

Interview with
Joyce and Hubert Smith
September 17, 2004
by Marge Howard-Jones
for the
Highway 101 Association

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Interview with Joyce and Hubert Smith, on September 17, 2004 at their home, 2719 Greemock Court, Carlsbad CA 92008. Interviewer: Marge Howard-Jones Transcribed by Kristi Hawthorne

Joyce: I'm Joyce Smith and I live at 2719 Greemock Court in Carlsbad, California.

Hubert: I'm Hubert Smith and I live at the same address, 2719 Greemock Court in Carlsbad, California.

Marge: I'm Marge Howard-Jones and I'm interviewing Joyce and Hubie on September 17, 2004 and both of them are long time residents of the area. So, we will begin with Joyce, when were you born and where?

Joyce: I was born October 24, 1929 in Carlsbad, California.

Marge: And Hubie?

Hubie: I was born January 3, 1925 in Ottumwa, Iowa.

Marge: And your parents' names?

Joyce: My mother and father were Berkely and Ruth West.

Marge: And yours?

Hubie: Albert and Vera Smith.

Marge: Joyce, how did you family come to Southern California?

Joyce: My dad was a golf pro at the Pasadena Country Club and went to Ohio and set up a country club back there, and met my mother and she came here to marry my dad in 1922.

Marge: Hubie, how did your family come to Southern California?

Hubie: It wasn't the whole family. My mother, myself and my brother next to me in age, moved to Long Beach, California in 1930.

Marge: When did you come to San Diego County?

Hubie: San Diego County in 1938.

Marge: Where did you live near or on Highway 101?

Joyce: You might say near because I lived on State Street as a real little girl, which at the time was First Street, and that's just about four blocks from Highway 101.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Marge: But it was the 101.

Joyce: At one time, it was the 101, yes.

Marge: Hubie?

Hubie: I lived at 218 South Cleveland Street, in Oceanside, California which is now the center of the Transportation Unit.

Marge: When did you move there?

Hubie: We moved there in 1938.

Marge: How long did you live there?

Hubie: How long have we been married?

Marge: You don't live there now!

Joyce: No, but he lived there when we got married!

Hubie: 1953 or 1955. 1955.

Marge: Did anything outstanding happen that you can remember on the highway when you were growing up here?

Joyce: Some of the events I remember was when the Carlsbad slough, which is now called Buena Vista Lagoon, flooded and the highway got flooded.

Marge: When was that?

Joyce: The first time I remember it getting flooded was about January 1, 1938 when my mom and dad and I had been able to go to see the Rose Bowl Parade. When we came back it poured rain and my dad just barely got across the lagoon and the car died because it got all wet, the motor. It was a Model A and those things happened.

Marge: Hubie?

Hubie: Basically the same thing, in 1938. Oceanside was isolated completely; no one could get in or out.

Marge: The highway was closed then?

Hubie: On both sides.

Joyce: And the Santa Margarita River.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Hubie: It was flooded out.

Marge: How old were you, Joyce, when you first rode on the highway?

Joyce: Probably about a week or two weeks old.

Marge: So you don't remember where you were going?

Joyce: Yes I do! I was born on First Street in Carlsbad and we lived down there, not when I was first born, but later, a couple of years later, we would go back and forth to my grandparents in Oceanside, and you had to go that direction. That was the only way, unless we walked on the beach. That happened at times.

Marge: Hubie, do you remember the first time you were on the 101 Highway?

Hubie: I was probably five years old in Long Beach, California.

Marge: And you drove down here?

Hubie: No, we lived up in the area.

Marge: Very far from the highway?

Hubie: Not particularly, a couple three blocks.

Marge: Did you have to use the highway frequently?

Hubie: No. I don't remember that part of it.

Marge: When did you drive yourself on the 101?

Joyce: I was 17. No, wait a minute, I was 16.

Hubie: So was I.

Joyce: I drove from Carlsbad to Oceanside on the 101 by myself.

Marge: For what reason?

Joyce: I had to go pick my boyfriend up. I had his car.

Marge: He lived in Oceanside?

Joyce: He lived in Oceanside.

