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*This transcription, approved and edited by Patrick Twist, contains minor orthographical changes from the original transcription done at the Border Studies Archive in collaboration with the students that conducted this interview.*

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Interviewers: Maria Barrera, Lupe Flores, Juan Casas, Vanessa Saenz, and the M.K. Slayton Tech from the Border Studies Archives

Interviewee: Patrick Twist

Interview Setting: Interview conducted in the home of Patrick Twist. The nearly 100 year old house has been the home of his wife’s paternal family, the Norquest, for all those years. The interview was conducted Friday October 29, 2011 at 5:30 pm.

Affiliation with interviewee: No prior affiliation prior to interview

Transcription Note: First hour of interview was not properly recorded. This transcript covers the last hour. It begins after Patrick Twist has given a tour of the property, the kitchen, living room and upstairs portion of the house. A few minutes of the conversation was held while the video camera was being set up. The conversation is regarding hiring process at local school districts.

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Patrick Twist came into the Norquest family just 12 years ago, when he married Caroline Norquest, daughter of Carrol “Kelly” Norquest, Jr. However, the 42-year-old school teacher has made it an objective to internalize the history – the ins and outs – of the Norquest property, including the 98-year-old Sears and Roebuck kit-home he and his wife moved into almost four years ago. Patrick Twist and his wife are currently remaking the house, trying their best to preserve the way it looked in the past. We (Lupe F., Jose C., Vanessa S., and Maria B.) interviewed Patrick Twist at the home’s location, Sugar and Chapin, on Oct. 28. It was a cool Friday evening. An informal interview about features in the area took place as we waited for the equipment to arrive. Once M.K. Slayton arrived, we continued, recording the informal interview as we went inside the home. The formal interview took place in the living room after we completed the tour. We were originally going to ask about the native plants and trees, but we came out with an incomplete, yet vivid and beautiful picture of the Norquest way of life more than 70 years ago.

[Video cuts to Patrick Twist explaining how a blacksmith tool in a shed works midsentence]

**Patrick Twist:** Go into the forge itself, we'd have a huge bed of coals, which that is built with right there [Patrick Twist points over from the shed to the outdoor house], that's where we made one so we can use out here, this [Patrick Twist directs everybody to an old wheel as an example of a drum], and blows air into the bottom, comes up, and you can weld things...

[Video cuts off]

[Video cuts back to Patrick Twist in front of wheel as example of blacksmith tool]

**Patrick Twist:** ...for hose for farm work out in the field, whatever you wanted to do, there you go... and the anvil, same thing, you just have them right there together and, you have the anvil right here next to the forge soon as it comes right out of the flame immediately put it on the anvil and start to work and you've got a very limited timeframe and you have to judge the steel by the color, by the color of how hot it, how hot it is, whether it's ready for welding, or ready, or whether it is ready for shaping, however you want it and the each part of the anvil is the specific, like the cone in the front is to curl things, to hammer and curl it, to bend it around like that, to curl in like this. And the flat part is generally for making things flatter. The round hole and the square hole are called the pritchel holes and you put tools inside of that, which are in here, I keep moving around on you guys, I'm sorry.

[Patrick Twist leads everybody over back to the shed as video cuts off]

[Video begins with Patrick Twist holding two steel pieces]

**Patrick Twist:** So you have a piece of steel that you want to cut, you put this in the anvil, that piece right there fits in that slot, and you lay your steel on top of it, probably a bright yellow color, couple of good stiff whacks with a blacksmith's hammer [grabs a hammer nearby to demonstrate], and eventually the middle will begin to split [taps hammer onto a piece] and then you can break it in half, make shorter or longer pieces, and that you put into the anvil to lay things in and bend it and twist it for curls [demonstrates with u-shaped metal tool]. These are all the original pieces that go to the anvil itself, so these are well over a hundred years old, and there would have been different shapes for different projects that you would have on the farm or with the blacksmith itself. It's a wonderful piece of ancient technology that you don't have to have any electricity for whatsoever [puts hammer down]... at all. And... it's easy to turn. Want to try? [Demonstrates by turning a crank and watching it move on its own with little force]

**Interviewer:** Do I have to be on that side?

**Patrick Twist:** No, no, you just turn it right here. And it blows a lot of air very quickly.

[Video cuts off]

[Video cuts from Patrick Twist in the middle of talking about the barn midsentence]

**Patrick Twist:** come from the original barn itself, ahm, and it hasn't been touched since I guess the 1940s. Um, [pointing over at sheet iron siding on barn] they didn't call this, um aluminum siding; they referred to it as sheet iron, because it's very, very thick. This is, this is newer from about maybe the 1960s, 1950s that they put it in. But this stuff that's on top is original from the 1930s. It's never rusted through. I mean, the stuff is ridiculously strong because they give it a very, very heavy coating of galvanization to galvanize the metal. Wait, do you, saying stuff like this [leans over to rub a piece of metal in the barn with his hand] has it steel gray looking color to it, it's galvanized. Modern galvanization is real, real thin. A long time ago it was hot dipped galvanization; that's why this stuff is still here, decades and decades and decades later. Um, would any, ready for more?

[Everybody follows Patrick Twist as video cuts]

[Video cuts to Patrick Twist walking over to cast iron bathtub]

**Patrick Twist:** It's still usable, [placing hand inside tub] this is still the original porcelain coating; it still has the bear claw feet [holding hands out to demonstrate bear claw shape]. Um, this was what was upstairs and this thing weighs a ton; it's about that thick [holding up index finger and thumb on right hand to demonstrate thickness]. So it's cast iron, it's a true cast iron bathtub. [Walking away from bathtub] And, unfortunately you see a lot of businesses up north that'll take old cast iron bathtubs and turn them into planters for flowers and stuff like that, when a true cast iron bathtub today is, I don't know, twelve, thirteen hundred bucks, and they're using them for planters, so... [looking around] Um, but what else-

[Video cuts]

[Video cuts to Patrick Twist midsentence standing near a water trough of tree branches, pointing at it]

**Patrick Twist:** the fence, this also, 1940s... this [laughs] is a water trough for the mules and the cattle. The thing is, though, is that the ribs [rubbing hand down the ribs on the side of water trough] are from the sheet iron that was used

to make the water tower for the house, because they had no running water and they had no, uh, water pressure, so you had to have your own water pressure system, so, more or less where that big mesquite tree is right there-

**Interviewer:** In front of the house, directly right in front of it was a

[rest is unintelligible due to background noise and wind]

**Patrick Twist:** -the teens if you wanted to buy one of those potential houses, well, there was no such thing as Edinburg Water Supply or Sharyland Water Supply, it was... you! So you filled it with water, it was on a tower, and that would provide the water pressure for the rest of your entire house. So the water would go into the top and then feed into the rest of the bottom of the house to create pressure for your sinks, your bathtubs, and your flushable toilets.

**Interviewer:** Was there ever an outhouse on this property, or was, or did they already have the indoor plumbing here?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, they had indoor plumbing at that time. So they had a septic system, they had a septic tank, and a grease trap.

**Interviewer:** And when did they stop using all of that?

**Patrick Twist:** When did they stop using all of that? Oh, [4 second pause] it's gonna have to be, probably around the nineteen... fifties, I would say is when Edinburg Water Supply probably finally came through. We don't live very far away from the center of town, but again, as the city grew, its boundaries grew with it. And then, of course, there's what they refer to as annexation: you get it whether you like it or not. [laughing] Not very fun sometimes-

[Video cuts midsentence]

[Video cuts to Patrick Twist standing near a fence and pointing over at a nearby house]

**Patrick Twist:** Immigrants would come here, and they'd have a sponsor family, and this little teeny house was built to sponsor that house right there [pointing at house] which was [noise distortion due to wind] the Templins, and that's how it earned its name as the Templins. So the very first inhabitants was this pretty big family of Germans that were living in this really tiny house, and in fact, their son was my math teacher. And I didn't know this until I married my wife Carolyn, she said... 'You, you ever live in a Templin house?' And I was kinda, it's...it's the same last name as my [groans]

math teacher that I didn't like! [Laughing amongst Interviewers at his reaction] He was really, really super strict and I couldn't figure out why until they finally told me [this sounds like what he said] the story of why he was the way he was, and that's at the old... the administration building for Edinburg School District, was my middle school. So, you know, it's kind of weird to go in there now, it was gutted and everything like that, to see it the way it is, but, um... They were living here and the really strange thing is they were, I wouldn't say shell shocked, but they were very weary of anybody who would come to the house. Somebody would knock on the door, they'd see somebody coming up the sidewalk, you could hear the [shuffles hands to demonstrate curtains pulled off camera] from within the house. And the kids, the mom, they would scurry off and they would leave dad to handle whatever thing happened at the door. They were still living like they were in East Germany, I mean East Berlin. So eventually, they had these [unintelligible due to wind noise]. I had a visit from two of the oldest sons that came down. Real, still, as long as they've been living here, they're both United States citizens, thick German accents. And it was strange, and they're like 'Oh, I remember this,' and they're walking all over the place pointing at everything, how it used to be for them. That's another group we should talk about: people that emigrated to escape political reform that was happening in their country.

**Interviewer:** What's your name?

**Patrick Twist:** Hm?

**Interviewer:** What's your name?

**Interviewer:** Templin.

**Patrick Twist:** Patrick.

**Patrick Twist:** Me or them?

**Interviewer:** No, them. Sorry.

**Patrick Twist:** Them: Templin. T-E-M-P-L-I-N... Templin.

**Interviewer:** Nice, so I can tell them about it.

**Interviewer:** When did they stop associ- um, when did they leave the house, or when did they, you know, besides, um, what do you call that?

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, goodness. Um, maybe [short pause] somewhere in the 1950s or 60s. I know but one of the sons [short pause] went to Vietnam, old enough to go,

so that might give you a front- a timeframe for the period, and he came back all [short pause] really messed up. Um, drug use, combat, in fact, he was when- when he came to visit, he's still kind of, kind of spacey out there, this just kinda weird, and I already knew about him, so they're like "Don't worry, he's okay", so it's alright. I really wish I could give you a time period: Kelly can. He's got all that written down; he's got a huge archives, and some of it is upstairs. Okay, um...

**Interviewer:** Do you have any archives of the 1930s or 1940s?

**Patrick Twist:** We do, it's upstairs.

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Oh, wow. Because we're actually doing, uh, part of this project is about, um, the 1930s and 40s, so if you just look at them, maybe another day?

**Patrick Twist:** There's all kinds of receipts and stuff like that from when the farm was active. The cattle and harvest and everything, there's just, it's ridiculous the number of receipts that they've got. Let's head in that direction [pointing away from the Templin house].

**Interviewer:** Okay, that's fine.

[Video cuts]

[Video cuts to Patrick Twist walking over to soft dirt and moving it with his shoe]

**Patrick Twist:** Look here. This is powder. It's not because it's just dust, it's because this was the way the land was when Kelly's dad bought it. The land has a very high mineral content, so they had to literally siphon off all of the heavy minerals in the soil so they could turn it into usable agricultural farmland. So, uh, Kelly's father, along with several farmhands, dug, I think it's a six-four and a half to six foot deep [holding hands to give idea of size] ditches crisscrossing in a grid network all across this huge 30-acre block, all the way around, and then put in, um, [momentary pause] it's like a potted pipe, we've got pieces of it around here somewhere where... The water, when it would drain, it would go into those, those pipes and it would collect that brackish salty water and it would run off into the drainage ditches so they could turn it into arable farm land, so they could use it. So when they first got it, it wasn't that great; you could only grow certain things on it, and Kelly's father wanted to go beyond that. So [glancing

back at the powder dirt at his feet] this is the way the land would look if he had not done that. So, this is the catalogs, or what used to be the catalogs. Um, come this way-

[Video cuts]

[Video cuts in to Patrick Twist standing in field with his arm extended with a thumb up and talking midsentence]

**Patrick Twist:** torch, and you burn all the needles off of the cactus so that cattle could come and eat it, because sometimes, your, I mean, down here it's not that great, sometimes as far as the weather's concerned, so they don't have the best eating material. So another thing was moisture. They had to have some source of water. The only problem is constantly doing that, eh, eating cactus and cactus pears and stuff like that, gives cattle essentially the runs, or diarrhea. So it was a stop gap that you would use every once in a while, so burning pear was very common. In fact, the pear burner is still up in the top of the barn. It's still there. I mean most people use them today to burn weeds and stuff from the yard, but their original use was to feed your cattle, to get rid of the thorns so that they could eat cactus. Um. Okay, this way, we've got...

[Only the sound of grass is heard as everybody follows Patrick Twist]

**Patrick Twist:** [Off camera] ...supply of water pressure for the house stood here, originally.

[Video cuts]

[Video cuts just a moment after Patrick Twist is asked a question]

**Patrick Twist:** [Laughing lightly] So you're gonna drive a nail in it, you need a very heavy hammer, and a lot of patience, because your nails are gonna [moves hands to demonstrate] just bend. Because it's double-walled for the whole house, again the structure was built to support snowfall. Then they, then there, it wasn't built for a quick, fast, easy deal; things were built to last a long time ago. They, eventually, dismantled the water tank that was there, and-

[Video cuts]

[Video cuts to Patrick Twist standing in front of a wall on the side of the house]

**Patrick Twist:** house, so he moved it closer. They need a lot more space for moving mules and everything like that back and forth. And of course, [turning to his right] they built their homemade swimming pool.

