

Introduction

In Fall 2023, students in the class MUSM 3091: Museums, Folklife, and Community Culture, taught by Nic Hartmann, interviewed members of the Bondurant community. The learning objects for the students, all of whom were undergraduates and most of whom were working toward a certificate in Museum Studies, was to lead an oral history interview and capture a time-coded summary of the conversation.

The students worked in pairs and trios to interview members of the Bondurant community. Their focus was on the history of two mainstays of Bondurant civic life: Summerfest, which has been hosted by the Bondurant Men's Club for 50 years, and the business formerly known as Farmers Cooperative.

The intention was that the conversations might be included in an exhibition. Whether the Bondurant Historical Society or another group decides to create an exhibition about Summerfest or the Farmers Cooperative, some of the collected stories should prove helpful.

What follows are the students' interview summaries.

Jim Clayton, Bryan Clayton, Isaac Pezley, Larry Haines - Interviewees
Aaron Kreuder and Erika Bethke - Interviewees
Location: Zoom
Date: 2023-11-17

Summary:

- Jim Clayton: Introduced at 1:28. Moved to Bondurant with his family in 1972. Started as a hired hand on a farm, then after a few years started to work at the Farmer's Co-op, where he remained for over 30 years. He served on the fire and rescue team, worked in the feed mill for about 15 years, and then worked in the office for the rest of the time. He did some accounting while he was in the office. He is still a member of the Co-op and still has some farm land.
- Bryan Clayton: Introduced at 1:46. Jim Clayton's eldest son. His mother was the first public librarian in Bondurant. He has a brother involved with multiple boards and functions within the city.
- Isaac Pezley: Introduced at 2:43. He is Bondurant's city planner. He was present to make sure everything went smoothly technology-wise, but he also re-stated questions for Larry, who is slightly hard of hearing, and spoke a little about century farms and the state of the community today.
- Larry Haines: Introduced at 8:02. Started working at the grain elevator in 1959. Retired in 2001 but not because he wanted to. He was the grain department manager for a little while. He eventually moved to the office and retired from there. He was born in Des Moines. His whole family is from Bondurant. He worked nearly every job there ever was at the elevator. He helped build the feed mill. He hired Jim said he was one of the best employees he ever had.

Farming Co-op Summary:

- organized around 1929.
- was at one point the biggest tax-payer/payroll in town.
- According to Jim, it was a good place to work.
- White silos are originals, middle was built next, furthest east was built last. First silos were built in 1952. Middle was built in the 1970s.
- owned by the farmers.
- scope reached out quite a ways past Bondurant; it was the largest co-op in the area, especially during the 1980's (Jim said, "We were the big dog on the block.")
- Had a petroleum department.
- Livestock were raised in the area but that is now dwindling.
- The co-op helped create a close-knit community of farmers.

- **Additional highlights from the interview:**

- Six corporate landlords control 6,000-8,000 acres each, which is HUGE compared to the family farms that used to be in the area, which were around 300 acres each.
- Larry had just returned from a trip out of town; he took the backroads, and he stopped by three different co-ops being torn down! In other words, this isn't just a Bondurant event.
- They used an AS400 IBM. Jim and Larry could use it very well. But, one of the managers changed to PCs, which were a lot more difficult to use. Jim would file everything he learned about the PCs into a 3-inch D-ring binder so that he could remember how to do it.
- Century farms were discussed starting around 36:55 and picked up again at around 48:48. There are some century farms in the Bondurant area, which means that despite the silos having closed, there is still a deep agricultural root in the community.
- Jim talked about how kids have different opportunities today than they had 10-20 years ago, and farm parents urge them to attend college.
- Brian talked about how when he and his dad moved to town in 1972 the town had 750 people in it. There weren't a lot of buildings or a lot of streets, and there were more wagons and tractors. He said at 46:46: "The town was so much more easy... I remember being able to run around the elevator with my BB gun shooting the sparrows up on the wires. You can't do that today."

