AN INTERVIEW WITH LINDA LINTNER

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

The Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV
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ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV

Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project
Rancho High School Class of '62

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Preface

The daughter of a soldier, Linda Lintner and her mother traveled from North Carolina to Overton, Nevada to stay with Linda's grandparents when she was only six weeks old. After her father joined the family, they moved to Las Vegas where both her mother and her father started working at the Post Office. Linda attended local elementary and middle schools in the valley, and in due time, Rancho High School.

In this interview, Linda shares not only her memories of growing up in Las Vegas but also fascinating stories about the almost decade long round the world sailing journey that she and her second husband began in 1986. In the course of the decade, Linda became a qualified diver, and expert sailor, and developed a lasting appreciation for the world, its oceans – and the skills you learn when you live on a boat with one other person for so very long.

Since their return, Linda has been keeping busy, volunteering many hours with local veterans homes and the church – we are fortunate that she was able to spend time with our interviewer, too, to share her memories of growing up in Las Vegas.

This is Claytee White. It is Tuesday morning, February 12, 2013, and I am with Linda—Lintner. Oh, my goodness, I spelled it wrong. I'm so glad to have you spell it correctly. So would you please spell your last name?

L-I-N-T-N-E-R.

Wonderful. Thank you so much. I'm going to start just by talking about your early life and I want you to tell me about your family, where you grew up, and you can do that any way you like. Give me your parents' names and tell me what they did for a living.

I was born in North Carolina and my mother brought me by train clear across the United States to Nevada when I was less than six weeks old.

Why?

Because my dad went overseas. We were at Fort Bragg and it was four days; he had four days he was locked up and they wouldn't him out to come see me and he said I am not going unless I can see my baby daughter. So he went. And they let him hold me and he got my little baby [bracelet], you know, with the name Baby Rowe. And then my dad's mother came with my mother across in the train. And I was a colicky baby. Oh, I don't know how they managed. I was in thirty-seven states before I was six weeks old. My grandparents lived in Overton and my grandfather was a guide fisherman on Lake Mead and we stayed with her. They had one of those little trailers that goes like this. It's not as big as this it's big enough for a bed. That's where we stayed.

Yes. Silver colored?

Yes. We stayed in that until my dad came back in 1945. He came right back into Moapa Valley train station. I was with my grandmother for a little while. They went to Vegas to find a place to live and they rented a little house at 207 South 13th Street, which is now—I believe it's Maryland Parkway; I really don't know for sure. No. Maryland is 12th Street. Anyway, it

belonged to Mr. Whipple and we lived there for ten years.

Reed Whipple?

Yeah, yeah. My dad used to take me to the movies at Huntridge Theater. And there was a lot at—anyway, it was full of bushes and trees. He used to take me on his Cushman scooter on the back and he'd give me a dime and I could get into the movie. Maybe he gave me—no. It was a dime I got in the movie and some popcorn, too, I think; I don't remember.

Probably a quarter.

Maybe, I think.

For both.

Okay. I was pretty lucky; I was.

Any brothers and sisters?

I have a brother; his name is Ed and he lives in Big Bear.

Give me your parents' names.

My mother's name is Helen Pauline Rowe. She was a secretary. That's where she met my dad when she was in Ponca City at Oklahoma at secretarial school. And my dad's name was James C. Rowe, Clarence.

Would you spell Rowe?

R-O-W-E. It's like rowdy. I had a dog named Rowdy and that was the only way I could get people to pronounce my name correctly. I said think of my dog Rowdy and say Rowe.

That is wonderful.

Anyway, my dad worked at the post office, too. When he came back he had to have a job and he said I can't do anything; I went right into the Army. So he went to the post office. And his great big gorgeous blue eyes, they said, oh, man, we've got to work with you. And they both worked at the old post office building on Third Street right where is now the Mob Museum.

Have you been to the Mob Museum?

No, I haven't. I should have gone and I was going to go with the Humana Silver and Fit, but I didn't go. I had too many things to do.

The next time you have the opportunity you must see it. You won't believe the difference.

I am sure.

So did you ever visit your father at the post office?

Oh, yes. In fact, there was a blind man that had a stand in the lobby at the post office. When he would go on vacation in the summertime, I would take over his duties for three months. It was wonderful. It was a lot of fun. I met a lot of people. I learned how to tie a string on packages because they would come in and they would buy cigarettes. See, at that time I couldn't have been fifteen, maybe. They would buy cigarettes and candy and newspapers and whatever, and it was my job to sell it to them, make sure that everything was stocked and ready to go. And it was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed that.

My mom was also—well, she worked for the postmaster for many years, as she worked for a lot of them.

As a secretary?

Yes, she was a postmaster secretary, main secretary in Las Vegas. That started there, too. But she didn't go to work for the post office until my brother was born. He's four years younger than I am. He was one of those kids that cries all the time if mother doesn't pick you up. She went to the doctor and said, "What am I going to do, Dr. Swank?" He delivered me, delivered my brother. My brother was born here in Las Vegas at Las Vegas Hospital on Eighth Street. "What am I going to do?" He said, "Go to work; leave him with somebody else." So she had a degree in secretarial work. So she went to the post office where everybody knew her husband and said do you need a secretary? Oh, my gosh, do we need a secretary. My dad worked for thirty years

and my mother worked for twenty-five.

Wonderful. Now, your brother was okay?

Yeah, there was nothing wrong. Well, he was okay; he was just a spoiled kid. But he got polio when he was four and I was eight. We both got sick and we got this high fever. And the next morning I got up and started doing something and he couldn't walk. So it affected the upper part of his left leg. He was a poster child—I should have brought that picture—he was a poster child, March of Dimes poster child for the Las Vegas area when he was four. He was adorable, blond hair, and he was so cute.

So did he get over it?

Yes, he did. When he runs he slings his left leg because of this upper. But it's only the upper, not the calf, the butt muscle. It's just kind of a bone there; it doesn't have any muscle at all. But he still plays baseball and he takes walks and he is a guide. Yeah, it's really pretty cool.

And he's a guide where?

He's a guide in Big Bear. He takes people on nature walks and he has a good time. He likes it. I didn't even know that until a couple of years ago. He doesn't tell me everything. I wonder.

I see. So you grew up here. You worked part-time in the post off.

