

Kelly Larson
Interviewed by Loren Webb
For the Washington County Historical Society

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Participants: Loren Webb
Kelly Larson

Webb: Good morning. My name is Loren Webb with the Washington County Historical Society. Here with me today is my twelfth oral history interview. This is Kelly Larson. He is the retired Deputy Police Chief with the St. George Police Department. He's also the author of *The History of the St. George Police Department*. We'd really like to welcome him here today with us. I wanted to also mention that today is Wednesday, what is it, January 24, 2024. Kelly, just please state for us your full name.

Larson: I'm Kelly James Larson.

Webb: Okay. And how did you get interested in law enforcement?

Larson: Well, I was called to it. I know that sounds sort of wacky, but I had a good job at Safeway here at St. George. I was the grocery manager, good salary, good benefits. But my younger brother worked over at Hurricane Police Department, and I volunteered over there as a Reserve. And the voice just came to me and said, "You need to go into law enforcement." So in November of '78, St. George PD was advertising for new officers. I applied and came out number one and was hired on January 1, 1979.

Webb: Okay. And what did that job involve?

Larson: Well, as a patrol officer you patrol the city, handle traffic accidents, initial investigations into burglaries and assaults, and generally did traffic control.

Webb: And what did you find rewarding about that job?

Larson: Well, I grew up here, and I wanted, I knew St. George was growing. From my experience at Safeway, I knew the City was growing, and I wanted it to be as good, safe place for my family to be raised and for new people coming into town that they had a safe place to move to.

Webb: What did you find stressful or frustrating about the job? Was there ever any frustrations involved with the job?

Larson: Yeah, lack of communications. We didn't have a very good communications system at that time. We used what we call [unclear] that they plugged into your car, and then

when you left you popped them out, and they were your handset. And you know, the tower we had at the time was up on the Red Hill by frog rock, and there was areas in town like Bloomington you had no reception whatsoever. Green Valley area you had no reception whatsoever. So that was frustrating trying to get information to somebody and not being able to reach them because communications wouldn't reach.

Webb: Wow, wow. What experiences do you recall from that job that stand out?

Larson: That what?

Webb: What experiences from your job as a police officer stand out? Anything that stands out from those experiences?

Larson: I worked there for 26 years. There's a lot of things that stand out. I think some of the things that were important in my time is we got better communications. We put a radio tower on the Black Hill, up on top of the hill, and later we put a tower up on Webb hill. And so that gave us communication all around. And then of course improved communications just generally helped out a lot.

Webb: Wasn't the dispatch office based out of the St. George Police Department—

Larson: Yes.

Webb: For all the other law enforcement agencies?

Larson: We dispatched for all law enforcement, including Highway Patrol, here locally, Sheriff's office, and Washington City. And so we, it has since moved to an entity of itself. And I saw that happen while I was still there. We went, we went to a car-per-man program. We had that when I first started, but the price of gas was just—not very much compared to today. But so we went to fleet service, and that didn't work out very well. So we went back, under Chief Pollei we went back to the car-per-man program. One of the other things I feel very important about is putting officers in the schools, school resource officers, and we put them in the high schools at first, and then the high school officer was responsible for the feeding middle school and junior high. In retrospect, we should have put them in the junior highs first instead of high schools, but we've solved that problem. And that really helped us out, that they were there to help. They weren't there to harass, they were not there to be a strong arm or to govern them. They were there to help the students and to get to know them. They keep them from being problem kids.

Webb: Okay. And if you were, you were able to advance in the law, in this St. George Police Department. Were there any other positions that you held besides Police Officer and Deputy Police Chief?

Larson: Yeah. I held every rank within the Police Department. Chief Hutchings brought me off the street after a couple of years, and I became his Administrative Assistant. I helped him with communications and correspondence. I was his ghost writer, as you would.

And then I traveled with him to Salt Lake. He was involved in a lot of law enforcement committees in northern Utah, so I was his driver. Then while he was in meetings, I went and picked up stuff we needed, the Police Department, and stuff.

Webb: M-hm. When did you come to the Police Department? Tell me again.

Larson: January 1, 1979.

Webb: Okay. So what was interesting about these positions, and how did they prepare you for the Deputy Police Chief position?

Larson: It's not anything, really, prepares you to be the Deputy Chief. But I did statistics for the Police Department for, about 1982, when the situation—and I helped Chief Hutchings with the budget. And then when he was suspended I sort of took over the position Acting Chief while he was, he was on suspension. Being a first-line supervisor, a sergeant in the department, you had to be responsible just making sure people were doing what they're supposed to be doing.

