Interview of Ruth Peterson

July 1, 2005

Interviewer: Carl Miller

with assistance from Layne Whittaker and Connie Nielson

Interviewer: Carl Miller with assistance from Layne Whittaker and Connie Nielson

Connie: Layne Whittaker is going to film on behalf of The Lehi Historical Preservation Commission, Utah State Historical Society, and the John Hutchings Museum of Natural History. Everything that goes on this will be used in the museum as part of the state history. Is that okay with you?

Ruth: I appreciate it. I have lived in Lehi most of my life and if I can add something of use to the historical society I'd be happy to do it.

Layne: You will get a copy of this and you will be able to go through it and make any comments or additions or subtractions. It is up to you for use in different areas. Just so you both understand that. You have a final say on what we produce.

Connie: Your name is? What is your maiden name?

Ruth: My maiden name is Brunson. I am a daughter of Charles A. Brunson and Christina Fackrel.

Connie: Ruth Brunson. Do we want Stephenson Peterson?

Carl: I think she should have Stephenson in there.

Connie: Peterson spelled with 'son'.

Ruth: They are all spelled with 'son'.

Connie: Address is?

Ruth: Currently I am living with my daughter and son-in-law at 6226 South Turpin Street, Murray, Utah 84107.

Connie: Today is the 1st of July, 2005. Your interviewer will be Carl Miller today. He is going to ask you all the questions.

Ruth: He knows me pretty well. We taught together for a number of years.

Carl: I'm going to ask her a few questions. You sure look good. She decided that she had to have her hair fixed before she was going to be interviewed.

Ruth: It was my regular appointment. I come down each Friday to have my hair done so I could go to church on Sunday.

Carl: How long have you been going to Valene the beautician?

Ruth: For about fifteen years. She is a very good beautician. She lives up here in Lehi and when I come to Lehi it gives my son-in-law a chance to take care of a little bit of the yard work. It works fine for everybody.

Carl: When Hawaii was made the fiftieth state where were you when they put up the first fifty star flag over Hawaii?

Ruth: I guess I was over there watching them. You were there too. Is that what you want me to say?

Carl: That is what I just wanted to check out.

Ruth: I have a good memory. It's a bit short but I remember the important things.

Carl: What's interesting is that the governor of Hawaii invited only about four hundred teachers. At that time in native America there were over a million of teachers. How did you get invited out of a million teachers? You were only one of four hundred selected.

Ruth: I had a good friend there on the Lehi faculty. He was the President of the Teachers Association here in Utah. I said, "I would like to attend that convention." His name is Carl Miller. He said, "Well, I'm able to take my secretary. If

you are willing to be my secretary you can go." I took on the name of secretary and we had a good time, didn't we?

Carl: I have a snip of a picture of us sitting there but I can't really identify which one is you. Here is me and right there is Mrs. Gray, were you one of these people? You may have been the one taking the picture.

Ruth: No, I wasn't taking the picture.

Carl: That is a poor picture.

Ruth: I'm not sure.

Carl: That is Mrs. Gray.

Ruth: I probably was sitting by her.

Carl: That is what I assumed.

Ruth: We came together and we were all on the same faculty here in Lehi.

Carl: I want to show you something else. I didn't date this but the first year I taught fourth grade with you, your class and my class put on a program. That was the name of the program. The two of us are bosom buddies, let me tell you.

Ruth: The fourth graders loved to put on programs. We usually braided the May pole if it was in May. We sang songs.

Carl: Mrs. Stephenson's fourth grade class did a Danish folk dance, a May Pole dance, and a highland Scottish dance. I just wanted you to know that I was looking for something that we did together. You can't keep this [holding up a letter]. This is a letter that you wrote to me once. I was president of the UEA, and some time in our interview, not today, I'm going to let you take this and you can make a copy but I have to have it back. I'll tell you that Mrs. Peterson was very spunky as far as what was going on. She wrote a three-page letter here to me as the president of the UEA and she wanted to make sure that she understood what was going on and she wasn't necessarily in agreement with what was going on.

Ruth: I don't know what is coming maybe it isn't good for me.

Carl: I'll just give this to Morris and he can bring it back.

Ruth: I always approved of your ways and your methods.

Carl: I notice you have a letter and it wasn't signed by anyone from the UEA office. You would expect that it would have my name on it or someone that you could blame for what was going on. I was proud of you then and still am. Let me give this to Morris.

Ruth: Well, thank you.

Carl: We are going to interview you and I know quite a bit about your family but I am going to ask you more. You say your last name is Brunson. You grew up where?

Ruth: I was born in Salt Lake City. My father was a farmer and he wanted to buy a farm and he needed financing so he made arrangements to go to Salt Lake and get a job. He was a motorman with the street car company. This only stayed with him for a short time until he got a down payment on the farm. We then moved to Fillmore. I happened to have an older brother but he wasn't much help on the farm. He had what they call 'hay fever', a form of asthma. When father needed some help he took me with him. I rode the derrick horse and I planted the corn and the potatoes for him. We got along fine. We were farmers together.

Carl: What are some of the characteristics of the Brunson family?

Ruth: Well, they are humble people. They hang in there together. We moved into Fillmore when I was two years old so father could farm. His mother lived there we arranged for her to come and live with us. She was an elderly lady of about eighty two when I first met her. She was bound and determined that I was going to know about my pioneer ancestry. She came across the plains when she was a child and she was very proud of that. Every chance she got she would get me on her lap and she would sing songs to me about the pioneers. She would tell me stories about the pioneers. If you will let me I'll sing a song about the pioneers. I was maybe four or five and she would get me on her lap and she would sing. She didn't need an accompaniment or I don't need one either.

While strolling one eve, with the New York State throng
We met a poor boy who was singing a song
Although he was singing, he wanted for bread.
Although he was smiling, he wished himself dead.
Cold blew the blast and down came the snow.
He had no place to shelter him, no place to go.
No mother to guide him, in the grave she laid low.
Cast out on the cold streets, was poor little Joe.
A carriage passed by with a lady inside
I looked on poor Joe's face and saw that he cried
He followed the carriage she not even smiled
While fondly caressing her own darling child.
Cold blew the blast and down came the snow.
He had no home to shelter him, no place to go.
No mother to guide him, in the grave she lay low
Cast out on the cold streets, died poor little Joe.

I'm sure you will agree that is a very sad song to sing to a child. But my Grandmother wanted me to be aware of my own blessings. I was very fortunate I had a home, a nice warm home in the winter. My parents were loving and kind to me. She sang this song deliberately so I would know that I was very fortunate. My parents lived until I was grown. I was married before either one of them passed away. They gave me a good life. They taught me well and told me how they wanted me to live righteously. They were a good example to me.

Carl: You said they were humble folks?

Ruth: My Mother was quite well educated. She lived in Woods Cross up by Bountiful. My father lived in Fillmore and he was raised there. Farming was the main activity there in Fillmore and that is what he followed. I was the center of the family. I had a brother and a sister older. I had two sisters younger. After my father came home from a mission we had another baby girl named Olive. So I was right in the middle of the family. We were humble people but we stayed close to the Church and we felt that we were very blessed. We followed the instructions that the gospel gave us.

Carl: The Brunson have a characteristic about them. If you are one of them you seem to be around a long time.

Ruth: Our genes seem to hang in there. [laughter] My sister didn't live to be eighty, she fell down the stairs and ruptured her lungs and was gone in two days. The rest of us have always hung in there until we were in the late nineties. I'm going to be the winner. I'm going to be one hundred next February. My brothers and sisters wanted to live that long. They fell a little bit short, they were in their late nineties. I think I'm going to make it. We will have a party in your reception center if we may. We will invite all my former students and my neighbors and friends and relatives. That should be another good time for us.

Carl: Next February? What date in February?

Ruth: The twenty-eighth of February. We had a good time. It was well attended. You told me once that it was the largest party that you had in the reception center up to that time. My students came back and gave me hugs and compliments. It was nice, very nice.

Carl: In those one hundred years. What are some of the earliest things that you remember?

Ruth: I remember looking at my picture. I was only six months old. I remember looking at this picture [holding up a photo] and realizing that my Mother must really love me because she put a ring on my finger and it's tied around my wrist with a ribbon. I thought she must really love me or she wouldn't have decorated my hand like that.

Carl: And you remember that?

Ruth: I remember the picture. I was only six months old when it was taken so I must have been four or five when I realized that …

Carl: What other early memories do you have?

Ruth: This picture represents when my father received his call for a mission. I was only six years old. He was a councilor to Bishop Ruffus Day. It was the Depression and they couldn't find people who could finance a big mission for one of their children. The bishop said, "Charles, you haven't have the opportunity of going on a mission. Would you be willing to receive a call?" Father came home, we called a family meeting and we all decided that he should go on a mission. Mother needed a lot of help so we voted that we would help her. I remember that very well, that meeting, because father was so serious about it. "I can't go and leave your mother without the help. If you are willing to do all that you can to help her then I'll be glad to go and do the Lord's

work." I remember making that decision. I was just six years old.

Carl: How did he travel when he went left Fillmore when he went on his mission?

Ruth: He went to Salt Lake to be set apart. Mother went him. This story is not the most complimentary one, but Mother admitted that this is what happened. They set him apart and one of the General Authorities turned to her and said, "Sister Brunson, you are going to be very blessed that you allow your son to go on a mission." But it was her husband and she took it rather badly. Father enjoyed that, he thought it was funny. [laughter] He went to the Western States Mission. He labored in Nebraska and most of the states right around Nebraska. When he came back home he complimented us all for helping Mother. My only brother got a job doing the janitor work in the ward chapel to help finance us when Father was gone. Father went without purse or script. That means that he depended on the people that he served to help him out and give him lodging. He and his companion were both very humble.

One time a man allowed them to sleep in the barn and the next morning he gave them pitch forks to pay for their lodging. You are going to come and sack the hay with me. They told them what they could about the gospel. It was a very humbling experience, with no money. He didn't have any schooling to prepare him. He just went with his own testimony and tried to influence these people to accept the gospel.

Carl: How did your Mother and Dad travel from Fillmore to Salt Lake when he was set apart?

Ruth: There was a man by the name of Joe Carling. He drove a truck to Delta to get the mail for Fillmore. He would take passengers to Delta. Then they would get on the train and go to Salt Lake. That is how they got there.

Carl: What other memories? Are there any early childhood memories?

Ruth: I remember my father writing to me and complementing me on my attitude and telling me how much he loved me and how he expected me to help Mother and the rest of the family. I remember that very well.

I was six so I went to school that year. I enjoyed school but I had one bad habit, I was left handed. I couldn't use my pencil in my left hand without my teacher wacking me with a ruler. They considered it a bad habit. They wanted to change it so I wasn't very happy about that. I learned to be very secretive and when the teacher was over there on the other side of the room I would change the pencil to my left hand and write. I still write with my left hand. I won the argument but I suffered for it.

Carl: When you became a teacher did you use those tactics? Did you swat anyone with a ruler?

Ruth: I never wacked a child with a ruler. I don't believe in corporal punishment. I think the way to make people feel better is to make them happy. I tried my best to understand the children's problems and I would sympathize with them and encourage them to do better. No, I didn't use that kind of a method. It didn't help me any so I didn't think it would help anyone else.

Carl: Do you think that it was because you had been mistreated by a teacher or was it from your teachings that you were kind to other people.

Ruth: I always wanted to be a teacher. When I got my Patriarchal Blessing, Hyrum Smith was the Church Patriarch. I was going to the University of Utah. I went to his office one day and asked if he would give me a patriarchal blessing. He did and promised me that I would be a leader among young people and that I'd help them. I took that as a very serious promise and I tried my best.

Carl: What are some of the leadership positions that you have had that was fulfillment of that?