I did. Actually after I got married—oh, and before I got married, when I was in high school, we had moved to North Las Vegas when I was ten and we lived on Webb, one thousand Webb; that's like one street from Owens. That's why I ended up at Rancho High School; otherwise, I would have been going to Vegas. I would walk to J.D. Smith Elementary School. I went to Jefferson and J.D. Smith and Rancho.

So at J.D. Smith you met a lot of people that went to Rancho with you.

Yes, lots of them. The eighth grade class, we were pretty tight. I felt better about myself in junior high school than I did in high school for some reason. I have no idea why. I don't know

why.

Did more kids join the group when you entered high school?

Actually, the group fell apart; that's what happens. I've always found living in Las Vegas that you make a really good friend and then their parents go somewhere else and so you lose them. It's really rare I think to have six people and there were six of us who were really good friends. We went to the same church and the same youth group stuff. In fact, there were more than that; there were probably eight or ten.

Yes. Because all of you that I've interviewed so far, you're saying the same things. So it doesn't seem as if you lost a lot of friends.

Well, I guess not. But I met Billie and Connie through church. You didn't get to talk to Billie because she's gone now. But I was married in the First Baptist Church in Las Vegas. I think it was on Seventh Street; I'm really not sure what street. It was Seventh and Carson?

Which Baptist church?

First Baptist Church of Las Vegas. It is a very old-fashion church.

Oh, isn't that great?

Yeah, it was.

So tell me about Rancho. First tell me about your extracurricular activities, Pep Club, all kinds of things.

Well, we all belonged to Pep Club. I had a friend who wanted to join Pep Club and they didn't want her to join. I said what is wrong with you? She's a good person. Well, she has wine with dinner with her mother. And I said, yeah, like that matters? I don't think her mother lets her drink wine. And she said to me no, she didn't. And then from then on—I only met Cheryl through—and you've talked to Cheryl, too, Cheryl Leonard. I didn't understand that at all, so I said you have got to vote her in or I'm not coming either. And they did. And we had a

wonderful time.

So you were a protester early on.

[Laughing] That's terrible, isn't it?

No. I think it's wonderful.

Only in rare cases, though, because when I was here I didn't like the protesting, the burning people in effigy and stuff like that.

Are you talking about at UNLV?

Here, yeah.

Tell me about that. Are you talking about during the Vietnam War?

No. What am I talking—I don't know. See there, I didn't pay any attention to why they were—we burned somebody, a Tobler that owned a hardware store and I don't know why.

Von Tobel?

Yep, Von Tobel, not Tobler. Yes, Von Tobel, for some reason.

It was probably when the school was just being organized and you were probably trying to break away from UNR and become independent.

Maybe. I don't know. But anyway, I do remember—let's see, Rancho. You wanted to talk about Rancho, didn't you?

Yes. Let's go back to Rancho.

I'm sorry.

No, no, no. This is okay for us to jump around. So Rancho, tell me some of the other extra things that you did other than just classroom work.

I tell you the first class I flunked. Shorthand. I thought I could follow in my mother's footsteps. Oh, man. Shorthand makes you go—and makes your mind think [making noises]. But I was doing that all the time; when people would talk to me, I'd go [making noises]. It just drove me

crazy and I said I can't do this. It's weird, huh?

Yes, it is.

Anyway, it's odd. So school...

Do you remember the shorthand teacher?

No.

Which teachers did you enjoy most?

Oh, I had a civics teacher. In fact, I think he's still in politics in Henderson area. I can't remember his name; it started with an H, Hutchins; I don't know. I don't remember a lot of stuff because I had a stroke in October of '01—I mean not '01, but 2011. So yeah, go ahead.

Tell me about the singing. Did you do any singing in high school?

Oh, yeah, I did.

Okay. In church?

I always sang in church. I belonged to the choir. My whole time was taken up with church.

Why do you think so many young people were so dedicated to church at that time?

Even when their parents weren't, they were. Joyce came with her friends. We got a lot of really neat pictures of us with all our kids standing around waiting for the church to start. Well, it was just a different time then. I tried to get my kids to go to church. My first one went with me until she was about—well, until she moved away. Then that wasn't what she wanted to do. Stacy went with me a lot and then when she got married and came back to Boulder City she attended church with me all the time. So one of them goes this way and one of them goes that way. One of them is a Democrat; one is a Republican. One of them hates the other one's husband; this one hates her husband. They're different people.

Typical family.

Yes. And completely different people altogether. I mean they're both loving and kind and

giving, but they're eight years apart and that was kind of a difficult thing for me.

Tell me about the fun things you did as a kid. You remember working at the post office. How did you get back and forth from the post office to your home?

Oh, my. I must have gone with my mother. We lived on 13th Street and that was on Third Street. I don't remember that because I stayed all day, so I must have gone with her at eight in the morning or before eight.

Probably. Now, do you remember the kids cruising Fremont Street?

Do I ever. Yes.

Did you have your own car?

I did not have my own car. My folks were gone one time and they said, "Whatever you do don't drive the car." So everybody else wanted to go cruise Fremont and nobody had a car. So I said, "I'll drive the Mercury." It was a Chartreuse Mercury with wheel covers. I mean it was really a car and a half. Of course, we went up and down. We would make the turn where it was the railroad station and then come down to the Blue Onion and turn and go back and back. After about the fourth time and the fifty-second stoplight, the car gave out. So I had to go find someplace to call my folks. I called them and I said I have been driving the car. Oh, we told you not to do that. I did it anyway and the battery is dead and can you come get me? Well, it's going to take a while. Anyway, they came and jumped it. I can jump a car now, but I didn't know how to do that then.

Because if you would have done that, they would have never known.

That's true. We tried everything we could.

The city at this time was owned by the mob.

You know something? I never even noticed.

Tell me the difference between mob ownership and corporate ownership.

None. [Laughing] Well, I never knew anything. Sunday was church and evening was church, also. Wednesday night was choir practice. My folks didn't gamble, never went downtown. In fact, we never did.

So did you ever go after the prom or after the senior dance or anything like that? Did you go into any of those locations to have dinner?

Nope. We went to people's homes and goofed around. That was not something that I ever did, so nope. The kids do that now; rent a limo. No way. Even the guys I went out—I didn't go out with very many people in high school. And I did get a car finally. I bought it myself.

That's what I was going to ask because everybody I've interviewed who got cars early, they purchased it themselves. Everybody worked.

I was in high school. Yeah. Well, I didn't work as early as Joyce and Connie. They all worked at the theaters. I didn't do that for some reason. I probably could have if I really wanted to.