Webb: M-hm.

Larson: And then when Pollei became Chief, I was made, promoted as a Lieutenant, and then later, he appointed me as Deputy Chief.

Webb: Okay. So when Police Chief Joe Hutchings was sued by the three female employees of the St. George Police Department for sexual harassment, how did that impact the Department?

Larson: That had a real big impact on the Department because everybody was questioning everybody else's loyalty to either Hutch or to the Police Department. And so there was a lot of conflict. And I told the City Manager that I couldn't stay where I was at because of the conflict—we needed to bring somebody else in. And so they brought down Jon Pollei from, he was second in command in Salt Lake City Police Department. And then he had a condo down here. So they sent him down here to babysit. And probably within three days, he said, "I can't babysit. There are problems here we need to resolve." So he put us in order and made changes that needed to be changed. Then things settled down.

Webb: Okay. So who were some of the other officers, detectives, or police chiefs that you've worked with? And maybe you can tell us a little bit about each one and how they impacted your life.

Larson: A lot of people impacted my life. I knew all the officers in the Department, all the dispatchers, all the reserves, on a first-name basis. I'll give you some of the people that I remember. Of course Chief Hutchings was my first chief, and he had positions on [unclear] council and other law enforcement committees in northern Utah. And that helped St. George a lot because we were known by—as a small department of 19

officers, we were known by larger departments in the Salt Lake area. Chief Jon Pollei was, I would rate him as the best Chief I worked under. He allowed you to be a boss. He allowed you to make mistakes, as long as they weren't life-threatening. And you grow from those. And he was a great listener. And under him the staff learned to work together to solve problems rather than just complaining to the Chief.

Webb: Yeah.

Larson: Chief Robert Flowers, I know you're probably going to find this out anyway, but he never worked a day in his life. He loved people. He loved the public. Coming to work, to him, was like playing. He's now the Director of Public Safety for Ivins and Santa Clara, and at one time he was the Police Commissioner. When he left St. George he went to Salt Lake to be that. And that's really a feather in his hat, knowing that the Governor thought enough of him to pull him from where he was at up there to be his assistant.

Webb: Yeah.

Larson: Chief Excell of Hurricane's Police Department, I grew close to Lynn. We had a lot of luncheons together and talked about things. And he brought Hurricane Police Department from a small department to a recognized department. Probably still a small department in the State of Utah, but he's a good friend and a good chief.

Webb: Okay. So what criminal cases did you or the Department work on during your tenure there that stood out? Any criminal cases?

Larson: Well, when Pollei came down, he brought down homicides with him. We told him he "brought the big city problems with you when you [be]came, Chief." So we've had several homicides. I've worked on them. I was never a detective, but I worked with the detectives, and I did, until technology caught up with us. I did the crime scene sketches for the investigators, and then we got the electronic devices and stuff, and then Sherman Stebbins took over that task.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: But there were a lot of them, too many to go into details right now. It would just take too much time.

Webb: Okay. So tell us about your experience with the FBI Academy, and how did that come about, and how did that improve your capability as a law enforcement officer?

Larson: Well, right after I became a police officer in 1979, I was a member of the St. George SWAT Team, and I was a sniper. And we had the opportunity to go back to Quantico to SWAT training.

Webb: And that's Quantico, Virginia?

Larson: Virginia, uh-huh, the FBI academy. We were there for a week, and I fell in love with the place. And Lieutenant James Rayburn with the Police Department [St. George] had just come back in that spring, in '79 he'd just come back from the Academy. But I fell in love with it, and I wanted to go there to the Academy. FBI Agent Kurt Jensen who was their training officer for the Utah FBI, we had training down in St. George, down here every spring, and they had firearms. So I was a firearms instructor. So I helped Kurt put together the training for firearms. And he took a liking to me. And he worked hard to get me to go back to the Academy. You had to be, at least for St. George you had to be at least a Sergeant to go. You had to have at least five years in law enforcement, had to do some interviews, and there's a long waiting list. And I went back in March of '85, and most of the people that I dealt with back there, roommates and stuff, with 15 and 20 years in law enforcement. So I was a younger officer there. But it helped you because you could pick up the phone and call one of the, one of the graduates and ask them for help or do this or do that for you. Deputy Chief Winget from Las Vegas Metro was just a phone call away, and we spent a lot of time investigating things.

