



Interview Summary and Index

Interviewee: Brent McMaster

Interviewer: Melvin Thatcher

Date: May 22, 2015

Location: Salt Lake City, UT

Summary	
<p>Brent McMaster shares his memories of growing up at 1420 Kensington Avenue from 1942-1962. His first recollection is of riding and maintaining a bicycle passed down from his sister. He talks about games played in the alleys, on the streets, and in the Gully at 1600 East. Yoyo contests, bike games, clod fights, and rubber guns are highlighted.</p>	
<p>Brent remembers sports activities, particularly playing basketball as one of last of the “Edgehill Gym Rats” and his first Little League baseball team. He tells skiing in the Gully and of learning to ice skate on backyard ice ponds. He roller skated and made a crate scooter from old roller skates. His brother Tom and other kids built and raced soapbox derby cars in competition at Hogle Zoo and around the neighborhood.</p>	
<p>Brent recalls the shopping district at 15th and 15th where he set up a lemonade stand and a shoeshine stand. He also worked for the IGA grocery and Rexall Drug. The neighborhood boys hung out at Pat’s, a variety store. He talks about the role that gas stations played in a boy’s life.</p>	
<p>Brent shares memories about his siblings, particularly brother Tom, and his mother Clara Watkins McMaster, a noted writer of children’s songs.</p>	

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Time	Brief description
00:00:00	Introduction
00:00:38	Self-introduction. Born 1942. Lived at 1420 Kensington Avenue from 1942-1962 with two years away for an LDS mission. Was a “free range” child, roaming and exploring neighborhood. Attended Uintah School, Roosevelt Jr. High, East High, and University of Utah.
00:03:09	First recollections. Doing everything on bikes. Talks about inheriting his



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	sister's bicycle, repairing, and maintaining bikes.
00:04:39	Games. Homes in neighborhood divided by alleys running north-south and east-west. Creative play in alleys—marbles, clothespin match shooters, BB guns, Whamo slingshots. Games at 15 th and 15 th —marbles (pots, rings) and yoyo contests.
00:07:17	Edgehill Gym Rats. Talks about Edgehill [Ward] Gym, mentor Paul Hansen, leagues, uniforms and so on. Mentions Hansen giving boys responsibilities for concessions and locker rooms. Notes participation included boys from all neighborhoods. Recalls Edgehill Ward producing great basketball teams for all-Church tournaments.
00:10:12	Shops at 15th and 15th. Names IGA Grocery, Safeway, Economy Drugstore, Rexall Drug. Also recalls comic book store and barbershop. Had his own lemonade stand and shoeshine stand there.
00:11:42	Street play. Talks about playing football and baseball in the street, sledding from 1300 East to 1100 East on Harrison, Sherman, and Browning Avenues
00:13:20	Games in the Gully. Entered from 1600 East behind the Cannons [on Kensington]. Rode bikes, played bike tag, ditch. Had clod fights and June grass fights. Played with slingshots and BB guns. Chemistry sets used to make gunpowder and bombs.
00:16:00	Answers questions. Tells about Edgehill basketball leagues, sponsorship, and participation of LDS and non-LDS boys. Formation of neighborhood groups by boys based on street blocks. Explains game of ditch.
00:20:16	(Con't.) Digresses on sledding in the Gully. Elaborates on clod fights between neighborhood teams. Tells about rubber gun fights and describes a ten shot tommy gun rubber gun built by his brother. Notes that association between boys and girls was limited to church activities.
00:25:12	(Con't.) Mentions work opportunities at 15 th and 15 th shops. Talks about hanging out at Pat's, a variety store. Elaborates on his shoeshine stand and its appeal to neighborhood men in suits and Florsheim shoes.
00:29:11	Little League baseball. Tells about joining Fred Tedesco's team for league play at the 1700 East and 1300 South ballpark. Describes broken bats and how baseballs were wrapped with black friction tape.
00:31:33	Assorted memories. Every boy had a dog off leash. Recalls collecting and selling old newspapers by the ton. Also collected string and popsicle sticks. Attributes this kind of activity to the influence of the wartime experience. Says the Gully was a place for solitary, peaceful walks, not just games. Remembers older boys teasing younger ones about prisoners escaped from Sugar House prison.



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00:35:09	Gas stations. Comments on the big role played by gas stations in the lives of boys. Jim Barby's at 13 th and 17 th . Joe Bateman's at Kensington and 1500 East.
00:36:38	Pigeons. Recalls brother starting a pigeon coop with pigeons captured at Westminster College.
00:37:48	Answers questions. Never saw in prison work parties in the Gully. Westminster College was a single building and a lot of grass. Reasons for going to Sugar House: Douglas Models-describes building a balsa wood airplane. Other Sugar House businesses mentioned include Keith O'Brien's, Southeast Theater, Southeast Furniture, Granite Furniture, Hygia Ice.
00:41:45	Skating. Tells of learning to ice skate on homemade ice ponds in backyards, roller skating, and making crate scooters.
00:43:57	Brothers. Two brother, four years and eight years older. Recalls Tom building a boat. Tom wrote a letter to Westminster apologizing for stealing pigeons. He entered soapbox derby.
00:45:21	Soapbox derby. Tom entered derby. Tells about building soapbox cars and kids racing them in competition at Hogle Zoo and around the neighborhood.
00:46:30	Mother, Clara Watkins McMaster. Asked by LDS Church to write children's music. Mentions titles and comments on their impact on children worldwide. Musical home. Mother initiated quartet signing with her older sons. She accompanied husband's dance band and sang duets with him at funerals and missionary farewells.
00:49:31	Other siblings. John and Dianne.
00:49:41	Closing thoughts.
00:50:23	Answers question on vacant lots. Still many in the neighborhood. Boys played in new home construction sites.
00:50:07	End time