Ruth: When I was about fourteen my teacher asked me if I would teach a class in primary and I did and I enjoyed it. A little later on they asked me to teach Sunday school. When I graduated from high school my Bishop, who was also the superintendent of schools in Millard District, called me into his office and he said, "Ruth, I've been observing you. You are a natural teacher and I wonder if you would accept a position down in the Pavent Valley? It is a one room school and I'm sure you can manage." I was the only teacher in the one room school. I had seventeen students ranging from first grade including sixth grade. We didn't have a janitor. The fifth and sixth grade boys split the wood. It was de-

livered in lengths that we could put in the stove but it needed to be split into smaller sticks. They did that for me, they would sweep the floor after school, they would bring the wood in and put it in the wood box. I had two Japanese children Toshsa and Tocale Yamoshita. The little girl was in first grade and didn't speak a work of English when I first met her. Her father would bring a ten-gallon bottle of clean water for us to drink. He would turn the bottle upside down and put it in a metal case and it would have a spigot down here by the opening of the bottle so the children could put their cup under it and turn the water on and get a drink. After he would put it in place, he would bow and bow all the way out of the school because I was the teacher. I understand in Japan that is the custom. They honor a teacher by bowing to them. He would smile and I would say 'Come again' and he said he would. He kept us in drinking water.

Carl: Where is Pavent?

Ruth: It is the name of a valley west of Fillmore. My father always had a farm down there and a lot of his friends had ranches or farms. We just called it Pavent but some people were fancy and called it Pa Vant. I don't know why. It may have a French origin, I don't know. Pavent was good enough was us, we just called it Pavent Valley.

Carl: How old were you when you were asked to be the teacher?

Ruth: Eighteen years old. I was just out of high school.

Carl: You looked like a student right there. [looking at the picture]

Ruth: I had just finished high school.

Carl: You said that the students split the wood into pieces.

Ruth: Yes, the boys did. I had to be careful because at the time we were down there the wild animals had the disease rabies. It made them very aggressive. If they bit a child they would go out of their mind. But I would have to watch. At recess time if I saw any disturbance or any wild animal in the bushes I would keep the children in the house and we would play games during recess because I was afraid of them get bitten.

Carl: What would they do with the wood after they split it up?

Ruth: He had what we called the pot-bellied stove. It had a flat top. Sometimes the mother of one of the children would bring a kettle of soup and we would serve it for their lunch along with the sandwich that they brought. The fifth and sixth grade boys took turns putting the wood in the stove so the school house would stay warm.

Carl: Who started the fire?

Ruth: I started the fire. I got there quite early. The place where I lived was the home of Brother and Sister Roberts. They had four children in my group so they felt like they were a big part of my school and they would come and help me. They would serve soup or coco or something for the children during cold weather.

Carl: What was their last name again?

Ruth: Roberts. Mother knew Mrs. Roberts. She went with me to see if they would take me in and let me live there. She seemed happy too. I got ninety dollars a month for wages that year and I paid her one dollar a day. Can you image that?

Carl: [laughter] Do you know what that reminds me of? Do you remember when I came to Lehi to teach.

Ruth: Yes, I do.

Carl: You know I didn't have any money. Not only did I have no money, when I got paid I still didn't have any money even after I paid my bills. Do you remember how we became acquainted?

Ruth: We talked because we were on the same faculty. You had a disappointment in you financial condition so I offered to give you a loan. Did I?

Carl: Every month nearly. I had to come and beg someone to help me out. It was usually twenty, twenty-five or thirty dollars that I needed. Where did I get that twenty, twenty five or thirty dollars when I came and told you that I needed the money?

Ruth: I wasn't teaching in a one room school. I got a raise. [laughter] I was in Fillmore or Holden. Where were we?

Carl: Oh, we were right here in Lehi.

Ruth: By that time my salary had improved some. I went to the BYU and took summer classes and summer school and I took correspondence classes during the winter. Finally I got my degree. My major was elementary education. My minor was art. I took those art classes at the BYU from Brother B.S. Larsen. I latter found out that he was your uncle. This is one of my paintings. I was lucky enough to get a prize for that. [holding up the painting]. This is just a hobby. I love to teach. In fact when I retired I said to my husband, "I think I'll register for teaching. What do you call it when you just have to go and help someone out?" A teacher's aid. He said, "I don't think so. When you are through you are through. I'm not going to stay home alone any longer." You could tell I wasn't the boss. I wasn't supposed to be. When I taught I knew who was boss. It was the Priesthood. They were the wise people and we lived that way all our lives.

Carl: Do you want to rest?

Ruth: No, I like to talk. What do you want to ask me next?

Carl: I want you to tell me about having your children and rearing them as young children.

Ruth: After I finished teaching in this one room school. Every once in a while the superintendent would be sitting in the class observing me. He didn't knock at the door. I didn't know he was in there. He would smile at me when I found out that he was there. At the end of the year he said, "I have a new job for you Ruth. They need a new teacher over in Holden." They transferred me over there. I worked with the young women in mutual. About Thanksgiving time, I met a young man who lived kiddy corner from me, I lived in the home with the Bishop and his wife. She was my Mother's friend. My Mother looked after me. She wouldn't let me stay with anyone she didn't know. I met this young man. He came home from his mission. I don't know how it happened but I was the dance director for the young women. They asked him to be the dance director for the young men. That put us together. We learned the dances and we taught them to the young people. They had a dance that they called the Gold and Green Ball. We had a floor show and we were prepared. The young people knew their dance, the floor procedure. While we were teaching them to dance we got acquainted with each other. We decided to get married after school was out. We went to the Salt Lake Temple and were married. We decided to continue our education. We went to Provo to live and go to BYU. My husband's name was J. Maiben Stephenson. He had a year of college work before he went on his mission. He didn't have a job and he had just come home from his mission. When we got into Provo I went to the office of education and met the superintendent and I said, "We are going to live here until my husband gets his degree and I would appreciate a job teaching school. I have had two years experience and I've enjoyed it and I have been successful." I made it sound as good as I knew how. He wasn't interested. He said. "We have a rule that married teachers should stay at home. If I hired a married teacher she would either have a baby, and have to be excused from the school or else she would prevent a qualified gentleman from teaching. We don't go into that." There wasn't a job for me in Provo. I found a few neighbors that would let me do housework. I could tend children and I could run errands. This is what I tried to do. My husband finally got a job as a night watchman on the lower campus and he delivered the milk for one of the dairies early in the morning so he didn't have to miss any of his school work. It turned out that we got along just fine. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, the superintendent sent the supervisor to interview me and she said, "So many of the male teachers are in the national guard that we need you. Would you be willing to come back and teach?" I said, "Sure I would, I've been waiting to do that." So from then on I taught. I taught there for twenty eight years. I had already taught in Millard County for two years. That completed my teaching career. Thirty years and they retired me at age of sixty-five.

Carl: When did you have your children?

Ruth: When they wouldn't hire me. When I was staying home minding my business, you know. I resented that because I was as qualified as a lot of teachers. They had this silly rule that they honored. But I won out anyway. The Japanese helped me. [laughter]

Ruth: I had a boy first. We named him Charles in honor of my father and Maiben in honor of my husband. Charles Maiben Stephenson. Malcomb

was the second. He was named Malcomb B for Brunson. Then Sharon came along and she was a doll. She just loved to go to school. When she graduated she would go and help the teachers with their practicing. She played the piano and she played the violin. She loved to do that.

Carl: Where were you living when Charles was born?

Ruth: Charles was born in Provo. We had a small apartment on 3rd East and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor rented us this two-room apartment. It didn't have any running water in it. It had a stove in the kitchen. I had my baby at home. The doctor came. We called him about midnight. He had been at a party and he had been drinking. But he managed to deliver the baby. It worked out all right.

Carl: Now the other children. Where were they born? How many were born in Provo?

Ruth: In Provo, just Charles. Malcomb was born in Fillmore. As soon as school was out we were broke. We couldn't pay rent so we went home to my Mother and Dad and they were kind enough to let us stay there. Malcomb was born. We slept in a tent on the lawn and mother made a bed in the guest room. My boy was born there.

Carl: Did you just live there in the summer?

Ruth: As soon as school started then we could afford to pay rent and go where we worked.

Carl: When did you first come to Lehi?

Ruth: By that time my husband had his degree and he got a job teaching at the high school in Lehi. I didn't teach for a few years.

Then we decided to go to California for a vacation. When we got down there we went to a zoo. I guess it was too much walking, he had a heart attack. From then on he didn't teach. He was disabled.

Carl: About when was that?

Ruth: It was in Oakland California when he had his attack. I didn't drive then. We called Charles and Charles came, that's my oldest son and took Maiben home. We put Maiben in the hospital.

Carl: That was in the fifties?

Ruth: We had twenty-seven years of marriage life together and then I was alone for eight years and then I taught again during that time. Then I married one of my neighbors. He was in the Bishopric when I first went to Lehi, Glade Peterson's father, Lester Peterson. He and I were together for twenty-three years and he passed away. Since then I've been alone longer than I have had a companion. It's worked out all right.

Carl: When Maiben died how long was it before you married the Peterson?

Ruth: Eight years.

Carl: Then you married into one of the most prominent families in Lehi? Do you agree with that?

Ruth: Yes. My husband was quite humble. He was a member of the Bishopric but he wasn't one to tell other people what to do. He has raised a very fine family. They have never failed to be very good to me. I really do appreciate them.

Carl: I want to ask you, how many presidents during your life time, all 100 years, there would be twenty-five presidential slots open. Do you know how many …?

Ruth: Times I voted? I voted every time. That was part of my responsibility. I don't know if I voted right but the way I felt, I voted.

Carl: Of all the Presidents of the United States was there one that you particularly liked?

Ruth: Ronald Reagan was a very popular man in my estimation because of the experience he had as an actor. I don't know, that shows my shallow thinking. The one I don't like is Mr. Clinton. Bill Clinton? He was a big disappointment to me but I have relatives that say what he does personally is none of our business. He was a very good president. I think you should judge people for what they are not just what they do.

Carl: Where did you get that philosophy?

Ruth: Well, from my thinking, of course. I have a hard time forgiving people. Now that is not a virtue. But if I know they do wrong I hold it against them.

Carl: You stick to values and standards? Is that right? Do you believe that values and the standards don't change?

Ruth: No. I guess people still do those things they have always done. I liked Kennedy. I thought he was a fine President. There are people who consider him a womanizer and he wasn't true to his wife.

Carl: Do you remember when Kennedy was assassinated?

Ruth: I took that very seriously.

Carl: Were you teaching school that day?

Ruth: It may have been during the summer? Do you know what time he was assassinated during the year?

Carl: In November I think. I was teaching fifth grade at Lehi Elementary at that time. I know the fifth graders got to watch it on TV. I was wondering if the fourth graders did?

Ruth: I don't remember really. I remember worrying about his wife. I thought she was very brave. I'm not as politically minded as you men are. I take people personally and try to know them as they are. I don't remember political standards.

Carl: From your bringing up and your background. When you came to Lehi to teach did you notice things that were the same or different in the administration program?

Ruth: I was fortunate. The house we bought was in a good neighborhood and I really thought my neighbors were just fine people. It wasn't long until I got acquainted with the officers in my ward. I felt right at home there in Lehi. There are things that have happened since then but I have promised not to discuss this.

Carl: I would like to know, have or haven't you been involved in politics?

Ruth: I don't think directly in politics but I worked in the Relief Society in a compassionate way and I remember being an officer in the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. They put me on a committee to restore the Fairfield School House and we did that. I tried to make the world better where I found it. Not under the title of politics.

Carl: You were told that you would be blessed and that you would be a leader of young women. Tell us a few experiences that you have had about being a leader in the Young Women's program in Lehi.

Ruth: I was asked to be a teacher of the Young Women and I worked at that for a little while. Then they asked me if I would do similar work on a Stake level. They put me in the stake, on the stake board. I worked with some very fine women on the stake board. They were concerned about the welfare of the people. We tried to make the activities beneficial to them.

Carl: You were very successful when you were the Stake Young Women's President.

Ruth: I really enjoyed it and the people on the men's stake board and the other people, the women that worked with me, were just wonderful people to work with. I was president of the young ladies. I found that if I assigned one of these members to do something it was done. They were really dependable people. It wasn't a head ache for me at all. We got along fine and I appreciated the opportunity of working with them.