Webb: So it was a good, supportive network, it sounds like.

Larson: Yes, it was, and it still is. I'm retired, and don't, but I'm still active in there. And they meet here in the fall and then meet in Moab in the spring, and I go to both of those and have done. I've only missed two since '85, and that's because I had to stay home to watch the store while the Chief and the Lieutenant went.

Webb: Okay. So what were some of the most rewarding things that you enjoyed about your time with the Police Department?

Larson: Association with the officers and with other agencies that we dealt with and with the public. And seeing the City grow and still not being able to pinpoint a crime area. We'd have people come in often thinking of moving to St. George, and they'd say, "We're looking at moving to Bloomington Hills. What's the crime rate there?" And we had statistics. We divided the town into ten districts, and we kept statistics on each district. And so we could show them that there wasn't really a crime area in St. George. And that made you feel good that you knew that people could move in here and was concerned about that, and also realize that this was a safe community.

Webb: Yeah. I think that's really important. What were some of the most frustrating things that you faced with the Police Department, and how did you or the Department deal with them? I know you've mentioned about the communications. Was there anything else?

Larson: Communications, budgets, manpower. We were always under-manned. But you need to understand that when you hire a new officer, that's a long-time commitment. That's a new position, and if he leaves, you replace him with somebody else. So that's a forever budget item. Then you have his vehicle, you have his handset, you have his body armor, you have his weapons, you have training. Utah requires you to have 40 hours of in-service training a year to stay qualified. So it comes with a lot of expense. So it was

sometimes frustrating, like we'd get five new officers, but we wouldn't get any with cars. But we wouldn't replace any of the other cars that needed to be replaced. So you was always behind with cars. And you understand, I understood the reason why and that. Gary Esplin was a great—

Webb: City Manager.

Larson: City Manager, and he had faith in us, and he trusted us. And so we got a lot of things through the budget process that we probably would not have done if Gary didn't know what we were doing and trusted what we were doing.

Webb: Okay. What do you feel were your most important accomplishments with the Police Department?

Larson: The most important one, I guess, would be to allow the City to grow and expand and keep the crime rate down. It was a good place to raise a family. Putting officers in the schools, school resource officers, was a big plus for us. We, you can drive around the City, and you don't see graffiti. You drive around the City, and you look at the City parks, and you see families there. You go on the trailways, and you see single ladies walking, young mothers pushing their babies in carriages, older people walking or riding bikes. And that tells you that they're safe and they're enjoying what they're doing. And we do have officers that patrol that a little bit. But just, it makes you feel good because the City's growing and you have a good, safe place for a family to be raised in.

Webb: Okay. Thank you on that. So while you were at the Department, and even when you retired, what prompted you to write the *History of the St. George Police Department*, you know, and to continue to compile facts and statistics about the Department up to 2020? I mean, that's amazing; that's pretty incredible, Kelly.

Larson: Well, thank you. When I joined the Police Department, there's a Federal grant called LEAP which allowed police officers to get college education credits, and St. George was part of that program with Weber State. And I had spent time at BYU but didn't graduate. And so I wanted to get my bachelors degree, and so we started working on that. One of the classes required a research paper, and my brother and I, my younger brother was on the Police Department, so we did a research paper on the history of the St. George Police Department. And then I sort of fell in love with that, so I kept going with it until I got to, after I retired it became hard to get statistics from the City, and so I sort of weaned away from it, unfortunately, because it is a detailed history.

Webb: It really is, with all the different aspects of what they cover and the statistics. What statistics from your history of the St. George Police Department stand out, especially those that show a pattern or patterns?

Larson: Well, your traffic accidents would show a pattern, and we addressed that. The unfortunate thing, with traffic accidents, if you put a lot of law enforcement emphasis on a certain intersection, like Bluff and Boulevard, those accidents and everything move to

a different location. So you go over there and you get that settled down, and they move to another place. Statistic-wise, I said we, we had ten districts, and we looked at each one, and we didn't have manpower to put people in, officers in each one of the districts. But those that didn't have officers full time in them, they also looked to the others. Like Bloomington was District 10, Bloomington Hills was District 9. So an officer in 10 would also patrol Area 9.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: So you had the coverage that you needed there for that.

Webb: So is this something that you want to continue to do as long as your health permits, to be able to keep that history going?

Larson: I would like to, but I don't have, I don't have the resources. I don't have access to the police officers who've been hired and who's retired or who's left the Department. I don't have access to the major things that happened during the year. When I was there, I recapped every year the major things that happened during that year. I kept track of all the fatal accidents and all the homicides.

