

Lowell Brown
Zion National Park Oral History Project
CCC Reunion
September 28, 1989

Beth Martin: This is Beth Martin interviewing Lowell Brown. It's the 28th of September 1989, CCC Oral History Program. Lowell where were you from originally before you ever joined the CCC's?

Lowell Brown: I was from Cache County, Logan, Utah. That's where I was born and raised.

Beth Martin: Okay, and what did you do before you joined the CCC's?

Lowell Brown: Well, I went to school and I graduated from Logan High School in 1933 in May, the latter part of May, and right on the first of June we were inducted into the CCC camps.

...

Martin: Oh yes, I want to do what's exactly what you exactly did in Zion. Well what did you do for recreation after?

Brown: Oh hey. We had some of the best baseball teams, now we didn't have a softball team... Now that was one of our main situations and we did have basketball because we had a gym in a church down at LaVerkin that we were able to use. They let us use that all the time for our recreation.

Martin: But in the spike camp.

Brown: But in the spike camp up here mostly I'll tell you what it mostly was boxing. We'd done a lot of that. We didn't have any ring or anything, but we'd get out and put on boxing gloves and just do that to take the frustration away once in a while. And a lot of wrestling, a lot of horseshoe, we played that.

...

Martin: Course up there did you boys take books with you to read at night?

Brown: They had little libraries at that time that they used to bring in books, but they were kind of a paperback thing mostly of fiction stories and stuff like that. It wasn't necessary church history.

Martin: Now you were talking a little bit about yourself. Did you take advantage of the education programs that the CCC offered?

Brown: Yes, the thing that I took advantage of was -- when I was a youth going to school there in Logan I worked for a contractor in the summertime after school was over. So through that I was helping to build homes, not a lot of it but I was doing a few pounding of nails. Now we when came to the CCC camp, what little knowledge I had of that I was one of the main pushers down here at the building of this camp and the one in Logan also. And through that yes, I went into contracting later in my years. Oh yes.

....

Martin: Well what type of classes did you attend?

Brown: Mostly carpenter classes.

Martin: Stayed right with the construction business?

Brown: Yes, I sure did.

Martin: What about your medical care? Did you ever have any medical problems?

Brown: Yes, only one. I had an appendectomy in 1933, in the latter part of 1933.

....

Martin: Did you gather any lasting friendships?

Brown: Yes, many of them. I have in Logan at the present time, which I don't live there but I do have, I would say, and the picture that I have inside your recreation building now, I would say probably thirty of those people that I see quite often. Still the same guys, same fellows.

Martin: That's nice.

Brown: Went to school with them, went to college, part of a little bit of college but not very much. But yes, I still have lots. We still meet often, not as a CC situation I wished we did.

...

Martin: What would we have done without the basic work that the early men did?

Brown: Like we were doing?

Martin: I can't imagine what would've happened if we hadn't....

Brown: I'll tell you the main basic things, I think as far as coming and putting in a water line coming down through there, that could've been done very easily with a bulldozer today or with a clam and dug it out or whatever they had that would've been very easy and very quickly. But show me equipment that would go up and build that beautiful trail from here on up to the top of that mountain. Couldn't make it, take the one that goes up through the tunnel and off across there, you couldn't have done it and still can't.

Brown: See we were mostly on basics. Let's get the water to the people.

Martin: Get the water down

Martin: Then you think then that it [his success] was your experience in the CCC?

Brown: Yes, absolutely. It helped to teach me responsibility for myself and not be afraid to work. Like I've told everybody in my life, I've said "If you want to make a good living. If you've got the nerve to go to California and work hard you can work all of your life and have a good job, but if you're not that kind of person, don't bother to go because they don't need you. And you can really make it." Yes, and I think of this. Getting up at five in the morning was a great thing for us. It taught us to get up. It taught us cleanliness. Go in and brush your teeth, go in and take a shower. Get in and do these things, and get all your clean clothes on. We had to wash all those clothes. One, we couldn't wear a shirt the next day that we had worn the day before.

...

Martin: Okay, let's go ahead and talk and tell about some of the other experiences here. What did the programs from the colleges present to the CC boys?

Brown: Most any subject you wanted to take.

Martin: No, I'm talking about entertainment.

Brown: Oh, entertainment, singing. Mostly singing, and they would come and put plays on, a little play. Normally, you don't have too big of an area as far as the stage is concerned. So they would have this little twelve by eight, so they'd only bring a play with four or five kids in it, girls and boys. But the singing groups we'd have as high as eight to ten, fifteen people.

Martin: You didn't feel like you were being too deprived?

Brown: Oh absolutely not, not one second.

....

Martin: Did you have any more comments Mr. Brown?

Brown: Well, I don't know ... You know, I made so many friends. Today, if we could have a reunion similar to this one that you people are having here, with us as guests I have to say, I would love to have one going into this other area and get a hold of those fellows.

Martin: Wouldn't that be nice if every camp couldn't have a reunion before it's too late, before we get so we can't even move.