

## Oral History Interview Template

Interviews should not last longer than two hours. Your subject becomes tired and answers will reflect this. Ask for a second interview session, if needed.

### **Have interviewee sign Oral History Cooperative Consent Form before interview begins**

#### **Beginning the Interview:**

- Introduce self, as well as interviewee.
- Note location and date.
- Mention the topic & reason for this interview.
- Explain what will be done with the information gathered. (This information will be transcribed and both the recording and the transcription will be housed in the Western History Center at Casper College).
- Get informed consent on tape: **Do I have your permission to record this interview?**
- Indicate the general topic areas you'll cover. For example, "Today we'll talk about family and growing up in WY, education, career, how work has changed over the years, memorable moments living and working in Natrona County, etc."

**Interview Body:** –A lot of these questions may be addressed by the interviewer in one long answer – let the interviewee tell his/her story in their own words if that is the case.

#### **Family Memories**

- Can you tell me your name and spell it out for me?
- Please name the members of your family? (parents, siblings, etc.)
- When did your family first come to \_\_\_\_\_(Casper, Natrona County, Midwest, the ranch, etc.)?
- What did your family do for a living?
- Think back to your early memories of growing up. Describe a typical day you might have had. (Significant people? Games? Playmates? Chores? Pets?)

#### **School / Education Memories:**

- How old were you when you first started school?
- Where did you first attend school?
- How did you get to your school? (Walk, parents, neighbor, bus, etc) Describe what those trips to & from school were like.
- Any impressions of the first day / first week/ first year? Describe that first for us.

- What were your favorite subjects in school? Why?
- What did you like least about school?
- In addition to your studies, were you ever involved in any other activities or sports at your school?
- Did you go to college and what did you major in if so?
- Why that major or why that particular school?

**Profession/ Work / Career** [Research of your interviewee may be required to ask specific questions in this section]

- What was your very first job? Describe a typical day working at that job.
- What was the best / worst job you've ever had? Describe it.
- Who were some memorable people with whom you worked? Why was that person so memorable?
- How did you get into your line of work? Or, what made you decide that field?
- Describe a typical day in your work.
- If you knew then, back when you started, what you know now, is there anything you'd change?

**Life Changing Events:** - This last section requires that the interviewer have some knowledge of the major events that may have affected the subject. Some of this knowledge may come from research in a history book, in newspaper archives, in conversations with others, or in the pre-interview with your subject. This may lead into numerous questions in this section

Possible topic areas:

- Personal achievement / success
- Personal relationships (spouse / best friend / romantic partner)
- Economic hardships / Great Depression / Recessions
- War
- Boom / Bust cycle of Casper and the energy industry
- Illness / tragedy / loss
- Introduction of new technology
- Blizzard of 1949
- Casper College career

**Closing:** Thank you for your time today, your oral history adds so much to our history of our town and will be a valuable asset for researchers in the future.

- Do you have anything you'd like to add?

I will be transcribing our recording. Both the recording of your oral history and the transcription will be housed in the Western History Center.

Express your thanks and appreciation.

Sign off & turn off the recorder.