Well, you had both parents working full-time jobs.

I did and they had wonderful jobs. Every summer they got two weeks off with pay and we went to a national park and pitched a tent. While I was helping my dad pitch the tent, my brother was digging the trench around it in case it rained. Places like—all of them. I've been to all the national parks around Nevada.

California?

Yeah, California and Colorado and just all over and New Mexico. I can't think of all of them, but all of them. We had this great big green tent. It was shaped like this [demonstrating]. It was like a military tent. Dad brought it home. Of course, we had to bang in the holders for it.

You actually put the stakes into the ground.

Stakes in, yeah. My dad hit it, but I—see, I trusted him.

Yes, you did.

They were wonderful people, my folks. They're both gone. But of course, that's the way it is. We were in high school and one time we were going to Scotty's Castle. I said we can't find an adult to drive. And he said I'll go. Oh, he was so much fun. He kept saying about Joyce after it was over, gosh, that's a cute girl. But he saw her every day, every Sunday at church. She was a lot of fun, too. Well, she still is.

Yes, she is. That's great. So it was just going to be a trip for the girls?

Yes. I think so. It must have been. I don't remember, but we had a car full of girls.

I think that's wonderful. How did you end up in Boulder City?

I married W. Tom Cooper. I married him at Nevada Southern. I dated a lot in college, and so I had a lot of choices. He was the most stable.

What did a girl mean by stable at that time?

Oh, stable was he didn't—okay. He did drink and smoke. Well, he had family in Boulder City that was typical Beaver Cleaver home, just delightful people, and not crazy.

So it was similar to your home.

Yes, it was very similar to my home. There were other people that lived in Boulder City that thought I was the cat's meow, but I wasn't interested. I don't know why. He was the most stable. He had bought his own car, also.

What did he do for a living?

He worked at an appliance store in Henderson, Boulder Appliance. He repaired refrigerators and he delivered stuff because he was a great big guy. He worked for the park service before that. He used to take their—even in high school he was very big, and so he carried their payroll from the park from the lake up to the bank. And they got to wear a gun. It was so cool; he thought he was the Lone Ranger. That was when he was in high school. Anyway, he worked at Boulder Appliance.

He finished his—I don't think either one of us finished. He got into accounting and he was really good at that, but he didn't get his degree. Both of us worked for Larkin Plumbing way back. He did the accounting. I was working there. I was just supposed to call people and ask them how Larkin Plumbing did on coming to their home and fixing things. So then the guy said you can do payroll. And I said I'm really not good with money. After about the third month of me doing payroll, I paid myself more than anybody else, I got all the tax things wrong. I would start with—and my eyes would go like this. I was really awful. And they said, well, we're going to have to fire you. I said I don't blame you. So I said but I know somebody who can do this job really well. So I said I'm getting married in April and the young man that I'm going to marry is really, really smart and on top of things and he can do the payroll. Okay. So they gave him a job right away and he was dispatching and payroll and a gazillion other things. And he could just do it; that's all.

And did you go to work as a young bride?

Yeah.

What kind of work did you do?

Oh, where did I go? I went to work for Dr. Ahlstrom. She was a dentist, a children's dentist.

In Boulder City?

No. Actually, she was in Boulder City for a while, but she got her office moved to Las Vegas because more ability to do things.

More children.

Yeah. Again, she put me someplace where I really didn't need to be was in figuring out the– [laughing]. Yeah, you're ready for this, right? I loved calling the parents and saying, "It's time for your child's prophylaxis." And they go what? That means teeth cleaning, not what you think.

[Laughing] So you enjoyed that.

I did. But then the insurance companies started being really crazy and you had to get all the paperwork done for the insurance companies and make sure everything is very precise and I have never been precise in my life. I'm just [making noise] like this.

You're an artist.

I am, yeah. So that's what happens. Boy, I'll tell you I wanted to play football at UNLV; I really did.

Why?

Because I just love that. I love games. In fact, when I was here—I don't know what year it was—it must have been '63—somebody voted me the most athletic girl on campus. When it came time to give the awards they said most athletic and I stepped—I had red high heels on and a white sheath dress. I was slim and trim and I could walk in high heels. When the guy handed me—he took my hand first and I started to take the award and he said, wait a minute, I want to say something to you; you're the first athletic girl that I've ever seen that could walk in heels and look like a lady. I said, oh, that's very nice of you.

Oh, that's great.

Anyway, I played tennis. I played mostly with the backboard. I would hit out there—well, I don't know where it is now—but out there in the middle of nowhere. I'd hit that backboard. And if I didn't hit it again, it would go out in the desert and I'd have to go get the ball. So I ran, ran, ran, ran, ran, ran. Yeah, that was fun.

I wasn't very happy in high school. I was a twirler at J.D. Smith and I marched in the Helldorado Parades in the very hot stuff. We were the Indians, some kind of Indian; I don't remember. We had red and white uniforms and moccasins. Can you imagine how hot it would be marching up the blacktop on Fremont Street with moccasins on? I'd love to interview you.

Did you live here?

No.

Oh, okay. Never mind. Hot, that's how it was. They had rodeos in the summertime down at Cashman Field. It was a baseball field, really.

So now, the rodeo was part of Helldorado week?

Yes, it was. Yes, it was.

Which floats do you remember, the ones from the schools or the ones from the Strip?

Oh, the ones from the Strip. In fact, did the schools have floats? I don't know. I imagine they must have. The ones going up Fremont Street, they were elaborate. I remember the time the Golden Nugget had all these showgirls painted gold. I mean they were painted gold from head to foot. Later we found out that painting your body with paint is not good because it cuts off—especially in the heat—cuts off all your perspiration and all the breathing that your skin does. There were girls dropping all the way up there. But I didn't see that part because I was right at the beginning of the parade; we went up in front of the Chief Motel.

Where was that?

Let me see. It had to be at Eleventh or Tenth and Fremont. It was right on Fremont. It's gone now. I mean that's a long time ago. That picture of me with my little Helldorado thing my mother made me.

Good. So what other businesses do you remember that are no longer there? Fremont.

Is the Franklin Motel still there?

I don't think so.

No. Because Mr. Franklin was from Boulder City and he owned the Franklin Motel right on Fremont Street. He was on city council in Boulder City. He asked my first husband if he had any interest in being on city council. Tom said, well, yeah, I'd like that. He was quitting in the

middle of his term, so Tom got appointed to city council when he was twenty-two years old. Isn't that something?

