKER: I mean, we got four -- four
9 different places to eat now.

10 MS. HUGGINS: The hotel served a good
11 meal --

12 MR. TUCKER: They do.

13 MS. HUGGINS: -- the last time I was
14 there. I have a friend at Tarlton in Stephenville who
15 comes every once in awhile and we go out to dinner, and
16 usually we try to go to Hico. And so we went to the
17 hotel the last time, and -- and it was pretty good.

18 MR. TUCKER: They serve some good food and
19 everything. Well, listen, I real appreciate it and --

20 MS. HUGGINS: That's okay.

21 MR. TUCKER: -- and you have -- you have a
22 good day, and we appreciate it very much.

23 MS. HUGGINS: Thank you. It's nice to
24 meet you, all of you.

25 MR. TUCKER: Well, thank you.

35

1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

2

3 I, Jamie Cooley, Certified Shorthand

4 Reporter for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that

5 the above and foregoing interview contains a true and

6 correct transcription of all portions of the

7 proceedings, all of which were reported by me.

8 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness my hand on

9 this the 31st day of January, 2019.

10

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12

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