**Interviewer:** I was gonna ask ‘What is that?’

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, it’s a homemade swimming pool. We filled it in just this past summer, [walks over to the swimming pool] and... I mean I could get, get down on the inside of it and it was ten feet deep, and it slowly went back up like that. They got a lot of family photographs when they would use it, because to beat the heat, literally, and free water, so, just pumped it right out of the cistern and over here.

**Interviewer:** How old is it?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, they built this, I think in the 1950s, late 1950s. [Momentary pause] And they used it a lot. There’s tons and tons and tons and tons of pictures, but we had to fill it in because, essentially, the ground around here, when they put in those casings that I mentioned to drain the soil to make it better for farmland. Those casings collapsed and it started to cause little potholes, sinkholes to creep up every now and then, and it started to erode [moves hand under corner to show eroded area of pool] underneath. So we had to fill it in to keep it from eroding away the land even more. Eventually, the water pressure system was gotten rid of for the house that was there [pointing past the house], and... they kept the windmill and moved the cistern over here.

[Patrick Twist leads everybody over to the cistern]

**Patrick Twist:** Essentially they took it and put it right here [pointing down at the concrete on ground]. To be, step over this way, [moves with everybody on top of the cistern] you’re now standing on top of a massive pit underneath your feet. Spooky, ain’t it? [Laughs]

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Patrick Twist:** Yes, yes. This, this became the water cistern supply for the house, so they moved it from above ground to two different locations from the windmill to underneath, and that [pointing at cistern entrance on ground and lifting it open].

**Interviewer:** Oh my God.

**Patrick Twist:** Yeh.



**Interviewer:** Oh my God. It's so...

**Patrick Twist:** Relax, don't worry, you're safe.

**Interviewers:** Wow.

**Patrick Twist:** So this would be filled with water [pointing at nearby pipe], and that pipe right there, they'd pump the water in through that down into here, to fill this up [holding hand up flat]. And it goes all the way back over there [pointing away], so wherever you see concrete is where the water cistern was at. And the huge, there's a huge central support filler [pauses while pointing inside cistern at angle] support top part of it.

**Interviewer:** Joe, you want to move over here so you can see?

[Camera moves over as Patrick Twist continues talking]

**Patrick Twist:** And they would fill it with, uh, right there, that's a little tiny irrigation head. They'd open that, and water from the rear brand would supplement water from the cistern, so they, I mean back then the water was clean, it was- you could drink it. Of course, they would try to filter it. The thing is though, is how do you filter thousands and thousands of gallons of water [closing the lid to the cistern] on a self-subsisting farm? So you'd build this square that you see right here [pointing down at a slab on the ground], this outline. It's about that tall [holding hand forward at chest level]. Was an experimental sand filter. Run water through the top, goes through the sand, and eventually becomes cleaner and cleaner and cleaner, so now you can turn it into palatable drinking water. So this outline used to be a massive sand filter filled with sand and gravel to clean out all the particles and particulates of the water. So, a long time ago, you literally lived off the land. Um, swing set [pointing at swing set off screen], if I remember correctly, that came with the family when they came down from, good God, was it Kansas?

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:** It is over a hundred years, the metal. I know it is a little unbelievable but,

**Interviewer:** Built to last.

**Patrick Twist:** ...it's built to last. Remember I mentioned the galvanization that they used is really really thick that's what this is, you don't. It's got like wrinkles in it that its so thick. [you guys use it], yeah [laugh] its uncomfortable [laugh]. Its covered with bird poop, so but anyway this, this is a hundred

years old, all the framework is a hundred years old, except for the wood of course. Um, now did Kelly mention the tree? [your wife did] Ok, the...

[Video cuts]

**Mr. Twist:** So the tree hit the water table.

**Interviewer:** Was there an exact date of when they planted it?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, I want to say it was in the 1929 or something it's not very old. It is actually younger than the tree that has the plaque in front of the interschool district administration building. There's a tree that was planted there for Harbor Day but that way back in the 1927 when you read the plaque. It's a huge tree it's like this but this has a larger trunk, so, it's just another, the biggest tree.

Um oh, and the roofline, the roofline comes down if it continued out to about here more or less is where that massive front porch used to be. That went the whole length of the house just sad I really wish the porch was still here [laughs]. But for practicality purposes you had to do what you had to do back then. [Was there a tree here too or] No there was no tree, I mean, when you see the picture, you're like, oh my God, yes, get rid of the porch. But, you would think that it would shade the home but it didn't, it just captured the light and heat. Um all the electrical lines all the water lines are all on the outside of the house it looks atrocious [laughs] I agree, all these snaking lines that you see, you can come around this way.

[Video cuts]

**Mr. Twist:** The waterlines that you see, they supply water to the upstairs bathroom. The venting system for the sewage system the electric lines that feed all the way around the house. It has to be like that there's no again there's no way to chip away at the sheetrock and install electrical lines there is no such thing as sheetrock [laughs]. Its wood this thick on both sides and real 2 inch by 4 inch 2 by 4 are massive chunks of wood that are the whole frame of the house. That's why it survived every single hurricane since 1913.

**Interviewer:** Is there any kind of insulation?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, on the inner walls no ma'am um none. So, yes, you go inside and it feels like this outside and it's like this inside and it's very chilly. The

interesting thing is though is that since the wood is so thick we will have warmth , warmth after the northern winter blows through for two or three days it will stay in the 70's on the inside of the house, and it slowly the temperature will begin to drop. But then oh my gosh it's hot again and it's like yuck [makes a face] it's muggy and everything but it's 60 degrees in there for three days [Oh wow] [laughs] so you get like ah it's like air-conditioning and it's the weirdest sensation; I still can get used to that. It still freaks me out like the house is going to be flaming hot in there and no it's like actually really nice inside the house like you got central air-conditioning and central heat but it eventually it equalizes itself.

**Interviewer:** Without paying for it [laugh]

**Patrick Twist:** No. Without having to pay for any of that; its nice, mother nature does its job, um.

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:** This is aluminum siding and I can't remember the dates they had this installed I want to say it was the 1960's and underneath that then we finally get the insulation but it's this thin, um polystyrene fiber board whatever you want to call it that is underneath this. But then directly underneath that is clapboard wood like this up the entire side of the house. Um, this is a style of clay pipe that is out there in the field that they used to drain the land of all the heavy salts and minerals to make the land arable so it's farmable so it's useable. This is, that's that piece right there um, let's see (mumbles what else was I going to tell ya) um shall we go in?

**Interviewer:** Mmmhmm.

**Patrick Twist:** Let's go...

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:** I know it's nothing but a brick these are the bricks that were used, this style [places brick on the pool] this style [places brick on the pool] this style [places brick on the pool] that's from Mexico [places brick on the pool] this style. Kelly has relatives from that time period 1920's, 30's, and 40's that had a brick company out close to Mission, Texas if I remember correctly or actually close to Sharyland in fact, and this style of brick is what was used to build the ways and means of the water system for McAllen.

**Interviewer:** Oh wow.

**Patrick Twist:** There is a picture of it over at the Edinburg Historical Musuem [South Texas Historical Musuem] and you go inside and there is this massive round cylinder, it was all lined with bricks. Kelly's family remembers when they made the bricks and this is a brick from that time period. So I mean the place is littered with them so Kelly's family can get them rather inexpensively and it helped have family members have their own brick factory back then but um let's head inside lets head inside. Oh um we have two Chihuahuas and they are very loud.

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:** Sportships, silverware, coffee pots, plates [dog barking] you name it, it ended up on the surplus market. Farmers took advantage of it families took advantage of it so this [tapping on the countertop] came from some ship somewhere. Don't know what it was or where it was but it's a stainless steel. I mean everything [dog barks] again, it's been here since you know creation [dog barks]. It still has lead suldrain on it from that time period when they put it inside the house. We still have some United States Navy silverware and serving um serving sets up at the top of the barn USN on it is punched [punches his hands] onto the spoons. Um, and Kelly's father would use all of that for the farmhands they'd come to work they'd bring their food and they were well ok we're going to go ahead and cook something so they'd end up using um all the surplus silverware and plates and they just used that it was stainless steel so it would never rust. So they, again, they took advantage of whatever and you see really old houses they had original paint in it. It's an odd colored paint and you're like why would they want that paint it's all surplus from World War II. If houses are still standing and have the paint um inside of it generally it's going to be surplus or that was all that they could get. Ok, um let's see um the living room um original 1913 wood floors um and let's see if we can get light in here to make it a little bit brighter. Underneath the rug, you see that old outline?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Patrick Twist:** Ok, that old outline was from the rugs that were in here from the 1930's and we lucked out we didn't plan it we just lucked out in finding rugs that matched the same size. So the coloration difference is the original rugs that were in here from the time period so I know it's not perfect but we're trying to get it back to the same look from the time period. So you had

wood floors with rugs you didn't have carpeting it was too expensive. So you just used area [dog barks] rugs and from here to here was a huge rug that was in the room. Gigantic even bigger one and then you can tell and from here to there and then right here is where um Kelly's dad went ahead [laughs] went around the room with just enough varnish that they could get because this was back you know when they didn't have a lot. So they would varnish just what they could and then they lay the rug [barks] on that so it would look...

**Interviewer:** [Laughs].

**Patrick Twist:** ...oh its varnished all the way around. No it wasn't [laughs].

**Interviewer:** [Laughs].

**Patrick Twist:** Um this the real blond colored stripe that's here was worn down from the backings of the rug. So old rugs were really really really stiff again the made to last type attitude for decades. Unfortunately, the backs of rugs would polish down the wood so the rugs would sweep and move a lot [dog barks]. So essentially the old idea of slipping on the rug comes from the back of the rug would polish the back of the wood. Um, it's all tongue and groove it's not just um the bark and lumber together. So there is a tongue and then the groove and it's laid all the way across. Um still the original nail everything we've never touched it. All we did was take boiled linseed oil and old t-shirts and a mop and go at it to revitalize the wood it was very white, lightish in color to get it, bring it back to where it was. Uh, let's see...um, the original...

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:** And you can come on in. This is the music room and the family would play on, uh Caroline's grandmother played the organ, and played the organ for church and so on and so forth. The same thing the same idea that was in there was in here for the floor with the, you see the black striped outline. Um, where were these French doors? They weren't here originally, they were somewhere else, over on another part of the house. But, I can't remember where they came from. Um, the ceiling tiles that's what I was trying to remember. Long before our time including mine a really really really bad hurricane came through and that hole [point to a hole in the ceiling] that you see right there. You see where the ceiling tiles have nails in them?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:** Well a massive hurricane brought, caused a leak upstairs and flood its way through and Kelly took a pencil [laughs] and poked right there [points at the hole] and it just poured water [girl laughs]. So it was stuck up because all those tiles you see tacked back up were bowing down, holding all this water in the sub flooring of the house so it just, it just poured [making splashing noises] right there. So buckets and buckets and buckets and buckets later they had to take everything out. Um, let's see what else?

**Interviewer:** Mrs. Twist had said that there was chimneys [Patrick Twist: yeah] before, where were those located?

**Mr. Twist:** Yes, thank you, you're reminding me of things I'm forgetting. There was a fireplace that was right here imagine the TV is now a magical fireplace, it was here and it went up the side of the house. And there was a door here that went out and there was a small little side porch just on the outside of this window. So you can come in this way and come into the house right here and there was the fireplace. Um, now you have to remember that the construction of the house was changed around because of the heat issue. There was no air conditioning, it was open the windows and hopefully the fan would blow enough cool air to keep you comfortable, which didn't last very long.

**Interviewer:** [Mumbles something].

**Patrick Twist:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** I put those folders there with the pictures.

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, ok thanks. Let me move that out of the way.

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:** They were first told. Your farm would be absorbed or taken over by the county or the state and then it was auctioned off for backed taxes or whatever or to pay your debts. Um, they had water. It was ridiculous. it stood for two weeks! Two and a half weeks almost out there, knee-deep. You couldn't walk outside and it was there for days and days. The mosquitoes were horrible and it was really, really bad. Um, Kelly's family was fine because they didn't have, this was not, this plot of land was not

the only piece of land that they used. Where Panam sits [chuckles]. That was our family's land. Across the road where what's that school system?

**Interviewer:** Beta.

**Patrick Twist:** Beta campus.

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Patrick Twist:** We farmed that too. So essentially going straight back like that. I mean you have land that you can tell changes its elevations. So they had farmland that wasn't buried underneath water. Um, we found, I found a grinding stone for a mocajete that was uncovered from the rainfall. It's about that long but it doesn't look anything like and I can't remember the name of the professor that came out here to look at it.

**M.K. Slayton:** Skowroneck.

**Patrick Twist:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Um.

**Patrick Twist:** Came out and looked at it and he saw it and he's like "what's up with this" and I said "Well I don't understand. What do you mean?" He said, "Where did you find

it?" So we went and showed him, he wrote it all down. And it's not it doesn't go in a perfect like a spike or anything like that. It's flat-sided for some reason, when generally they're round and smooth with a round, large bulge at the bottom. This one is bulged and then has flat sides on it. So he said that was kind of different. And Kelly's family, he's got a box of arrow heads and spear heads from the land as they would farm. When you'd have mules, you're looking at the soil, and there up comes a spearhead or a spear tip, up comes another arrowhead so we showed them all to.

**Interviewer:** Skowrowneck.

**Patrick Twist:** Skowroneck.

**M.K. Slayton:** Yeah. It's a hard last name; everyone has trouble with it [laughs].

**Patrick Twist:** Skrownek. Did I say it right? And he looked at everything and of course, you could see flags going off and his wheels turning really, really quick.

