

Interview with Evelyn Garbarini
By Anissa Michell and Emily Bohl

March 18, 1997

(Emily) We have a lot of newspaper clippings. (Evelyn) I imagine you have this.

(Emily) I am not sure, (pause) he was in charge of your husbands father . (Evelyn)

Yes. (Emily) Okay... alright. (Evelyn) You see, on the other side, I was saving it for this too. This is my husbands father and my husband. I think it is a very poor picture of him and he was very photogenic but I think he wasn't well. I think that was the day he was sworn in as supervisor. (Emily) How long did he serve as supervisor? (Evelyn) Well, he died in 62. He died in September and I was sworn in, in December of 62, and then I served 63 and 64 but I didn't run again. (Emily) Is this...? (Evelyn) Now, I don't know, do you have this? I found that... It is put out by the Chamber of Commerce. (Emily) Yes, we probably have a copy of this somewhere. If not we can make a copy of it at the Archives. (Anissa) I think I

have seen this before. (Evelyn) Now, do they want names of people that worked there? Well, I have quite a list here. (Anissa) Oh wow, look at that. (Evelyn) I wrote these things down. Do you want me to read them off, or just give it to you? (Emily) Well, you could just read them off. (Evelyn) Well, I have here, the North Shaft and the South Shaft were on the East side of Highway 49. I'm not good on directions. I think it's East, could be South. Now, it's probably East. You probably have that, the North Shaft, when they were no longer mining in it, it served as an air shaft. (Emily) Oh? (Evelyn) And they kept it in repair. My husband worked there at one time repairing it in some way. Now these are stockholders. Do you have those? (Emily) I don't think so. (Evelyn) Well, there was a James Sloan Hutchinson. He was the father of these others. (Hands the picture to us) He was one of the stockholders also, there was his son Edward and his daughter Kate. They were all stockholders. Now I don't know... then there was a James Hutchinson, who was the son, and he is the one that had a home built where the dispatch office is now. (Emily) Oh, okay. (Evelyn) Now he evidently was a stockholder, if he were not in the beginning, he must have inherited. So he must have been a stockholder, maybe not in the beginning, but at the last. And then there was a

Joseph R. Noland, (who published the Oakland Tribune) and was a stockholder. And a man named McClure, (pause) and I looked up his name... (looks on paper) oh, here it is. I didn't know the first name, I just knew McClure. But in the book, Gold Mines of California, it mentions a Colonel William McClure, in connection with some hydraulic mining someplace else. And I don't know if that would be the same person or not, but I knew that there was a McClure that was a stockholder and that there was only twelve stockholders. The elder Hutchinson was... him and another man, I think his name was Sather, started a bank. I think it was a Sather Bank in San Francisco. I'm not sure about that though. (Emily) Is Hutchinson the family that's still around the county today? (Evelyn) Are they the Hutchinson's here now? (Emily) There is some that live in Plymouth now. (Evelyn) No, I don't know, (points to the picture of both Hutchinson's) This one and this one never got married, and James Hutchinson, the one that built the house up here, he had an adopted daughter, he was married but he had just an adopted daughter and she didn't get married. Then he used to mention nephew Kent. Kent Hutchinson I believe was an attorney in San Francisco, but that was a long time ago. Because Mr. Hutchinson died around 53 or something. Maybe a little later, and I haven't heard

of him since. Now, Edward Hutchinson was secretary of the Kennedy Mining Company for a long time. And then he became president later. And just a little note. He and sister Kate, stayed at the National Hotel when they would come up for a couple of days and there was a girl there that became my sister-in-law afterwards, said that Kate would have a flower for each one of the waitresses to give to them. (giggles) There was a lawsuit between the Argonaut and the Kennedy, but I don't know much about it. I think there was a previous fire and they poured a lot of water down that went into the Kennedy. But there was more than one lawsuit, but I don't know. The Argonaut went out and I heard Mr. Hutchinson say that they went to lunch one day and they left some papers on their desks (the Kennedy people) and when they came back their papers were gone and they lost there suit. He thought that had something to do with it. (Emily) Yes, that there was some connection there. (Evelyn) Needle in the woodpile there. Then I have some names of the people that worked there. This man, I don't know, I can't remember his first name. (pause) Bernardo. He had only one hand, but he worked there at the mine. I don't know if he got hurt there in the mine, but I can find that out. (Emily) We can look that up in the Archives too. We have newspaper clippings and we can look up his