Carl: Can you remember any of the young women that you worked with then that are leaders in Lehi today?

Ruth: Most of them are too old to work today. When I get to be a hundred, they people I worked with are quite near my age. [laughter]

Carl: You are just not aware of the legacy that you left.

Ruth: They asked me if I would be president of the Delta Cappa Gamma group. That was an honorary women's teachers group. That was a real honor. I felt that there were other ladies that probably could do it just as well. I enjoyed it and I received compliments on the progress that we made.

Carl: Where were you when they raised the fifty-star flag over Hawaii?

Ruth: We arranged to be there on the day that they were honored as a new state of the Union. There were parades and programs and refreshments.

Carl: What kind of refreshments? I remember one with fruits and that. The Queen's palace or the King's Palace is where the Governor invited

us that afternoon. I have never been to such a colorful lavish reception.

Ruth: They really go all out. Those Hawaiian people. I think entertaining people is their big talent.

Carl: How long did you stay in Hawaii that time?

Ruth: As I remember we were there about three weeks. We participated in the celebration of them becoming a state. Then the educational people arranged for classes for us and we learned some Hawaiian dances and we learned some Hawaiian songs and we were taught the history of Hawaii. When we got back we really put on a big program, didn't we?

Carl: What was the name of the school that we stayed at when we were in Hawaii? The Kamama School. Who went to the school?

Ruth: I understood that it was a boarding school for young girls where I was anyway. They were out of the school so we were privileged to use their living quarters. Is that how you remember it? You were in the boy's section.

Carl: I was in the boy's section. Even today the Hawaiian economy or the Hawaiian support of school to a great extent is based upon if you are a direct Hawaiian. You have privileges that other citizens don't have. That is where we accommodated those privileges. I remember that one time it was over the weekend. I think it was about Saturday afternoon. One of the national officers came to me and said we are missing two of your teachers from Utah. I said, "Oh, don't worry about it." They came the next day about the same time Sunday afternoon. "We are concerned about your two teachers. We need to find them." What happened to you?

Ruth: One of the Hawaiian teachers was kind enough to invite us to her home for the weekend.

Carl: Invited us, who was us?

Ruth: I don't remember her name, she was a Hawaiian lady but Mrs. Gray and I accepted her invitation. We neglected to notify you. I am sorry.

Carl: I wasn't worried.

Carl: Tell us how you enjoyed going with this lady to her home.

Ruth: She served things that we had never eaten before like little sea animals that I didn't know if I wanted to put them in my mouth or not. I was a guest so I did, I chewed on them. I would have come home if I could have done but I learned how they lived. It was interesting but I don't want to do it again. You weren't worried about us were you?

Carl: I wasn't worried. I knew that if anyone could take care of themselves, Mrs. Peterson and Mrs. Gray would never get lost. And no one would ever take advantage of them. That may be different today if we went.

Ruth: With Mrs. Gray, I felt safe. She could handle anything.

Carl: What do you remember about the wars that the United Stated has fought in the years of your lifetime?

Ruth: My older brother was in the First World War and I remember the anxiety that mother felt while he over seas. My Mother would send me to the post office. We didn't have a box, we would just go and ask the post master for our mail and he would give it to us. One day he said, "Now you will have to hurry home because there is a letter from a soldier from the war." I ran all the way home. Mother read the letter and I remember how she cried and cried because she was so worried. He got home OK. In one of the wars my two sons were trained in the military. My oldest son had active assignments. My younger son flew airplanes and was still in training when the war ended so he didn't get to go to the actual conflicts. But it worried me. The older boy wanted to see the world. He joined the navy to see the world. He got the chance to be the secretary to his commanding officer. All he got to see was his typewriter. But he didn't write to his mom and I worried about it. I wrote to his commanding officer and said, "My son is Charles Maiben Stephenson and I haven't heard from him for several weeks. Could you arrange to have him write to me?" My son was in the office and recognized my hand writing and tore the letter up. He wrote, "Mother, don't do that again you are going to get me in trouble." He wrote to me after that quite regularly.

Carl: That's interesting.

Ruth: Well it just shows that if you show your temper it works.

Carl: Any more comments about other wars?

Ruth: I had nephews that were in active duty. My own children they got to do some training.

Carl: Have you any grandchildren that have been recently involved?

Ruth: No.

Carl: How are you so fortunate as to live with Morris the last few years? Tell us what it is like living with Morris?

Ruth: After my second husband died I was alone and I was getting ready for Christmas. I got the ladder in the living room and climbed up there and was putting the star on the top of the tree and some of the other ornaments. I then leaned back to see if it was balanced and the ladder tipped over. I got a concussion there and the Relief Society they took me to the hospital in an ambulance and I was quite laid up for a while. I think my youngest daughter was a little worried about me. They talked it over and they decided that they had better take me to their house because if I fell they could pick me up. I have been there the last six years.

Morris: Mom. What is it like in our house today?

Ruth: What is it like in your house today? My oldest daughter passed away leaving four little girls and Morris and my youngest daughter took care of them and raised them until they were married. They all have families. These folks keep in touch with them all the time. Their oldest son has a family and they have outgrown their home. They sold it and decided they would build a new home up by Cottonwood Mall. In the meantime they didn't have any place to live because they sold their home. They asked permission and Morris said yes come and live with us. There is his son his daughter-in-law and four children, a sixteen-year-old girl, a thirteen-year-old son, an eight-year-old son, and a three-and-a-half going-on-six daughter. We have a lively place to lie. I'm there and I try to be quiet but sometimes I tell the children that I wish they would be quiet.

M: The little girl likes to use Mom's cane for a horse. She will put her cane down and when she goes to use it, it is usually taken.

Ruth: It's not my cane anymore. It's her horse. So we have our difficulties. It is typical of their kindness that they have taken in unfortunate people that need a home. [laughter]

Carl: When you came to Lehi, where did you buy your groceries, where did you shop?

Ruth: I think there was only one store in Lehi where you could buy groceries. That was Larsen's Markets. Later on, Price's put in a food store across the street. You should see all the stores now. I think there are eleven fast food places to eat in Lehi now. All the women work and they don't want to cook so they take their families out to eat. I think I'm wasting your time.

Carl: No, no you are not wasting my time. There is a ton to ask you. In all the experiences you have had in a hundred years, what is one or some of the most interesting or the ones that you enjoy remembering?

Ruth: When I first went to BYU I was just amazed at what some of the teachers knew. Harrison R. Merrill just hypnotized me. He taught classes in Literature and he would live it as he read it and I was just hypnotized. I really enjoyed that man and his ability. I enjoyed my art classes with Brother Larsen. I often felt bad to not know that he was your uncle when I was taking his classes because I could have bragged you to him and bragged about him to you. He was a very good teacher and he was a wonderful artist.

Carl: Harrison R. Merrill thought one of the best of childhood stories was KOY or Cory Sheeto. My Mother would read it to us over and over again. Then she would tell it to us for years. It was Harrison R. Merrill.

Ruth: He was an artist in his life. He really was. He stayed with it until you wanted more and more all the time because he did it so well.

Carl: Were there other experiences?

Ruth: He had a brother Amos N. Merrill, I think, it was Amos Merrill. He wasn't nearly as dramatic as Harrison R. but he got through his teaching material and checked on us. He was conscientious. I always thought that Harrison R. Merrill was the most talented teacher I had ever come in contact with.

Carl: Do you remember your family celebrating the holidays? Christmas, Thanksgiving, as a young child?

Ruth: Since I was ten years old my Grandmother Brunson lived with us. When we had a holiday she took over. She wanted us to know how it used to be. We got a comparison between the way mother prepared and the way that Grandmother said it was when she was that age. That made it nice and educational for us. Mother was an excellent cook. She fed us very well. Grandma was so full of pioneer stories that her biggest thing in life was to have us understand and appreciate what the pioneers sacrificed for us. It wasn't for them because they didn't live long enough. It was so we could have a good life. She would always bring that out so we could understand it. She was a very devout lady. She knew all the hymns and she lived them.

Carl: Do you have another song that you would like to sing to us?

Ruth: No, my voice isn't …

Carl: I know I'm over doing it.

Ruth: There were other songs that I probably could remember if I had a copy. I don't believe I need to sing any of them.

Carl: How did you celebrate the holidays?

Ruth: Our holidays were highly enjoyable but our treats were meager. We couldn't buy an orange or a banana in Fillmore when I was a kid. They had to be brought from Salt Lake. When the folks would go to Conference they would bring back some oranges and bananas and maybe some candy bars. We didn't have those luxuries in Fillmore. Mother made home made candy, honey candy.

Carl: With the honey candy did you ever stretch it?

Ruth: Oh we always had to stretch it.

Carl: Tell us about it. We can start with that next time.

Ruth: I will make you some.

[End of tape]

2nd Interview of Ruth Peterson, July 15, 2005

Interviewer: Connie Nielson with assistance from Layne Whittaker

Connie: I am going to introduce you for the tape. I'm Connie Nielson and we have with us today Ruth Stephenson Peterson. Today is the 15th of July, 2005.

Connie: Ruth, I need to get some history from you about the school buildings that set here just north of the Memorial Building. Will you tell me what the names of those schools were?

Ruth: I don't remember what the name was but there were two older buildings on the west side of the road and that is where I started teaching. My fourth graders went up the stairs sometimes two at a time to get into the classroom. As soon as the new building was completed we moved up there and that is where they are now. That is where they hold school now.

Connie: I want to know a little bit about these buildings.

Ruth: One was designated as the Primary Building and the other one was the Grammar School.

Connie: You served just in the one on the west which was the Grammar School. Right? Was the fourth grade in that building?

Ruth: Yes, upstairs.

Connie: How many fourth grade classes were up there?

Ruth: There were two. Two fourth grade and there was a fifth grade with two sections up there too. There were four classrooms upstairs. Brother Larson was the other fourth grade teacher when we first went in there.

Connie: When you first went in there he was the companion teacher to you. That was Tom Larsen?

Ruth: Yes.

Connie: Tom Larsen later taught me in the sixth grade, but it might have been the fifth grade because I took fourth grade from you. Can you remember who the teachers were that taught the fifth grades?

Ruth: Ethel Wuhlston was one of them. I think Marvel Gray, might have been in sixth, but I think she was in fifth. Basel Dorton.

Connie: Now Basel Dorton did not teach the fifth grade, what grade did he teach?

Ruth: He must have been in the sixth.

Connie: Can you remember the other teachers that were in sixth grade?

Ruth: It's just a guess but it think it might be Brother Nielson, Vernon K. Nielson.

Connie: How many years did you teach there in that school?

Ruth: It's been a long time. I guess about three or four.

Connie: Then you moved up to the new building?

Ruth: As soon as the new building was completed. The next fall we moved up there.

Connie: Can you remember about what years you taught there?

Ruth: You know, names and dates escape me. It's been too long. There must be a record of when the new building was finished.

Connie: How many students were taught in those two 4th grade classes?

Ruth: Right around thirty. Thirty one or twenty nine, just the number that came. We just divided it up.

Connie: Do you remember some of the subjects that you taught in your classrooms? I am wondering about the basic education taught.

Ruth: We had the basic text books and we followed them. We used the phonetic method of teaching reading down in the elementary grades. By the time they were in fourth grade they could read quite readily. We had reading, math, and science. We studied about the earth and sometimes we studied about volcanoes and unusual things that happened. We also studied the animals, insects was a unit and we learned all about insects. I told you about the little girl that brought the insect in her bare hand and it was a scorpion and they are poisonous. It scared me and I told her to drop it right now. I had to warn them after that. There were bugs that weren't safe to handle.

Connie: You taught phonics, math, and science. What other subjects did you teach?

Ruth: We didn't go into commerce. Selling things you know. We may have touched on farming methods. Some of their fathers were farmers.

Connie: Did you have music in your classroom?

Ruth: We did in the first few years and I led it in my class. But when we moved into the new building we had a special music instructor come in twice a week.

Connie: But in the old building it was up to you?

Ruth: Yes.