And then hence that's why you're here. [laughs] Because he was like "ok I got to talk to you people!" I said okay! Um, this is the original layout of the house. Um, the stairwell, that is through those tiny double doors, and we'll go up through in just the minute. It faced the opposite direction, and the tools that were used, the block and tackle, I brought them from the barn, I put it upstairs, and you can take a look at it and see how they picked up a staircase and pivoted it around, because even to me, Kelly finally... his memory clicked; he's like, okay, it's the block and tackle, it's in the barn, this is what they did. I was like, OK. And *this* is what we were talking about just a minute ago. This is the water system for the house. There's the water tower, but if you look, there is the cylinder feeding water supply to the house [pointing out old pictures]. The windmills back over here somewhere. So it would feed... this was your water system that it would bring it into the home. And what's the date? Nah that's twenty-eleven, nineteen twenty-nine is the date I think that is going to be the date right there. And same thing with this one. this one is just a different color so you can see the differences in it. Here is another one. Ok...west...ok original barn! West view of the old barn, um, circa nineteen forty-one. So, right out that way. Right in front of the yard where the cars were parked was the old barn. "South west view current machine shed." Because its barn/machine shed technology brought with it a change in terminology [interviewer laughs]. So and you can see behind that where all the apartments are right now that's nothing that was open, open farmland as far as you can look. Um, so all of the construction from this [points at the picture of the barn] all the wood that was used here all this sheet iron that we took a look at is what made this. Uh, there is forty-six. There's forty-seven. West view of the old barn. There's their nineteen thirty-eight Chevy [laughs]. Nineteen forty-two, nineteen forty-six so, um, three, four, five, six, four year time period it went from this to this. But this...I'm not sure when the original barn was actually built. Whether it came with the house or not. I'm pretty sure that the, um, land development company more than likely just had the house. The barn was kind of "you're on your own for as far as that's concerned." Let's see that is a color picture the same thing we were looking at. I hope this is helpful?

**Interviewer:**

Yes.

**Patrick Twist:**

Ok. I hope it is I hope I'm not, like, distracting you. Alright! Picture album! The Fox Company! This should give you an idea on how old these things are.

**Interviewer:** (Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:**

Um...Uncle Rikky. He was a pilot. He was part of, oh what was it called? SATCOM? COMSAT? (Strategic Air Command, SAC) Whatever it was



they flew...his base was in Mountain Home Air Force Base...take off from Idaho, go across the Arctic, and patrol the border between us and Russia and-

**Interviewer:**

Oh.

**Patrick Twist:**

Then fly back that is pre ICBM. Pre intercontinental ballistic missiles technology. So in the back of his airplane - he was a wing commander - on the back of his bomber was a nuclear warhead. Stress!

**M.K. Slayton:**

Wow.

**Jose Casas: (Laughs)**

**Patrick Twist:**

Stress. So he's a real hoot to talk to. Um, so he decided one day of his fun flights he decided to take a picture of the farm-

**Jose Casas:**

Oh wow.

**Patrick Twist:**

from up above. So this gives you an idea of - this is before Edinburg grew-

**M.K. Slayton:**

Oh.

**Patrick Twist:**

There is the house right there. And that's the orchard. It was growing outside the house from one of the original pictures we got upstairs. the orchard was still here in fact. It should give you a pretty good idea, if you can focus in on that. And that's looking from the south to the north, like coming in at an angle like that. Um, let's see what else? I guess Kelly's got these...yeah that's pretty much the same thing and that's a different home further down the road in fact... Ah, sorry. I'm going through memory lane in front of you. Um, not long after this is 1947 here- Can we pass it around?

**M.K. Slayton:**

**Patrick Twist:**

You can take a look at it and here is the home -

**M.K. Slayton:**

Wow!

**Patrick Twist:**

Before the massive porch was chopped off its right there -

**M.K. Slayton:**

Oh yeah.

**Patrick Twist:**

So those three top windows that's not there anymore. So you have that massive front porch and there's that orange grove that you what picture is this one time orange grove 1945 um-

**Vanessa Saenz:**

When was that...when was the last citrus tree?

**Patrick Twist:**

Hmm?

**Vanessa Saenz:**

Because that would have been where the road is right? Or...

**Patrick Twist:**

Exactly yeah. So where you're looking at across like that, Sugar wasn't there yet. No! Well it was, but it was dirt.

**Vanessa Saenz: (Laughs)**

**Patrick Twist:**

Remember the construction that was going on forever on Sugar Road?

**Maria Barrera:**

Yes.

**Patrick Twist:**

And they were ripping off all that concrete? That concrete was the original from the 1920s. That was the paved road that you had the clonkidy, clonkidy, clonkidy.

**Maria Barrera:**

That's why it took forever to fix?

**Patrick Twist:**

That's why. Because it was so thick. Back then it was, I mean, that's why it lasted for so long. Back then they didn't use asphalt, they used concrete. You go to Louisiana, Oklahoma and they have highways like that all over the place clunkidy, clunkidy, clunkidy.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Is there still orange trees on the property or are they-

**Patrick Twist:** No they're long gone. 1983 was the big wipeout freeze for the Rio Grande Valley. Um, essentially a lot of farmers took it real hard and unfortunately, um, simply because of the way the federal government has the system set up, a lot of them didn't have enough crop insurance or protective insurance to replant and restart their orchard businesses. Unfortunately it takes an orchard tree twelve years maybe to finally reach - or a little bit less than that to reach the maturity age to go ahead and produce fruit *enough* to provide money. Enough to pay for itself and it takes a lot.

**Vanessa Saenz:** And there was that freeze in '89.

**Patrick Twist:** Exactly. Exactly. So it was multiple successions of freezes that caused the citrus industry in the valley to kind of go downhill. At one time before that we were the king of citrus production for the United States.

**Maria Barrera:** Wow.

**Patrick Twist:** The Florida orange juice "drink it is good for you" - they took that in 1984 was when that campaign took off because they knew our citrus industry was wiped out.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Was that much part of the property or were they just...that wasn't...

**Patrick Twist:** No they had it. It was in one of the pictures here-

**Vanessa Saenz:** Yes.

**Patrick Twist:** It was these right there. There's the orchard right after right next to it...in fact the picture from the nineteen, 1925 there is the orchard planted next to the house. Very, very - and the trees are spaced very far apart. Orchard, or I guess you can say grove technology, back then it hadn't matured enough. Hybridization of trees, where they could push them closer together to maximize production, hadn't taken off all that yet. All that much yet. That's why you have like right down the street on Chapin going this way is the Rio Grande Citrus Association.

**Interviewer:** Mhmm.

**Patrick Twist:** So you go into that office and even then, that's another place you can go talk to. How far do your records go back? Or who was on your roll of citrus producers for the Valley? that's another thing. Um, let's see. I'm trying to think is there anything else here...Oh! Here you go. There's the diamond window. I wish these were still here. darn. Two windows they're covered up now-

**M.K. Slayton:** Oh yeah.

**Patrick Twist:** Hurricane blew them in. That's that - ha! The shower from the roof that you get, they were all blown in. Lots of leaks. I mean you have to understand the home was built for a certain area of the United States and not heavy rainfall and stuff like that. Hurricane seasons, and stuff like that. And unfortunately at one time... where is that picture at? Oh there's one! There's a real good one! There's the front porch-

**Vanessa Saenz:** Wow that was beautiful.

**Maria Barrera:** Wow. very southern [giggles].

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, yeah. Exactly, exactly. It makes my heart break “grandpa why?” But he didn’t know. I mean, um, what was I thinking of. I mean can you imagine driving around in the countryside and seeing this place abandoned. ‘Cause this home was abandoned for a long time. And it was being used for, of all things, a *corn* crib. to store dry corn in for farm animals.

**M.K. Slayton:** Oh wow.

**Patrick Twist:** The whole house

**Vanessa Saenz:** ... (*Unintelligible*).

**Maria Barrera:** Wow.

**Patrick Twist:** So where we’re standing right now we would be buried in corn-

**Jose Casas:** (Laughs)

**Maria Barrera:** (Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:** Because they would open the front door and they’d take out their dried corn and take it for the farm animals. And it was - the home and the land was owned by a separate family and essentially it kinda like a trade deal between the families. One was leaving to go back up north and one was coming down here. Um, so they would use it as a corn crib. And they’re like well there’s a house down there you can go ahead and use that. And they show up and ok...But they kinda knew ahead of time to begin with. And so, home was abandoned and eventually they re did it.

**Vanessa Saenz:** What year was that?

**Patrick Twist:** Oh this is going to be 1920’s I think, if I remember correctly.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Ok.

**Patrick Twist:** 1920’s - somewhere in that time period um

**Vanessa Saenz:** And then they came when? Or that...

**Patrick Twist:** When they traded places? Probably 1930’s. Very late 1925, very early 1930’s if I remember correctly. And imagine this whole room cleared out. No furniture. And they’d have dances in here.

**M.K. Slayton:** Oh.

**Patrick Twist:** So families would all come and there would be a fiddle and piano or I wouldn’t say an orchestra but maybe a quartet of some kind. Somebody playing music of something. And the floor was still the same floor, that’s why the floor is so smooth. Hard heel shoes with sand and whatever else that was tossed that allowed people to slip and slide. And when you walked in here, you felt that – you’re kinda going like this. If you...you can see the hump right there. There’s like this central ridge from whats coming up from underneath the floor. It’s actually not because the home is settled and it’s been here for...Right here where were standing it’s like woo! There’s the high point. And you can feel it right there. And underneath the house if you don’t mind getting dirty you can come back and wear overalls and dirty t-shirts and everything and crawl underneath the home-

**All:** (Laugh)

**Patrick Twist:** No I’m kidding. There is a...there’s a concrete rib about this wide and about that tall that runs from this point straight all the way across the

house. So, this whole side of the home has settled. So you're actually lower than... I'm taller than you but now I'm getting shorter because

**Jose Casas:** (Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:**

the home has settled. There's not another concrete rib over there. And when me and Caroline first - it wasn't before we moved in - it was when we were trying to figure out what was going on with the house. There is another family member you need to talk to. He is the historian for Golden, Colorado where the Coors brewery is located. He is the official historian for the entire city. He was down here and he and I were crawling around this whole place underneath the home, into the attic. And he was like "OK, wait a minute. There's no concrete rib. And how come what for we found original pieces of the lumber from when the house was built. It was still underneath the house. No one had cleared it out. Um, what we figured out was is that if the land company was going to offer you a home for sale and they want to track you here well they want that house to be built [snaps fingers] lickety split. So pour the one rib. Big deal. Don't worry about the other part. It's just a show house. It's probably going to get dismantled or taken down either way, not knowing the show home was still going to be here a hundred years later. Um,...what was I going to tell you? My mind is running with all these things I'm trying to remember. I'm trying to keep it all straight in my head

**Vanessa Saenz:**

When did you start the restoration? When did you all move?

**Patrick Twist:**

Um, probably about 3 ½ years ago. Close to 4, if I remember correctly.

**Vanessa Saenz:**

And where were you? Were you here in the Valley? Or had you ...

**Patrick Twist:**

Oh yeah! We were living in the little Templin house. That was brutal.

**M.K. Slayton:** (Laughs)

**Jose Casas:** (Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:**

That was really had. Two Chihuahuas and a wife. Hmm. In that little teeny house.

**M.K. Slayton:** (Laughs)

**Jose Casas:** (Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:**

It is not fun. It has no central heating or air or anything like that. The attic is nothing but a new roof built on top of the original roof. So you pull back the insulation, there's shingles in the attic. So, ok we need to build in a new roof. So the back rooms of the Templin house, the floor which was actually, um, a porch that they poured layers all hand poured so you're walking around carpet what's underneath the floor? It's the original concrete. They just poured it themselves and put it all down. Um, as far as restoration is concerned, all we did... We didn't do anything in here. We left it the way it had been since grandpa fixed it or changed it around a little bit that was it. Um, all we did was fill in all the little tiny tack hole and nail holes and just paint the walls. All this drip that you see like this, the style is all from when grandpa was here. 1940's. So literally we really didn't have to do very much cause he - there's pictures of grandpa repairing the floor and fixing things all the time. he kept this place going all the time. Um, let's see. I don't know if the key is still in there. This is

from...when the family... this was the secretary. You put your finger in here...hopefully it'll open. It should [opens the secretary]. And this is what you would use...this is - if I remember correctly, sat right here next to the front door right. The farmhands, the door would be open, its payday, so they all lined up down the porch and grandma or grandpa would sit at the secretary and write out paychecks or pay in cash out of the [inaudible]. So, they would use that to pay all their bills. And, I don't know where the keys at but there should be...yeah its right there. There's a secret compartment in the back to hide valuables. It's from the nineteen teens if I remember correctly is all this piece of furniture is. So was the original lavatory behind you. That's also original from the time period - I'm sorry - with the marble top. You put the big dish station - [correcting himself] dish and basin. And you pour your water in it and wash your face with a towel and everything like that. that's what the marble was for. For the water dripping. 'Cause you dry and you'd have the, the bowl here and the pitcher behind it or on the side pouring in and as you did whatever you were going to do, the drips would be caught on the marble. So everything you notice has skeleton keys-

**Maria Barrera:**

Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:**

For everything. And we have a ring of skeleton keys that still operate different things. And we finally figured out which one operates the front door [laughs].