name and try and find something out about him. (Evelyn) Well, I know someone that would know his name, so if you want to I can just give you this. (hand us paper) Oh, here is some more over here. (grabs another paper) I don't know if your interested in the cyanide plant or not. It was Kennedy tailings. And these are just some people who worked there. (hands us another paper) I didn't know very many, and then I thought it would be interesting if you can find out the names of the men who worked in the drift to free the miners. Do you know any of those names? (Anissa) No, I don't think we do. (Evelyn) Well, I have two. John Perovich was one. And the only name I knew him by was Hyrate Charlie. (Evelyn laughs) I don't know his last name, you can find that out easily. I remember I just saw in the paper when he died. Thats the only time I ever heard his name. So I don't remember it. And he didn't have any children. I don't know if he got married, he either got married late in life or else he just had a lady live with him. I don't know. But I know he didn't have any offspring. Do you know why they call him Hyrate Charlie? (Anissa) No. (Evelyn laughs) Well, he used to work in the mines, and he was supposed to have hygrated. If you know what hygrating is? Do you? And they called him Hyrate Charlie. But he promoted himself from that and

was a gambler in town. Now he went up and worked, you know, because he was an experienced miner, and I've just heard it said that people were so anxious to do something to help in some way, and this person said even the gamblers on Main Street went up and worked in that drift. And I know that Hyrate Charlie was one, but there may have been others. But those are the only ones that I can remember. But there's a funny story about Hyrate Charlie. You know, I think he used to talk a lot about when he worked in the mine, so some joker around town sawed a piece of broomhandle that was just about the right length and size and then he wrapped it with brown paper so it looked just like a stick of dynamite. And so have you heard of the Looove Saloon? (Emily) No. (Evelyn) Well, there were two saloons on Main Street that were in the basement and the Looove was one. And he used to be down there a lot. I guess that was where he did his gambling. Part of the time anyway, and he was among the crowd down there. And his person, I guess put a little string or something on it and lit it and threw it down there. Oh, everybody just scattered. (Evelyn laughs) Everyone including Hyrate Charlie who should have known it was a fake. My husband worked with Bill Doherty repairing the North Shaft and constructed the concrete foundation for the hoist that was underground at

the 49 level, and constructed the concrete foundation for the steel door that joins the two mines and also repaired the wheels. Well, I guess that's about all I can think of.

(Emily) Okay, we have a sheet of questions that we can ask you, and we can get

some more stuff. (Evelyn) I hope that I can answer them. (Emily) Do you know

how many hours a day the miners usually worked? (Evelyn) Well, in my time

eight hours, but before that I'm sure they worked longer hours. (Emily) Did they

work every day? (Emily) Well I think they usually had Sundays off but in the mill,

they didn't have any days off. Because if you shut the mill down you lost gold.

(Emily) Do you know how the working conditions in the Kennedy Mine were?

(Evelyn) Well, you know after the labor strikes were passed, they were, I guess, as

good as they could provide in such a situation, but until then I don't think that they

worked ten hours until that eight hour law had been passed. I'm not sure about that

, but in my time they worked eight hours. (Emily) Would you be able to describe a

typical mining day at the Kennedy Mine? (Evelyn) Well, I wouldn't know about

the underground but I've been told that the men were not pressed to work real hard

because they really couldn't. They perspired so terribly that they didn't have all that

energy they would have had on top. But they weren't pressured for sure. (Emily)

What was it like for you living in a mining town or county? (Evelyn) Well, I don't know what to say because my husband didn't work in the mine, but times were good, I would say. But not for carpenters. But you know it was a steady job, you knew exactly how much you were going to earn and living costs were in comparison. So if you had a steady job at the mine, you'd get along alright. You didn't get rich. The Depression had very little effect here because the mines ran just the same. The government bought the gold so there was no reason to. Although they did cut wages a little bit for no reason at all. Because they got the same price for gold that they always got. But it was an excuse to cut wages. So they did cut wages a little. I remember when my husband was working there installing a ball mill and he worked there on that, but I don't remember what year it was. Afterwards, they installed one over in the mill in Amador City, and they worked on that too. You know when Hyron Johnson was governor of the state, he was selected on a platform of labor reforms. Now, this is the story I heard. That when he campaigned he came through this part of the country, and my husband was in grammar school and he said they let kids out of school to go downtown and stand along the sidewalks and cheer as the candidate for governor went by. The mines