Yes.

You can see what kind of a person he was. I got a second husband like that, too.

Wonderful. And how long was Tom on the city council?

Ten years. He was mayor in '75-76, when I had my second daughter and then we went our separate ways. We're really good friends with each other.

That's good. And then your second husband was also in politics?

Nope. That's a tough marriage thing, politics. It doesn't work.

Even when it's just a local office like city council or mayor?

Right. Yeah. The drinking gets more. You can't do any business at your home; you go to the bar to do it. That was tough and I didn't see him a lot even after the kids were born. I finally just said I can't live like this anymore.

So did you ever do any professional singing?

No, I'm not a professional. No. I sing at the veterans' home; I go extra Fridays to do that. No. I sing at church and I sing at two or three churches. I just enjoy it. I sing for different people, like I have to sing at a funeral on the sixteenth. That funeral is a lady's husband from Kansas where my second husband is from; he passed away and he is a Kansas Mason and my husband is a Mason. So they call me and say can you sing? Well, I have to go someplace else that night, but I can make the funeral because it's not late. I do whatever I can. And I like to be asked, so that's kind of nice.

So what kinds of work did you do over the years that you were married to Tom?

I did work at Gaverson Satler. Gaverson Satler was a great big place where they keep all kinds of stuff, a storage area. It was on West Sahara way off the road; I worked there. I took care of

all the air-conditioning stuff. What do you call those buildings, those great big old buildings that store stuff?

A warehouse.

Yeah, a warehouse. That's right. I lose words.

It's okay.

It was a warehouse. Air-conditioning guys would come in. First they'd call and say, Linda, do you have a BF-762? And I said is that a compressor? And they'd say yeah. And I say just a minute. I had to go back and look, though. Go back and look. And if there was one, I'd say yes. They said one time that half the time when I asked somebody if they have it, I get there and they don't have it. And I said, well, you always get it when I tell you it's here.

And I worked for Faye Ahlstrom. Tom and I had been married. We didn't have any children yet. I had just quit working at Dr. Ahlstrom's because—you don't need to know this. I quit and I came home and I was playing tennis every other day with my friends and just having a good time. My husband bought me a golden retriever. He didn't buy it for me; what happened? He took me over to the veterinarian's house who had a female dog who had had eight or ten puppies. He said, well, one of them is yours. Okay. Well, oh, boy. The veterinarian said—her name is Carol Whitmire—she said be careful of Jody, the mother, she's very protective of her puppies and she's bit a couple of people. And I said okay. So I just told Jody how beautiful her puppies were and what a really good job she was doing and I talked to her and finally her eyes just went from [demonstrating] to [demonstrating]. And I said can I touch one of your puppies? Nothing. I said okay. I said, okay, Jody? So I picked it up. She was good. The veterinarian said you don't want a job, do you? Yeah, I need a job.

So I started—when I took—Nugget was her name—in for the first time to give her a bath she thought that looked pretty good. So she said I want to hire you to clean up everybody, clean

the ears and make sure. So that was good. Then I went from that to grooming poodles and everything. I had a thousand pounds of poodle hair in my eyes and my nose by the time I was twenty-five. It really gets in your face. So I groomed for a while. Then the person who worked in the front office didn't come one day, so I did that. Then she came back and then they said, well, there's nobody to groom today, why didn't you come in the back and you can do the autoclaving of all the instruments after surgery. So then I got to autoclaving the gowns and the surgical instruments and then putting them out. Then it graduated to can you put this animal under—or she would put it under and say can you intubate? So I would stick the thing and intubate. So I learned a whole lot. A learned a lot from that veterinarian. I learned a lot from others because she was a hiker and a canoe-er.

So after working for the veterinarian—how long did you work there?

I worked for her for twenty-five years. Then in 1986 I met Mike after Tom and I were divorced and he said how would you like to go sailing? And I said okay. Just on the lake. We sailed on the lake a couple of times and had some really horrible weather out there and it didn't bother me at all. He said, no, actually now I'm talking about getting a boat of our own and going cruising, like you put the food on the boat and you go across the ocean. I went, oh, wow, that sounds so neat. So I learned how to provision. I learned how to navigate. I went to navigation school in San Diego. Navigation school, it was really neat. I learned how to find where you are; you make two lines by the—it's confusing. Even with the numbers that I was really bad at before, I was the top of the class in the navigation because the teacher took his copy and put everybody's up against it and held it up to the light to see and mine was just right on his. I don't know why. But it was fun. Then so we took off.

I retired in 1986; that was my last year working at the animal hospital. I had gotten my technician's license by grandfathering in, but I still had to take the test. If you had worked in a

veterinarian hospital for ten years, you didn't have to have the schooling because you had the schooling. I was animal health technician number five in Las Vegas. It was cool.

Wow. So in '86 you retired.

In 1986 I retired.

And what did Mike do for a living that he could just take off and go around the world?

He trades commodities, so he's a day trader. And he was doing really well till he got me. No. We were gone for ten years. We stopped trading altogether and first we went to Hilo, Hawaii. We were there awhile. I learned to dive there. I'm a PADI diver, advanced PADI diver. Then we sailed around the bottom of the Big Island and we watched the lava rolling into the ocean. It makes a noise like surf. You could see it hit the water and go [making noise].

Was it still hot?

Oh, boy, it was red. Then we got a copy of a film that Jacques Cousteau had made from underwater. The divers were underwater in special hot suits or something. The lava would roll in and it would make a big ball, like this big, and then crack and you'd see the red inside of it and then you could see the divers backpedaling because it was hot. Yeah, it must have just heated up the ocean something else.

We went to Honolulu and we got married on the first of September. After we got married we started on a real adventure. We sailed to an island that belonged to a man who lived in Honolulu, Ensley Fullard-Leo owned Palmyra, he and his brothers. We called him up. We heard that he wasn't letting anybody go to his island. So we called him up and asked him to come over for dinner because we wanted to talk about his island. So anyway, he says you want to go to my island, don't you? Yeah, we really would like to go. Well, you can't go; it's trespassing if you go. Okay, no problem. So after a while we got to talking and he said have you got a chart of Palmyra area? Yep, we got charts of Palmyra. So we got it out and visited for the

longest time. He says, oh, yeah, this is a good chart. When you get there this is where the sharks breed and this is where the rays breed. He was delightful. Then he asked us if he and his kids—he had high school kids—could ride with us to Palmyra. We said of course. Before we were able to leave, one of his sons was accepted into the Olympics for rowing or something and his daughter started to college and she didn't want to leave. It was just one of those things; they didn't get to go. Then he called up with the National Guard. So they didn't get to go. The last thing he said when he came to talk to us and tell us that he couldn't go with us, he said, well, I hope you have a great time in Palmyra, but just know you're trespassing!