Connie: Did you have art?

Ruth: Oh yes.

Connie: What about the gym classes. That was just recess?

Ruth: We didn't have a gym in the old building. In the new building we had a nice spacious gymnasium and took them in there and taught them something like line dancing. We just stepped it off.

Connie: Who was your Principal?

Ruth: When I started Cecil Ash was the Principal. He was very understanding, very efficient and appreciative. I really thought he was an excellent Principal. He retired and then we had Dale Burgess.

Connie: I'm only going to ask you about the old Grammar Building. Was he the principal there?

Ruth: Mr. Ash was the principal as long as I was in the old building.

Connie: I want to talk to you a little bit more about what went on in your class because you were golden you taught so many wonderful things.

Ruth: When I first started teaching, I taught in a one room school and we had to improvise a lot of things. We kind of carried that idea over to this building where I was assigned afterwards.

Connie: What time did you start school?

Ruth: The bell rang at nine o'clock in the morning, as soon as the children got comfortable in their chairs we started school.

Connie: What time was school over?

Ruth: About three thirty.

Connie: Do you remember any big events which took place. You were there only four years?

Ruth: We had a May Day program. It was usually the fourth grade children's responsibility to braid the May Pole. I enjoyed teaching them that they just had to go under and over and under and over and as they met other students coming towards them. It was fun. We did it outdoors. The parents came to see the program. We would sing songs about spring time or about the birds or anything that would tie in with spring.

Connie: Now you had to do that outside. Did you ever put the May Pole up inside?

Ruth: No, the ceilings weren't high enough. There wasn't room inside for a May Pole. We had the whole May Day program outside.

Connie: When you had lunch time, did all the children bring lunches or was there a lunch provided that they could purchase some place?

Ruth: I remember the cafeteria in the new building but there wasn't a room that we could get a tray with food on it. I think we all each brought our own lunch.

Connie: So when you were teaching they never served lunch down in the basement of the Memorial Building?

Ruth: They may have done. I just haven't thought about it. I can't tell you that because I'm not sure.

Connie: So if you taught school for four years, was it during the time of the World War II? Do you remember the World War II Armistice Day?

Ruth: That is when the little boy came to school all bruised up. Did I tell you about that? We were just about ready to start school one morning and this boy came in and he had bruises on his face and on his arms. I asked, "What happened? Did you fall down?" "No, my father beat me up." I couldn't believe it so I said, "You are not a bad boy, why would he do that?" The boy said, "He didn't mean to, he has been in the War and he has to be careful and he didn't even know it was me. He was taking a nap and I sneaked up and tickled his ear and without knowing who I was he beat me up." So it must have been during the War that we were in that old building.

Connie: I remember an event that took place on the football field. Every class member of every class marched around the track and then we lined up and sang the Star Spangle Banner. I can't remember the other things that went on but I do know we sang the Star Spangled Banner and stood on the lawn with all the classes. Morris do you remember that moment? The Armistice when World War II was over?

Ruth: I belong to the DUP, the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. We stand and pledge allegiance and sing the Star Spangled Banner at every meeting we have. I don't have a definite memory of this.

Connie: How many recesses did you have during the day?

Ruth: We had one in the morning about 10:30 and one in the afternoon around two o'clock.

Connie: What would you do during recess? Would you be able to have preparation time or just rest from the students?

Ruth: There was usually one teacher assigned to go outside and monitor the behavior of the children so no one would get hurt. The other teachers were free to put board work on the black board or do whatever they needed to do next.

Connie: What kind of game or activities took place outside at that time?

Ruth: The boys did ball games. They had baseballs, they didn't have soccer then I don't think. The boys played separate from the girls. The girls would usually have a circle dance or maybe just a walk with their favorite friend.

Connie: Did they play marbles?

Ruth: Yes the boys brought their marbles and they would mark their circles. The girls usually stayed away from that.

Connie: Would they bring their jacks or jump the rope?

Ruth: There would be only one or two if they did. We didn't do any uniform activities. They usually went to the bathroom and visit with their best friends. All of them didn't want structured activity. We considered it a free time and if they just wanted take a walk or sit on the lawn they could.

Connie: I'm going to talk about the building. It was a big square building?

Ruth: The old one?

Connie: The Grammar Building. It was a big square building, two stories, tell me were there rooms in the corners? How were they positioned? Where were the stairs?

Ruth: There was a hall way down the middle and a window in the middle of each side. There were four classrooms.

Connie: Did they take the corners of the building?

Ruth: Well yes, you just marked it off, it was a rectangle and they put seats in there.

Connie: They had staircases that came out. Did they have those? Four of them or two of them?

Ruth: Just two.

Connie: Were the ceilings tall?

Ruth: I don't believe so because we took our May pole outside. It was tall.

Ruth: That is one reason why we decided to have it out of doors because it was too confining inside. By the time thirty children were seated and there was a teacher's desk in one end. There wasn't any more room for many more people. We didn't have a gymnasium or auditorium in that old building. So we had our programs outside.

Connie: Did the principal have an office on the main floor?

Ruth: Yes, it was on the main floor, on the ground floor.

Connie: Even though there were four big classrooms on the bottom floor, two fifth grade and two sixth?

Ruth: I think his desk was at the west end of the hall where the children came in. I don't think it interfered with any of the classrooms.

Connie: How many blackboards did you have to take care of for your students?

Ruth: We had a large blackboard at the front of the classroom where I usually presented the lessons. In the other walls they were not blackboards, they were where you could pin paper on them. Would it be sort of a sponge?

Connie: Would it be a pegboard of some kind? Who supplied the paper and the pencils? Did the students provide those or did they come from the school district?

Ruth: They were already in the building when the teachers came in the fall. There was a supply on some shelves. That was in the west side near the principal desk.

Connie: Now I'm going to go outside of the building. Was there always a big football field just south of the Grammar School building?

Ruth: I don't remember a big field, these were just children and they just played ball where ever they were.

Connie: Do you think students ever have organized like a base ball game and chose up sides and they played outside? Do you remember any of that?

Ruth: I think those games were activated by the fifth and sixth grades. The fourth grade didn't do that.

Connie: Did you teach Utah History at that particular time? Was that your responsibility to teach them about Utah?

Ruth: Yes, that was a major unit in social studies.

Connie: That social studies program was doing it then and still doing it today?

Ruth: That is the nearest thing to the history of Utah that you can get. It was interesting to the children because many of their grandparents were active pioneers. I thought it was very successful.

Connie: Did you enjoy teaching the fourth grade? Was that your favorite age group?

Ruth: Not particularly, I did like the curriculum it had. The children by the time they got to fourth grade their ability increased and they were able to follow instructions. Yes I liked fourth grade but I liked third grade too. They moved me around to wherever I was needed.

Connie: Did you teach third grade in that school?

Ruth: Not in that building.

Connie: When you were through teaching there and you moved?

Ruth: We went to the new school and it had all new furniture. We didn't move any of the desks.

Connie: Tell me about the new school, can you tell us where that school was that you went to?

Ruth: It's right where it is today. They are still using it.

Connie: Is it the Lehi Elementary School?

Ruth: Yes.

Connie: And the Principal there was Cecil Ash?

Ruth: We had Cecil Ash for two years and he retired and Mr. Burgess came in. He was also a very fine principal.

Connie: How many years did you teach?

Ruth: I taught 28 years in Lehi but I taught two years in Millard County.

Connie: Twenty eight years is a long time to teach.

Ruth: It takes that long in order to retire.

Connie: I understand that you were one of the very best that came out of the school. You were a compliment to our community. Many children revered you as a wonderful teacher.

Ruth: I hope they think that. I was really interested in their process. I don't believe in scolding or striking a child. I was kind to them and if I did have a child misbehave I usually asked him stay for a little while. I would explain to him that I was sorry that he didn't stay interested in what I was saying because I prepared it just for him. It gave him the feeling of responsibility to cooperate with me.

Connie: What happened with the student that was really smart? Did he get to have a double promotion?

Ruth: I'm sure some of them did. When I was in fourth grade and ready to go into fifth grade they didn't have enough seats in the fifth grade room for everyone. They choose six of us children that they thought could handle sixth grade. They moved those six children into sixth grade where there were plenty of seats. That is a strange reason to give you a double promotion just because there was a seat there for you to sit in.

Connie: Now that was in your day when you went to school?

Ruth: Yes that was in my day.

Connie: Did they hold the student back when you taught in the Grammar School?

Ruth: If they were capable of progressing they were always sent to the next grade. Sometimes we would get a child that was very limited and if he couldn't succeed where he was we knew he wouldn't succeed in the next grade up. We would talk to his parents and see how they felt about it. There were times when we encouraged them to stay in the same grade. If their parents insisted on them going forward they went forward.

Connie: Did they double promote, did they allow a child to skip a grade?

Ruth: Not that I know of. I have heard Grandmothers say that their grandchild so excelled in their ability that they didn't fit in the grade that they were in so the teacher asked permission to send them forward. It didn't happen to my students.

Connie: I'm asking you this because in the '2000' years, where we are now, sometimes we have this bunch that are called gifted and they make quite a bit to do about that. I wondered how they handled that in your day?

Ruth: If we knew that a child was bored and the curriculum was old stuff to him and he would be happier and more successful with more difficult work. I haven't double promoted any of my children but I guess it happens.

Connie: I'm trying to find the history of our older school setting and to see how it compares to our schools of today. How far we have come in the teaching skills. You taught all the basics and they survived.

Ruth: Yes, we had a curriculum to follow and it included certain subjects and we had text books to cover that material. We pretty well knew what to present to the children.

Connie: In your day of teaching did you use the typewriter in your preparation?

Ruth: I did at home when I laid out my plans. Morris uses the computer for me now. I don't use a computer, it is foreign to me.

Connie: When do you think of the hand writing of today?

Ruth: We stressed the Palmer Method. There was a rhythm to our writing. We wanted it that way. Now with the computer and other inventions, the hand writing is not used very much. They just go to a machine and it doesn't take long to do it and it's perfect. I notice my doctor's handwriting is plain but there is no rhythm to it. It isn't graceful like the Palmer Method required it to be but I don't hold it against him. You can read everything he writes.

Connie: I am wanting to show the history of what was happening—how you really stressed handwriting, how you stressed the different things in you classroom to produce an educated person. I know there is a great gap between then and now.

Ruth: I think the invented machines fill that gap. People realize that it doesn't take as much time with the typewriter and the computer and they don't have to worry about the condition of it. They have just made a change.

Connie: Tell me about math? Did you spend a lot of time of the multiplication factors?

Ruth: Some children required more time than others. You don't keep them together on something like that because some excel and others struggle. It takes quite a long time to help everybody.

Connie: When you met as teachers did you have a time that you met together as teacher's like a teacher's preparation time or was it taken care of on your own?

Ruth: We held a faculty meeting every Monday morning. The principal told us some of the major things that should be accomplished during the week. If we had problems we were free to ask about them and how they could be solved. I remember one of the teachers was very determined to keep the doors locked until the bell rang. I didn't feel it was fair to the children because the parents would bring them early, it was cold weather, their parents went to their jobs and they wouldn't have any supervision in their homes so where would they go? I thought the school doors should be unlocked and children could be free to come in and read a book or something quiet because the teachers used that time for preparation.

Connie: The children came early, did most of them come in buses, there were not a lot of cars at that time.

Ruth: Their parents usually brought them. Any conveyance that the parents had to get to their work they used to bring to school and then went on to their job. I know they wanted their children to be well cared for and the doors should be left open and unlocked so there would be a place for the children to come.

Connie: Was there a certain place for the bus students to be picked up?

Ruth: We didn't have a bus.

Connie: So then the students would either walk or be brought by the parents?

Ruth: Yes.

Connie: That is interesting because we have a lot of buses now.

Ruth: I think the social conditions are much more uncertain now. It isn't safe for children to walk any distance. Too many people are, well they can be kidnapped or mistreated, so the buses are a vehicle of safety.

Connie: When did they start busing students in your time? When you were in the new school probably?