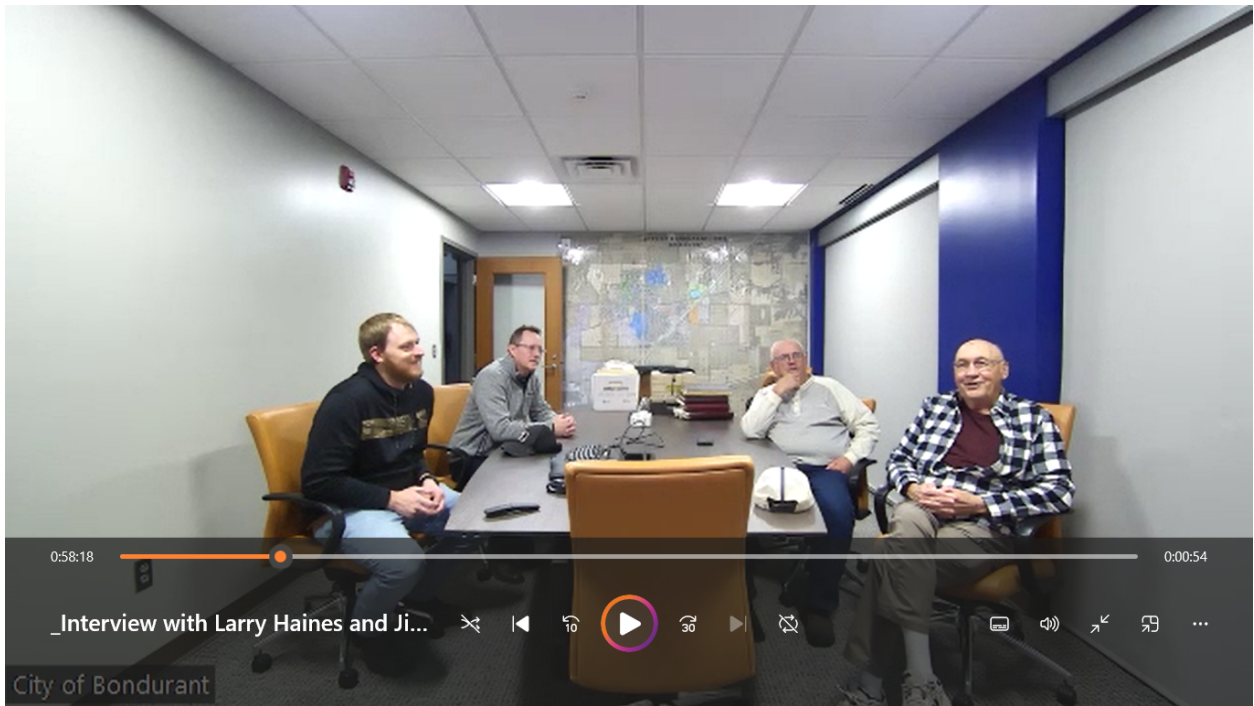
- Tractors and trucks coming in to use the elevator (3 years ago when it was open) had to compete with "regular pickup trucks and soccer moms" for use of the roads. It was not like that in the past.

Interesting Quotes:

- 10:45 Larry: "There are a lot of things underground that people don't know about."
- 11:37 Larry, referring to farm families: "Tetween the two of us (referring to Jim)... probably the only ones left around here really, not very many of us left."
- 13:58 Larry: "The grain elevator shouldn't have been closed... in my opinion, anyway."
- 15:14 Larry: " [The Co-op is] probably not as strong as it used to be way back when it started."
- 18:41 Larry: "It's amazing what some of the land around here is bought and sold for."
- 19:23 Jim: "It used to be that farming was a way of life. Now farming is a business. ... the focus has shifted, you've got to be business oriented to make it work anymore."
- 21:11 Larry "I still miss it (the co-op). I'll tell ya what I miss more'n anything else is the people. And the kids."

- 25:40 Jim: "The PCs were foreign to me. The old AS400 IBM... it was simple and it worked...learning the new computer system was a bit of a challenge for an old guy, y'know?" He and Larry then chuckled.
- 29:35 Larry "You've gotta have some place for the farmers to go." (With regards to Polk county starting to fill up with cities.)
- 30:17 Larry: (with regards to farms: "Very few little guys left."
- 30:20 Larry "I would say Jim and I had probably the good years and we got some bad years. Sometimes they didn't think we were angels. We had to bite our tongue and I imagine they bit their tongue."
- 31:49 Larry, talking about when his wife got robbed at the bank: "She said 'When you've got a gun lookin' at you, you do what they say.' Apparently, as the robbers entered the first door of the vault, a lady slammed it and locked it."
- 44:13 Larry: "They're the future of agriculture, the kids."
- 47:71 Brian: "The town grew around the elevator, and there are still a fair amount of people who understand Bondurant is an agricultural town, but there are an awful lot of people who that doesn't mean anything to. But yet there are still some of us who grew up in this town who understand where our roots are."
- 51:20 Brian "The elevator kind of cultivated a special group of people; they've all grown deep roots, you know, with family, with community, with how they live their life, and like dad said, it started out as a way of life. You could make a living on 180 acres. Now, you can't. So it's turned into a business... farming is not simple anymore."

