



Judy Moon Glasson

Great Basin Indian Archive

GBIA 045



Oral History Interview by

**Norm Cavanaugh
April 9, 2015
Ruby Valley, NV**



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C: This is going to be a story about a lady that came from Ruby Valley, and you can see the Ruby Mountains in the background. And they're just beautiful. So, you'll be hearing today about the story of the Western Shoshone people, and how they came from the Ruby Mountains, and ended up here in Elko and throughout Nevada. And are still here, presently.

G: I'm Judy Moon Glasson. I'm from Ruby Valley, born and raised in Ruby Valley, and came to Elko, Nevada to find a job here. And I moved here and went to college here in Elko. And then I got married, and got my home here and live here since that time in— forgot what year it was. I have four sisters and two brothers. One, the oldest brother, got killed in World War II. And we all went to school in Ruby Valley, grammar school. And I moved here to stay with my aunt in Elko, and I went to work here to make a living. I worked in homes, and they paid, like, dollar an hour. Cleaning homes. And did I tell you I went to high school here at the college, Elko? And then, I bought this house here. And got married. And lived here since. After I moved here, then mine start people coming in. That's the first mine that I know of that started down there in Carlin. Then everybody, a lot of people moved here in Elko to work at the mine. Yeah. There wasn't hardly very many people here before the mine started. The first thing that I remember about traditional fall dancing, powwows and stuff, is my dad and mother used to go to Ibabah and say they're going to help out by dancing for the rain so the pinenuts will grow. Or you know, it's for the pine trees to have pinenuts. You know, the wet weather. So, that way, we'll have pinenuts in the fall. And that was the reason why they had these Fandangos, to pray for the rain for our pinenuts, for it to grow every year, for our food.

Yeah, that festival was for that reason, for the pinenut. And you know, for the food, any kind that grows on this country. Well, they first pray before they start anything, for why they were having this doings, first of all. For the rain, for our fruit, for the summer, for the—every year. Every year, they have that Fandango. That, I remember, as growing up. And yeah, start here in Elko, I start that rain and snow dance. [Laughter] Because nobody talked about it, you know, older people. They never say anything about our rain for their fruit, pinenuts, and everything. So, I—in Ibapah, people were doing that. Having those Fandangos for that reason. So they'll have fruit and everything for the year. So, I remember that, and then I started that here in Elko. And we had it out to Lee first. You know, we go camp out there, and we invited people to come from different places. So there be lot of people that celebrate it. The people that have the games and the dancing, and the person that pray for the doings. And so, they just get together and have fun. You know, that's our way of, in the fall, that's when they pray for all that fruit and everything, pinenuts for the summer. So, every year, they have wet weather, and let everything grow for the year. In the evening, they have that Bear Dance first. And then, like, before midnight, they turn into Circle Dance. And then, they have that Circle Dance all night 'til morning, and then another place they have handgames that going on. It's just that fun, you know? Fun in the fall of the year. People all get together and camp. And then, they have a feast afterwards. Yeah. That used to happen in Ibapah. They get a deer for their feast, and pinenuts, pinenut gravy, and things like that. So they all share that together with their doings. And they have a handgames, and you know, just fun things. Everybody get together. And then, there's a songs for the Bear Dance, too. We used to invite the people from Ft. Duschene down for that Bear Dance. I guess they still do it over there.

But they have the songs for that. And then there's Circle Dance. These young people now, they don't know anything about it. About the Bear Dance, and the—they quit doing those traditional things. Because nobody knows about it, except me. But the people my age, they're gone—that we all used to get together and plan it. So, I think I'm the only one left. Well, we have it up here at the tribal building. You know, at the senior building? Nobody comes, but we just, the people that comes down from the Colony. You know how it is now. The older—they don't know anything about it, so they don't come. But now, we're teaching Shoshone language, too, now. And telling them what the Indian people used to do long time ago. Thursday evening, I go teach for couple hours. And then, 'nother thing: I don't think anybody's interested in it, because I only have maybe couple or three that comes! [Laughter] Yeah, and they're learning. Yeah. They learn how to talk Shoshone. Yeah. That's the problem: nobody—the older people probably don't tell the younger people. I don't know. But I tell my sister's kids, and their kids, and they know about it in our family.