Webb: Is there anyone who you feel could take on that responsibility who is still working at the Police Department, say, maybe Tiffany Atkin, who is their Public Information Officer?

Larson: I don't know. No one's, the Police Department—

Webb: No one's stepped up to—

Larson: Yeah. Nobody's stepped up to do it. I've made copies of my History to Valerie, [last name, Kelly?] to, of course Chief [Marlon] Stratton had it, Chief [Kyle] Whitehead has it. But no one came forward and said, "Would you like to have access?" When I retired, I did, I continued to do the statistics for about three months, and then I was told I was no longer needed to do that.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: And so I sort of stepped back. The sad thing I have with the Police Department is once you retire, you're gone. It's not like bigger departments where they have a society where you're always invited to retirements and to swearing-in ceremonies, and stuff like that.

Webb: Maybe that's something they could consider, you know, down the road.

Larson: Yeah. I've talked to, I've talked to them about it, but nothing's happened, so—

Webb: Okay. So what other civic or religious organizations do you participate in, if any?

Larson: Well, of course I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I'm active there, and I've held positions there. I've been a financial clerk for 16 years until last, last January when I was released. I was President of the St. George Kiwanis Club, a member of the [St. George] Chamber of Commerce. I was a member of the [St. George] Exchange Club. I try to stay active in all those while I was there in law enforcement to keep the people impressed with what was happening.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: And also to be able to listen to their needs and their concerns and apply them back to the Police Department.

Webb: Okay. Where and when were you born, Kelly?

Larson: I was born here in St. George at the old hospital, McGregor Hospital, on 100 East and about 50 South.

Webb: Yep, I know where that was.

Larson: Doctor Reichmann was my doctor.

Webb: Wilford Reichmann, right?

Larson: Yes.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: I was born on December 11, 1947, about 5:30 in the morning, and my mom's always told me that I came out complaining and I haven't quit since.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: My wife will attest to that fact.

Webb: Who else was in your family?

Larson: There's nine of us. I have, my oldest sister Dockie was a twin, and a twin died a couple of days after they were born. And then Noreene was the second, and she married Gene Brooks. And then there was my older brother DeLoy, and then Dow, and then an older sister DeAnna, and then it was me, and then there's Kerry. And then when I was 12, we adopted Eva Dawn, and she's a full-blooded Navajo. And she married money, and she lives in California.

Webb: Okay. So describe your, oh, go ahead. Was there anything else?

Larson: Well, there's only myself and my brother Kerry and Eva are the only ones that are still alive. The others have all passed away.

Webb: Okay. And Kerry went into law enforcement, too?

Larson: He was in law enforcement. He was there a year before I was, and he retired, and now he's full-time babysitter for his grandkids and great-grandkids.

Webb: Okay. Describe your grammar school and high school years. Anything that stands out there? Elementary and middle school and high school.

Larson: East Elementary, which is now part of the Dixie College, or Utah Tech, I was in second grade when it first opened up. And I went there, and then I went up to the sixth grade center up on Tabernacle Street. And then at Woodward Junior High and Dixie High. When I graduated to the tenth grade, Dixie College moved out here, and—

Webb: Out to 700 East?

Larson: Yeah, and so we were the first three, I was in the tenth grade, and we were the first three-year high school, and the year I graduated in '66, the next year they [Dixie High School] moved down to the new campus down on 700 South.

Webb: Were there any influential teachers that you had that stand out?

Larson: I had a lot of influential teachers. I enjoyed typing, and I started typing in the seventh grade, and I typed all the way through high school. When I came back off my mission I took typing here.

Webb: Did you have Coach Fawson as a teacher?

Larson: I didn't. He was before me. I had, I had Mrs. Empey and Mrs. Blackham and Leo Sullivan was my type teachers.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: Fawson was just before me. We used to, we used to hide the typewriter carriages on him all the time.

Webb: He, the thing that he always said to us was, "Eyes on copy, eyes on copy." Anyway, so education-wise, did you attend college or university? And what was your major or minor, if any?

Larson: I did. I attended Dixie Jr. College here. It was a two-year college then, and I was in forensics, debate, public speaking. I graduated here with my wife, and then I had a full scholarship to BYU in forensics. But the person who needed to sign my papers was in

Israel, so I couldn't get the scholarship because I had to wait a year for him to come back to do that.

Webb: Oh, okay.