Hubie: It wasn't me.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Marge: It was pre-Hubie.

Hubie: Yep.

Marge: Hubie, do you remember driving?

Hubie: I was 16, I believe, when I bought my first car. A 1935 Ford. I did drive it around town, on the 101 in Oceanside.

Marge: Was there much traffic then?

Hubie: No.

Marge: Do you remember one car a minute, two cars a minute?

Hubie: Probably less. It depended on if there were races at Del Mar or not.

Marge: Can you recall some of the businesses that were on the highway?

Joyce: Yes. We can go from the bridge over the railroad. The first thing to the east on the left side, we're coming from Oceanside to Carlsbad, was actually a butane selling place and that was mid 1940s. Then you went over the bridge and there was a motel. That motel is still there today, but different. Across the street was the Red Apple Inn.

Marge: Did you eat there?

Joyce: No, because they had closed by the time I was born. But I remember that it was there and my parents always would talk about it. Then down further to the Carlsbad Hotel, cross catty-corner from it was the Twin Inns, one house, then a service station. Well, first it was Chase's little hamburger stand and then there was the Standard Service Station and the Twin Inns. Catty-Corner from the Twin Inns was Cohen's big estate and they had that wall completely around it. They had all these peacocks inside of there and that was a garden, a really wonderful garden, and you could hear those peacocks all over town. Then you went on down the road a bit and there was Montana Lunch, later. Well, we had across the street from the Twin Inns, there was a sundry store and that was also the Greyhound Bus Depot. Those were when I was just real small. However, later it changed and many things were added on around here.

Marge: Hubie, what do you remember?

Hubie: In Oceanside? North Hill Street, 101, the Mira Mar Café, on the corner of 8th and 101. The Flying A Service Station where I worked when I was in high school. Across, catty corner from the service station, was I think Brant's. It was a little local grocery store and it was kind of pretty much bare until you got down into town there was Shanks Hardware on the west side of 101. Palomar Theater, and Sweetwoods on the east side of the 101. Mission Drug Store was down further. Kelly's drug store was on the corner of Third and Hill. Let me think, Margo Theatre was on the west side beyond the drug store. Then the Oceanic Café was there. El Ray Hotel, DeWitt Hotel. The Standard Station was in the middle of town, come to think about.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Weseloh Chevrolet, a big red building, was on the 101 on the east side. Then there was a Texaco station on the corner beyond it, going south. There was a Buy and Save Market, South Hill Market and then it pretty much was not much of anything until you got to Short Street, which is now Oceanside Boulevard, and it went two or three blocks east. Then the slough and South Oceanside was very much desolate. It was all lined up and the streets were like that and you could have bought the whole block for taxes, back taxes.

Marge: What year was that?

Hubie: About 1939 or 1940 roughly. You kept going further south you came to Bob's Drive-in, on the corner of Vista Way and Hill and later on it was another restaurant, Craig's. Across the street from it was a vacant lot and now it's a clothing store, of some kind. By the way, I forgot to say, in Oceanside, the first thing I remember, you see the city limits and the population 6500. You come into Carlsbad and the population was 2500. That was 1939 or 1940. From then on down into San Diego, there was pretty much small towns, but very little of anything. There was Sheldon's Drive In, which was this side of San Diego and from then on it was pretty desolate until you got to Broadway, the train station.

Marge: Lots of wide-open spaces.

Hubie: Lots of it.

Marge: Do you recall any special landmarks or unusual structures?

Joyce: Not anything unusual, because we grew up with the Twin Inns and that, of course, stood out, a big Victorian home with their chickens out in front, and that was always a big thing. It was a part of growing up because I went to school with the Kentner kids, the two youngest ones, I should say. We rode our bikes all over and walked all over. There was no problems in those days because we could do anything.

Marge: And that was what year?

Joyce: Oh, that, gee, from the 30s on to the mid 40s, later 40s actually.

Marge: Through the war?

Joyce: The wartime, we had right across from the Twin Inns, it was like a converted service station, but it became the first little Coast Guard station and then an MP station. The Marines made it into an MP station and that was World War II. The Episcopal Church was there on the corner, as you go around the bend, and their parish hall was the USO during the war. I used to clean that for 35 cents an hour once a week.

