

Interview with

Dave Young

October 27, 2004

by Kenneth Hayward

for the

Highway 101 Association

Interview with Dave Young, December 17, 2004

Interview with Dave Young on October 27, 2004. Also present: Bertha Young. Interviewer: Kenneth Hayward for Encinitas Historical Society. Transcribed by Kristi Hawthorne

Kenneth: This is an interview of Dave Young and his wife, Bertha, by Kenneth Hayward at their home in Cardiff. The subject is the history of Highway 101. This is Friday, December 17, 2004. What is your first recollection of Highway 101?

Dave: I was born in San Diego in 1927 and I moved up here in 1931. My mother was a teacher in Central School in Leucadia. So I was 4 or 5 years old then. We lived in Leucadia and, of course, the 101 was going through Leucadia and all the eucalyptus trees. I remember when I was old enough to go over to the beach by myself I had to cross the highway. During the racing season, of course, we had to be home before the races were out or we had to wait 2 or 3 hours to get across the highway to get home. I remember that clearly.

Kenneth: Besides crossing the highway, did you have to cross the railroad tracks?

Dave: Oh yes. But we looked both ways to cross.

Kenneth: Do you recall the presence of the Auto Club during that period?

Dave: Yes.

Kenneth: Did they have those little motorcycle, tricycles that would cruise by to help people?

Dave: I don't really remember that, no.

Kenneth: Were those bells posted along Highway 101 or was that along El Camino Real?

Dave: Some of them were on the 101 and some of them were on El Camino Real. They were back and forth. The bells, from what I understand, where the padres traveled and they traveled many different places, so it wasn't just the 101 that they traveled on. I could be wrong on this, but this is what I've read. But yes, there were some and there was one that was down in Cardiff by the hotel.

Kenneth: What about you, Bertha, how long have you lived in the area?

Bertha: I lived in Oceanside off and on from 1952. But I've only lived down here since 1974, so I'm a newcomer.

Dave: Were you born in California?

Bertha: No, I was born in Montana. What I remember about the 101 was all the accidents, at night especially in the fog, with all the eucalyptus trees in the middle of the road. It seemed like there was someone killed there weekly, at least.

Kenneth: Driving down to San Diego from the north, I remember that a group of eucalyptus

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trees in Encinitas and driving on and again they'd turn up beyond the Torrey Pines reserve or right as you get there, in the middle of the road.

Dave: That was the old 101 beyond Torrey Pines and Camp Elliott. Those trees as you're going through and the lights on the other side could mesmerize you. You have to pay attention to what you're doing.

Kenneth: Besides the race traffic, was it difficult to cross the highway?

Dave: Not really, no.

Kenneth: Was the highway patrol always present?

Dave: Well, you'd see them once in awhile. We had our local sheriff around here who was always present.

Kenneth: Were you ever stopped by the authorities on the road for going too fast?

Dave: No. Not on the 101, let's put it that way! I did work for a Texaco station here in Encinitas right after I got out of high school for a while and I had to go and pick up a few wrecks with a tow truck, people ran into trees or cars crossed over. Quite a few wrecks.

Kenneth: Do you recall any businesses that really stuck in your mind along the highway?

Dave: Well, the main one is the Noah's Ark on the north end of Leucadia there.

Kenneth: Tell me about that.

Bertha: It was built in the late 30's, I think.

Dave: We have a picture of it down at the museum and all the history on it. It was built like Noah's Ark and it had animals.

Bertha: It was there until the early '60s.

Dave: You could see coming down from Oceanside it was on the right hand side up against the bluff there before you came into Leucadia.

Kenneth: Where the restaurant is now?

Dave: Way up on top. Just below that parking lot for the state beach.

Kenneth: Do you recall the period when Interstate 5 was being built?

Dave: Oh yes.

Kenneth: What did that do to things?

