

## ESSAY

My first interview was with Curtis Martin. His migration to and living in the Sweetwater County area was the subject. His reasons for the move here were based on a family decision to improve financial opportunities and also better schooling for his children.

Shortly after arriving here, they acquired the four corners of the Farson intersection, consisting of most of the businesses in the valley. It was an exciting challenge for them to take on "owning a town". He feels that living and working here have been a learning experience and a stepping stone for the distant future.

Curt and his family have lived in the Farson area for fourteen years. Although they have been very successful here, they do not plan to stay in Farson when they retire. He does not feel he made a bad decision in moving to Sweetwater County and feels they have accomplished most of what they set out to do. He also hopes that when he leaves here, he will be remembered more for what he accomplished and contributed than what he took from here. This is an important thing to him and believes it is why a person is what he is and does what he does.

My second interview was with Danny Bennett. The interview was also about his migration to Sweetwater County. Danny came to the Farson area from the Denver Colorado area as a young teenager and immediately liked it here. At first it felt like summer camp to him. Everything he did was fun, although it was considered work by the people living here. He has noted many changes over the years.

Some of the things he noted that were different about Farson were television, telephone, outdoor plumbing, people's attitudes toward outsiders (although he feels this has changed tremendously), tastes in music, and last but not least the weather. The way people had and have adapted to their environment, whether it was for recreation or necessity sometimes was laughable for him. He soon learned to do some adapting himself. If the choice to stay here in Farson is Danny's, that is what he will do.

In one of our classes. I had to do a report on Theory, Method, and Oral History by Peter Friedlander. When I did the report I didn't think some of the methods he used were something I would ever think of using. Yet, I find that doing these interviews made me wish I could have gotten together with the narrator before and set some questions up. I kept wishing that I had more experience. I wanted to drag the history from the narrator.

I learned a lot about doing an oral history and I do feel I would like to try something like this again, but not until I have more time to spend. I feel this is a subject that takes more time and effort than I was able to spare.

A comparison of my findings along with the others in the class are:

The better interviews were with people who were happy to talk about their past and experiences. The narrators mainly remembered the good times and happy memories. Most of the people were looking for better economic or better working conditions. Many of the narrators commented on the weather, usually that it was not as nice as where they had come from. Most of them also commented on the landscape, some liking it, thinking it is great just the way it is, and some disliking it, feeling it is dirty and barren. Some felt they had been accepted here while others still felt uneasy. Some of the general conclusions drawn were some of the narrators felt we were prying into their personal business. Others didn't seem to be bothered.

It appears to me that the longer a person has stayed here, the better they like it and are more willing to stay.

The value of my findings in understanding people's motives for and responses to moving to southwestern Wyoming will be in letting other people know that there is a history

here. It is important for their histories to be put on paper or tape so that there will be something for later generations to read and know.

It is important that we know there were people who were willing to take the chance to strike out and start new in a new place or job. The willingness of these people to try to make the best of whatever was handed to them should be recorded. Traditions are important and if possible must be preserved. If we can record these histories and learn from them, then it makes the effort worthwhile.

Every person's story is a history. What one person forgets another might remember. Perhaps we can put them all together and form an account of what actually might have happened in a certain time frame or period. These sources make it possible to know why more stores were able to survive in the small town of Farson thirty years ago than can do so today.