Marge: That was on the 101?

Joyce: That was right off the 101, yes.

Marge: Do you remember any, Hubie?

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Hubie: Two buildings that I didn't mention before, was Huckabay's department store which is a two story building, right off the corner of 2nd.

Joyce: Or Mission.

Hubie: Mission and Hill. And catty-corner from it was the National Bank. It was a big two-story building.

Marge: Were those the only two story buildings?

Hubie: As near as I can remember, the only two story buildings?

Marge: Were there any particular people connected with the part of the road, the 101, that you identify with?

Joyce: Well, of course the Kentners, and then when it was the Chase's little hamburger stand, which now is the same location as the first Starbucks in town, that was just a little bitty kind of a metal building and the Chase's of course, were some of the pioneers of town. My mother would work there sometimes on the weekends when it would be busy. You could get a hamburger for a nickel or a dime. They had two kinds of hamburgers, 5 cents and 10 cents. That was really a treat if you got to have a hamburger.

Marge: What was the difference?

Joyce: Just a little bit difference in size.

Marge: A bigger patty?

Joyce: A bigger patty and a bigger bun!

Marge: Do you have any remembrances of any special people connected with the 101?

Hubie: Yes, come to think about it. I was going to school in San Diego and, of course, I was driving. I took several military people back and forth hitch hiking and one day I picked up Mel Torme in San Diego and brought him to Oceanside.

Marge: Mel Torme, the singer?

Hubie: Yes.

Marge: Was he coming to perform?

Hubie: No, he was in the service. He was in the Marine Corps. He was hitch hiking from San Diego and I brought him to Oceanside.

Marge: So that was before he became a singer?

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Hubie: No, I'm not sure. I think he was kind of somewhat before, but afterwards then, he really became famous.

Marge: Well, what a thrill.

Hubie: That was a long time ago.

Marge: What's your favorite memory of the road?

Joyce: I don't know that I have a favorite memory. There was just lots and lots of going back and forth, even during high school days where we would catch the bus here at Carlsbad and ride the bus on the 101 to go over to Oceanside High.

Marge: How long did that take?

Joyce: There were stops all along the 101 to pick up the students coming from South Oceanside, and there were a lot of them. We had more than one bus in the area, but the one that I rode came downtown, came down around through town, and then back up through Oceanside and then up on Mission Avenue to go on up to the High School.

Marge: And how long of a ride was that?

Joyce: Probably 40 minutes. There were a lot of stops.

Marge: How big was the bus? How many students?

Joyce: It was a pretty good size bus. You still see some pretty much like them today. School buses, I mean.

Marge: Then forty minutes coming home?

Joyce: Yes, and we'd get off downtown and walk to wherever. Generally I'd walk to the drug store to go to work.

Marge: Which drug store was that?

Joyce: It became Stillman's pharmacy, on State Street.

Marge: Hubie, what about you? What's your outstanding memory of the road?

Hubie: Picking up Mel Torme probably was one of them.

Marge: Did you recognize Mel Torme? Did you know who he was?

Hubie: No. He asked me what my name was and I told him and I said, "What's yours" and he told me.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Marge: And then you knew who he was.

Hubie: Yes.

Marge: Do you remember any bad accidents?

Joyce: There were always some bad accidents because 101 was three lanes and it was a passing lane and boy, that would be really a hazard. Through Leucadia, those terrible, big eucalyptus trees became like a "slaughter alley". Up by San Onofre, they used to call that "slaughter alley", too, because it was wide open and people really got going and they had a lot of bad accidents. But at our "Y", what we call our "Y", which is right over the bridge going over the railroad and then State street coming off--there was no stop sign. So people would try to beat the traffic either coming off to go on to State Street or First street, then, or going on then and not be very good judges.

Marge: Were you here when the highway actually went on State street before they realigned?

Joyce: I was not born then. I was told about it.

Hubie: I think the worst accident I remember on the 101, I was going to San Diego one afternoon, going back to school. Of course, we had a lot of military women out here, Waves, I shouldn't say "Waves" today.