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Dave: Well, I was working at Solana Lumber then and of course my boss Larrick, Sr., he was on the committee to not have it go through the 101, to go inland. He and --?--- in Encinitas here, they all fought to have it inland. My mother had bought this house in 1960 so she was here when they were building it and in 1961 we moved up here. She was one of the first, for some reason, she went down on the highway when they were building and drove down to Solana Beach on it before it was even open. She was an upstanding citizen! But she did it.

Kenneth: Just to see what it was like?

Dave: Yes. We could sit right up here and outside here we can see the freeway, the I-5, and that way we can look at the traffic and see if we want to go to San Diego or not. It closed a lot of businesses downtown because all the traffic went on I-5 and so it was hurting the businesses along the 101.

Kenneth: It would have been more devastating if they had built the highway along 101.

Dave: Oh yes.

Kenneth: We're fortunate to have remnants of those little towns all the way down the coast because today they're a real resource. There's a renaissance and an appreciation of small towns.

Dave: That's why I've always liked Encinitas and this area. The Encinitas sign over the 101, that was here back when I was in high school and we were sitting out there, by then I was riding a motorcycle and we used to sit at night out by the drug store in the evening and watch the traffic go by. That sign was up there.

Kenneth: Wasn't that blown down by a storm a couple of times?

Dave: I think it was. And of course, recently, it's been put back up. I think Peter Norby down here in Encinitas has done a good job with saving the old buildings.

Kenneth: He's on our History Without Walls committee.

Dave: We've worked close with him. I think they've done a good job.

Kenneth: Was the Self Realization Fellowship on the highway when you first moved here in 1931?

Dave: No, they came in --

Bertha: --It was the late 1930s.

Dave: It was the late 1930's. The tower went off the cliff.

Bertha: The first one went off the cliff.

Dave: It was one of the first things that went down off the cliff and now others are going. They

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had a swimming pool out there.

Kenneth: When the interstate was installed there must have some favorable things for the local communities because the big trucks were gone.

Dave: It got the big trucks and the heavy traffic out of here. Now it seems like racing season all year round.

Kenneth: That's correct.

Dave: Encinitas Boulevard used to be San Marcos Road and out in San Marcos it was Encinitas Road, because it was coming to Encinitas. It started growing more.

Bertha: Then it was a dirt road.

Dave: Yes, it was a dirt road.

Kenneth: Must have been fun in the winter when we have our rains. What was the name of Highway 101?

Dave: It was called Coast Highway.

Kenneth: Would that have been true in Leucadia, Encinitas and Cardiff?

Dave: Pretty much.

Kenneth: Is it Oceanside that's gone back to Highway 101?

Dave: Yes, it's Highway 101.

Kenneth: Well, I want to thank you for your recollections.

Bertha: There was one thing that he told me that I thought was interesting, which he didn't tell you. He had a girlfriend in Solana Beach and he used to go visit her quite often.

Dave: I'd take the school bus and go to Solana Beach and then I'd stay there until her parents told me to go home. Then I would walk all the way from Solana Beach up to Leucadia where I lived. I just jogged and of course by the time I got home it was late and I'd get a few hours sleep and my mother would say, "Time to get up and go school." And the next day I'd do the same thing. I got a lot of good exercise! I did a lot of jogging!

Kenneth: It's a good thing the young people have the energy.

Dave: I couldn't do it now!

Kenneth: Well, you better not!

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Dave: You've probably heard about all the other places along the 101, in Cardiff down there, like George's Café, the Beacon, which was a hotel-restaurant type thing. There was Charlie's that sold hamburgers. I worked there for a while.

Kenneth: Where was Charlie's?

Dave: Right north of the Poseidon down there, down in Cardiff.

Kenneth: It had an exotic name, like a French name?

Dave: Back then it was just Charlie's Hamburgers. The man who ran it, his name was Charlie. I worked there with him and then he was gone and I would do the cooking. It was a car hop. We had a gal who would go out and serve.

Kenneth: In the 60's one our favorite place to go Fish House West, I think it was called, across the street.