Oh, that's great.

It was uninhabited. There were two dogs that lived there. They left two dogs there when they had a copra plantation. Do not ask me why. But the dogs were delightful and they made good friends with us. They hunted shark in the shallows, baby shark. They would run out and one would chase this way. And I guess sharks get exhausted fairly easily. They'd go back and forth like this and then one would grab the head and the other would grab the tail and like this all the way to shore. One would dig a hole and the other one would throw the shark in. They'd cover it up and three or four days later when it started to rot a little bit they would eat it. Isn't that something? When you don't have any food, nothing. And they didn't like dog food. So we had Cup-a-Soup, those little cups of powder stuff. I would fix a pot of rice and make a couple of cups of Cup-a-Soup and pour it over the rice and they were crazy for that. They liked that. But we had some meat onboard, some freezers and stuff.

And so where did you go after leaving that island?

We went to Samoa, American Samoa. We were there for quite a while. It's really interesting how the Americans went in to help Samoa after the hurricane that happened probably ten, fifteen years before they were there, and kind of ruined their culture. You can't ruin a culture unless it

really wants to be ruined. But they built them cement houses. They would sit outside the house; they didn't live in there. To really know what Samoa is like you have to go to Western Samoa, which is the other island. The people live in their little (fales) there. They're actually a raised piece of wood and they have little poles all around and thatched roofs, but no walls. So they would hang a sheet from the middle to other the side and there were five or six families lived in there. They would sleep in their own little wedge, amazing. And the pigs and the cats and the children were running all over the place.

But they were part of a village that had a chief and the chief was the man who said what goes and what doesn't go. I believe it was a matrilineal society; I'm not positive. I've forgotten a lot of that stuff.

Was the chief female?

If it was matrilineal, she was. But they had a really tight hold on the people that lived in their village on who they brought in and who they didn't bring in. I found myself wishing, wow, I wish we could have done that with our kids.

We went from Samoa to Fiji, which is delightful. We got there about two years after a coup that was the Fijian people decided that they did not like the Indians and the Australians who had come from India and Australia. They took over all their businesses; they bought all their businesses and all the businesses were run by white and yellow people, not by them. They were wonderful people and I felt sorry for them. But they had taken—

You felt sorry for?

I felt sorry for the Fijians. But when we got there, by the time we got there, they had taken back their businesses, just took them; they didn't buy them back. They were just doing really well, really well. So it was a kind of a—you feel sorry for one; you feel sorry for the other. But it was a fun stay. When we were there we went out to dinner a lot; that's what we always did. We were

in dinner one time in a little place we had to take a taxi to because it was too far to walk. We were done with dinner and we started to go out the door and the waiter said, no, no, no, no, you can't go out. Okay. They said, well, the guards are out. I said why? He said didn't you hear the bell ring? I said no. It's a religion. They ring the bell and it's five minutes you're supposed to be praying instead of eating; I'm not exactly sure. But anyway, they had learned that if you go outside you get beat up because you're not supposed to be eating and having a good time and walking around. Fiji was very, very, very—

So they beat you if you weren't praying?

Yeah. Isn't that beautiful?

Yes.

A boat sailed into Fiji and a little boy said I'm going to go fishing, Mommy. So he's out there fishing right off the big church there at a bank and he's fishing. Somebody called the police and they went out there in a boat and got him and took him to jail. He said but I was just fishing, and they said you don't work on Sunday. Well, I wasn't working; this is fun. No. They finally found out who his parents were on the boat. And they got of it by saying that they had crossed the international dateline and weren't sure what day it was. Sure, if you're navigating. But they got him out of jail with no problem. So they promised they would never work on Sunday again.

Wow. What a different way to live.

Oh, it was. And we went from one place to another. We'd stay two weeks to two months at a place and really learn about the people and how they lived and what they thought and go to the market at five o'clock in the morning to get vegetables and things that you don't have on your boat. We went to Tonga and the Solomon Islands. It was amazing.

So you left here in 1986 doing that. When did you come back?

We left in '88; we came back in August of '97. So it wasn't a whole ten years.

Wow.

I know. Somebody said, wow, Vegas must have been a lot different when you came back. I said, well, the first time I flew back was from American Samoa for Christmas. I flew back and I thought, gee, there's a lot of red roofs out there. They had started the building in '89 and it just started up the mountainsides. Oh, the last time I flew home was from I think Mauritius, maybe. I had to fly home for my daughter's wedding. She got married in California. So I flew from Mauritius. You know where the Mauritius is?

No.

It's off the African coast. You know where Madagascar is. It's just outside of Madagascar; it's called Mauritius and Reunion. It's French; two French islands, Reunion and Mauritius. We were there just in time to call home and call and get a reservation to go home. I flew to the Seychelles because I had been there already; that was interesting.

Yes. A lot of British people vacation there.

Do they? Well, I just remember the great big—it was a huge silver metal artist's interpretation of a person. It was huge; I mean it was as tall as this room is long. It had chains and it looked like this monster had gone like this [demonstrating] and broken the chains because the chain had flipped on its side and was just falling. It was absolutely beautiful. It represented their freedom from—you know—from communism. Actually, it was communism in the Seychelles. Do you believe that? Yeah. I think so. Anyway, they were told everything they could and couldn't do and every dollar they made had to go to somebody else. Does that sound familiar?

So is that how you stayed in touch, you would call home from various places?

Yes. Every time that you leave port on a sailboat there's a chance you're not going to make it to the next port. So we learned to trust a little more than usual when you were just living on a place like this. We learned how to trust that God; I'll tell you how many times did I say, thank you,

Lord? I would call before we left and then we'd call when we got there. So we had phone cards that we could do that with; my mother had to learn to use it.

So would you ever do that again?

Oh, yes, in a minute.

Wow. So was that a great way to start a marriage?

Oh, yes, it was. With my first marriage when I would get angry I would just go take a walk. And you can't do that when you're on a boat that's fourteen feet wide and fifty feet long. So we just learned how to yell it out.