- 53:38 Isaac, regarding century farms: "Even from the planning side, we see this a little bit, too, when we get farmers that are thinking about or actively selling their ground to developers because they've got the family that aren't around to take care of it next... it's hard to see that transition. Ultimately it's job security from our end, but it's still hard to see, cuz Brian's right, this was a community that was built on agricultural... so to see that move away, that's hard on our end as well."



Larry Haines, Jim Clayton, Brian Clayton - Interviewees
Marisa Rude - Interviewer

Summary

This semester in MUSM 3091: Museums, Folklife, and Community Culture, we were asked to complete ethnographic interviews with Bondurant community members in an effort to give voice to and preserve the stories of Bondurant residents. I partnered with Isaac Wiedenman in interviewing members of the Bondurant Farmer's Co-operative, Larry Haines and Jim and Brian Clayton. The interview took place via Zoom on Tuesday November 27, 2023, at 6:30 pm and was completed jointly with fellow classmates Erika Bethke and Kate Dennis.

One of the most poignant takeaways for me from this interview was the clear tie between big agriculture as it has developed under capitalism and the dissolution and disenfranchisement of rural communities like Bondurant. Larry and Jim brought up missing the intergenerational community of family-farming culture, farming becoming a business above all else, and the cutting of costs on big farms resulting in a decrease in quality and sustainability.

- IMPORTANT QUOTES
- Farming was a way of life, now it's a business." (On the way farming in the Bondurant community has changed).
- "It's a family thing, a love for the ground that you want your family to inhabit." (On the significance of having a Century or Heritage Farm).

CAPITALISM !! KILLING

Interviewed - Jim Clayton, son of Brian Clayton + Leary Hines, Roundstone Farm Camp
 Tuesday 11/28/2023 6:00 pm ; Format: Zoom
 Q order: (1) Brian, (2) Maria (mom), (3) Erika, (4) Kate
 permission to record given verbally

Jim moved to Roundstone 1972 w/ family (wife + kids)
 Brian Jim's oldest son
 head hand → farm camp
 most first public show was

1977 organizational camp
 some point biggest source income from
 8 managers in last 30 years, most recent 2 there seem
 got to know a lot of people good place come together
 progression of '80s
 - of which when Dad believed → early '80s 1982 (us)
 (Erika → Erika's life was
 old blueprints
 location given in @schellhouse in

Leary aspects
 Leary started 3/16/1959
 started? life but didn't want to
 fill in background for system development - 1963
 started taking years @ education
 began feed business
 "there's a lot of change in background
 over people don't know much"

CAPITALISM !! KILLING

FARMING

eggs decrease because have been closed, this is a
 + that you did many more good → largest big farmer
 + make them financial
 not many but everything keeps left
 good machinery w/ surrounding no tops + primary
 Roundstone largest camp dep in 1980s

Farming was a way of life, now it's a business
 other camps being torn down → new developments being
 pick up all the things that
 Mike's people + kids more than anything
 gave a lot of success to kids
 2 coffee shops @ a time each morning, farmers stop by,
 before w/ days

Leary would be gone in later years
 Learning technology + how to use a computer!
 Leary: worked 100 hours; feed mill, one, beans
 learned about green from supervisor
 2000 pounds, farmed
 good working relationship w/ Jim

Jim
 in charge of kitchen + accounts
 always busy - section 8-15 + how things have
 done things since which you have to be your people have a lot
 of good things too

Leary got in new camp, need to sell whole farming
 Jim still remembers; co-ops changed their farming - help → business
 people you work w/ you don't forget

How Community was changed
 - supported kids in community - 1911
 "FARMING" "HISTORY"
 "AGRICULTURE" all moved

- kids now have more direct opportunities to go do
 "things" + do things around
 - college encouraged for farm kids big pressure for business, less
 social life
 - learning + city kids supported more today

Century farm 100 years in same farm
 heritage farm 154

1973 a handwriting, a line for organizational that
 "to want your farm to flourish"
 farming not simple anymore → it's part of you