Dave: George's restaurant there--

Kenneth: --That's still there isn't it?

Dave: No, it's the Chart House now.

Kenneth: Oh, I see. I thought there was a place named George's that was in downtown Encinitas on the east side.

Dave: When that opened up everybody got that mixed up with the George's in Solana Beach. When I was in the Jaycee's back in the 1950's, we'd hold our meetings there at George's. They had good shrimp, chicken, lobster, and all this. In fact, I made the signs on top there. They'd always serve canned peas, I don't know why, it was easy to do and they did it. But how I got to making signs, in the 1940's ... I graduated in 1935.

Kenneth: --- From San Dieguito?

Dave: Yes. I went to work for the Forest Service station and I was stationed in --?--- just below Julian my first year and while I was up there that was part of my job, making signs for the Forest Service and they were routed signs. I was doing that. He wanted the signs up on the top and he wanted them made 4 foot tall and 36 x 36 blocks and cut them in angles and pieced together and made letters. San Clemente --?---. My ex-father-in-law was a friend of his, too. ---?--- Anyway, he asked me if we could make the signs. We'd run down to Del Mar Fair --?--- used the saw --?--- so he went back and talked to San Clemente and told him and he said, "Go ahead and get it and I'll pay for it." So he did. I still have it out in the shop down there. We made the signs that said, "Steak, Lobster, Chicken."

Kenneth: There's a tool like that called shop smith.

Dave: Yes, that's it. This is the old one, one of the first ones out.

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Kenneth: Was Captain Kino's always there? It's on 101?

Dave: That used to be the Shamrock and before that it was the Vienna. It's had a lot of names. But back when it was the Shamrock, and this is the 1930's, it was one of our hangouts and there was a counter in there then, just like a restaurant bar. In one of my careers I had a chainsaw that I bought. It was a two-man chain saw, with a four foot blade on it, handles bars. It was a heavy thing and I used that and I had a friend of mine and we'd go around here to Del Mar and Rancho Santa Fe and the eucalyptus trees that were dead we'd go in ask to cut them up and some places they'd pay us to cut them out. So we got paid for cutting them out and then we'd cut them up and sell firewood. I used to go out to Alpine because my parents had a ranch out there, south of Alpine and had a few acres out there with oak trees on it, so I'd go out there and cut them up for firewood. But this time we went out there and cut up two cords of wood, and we had a 1927 Dodge truck and in real low gear we'd grind up the hill. By the time we were coming into Leucadia and it was late in the evening and we were tired and hungry and we pulled into the Shamrock there and got ready to go in to get something to eat and saw a couple of guys down on the ground, beating the heck out of each other. He and I looked at each other. Should we pick them up or stop the fight or leave them alone, and about that time John Wayne pulled in. He was out at the racetrack and he pulled in and he got out and walked, you know how John Wayne walks, and he said, "What's going on here, boys?" He just reaches down and picks them both up by the scruff of the neck and feet clear off the ground and says, "Okay, that's enough of this fighting." We all walked in and he bought us a round of drinks. That's my story of the day! That's when I met John Wayne.

Bertha: Every Wednesday he and some other local guys would meet at Captain Kino's for lunch.

Kenneth: Do you remember a former Cardiff resident named Gerald Cullison? He was a part of the very beginnings of Quail Botanical Gardens.

Dave: I didn't know him personally. Is he about our age?

Kenneth: I don't recall. He graduated from San Dieguito High School and his wife did, too. He now lives in Lake San Marcos.

Dave: We've all had our personal experiences on the 101. I've had a few wrecks on the 101. I was coming down the dip there from Encinitas and I was getting ready to make a left hand turn and I gave a hand signal, that was before signal lights, and as I pulled over this guy clipped the back end of me and pushed me clear round and my car rolled over and I was upside down against the sign post on the west side there.

Kenneth: What intersection was that?

Dave: I can't think of the street. It's where the dip is, as you're coming into Encinitas and you go down the dip and up the hill.