Marge: But, that's what they called them.

Hubie: There was a load of them. There was a narrow concrete bridge in Cardiff and there was a head on collision there and there was a lot of people really in bad, bad shape. But I didn't stop.

Marge: You were driving past.

Hubie: That's about the worst accident I can remember seeing. I can remember when there was no traffic on the 101. There was absolutely nothing to speak of. We used to play touch football in the middle of the street of Mission and Hill.

Marge: Few interruptions?

Hubie: Very few. No stop signs, no signals. But trying to get across when there were races, that was something else.

Marge: How long was the racing season?

Hubie: A couple of months.

Joyce: Kind of like it is now.

Hubie: About the same.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Marge: Did you know any of the patrol officers or traffic cops?

Joyce: The one CHP, when I was a little kid, was Mr. Elmer and he lived here in Carlsbad. He was a motorcycle officer. You didn't see them very often. Then of course we knew Ole Kissinger, who was a sheriff. My uncle was the justice of the peace, so we got to know Ole quite well and those were the days.

Marge: Where were the Highway Patrol?

Joyce: They didn't have an office around here. I suppose it was down in San Diego. I do remember Mr. Elmer on that motorcycle. He was a very nice man.

Marge: Did people get stopped for speeding?

Joyce: I don't think so.

Hubie: The speed limit in town was 35 miles per hour and most of the cars wouldn't do much more than that anyway.

Marge: Did you know any of the police?

Hubie: I knew Guy Woodward. L.C. Settles. What was the other one?

Marge: Did you know each other in high school?

Joyce: Yes.

Hubie: He was acting captain-- I can't think of his name. His daughter died not too long ago.

Marge: So you say the speed limit through town was?

Hubie: I don't ever remember seeing it posted, but most people didn't go very fast.

Joyce: Generally 25, I think.

Marge: Did either of you ever get a ticket?

Joyce: I didn't.

Hubie: Not on the 101. I did on Mission.

Marge: Was there ever a celebrity in a parade route or a U.S. President?

Joyce: Not really on a parade route, because we didn't have many parades other than the 4th of July in Oceanside. They would have blocked off the highway for that.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Hubie: They still do.

Joyce: But that was 101 in those days. There was lots of celebrities that stayed at our hotel here in Carlsbad during racing season. Then later they made movies at Camp Pendleton. John Wayne, particularly, and a lot of them did stay at the Carlsbad Hotel.

Marge: Did you see them?

Joyce: We'd see a couple once in a while, but you weren't really looking and they looked like ordinary people in those days to us.

Marge: Were you ever in a parade in Oceanside?

Hubie: No. We had several military officers that were grand marshals and things, but I can't remember their names. I did meet Betty Grable at the Standard Service station in Oceanside.

Marge: When you were working?

Hubie: No, wasn't working but I knew the kid that was working there and I was there talking with him. She was kind of a nice gal, but she wasn't as pretty as I thought she would be.

Joyce: The legs!

Marge: Yes.

Hubie: That was a long time ago.

Marge: Do you remember when the first traffic light was installed?

Joyce: No, we were talking about that and I don't think there were traffic lights came on the old 101 in our area until after the freeway, when we began to really start growing. Those are just things that you took for granted. When you went to San Diego, you watched your speedometer at 35 miles and you could hit all the different traffic lights, because the way they were set, but that was about the closest we came to having traffic lights.

Marge: What were the service stations along the road?

Hubie: The Associated Station where I worked in Oceanside. Dodge Wallace had a service station and tire shop. Standard Station right, kind of in the middle of town. The Texaco just south of where Weseloh Chevrolet was. Then there was another fellow that had a station, I can't remember his name. It was beyond Whiting and Mead. Whiting and Mead was a big building, too, come to think about.

Marge: What was Whiting and Mead?

Joyce: A big lumber yard.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Hubie: A big lumber yard. It was a two-story building, too, come to think about it. We both had classmates that lived in the 2nd story.

Marge: On the 101?

Hubie: Right on the corner of Wisconsin and 101. It was the southeast corner. I'm not sure what's there now.