I was told from the very beginning that if anything squeaks or moves on the boat that you need to tell the captain right away, who was my husband. So we had a little squeak in the wind vane and I didn't tell him because it was just a little squeak. He came up on deck after and he said why didn't you tell me that thing is squeaking? I said, well, it's nothing. He said, oh, sure, the keel could fall off the wind vane and then we wouldn't be able to use it you'd have to steer the rest of the time. So I learned from that.

And then another time that I didn't do what we told me to, we got forty-knot winds going into New Zealand. I didn't tell him that they had gone up just five knots. But forty, that's pretty strong. But our boat was fine. I didn't tell him that it was going a lot faster. So he came up and he said we've got a reef. So we spent fifteen, twenty minutes trying to get the sail down enough to make it a smaller sail. We had all our sails up, so we had to take one in. But I was having a good time; it was going along.

That sounds wonderful.

I've got to tell you the rest of it. This is a funny story about husbands and wives. He went down below and he washed off and got a new T-shirt on and he came back up and he was standing in the hatch area on the stairs, because we had stairs that went down, and he was reading me the riot

act again. I said aren't we done with this? Do you know what God did? [Laughing] We were just going along and this bucket full of water—I mean it wasn't a bucket; it was just water from the ocean—came right straight up in the air—and I watched it—right straight up in the air and right over the top of him down the hatch. And I went ooh. And he went whaa. He had to go do it all over, wash up.

So was the argument over then?

Yeah, it was because God got it finished.

That is great. So how long did you live with him? How long were you and Mike married?

We still are.

So how long has it been?

Oh, it will be twenty-five years the first of September. Yeah, I was married to Tom eighteen.

So are you still in Boulder City?

Yes. When we got back from cruising we left the boat in Washington State where we had come in. Well, we came in the straits of Juan de Fuca to a little fishing port, but I can't tell you the name of it right now, Port Douglas—no—Port Angeles. Port Douglas is in Australia. I can never get the ports right. We drove back to Boulder City. A friend of mine sold real estate and she tried to find us a house. Well, we saw every house in Boulder City that was for sale and didn't find what we wanted. So we went back to Washington and worked on the boat for a while. We had to clean it up and there were things that needed to be done and get all of our stuff off of it because Mike wanted to quit. He said watch my lips; "I want to go home." So we were in the Caribbean then. He fell off scaffolding and broke some ribs. He didn't want to do it anymore. I said, okay, well, I'll go home if you take me to the Galapagos first. He said we can't get there from here. I said yes, we can. We go across and we go through the Panama Canal and then we sail down to—so that's what we did—sail down to the Galapagos. Oh, man. And then we went

straight up from the Galapagos to Washington State. We crossed our line. Yeah, really neat. Neat, neat, neat.

What did you ask me? How long I had been married. It will be twenty-five years.

You told me. So you left the boat in Washington.

Then we put it in the hands of somebody who would sell it. We had to go back a lot of times. But we finally came back to Boulder City and found a house that we liked. Mike had a house there and so did I, but my younger daughter was living in my house and we had rented his house to some friends of mine. And I didn't want to live in a house with a pool, anyway. I never had a pool growing up and I don't want to have to take care of it. It's really sad that I didn't because he had fruit trees planted all around that pool. He had nectarines and pear and almonds. Oh, man. There weren't any peaches, though. What did he have? I don't remember what else. Pomegranates.

But did you sell the property?

Yes, we did. My daughter stayed in my house and we sold his house and bought the house that we're living in now with cash, thank goodness. That was the only way to do things. It has turned out to be pretty cool.

So did he go back to being a day trader?

Yes, yes. It hasn't gone very well, though, because in the ten years we were gone traders started trading—I mean anybody could trade on E-Trade. They would get on the Internet and closing times of the different commodities were all night long I mean they would go on forever. It used to be he had in his head cotton closes at this time and wheat closes at this time and pork bellies close at this time. It's been tough for the last—it's not been all cream. I didn't go back to work. He didn't really want me to go back to work. He's struggling and he's doing okay. We're still there.

That's wonderful. Yes.

We're able to pay the taxes and buy food and go out to eat once in a while. You know what? When you're on a boat you realize it only takes love and a little food and water; that's all you need, and something over your head.

And you don't have a mortgage, so that's why you're able to do that.

That's right; no mortgage at all. Yeah, that's cool. I thought when we did that, what, you're going to pay cash for the house? And he said of course; I don't want to have to pay every month. My mother was like that, too. If she bought something on time, she would pay three payments each payment time to get it paid off.

So where did you go shopping when you were near downtown Las Vegas growing up, in high school?

You mean like grocery stores?

Clothing.

Oh, across the street from UNLV there was a lady named Arian who had a bridal shop. It was on Tropicana in that little strip mall that was just right over there.

Where Vons supermarket is now?

I guess. Anyway, she had a little dress store down on Las Vegas Boulevard, a little dress shop. If you wanted to get something really nice, you went to Arian's. She knew what size you wore and she would greet you with this huge hug no matter if you hadn't seen her in months. That was fun, too, because a lot of my friends from high school were in a beauty contest; it was Ms. North Las Vegas contest. Well, I didn't get very far, but I got my bathing suit and my red high heels from her.

That's great. So now, where do you shop now in Boulder City?

In Boulder City they have several really—they don't have as many as they used to, but some cute

little shops, like—Hot Digs; I don't remember what it's called. But if I want to buy clothes, I usually go to Coldwater Creek. And I go to Henderson to places like—

The District.

Well, actually I love Ross and Marshalls and they're both right there in that new shopping center on Lake Mead.

Oh, that's great.

Stewart's Market; that's where we went shopping.

Where was that?

That's on Stewart Street right near the church where I went to church. Homesite Baptist Church is where I went. I was just thinking—and you were thinking (sic) about where did you shop.

Every Sunday evening we went out to dinner, my family, my early family. We went to a pancake house that was on the corner of 16th, I think, and Fremont. I don't know what it was called, if it was called the Pancake House. I would have little pigs in blankets and that was the most wonderful thing. When you go to a Pancake House, you can eat a lot for practically nothing because my mother was saving for a house. They found that house; it was being built in North Las Vegas. They bought it brand-new and I hated it.

Why?

It didn't have any trees. That house on 13th Street had huge salt cedar trees that I could just walk up. I could just walk using both hands just walk up the trunk and sit in the tree and watch the whole world go by. But then there were no trees; there was one little stick.

Did you plant trees up in North Las Vegas?