Ruth: Yes, it was usually the children on the outskirts of town. You had to live a certain distance

from the school building to be eligible to get on the bus because it couldn't hold all of them. But if you lived within walking distance you walked to school.

Connie: Do you think that the new school that was built took care of the growth that was here?

Ruth: Who would know? We didn't know that there was going to be growth like we got. They had to bring in portable classrooms and surround the building with them. Nobody was prepared for the influx of population.

Connie: In the Grammar School there was fourth, fifth, and sixth. Then when they went through did they let students go to the high school that was just on the east side of the buildings on Center Street here?

Ruth: I don't know whether they admitted seventh graders or not. I guess they did.

Connie: I remember going to the seventh grade at the high school.

Ruth: That must have been how they solved it. I can't remember all of these things.

Connie: You are wonderful for the things you are remembering. What I want to see is the technique of that day, the setting that you taught in, the building that housed you.

Ruth: I think the plans we made were acceptable today, I really do, the basics. We brought in a lot of other things that enriched the curriculum and that is good. I wouldn't discount what we did. We did the best we could and I think it was successful. I think the people that were educators in those days fit right in.

Connie: I think that because of you and the other teachers that taught here in our community we have good people that came through the process.

Ruth: That is a big part of teaching to prepare children for life. We aimed to do that and I hope we were successful. I think we were because I admire and respect the people I meet now.

Connie: One other question pertaining to the school. When you met as a faculty, teachers from both of the schools met in one faculty meeting, didn't they?

Ruth: You mean the fourth and fifth grades?

Connie: No the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, all of the teachers met in the faculty meeting.

Ruth: I think so.

Connie: Mr. Ash was the principal of both of these schools.

I believe that we have covered a lot the good stuff that took place in those wonderful two buildings. So I'm going to call it quits for today unless you have something you want to ask me. Next time we will have another setting with Carl and you can give us the information about your family and make sure we have the details and probably some fun things that you did in your life. We will let you know about what else we need.

Ruth: I think that is a good way to do it.

Connie: That will be fine.

Connie: Tell us stories about the schools. This is Morris Goates. He is with us today, he brought Ruth down and he is the son-in-law and has some experiences in those schools and we need to share them today so we can fill in some of the neat things that took place there.

Morris: I remember that building, it was quite unique. It was really three stories. There was a gymnasium in the top but because it was so old that we couldn't use it. There was just the two floors. I remember doing the May Pole in the center of the first floor. There were four rooms on the corners and the two restrooms on the south wall on the first floor and the office in the center and the nurse's office that did the shots. On the second floor there were four corner rooms plus a room on the center. When I was in fourth grade Mrs. Wuhlstum taught there. One of the things that I though was fun was that Bro. Evans didn't get up there to clean those windows because it was on the second floor and there was cement underneath it. She was determined to get those windows clean. She chose me to sit on the window seal and wash those windows. She put the windows down on my legs and held on to my legs while I washed those windows. I thought it was super. I went home and told my Mother and that was a mistake. My parents weren't that excited.

When I was in the fifth and sixth grade they did an experiment where we had three teachers, three fifths and three sixth. The fifth grade teachers were Mr. Nielson, Mrs. Gray, and Mr… I can't remember if Mr. Ash was fifth or sixth. He was sixth. Mrs. Wuhlstum had moved to fifth. She was my homeroom. We spent two periods a day with her, two with Mr. Nielson and two Mrs. Gray. In sixth grade Mrs. Sorensen was my homeroom and we had two periods with her, two with Mr. Dorton and two with Mr. Ash. The idea was to prepare us to go to junior high. When my wife came along three years later that had been disbanded. Did you go through that?

Connie: I did not have the three teachers.

Morris: So it was just the two years that I was there. That was quite fun.

Connie: I remember it was Mr. Dorton and Vera Martin as sixth grade teachers. Mrs. Gray was fifth. I only remember two classes of sixth grade. I remember Mr. Larsen but I don't remember the other teacher unless it was Marva Gray.

Morris: Mr. Larsen came after I left.

Connie: Mr. Larsen was wonderful. I remember having Basil Dorton but I also remember the other part of Vera Martin being there.

Morris: I don't know? Did Vera Martin ever teach fourth grade?

Ruth: Usually she was either fifth or sixth.

Morris: Because I never had her.

Connie: Did you have Mrs. Walton or Mr. Brown?

Morris: No.

Ruth: She was in Primary grade, second or third.

Connie: I remember Mrs. Putnam, a Mrs. Viva Taylor.

Ruth: She taught first grade.

Connie: I don't remember. Was there more than one first grade teacher?

Ruth: Naomi Shaw taught first grade but I don't know whether she got started before we went into the new building or not. I really can't remember.

Connie: I remember a Mrs. Johnson being a kindergarten teacher and I never had kindergarten.

Ruth: Verna Johnson.

Connie: That class took place in the old furnace room.

Morris: The furnace was underneath this building and then in this room on top we had the kindergarten. Marie Phillip Robinson was the assistant to Mrs. Johnson.

You asked about the old dance hall. I shouldn't tell you this but...when I was in second grade, I had Mrs. Guerny, Farrin Guerny's wife as my second grade teacher. We as young boys thought it was great sport to go over to that abandoned building and throw rocks at the windows.

Ruth: Under her direction?

Morris: No, oh no. When she found out, she didn't yell at us but she let us know in very firm terms that she was disappointed and I still remember to this day how I felt when she told us how disappointed she was that we would go throw rocks through that vacant building.

Connie: There is now the Dance Arts Apartments but they were just an old building then.

Morris: This is the old original building that ran north and south. Now they have built out on either side. That used to be a skating ring too.

Connie: But it had a spring floor.

Morris: Yes.

Connie: It was one of the very few buildings that had a spring floor. The Smuen people were the ones that put it together. They had a band area and a stage where they did the orchestra. Then the people would come on the Interurban, just a block north of the Dance Art Academy. That is where the people in the community would get off and go dance on that wonderful spring floor. The minute they started dancing everybody's was in tune, everybody's beat was right because the floor bounced the same with everyone else bouncing.

Morris: When I came through on the two grades that building was vacant.

Connie: On the corner there was a little store. Was it a store?

Morris: There was a little building on the corner, I remember. Of course this was during the war and candy was not very plentiful. But that did spring up and we would go over after school and buy penny candy.

Connie: I asked Ruth what things were rationed? Elastic, rubber, they didn't make cars, steel. They couldn't make the cars for about four year, from '42 to '46?

Ruth: I was nine years old before I ever saw an automobile.

Connie: They rationed sugar and that is why it was hard for you to have the candy.

Morris: Do you know the first place that had candy in Lehi? The pool hall, Bill's Pool Hall. We would stop on the way home from school to buy an Almond Joy. I walked in there once and my uncle was there. I didn't go back.

Ruth: Was he clerking? [laughter]

Morris: No he was going there to visit with his cronies.

Connie: He was doing what they do in the pool hall. [laughter]

Layne: Can I ask you two what you did for recess?

Morris: We had marbles. We had basketball. We had softball. And we would sometimes organize by class and sometimes we just played where you go out and if you would catch the fly you go in. If they struck out then you would advance up so everybody would get to play all positions. I don't remember, soccer was not thought of at that time and I don't think we played volleyball. It was basically basketball, marbles and football, we would play football on the old football field. There was no lawn around those buildings. It was just dirt and the marble rings were permanent. They were put in there and brushed so clean that it was as smooth as this floor.

Connie: The boys would just be hovered over those rings and the girls would be sitting over here playing jacks and jumping the rope or the boys would be chasing the girls and playing dungeon.

Morris: There was a place there in the old buildings…

Connie: Yes, dug out windows…

Morris: That they would put them in there and they would be in dungeon.

Connie: They would put the girls in there when they caught them and put them in the dungeon.

Morris: They played kick ball.

Connie: Do you remember the line of poplar trees that went around the whole block?

Morris: That is where the carnival would be for a long time right next to the Primary Building. One of the things that was silly for us to do was that the hot lunch was served here in the basement of the Memorial Building and when we would be released from class we would run down here, get our lunch and then we would play. Then after that the high school would be released they would come. During the winter time when there was snow on the ground we would stupidly throw snowballs at the high school kids. They were so anxious to get there and eat that they wouldn't stop. But they would give us fits after they got through. We would run to the doors of the school and the teacher's would not let us in. We were slow learners.

Connie: I remember back then the meals were really good. They were good to me. I can't remember, were they bowls of soup?

Ruth: Did you go to the high school to eat?

Connie: No, down here in the basement.

Ruth: I don't remember that at all.

Connie: That's not bad because you took your lunch and ate it and the rest of the kids got out of your hair.

Morris: They went over there later. While I was in elementary school we came down here, we would run down here and come in the back door. I don't remember the lunch being that tasty.

Connie: I remember a lot of bowls and bread.

Morris: White gravy with fish in it, on steamed potatoes.

Connie: And gravy and a little ground beef.

Morris: Yeah. It was twenty-five cents and we could go down to Ferd's Café and get two scoops of potatoes with gravy and a slice of bread and a root beer. When I got old enough we would go there instead of coming here [Memorial Building].

Connie: That was probably when you got to be in seventh grade.

Morris: Yes.

Connie: When you were still in the elementary you went down here.

Layne: What were your favorite subjects in fourth grade?

Morris: I remember studying the history of Lehi with Mr. Nielson. We did a class report where we went to the pumps and other places and talked about the industries here in Utah and the Lehi area. That probable stands out in my mind more that anything else I did in all of elementary school.

Connie: This was my fourth grade teacher [Ruth Peterson]. I can remember that I enjoyed every minute.

Ruth: That is because you knew why you went to school.

Layne: Did you two walk to school?

Morris: I lived on 4th South and 3rd West. The school was on Center Street.

Connie: I lived out east of the Lehi Roller Mills and I walked up about two blocks to catch the bus. I rode the bus to school.

Layne: Do you remember the year?

Connie: When I was little. It must have been during my school years because my parents never had a car to bring us to school.

Morris: I think there were two buses. One came from Cedar Fort and Fairfield and the other one was the outlying one. Brother Bateman was the bus driver.

Connie: Brother Bateman was the bus driver. There were quite a few outlying homes or farms and they were brought in just like Morris said from the outlying areas. Then when I became a little bit older, I had to walk that mile and I got so I could walk that in twelve minutes.

Layne: Thank you very much.

[End of Tape]

3rd Interview of Ruth Peterson

Interviewer: Carl Miller with assistance from Layne Whittaker

Ruth: This is Ruth Brunson Stephenson Peterson speaking and I've been asked to give some information about my family. To start with I have a picture of my parents. My father was a farmer in Fillmore, Utah. My Mother lived in Woods Cross that is right next to Bountiful. She was very ambitious, she learned to play the piano and she had talents that were really outstanding. When father went up to the dedication of the temple he had the privilege of meeting her and he was impressed. They dated for a while, while he was up there. He went back to Fillmore and they carried on correspondence. They wanted to get married but her mother said, "No, you are too young. I want you to wait at least two years." So they kept on writing letters and finally they were married. Don't ask me the date, I have it at home. She moved to Fillmore with Father's mother. She liked Fillmore. It was the first capital of Utah and this is the capital building. They called it the Territorial Building. Soon the people of Salt Lake, Ogden and other places decided that it was too far away from the center of the state so they decided to move the capital to Salt Lake.

Mother was very instrumental in making this building into a Daughter's of the Utah Pioneers Museum. She worked with the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers for a long time. She has also been the president of the Relief Society and worked in the Mutual. She was very religious and she made sure we learned all about it.

Carl: That's Charles Brunson

Ruth: No, I was raised in this house and it was owned by my grandparents. His name was Louis Brunson and was the second bishop in Fillmore. Bishop Callister was the first bishop. Mother helped out in the ward and she helped in the Daughters of the Pioneers.

Carl: Is this building still standing?