Jim Clayton and Larry Haines - Interviewees

Isaac Wiedenman - Interviewer

Location: Zoom

Date: November 2024

SUMMARY

For our interview we spoke with Jim Clayton and Larry Haines, two of the oldest members of the Bondurant Farmers Co-Op. They were assisted by Isaac Pezley. Our interview was somewhat light on questions as Jim and especially Larry were eager to share their experiences. Jim and Larry had been part of the Farmers' Co-op for many years in many different roles, beginning with working in the grain silos all the way up to head office. Larry spoke about his experience with payroll, as well as his prior difficulties adopting personal computers over a more familiar IBM. Both Jim and Larry spoke fondly about the Farmers' Co-op and the City of Bondurant. Jim's son, who sat in on the interview, also had interesting contributions regarding his experience growing up in Bondurant, its constant growth and construction, and a lost sense of being a small town as the community grows.

One of the largest takeaways from the interview was how Larry and Jim's experiences of farming have changed as the community of Bondurant has changed. Many times they reiterated their feelings that farming is not about community anymore but rather profit. They pointed to the recent closure of the grain silos as proof of this, as well as their difficulties identifying small farms in their community. This loss of community or change in community could be something to develop into exhibit on the history of Bondurant.

Aaron Kreuder - Interviewee

Abby Fowler and Ava Nollen - Interviewers

Location: Zoom Date: 2023-11-17

Description: Aaron Kreuder discussed his experience with Bondurant's Summerfest, from the perspectives of both a Bondurant citizen and as the chief of the fire department.

Language: English

Formats: 1 audio file, digital, WAV (31 mins); 1 video file, digital, sound, color, mpeg4 (33 min.)

Rights: No restrictions, permissions completed.

TIME CODED LOG:

00:45: Aaron is a transplant from Savanna, Illinois. He met his wife in high school and made the decision to move to follow her after college. They bought a house together in Bondurant due to its school district and small-town atmosphere, and he became a truck driver.

00:57: In 2001, his wife made him sign up for the volunteer fire department because she was sick of having him in the house. He spent a lot of time in a fire department growing up, as his adoptive dad was his town's fire chief.

02:54: He moved into a pay per call fire position in 2006, and then was brought on as the full-time fire chief in 2015. Despite it being a big pay cut from his truck driving job, he found it worth the risk because it's his passion.

04:31: Aaron's involvement with Summerfest is more as a citizen than as the fire chief. He has been going to the Summerfest since moving to Bondurant in 1988. At the time it was small (~1200 people) but well attended by the town, but it has grown every year since.

05:38: In the past 5-10 years, he has been involved in designing a fire emergency response plan for the festival. The main problem is that the festival blocks space that is needed for the

fire trucks to come out of the station, so they now must move the trucks to the front in preparation.

06:57: Aaron feels that the festival has grown to the point that more people from out of town come in for the Summerfest, but it still feels like a hometown celebration.

08:18: The carnival is the highlight of Summerfest for his kids. For Aaron, the parade that kicks off the Summerfest is his favorite part. He also enjoys seeing people have fun, especially groups of younger kids, as it demonstrates the safe environment. But, at the end of the night, it's a headache for him.

10:11: He enjoys the food at Summerfest and strives to support local businesses.

11:11: He believes that Summerfest reflects Bondurant's small town feel where kids can still be kids. However, he is concerned that the small-town feel may not stick around as the town continues to grow. At the same time, he wouldn't have a full-time job if not for Bondurant's growing population. Overall, Summerfest does a good job promoting the tight-knit community feeling.

13:09: He wishes they held it in a different place, as the festival blocks the streets that small businesses are on for a few days.

14:35: Drawing connections to Abby's hometown North Liberty, which is experiencing growth like Bondurant, Aaron says that the growth started out with houses being built and was propelled by incoming big businesses like Amazon. Summerfest helps build the community feeling amid this rapid growth, and being a long-standing tradition, it isn't something that is going to disappear soon.

18:40: Given that the fire station averages 3-4 calls a day, they have had emergencies during Summerfest. The crowds and closed roads sometimes make it more challenging to get to the emergency.

20:35: When they were young, Aaron's kids always looked forward to Summerfest because it gave them the chance to reconnect with their school friends. As they got older, it developed

more into an anticipation, which is the shared sentiment with adults around Bondurant. From what he knows, no one makes a big deal about it coming into town.