Kenneth: Leucadia Boulevard. No, I'm thinking of the freeway.

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Dave: No, Encinitas Boulevard comes down into now, it didn't use to. Down by Moonlight beach, that dip there and I was going north just coming up the hill and this guy hit me from behind and I rolled my car right there. He said it was my fault and we had to go to court. My barber, a barber in Encinitas there, and he came up and I didn't know, but he took pictures of all the skid marks and everything and he said, "You know, I've got pictures of the skid marks there. In fact, I'll just give those to the judge." We had a local judge in town. I think he gave them to the judge.

Kenneth: What did the fellow claim? That you backed into him?

Dave: No, that I turned over in front of him. He was coming too fast and I might have, I did turn in front of him but if he wasn't going so fast he wouldn't have hit me, and of course, I gave a hand signal, but in the evening you can't see hand signals. One time a friend of mine we were in this '41 Ford heading north on the 101 and he wanted to see how fast his car would go and he opened that thing up and I know he got up to 100 miles an hour, and that was fast in those days.

Kenneth: Do you recall any parades?

Dave: Well, this last one was special because we were in it! In fact, I have the stage coach down at the museum now that was in it.

Kenneth: What was the source of the stage coach?

Dave: That was made down in Tucson, Arizona. Harold Wiegand ---?---- the stage coach sitting down here in front of the bank –

Kenneth: -- On El Camino Real?

Dave: Yes. The covered wagon is still there. The fire department called me and wanted to know if I'd be interested in the stage coach for the museum. So I took my little trailer and I went down there and my brother-in-law and a couple of other guys helped me and we loaded that on and I brought it up here.

Kenneth: When was that?

Bertha: That was about 1993.

Dave: I can give you the whole story but you don't have enough tape to hear it all. I fixed it up somewhat and we did put it in the parade on the truck that we got from the flower growers. That's another story, how we got the truck, but we put it on this truck and put it in the parade.

Kenneth: This would have been some time ago?

Bertha: Maybe 1996.

Dave: The 1996 parade.

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Kenneth: So between 1993 and 1996 you worked on it and restored it?

Dave: No, we just put it on as is. The wheels were all rotted away where they had it sitting on the ground, they'd plant flowers around it and watered them so the wheels were pretty well shot. The top part was sort of a veneer. We got it on this trailer and we got flowers from the flower growers in Carlsbad and we stapled flowers on it. We have pictures of it. That year we put it in the parade and we won Best of Parade, Best of Float. We won all the prizes that year so we were pretty proud of that. Then we took it down to the Del Mar Fairgrounds, San Dieguito Heritage Museum in Encinitas, Rancho Santa Fe, that area and this is what a lot of people don't know but we are not Encinitas, we are San Dieguito. We worked with Del Mar and I took the stage coach and set it up down there. Then I brought it home and put it down in front of our museum. It's just sitting down there and of course it's deteriorating more with exposure and the train and bus going by there. So a fellow came by one day and asked me what I wanted to do with that stage coach. Well, I'd like to restore it. He said, "Well, I want to help you." He said, "That's what I did in Montana." He was from Montana, he had a ranch up there and he raised his kids, and he said, "Well, we've done the ranch thing, what do you want to do?" She said, "I want to live by the beach." So that day he had taken her to Moonlight Beach and he saw that stage coach.

Kenneth: What date was that roughly?

Bertha: It was maybe six years ago.

Kenneth: So about 1998?

Bertha: About that.

Kenneth: I asked Chuck, "What do you think it would cost to restore it?" He looked it over good and I said, "Fine, let's do it." He drew up a plan. I put in \$5,000. So the first thing they did, he knew some wheel man in Utah and he contacted them and they came out and looked at it and said, "Yes, we can do the undercarriage for \$2500." So they came down and picked it up and hauled it there and in the meantime I had to start to get the rest of it. By that time a year had gone by. Everything takes a lot of time. So I put in for another grant to finish the stage coach. To get the undercarriage done and the only thing they could save on the undercarriage were the three hubs and the front axle. It was all oak wood. All the rest of it had to be replaced.