[everyone laughs]

**Patrick Twist:**

And that's another thing - all the door mechanisms, the hinges, the doorknobs, the locks are all original from 1913. Um, this one has one...That right there that's a ceramic coded iron doorknob with a brass latch in the back. it's a real simple little mechanism, but they are tough as hell. I mean they never, there almost a hundred years old, they don't wear out. I mean we can still lock them with no trouble whatsoever and it takes a heck of a good blow to get the doors open if you ever really actually needed to. Um, let's go upstairs. Let's get to the meat of the issue.

[Video cuts]

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**Patrick Twist:**

Ok! Um, Aunt Ingre - I-N-G-R-E. And if I misspelled it Aunt Angry I'm sorry.

**Maria Barrera:** (Laughs)

**Jose Casas:** (Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:**

I apologize. I love you with all my heart.

**Maria Barrera:**

Was she angry? [laughs]

**Patrick Twist:**

I hope no. She - her son is Ricky in Golden, Colorado. His mom, I mean his family, lives there and he's the historian for Golden, Colorado. She painted these going up the staircase. From this point up, we haven't done anything. So the fresh paint and everything you see over here this is over

the last couple of years. But everything on forward is paint from the 1950's, 1940's, 1930's. let me turn the lights on. [everyone walks up stairs] So it's a big difference from downstairs. This is what I was talking about. No sheetrock. you don't need it [laughs]. So all these little tiny tacks that you see are from when they hung *real* wallpaper. Fiber backed wallpaper with fabric. And when we - me [laughs] was up here with a dust mask and tearing it all off, the wallpaper, they put on in the 1940s and stuff like that it had pulled away and I'm tearing away and I was like "what's all this stuff underneath it?" And it was cotton seed hull sacks that they used from the 1930s to put as the backing for the rest of the house to attach the wallpaper to. Cause you bought - you buy wallpaper today and it's like a plastic substance with like a fiber that's on the inside of it. Well back then it was paper but you had to have a cloth backing to stick it to. You don't have a lot of money, what are you going to use? You're a farmer, you sell cotton seed hulls and you've got these massive burlap sacks. Attach it to the walls. Um, where we're standing right now would be those, well right above us would be those three windows and all those discolored pieces of lumber that you see up there; do you notice the drips go up? Huh hah! [laughing]

**Maria Barrera:**

Wow.

**Patrick Twist:**

The stains go up

**Maria Barrera:**

Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:**

Cause all of that is from construction from the porch that he dismantled he used on the inner walls. Um, all this wood if you...there's a place up here in fact. See right there. The dark areas of the wood, it's *still*, um, about two years ago when it was really, really, really super hot a hundred plus degree weather for a couple of weeks in a row. The wood is still... that's even better right there. Perfect. You see that?

**Vanessa Saenz:**

Yes.

**Patrick Twist:**

From 1913 the wood is still putting out sap.

**Maria Barrera:**

Oh wow!

**M.K. Slayton:**

Wow.

**Patrick Twist:**

And I mean you can touch it and that's what it is. That's what - I couldn't figure out what that sparkling stuff that was all over the walls and eventually it would come off because it would dry and then flake away but this one spot it just keeps producing it. Um what else can I tell you well do you have any questions?

[Video cuts]

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**Patrick Twist:**

Um, Kelly, Ricky, Mark, Ingrid, Dixie, Marie...So Kelly, Ricky, Mark, Ingrid, Dixie, Marie; seven kids. Hope I'm not forgetting one. Um, you got all the kids upstairs so you want somebody to come down. You want all the boys to come down because there's gonna be work. The boys

would get so many rings. Bing! Bing! Bing! Bing! [imitating the bell] So they'd bring 'em all downstairs. And the button - it still works.

**Interviewer:** Wow!

**Patrick Twist:** It's in the kitchen. And I'm up here doing something and, of course, guess what happens? Patrick! Bring! And that thing rings and I gotta run downstairs. Um, chores for the day. Put it on the chalkboard. This is what you're going to do. And yes my brother-in-law left his stuff here for me to play with. Which I didn't really need [laughs]. Um, this gives you an idea. Right here. The thickness of stuff. This is some of the original paper from the 1920's. That right there...hold down a second let me go in here for a minute. Ah there it is! If I can find it. Yeah there it is. It's a little dirty. Watch out I'm going to have to come through there. I'm just gonna lay it on the floor and I'll just vacuum it up later. Ok there is your...now look carefully: [reading] Sears Roebuck and Company. We figured out this house is a *kit* house. Long time ago, you looked at your house in a catalogue and you picked it out like this is the one we want and Sears Roebuck and Company would mail it to you via railcar and you'd put your house together. So we finally figured out when we tore out all this paper off. Ricky from Golden was here and he was like, "Hey this is a kit house! This is a kit house!" This gives you the backing number that was used for the original wallpaper from 1913. so this from 1913. Um, the cotton seed hull bags. I'm not sure if this is...has it or not. Does it? Yeah this is it.

**Interviewer:** Oh.

**Patrick Twist:** Cotton seed meal, that was. 43% protein. 1920's, 1930's. This was the backing that grandpa used. There's the staple holes that was holding it up on all the walls all around the entire house. Of course, downstairs it would have been done the same but; of course, there is more wear and tear downstairs so that gets stripped down more often. Upstairs, ok the kids grew up, moved away, got married and it just stayed, which was a really good thing. And that's why you're here. To document these events [laughs]. For posterity's sake, kids. [laughs] Listen to your grandma and grandpa. Let me move that out of your way. Its referred to around here as the east room which is right here. Here we go. Ok! Crowd on in. Alright. When we came in here and we were essentially it was get rid of all the wallpaper and dust mats. Seventy something years of rat pills and roach pills you name it dust it was horrible. Well I started on that end of the room and that gives you the pitch of the room outside and they go straight thru and when you go outside you see these windows then you see the pitch in the roof right on the other side of the shingles. It gives you an idea of the construction, of course, you can chink it up with whatever you got. And this is all still the same one where the whole house is still built with. On either side of it every single wall of the house is like this is double thick. Um started over here tearing and tearing and tearing tearing tearing tearing and stopped, and they came back the next day tearing and tearing

and tearing tearing and came to that. And I was, like, “what is that stuff” and staring tearing and tearing tearing tearing and it changed and I couldn’t figure out why. I asked Kelly to come up here and take a look and he was like I don’t what that is. He had not remembered it from the time period that he was a child. And from this point specifically to this right there, that’s the original wallpaper choices you had from 1913, when they showed the house to potential land-buyers for the house. So it’d been under the wall paper since 1913. So you had a choice of something that had squares [Vanessa Saenz in unison: “Squares”] and little tiny floral pattern and that was this strip. Underneath that there’s another choice that they just plastered over that. You have a floral pattern that was there. There’s more of the brick. Then you have the top-trim right there, with a lot of filigree and weave-work on the top to match the square pattern underneath it. To compliment it [Patrick continues in a voice conjuring]. So, essentially, you want your wall paper trim, this is what we’ve got. And this is your wall paper choice. Uh, down there there’s the blue one, if you wanted your whole room in blue. Or you wanted it all in deep-hunter-mint green-looking right there. Um, the outside laboratory sink was mounted right here [Points to the opposite side of the wall where the wallpaper is]. Gas line to go in there to provide light in the bathroom [Points upward to quarter-size hole]. That in there was were the cast-iron bath tub was [Points to the adjacent small room]. That massive things that was out there in the garage painted red. It took five of us to move it over to Caroline’s uncle’s house next door. We filled it with ice for the Fourth of July and a lot of good beer [raises fist enthusiastically and everyone chuckles] and it worked really well. It held ice in it for over 18 hours. So this was your bathroom, originally. Um. It was [removes a board slanted on the wall]. There’s the water-line connections that went through to provide water to the tub. So the tub was right here against the wall, so it wasn’t on the other side. You came in right here and you got on the tub right there. Unfortunately, none of the bathroom fixtures ever survived. We don’t know what ever happened to them. So when they, and the tub, when they came into the house, the tub is original to the house. It wasn’t when Kelly’s family bought it they put in the cast-iron tub. The tub and everything was here. So they used it for year, but eventually the old piping work went away. But it was sad because when you look at a cast-iron bathtub, the hook-ups go into the back of it and all of the piping work comes out and down. It’s all chrome-plated sometimes solid brass, and has this huge ring to provide for a shower curtain. None of that survived, we don’t know what happened to it. The home had carbide gas lights. And, essentially, that was your very first form, before you could have electricity in the house, that’s what was provided. So it would burn very, very bright. It has a very harsh, bright, bluish-grayish look to it, almost like a welder’s arch.

**Patrick Twist:**

But it was a gas. So when you come into a home and you see in some places like that that the carbide gas would come in [Points to a hole in the



ceiling]. The pipe was on the outside of the wall. It would poke straight through and come in here and come in from this room also [Moves arm from bathroom to hole in wall] and come out; you'd see this lamp sticking out, a very decorative oil lamp. Well it wasn't an oil lamp; it was the carbide gas. Like in old horror movies or something like that, you see these lights go along the wall that was the carbide gas. And outside where we were, where that mesquite tree was at, where I told you the water tower was, there's this big rut or a hole that we have to walk through, that was where a gigantic, huge, carbide gas tank was buried underneath the ground. So they'd come out once in a while and refill your tank and you'd come into the room and light the carbide gas and provide light in the room. And your whole house was a gas bomb.

**M.K. Slayton:**

Yeah. Sounds interesting.

**Patrick Twist:**

Yeah, exactly.

**Interviewer:**

And who's room? [Unintelligible]

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:**

History nut and buff. Nuevo Santander [Opens scroll of a map labeled Nuevo Santander]. I guess that's gonna go back to your old Spanish land grants.

**Maria Barrera:**

Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:**

Uh, Kelly's a member of Las Porciones. The historical group around here.

**Maria Barrera:**

Oh, really?

**Patrick Twist:**

So he's got connections coming out the wahzoo with people for you to go interview and talk to. Um, there are really fun. They know so much about the area it's ridiculous. All the ranching families to the north, the Guerras, the Luna, the McAllen. Oh, the McAllen's are real picky. They won't let anyone on their land. They are very, very close-lipped [does the zipping gesture to his mouth]. They don't want anybody on their ranch. Um, there's actually something down here that not a lot of people know about. The fact that we have a hot spring north of Edinburg. Close to 281 there's a hot spring out there. Um, me and a group of my friends when we were in high school, we were just bumming around off the coast of McCook, that's another, sorry, getting a bit off topic, there's another group of people you want to go talk to are all the Polish farmers that immigrated into the Rio Grande Valley. Um, and the Germans one also. That land was all brush land. Virgin land. Virgin. Nothin. There's brush. And you go out there, you want to talk to a group of people that are here from day 1 living down here that immigrated to the United States that had zero, nothing but wagons and mules, you go out there. The, it's a catholic church, but it's a Polish-Catholic church, they do things a little bit different there. There's grandmas and grandpas, I don't know if they're still alive, but they were when I was in high school. All they could speak was Polish, all they could speak was German, so you'd go to their house and they'd ask, wh-wha-what was your name? And you've give them your first and last name if

your name had a German last name and you were in a Polish house [MK laughs sarcastically], they didn't really want to talk to you [he give us his back to act out the scene]

**Maria Barrera:**

Wow.

**Patrick Twist:**

Feelings from emigration from Europe because of WWII, WWI, take your pick. But this is kind of neat because this house was here when WWI was raging; and WWII and Korea and Vietnam, take your pick.

**Interviewer:**

And how long has your family been in the Valley?

**Patrick Twist:**

Um, my family's been down here since 1920s and they came from Missouri, Wilamazoo [chuckles]; try spelling that one.

**Interviewer:**

W-I-L-A

**Patrick Twist:**

[With a long sigh] I don't know, it's really long, it's really long, it sound short, but it's not: Wilamazoo, Missouri.

**Jose Casas:**

Sounds like Kalamazoo.

**Patrick Twist:**

Or Kalamazoo, but it's actually Wilamazoo. My great grandfather, um, he was a famer down here, east of Edinburg on La Blanca Road. And he would work on the farm, and then in the winter time, when the crops were aligned fallow to replenish the ground, he'd walk not too far away, about a mile or so, and work at the ice house, literally the ice house, bring it by rail and they would supply ice to what they would call refrigeration back then. So he did that in his spare time or to earn extra money for the farm.

**Interviewer:**

And did you help out on the farm when you were growing up?

**Patrick Twist:**

Oh yeah. We'd pull up, your arms would itch, be raw from carrying, uh, harvested corn from the garden, the sweet corn, to eat. You had corn for the animals and you had corn for people, which is the sweet corn, which is planted right outside the back, too [chuckles]. So you're, like, driving around, oh well is that corn, well yeah that's corn, got 30 acres of it [unintelligible]. Yeah, we would carry it in the garden for grandma and grandpa. We were the same way. Um, well water down here. Have any of y'all ever had real well water?

**All:**

No.