23:43: While he has fond memories of enjoying festivals in his hometown, the carnival part of Bondurant's Summerfest was new to him. Notably, since Bondurant is very close to Adventureland in Altoona, carnival rides are very accessible to residents of Bondurant. However, Summerfest has a different feeling, and there are other activities too, like a sidewalk chalk coloring contest. Summerfest also has a more temporary feeling and is more about bringing people together.

27:04: His favorite memory from Summerfest is when an organization did a fundraiser activity where they pretended to be sheriffs and locked some people, including Aaron, up in "jail." He recalls that some people paid extra to keep him in jail.

29:01: Although it is expensive, Aaron enjoys the structured fun of Summerfest. From a fire chief's perspective, there's a lot of planning required.

31:01: Closing remarks

Tara Cox - Interviewee

Annabel Hendrickson and Bethy Hernandez - Interviewers

Place: Zoom

Date: 2023-11-3

Summary:

On the morning of November 3, Annabel Hendrickson and Bethany Hernandez met with Tara Cox over Zoom to discuss her experiences as a city council member and as a citizen of the City of Bondurant. We both prepared up to 10 questions before the interview and alternated asking these questions to Tara. We also asked a series of questions relating to the city of Bondurant and the Summerfest. She asked that we not record the visual interview but rather only the audio interview.

Tara has lived in Bondurant for 7 years. She has lived in Iowa for her whole life and is originally from nearby Urbandale. She moved to Bondurant because the small-town feel and quality schools were appealing to her. After having lived there for two years, she became a member of the city council and a local relator. When asked what she thought of the growing expansion of Bondurant, she felt that it could only be seen as a benefit to the town. For instance, she stated that the building of an Amazon warehouse near Bondurant has provided people with more jobs, more resources, more businesses, and the ability to stay connected.