Joyce: It became the parking lot for one of the banks.

Hubie: Uhaul is this side of where it was. It was one of the bigger buildings in town.

Marge: Do you remember the motels and camp places along Carlsbad?

Joyce: Yes. They used to have the camp up in Oceanside along the beach. There were motels in different areas. Carlsbad had the Moon Motel up there right across the bridge and then later the Annable's had one down behind Pine and Oak. It was in there and there were little cottages. I remember Mrs. Annable doing all that laundry and they were out on the clothesline, because of the people staying at the motel. Then I think the next was up in Oceanside. But for camping you could pretty much go along the beach. In fact, we used to go fishing down there, too and pull a trailer and I know that some relatives did and that was just a little trailer and they could pull it off on the rocks and camp there.

Marge: Any place?

Joyce: Yes.

Marge: Do you have any recollections when the power plant was built?

Joyce: Oh yeah. That was quite an undertaking. I watched them do the bulldozer to open up the channel going in for the water. That was Kelly slough to us, for years.

Hubie: For the cooling system.

Joyce: Yes, for the cooling system and building that big Encina power plant. The beach was just a wonderful beach that we used to love, because the kids could go and play, in the water, depending on what the tide was.

Marge: You mean the lagoon?

Joyce: In the lagoon.

Marge: So they built a second jetty for the water to come into the lagoon?

Joyce: When they were first working on that, that was before it was really dredged out.

Marge: Did you ever go fishing down there?

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Joyce: People do. But no, I never went fishing down there. Always just to the beach taking my kids down and the neighborhood gang and laying in the sand right there at the beach.

Marge: Do you remember the Poinsettia fields?

Joyce: Oh yes, yes. When it was Ecke's down there. They were gorgeous. It's too bad we lost that. I remember when they were growing the artificial rubber.

Marge: Guayule?

Joyce: Guayule, down during the war. That was something else—talking about things you remember--when I was real little, the army artillery would come, sometimes during the year, down at Terramar and they would have night artillery over the ocean. That was something a lot of people would go and watch. They had tracer shells that would go out, you know, and that was an evening's entertainment.

Marge: They would fire things out in the ocean?

Joyce: To practice. During the war, watching all of the different caravans, convoys that were going either from San Diego coming up here to Camp Pendleton or going from Camp to the harbor in San Diego, because you knew those guys were going to go out if they weren't on the trains. That was something in those days, too. But when we wanted to go to the beach during racing season, you had to go at a certain time of the day. Otherwise you could not cross.

Marge: There were no crosswalks?

Joyce: There were no cross walks.

Hubie: They wouldn't stop for you anyway.

Joyce: There were no sidewalks. You just had to take your life in your hands.

Marge: That was before the freeway?

Joyce: Yes.

Marge: Up until 1952?

Joyce: Yes.

Marge: Were you here during the war, Hubie?

Hubie: Yes, in fact, talking about the war. I was an air raid warden[?] I had my hat and a tank. I was also an airplane observer on top of the high school. We had a building up there to look for planes.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Marge: Did you ever have anything to report?

Hubie: Well, yes. All the planes, we'd tell them what it was and where it was going. I do remember one thing, too, about Oceanside. I used to surf fish a lot. In fact I used to surf fish where she was talking about. One day I was out surf fishing off the pier in Oceanside, in a heavy storm and the end of the pier broke off while I was out there.

Marge: Which part of the pier were you on?

Hubie: I was on the other end! That was a long time ago.

Marge: When the guayule was being raised, what did that look like from the road?

Hubie: Like a rubber tree.

Joyce: It looked kind of like a rubber tree you would get in a nursery.

Marge: How big?

Joyce: Probably 5 or 6 feet.

Hubie: They didn't go too far.

Joyce: I think they started out from small ones and grew them down there. It was right there where the Encina plant is. Then, of course, Mr. Gage was down there, in South Oceanside that's where he really started to grow ranunculas and the flower fields, and then of course the Ecke's had the flower fields down south. But those poinsettias that they grew along there, that was gorgeous. People used to come and look at those.