Yes. And you should see them now. When my mom passed away and I sold the house. I go by every once in a while. That tree got so big that it just took up all the sidewalks and started on the driveways. So I think they took that out. But anyway, it's kind of fun to go back and look.

My folks always loved Mount Charleston and they would go up and just sit on the park benches and play in the snow. There's a picture of me about a year old with snowballs and stuff. They decided about the time I got married that they wanted to buy a cabin up there. So they found a little cabin; it was thirteen hundred square feet. It was A-frame, didn't go all the way to the ground; it had a wall about this high inside. My folks had that until my brother and I sold it just this last August. That was something else; it was hard to do that. It was free and clear except for the three thousand dollars a year taxes and that's more than we pay for our two-story house in Boulder City. Mom's money was running out and we didn't have that much money and my brother retired and I didn't know that. So it was prudent to sell it. We sold it to a really nice couple that came from Florida and wanted to live in the snow sometimes.

Perfect. So do you like Boulder City today?

I love Boulder City. There are a lot of people in Boulder City—Boulder City was a different kind—it was a government town for the longest time. About the time I met Tom it had incorporated itself and we still had Boulder City schools. Boulder City School was separate from the Clark County schools. It didn't take but about—I don't know how many years—not very many years, four or five maybe years of having incorporated school that they got incorporated into the Clark County schools. But still Boulder City is a better school than any school. We had six valedictorians with five-point-oh averages. I mean five, how do you get a five?

I have no idea.

You do all the extra classes that they have for you plus all your schoolwork.

So do those kids get to go to some of the Ivy League schools?

Yes, they do. They get huge scholarships. It's wonderful; it really is.

So what kinds of organizations and clubs are active in Boulder City now?

I belong to Rebekahs.

What is that?

Rebekahs is a—R-E-B-E-K-A-H. It's part of the International Order of Odd Fellows. Rebekahs are very similar to Eastern Star and Masons. My husband is a Mason and I belong to Eastern Star. Oh, there's the women's club and they're college-educated women, Women of the—it's letters.

University women.

Yeah.

So what are some of the activities that some of these clubs do for Boulder City?

Oh, gosh, they do all kinds of things.

Fashion shows?

Scholarships is one of the big things.

So how do they raise money for scholarships?

Oh, they have teas and they have—like you said a fashion show, it was a sorority that did that, had a fashion show. And people that had lived in Boulder City forever donated their clothes to the fashion show. So they had clothes from the thirties they were wearing. And it was really hard to find anybody to fit into the skinny waist things. But they would sew them up in the back and put a jacket on them. Absolutely adorable. That was just so much fun just watching it. They would come down the stairway at the hotel and when they got to the first landing, they would tell about the outfit they had and they would come down the last ten steps and model for everybody. We all had tea before that. It was beautiful. It was one of the best ones I've ever been to.

So what about Art in the Park in Boulder City?

Art in the Park. My mother and my daughter and myself, we started a long, long time ago

donating a painting that we did. It wasn't called Art in the Park then; it was called—well, Art in the Park, I guess. It wasn't called that, though; it was called something else. There's one picture of me in there with the painting that I donated. My mother was a painter. So we would get three booths in a row, which was twenty-five dollars apiece then and it was a square about as big as this table and you could put your paintings out on easels. Now it's become very, very expensive. So we got three in a row—my paintings, my mother's paintings and my daughter's drawings.

One artist in a different area came to my daughter and said would you be willing to trade art with me? And she said sure. He said because I really love this. She painted horses in watercolors. She did it any way she could do it, but she was really pretty good at it. So she went over and she came back with a drawing that was amazing, almost like da Vinci's drawing of the man. That was the one that really caught her eye. He didn't care how much the differences were and the prices; he just wanted to have something of hers. Isn't that neat that somebody would do that? It's lovely.

Yes, it is.

We were in Art in the Park—Boulder City Art Festival was what it was called. We were in the Circle Park for years. Then it came my turn to be in charge of the whole thing. The wind was supposed to blow and it was supposed to be rainy. We never had any problem with it before, but it scared me. Two days before it started I said we're moving to the school, the high school. So everybody had all their stuff in the hallways of the school. It still was not nearly as elaborate as it is now with all the crafts and things. It was mostly fine art, arts and paintings. Outside we had on a clothesline. What kind of sunglasses are those that keep the sun from—they keep the sun from hurting your eyes. Anyway, this lady—and she's very popular now—she made like—I don't know what she made them out of, but it was paper. It had glass over it. It had a light inside—it didn't have light inside then; you had to use the sun. You would take these two pieces

of—they were like, well, a piece of plastic, but it had a color so that when you put them together it was much darker. You could go to her thing, it was hanging on the line, and go like this and have it darker and it would be something else. Jordan is her name. She's still doing stuff. I am really not good at saying that kind of stuff, but it was really neat. That was Art in the Park.

And now it's one of the biggest things around.

Yeah. Country Store is something that's big, too; it's a rummage sale run by the women at Grace Community Church. I went there for many years. My daughters were dedicated there. I didn't get married there, though, because my home was Las Vegas, although he lived there and went to church there. I got married where I wanted to.

So you got married in your old church here?

First Baptist Church, yeah. Yeah, the Country Store now is still huge if you ever want to come out. It's in October and it's Friday and Saturday, some weekend in October around the 21st. It's huge, huge. It's everywhere.

And people donate their clothes and sell them?

Clothes and furniture and bedding and craftwork and shoes. Somebody makes chili and they serve chili all day and sodas. The basement has books and videos and pie.

That's wonderful.

It really is neat.

So that's the big fundraiser for that church?

Yeah, it is.

Wonderful. So any other memories about Rancho High School, anything else that you thought about?

You said if I was an activist or not. One time we were having a performance; I think it was the one where the quartet was singing in the gym. There was one girl who was a dancer and there

was no place for her to change her clothes. So she had gone up to one of the storage rooms at the theater to change clothes. The gal in there was practicing her part for the play that was going to be the next week and she wouldn't let her in to change clothes. And that really made me mad. I said what, she's more important than anybody else? Finally she opened it and I said, Peaches, I'm going to kill you if you do that again. So Darlene went in and changed her clothes and then we left. But that just made me angry.