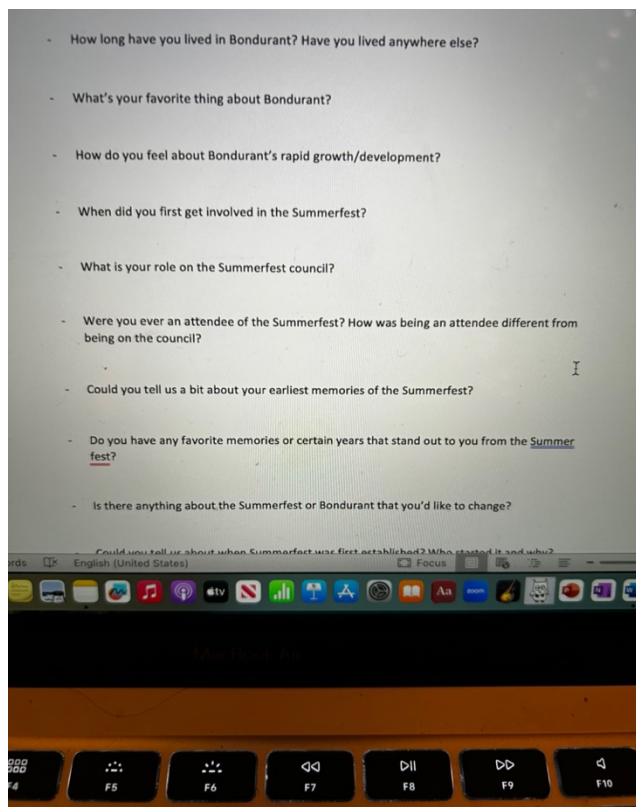
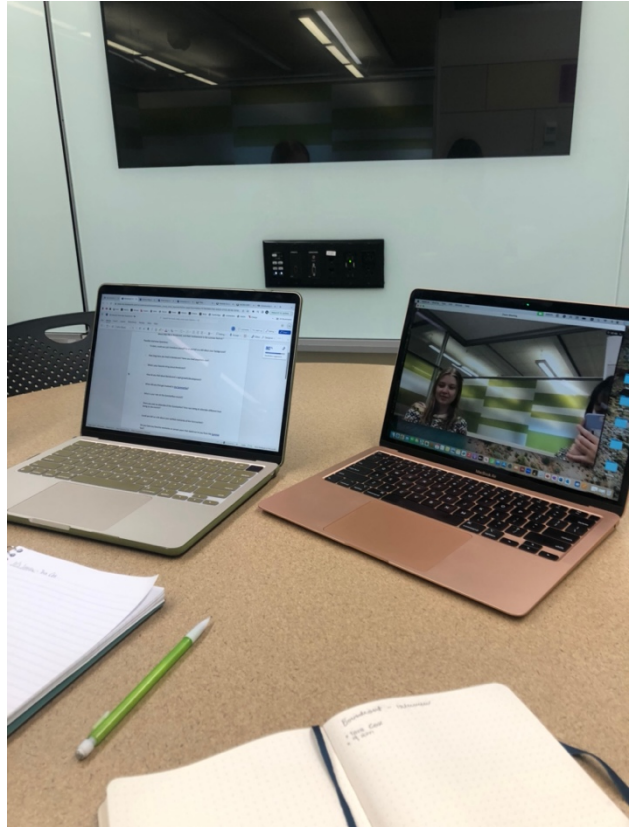
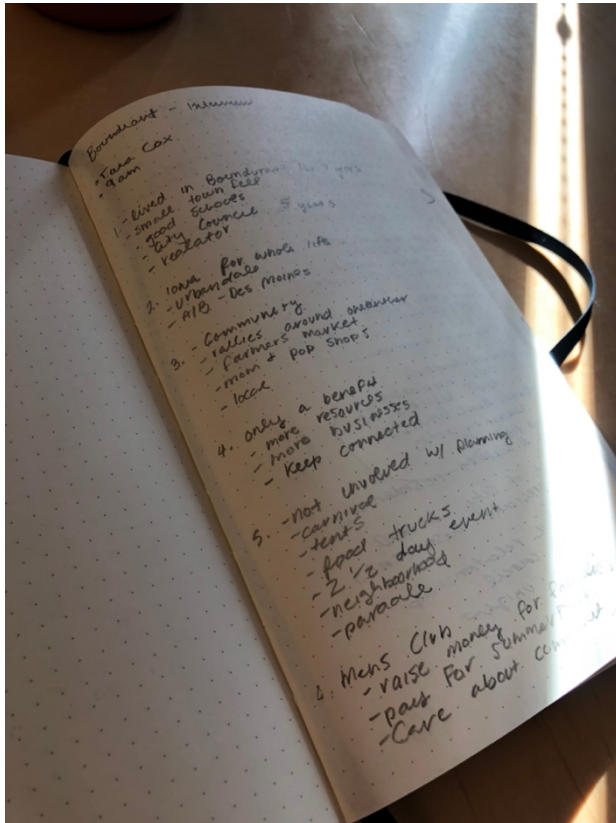
When asked if she was involved with the planning of Summerfest, she explained that she was not involved in the process and had only attended Summerfest herself. She said, "It's just lovely to be able to walk through it and know people and really just have that feel of unity. So no, I don't do the planning of it, but we participate as a city council every year we're in the Summerfest Parade" (6:42). When asked about who plans the Summerfest, she discussed how the Men's Club raises money to organize Summerfest and support other community events and

needs. She described the men's club as "just men that care about their community. And care about one another. And so they want to keep promoting that, you know, small-town community" (8:43). Throughout the rest of the interview Tara described her fond memories of the summer festival and the local businesses in Bondurant.

When asked if there were any changes she would like to see in the city of Bondurant, she replied that she thinks that there is always room for improvement in any city or town, but she encourages community members to get involved and advocate before complaining. She hopes that people will be the change that they wish to see in the community. She reflects that this is why she became involved with the city council, as now she can contribute positively to building the Bondurant that she wishes to see in the future. She stated that being on the city council "has really given me a true appreciation of what goes into running our city and to what goes into planning those events. So, I think I appreciate them more because I know how hard people work to make it happen. And I guess before I got on the city council, it was really easy to sit back and have a passive relationship with your community and just go to work every day and you know, take care of your family and do sports with your kids and all of those things and it's easy to overlook the community events" (18:09).

Tara concluded the interview by emphasizing the importance of community events and shopping locally: "It's a great way for people to find out about businesses in their town. I think people who have never come to events such as farmers market or Summerfest, are then like, 'Oh, I didn't even know that we had somebody in town that made sourdough bread and sells it or someone in town that makes homemade soaps.' And it's just been a great opportunity for them to realize that maybe what they're going out of town for we have right here in town and that's helped, having those communities, community events and reminding people of what we offer here." (28:44).