**Patrick Twist:**

Most people, they drink it for the first time, and it's like they're swimming at Padre and they took a mouthful of water from the gulf. Extremely salty. Um, your bathroom fixtures are completely corroded up or covered with heavy mineral deposits. Washing clothes was, is, a real chore using real well water. You heat the water up. the minerals com out of it [does boiling-like gesture with fingers]. Um, your hot water heaters are layered in it that deep. You gotta get a water heater about every five years or less than that. Um, that's what we grew up with drinking down here, was well water, which is the same what Kelly's family had. Very, very, high mineral content. It's amazing we never had a kidney problem, like kidney stones, because of what we had to drink. But that was what we had. Um, to me it tasted fine. My friends would come over and we had to go to H-E-B to buy them water, which my mom and dad were like, what's wrong with what we're drinking? Tastes like salt water. This is something my wife put together when she was a little kid [shows us an aged poster with

picture clippings of the home's stages through time]. "This is My Grandmother's House," covered in dust, which gives you, you can barely read it, it gives you the successive history of the house, year by year, which are the picture we looked at downstairs on the coffee table. So they just went and they had them [chuckles] mimeographed a long time ago. There was no such thing as Xerox; had to go take it and have it mimeographed. It's like they take a picture and print it out on the paper for you, it's really weird. So this gives you, this is, if I remember right, I can barely read it, 1913, I can't even read it, 1922, well this is when the picture, 1913 to 1922; essentially, the house was occupied for a tiny bit and then again it was abandoned and the corn crib thing started and then off it goes. It had a picket fence, actually, at one time, neat. Thank God it's no longer here, it looks horrible. Um, gee wiz, you're surrounded in fact, by the family archives. Part of it, there's a whole storage unit totally devoted to archives. Um, there's old letter, there's great grandma Lydia's diaries right there. Lydia Nordmeyer photo collection, cigar boxes, grandpa's a cigar smoker.

**Maria Barrera:** Are these the archives that they have at the, uh, courthouse?

**Patrick Twist:** No. This is private, family stuff. Um, when we were renovating the home, we were finding books and magazine from 1940, 1941, 1942, 1922 [Opens a box].

**All:** Whoa. Cool!

**Patrick Twist:** So there's grandma and grandpa. Ding! And Carrol Everett 1960. Want cigars? Sorry they're all gone. Grandpa smoked them all. So, literally, oh wow, there's one of the picture of the garden off to the side [Shows picture], when it was still around, when they were still using it? That's what I was looking for! This is what proves of what he, this is one of the pictures I mentioned of him fixing everything. Grey haired, no shirt, perfect picture of fitness at, you know, a hot 60-year old man laying on the floor, 70-year-old man fixing the floor in his house, so essentially that's why the place survived, 'cause

**Maria Barrera:** They were constantly keeping up....

**Patrick Twist:** They were constantly. He grew up like that. Here it is, oof, when was this? Oh, this is after the hurricane. This is when everything got destroyed and had to be redone. See the diamond windows, patched, no longer there, had to be, because they all got blown in. Thank you. So grandpa was, like, [get photo passed to him]forget it, if it happens again, we're just gonna have more leaks in the house. I have fun stuff with older dates for you guys.

**Interviewer:** Did they burn the trash, or do you know when they had trash service?

What did they do with their garbage?

**Patrick Twist:** Essentially, you burned it or buried it. In fact, they had, when me, my family, it was you had a trash pit. You just went outside, dumped your garbage in it. With all the vegetable cutting, you put into a compost, you never threw it away. And that was like ingrained in our heads [M.K. Slayton chuckles]. If its vegetable cuts and you're cutting onions and roots from onions or anything like that. Um, tomato peelings; um, rotten

bananas, whatever you got, you don't throw that away, that goes into a container that you take out and put into the compost pile that you put on the family garden 'cause it needs all the help it can get 'cause you're going to be living off of it. That's just one box. There. Kelly has been in here [looks around], there were all these... Oh! Over there [points toward us]. There's more stuff in the other room I got to show you too. I hope I'm not wasting your time.

**All:**

No!

**Patrick Twist:**

I really hope not. I, because I hope I'm not, again, they told me, go ahead and ramble they seem to like for you to ramble [All laugh]. Ma Ma. Good Lord. I really don't know what's in this thing. Oh, good. (Sighs) Date, date, fewf, there's a horrible smell, this has got to have a date on it [peruses through a briefcase]. C'mon. It doesn't have it there. Anyway, what's in here, I'm not sure, but that... these are empty, let me put that down. This is Ma's.

**M.K. Slayton:**

What were those suitcases there used for?

**Patrick Twist:**

What?

**M.K. Slayton:**

Like these, um, were just briefcases.

**Patrick Twist:**

Oh. [Tries picking one up] Good Lord that's heavy. Everybody has a name: Momma, oh who was it, Neil, Uncle Neal who lives next door, Mark, Ingrid, the one that did the paintings in the stairwell. These are all again, G.I. surplus. This is what a G.I. would pack his clothes in. So your uniform, your under shirts, your dress uniform, this is what the military issued to you; this is your suitcase. Surplus came around, Grandpa, frugal as he was, suitcases for the whole family. So everybody got their own suitcase (old army suit cases that Marie Sleeth or Dixie Setti described) for when they were gonna travel. And they had, they had, where did they go? They went up to Kerrville, another German community up there. They would go up there to beat the heat. It's hot up there though. But they had property up in the hill country and aunt Marie, whose suitcase is not here, probably in another part of the house, she had property that was up there, in Bandera, Texas, up in the hill country, so the family would, like on a little short vacation, go up and they had relatives that lived up there also. So essentially, your suitcases are all from WWII [chuckles]. Um, let's see. Let's go in the other room to show you the chests the family had when they immigrated to the New World.

[Video cuts]

**Patrick Twist:**

...Chests from when you came to America from Sweden. So your clothing, all your belongings are packed in that. And this is what they brought across in a steamship to get to the United States from Europe. So was that [points to chest below]. That's from Sweden also. There's again, there's a skeleton key. Um, grandpas rocker. Another steamer chest. This is Carrol A. Norquest, this is Kelly's trunk that he used when he was in the

army, that they issued to them. Um, I'm trying to think of what else is up here, unless everything we moved it all down stairs.

**Interviewer:**

And is that a window or was it a door?

**Patrick Twist:**

Oh, that's just a window, that's original to the house also from 1913, and not that one though. This is where one of the diamond windows would have been, somewhere over here in this part of the house. Um, again, straight through is shingles [knocks on top of wall]. Above head is the attic, but it's really, really small. It's not very big. Remember, it's a story-and-a-half. Downstairs the ceiling is a lot taller; so up here it's a whole lot closer. A story and a half. There's my brother-in-law's goofy drum set [All laugh]. High chairs for the kids when they were babies, this is from, this is from what, 1930. Um, there's a big, huge steel one out in the barn. The thing weighs a ton. It's a baby chair, a baby's high chair, from the 1940s. That's how, no wonder, it's survived the weather and everything, it's ridiculous. Um.

**M.K. Slayton:**

Oh yeah, I was gonna ask what's that.

**Patrick Twist:**

Don't worry, it's not poisonous [Retrieves large glass bottles from corner]. At one time, when you made wine, so they made wine, but eventually wine goes bad and turns into what?

**Interviewer:**

Vinegar.

**Patrick Twist:**

Vinegar. But if you do it the right way, it turns into, like, balsamic vinegar. That's what this is. So this has been up here, I think, since the 1960s [All: Whoa!] This ought to give you an idea of how old the containers are. And Kelly comes up here every once in a while and takes out a fraction amount and puts it in his refrigerator and everybody, come get a taste, come get a taste. And it's magnificent. So they made wine.

**Interviewer:**

What did they... With grapes or?

**Patrick Twist:**

With grapes outside where the big water cistern pit beneath our feet. That whole thing was a huge grape arbor. So they would grow grapes like crazy and they had to figure out what they were going to do with it because they were making this huge mess on the ground [puts balsamic jars back]. And, of course, they went ahead and decided to make wine. So they'd make their own wine. Huge cans of it. Of course, they wouldn't all last 'cause it'd go bad, they had to drink it, so. [Kneels down and retrieves The Etude music magazine] Um, 1955 [passes it to us]. Again, 1955. Good lord, what are they playing? That's a heck of a saxophone. 1955. This whole collection for the whole year all the way through... Here's an even older one: Middle of WW11, 1942.

**Interviewer:**

The family is very musical.

**Patrick Twist:**

Everybody plays. All of us. My wife plays, let's see, the guitar, the organ, the piano. Kelly plays the viola, the trumpet, the piano. Caroline's sisters, uh, the cello, cello, violin, violin. I only play one thing, I play the bag pipes and the harmonica. I learned that from Kelly. Um, Uncle Neil plays the violin and Dixie plays the Violin. Aunt Virginia plays the cello. Essentially, oh, both brother-in-laws drums. Yeah, everybody plays something.

**Maria Barrera:** Do they have a music teacher?  
**Patrick Twist:** Huh?  
**Maria Barrera:** Do they have a music teacher?  
**Patrick Twist:** Um, when Kelly and the three brother and the sisters were all growing up, their grand, their dad essentially told them they were going to play an instrument, there were no ifs, ands or buts. Um, so essentially, they had their own form of entertainment. You had to do something like that. You had a bunch of unruly kids in a farm; you had to give them something to do. So they all had to learn how to play something. They all had to choose something. And Kelly chose the viola, which is the bigger version of the violin. Um, and the trumpet. Um, Uncle Ricky, that was it, trumpet. Uncle Mark, piano, violin, guitar. Uncle Neil Guitar. His son plays the banjo, the guitar, I mean everybody, it's ridiculous. They all sing in the choir, they all sing in Pan Am's choir. [Chuckles]. My sister-in-laws, they play and so does my wife's uncle, they all play for the university orchestra. So they're all, whatever's going on, they're all, oh, we're gonna go. They're really weird [All chuckle].

**Interviewer:** Unintelligible.  
**Patrick Twist:** I love them to death. I mean, when I got married, I didn't know I was marrying into this tribe of people with all these really different ideas of doing things. [keeps rummaging through the magazines] Um, 1945, the end of WWII. This is what's amazing, is, you look at Magnavox. Not TVs, it was radios [shows us old Magnavox advertisement].

**Lupe Flores:** The advertisements.  
**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, yeah, very, very different.  
**Jose Casas:** Look at the puppet here.  
**Patrick Twist:** Exactly, exactly, you listened to the radio, that's you, you did something else at this same time. It's amazing [pauses and looks into the magazine]. There's stuff that we've gone through in this house, some of it unfortunately got destroyed with time. There were some things in here from 1925, 1922, that had to be thrown out. And they were, again, musical score magazines, stuff like this. This was 1951, 1950. We've found LIFE magazines. We found the one, the original one with Marilyn Monroe on the cover.

**All:** Oh, wow!  
**Patrick Twist:** We have that one in the safety deposit box. We have the issue of LIFE magazine where, if I remember correctly, Kennedy's assassination. All that's here. I mean, this place was like a vault. Everything they got is all stuck here. They had the National Geographic from when I was born, 1969, I was like, Pfft, so it's pretty amazing, everything they've got in the home, literally, saved, taken care of, they really didn't let anything happen to it. Um, this was the boy's room and it was very, very hot. No-notice there's no ceiling fans. You had to plug everything up. Windows always had to be open to let any circulation. You can tell its' stuffy in here. Um, this way. An here is the block and tackle that was used to literally lift from

here over the whole stairwell all the way down, the whole thing, to lift it and turn it [makes gestures].

**Interviewer:**

Originally it was facing that way?

**Patrick Twist:**

Um, originally, where the bathroom is, that little door right there was the front door. You came into the front door, which was where that massive front porch was. And you came in this way and looked up and the stairwell went up and in and up around to the top story of the house. Well that wasn't practical with the heat and him having to change the inner construction of the home to fit the need at the time period. It just wasn't built the right way for what they needed for down here. So that block and tackle that's behind him [points to Jose Casas], that's what grandpa used. That's been in the storage in the barn since 1930s, 1940's and it hung from up here when the main support beams were exposed [points to the ceiling of stairwell]. You could lift everything up and move it. Um, the whole, everything is original. Nothing is, like, we had to replace it in the last 10 years, or 20, or 30, or 40. All the wood work is original from 1913. And we stopped. That's where we stopped. What you're looking at, the color change, from here to there, this is the boiled lynn seed oil from here going down and then the rest of the floors in the house. This is the way everything looked downstairs before we went in and said, ok, we're gonna go ahead restore the home. Um, up here eventually, where the original plan was to go ahead and re-paint everything, we were going to leave, of course, that's all gonna stay the way it is [points to Ingrid's paintings. But then Kelly brought Tom Fort from the Museum and he's, like, you don't want to cover this up yet. I was, like, okay. We weren't gonna do anything to it or paint it or something 'cause he said this is you, again, a view into the way they did things about 70-something years ago, 80-something years ago.

**All:**

Mhm.

**Patrick Twist:**

So we left it and everybody comes up here and they seem to kind of like it. It looks kind of weird, it looks like it's half-done or something [All chuckle]. Um, again, door knobs, everything up here is all 1913. Doors are all solid, none of them are hollow. It's ridiculous trying to close some of them. Oh, this is annoying as hell. When the weather changes or heavy rainfall, opening and closing the door, the wood swells and the house moves. You'll be laying in bed and POW! You hear this loud crack and it's the house settling and moving and contracting and expanding with the cooling or the heating temperatures outside and inside the house.

**All:**

Wow.