Ruth: No, when we sold it they tore it down. It was just a block west from Main Street and they built a modern insurance building on that. I have several pictures of it. It was very plain. It has a fire place in every room, no stoves. Mother cooked in one fire place with a kettle, with the flames heating it up. We were real pioneers, I thought. We got along fine. Dad wanted to be a farmer and after they first got married they lived in Salt Lake and he was a motorman on the street car. He earned enough to make a down payment and bought a farm. I had an older brother named Clyde, but he didn't like to farm because it choked him up. He had what we call hay fever and I think it probably was a form of asthma. So I used to go to the farm with Dad; I'd tromp the hay, I'd drive the derrick horse, he thought I was a pretty good farm hand. My older sister worked in the confectionary in Fillmore. I was his main help.

Ruth: We were at the BYU getting my husband's education finished up. While we were there my first son was born and we named his Charles Maiben to honor my father and my husband. He grew up as a very serious minded boy. When he graduated from High School I said, "Let me see your certificate." He said that the recruiter took it. They had a government man come and interview and told all about this war that was going on and they signed up these high school graduates without even telling the parents about it. He was quite excited about going into the navy. He thought he was going to see the world. We didn't object because we wanted him to be patriotic. I did a lot of worrying while he was there. In the mean time though, we stayed at the BYU for three years until Maiben got his degree and Charles was born. Then Maiben got a contract at Nephi to teach in the high school. He taught history and English. He liked it there. But he got another job down in Oasis, I'll bet none of you know where it is, it's a little town down in Millard County, a little south and west of Delta. You wouldn't think that it would be in a little place like Oasis. The students were bussed or maybe they walked, from Delta and Hinckley and Deseret and formed the student body. Maiben was the principal and he had four or five teachers. I remember Mary Hatch was one of them. I don't remember all of them. And he liked it there. While we there in September, just as we were getting settled Malcomb was born. He was a fun loving little boy. We surly thought we were blessed with two boys and they got along fine. I enjoyed tending them. At first I felt bad that I couldn't teach. And I told you last time why, it was because they said my place was in the home and I was not the chief qualified man that was supporting his family. That was a hard thing to take. I obeyed it because there wasn't any other chance to do anything about it.

From Oasis we went to Oak City. That was a happy place because Maiben's older sister lived there, Aunt Maim. She and her family were very good to us. Her husband was quite inventive. He didn't mind having a big family come to dinner but he called all the boys to the tool shed to get weighed. He weighed them before they ate and encouraged them to eat all they could because the guy that gained the most would get a silver dollar, so he had all the boys gobbling up everything on the table, silly but it worked. The children were weighed after dinner and the dollar was presented. While this was going on I tried to help Aunt Maim with the dishes. We had a good time there in Oak City.

Carl: How long were you in Oak City?

Ruth: About three years.

Carl: And you came to Lehi?

Ruth: No, we went to Delta first. Maiben taught in the high school in Delta. All of my children were in school by then. I have not told you about my girls. Sharon was born the year we went to Oak City. Aunt Maim just loved her and she would tend her anytime I needed it. Then from Oak City we went to Delta and during the summer my baby, my youngest child was born, another girl Kathryn. She was premature. I worried about her and the neighbors worried with me but finally she gained a little weight and she is in good health. We surely enjoyed her. She was a very lovable girl. When Sharon married and had four children, her husband died and her bishop, Bishop Skinner called her into his office and said. "You know I think it would be wise if you arranged with someone you have confidence in to have them take care of the children if something happened to you." So she did that, she asked Kathryn and Morris if they

would take the responsibility of her four little girls if she passed away. Well she did. She was subject to veracious veins, she had these four little girls quite close together. The oldest was twelve when she passed away, and that was Peggy. Then Lori was about two years after that, and then Kelly and the youngest one was Carolyn. Kathryn and Morris had their hands full. They had six children of their own and these four. But they got along fine and Kathryn still keeps in touch with them. She remembers their birthdays, and when the have their babies we always make a big fuss over it. They are doing fine. They are all married and have families of their own.

Carl: When you came to Lehi your children were all active in community affairs and school, tell us about that.

Ruth: We came to Lehi and found a nice brick home and bought it. Other places we had been we rented, but now we had a home of own. It was a good thing because I have lived in Lehi for 69 years and just recently I moved up to Kathryn and Morris's place. So if I fell down they can pick me up. It seems to work for me. They are very good to me. We have met a lot of very nice people there.

When Pearl Harbor was bombed the superintendent and the supervisor both came to see me. They said, "We are so short teachers, we understand that you have had experience. Would you come and help us out?" A lot of the men teachers were going into the service because they were part of the National Guard. I was happy to have the opportunity. All my kids were old enough that I said, "Well, there is one problem. Kathryn is old enough to go to kindergarten, but I wonder if Fern Johnson the teacher could take her the whole day instead of just half the day." Because I don't want to let someone else tend her. The supervisor said that has all been taken care of. We found Mrs. Johnston on the way and she said she is willing to do that. They must have wanted me to come because they made all the arrangements for me to come. I got a job teaching in Lehi. It was teaching forth grade and that pleased me because pioneer history has always been interesting and important to me. After I had taught a number of years Carl came. What year did you come Carl?

Carl: I came in '53.

Ruth: I didn't retire until 1971 so we had a good relationship and time enough to understand how each other feels about their job and he helped me a lot. I noticed this about Carl. He didn't copy anybody else, he had his ideas. Some of the teachers thought they had to control the children, line them up and send them to lunch. Carl let them come in a group but he made sure they knew what their behavior should be. They were natural, they walked by their friends, they went to lunch, and went back to their room without any difficulty. Carl was a super teacher and he taught me quite a few things.

Carl: I was going to ask you about that. Here we were with these veteran teachers, all good teachers.

Ruth: But they used different methods.

Carl: Yes they used different methods. You and I, it wasn't just me that didn't fit. I got ideas from you, we didn't make the line exactly …

Ruth: You fit perfectly. It was just the older teachers had a bit of difficulty accepting your new ideas. You stood for progress. I'll verify that. Carl's theories are very well founded.

Carl: You were teaching school and your children were basically involved in community things. All of your kids were talented. Tell us what your kids did during their days here in Lehi.

Ruth: Malcomb was president of his graduating class in high school and he made friends very well and was a good student. Charles was very serious minded and I don't know whether it was the move we made from one community to another but he had a bit of difficulty making friends. Sometimes people challenged the new kids that moved in. They have to make them feel like they are sissies or something. Do you believe that?

Carl: I felt that when I came to teach school. I had to conform. I've been told as recently as within the last year—you're not a native of Lehi, you have to be a native of Lehi to be anybody.

Ruth: That was one of the problems with Charles. He didn't defend himself aggressively, he wasn't considered very important for a while. It hurt him and it hurt my feelings but we finally got him in a circle of friends that seemed to be loyal and understood him. He got along fine in high

school. When he went into the navy he was as tough as any of them.

Carl: Sharon and Kathryn are very talented in many areas. What did they get involved in?

Ruth: Malcomb was too, he composed talks, poems, and he loved the outdoors. He studied about wildlife and things like that. He did very well. I have a letter here from Namoi Shaw. Sharon was still in high school when Brother Shaw passed away. He was her music instructor. In fact he was in charge of music in the high school. When he passed away she was still in high school and they asked her to play a violin solo. That was a pretty tough assignment for a kid. Mrs. Shaw after the funeral said she couldn't come and congratulate Sharon because she was emotionally upset. She sent her a letter. Carl will you read the letter?

Carl: I don't know. I certainly won't be better than you but I'd be happy to read it for you.

Ruth: This is a tribute to Sharon from Mrs. Shaw when her husband passed away.

Letter: Dear Sharon. This note comes to express to you that which I was unable to tell you fervently last Friday, that is: My sincere thanks and appreciation for your lovely and appropriate violin solo in a service for Mr. Shaw. It pleased me as it would have pleased him to have you play on that occasion. He would have been so proud of the way in which you did it. For the gracious and generous tribute to my husband I shall always be deeply grateful to the faculty and student body of Lehi High School. Words can never express how sincerely I feel about all that that has been done and said. Perhaps a special thanks to you will let you know that your talents and your musical achievements will always hold a special place in my heart.

Sincerely,

Naomi Shaw

Carl: I understand that as Naomi Shaw lived, she kept that appreciation in her heart until she died. She probably still has the appreciation. It's was only a year ago that she died.

Ruth: Well, I thought it was a very tender tribute to a little girl who was about seventeen. Sharon was really pleased with it. After she graduated from high school her main hobby was going back and seeing if she could help some of the teachers. She especially enjoyed the drama department. I went home one day and there wasn't a stick of furniture in my living room. She had loaned it all to the Lehi Drama Department for a stage that they were putting on. I didn't mind because I knew where her interest were and she helped them make costumes, she helped decorate the hall, and she did everything she could. She was very enthusiastic about it. She lived just across the road from the High School. While her own children were in school in the elementary school she went and helped the teachers out. She loved to do that.

Kathryn was also talented in music and she is spending most of her time with the old time fiddlers. Now since she doesn't have too many home responsibilities, and they enjoy having her there. I was going to tell you—This is my youngest daughter Kathryn. [holding photo] She was named in honor of her Grandmother—Grandma Brunson. This is a picture of my entire family together. [holding a photograph]

Carl: That Kathryn is a beautiful woman, isn't she?

Ruth: Yes she really is a lovely person. Such a sweet personality. She takes an interest in all the other members of the old time fiddlers. She makes an effort to encourage them. One of the gentlemen wasn't efficient in keeping time and the leader of his particular group said that maybe you shouldn't play until you learn how to manage the rhythm because you are late getting into the composition. Kathryn knew that he wouldn't learn if he didn't keep playing. So she went and she said, "I think we can handle that ourselves. I'll help you." He kept coming and now he is accepted and that is typical of Kathryn.

Carl: You know who Kathryn reminds me of?

Ruth: Who?

Carl: I think she got these characteristics from you.

Ruth: I hope she would be pleased if she heard you say that.

Carl: I want to ask you one or two more questions. We mentioned that you were one of the special guests of the governor of Hawaii at the

gathering for raising of the fifty star flag over Hawaii. I noticed that after you applied what we went to Hawaii for. The idea was to integrate a new culture into the American system of education. So you were one of four hundred teachers that went there. How did you integrate that into the years since then? I know that you did, but I would like from your own words. How did you apply what you learned in Hawaii?

Ruth: Well, I started teaching the children here in Utah in my room, songs I learned in Hawaii and this is the invitation to come to the program. It says that I am in charge of it. You want to read it out loud?

Carl: Yes.

> *Dear Parents:*
>
> *We would like to invite you to attend the Lehi Elementary School PTA annual election meeting to be held tonight Wednesday April 29, 1971, at 7:30 pm in the school auditorium. A special program will be presented by the three third grade classes. It will follow a Hawaiian theme and will be under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Peterson, Mrs. Mary Barret, and Miss. Cathern Wanlass. The general public is invited to attend. There will be plenty of parking on the west side of the building. Elections will be held proceeding the program.*

I think every year, as I observed Mrs. Stephenson then and now Peterson. How she incorporated the understanding of what Hawaii offers, the whole of the nation.

Ruth: It was a real wonderful experience for me to go to Hawaii and I wanted to share it with the children I taught. It seemed to ignite an interest when I would tell them about it or teach them a song about Hawaii. I tried not to tell them about all the insects we had to fight. We had a picnic, big long tables with food piled high and it was in a park. After we had eaten they invited us to go up the canyon to the falls, the Hawaiian Waterfalls. We enjoyed that and when we came back you couldn't see the white table cloths. They were black with insects picking up the crumbs, beetles and every kind of insect. They don't advertise that when they say come to Hawaii. But it is real problem. The people of Hawaii have a lizard that they put on the walls of the rooms. If they have a big house that have more than one. It's called a 'pico', something like that. It jumps wherever it sees and insects and eats it up. So if you would rather have dragon lizards than mosquitoes and flies then there is no problem. I wouldn't care for the bigger animals. They were worse than the insects, I thought. We went to a reception over there in the President's house. It was a beautiful building. You couldn't step on the lovely tiled floor with beautiful designs in it, you couldn't step anywhere without stepping on cockroaches. They were miserable things and they could run fast and I couldn't keep up with them.