Starting from Harrison Pass, there's a ranches. People used to work at the ranches here, sometimes. They have a homes where the ranch is where they work. Anyway, on Harrison Pass side, there's a ranch there where Frank Temoke and them lived. They had house there, Frank Temoke and his wife, and Bronco Charlie and his older people. They had houses there behind the ranch. And over there where we grew up, it's—where the Shoshones are, they had allotment lands there. My grandpa had allotment land, that's where we had our home. And so, people all lived there. Temokes, and Dicks, and us, and Smith. They have their allotment land. And they lived there. And they moved off, because they got older and moved to Elko so they can have their old age pension.

[Laughter] So, right now there's only Temokes out there, and Dicks. And we have a home out there, too. We have a allotment land. My dad had allotment land, so—way back on Secret Pass side. Yeah. And we fence it up, and we build house on there. So we go out there in summertime.

Well, they each have their own section. It's a big Indian land, but they have their own section. Allotment. They have so many yards. Yeah. And then we have our own—I guess the government gave it to my dad long time ago, when he was young man. And he never fence it, but when we got older, we went and fence it ourselves. So, we got allotment fenced in. And I build a house out on there. It's down toward Secret Pass side. That side.

C: That's really pretty country out there.

G: Mmhm. Yeah, we go out, drive out there once in a while.

C: So, do you still pick berries, and pinenuts, and so forth?

G: Oh, yeah. There's no pinenut, but you could go out across there on the mountainsides, they have them. Not on the allotment land. Well, we *do* have pine trees on our allotment land. Not very much, though. You have to cook your pinenuts, and then take the shells off, and then cook it with coals. And then, after that, you grind it up. Then you make gravy out of it, pinenut gravy.

C: So, when you grind it up, do you use a grinder, or do you use a—like, the rock grinder the old people used to use?

G: Mmhm. Rock grinder. I got—

C: Rock grinder.

G: Yeah. I got one.

C: So it's actually ground into—

G: Then you just grind it like this, to make it nice. Just a bare bread. Bread and pinenut gravy, you just dip it in there and eat it like soup. But it's a lot of work, and it's good.

[Laughter]

C: And then, what are some other types of foods that you still prepare?

G: Like, if you kill a deer, you make jerky. You make jerky, and then you cut it up, boil it, and make gravy. Put gravy in there, soup, and it's good.

Well, from a deer hide, you have to scrape it up, and then you soften it, and then you tan it with a smoke. And then you cut it up into gloves if you want gloves out of it, or moccasin. After you tan it, it's nice and soft. Yeah. That's what you make out of deer hide.

C: So, do you still do that?

G: I used to, but I'm getting too old for it. [Laughter] Yeah. I used scrape it out here. My nephews used to help me. But the deer, they cut off and skin it real good. And they put it in the oven, roast it. [Laughter]

C: The deer head?

G: Yeah, deer head. And it's good! And then, the leg part, they put it in the beans, cook beans. You know, they dried up this part.

C: Shinbone area?

G: I don't remember. My great-aunt used to did that. But I never. My dad died when he was young. My mother died when she was young. So I didn't really have older people. Yeah.

C: So, who raised you?

G: My aunt did. My aunt, she lived here in Elko. Ever since she was young lady, she worked here and saved some money, and she bought a lot of land up here on this street, going up

to the Colony. We worked in homes, you know. Clean homes, different ones every day. And save our money. She would, she bought her home like that, save her money. And after she died, well, my mother took over, and then her husband and my aunt, they split up the money. Indian people lived here long, long time ago, when the railroad was still through here. And they sold it to me. So, that's how I made a down payment, and paid my three payments.

Well, my dad worked all the time to—so that way, we'll have groceries and clothes that we need, you know? Or, we're not having hard time. Because he's always worked on the ranch, that I remember. And he died, too. He had pneumonia. Young. He was still in his early seventies. And my mom, too. She was still—she wasn't even eighty. Like, almost eighty. Yeah, still young. Yeah. I remember that. They were still young, yeah. They didn't retire. [Laughter] Yeah, my mother used to make beadwork. And I never did. My young days, my age group, they never—you know, to sell, but they learned up at Karla's office. She's teaching beading class, and Shoshone class, and different things. But she don't have too many students, either. One or two.

Well, stay with our culture. You know? Keep on with it. So that way, the white people don't think that we're nothing. [Laughter] Stay strong with our culture. Have our fall doings. Well, I think they should keep it up. You know, whatever we're doing, the young people. Learn about our culture, and our way of life. Yeah. Have powwows and Fandangos, and, you know, keep it up. Don't let it go. Our Indian way of life. Yeah. Go kill a deer, make jerky! [Laughter]

[End of recording]