Interview Photos:



Mel McCleary - Interviewee

Adair Jost and Anh Nguyen - Interviewers

Date: December 2023

Location: Zoom

Summary

We began the interview with the technical zoom difficulties, but after we figured out how to get Mel's camera started it was an amazing interview. We hopped around a lot and talked about many things because he has lived an interesting life. Mel McCleary talked about his career in law enforcement and then his childhood in Bondurant. He recalled how as a younger worker he would "ride to the restaurant in downtown Bondurant in the back of a pickup truck," with other workers on the farm for lunch. He talked about his childhood and how the people in his community influenced his career choices even though his family had been farmers since the late 1800s. He said of his early family, "Back then, you didn't really have a choice whether to be a farmer or not." Although we came to the interview with questions, once Mel started talking we let his stories lead our interview.

After his stories of Bondurant, Mel described his life as an adult away from Bondurant. He went to Korea, serving in the DMT zone, and has gotten "probably 250-300 confessions" from his time in law enforcement. Even though these stories did not happen in Bondurant, they were effected by his upbringing there.

He talked about his early ancestors' rural farm-town work ethic and how it was passed down to him. Recalling the community, Mel said, "You got to know everybody better...Everybody was very friendly." We think that, for a future Bondurant exhibit, these things would be great to include. He described how people took care of their responsibilities before you had fun. It seems from his stories that many of the people of Bondurant during his time had that same ethic and view on working. The whole town was full of people who knew when to have fun and when to be serious.

The coolest thing that we discovered out about Mel is that his childhood home in Ankeny is now their museum. His childhood is now forever encapsulated, which is so awesome because usually the people from those homes are long gone. Museums are not just for old dead things. If they have a big enough impact on a community, they deserve to be memorialized.



This is Mel's childhood home, now the Ankeny Historical Society Museum where the McCleary family lived for 40 years before they sold it



A bedroom in the house; was it Mel's, we wonder?



The basement of the museum house, now set up to be used as a meeting room.

Brian Deeds - Interviewee
Miles Kramer - Interviewer
Date: December 2023
Location: Zoom

Interview Log:

We started off by asking Brian about his family's history in Bondurant. He considers himself to be a relatively new arrival in the city, as they have lived there for just 7 years and have no prior history with the location. He was attracted to the community due to what he considers a positive environment for raising his three children. Starting at timestamp 1:08, we asked him a questions about the Bondurant Men's Club, of which he is the president. He joined the club after moving to Bondurant in an effort to get involved in the community, and as the President of the Men's Club he organizes their meetings and acts as "the face" of the group when it needs to interact with city officials and local businesses. However, he emphasized that all the Men's Club members share this responsibility in different ways and that it is a "tight-knit group" (2:44).

Summerfest is an annual fundraiser organized by the Men's Club, and Brian indicates that the Men's Club is primarily known in the community for its role in organizing the event (3:57). The goal of the event is to give back to the Bondurant community; 100% of the proceeds from Summerfest are kept within the community and donated to various local efforts throughout the year. The Men's Club works with local businesses and "traveling midways" to provide various activities for attendees. They have a special pride in the fireworks show, which Brian made a point to mention as "competing with the big cities around [Bondurant]" (5:20). When asked about his favorite memory about Summerfest, Brian explained that 2021 was the largest turnout that Summerfest has ever had, even though the Men's Club wasn't sure that they would be able to put on the event due to the pandemic.(6:38). People who have left Bondurant often returnn for Summerfest to catch up with old neighbors and friends. Brian made a point to mention that both year-round and especially in the week prior to Summerfest, preparations for the event are a community effort in which the city government and various community groups and clubs work together to make it happen (8:25).

Beginning at 9:08, we asked Brian a few questions about the changes he has seen in Bondurant. He states that the community has 100% changed" in the 7 years he has lived there, and the primary pressure point in his mind seems to be the growing population and the younger age skew that as occurred as a result. He describes the growth as "good growth," however, and at 11:03 he states that the new families that have moved to Bondurant have quickly joined existing traditions, such as Summerfest ("The new people coming in are kind of stepping in and really taking to the culture of Bondurant"). He expressed a worry that events like Summerfest will be forced out of their more accessible positioning in the heart of Bondurant (easy to walk or bike to from anywhere in town) due to changes to the local geography. There is a clear sense that this expansion may threaten the ability of the Men's Club to continue fulfilling its current role within the community. Overall, Brian sees the local growth as positive but stresses that he hopes Bondurant keeps its "small-town feel" and that local businesses will continue to gain support and thrive, rather than be subsumed by larger corporate entities seeking economic opportunity there (14:15). Brian also showed deference to older members of the community at the end of the interview; it seems that he considers individuals who have lived there the longest to be the most important voice when it comes to understanding and preserving Bondurant's past and local traditions.