Carl: One last question, as far as I'm concerned. When you arrived in Lehi, who were some of the influential leaders that you paid attention to and who do you remember and what where their characteristics?

Ruth: My family was more involved in church more than anything else. Herman Goates was the Stake President. He is Morris's father. His councilors were Brother Frank Jones and Brother Armond Webb. I got very well acquainted with them. Brother Goates lived across the street and didn't take him long to offer me a job in the church. I would go over to his place for advice. Some of the instructions that I got from headquarters I didn't quite understand. They didn't want the girls to go to a dance with sleeveless dresses. They suggested that I have a supply of shawls that I put around their shoulders and let them go. Well you try that. They felt insulted because their mothers had made them a beautiful formal dress and I wouldn't allow them to wear them without a Grandmother's shawl. It didn't seem appropriated to me so I thought the best thing to do was to follow the instructions. I knew he would say that because in our church you don't go against our leaders, do we? Anyway I hurt a little girl's feelings and I felt terrible about it. She came to the door with her date and I said, "Would you like this shawl around your shoulders?" She said, "No, this is a brand new dress" and I said, "My instructions are that the dresses that are worn here should have sleeves, short sleeves maybe but they need sleeves." Her's just had a strap. It was quite a while before her family liked me again. They really felt like that I had insulted her. She and her date turned around and left. They didn't come to the dance because I told her that she was not suitably dressed. That

worried me to death. They changed the ruling after a while but they still encourage people to dress very modestly and I am all for that and I believe in that. There should be a more pleasant way of doing that than taking a young girl's self esteem away from her.

Carl: You mentioned Armond Webb. What did he do for the community?

Ruth: I think he a handled the Sunday School, if I remember right. I was in mutual and Brother Jones was our advisor. We got along fine. I taught the Gleaner girl's class. And then they asked me if I'd take the position as the president of the Young Women in the Stake and that was a big job. [holding up a photo of the presidency] I got some good help. My councilors were Veda Peck and Sister Ash and my secretary and treasurer was Ada Southwick and May Sheppard. Names and dates just escape me so you will just have to excuse me.

I didn't tell you about my little Indian girl. They called the church people together and said that the Indian youth needed an education. We have decided that Latter-day Saints people will take them into their homes and they can come off the reservation and get a good schooling. Kathryn was in favor of this. She said, "I think that would be nice if you could get an Indian girl my age and she could be my best friend." So we did. This little girl came from Montana. Genevieve Cox was her name. She really gave us a run around. She had been in a Catholic School the year before and then they asked her to come to the Latter-Day Saint's church. She had to stop smoking and she had to clean up her language, and mind what the teachers told her. This was difficult for her. Whenever we had a disagreement, and we did, I had to remind her of things that were required. She would say, "I'm going to walk home. All I'll have to do is go and buy some cigarettes, walk up the street and you'll kick me out and that is what I want." I felt like I was a failure. We tried our best to get on common ground. She was about sixteen then, maybe fifteen. One day she took the keys to my car. I had gone to a faculty meeting with one of the other teachers and left my car at home. She borrowed it without asking permission. She took the key and she knew how to drive. She went down the street and got some friends to go with her. When I got home there wasn't a car in the driveway and I was worried. Malcomb came home and I asked him to find her. He took his car and soon found her. He talked to her and he said, "You know you made my Mother feel really bad. Can't you go home and tell her you're sorry?" She said, "If you hadn't come along I would have walked home. I would have walked to your home but I would have hitch hiked to my home in Montana." It was kind of hard to have her there and maintain the family. She stayed the whole year and we got along better as time went along. She went to the same cooking class that Kathryn went to. The teacher says, "It was going to freeze pretty quick and if you have any green tomatoes on your vines I would advise you to pick them and slice them and make a batch of green tomato pickles." Genevieve thought that it would be a good project. She got home before the rest of us. Sure enough we had green tomatoes in the garden. She picked them and sliced them and followed the recipe. When I got home we had something cooking. We couldn't finish it because we needed some more salt. We had a four pound sack of salt. It wouldn't take. She said the recipe called for five pounds of salt. I said it can't be that. Let me see your recipe. Sure enough that is what the recipe said. She said, "I borrowed Kathryn's recipe and it it's not right it's her fault." She was good at defending herself. So when Kathryn came she said, "Oh, Mama, I forgot to cross the 't'." It called for four tablespoons 'tb' for tablespoon and 'lb' for pound. It was an innocent mistake but it created quite a rift between those two little girls. It is fine to adopt a child for winter and help her out if she will let you. After Genevieve went home, I wondered if anything we had done has helped that child. She had ideas of her own and she doubted what we told her was best. If you don't want that in we'll strike it out. I thought it was interesting that she was determined to put four pounds of salt in a kettle of pickles. Can you image? We buried them in the back lot. It would choke you to death if you ate it.

Carl: When we started, do you remember what you said about the Brunson family?

Ruth: Don't expect me to remember what I said. Be careful.

Carl: You said that you came from a family that were humble people. And they were caring people, they cared about others, and took care

of others and assisted others. They were very helpful. Do you know what I think?

Ruth: Did you believe me?

Carl: I believed you then but I think for nearly a hundred years you have carried out those characteristic of your family. I compliment you.

Ruth: Well, Carl that is nice of you.

Carl: Is there something that you'd like not only your family but also anybody else that might view this video, a message you would like them to have?

Ruth: Well it is a very personal thing. I don't know if it should be recorded.

Carl: I think it should be and if you decide you can take it out later.

Ruth: Mother was very religious. When I was born. My father was just getting over a bout of typhoid fever. She worked very hard to keep me from getting it. I didn't get typhoid but I had another bad disease. It was feared that I wasn't going to live. My Mother told me as soon as I was old enough to understand that she had prayed to the Lord that if He would save my life she would raise me to be an honest, virtual, helpful person. She took that so seriously that she reminded me of it every time I did something wrong. "Ruth you are not letting me keep my promise to the Lord." She wanted perfection and she wanted it now. I tried. I think she had a big influence on my efforts to do what was right because she valued that promise that she had made in her prayer. She wanted me to help achieve it. That seems a bit extreme, doesn't it?

Carl: No, I think that is very appropriate. I think that ought to be available for future generations.

Ruth: Mother was a very devout lady.

Carl: I went to a wedding reception last night. The bride had her shoulders covered and short sleeves and I thought she was the most beautiful bride that I had seen in years. She felt comfortable about it and she was very open and very friendly. It was so appropriate that when you mentioned that this afternoon, I just remembered just last night that I saw an appropriate bride and it's very difficult to look at brides now days and not be distracted.

Ruth: Well, I've been told that if you carry out the directions of the church you have to make the dress yourself you can't find a wedding dress with the sleeves in the stores.

Carl: You have to go to Connie and get her to design one for you.

Ruth: I don't plan on getting married again. [laughter] But if I get a chance to tell anyone I'll direct them to you because you know what the standards are. Well I think that has covered everything that I have. There is a motto that I try to carry and tell people. "Smile is a carved line that sets things straight." I think that is good. I was honored with this certificate. It says "Certificate of Achievement." This certificate is issued to Ruth Peterson for 100% attendance while she was teaching school, the grade was left blank but the year was 1969 and 1970. I retired in 1971. I have been retired for as long as I have taught. I taught for thirty years and I have been retired for over thirty years.

Ruth: This is my son-in-law, Morris.

Morris: Would you mind if I said something about you. You may not want this.

Ruth: If it is true I'll take it.

Morris: I just want to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to Ruth Peterson for the wonderful person she is. From the point of view from her son-in-law, I want you know that never in the forty five years that we have been married that I have ever had her say anything that would make me feel bad. She has been a wonderful mother-in-law. We love her and we are so thankful to have you in our home. You bring a sweet spirit to our home.

Ruth: It's because I taught my girls to be very careful who they marry. They must choose the best. [laughter]

Morris: Somehow Kathryn lucked out I guess.

Ruth: That should finish us off don't you think?

[End of Tape]

Taping done in 1986—Lehi History Class

Announcer: We would like to welcome you. These are our faithful members that always come. We would like to welcome Ruth Peterson

back with us today. She is going to talk about the early schools in Lehi today. We are going to continue on next week. Now we will move right into the spring session. The spring session, when April comes, will be at two o'clock in the afternoon rather than one thirty. Next week will still be one thirty. Now we will turn the time over to Ruth Peterson.

Man: Can I ask a question before we get started? What about the school houses out west of Saratoga?

Ruth: I didn't get to them. They told me just the school in Lehi. I didn't know that I was to branch out into Saratoga. But I was impressed that there were that many schools that have been used through the years and that every one of them will have been abandoned by next fall. The Seminary was torn down and then we had the new Stake Center. The only one still in use is this one [holding up a picture] and that is being used as a junior high.

Man: There's a school that is still being used as a home.

Ruth: That is the Sego Lily.

Announcer: Could you read the sign for him? I am taping this for Mr. Felt and he can't see the chart so could you read the chart for him?

Ruth: In reading about the Mormon pioneers, we know that they were very determined that their children would have all the advantages that they could give them. Some writers have given the Mormon Pioneers the name of being backwoodsy and ignorant and shiftless. That is not a true picture at all. We find that most of the early pioneers came from fine middle class families. The only reason they were poor was because of circumstances out of their control. They had been mobbed, they had been burned out and driven out of their homes. For that time they were really limited as to what they could do. There were journals telling us that even crossing the plains the parents would get their children together and read to them or teach them to read or drill them on spelling words or times tables or something like that. They were determined that their children were going to have all the advantages that education could provide. When they first came to Lehi there were several schools that were held in their homes. All of their manpower was being used to get the land under cultivation and plant the crops. The mothers who felt capable and had room enough would invite the children from the neighborhood and they would teach them and they had schools even before they were able to build a school house. There was a Mrs. Beasly and a Mr. Purse who taught the older ones. There were several others. They hadn't been here very long until they banded together and built a school house for all the children to attend. This was a log cabin type of house it was only eighteen by twenty four feet. It had a fire place on one side and on the other end of the room it had a long table so the children could go into different groups and practice their penmanship. In early pioneer schools and even when my father was going to school, they really stressed penmanship. They had a Palmer method of writing. It was very rhythmical and very beautifully executed. They spent effort in that way. For a number of years the children went to this first log school.

Man: Where was that at?

Ruth: The first one was down by the rodeo grounds, where the rodeo grounds are now. It is just about where the railroad crosses Dry Creek. Virgil told me that that is where it was. It was the first public building so it was used on Sunday as a meeting house. It was used as a City Hall. Those that were in charge did their planning there. They even used it as a Ballroom and a Theatre. Because they did have cultural groups that were determined to increase their knowledge and their enjoyment while they were settling this area.

It wasn't long until this little log school was just bursting at the seams. People were moving in and their children were coming to school and they needed more room. They built the Thurmond School. It was just west of where that monument is down on the 1st Ward parking lot, The Thurmond School. I think that is where it was. It was just west of the 1st Ward Church. The teachers were Ida Thurmond, her sister Margaret and another sister Elgina, did you ever hear of Elgina Thurmond, and her brother George William Thurmond also taught the older children. There were boys that were as big as he was and almost as old as he was. They didn't come full time until the farm work was done or until it was too cold and then they would come to school for a few weeks. Some of them were not too

interested. One boy especially his name was Jed Woodward. He was just about as big as Mr. Thurmond. He was a nuisance, he was one of these kids that just didn't know why he was coming to school. Mr. Thurmond tried to be patient with him and one day he really had to chastise him and he said, "Kid, I want you to go home and don't you come back until you know why you are going to school." That made the boy angry. They were practicing a program for Christmas. Mr. Thurmond is described as a very creative, artistic man and the people felt that they were so fortunate to have these Thurmond folks to teach their children. They were well educated and very dedicated in the work. They were practicing for the program and this Woodward boy burst into the room and started to make a disturbance. Mr. Thurmond said, "Kid, I want you out of here." And he helped him out. It wasn't long before he came back with a revolver and shot Mr. Thurmond right in the chest and killed him. You see we have violence now but you see that there were cases that sort of thing happening even in pioneer times. That threw the whole community into a state of shock and mourning and they just felt terrible about it. The Woodward boy was arrested and he was sentenced to ten years in jail. He filled that term and then he was pardoned and he moved down in the southern part of Utah. He hadn't mended his ways nor had he learned much. The record shows that down there he was stirring up a public disturbance at a public dance. The policeman ordered him to leave the building and he didn't obey so the policeman shot him and killed him. We had desperate situations in those days too.