blew all their whistles and then after he was elected, and he did get these reforms, the mine companies didn't like that. So there were no whistles and the kids weren't let out of school when he campaigned for his second term. But it was not only the eight hours, but a lot of saftey requirements that were passed that meant a lot to the working men. One thing I almost forgot was about the whistles. Have you heard about the whistles? Well, in the morning both mines I'm sure, yes I'm sure both mines did. At 5:30 they blew the whistles, see they had steam engines then and had a steam whistle, and they blew that three times at 5:30. That meant get up. Then at 6:00, they blew two just in case you didn't get up. And then at 7:00 they blew one, and you were right ready to pick up your tools. Yes, you know after the mine shut down everybody missed that. (Emily) Everybody slept in! (Evelyn) It was just part of living you know. (Emily) Could you describe what atypical day would be like for a child or a teenager? (Evelyn) Well, there were sports during my time, which most kids took part in. Some had chores and people who lived on ranches had to go home and help on the ranch or something but the people just living in town, the kids more or less took part in a sport. Basketball was the big thing when I was in high school. (Emily) Still is. (Evelyn) They didn't have football at all

when i went to high school. (Emily) Did they have any sports now that we don't have now in high school? (Evelyn) I never heard of soccer, do they have soccer at school? (Emily) Yes. (Evelyn) They had tennis and basketball and baseball. And then those who didn't want to go for anything like that had calisthenics indoors. Thats where I was. I wasn't good at calisthenics either, but I had to take something. (Emily) What was it like to travel from one town to the next? (Evelyn) Oh well, I can tell you something about that. We lived in Volcano, and there was four of us that were ready for high school. One boy, was the son of the people that used to own the Livery Stable. Then they bought a Ford car and rented that out. Well, we had this Ford car, and he was going to drive back and forth to school. So the four of us rode in that from Volcano to school. We had to leave kind of early. Well, do you know what they hills are like going into Volcano? There were two places on Volcano Hill where we had to jump out and push. They had running boards those days. There was no top on it, so we knew just those places, so we jumped out and we pushed for a way and then we jumped back. (Evelyn laughs) funny we didn't get killed. We did that until the stormy season, then we couldn't anymore. So we just found places to board in Jackson. (Emily) How long did it take you to get

from Jackson to Sutter Creek? (Evelyn) I wonder. (Emily) How about from Volcano to Jackson? (Evelyn) Well, from Volcano to Jackson, I think it took about an hour. (Emily) Wow! (Evelyn) And before the automobiles it took three hours to come from volcano to Jackson. Before the automobiles, we just didn't come to Jackson. (Emily) Well, how did people usually travel? (Evelyn) Well, we had a stage with horses. (Emily) Do you have any idea how long it would take to get to Sacramento? (Evelyn) Oh, I don't know, you would do well to go down and back in a day. I don't know if you really could. I remember people talking about staying along side of the road. (Emily) Do you know the time period of that? (Evelyn) Oh, that was way back. I remember Emmet's mother telling about her mother. They had a ranch. And once or twice a year, she made a trip to Sacramento to sell dried fruit and she would sell down off of the geese, and I don't know what else she had to sell, but she would have this team with a wagon and take her older boys with her and they would have to stay along side the road going and coming. So I guess it took two days to get down there. (Emily) What kind of entertainment did they have in Amador County? (Evelyn) Well, in my time we had the movie theatre, and we thought that was great. Maybe go once a week. (Emily) How much did it

usually cost? (Evelyn) I don't remember. 50 cents? I think 50 cents. (Emily) Do you remember any specific events? (Evelyn) Oh yes. On the Fourth of July there was always a celebration someplace in the county. Not always in Jackson. This was a very Catholic town and on Saint Patrick's Day, as a break during lent, there would be a program put on at the theatre of local talent and maybe a little play and songs and that sort of thing. And of course there weren't enough seats for everybody, and those who wanted good seats would stand in line all night and get the tickets. There were people who did that . That was during my time. But I don't think we tried to go. Weren't going to stand all night. (Emily) What were the other main industries in the county during that time? (Evelyn) Well, outside of the mines there were the foundries. In my time, just the Sutter Creek foundry, but in the earlier days there were several foundries. There was always the Blacksmith Shop, and the grocery stores. There were dry good stores too, but in Volcano. Then the butcher shops would be separate from the grocery stores. There was a butcher shop where Mr. Garibaldi has his shop. I remember going in there. Well, if you didn't work in the mine you were kind of out of luck. After the PG&E came in, that helped a lot. I don't remember the date on that, early 1900's I guess. That helped. Then the