**Patrick Twist:**

Um, your doors, like weeeee [moves a door that squeaks] it'll close and stop. It won't close all the way. You have to shove it closed. But then in the summer time it just shuts. The cool weather, all the wood shrinks. So everything changes in the house [Sighs]. It's a real pain in the rump. This is one of the girl's rooms. There's not much about it, I mean it's just. We haven't really done anything. We have mace. We haven't really done anything with the top part of the house. All this little stains and stuff like

that, that's just simply growth. Mold, I guess you want to call it, so it may not be good for your asthma [addresses Jose Casas]. Yeah, you're like, mmmm. Um, I don't know what else, we, the only thing we did add was a fire detection system, which is right there [points to center of ceiling]. And motion sensors in the house right there. Um, and a security system for the home. Before that, about maybe three or four years ago, it didn't have any of that, and that really cared me and Kelly's family never done anything with it, like no fire prevention. They had fire extinguishers in the house; I mean that's what you had. The problem is that when the alarm insulation company showed up and they, looking around, like, I've never done anything like this before, in a house this old, and they're drilling through everything. They had a hard time trying to do it. And they said to us that more than likely, if the house were to catch fire at all, it would take hours and hours to burn because the wood is so dense and thick and still full of sap. The floor, from what cousin Ricky from Golden, Colorado said, is heart wood. Essentially, this is the type of flooring you pay for today that's extremely expensive. It doesn't look fantastic right now, but this is the type of floor, the type of wood that you want. What you're standing on is from 1913 and still has not worn out from being used as a corn crib and decades of kids running down the stairwell all the time. So you go and you want to pay for a real hard wood floor, heart wood hard wood floor, you're gonna pay through the nose because it's going to be here 100 years. This is, essentially, when you see picture of them cutting trees from Washington and Oregon and Montana and places like the major logging industry, this is the center core of the tree, the strongest part of the tree, that's what all this. The hard wood heartwood is what they wanted because they knew it was going to be a high traffic area. This is where it all came from. Um, all the wood that the house is built out of is 100-year-old hard heartwood, the entire house. We didn't know that. We thought, okay it's just the floor. And Old Ricky from Golden came up here and he's like, no, the whole home is built out of it. So all the support beams underneath there, what you see through that right there, piece of wood right that's a massive post that goes down and then it come back up again. It's part of that sub-flooring wall that comes all the way down like that. I don't know what else to tell ya. You got any question?

**Maria Barrera:**

Um, we do. Can we just go down stairs.

**Patrick Twist:**

Oh, sure, let's go downstairs.

### **Official Interview Begins**

**Maria Barrera:**

[Start of sentence was not recorded. She is referring to teachers who have retired and then rehired by a school district] ...they were getting paid double of what a new student, I mean, new teacher would get paid

**Patrick Twist:**

Well, the...be careful with that. When you retire/rehire as a teacher, you, you get your paycheck as a teacher. All your federal withholding, your insurances- whatever you have chosen to have- is taken out. Along with



that-no choice-is TRS (the Teachers Retirement System). Automatically, okay, you stock away money into that for years and years and years and you reach retirement age and number of years when you retire. Now you are drawing out of the state retirement system. The school district is not paying you two paychecks. The state is giving you the retirement that you've built up over 25 years and which you paid like just like Social Security. Teachers have no Social Security in the state of Texas. They have TRS. So you don't see Social Security withholdings on your check. What you see is TRS, Teachers Retirement System for Texas. So, you've beat the system. You're not tied to Social Security at all. So whatever job you've had in the past your Social Security is coming out from that. Soon as you start becoming a teacher, Social Security doesn't touch you at all anymore. It goes straight into your retirement system. A billion times better than Social Security. Because you get medical benefits that come with it and everything. So, when you get rehired, after having teaching for 25, 27 years or 30 or 32 or 33 you are getting a paycheck from the school district but now your due pay from your retirement is coming to you also. So it's not two checks from the district. One from the state, that you paid into-it's your money anyway- and then one from the school district. I didn't understand it either when I first started. I was kind of like, "How are they going to do this?" but the only problem-school districts look at it as a problem- for retire/rehire is that teachers that have retired/rehired, they are at the top of the pay scale. So they're getting whatever it might be 37 to \$48,000 take your pick it's somewhere in there. Versus a new teacher starting off at 28, 29, or 30 whatever it might be and then it will slowly increase. So it benefits the school district to "Please go away."

**Jose Casas:** (Chuckles)

**Maria Barrera:** Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:** We can save money so that we can go ahead and bring in new teachers. But there's really not much they can do. You can be a teacher for 40 years if you wanted to.

**Vanessa Saenz:**(Chuckles and says something that is unintelligible on recording.)

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, yeah. We've got a lady on our campus 35 years, something like that, it's insane. Her husband was my English teacher in High School.

**Maria Barrera:** They have a couple in Rio Grande City- the Schafer's- they have been there for years and years and both of them are struggling with their health and I guess they figured they would retire because you know he would have heart attacks and she has uh, osteoporosis but no, they are still going.

**Patrick Twist:** They're doing it, a lot of them will do it (*quick pause*) Buddhist Mantra: You suffer because you want. You want children? You've got to pay for that. You want a nice house? You will suffer (*loud noise*) because you want. Yo have to pay for that. Um, all these things, your home, cars, whatever you want you gotta pay for all of that. Well, you paid out. If you are going to be a teacher you better plan on being there for, what teachers refer to in this district as: "I've got to get my 30. 30 years of

experience to retire... happily. When you've had two kids go through college, homes, automobiles and you've lived a very good life. I mean you go to any school district parking lot and campus and the cars all look freaking brand-new.

**Maria Barrera:**

Yes.

**Patrick Twist:**

Because they all buy brand new cars every two to three years. They trade in and get another one. If you don't do that then you don't have to be the Schafer's?. When you're walking around with an oxygen tank and tube and a wheel chair and still teaching. I mean that's not fun. It's gone beyond that. You're doing it so you can survive after you retire. So, sorry, not trying to be the wise man on the mountain. I've seen it on our campus. And if you notice there is no rugrats; we have no children. Well two, they're about this big. (*Indicates size of small dog.*) You hear them and they are barking. Just (*unintelligible.*) So ask away. Ask away. What do you got?

**Vanessa Saenz:**

Um, growing up, um, you're helped on your...helped on your grandparent's farm. Did you live on the farm or did you just go and visit?

**Patrick Twist:**

We lived next door. We walked across the (*laughs*) cotton field to pick corn. (*Chuckles.*) Literally.

**Vanessa Saenz:**

What other chores did you have?

**Patrick Twist:**

Lord, uh, okay it's a list. I still remember. Feed the horses in the morning. Make sure all of them have water. Feed the cattle, in the morning. Cut fresh grass for the new calves. You had to do that with a butcher knife. Um, if it's cold, make sure that the orchard heaters that are in the barn are lit and running. This was all before school, okay and we rode the bus. Yuck. Um, this is 1980s, okay, 1980s when I was doing this stuff. Not that far away. I mean when you live on a farm and do that, um that was before school. After school, same chores again. Feed all the horses, bring all the cattle in, bring all the horses in make sure everyone has fresh hay in their hay bags. Um, then on the weekend or during the week mow the yard which you have a 10-acre plot of land which meant trimming all the fence lines, trimming trees.

Essentially maintaining, you wouldn't even call it, it's not called a ranch. You wouldn't even call it a ranchette. You just had a 10-acre block of land that needed maintaining. A ranch, to most people down here, they call it down here, it's not. A real ranch would be like what we mentioned earlier about the McAllen ranch or what they call the Arrowhead Ranch. Um, the Guerra's ranch and stuff like that. Where it's multiple, thousands and thousands and thousands of acres. That is a ranch. Where you can walk for a full day and not get to the other side. Down here people have this misnomer, I suppose.

Um, weeding the garden, watering the garden. Making sure the compost bin is filled up and turned to allow the decomposition of the vegetables to go through. Um, washing off the back porch and the front porch. Dust was constantly accumulating all over the place.

Um, picking the vegetables. “Make sure you go over to Grandma’s.” She’s got chores over there that she can’t do anymore because Grandpa passed away. So it was a double whammy.

**Vanessa Saenz:**  
**Patrick Twist:**

Was there any chore that you just, “Ugh! I have to do that.”

Yeah, cleaning out that freaking burn barrel. I hated that with all my heart. And I knew it was... I could see it coming because every time... You had this massive piece of oil rig pipe. It was huge. It was bigger than a 55 drum and maybe about 5 foot tall. You took all the garbage from the inside of the house minus the vegetable trimmings, dump it in there and set it on fire and burn it and you could see, I could, as it got closer and closer to the top. That meant that the time to clean that thing out was getting closer and closer. And I hated that. Cuz it was shoveling it out with a shovel which was dust and ashes and God knows what else burnt with the burnt plastic that was in that and then putting it in burlap sacks and then hauling it off and dumping it somewhere. You could dump it anywhere. Or burying it, they would dig a hole and bury it. Just to clean the house. We didn’t have a burn pit. Burn pits for most people 2 or 3 feet deep. You dug it out with the tractor or by hand. (Laughs.) Toss it out there bury it and eventually move over about 2 feet and dig another one and use that for a year and then move over fill that and then go back to the original one. By that time the cans and everything had rusted and you could dig that one and start anew. That was common. Everyone had that. Everybody did. Well water also. Change the filters for the well that was another thing. Um, cloth filters. They’d constantly need changing, every single month. Um, shock treating the water lines with bleach. You’d go out to your water well and like put maybe a quarter of a gallon of bleach and it would kill all the algae that might be living in the waterlines. Of course, you’d run everything in the house first, to flush the lines and it would kill the bacteria in the lines and it would purify the lines and you could start all over again using water and so forth and so forth. Irrigation that was another thing. Water usage. That was ridiculous. It was every 2 weeks in the summertime. Flood irrigation. You had to lay out aluminum pipe or plastic pipe and move it to irrigate everything you want. You’ve got a 7 and ½ block pasture, you had to flood irrigate that. And each pasture was divided with a, um, a built up like a furrow hump on top like you could move it to the next pan and then flood that also with irrigation water. And you would rotate your animals. And that’s another thing. You wouldn’t do that all the time. Give this side of your property rest and then move the animals to the other side. Maintaining electric fences, trimming, cleaning, recharging- making sure that the battery’s charged. That was normal as a kid. That was like everyday life. But your entertainment was pretty good. You’d walk 8 miles, 5 miles in any direction and you wouldn’t come across a single person.

**Vanessa Saenz:**

Was there any types of animals or insect- insects that you’ve noticed aren’t here anymore?

**Patrick Twist:**

Hmm.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Or have you seen an increase in a certain amount of you know, like vermin or...?

**Patrick Twist:** I would probably have to say, more an increase problem probably. Uh, coyotes, *Coyotes (said in Spanish)* simply because human habitation has encroached on their world. We have moved into their world, the wilderness. I wouldn't say wilderness but open land, virgin land. And they're survivors they look for, what are they called? Um, opportunists. They take advantage of whatever they can get their hands on. So it doesn't really matter to them. More coyotes, a lot more uh, hawks-predatory birds. A lot more often. Simply because you've got a lot more, what would you say? Vermin, rats, mice stuff like that from human habitation. They're attracted. They are all along the power lines here sometimes. We have them on our trees. We had a wild turkey this summer!

**Vanessa Saenz:** Really?

**Patrick Twist:** We don't know where it came from. I am standing out next to the barn and just this "OH-WUF" wind goes past me. And these massive wing span. I thought it was an owl or another hawk and it had landed and it stood up. Freaking turkey! That had come from somewhere. A big old gobbler and a beard and everything. I don't know where it came from. I really don't know. I've got pictures of it somewhere. "Did I have a picture of it, Hun?" (*Question directed at his wife, Mrs. Caroline Twist.*)

**Mrs. Twist:** Yes. (*Response is very faint on recording.*)

**Patrick Twist:** And a little tiny video of it also. Or I tried to. I was using a tiny camera to take a video of it. I have a picture of it though.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Um, has Mr. Norquest, um, talked about any animals that they, that are no longer here? Here on the property?

**Patrick Twist:** Mules.

**Vanessa Saenz:** The mules?

**Patrick Twist:** The mules.

**Vanessa Saenz:** When was the...do you...would you know when the last year was that they used the mules? Did they keep it until it died or. "It's no longer a working animal so we don't need it..."

**Patrick Twist:** I really don't know. I...probably when the barn was rebuilt...the 1940s. '42-46. That four year time span we took a look at in that picture that we saw. If that was the original barn for the mules to be living in and they moved over to the "machine shed". The change of operation to a change in terminology probably around the 1940s. But they...it's not like they completely quit using them. They had uses for them still. Tractors were for farm (*unintelligible word*). They might have used the mules for something else.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Now a couple of years back there was, I don't know if you remember reading or hearing about the bobcat that was in the South Texas Museum. he just like wandered in one morning.

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, yeah, yeah.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Have you guys had any, like of the... You had the wild turkey come. Have you had any coyotes other.

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, yeah.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Or any other dangerous animals.

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Come in?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, coyotes, yes. Right out here on the cornfield. No problem. Easily, all the time. You can hear them at night sometimes. Like right now, this time of year...the cool, you can hear noises a lot farther away. They're right here up to the North. They come from that direction all the time. The new orange groves that were replanted, there is literally a path that goes like in an angle straight this way, going NW of Edinburg. Any wild animal could easily make its way into the city limits, no trouble whatsoever. That wouldn't surprise me at all.