Marge: Do you remember why they stopped growing those?

Joyce: No, I don't remember for some reason. People started building houses. Terramar became kind of an exclusive place to live.

Hubie: For the elite.

Joyce: No, not really.

Marge: What about further south in Ponto?

Joyce: Ponto was a place where a lot of surf fishing went on.

Hubie: That's where I used to fish a lot, too. Off the banks in Carlsbad, I fished a lot.

Marge: Do you have any other recollections we need to know about?

Joyce: Well, I talked about the artillery down there. That was kind of neat. Carlsbad had the,

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

first we had the army and they were in the forest but they patrolled.

Marge: On the beach?

Joyce: Yes, and the pier. But I remember, we were talking about the black outs and during the war everybody had to have black shades. You couldn't drive with headlights. You had parking lights or people tried to cover up their headlights with a small thing. There were guards on the trestles to keep the tracks clear.

Marge: Railroad trestles.

Joyce: Yes. One night, I was asked about when they tried to re-strengthen the trestle and I really didn't know the answer but my one classmate lived there by the railroad track, right next to it. I emailed her and she wrote a letter back telling about one night. This is the end of Chinquapin. All of that used to be orchards, a few house, but orchards. They heard a car come barreling down Chinquapin, heading west and it hit the berm, flew over onto the track. It was a taxi cab with his tank full of gas, and that's when gas was rationed.

Hubie: It ruptured the gas tank.

Joyce: The Trask's heard it and went and found out and the Pedley's who lived on the other side of the tracks, they heard it and they were all there. They sent the two girls to tell Mr. Ron, the guard at the trestle, because the train was due. He went and got some lanterns and walked way up the track to stop the train and it did stop, in order to get that car off the tracks. That was kind of an exciting thing.

Marge: Do you remember when that was?

Joyce: It was in the early 40s. There was one thing about the highway, walking down the 101, we girls would head for the beach and a couple of times we were stopped along the way down toward Tamarack, where it was easy enough to stop. "Well, where are the caverns?" Because they were in Carlsbad! Oh well, sorry, you go to New Mexico for caverns, you know. But that was always something we got a kick out of, reminiscing with the girls you grew up with, walking to the beach.

Marge: How many of your old classmates still live here?

Joyce: Oh, we have a bunch. My closest friends are gone, but we probably have twenty.

Marge: Who are still living here?

Joyce: Who are still living here. It's amazing.

Marge: People don't leave.

Joyce: Well, that or they come back!

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004

Hubie: That fellow I was trying to think of, that was Harold Davis. He was really a great guy.

Joyce: He had two daughters.

Marge: Hubie, any other fond memories?

Hubie: I think of that old hotel on the beach. I think that was really something great.

Marge: The Carlsbad Hotel?

Hubie: No, the one in Oceanside by the pier.

Joyce: The Colonial. There are lots of things, once you start going down the road, as to what was here and there. It's like when they opened up the lagoon and all of the people started going to the beach down there that hadn't really gone there, because we had gone to the hotel beach the best we could. After some of the storms in the winter, all of the rocks would be on our side and not on the hotel because they'd get a bulldozer and push them all on our side. Well, it was still high tide mark up to their wall and we'd go over there and park. Mr. Morris would get mad and call Ole Kissinger to come and get us kids out of there. Well, we didn't budge very much, I'll tell you. Somebody had told us, "It's public beach to the high tide mark" and that was way up there.

Hubie: What was the hotel or motel catty corner from the Twin Inns? It was there for a long, long time.

Joyce: You mean Fidel's?

Marge: It became the Royal Palms.

Joyce: The Royal Palms. That was the old Cohen place.

Hubie: They had a swimming pool, that's the reason I remember.

Joyce: The kids used to crawl over the wall to go swimming.

Marge: Did you ever go inside the garden when Mr. Cohen lived there?

Joyce: No, it wasn't Cohen's then. Eddie Kentner had a beautiful, beautiful garden. A fish pond and all of that and I always felt bad when that went.

Hubie: Now we're on to something else.

Interview with Joyce and Hubie Smith, September 17, 2004