telephone companies came along. But before that time it was just the mine and the foundries, and a few people worked in the grocery stores. (Emily) What do they do in the foundries? (Evelyn) Well, in the foundries they made any metal parts of buildings. Now, there was a foundry in San Fransisco that casted the metal parts on wheels. Sutter Creek didn't. But they did very precise and complicated work. There's a man in Sutter Creek that used to work there, by the name of Ernie Maltesta. He's the only one I can think of that worked there. But the foundry was very important to all the mines around. Plymouth, Sutter Creek, and Jackson. (Emily) Were there very many ethnic groups? (Evelyn) Oh yes. It seems that in the beginning the people were usually Irish and English. They called them cousin Jacks. Then it seemed like there was a wave of Italians. After that it was the Slavic people, and at the last, most of the miners were Mexicans. And they seemed to come just in a wave. (Emily) Where did the many people live and what jobs did they do? (Evelyn) They lived mostly in rented houses like the ones along this street, and in other towns that way. They usually lived in rented houses. Very few people owned their owned home. You couldn't go to the bank and get a loan unless you had more property you were asking for. (Emily) And most of the people

worked in the mines? (Evelyn) Most of them. (Emily) Do you remember where the gambling halls were before 1942? (Evelyn) Yes. Almost every other door. Wells Fargo and the National Hotel. I don't have any idea how many there were. There was the Loove and another underground. Then there was another one on the other side of the street. The Pioneer, then another one before you got to the corner. Then the Silver Gardens, which was bar and gambling together. (Emily) Do you think the mining industry kept the gambling halls in business? (Evelyn) Yes.

(Anissa) Where did you buy your groceries? (Evelyn) Well, lets see. In the beginning it was Genockule's Store. And that was where the resturaunt part of the Wells Fargo Club was. That was where we bought groceries and then we bought from Spinetti Brothers. I don't know how far back the Motherlode Market goes. And then there was Castinelli Brother store too, on Main Street. And then Chickazola's store in Jackson Gate took care of the people in that area. (Anissa) Where did the people with automobiles buy their gasoline? (Evelyn) Well, there were several stations. My father-in-law had a station down where the park is now on the corner. He had a srevice station there, and then just where Eldorado Bank is was Castinelli's Brothers Store. Then Spinetti's where Spincio is now. Then there

was another little grocery store a Cornish man had. Olver was his last name. And the Cornish people patronized him, of course. It was a smaller store. (Anissa)

Who was your doctor and where was he located? (Evelyn) In Volcano, we just didn't have a doctor, but when I moved to Jackson, there was a Dr. Kern. His office was upstairs in the building next to the Motherlode Market. Very fine doctor.

(Anissa) Where did you usually buy your clothes? (Evelyn) Out of the catalog!

There was a dry goods store where you could buy the material to make a dress.

And you could buy shoes there. All kinds of dry goods. But I think you could buy overalls, sweaters, and shirts. When I was growing up, all we had was a

Weinstock's catalog, then later we got Sears. It took about a week to arrive.

(Anissa) Where were the boarding houses? (Evelyn) Well, Jackson Gate had several. But there were many people that took boarders just in their homes. I'm thinking of Benesovich, and there were rooming houses on Main Street and restaurants. Jackson Gate had most of the boarding houses. I guess they furnished sleeping quarters too. But the Kennedy Mine had a boarding house and it's where Cybil Arata lived when Bill Sinclair was superintendent of the Kennedy Mine, he and his wife lived in a part of that building. I used to go there quite a bit because

she and I were very good friends. But the rooms where they slept were all closed off. The Argonaut never had a boarding house. A lot of the Slavonians and the Italians would take in people. There was a Mrs. Pardini. She lived up here on the corner and then she moved to the house across the street and she kept people in her place, but not very many. Then there was a house next door. A Slavonian lady that took in a few boarders. I guess there were quite a few ethnic people who did that.

(Anissa) Do you know about how much the boarding houses would cost? (Evelyn)

Oh, I have no idea. I never thought of that. (Anissa) Would you say that most of

the people had cars? (Evelyn) Yes. Well, I was married in 1920 and by that time,

a lot of people had cars. Our first car was 1928. A lot of people had cars. (Emily)

Mostly Fords? (Evelyn) Yes. Oldsmobiles too. (Anissa) Was ranching and

farming big in Amador County? (Evelyn) Yes. I'd say. Cattle raising. And you

know, that's one thing you don't hear much about. I've been waiting for Larry

Sinata to come out with something about the cattle people. There was a lot of cattle

raising around here. (Anissa) Do you know the names of the main ranchers?