Larson: So I moved over to U. S. history, and I was in ROTC program for three years, and then I lost my high-frequency hearing and they kicked me out of the program.

Webb: Did you go to any university, or just Dixie Jr. College?

Larson: BYU.

Webb: Oh, you went to BYU.

Larson: BYU.

Webb: And you graduated in what?

Larson: I graduated in, well, I didn't graduate from BYU. I was up there, and then when they released me from the ROTC I was also working full-time at Mountain State Steel as I laid out beams and stuff off blueprints.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: And they couldn't get U. S. Steel, so they laid us off unless you wanted to be a sand blaster or a painter. So I came down here for Thanksgiving, and Mr. Ward, I worked at Safeway before I went up north, and Mr. Ward asked me when I was going to come back. And so I went to Patricia's parents' place and asked her, you know, "Where do we go when we have a chance?" And she said, "We come home." And it wasn't to St. George, it wasn't to our parents' place, it was "home."

Webb: Yeah.

Larson: So we left the kids, took the cattle truck up and loaded it up, and came back, and I worked, started working for Safeway.

Webb: And Safeway was located on about 500 East and St. George Boulevard at the time, or 100 North at the time, right? Does that sound about right?

Larson: Well, when I first started there, it was where the toy place is at now, boats and playgrounds and stuff.

Webb: Yeah. The Lifetime Equipment.

Larson: And when I came back, it had moved across the street on the Boulevard and about 650 East. But anyway, so—

Webb: What did you do there at Safeway?

Larson: I was in charge of frozen food.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: And then I became grocery manager. I was over the checkers. Interesting that after I became a police officer, I'd go in to visit, and a checker would want some change, and Mr. Ward would look at me and say, "So, go get him some change." So I'd go get the change and bring it back. I'm sure people looked [at us and] said, "What's that police officer doing making change?" But I ended up, I left as a grocery manager. I ordered half of the store and a lot of the end displays and stuff for it.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: And I also did the accounting. When Mr. Ward was gone, I did the banking for him.

Webb: Describe how you met and married your spouse.

Larson: I was a senior in high school. The first day of class, I was taking either calculus or geometry, calculus or trig, I forget which. And the student counselor, Mr. Orton, grabbed me and said, "We need to talk." And he said, so I went in his office, and he said, "You haven't taken geometry, which is a required class for graduation. So you're not going to graduate unless you take that class."

Webb: This is Rulon Orton telling you, the school counselor?

Larson: Yeah, yeah. So I was okay. He says, "It just so happens that class starts the same time as your other math class was." And that was, Rudy Iverson was the teacher. So I was the only senior in a class full of sophomores. And Rudy had you sitting in alphabetical order. So I was Larson. And there was Maxine McAllister, and then there was a girl by the name of Patricia Mathis. So she smiled at me, and that was it.

Webb: And Patricia, you married Patricia Mathis?

Larson: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: She waited for me while I was on my mission, and we were married on December 11, 1969.

Webb: Where did you serve your mission?

Larson: I served my mission in Texas, and half way through I was transferred down to the new Texas South Mission.

Webb: Okay.

Larson: I was a trainer. After about six months on my mission I became what they called a trainer in Zone B, and when I went south I was a trainer down there. I had 17 companions. I gave up to the third discussion, and then they get transferred and I get a new one. And sometimes I had problem missionaries that they didn't know what else to do with. And so it was an interesting mission.

Webb: Sounds like it. How many children did you have?

Larson: I had five.

Webb: You have five children. How many grandchildren?

Larson: Twenty-one, and nine great-grandchildren and another one on the way.

Webb: Okay. So you keep fairly busy just keeping tabs with all the children and everything.

Larson: Yeah, yeah. Two have moved to northern Utah, one last year and one the year before, so—

Webb: So as you look back, oh, I was going to ask you, have you and your family or extended family been involved in ranching, and if so, tell us about that.

Larson: Yeah, we were involved in ranching forever. My dad was a, was out on his own when he was 11 years old, when he was 11 years old, herding sheep. He became a sheep herder and had a pretty good sheep herd, had Mexican—

Webb: What was your father's name?

Larson: Ellis Larson.

Webb: Okay, okay.

Larson: He was, my grandfather founded Bloomington, and my dad was born down in Bloomington and raised there.

Webb: What was your grandfather's name?

Larson: Lars Larson.

Webb: Lars Larson, oh, my gosh, yeah. So, and you ran cattle down below Bloomington, right almost to the State line?