The Thurmond School was conducted for quite a number of years and they had a very good faculty. After Mr. Thurmond was killed his brother David J. took his place as a teacher and then there were the three girls and the other brother.

In 1872, the Roth School was build. That was east of Mr. Laney's home. Where Mason Goates' parents used to live. It was a little north and east but in the same block. I think the school faced east.

Woman: Which Laney is that?

Ruth: The older Mr. Laney, it is about 4th North on 1st East. That is where the older Mr. Laney's house was. They didn't abandon these other schools because the town was growing so fast. They were using all of these. The Roth School was made available in 1872. Then the people in the North Survey, they were the people who said they were over the track, felt discriminated against and they said, "Well you have a new school up here and you still have the Thurmond school, why can't we have a school in our part of town?" There was quite a controversy about it and finally in 1875 they erected the Franklin School. That was north on the state highway on the way to the Point of the Mountain. About where Vernon Curtis is living.

Man: Dale Synder and Jack Barnes live right in there.

Man: It was on the south side of the road by the house that was stuccoed there.

Ruth: That appeased the people in the north end of the town. In those days they didn't have a bus. They couldn't get their children to school unless they could walk. The teams and wagons were being used so it was only right that they would have the school within walking distance. That is why it was put out there on the high way. Of course, the highway wasn't there then.

Woman: I find it very interesting that most women didn't drive.

Man: That is before they had cars.

Ruth: I was over thirteen years old before I saw my first car. It is hard to visualize that they didn't have cars. Most of them didn't even have a buggy. They relied on their wagons and their teams. The men were hauling wood to heat their homes, or they were plowing or doing something else.

Woman: Mr. Coaltes, he had the first school wagon that I am aware of here.

Ruth: Did he get the children clear out here?

Woman: He came out as far as the river.

Ruth: So they didn't have to walk.

Woman: And at one time it was just kind of an open wagon or a buggy. I remember this one kid used to sit on the running board on the back playing the harmonica all the way in and played the same song I can't remember the name. He would play "On the Wings of an Angel".

Ruth: If I had the wings of an angel. That would send you on in a hurry.

Ruth: One of the people I talked with said Simon Eggerson was a very outstanding teacher and he taught in this Franklin School. He was given credit of modernizing the teaching methods and the procedures that were used. He worked with the other teachers sort of like a supervisor and helped them equalize the cirrculum so that all the children would have the advantages of a good set of learning.

Then the next school was sponsored by an outside group. There were people moving in that didn't belong to the Mormon Church. They were reluctant to turn their children loose with these Mormons. They wanted this school separate from the Mormons. So the New West Church Commission sponsored building a New West School. It began as a high school but it was enlarged to include all the grades. This was built on Main Street and when I came to Lehi in 1943 there was a little building there, I think it was about a little west of the present post office and a little bit east of the bank. It was right about there were the parking lot is. Marv Lot used it for his plumbing shop.

Woman: Before that there was a red brick house there and Miss Woolly was the school teacher. My Mother, I've got the diploma, she graduated from there. Dorothy went to school there. My Mother had a sick baby and I went three months to the new school house before I came up out here. Miss Woolly taught the grades from first, second, and third.

Ruth: Delbert Norman gives her credit for being the best teacher he ever had.

Man: She got killed going across to the bank to the north. A car hit her and killed her.

Woman: Eunice Hutchings and some of those from out there all came in to school too.

Ruth: It was conducted with such expert methods that even some of the Mormon people decided that maybe that would be a better place for their children to go to school. The enrollment grew quite rapidly and so that is why they built on to it. They even made a little cottage on the west and had ministers come in residence and they taught the Congregational Church Theory. It was right there quite near where the bank is now. By this time the population of Lehi had grown to be over two thousand people so they had use for all these various schools in the different areas of the town. The New West organization let the other church come in and Miss Wolly was one of the teachers and Miss Carter was a teacher there and a Miss Winslow. To begin with there were only four students. They were Lily Harwood, Rose Harwood, Minny Wines and Eugene Wines. The other people held back to see how these outsiders were going to conduct this school. When they found out that it was going to be a well run organization they then let their children come and the enrollment grew fast. It was a high school to begin with but it was later enlarged to include all grades.

Then in 1892 the Central School was built and it was a high school and was up where Josephine Cooper's house is now. Just across the street north of the Wines Park. Just across from the Rorie Christopher's home.

Woman: That is where the 2nd Ward held their church for a while.

Ruth: Thelma Cooler told me that after it was decided that they would tear that building down, her husband contracted with them to tear it down for the brick. He used the brick. When she was expecting her baby Caroline, Mr. Cooler went over to Dr. Richards and said, "I understand that you are building a home. I have some bricks I'd like to supply you with if you will take care of my wife while she has this child." That was the way Caroline was paid for, using the brick of this Central School. I thought it was quite interesting.

Then there was a disagreement about that too. A sectional fight arose again and the people in the North end of town won this argument. The Sego Lily School was erected. That is just across the road from the 4th Ward church. They were getting schools in the various sections of town. We have a Sego Lily school at the present time but it isn't the same one. This one was erected in 1894 and it is just across the road from the 4th Ward Church. It had such a large enrollment that they had to build an addition to it. That was in 1913. That building is still being used as a private residence. I think the Dan Dunston family bought it and Ada Peterson told me that her family had

lived in it and it was her home when she was a little girl.

Ruth: It seemed that Lehi was just growing all the time and all of these schools were filled to capacity. They decided they would build a larger building and put it on the jail lot. The jail lot is just directly west of the present junior high. Did they ever have a jail there?

Man: I don't know where the first jail was. Dale might know. It was up here at where the Memorial Building is.

Ruth: They called it the jail lot.

Man: It was just right here that there was a big jail house before the Memorial Building was ever built. Part of the high school was the Tithing Office and it was built right there just south of the Tabernacle.

Ruth: When I came to Lehi in 1943 those two buildings, there was the Primary Building right across the road from the Jr. High and then the Grammar Building right directly west of the Primary Building. They were all on the same lot and the football field was just south of that. Then they had the lunch room in the basement of the Memorial Building. So it was all right there together. The Grammar School and the Primary School were built first at a cost of thirty thousand dollars. The contractors of Oran and Feal built these two buildings. The Primary building was erected in 1905 and then five years later, they almost looked identical, the Grammar School right adjacent to it was built in 1910.

Woman: Where was that?

Man: It was just there on this lot up here. First, second, up to the fourth grade they went over here to the Grammar School.

Man: Sixth, seventh, and eighth and then they went over to the high school.

Ruth: When I came to Lehi the war with Japan was on and many of the teachers had been called into military service. My husband was teaching at the high school and they found out that I had been teaching school before my family was raised, so they asked me if I would come and teach. I taught in the Primary Building along with Isabel Brown and Mrs. Putman, Winnie Sorensen, and Ilene Sutherland and our principal was Cecil Ash.

Man: Cecil Ash was the principal and they had Gerald Robison, Basil Dorton…

Ruth: They were in the Grammar Building.

Man: Cecil Ash was the principal of both of them, wasn't he?

Ruth: Yes, he was.

Man: Lloyd Philips was the principal in the building, first, second, third and fourth. She taught me and Evan Anderson's wife, Lillian, taught me before she was ever married.

Man: Carl Jackson's wife Jeannie she was trying to teach art over there.

Ruth: That is before she went and taught at the high school.

Man: Wallace Berry's father was principal when I went to school over here. He lived just across the road. All he had to do is to come across the road.

Woman: There was a Davis that taught over there.

Man: Billy Davis taught there.

Man: Who was the taller woman who taught over there?

Ruth: I had a chance to teach in the Grammar School later and that tall woman was Ethel Wuhlston. She taught fourth grade and I taught fourth grade and then she was transferred over into the American Fork area. Tom Larson came to teach fourth grade. I thoroughly enjoyed working with Tom. Do you remember him? He was really a fine man.

Man: Do you remember Joe Robinson?

Ruth: Yes, but he was in the High School. Maben was teaching in the high school then and Joe Robinson was teaching in the high school. Basil Dorton and Vernon Nielson taught sixth grade. Vera Martin and her sister Marvel taught fifth. Tom Larson and I were in fourth. That was all there were in the Grammar Building. We taught there until they finished the Lehi Elementary School up north of the Hutchings Museum. Oh we were happy to move up there. No more stairs to climb. We had to march the children up the

stairs and down the stairs in these old buildings. All the rooms were on the ground floor up there at the elementary school. We really appreciated the change.

Woman: Mr. Davis, I think, taught one of those Carr kids who got in trouble and jumped down the stairs down about half the time.

Ruth: I had quite a hard time keeping Noland Haws from jumping all the way down. He still remembers that I had to go back and do it right. He says, "I am so glad that you made me do that." And I said, "Yes you are. I'm sure you are glad that I did that." [laughter] It was hard to discipline the children. When they went down they were anxious to get out for recess. They would shove each other and up at the new building it was much better.

It says in the book that I read that Lehi High School was built in 1921 and it was added onto up to 1950. Up to that time it had twenty instructors and 538 students. Then in 1915 the Alpine School District was formed. Up to that part we had been part of the Utah County School District. The Alpine School District was formed and Jay Preston Creer presided at the meeting for this incorporation. He and the board members elected Karl Hopkins to be the first superintendent of our district. Then it said, "Some of the noted educators of our time were James A. Anderson, George N. Childs, who stopped teaching to become the cashier of the new bank in 1906, Fred Worthon was a teacher until he decided to study medicine, and he went east and came back as a family doctor. Andrew B. Anderson was Nasa Goates' father, he taught here until he was appointed to be president of the Dixie College in St. George.

Man: He went to Weber [?Beaver] and taught too.

Ruth: It was Weber[?Beaver] maybe.

Man: At Murdock Academy and it was a branch of Brigham Young University.

Ruth: Nasas told me about that quite a bit of the time. Maybe I got it mixed up, maybe it was Weber[?Beaver] instead.

Man: Yes it was.

Ruth: I think this is proof enough that Lehi has been a strong supporter of education throughout the years. I know when I first came to Lehi we went to some ball games and I can testify that the parents surely supported their athletes. I sat in front of the Lamberts one night and Mrs. Lambert just pounded my shoulders and yelled her little heart out because her boys were on the team. We excelled here in Lehi in quite a few educational pursuits.

Ruth: Jay Lambert was the World Heavyweight Champion Boxer, the whole world's boxer. Then I thought it was really neat that Sister Pete asked me to teach because I have had experience teaching in a one room school. I want to show you. When I first began teaching it was down in Pavent. There I am with my seventeen students ranging from six years to sixteen. You can see they were typical farm kids. Part of the circulum was to keep you nose clean. Clean your seat before you came into the school.

Woman: I remember when I went to school, you would stand up in a row and they would inspect your finger nails.

Ruth: This is one of my little students. Her name was Toshsa Yamishta, her little sister was Tacocle and she was in the first grade and Toshsa was in the fifth. She was my star pupil. Their father couldn't speak English but under contract he bought a five-gallon of drinking water, a glass bottle of drinking water and inverted it into a stand that had a spigot to which we each could take our own cup and get a drink of water whenever we wanted too. I was the janitor, the teacher, and the hot lunch supervisor. The parents took turns preparing a kettle of soup or a casserole or something. We would put it on the top of the pot bellied stove to keep warm. They would each bring a dish and a spoon along with their sandwich and we would have pot lunch. It was just about as modern as a one room school could be.

[End of Tape]