**Vanessa Saenz:** And do have trouble with rattlesnakes or any other rep...

**Patrick Twist:** Uh, rattlesnakes, not really because we have- I wouldn't say, a big population, but every year we see a large black snake, the Indigo snake. We have one that lives here in fact. My wife saw it. She has a picture of it. Outside where we were where the water cistern was- the pit with the water stuck in it. It was on the ground went up the homemade pool, went over to the bird bath and was just in the bird bath hanging off part of it and it must have close to maybe 7 feet in length. Huge. And about that big around. Beautiful black-blue, like this color. On its back. And then underneath it was this golden-bronze on the bottom and the belly. Massive snake. We saw it when it was irrigation. When we were irrigating. It was all coiled up in the water and then we came out to see if we could see it. It's hiding over there somewhere where you were standing. We know that it's over there. The ground has settled and there's these little holes that run all over the place- underneath that swimming pool, in that hallowed out area they would live in there all the time. We found a group of kittens living there one time.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Well, maybe he got to them. No...

**Patrick Twist:** (*Laughs*) No, no, no. Rattlesnakes, no. Um. I haven't seen any scorpions here, but I have just a couple miles away. We've had them in our school and even though they come out and do a regular pest sweep. There are scorpions. I don't know if that would really be considered a problem or not.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Is there any, well this was kind of rural, was there any important buildings around this land that are no longer, or...was it too rural at that point? Because I know that the center of Edinburg was...

**Patrick Twist:** The center of Edinburg, used to have that gorgeous court house, that was destroyed. You ever seen any pictures the original courthouse? You know where the parking lot is at? And you've got that disgusting, flat ugly thing they built that they can't tear down now. Where the parking lot was, was this huge gorgeous court house, very ornately built. Um, I can't think of any important buildings that are no longer standing, that are not

here. Again, if it was, it was going to have to be over in the major center of the city. Since this was in the rural part of Edinburg, or at least it was. The city limits end right here, across the street. We just got put into the city limits not long ago because it was odd the way it wove around everything.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Now...we saw the vinegar, now, the wine, was there anything else that they produced during the...that they self-sustained. They had their wine, they had their orchard, their... did they sell that or was that just for the families?

**Patrick Twist:** It was just for the families. Um, tomatoes, canned goods. You canned all your own tomatoes, squash, okra. That was a real big thing- okra. Kelly's family loved okra apparently, a lot. No, they didn't have something like a you'd say, a general or private farmer's market where they could sell things. They didn't have anything like that. Um, basically, whatever they had is what they used. But they used it for their family for the most part. She not living, anymore, she was one of my bosses when I put myself through college. Her name was Mrs. Allen. Allen floral here in Edinburg, a family owned floral shop, she was from the time period when they used nothing but wagons and mules for everything. And her biggest memory, as a child, was all the red dirt out here northwest of Edinburg and as far as they were concerned, during the Depression, there was no Depression. They didn't know what that was 'cuz everybody you raised their own food. You raised your fruits and vegetables. You raised your own meat, you had your own milk, you had your own cheese. You did everything on your own anyway. So for them there was: What- what Great Depression? What are you talking about? Yeah, there was a drop in farm prices but it didn't really affect them all that much. And you can say that they were poor but they didn't know it.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Was there any questions, Maria Barrera, that you (*unintelligible*).

**Maria Barrera:** Um, did the Great Depression affect the family, at all?

**Patrick Twist:** No, but part of the reason why, I think, they moved was for health reasons. Because of the cold, they came down to someplace that was warm-warmer. I don't remember Kelly mentioning something about it, how it did affect them, in some way, but it wasn't a great deal. It wasn't really, Um, again all the equipment that they had was so that they could do everything by themselves. I know that today, society is very service oriented. Someone else does it for you versus back then where, which was; you were your own service. You did everything on your own. Um, I really don't know. To be honest, Kelly would be your gold-mine for that. I know that he could remember. And you have all the other brothers and sisters. Um, Mark, Neil. Neil is just across the road here, right across the street, across the property. He himself, he is the youngest. He is the baby of all the brothers and sisters. He would be able to tell you some things too. Um, no not that I can remember. I just know that everybody saved everything. They saved everything. They have collections of junk. Scrap lumber was used for everything. The barn was rebuilt from the old barn.

The house, whatever was taken off the front porch was used for something else. I really.... Kelly would be your best source for anything like that. Anything else?

**Lupe Flores:**

Actually, I had a question, but it's kind of a bit off topic, but not really.

I wouldn't think...Do you know if there are any documents that shows any interactions between the Norquest family, say at the time at the time, you know say 1914, 1930s um, to 1950s. That show any interaction with the Schunior family or some other familiar families at the time. You know like that show any kind of interaction from just you know, knowing of each other or actually...

**Maria Barrera:**

Business?

**Lupe Flores:**

Yeah, business.

**Patrick Twist:**

Um. Okay. I really....I haven't seen anything personally. You saw that room up there that's got boxes and boxes and boxes. There's old letters up there. More than likely there's got to be something.

**Vanessa Saenz:**

What families would come to the dances? Was it just family?

**Patrick Twist:**

It wasn't just family, it was anybody and everyone that they knew.

**Lupe Flores:**

Like locals who would work the land?

**Patrick Twist:**

Locals who would work land, other farming families besides the Norquest. They would all come. So, you would go to each other's houses to do things like that.

**Vanessa Saenz:**

Was there a particular family that they were very close too? Aside from the...

**Patrick Twist:**

Probably the Nordmeyer's but that's though marriage within their own families between their families. The Templin's, the family that tried to escape the Communistly run Berlin, Germany, rather. They got close to them. That's another family. But that was probably, hmm...Your talking about the Schunior family. No, not that I know of. Kelly might know. Kelly might. Um, no not that I can think of, that I've heard of to be really honest. Anything else?

**Maria Barrera:**

Um, did any of them serve in the war? WWII, Vietnam?

**Patrick Twist:**

Um, well Kelly is the oldest and back then, after WWII, up to a certain point everybody got drafted.

**Maria Barrera:**

Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:**

Everybody had military service, not the ladies of course, but the guys okay, concerning my age. How old are you?

**Jose Casas:**

Uh, 21.

**Patrick Twist:**

And you?

**Lupe Flores:**

I am 22.

**Patrick Twist:**

They probably would have, somewhere along the line got the magic letter: "Congratulations. You have been drafted into the United States military," and then they'd pick or choose or you'd get to pick and choose which service you were going to go to. And that is the era that Kelly lived in. Where you went and you did your military service because it was requested to do so because of the draft that was still in existence. Um, Vietnam, Korea, it would have to be one of those two conflicts, wars. I

can't remember if Mark did or Uncle Ricky did; Kelly's brothers. Um, I did, I do know that Uncle Ricky was part of what we mentioned earlier, before we went upstairs. I remember now, SAC- Strategic Air Command. But he was part of that group and this was all during the Cold War and of course that was still going on, that's after WWII to begin with up until whenever Communism or Russia's communist or communism fell in the 1980s; 1989 I believe is when the Berlin Wall was taken down. Changed their style of government. But he was with Strategic Air Command. And as far as conflicts or wars I'm not really sure. Mark, might be...I don't think he was though. They all could have easily gone in the time frame. They could have served; they could have gone into one of those. It might have been college, saving grace where you don't have to go or something like that. Kelly or one of the brothers would have to be your best bet. Ask them that.

**Maria Barrera:** Regarding the workers, were the sons in charge of the workers or did they have someone else in command? To control the workers?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, more than likely it would have been Grandpa- which was Kelly's father, but the boys all worked together with the hands. There was no, "You're the hand and I'm the farmer's son."

**Maria Barrera:** Everybody was equal.

**Patrick Twist:** Everybody is equal. We all are digging the hole. So, there was no such thing as, "I'm better than you are and I'm on top of the hole." We are in the hole together. We are all doing the same job. Um, a lot of the workers yes, had come over from Mexico, but it made no difference. It was, people needed work, the farmer needed someone to do it and the farmer's sons were out there digging in the hole with them. So, there was really no such thing as, I mean at that time you really didn't...everybody pitched in, everybody helped everybody.

**M.K. Slayton:** Did they employ *Braceros* here?

**Patrick Twist:** *Braceros*?

**M.K. Slayton:** It was like a program in the 60's for Mexicans to have amnesty to work here.

**Patrick Twist:** I think that they might have, if I remember correctly. Um, Kelly's dad put a book together that was published-

**Maria Barrera/Vanessa Saenz:** Yes

**Patrick Twist:** Um, Rio Grande Wetbacks and there's copies of it and it gives

**Maria Barrera/Vanessa Saenz:** We've read it.

**Patrick Twist:** You've read it, okay.

**Group:** Yeah.

**Patrick Twist:** Okay, interesting. And it gives you that whole time-span of what it was Like for them. What the families were like and what they did for each other back and forth. It was, they just looked at them like they were people, not nationality or borders.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Did they, did business boom, like during the war effort? Did he provide cotton for the war effort? Or was it just shipped off? How did that work?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, if I remember correctly, you essentially...everything was.. not



everything but a vast majority of it went to the war effort. Steel production, cotton production, oil production, a vast majority of it went for the soldiers that were going off to fight. But more than likely cotton was probably used for uniforms, bed sheets, bandages, take your pick. Seats in jeeps, tanks, lining for helmets. You stop and think it wasn't just your shirt, not just your *camisa* that you got there, not just your *pantolones* its going to be the whole nine-yards. Anything and everything that used cloth. Parachute straps, chords you name it. More than likely, Norquest cotton was in somebody's uniform somewhere at the time. It wouldn't surprise me at all. Anything else? Ask away. I know you're tired.

**Group:** (Laughter)

**Patrick Twist:** I'm fine, I mean I've had a long day, but I'm okay.

**Maria Barrera:** Well, you answered a lot of the questions we had as we were going around the house.

**M.K. Slayton:** Well, just because it's Halloween weekend, I have to ask. Are there any ghost stories or anything about this house?

**Patrick Twist:** Um, not ghost stories but um, we don't know if it was because of all the stuff that was in the house, because it collected over years and years and years like right now you're higher than I am and not just because of the cushion of the seat that I am on right now but because of the way the house is settled. The front door would just open, just *Click*, real slow. And we all just be sitting here watching television, and this is when Caroline's aunt, Aunt Dixie was living here. Have you talked to Dixie yet? Have they interviewed her?

**M.K. Slayton:** I think the other group interviewed her last week.

**Patrick Twist:** Okay. The TV was over there where that pink love seat is at and the lounge chairs or the other furniture were all composed around the tv over there and the front door was there. And we would all be sitting laughing, talking whatever, watching whatever and then the door literally, *Click*, would just open and I wasn't married to Caroline yet and I was just looking at the door and I knew it was shut and Aunt Dixie would say, "Oh, hello, Grandpa. Oh, hello, Grandma, welcome back and didn't miss a beat. And that is what happened. But it hasn't happened in here yet at least since we've moved into the home.

**M.K. Slayton:** Creepy.

**Patrick Twist:** Um, smells. This is the strangest thing. It's not bad smells, it's a wonderful smell of un-smoked pipe tobacco. Beautiful. In that stairwell and it freaks-hair-I've got long hair but at the back of my neck I can smell it when I go up there when I walk around. And you walk through it and you'd stop and "What was that?" I'd go back down and it was gone. But for a brief instant you can smell those smells in that stairwell. And there is no pipe tobacco anywhere in the house. And the whole house has been totally cleaned out.

**Vanessa Saenz:** And Grandpa smoked?

**Patrick Twist:** Grandpa did pipe tobacco and Uncle Ricky too. And he was here when he was a young guy in college. But I can't remember what time period that is,

but he's still alive. But Grandpa had all of his stuff too. You saw all of the cigar boxes that everything is stored in. So, stuff like that. A little sweet smells and I don't know if it's the sap from the wood or not but perfume, every now and then, you can smell that but only going up the stairwell. I'm thinking that it is pulling it from somewhere and its going up via draft. But it's hovering, it's just staying there. Only thing I can think about is, you don't hear any bumps or rattles or anything like that. Or the sound of chains dragging across the floor or something like that. Um, no, but just feelings. Like out at the barn at night, I have to go out and there and check if everything is okay, you get this feeling that there are people all around you or something.

**M.K. Slayton:** You're trying to scare me.

**Everyone:** (Chuckling/Laughing)

**Patrick Twist:** I mean and that happens to be. And it's sometimes I don't know if I am doing it to myself or not but laying here watching television, reading I look around and that floorboard has been here since 1913 that has been through every single president since 1913, every single war and conflict, every single political change in the United States. It was here when John F.K. was assassinated. It was here when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his *I have a Dream* speech. It was here when the atomic bomb was dropped. It was here when the atomic bomb was developed.