(Evelyn) Well, the Kirkwood's that own the resort and the Matley's. The Frelish

had their ranch where the Amador Plaza is now. Now, you know those rock walls.

And the Alan's. The people in Ione raise cattle also. (Anissa) Was the timber industry large? (Evelyn) That was very important. After World War One, the sawmill started up by Pioneer. (Anissa) Do you know who the main loggers in the county were? (Evelyn) Well, the saw mill was owned by a man named Ruggles. He was a very wealthy man and was sole owner up there. The Chickizola's had a mill up by Cook Station, and then there was another saw mill just below Ruggles saw mill and I can't think of the name of that. I guess after that was the Whittin Lumber Company. (Anissa) Do you know what areas they logged? (Evelyn) Well, they logged up around Cook Station, the Whittin's did. But I'm sure that in the beginning it was up around Cook Station. Now, the Ruggles sawmill logged at a lower elevation. (Anissa) Can you remember anything about the labor strikes against the mine owners? (Evelyn) Well, some yes. My husband got laid off. He was working at the Amador mine over in Amador City installing mills. The strike wouldn't benefit him because it was just the miners. This was the miners mistake that they didn't wait until they got the top men organized. The top men resented being out of work because it wasn't going to help them. Although my husband felt that he deserved it and he had to pay the price. But he was very sympathetic

towards the miners, but most of those top people weren't because they weren't going to benefit. And I think if they had waited and got the top people organized, then they might not have been against them. (Anissa) What other memories do you have about living in Amador County or in Jackson? (Evelyn) Well, there was very little carpenter work. People couldn't borrow money like they do now. It was hard for a man to save enough money to buy a house and so everyone rented. They didn't charge much rent so they didn't do much repair work either. So, if you had a steady job at the mine, you were okay. But for a carpenter, it wasn't good. (Emily) I think we got all of our questions answered. (Evelyn) Well, I hope I was helpful. (Emily) Oh yes. (Evelyn) You know, I haven't seen anything about the whistles. And there was a dance on New Years Eve. Some place in the county, usually in Jackson. The Native Daughters put on a costume ball every New Years Eve. And at the mines, when everybody started ringing bells, the mines set off dynamite to make a big blast. Central Eureka in Sutter Creek, were the last to carry out the tradition of setting off the blast at midnight. The bootleg days were also exciting. They also had cathouses. They were really plentiful in Jackson. When the law passed, the other places seemed to get rid of them but Jackson just went right on

and went right on with the gambling too. Well, I guess everybody seemed to think it was okay. The officers that should have closed them up didn't because they felt that the people didn't want them closed. I guess, I don't know, but Camanetti got the Attorneys General office to close it up and everyone thought the town would die, but it didn't.

Argonaut High School
Oral History Interview
Biographical Sketch

Subjects full name: Phyllis "Evelyn" Garbarini

Address: 409 Staal
Jackson

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____

Date of birth: May 20, 1904 Place of birth: Volcano

Date of marriage: Nov. 10, 1920 Place of marriage: Sacramento

Name of spouse: Emmett H. Garbarini

date of birth: March 10, 1897 Place of birth: Jackson

Subject occupation: House wife

Spouse occupation: Carpenter

Name of mother: Eva Murphy

Date of birth: Nov 15, 1870 Place of birth: Volcano

Occupation: Teacher

Name of father: Owen E. Gillick

Date of birth: Dec. 8, 1868 Place of birth: Volcano

Occupation: Carpenter

Subject's children and dates of birth: 0

Subject's brothers and sisters and dates of birth: _____

= Owen E. Jr. - Dec. 30, 1899

= Gordon Gillick - March 21, 1901

Subject's primary and secondary education: (Schools attended and dates) Volcano grammar , Jackson High

Subject's higher education: (Schools attended, graduation date, majors, degrees) _____

Subject's profession or occupations: (Job, dates, where) Ø

Military service: (Branch, rank, dates of service) Ø

Civic and community activities: (Offices held, activities, etc.) husband county sup. she finished her term

Miscellaneous information: (4) Y-pa's came during gold rush. Everyone came from Volcano where mom taught

Prepared by: Emily / Anissa

Date: 3/ 197

Project: _____