I don't get angry that much anymore. It's really calming to be on the ocean. You don't have anything else to do. We kept our own watches, so we called ourselves "lips that pass in the night." When we were by ourselves, which was most of the time, we would do four hours on, four hours off, four hours on and then six hours off so that we always had a good night's six hours sleep. People that sail and go three hours on and three hours off are zombies by the time they sail for two weeks anywhere. So we didn't have any problem with that. My husband was in submarines and he knew about watches and how to set them up so that you could actually get some rest.

Oh, that's great.

It was; it was great. When we had another person with us, we did four on, four off all day and all night, which worked out. No. Four on, eight off, because if we had three people we could divide it.

So it was three segments of a twenty-four-hour period, yes.

Yes. But we never were without a watch. You have to have a watch. A lot of people get in trouble not watching. I remember more what we did on the boat than in high school.

I think it's wonderful that you remember that. Those were the times that you really loved.

Yeah, I really did. Life with Mike has been really, really nice. When we came back my Rebekah lodge wanted to go volunteer at the veterans' home for Super Bowl Sunday. They

wanted to help set up all the decorations and go get the people to come down for the pizza parties and things like that. So we did that one time. I had been singing on Fridays, just going. I wasn't a volunteer; I just went and sang. After that time I got to meet some of the people living there and an amazing group of people that work there, the CNAs and nurses and the group that worked there. They were so caring and giving. And the place was spotless, absolutely spotless. They have a chapel. They have kind of a living room where they can watch. Anyway, so after that was over I went to Angela, the head of volunteers, and I said I want to be a real volunteer, so I got the paperwork. You had to be fingerprinted and you've got to get your tuberculosis thing and you have to sign—not sign your life away, but they have to do a background check on you and make sure you're not crazy.

Exactly. And I think that's important.

I had five hundred and ninety hours this last time.

Oh, that's wonderful.

Yeah, I think it's pretty good. Oh, no. Nine hundred and ninety hours. I'm almost to a thousand. It will take me six months to get to a thousand. But I started going every day. She gave me a job of changing the water bottles in the rooms and on sidewinder neighborhoods. So I would go in the morning and get the little cart and go down and get the waters. You have to knock on the door and go in and you visit with everybody, because you have to, and I like that. And I find out how they're doing today. Oh, my son's coming today. Oh, good. You're going to lunch?

Oh, that's wonderful.

Yeah. And so I got really used to the people there. I would go back to the kitchen and fill up the water bottles with ice and water and take them back. I did that every day for five days a week, after not having done anything like that in ages. So at one point I said I don't have any time to do anything else because it was right in the middle of the day. I did it from ten o'clock to one

o'clock. So I said I'm just going to come three days a week; I'm going to come Monday, Wednesday and Friday. So I'm still going three days a week and doing the same thing, but I love it.

That's wonderful.

Lost a lot of good friends in the three years.

Yes. But I think that's why we're here.

I think so, too. You are so right. Are you writing a book; is that what you're doing?

No. These interviews are used for researchers, students who want to research the history of the city, of the area. So we do oral history on all kinds of subjects. Like early healthcare, we interview doctors and nurses. We want to do something on entertainment, what it was like, dancers and showgirls. So we ask them about behind the stage, on the stage, the various shows.

Oh, neat. Very interesting.

Yes. So we get all kinds of information about life.

Isn't that great?

The whole gamut of life in this area.

People will say I wouldn't move to Las Vegas for anything. I say it all depends on you.

They just don't know.

They have no idea what a lovely city this is. It got huge and the overbuilding was a real mistake, but it happened and what can you do about it?

So thank you so much.

Oh, you're welcome. It was wonderful. I just love meeting you, Claytee.

Wonderful meeting you.

I didn't learn much about you.

[End of recorded interview]


HOTEL

Thank you

Linda


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Carnival
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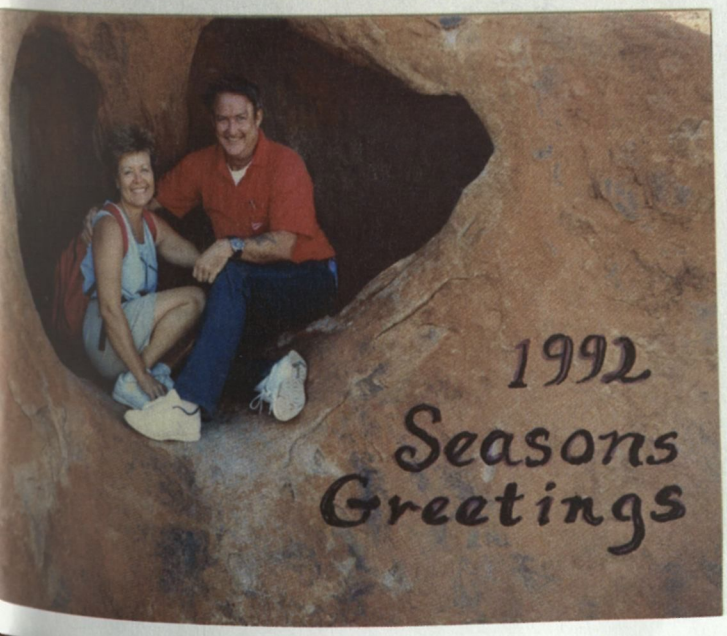
1992
Seasons
Greetings

B.C. 1974 ART FESTIVAL

DONATING ARTISTS

TALANTED LINDA COOPER of Boulder City has donated her oil painting "Mountain Stream" to the Boulder City Art Festival. The members of the Boulder City Hospital Auxiliary are now selling tickets for a drawing to be held at 5 p.m. October 6, 1974 during the Boulder City Art Festival.

Linda has been painting several years and uses both brush and palette knife to achieve a smooth satiny effect. She entered the Boulder City Art Festival last year and was encouraged by the response shown her work to enter again this year.

Other pictures donated to the Boulder City Hospital Auxiliary are, etchings by Roy Purcell and Thalia Dondero, and acrylic by Roger Eads, and an oil by Helen Rowe.

All money raised by the Boulder City Hospital Auxiliary go to support the Boulder City Hospital, a community, private, non-profit hospital supported by the people of Boulder City.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS-William Ferrence (r) and Linda Cooper are recipients of the B.C. Jaycees Distinguished Service Awards this year. They were presented with their plaques at a DSA banquet last Saturday at Bob Verchota's Railroad Pass Casino. Jaycee Banquet Chairman Bill Budd (1)l) is shown congratulating the winners

Knighton Photo

Bill Ferrence, Linda Cooper Receive Jaycees Distinguished Service Award