**Maria Barrera:** That's crazy. (*softly said in background.*)

**Patrick Twist:** All that stuff. And then you sit here and you think about that stuff and its overwhelming but at the same time it's very energetic in a way. Yeah, I get a very big energy kick out of it. Um, the glass, the door, the doorknobs. Everything that this room has seen. Filled with corn cobs, you know, and then a dance. They had dances in here. The multiple Christmases where the family comes and sings and stuff like that. It's dizzying, it's dizzying. Um, its stuff like that. You think of Marilyn Monroe, John F. Kennedy, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and Frank Sinatra. *The King and I* um, *The Music Man*. Anything that you can think of since 1913 until now this house has been standing since that happened. I mean, fire place that was here that is no longer there, the wood stove. That's right, I'd forgotten about that. The wood stove in the kitchen to warm the house. And there's a place in the roof. I don't know if...no you can't see it...no, it's on the other side of the wall. It's in the kitchen. There's a hole that is covered over. Where the heat could travel up to the upstairs and provide heat for the kids upstairs. So there was a wood stove in the other room. Um, the kitchen floor that we came in and walked on, that is, that's new plywood, not brand new but they had to replace it because the kitchen was the most used room in the entire home. Everybody was using it constantly, all the time. So the wood stove would leave little charred marks on the wood floor and that had to be eventually taken out. What happened to the wood stove? I don't know, I really don't know. Um, but there's remnants of that stuff all over the place. I'd forgotten about that stuff. The fire place and the wood stove for heat. Um,

what have we found? Um, there are Uncle Ricky's model airplane stuff. Ever since he was little, he wanted to fly airplanes. Find pieces of that in the attic. Little balsa wood pieces. Um, shell casings from a Colt revolver, a single action revolver, from the cowboy days that I found upstairs. I left them there I didn't want to move them from wherever the boys were experimenting with a firearm, a handgun or something. But it was... you can tell by the base of casing, it's got a huge dent in it from an old style revolver from the turn of the century. They were probably (unintelligible) they were using for that type of stuff. Just all kinds of tiny little things um you don't think about until you see it. Okay, wait a minute (unintelligible)...Um, the wiring in the house that's all from the 1950s. 1940s not all of it. I mean it's all new wiring. You saw some of it outside the house. Just this summer we had to replace a dryer because the original wiring that wrapped wrap in what's called Nomex covering, which is this woven fabric that you can literally see the weave like this. Around this massive, not copper, *aluminum*, woven wire that was huge. I mean it looks like a piece of rope. That went from that fuse box, which is original to the house, up that, up the side of the roof and then across the top of the attic and then back down again up to where the drier was at. But the wiring that is up there that has just been disconnected is still laying there. So its modern wiring but the old wiring from the 1940s is still in the house. You can still see some of the switchboxes on the screened in porch when you come in from that time period. Um, that is actually out in the barn. You can still see it. Amazing what survives, to this day, what is still here. Made to last. That's the thing, are stuff is no longer made to last.

**Vanessa Saenz:**  
**Maria Barrera:**  
**Patrick Twist:**

Yeah.  
No...Yeah, to a certain point. Again it goes back to a service oriented Lifestyle that people have gotten very very very accustomed too. Again, in a new home you walk into it and it's very hallow sounding. And in here, thum! thum! And I can be doing something in that room, or that room and my wife won't ever hear it. Because it's so thick. I mean you hear the traffic go by...when the Northers blow in, the rugs will flutter because the North wind blows in through the drying vent but it's the house is built on a concrete lip. That goes all around the outside that the support walls rest on. Underneath our feet right now s nothing but dirt. It's hallow underneath our feet. It's not solid on a concrete pad, so there's a vent on the C side of the house and on the East side of the house. And two over there and one over on that end of the house, to keep the earth dry underneath it. So when the wind blows in through that hole the rugs will flutter a little bit. When there used to be indoor/outdoor carpet in this room, which is what they could afford, it would literally blow up would flip over from the...You can see where he's sitting there are these massive spaces in the wood where the house has settled and pulled the floor apart. But in the summertime it expands, everything will close back up again. So you get a little tighter house in the summertime versus in the wintertime.

**Vanessa Saenz:**

Which is most of the year here.

**Patrick Twist:** Which is most of the year. Exactly. There were some records like from the record player. Um, real thick stuff. Not vinyl, it was a different thing, like a bake-light material or something. Real super thick like from 1913, 1914, 1915. Kelly said there somewhere around here. (*Ambulance siren sounding off outside.*) Don't worry we're safe.

**Group:**(Laughs)

**Patrick Twist:** The fire alarm would have gone off. I've got some of those in fact. Records that were really heavy. You need a record player that has enough turn so that you can actually hear it. They're so heavy that a modern turntable is not strong enough. The time period where you had to hand crank it until finally started to spin. You could use them for a Frisbee they are so thick.

**Group:** (Laughter)

**Lupe Flores:** The wooden crosses around the house. Are those original to it as well?

**Patrick Twist:** No, they come from our church. We are all, the whole family, we are all Lutherans. What's a Lutheran? Um, there the first group of people to break away from the Catholic Church. Martin Luther?

**Group:** Yes.

**Patrick Twist:** "Got away from the original stuff. Where are you going?" That's us. We're Catholics like that far away. So, um, yeah. The whole family is heavily religiously involved. Every Sunday, we're all at church. Some one's playing an instrument. Someone's singing in the choir. Someone's reading. Someone's doing something. Someone's in charge of the fish fry for the church.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Thus the peanut oil?

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, the peanut oil, you saw that out there?

**Vanessa Saenz:** Yes.

**Patrick Twist:** Exactly. It's just.

**Vanessa Saenz:** That or you're getting ready to fry that wild turkey for Thanksgiving.

**Patrick Twist:** Exactly. If I ever find it again. If we ever found that thing it would be awesome. Um, we still do things around here the old way. Every once and a while uh, Kelly and his brother-in-laws will somebody will call and say we are going to dig a *poso*. We're going to dig a pit and put coals in it and wrap it and put the meat in it and bury it and let it cook all night. And then 7 o'clock in the morning you take the cow's head out.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Oh, bar-b-que, *barbacoa*.

**Patrick Twist:** *Barbacoa*. The real way, in a *poso* in a hole in the ground uncover it, and unwrap it of course everyone's been working on it all night long so all the guys have been drinking too much beer and breakfast shows up and it just comes right off the bone. Who's had really good *barbacoa*?

**Group:**(Unintelligible Replies).

**Vanessa Saenz:** The cheek!

**Patrick Twist:** The cheek.

**Vanessa Saenz:** When it's in the pit you can't beat that.

**Patrick Twist:** Woo-hoo!

**Group:** (Laughter)

**Patrick Twist:** So yeah, they still do that. That's over there at Kelly's house. It's covered with a piece of tin so...

**Vanessa Saenz:** Aside from the, I just thought of a question, aside from the cows. Did they have other cattle? Did they have the goats, like the *cabritos*, did they have sheep?

**Patrick Twist:** Goats I'm not sure about or sheep I'm not sure about. Cattle definitely.

**Vanessa Saenz:** About how many about how many head, or

**Patrick Twist:** I don't know. I know that Caroline, when she was a lot, I mean not a lot, forgive me Caroline. I'm sorry. Um, she remembers when they had cows. And that was not a corn field but it was a uh-um, pasture. And their cows were out there and the cows would get out. And so they were, "The cows are on my front lawn." And they would have to go and get them but that was all before I married her. Most of my time, that I've been married to Caroline; the whole time in fact, it's been nothing but a farming field. Whenever they got out of cattle it must have been the early 80s, I suppose. That just a pure guess or speculation on my part. Um, again that's the Polish families from McCook. I know that its way off from just this family. You go out there and they have a sausage making party. They slaughter something, pig, goat, cow and they... You go out there and like, "Okay, what am I gonna do?" "You're on the grinder. You're gonna pack the grinder. You're gonna run the skins. Everything. They make their own sausage.

**Vanessa Saenz:** I haven't seen a grinder in so long. My grandma used to have one.

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, you go out there and it's normal. And smoking it in the smoke house. I- I don't doubt that they still do that. It wouldn't surprise me at all. And that's just, that just 20 miles away, the little town of McCook. It's nothing but a crossroad with a blinking red light. You've got all of these farming families. That that right there alone would be a massive project for a genealogical study. See what people have done, where they've gone with their lives and such. Anything else?

**M.K. Slayton:** Where was your family from? Before (unintelligible).

**Patrick Twist:** Um, Well...from what I understand from my mom and dad. Ireland and Scotland.

**Maria Barrera/Vanessa Saenz:** Thus the bagpipes.

**Patrick Twist:** Yes, Yes.

**Group:**(Unintelligible. Everyone laughing and talking over each other.)

**Patrick Twist:** And I'm going on that from what my mom has told me and I've got a little bit of paperwork which was done by one of our family members- a cousin of ours that was a genealogist. And it went back to 17, 18, 17, and 15 something like that. Where our family had...he was able to discover things from Scotland and Ireland, ties that had linked the families and they eventually...My last name is Twist, T-W-I-S-T, but our real last name, my Dad had a choice of funny marriage situation going on, real last name should have been Wagers, W-A-G-E-R-S and even when I looked up, as far as I could get I found out that the last name Twist, Wagers came from pretty much the same area. The border between Scotland and England in

North Umbria. There's a little area where the river of Twizel where they think the name Twist came from because "twist" means rope makers. To weave and twist ropes together. So, that's far as I've been able to go. Kelly's family, take your pick. He goes all the way back to Germany and wherever else the whole family came from. Sweden, I believe. Um, its ridiculously long. Same thing with Odie. The Pena family. Odilia. That goes all the way to Spanish land grants and then back over to Spain. So Kelly knows that Odie's family has Jewish roots somehow or another linked over to Spain. When they immigrated from Spain. Long, long, super long time ago.

**Vanessa Saenz:** To escape the Inquisition?  
**Patrick Twist:** Uh, probably. I wouldn't doubt it. Um, anything else you want to know?  
**Maria Barrera:** Any more questions? That's it. Thank you.  
**Patrick Twist:** You're welcome very, very much. I hope I didn't bore you to tears.  
**Vanessa Saenz:** Oh, no. We're taking this class for fun. It's not required.  
**Patrick Twist:** Oh, sweet. That's awesome.  
**Maria Barrera:** The last thing I need is your signature.  
**Patrick Twist:** Signature? Oh, okay.  
**Maria Barrera:** And, I brought you a couple of stuff. This is a picture from the Norquest. It covers the whole area. This is a brochure from the archives in case you have any questions.

**M.K. Slayton :** (Unintelligible).

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, okay.  
**Maria Barrera:** And uh, this, I uh Dr. Skowronek told us to give it to you.  
**Patrick Twist:** Okay.  
**Maria Barrera:** I didn't really get to look at it...  
**Patrick Twist:** Okay.  
**Maria Barrera:** Um, I, uh think its just different kind of things.  
**Vanessa Saenz:** It's your rights as landowners and they just can't come in here and take your land.

**M.K. Slayton:** The informed consent?

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, okay. Yeah. We've been trying to get a historical designation for the house to begin with because of the age and the history of the home. Hence, Ricky from Golden, Colorado was trying to help us do that. Have it. You know how homes have that State of Texas plaque stuck on them? They're hoping our family's hoping that we can have that designated because at one time Pan Am was actually trying to take away the land. They put it under "Condemnation" and we had to fight them on it legally.

**Vanessa Saenz:** And I think that's what this black-

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, so there's...and that the beautiful things is, that they- not you guys- but the University its Business Acquisitions Branch was run by evil overlord named, can't remember this guy's name. Anyway, he was doing all sorts of crazy things. And we ended up having to fight him off with a massive legal battle and so on and so forth. So...

**M.K. Slayton:** And has that been resolved?

**Patrick Twist:** Uh, yeah. We're still paying for it though.

**Maria Barrera:** I can just imagine.

**Patrick Twist:** Massive legal bills but...

**M.K. Slayton:** Did Neil represent you in that or...

**Patrick Twist:** No, no, that...having a family member represent your family.

**M.K. Slayton:** Uh-huh.

**Patrick Twist:** That runs in all into all sorts of lega- I wouldn't say legal conflicts but just conflicts of interests. So it's just better to hire out someone that's a pure specialist in that area of condemnation. That's what we ended up doing.

**Maria Barrera:** A friend of mine interviewed Neil today.

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, really?

**Maria Barrera:** Yeah. She was really nervous about it, and I wanted to go to see him because she told me that he went to the University of Texas- Law School.

**Patrick Twist:** Mm-hmm.

**Maria Barrera:** And I kinda want to go there for law school. So I wanted to talk to him and see

**Patrick Twist:** Oh, he is an appellate attorney and...I don't want to ringing bells but he is one of the best ones in the Rio Grande Valley. Um, he...highly, highly, super highly regarded by a lot of his peers...Hey, Mom! Hi.

**Group:**(Round of "hi's" as Mrs. Odilia Pena and Mrs. Caroline Twist enter room.)

**Patrick Twist:** That's Odilia, Odie. Not my mom, but my mother-in-law but I call her "Mom." She's my mom.

**Maria Barrera:** Okay. Can I get your signature here?

**Patrick Twist:** Sure.

**Maria Barrera:** And there's another. There's like two.

**Patrick Twist:** That down here?

**Maria Barrera:** Uh, yeah, sorry, down there.

**Patrick Twist:** Okay, so, here.

**Maria Barrera:** Interviewee.

**Patrick Twist:** Interviewee.

**Vanessa Saenz:** I'm curious about the paddle that's up there.

**M.K. Slayton:** Yeah, what does it say?

**Patrick Twist:** Die Klatsch it means goof off.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Did they use that

**Jose Casas:** I think that's self-explanatory.

**Patrick Twist:** Yeah, they used it. They got whacked.

**Vanessa Saenz:** (To Mrs. Twist) You never got that, did you?

**Patrick Twist:** Dei Klatsch. The paddle. See even there they are like, "No, oh, no" Everybody knows about that paddle. Caroline? Oh, she disappeared.

**Mrs. Twist:** Yes? (very faint).

**Patrick Twist:** I hear Dot, that's Dorothy. The Chihuahua.

**Jose Casas:** Chihuahuas are adorable.

**Vanessa Saenz:** Unless you've been attacked by them. I'm keeping my calf facing away from her...

**Group:**(Overlapping conversations and laughter).

\*Following 4 minutes consist of conversations regarding the date (Friday 28<sup>th</sup>) and the

Mr. and Mrs. Twists dogs and pets: Penelope “Penny”, a Chihuahua, Dorothy “Dot”, another Chihuahua and Minerva a kitten.