Larson: Yeah. We went to, it was on the Arizona Strip.

Webb: Okay, and you're on the Arizona Strip, too.

Larson: We, but when they started fencing places and stuff, Dad and others moved from sheep to cattle.

Webb: What kind of cattle did you raise?

Larson: Just Herefords, mostly. We had, Angus didn't work good out on the Arizona Strip because they're short-legged. So most of ours was Herefords. And we ran down along the River from the Arizona State line down to Cedar Pockets, and then we ran up in Bull Valley next to the Utah-Nevada border, and then we ran out on Wolf Hole Mountain and Mokaac Mountain and Wolf Hole Lake and Main Street.

Webb: This is pretty rugged country.

Larson: It is, it is.

Webb: Yeah.

Larson: I've had chaps ripped off my body.

Webb: So you've had some interesting experiences in ranching? I bet you just kind of enjoyed being out there, outside and working with—

Larson: It was, it was good experience growing up. I learned from my dad that you did the job right the first time, and you didn't quit until you finished what you needed to do. A couple of times when we didn't do what we was supposed to do, and the cattle got out, then we had to go get them back in and do the job that we should have done in the first place. It taught me to be self-sufficient. I never worried about getting hurt. I never worried about getting lost. I taught my kids how to keep track of where they're at and the different locations, you know. Seegmiller Mountain has a big hump on it. But on the south side of it, there is no hump. So you got to know what they look like from different angles and stuff. It was good training for my children.

Webb: Taught them how to work, right?

Larson: Taught them how to work. My next-to-the-oldest daughter, Brenda, she was a cowhand. I could tell her to go someplace to check on something, and I didn't worry about her. I should have, probably, but, but it taught us the skills and stuff. Federal government kept pushing us and pushing us, and we finally sold out in the middle 1990s. So—

Webb: Okay. So as you look back over your life, what would you like to be remembered for?

Larson: Being a good father and a good husband and a grandfather, being a good officer in law enforcement and helping develop the department to what it is, and I love shooting, and I do cowboy action shooting, and I'd like to be, I'd like to have on my headstone, "Gun fighter," because that's what I shoot, gun-fighter style.

Webb: Okay. That's great. Is there anything else that you feel is important that I haven't asked you that you'd like to tell us about?

Larson: That's a—I'll have to look here for a moment. A lot of things. The Police Department has been a good experience for me. I had some good trainers. I had, Dennis Rogers was a great detective, and he ended up moving, he got involved in Amway and made so much money he moved to Florida.

Webb: Yeah.

Larson: But he took me under his wing, and I helped him investigate a lot of burglaries and stuff like that, which has helped me throughout my life knowing what to look for and stuff. I've wished that the Police Department was more active in those who've retired so we don't lose that, that status and stuff. But I've seen the Department grow from 19 to over one hundred and something officers now. It's still a safe place to live, still good officers. Under Chief Pollei we learned that either pay for it now or pay for it later. That means if you, if you didn't do a good investigation and background checks on officers, if you didn't pay for that, later on there may be problems with the officer, and then the City's going to get sued, and you're going to pay an awful lot. So we always sent detectives, let's say if an officer was in Billings, Montana, we would send detectives to Billings, Montana, to investigate the background of the officer. We didn't really care too much about what you put on your applications for references.

Webb: Uh-huh.

Larson: We'd talk to them, anyway, we'd say, "Who do you know that knows this person?" Then we'd go talk to them. And we'd ask them, "Who do you know?" That third person was the one that we really wanted to talk to because they didn't care one way or the other, but they gave you the truth. And so that's how our investigations went. So it took some money to do that. Chief Pollei wouldn't let us fly to Hawaii, however. But we did good background checks. We had good officers. I loved the officers, and they did really good work. We had a good Police Department then. Under [Chief Kyle] Whitehead I think that we still have a good—good police officers are ethical and are honest, and they care about the public. They care about the City. And they care about each other.

Webb: Well, I really appreciate you telling me this, Kelly. And thank you so much for coming and joining with us today.

Larson: You're welcome.

Webb: I just really appreciate the contributions that you have made to this community, and you know, they've been so extensive. And you've been so entwined, you know, with the police department and the community, and so we just want to, I just want to thank you for being here.

Larson: Thank you, Loren.

Webb: And I appreciate your friendship. So we, again, we want to thank you, the audience there, for being with us today. Again, this is the Washington County Historical Society oral history interview, and my name is Loren Webb. Thank you so much for joining us today.

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