Kenneth: Did carriages of that vintage have springs?

Dave: No, they were slung. They got that and they said, "We need another \$1000 to finish this." So I gave them the other \$1000 and they brought it back and set it down there and it was \$1500. I used the rest of the money to finish off the top and while I was doing that a fellow came by one evening and he said, "When you get that ready to paint, I'll do the lettering." I said, "Fine." So when I was ready I called him and said, "We're ready to go." So I took it out to his paint shop in Leucadia and he started to work on it. He gave me a call and he said, "Dave, you better come out and take a look at this thing, I don't know if you're going to like this or not." So I went up and looked at it and what he had done, he was doing a crackle finish on it. He had painted five coats of green, five coats of black and rubbed it out. Then he did the lettering and he said, "Do

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you want that in gold? Just for the lettering, just for the material, it's going to cost \$60.00." "So, okay, let's just do the lettering in gold." So that's what he did. The whole thing came out beautiful. He said, "My dad taught me how to do that." "You had a good teacher." He's still out there.

Kenneth: This coach must have had service some time.

Dave: Actually not. It was built as a static display. The undercarriage is original, it's a wagon undercarriage because the front wheels are big. The front wheels are a little bit smaller. A gal out in Valley Center raises mules and he got to talking to her and I guess they hit it off pretty good and she said, "Anytime you want to borrow my mules and my harnesses to pull your stagecoach with, your welcome to have it." Then another gal out in Penasquitos, a rancho out there, she drives mules also and we met a friend of her that has a team of horses, so I've got a lot of sources.

Kenneth: Do you know where the undercarriage had been used?

Dave: It was down below Tucson, Arizona. That's where it was made by an old-timer. Bertha and I went down there to talk to him because I wanted to get more history on it. And we went into the fairgrounds down there and I talked to a gal down there and she told me where he lived and she said, "He's getting pretty old." I couldn't find his place anyway so we just gave up on it so I never did meet the guy. I think he built the carriage. It's a little bit smaller than a Wells Fargo coach. But then Harold Wiegand got him to build that for the plaza. Harold went down and picked it up and brought it up and set down there.

Kenneth: Well that's really interesting.

Dave: Everything's got a story.

Bertha: He just got finished in time to take it to our museum barbecue which was the 5th of May. During April he worked hours and hours and hours.

Dave: It took about five years to get it where it is now. We got a little history on this house. You're sitting in the room that was the original house built in 1895. This was by Walter McKennon. Hector McKennon is the one that settled Cardiff. That's why there's McKennon street down there. His son Walter built this house. The front door, as far as we can tell was right there in the middle. I think they had the fireplace and a bed in here and they had a stove in here and they had the outhouse out back. The rest has been added on to. In the kitchen, we looked at the inside wall of the kitchen, that was an outside wall, things like that. You can see, we collect antiques. We've been collecting for 31 years now, that's how long we've been together. We've moved a quite a bit of our stuff down to the museum for the exhibit. We met on a blind date. At that time, my wife and I split up and I had to give up the house to settle with my ex-wife and I got enough to buy a sailboat and I had a twenty five foot Coronado up in Oceanside harbor. Of course, I always liked boats and I was torn between the ocean and horses and ranching because my grandparents had the ranch in Capital Valley in Alpine and I spent every holiday and whenever I could get out there in the summers and the rest of the time I was at the beach. That was before surfboards. ... That was the boat sitting there in front of the Jolly Roger at Oceanside

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Harbor. The slip fees got too high and I sold that and bought a 22 foot trailer boat. Then I have 22 footer sitting out here. This driveway came down as a dirt road. None of these houses were here. We took quite a few trips. We took one trip, we went up to Montana. We went up the coast to San Francisco and then out to coast on Highway 1 all the way up until we got to Portland. I don't know if you've ever been on that Highway 1, that stretch up there.