Photos taken from the Bondurant Men's Club page on Facebook

Photos credited to Ben and Kathy Fuller ("Photos By Ben" on Facebook)

Bruce Cordes - Interviewee

Dom Martino and Joy Curry - Interviewers

Date: December 2023

Location: Zoom

Summary of Process: Bondurant Men's Club is a philanthropy, voluntarism and non-profit foundation, which was founded in 2015. The group includes local men that host the annual community carnival called Summerfest, the annual community Easter Egg Hunt, and an annual Breakfast with Santa, along with other events hosted throughout the community. They have contributed to the construction of several shelters throughout town and helped ease the burden of those in the community who were in need. We wanted to focus on Bruce's involvement and experiences with Summerfest. Secondly, we planned to gather his opinions about the Men's Club. He seems very nice from our emails, but he didn't provide any images.

Post-Interview Summary: We ended up having a shorter interview than expected, but we gathered good information, nonetheless. We began by setting up the fundamentals of the interview: His name, his story, and how he fell into this whole net of events. Bruce stated that after he moved to Bondurant in 1986, he joined the Men's Club in 1987/1988. He moved with his kids and has stayed put since. Bruce has indeed been around to witness the changes. A friend had introduced him into the Men's Club. It was very small at the time, but he's stuck with it and been a part of its operation. Summerfest has been around since then and the Men's Club was still a part of its operation. They also hosted many seasonal events for kids.

One of the earlier struggles Bruce lists is the act of sourcing amusement rides, even if it was only for a handful of rides. Fireworks were a staple of Summerfest, and they've only gotten more popular.

100% of proceeds from Summerfest go right back to the community, with prioritization of funds going to programs or projects that benefit youth/kids. A large amount of the funds needed to conduct the men's club has been acquired through business partnerships. Also, preparation for Summerfest takes roughly six months. They're very dedicated to the cause.

This year [summer 2024] is the 50th anniversary of Summerfest. They're seeking additional entertainment to make it special, so they've been "keeping an ear out" for any sort of opportunity. They want more attendance and profits so they can turn it back around and provide to the community. They're hoping to do a tractor pull this year. Also, music or stage entertainment is desired.

We asked about the internal organization of the Men's Club. Some of the members are good at social media, business, outreach, and more. Bruce is in charge of the raffle and has been for some time. He discussed the difficulties of creating a raffle and who needs to be involved to make it work. Bruce says that his favorite part of Summerfest is the gathering of all the people. It's like a giant block-party with people wall-to-wall and their families close by. Bruce states that "...seeing the people stay around and visiting and (really) enjoying it as much as the kids." is part of what makes Bondurant unique.

Bruce talked about the parade, which slow but enjoyable and getting bigger every year.

He then listed each of the ways that the Men's club has given back the the community, especially in the forms of donations. From the library to the youth sports, all sorts of funding is created and powered through the Men's Club. Just within the last few years, \$25,000 to \$30,000 has been raised in total. A lot of work is being conducted towards bettering every corner of the community.

Lastly, we wanted to know about the folklife of the Men's Club. He stated that "it comes from all walks of life and of all ages." Bruce is one of the older members. People come and help when they can, and they like to base it off voting and group decisions. There are currently 25-30 members.

Bruce's final remarks were about how the Farmer's Cooperative property is stirring up a lot of attention toward its removal. That space is heavily used by the Men's Club, and so they are finding ways to work around it. On the plus side, amusement rides are more reliable now due to their communications with 'Sam's Amusements', based out of Oklahoma. They've even gotten a huge Ferris wheel in recent years, which indicates their progress.

Final Thoughts:

We think that Bruce was very kind and ready to answer any questions relating to his passion! We came with many questions, but he swiftly ended up answering most of what we could think of. We did not reach the 30 minute runtime, but we really had some good responses and natural conversation. We are still trying to gather photos from him, but we might have to wait a bit. Overall, we think we had a lot of fun, but we also got a bit caught up trying to come up with narrower questions. Next time, we'll try to expand upon this.