

INTERVIEW WITH FONTA TATTON ANDERSON

SUZANNE ANDRSON: I'm Suzanne Anderson and I'm conducting an interview with Fonta Tatton Anderson at her home at 39 West 3640 South, West Valley City, Utah, 84128. Today is October 6, 2016.

Tell me your name.

FONTA: My name is Fonta Tatton Anderson.

SUZANNE: And what day were you born?

FONTA: December 10, 1930. It was very cold and it was snowing. This is what my Mother told me.

SUZANNE: Who are your parents?

FONTA: My father is Luther Tatton. My mother is Mary Abigail Barney Tatton.

SUZANNE: Tell me what your parents were like.

FONTA: They loved each other very, very much. They did everything together and you could hear them in the morning when they'd wake up - you could hear them kissing each other and loving each other. And hope you slept well. You could just tell they loved each other. All of my friends said they wished their parents were like my parents - they're just kind and loving, and as long as I can remember they were like that.

SUZANNE: What is your earliest memory?

FONTA: When my youngest sister was born. We were at home and the doctor came and he had a black bag and I thought she was in that bag and she stated crying. I wanted to see her and they wouldn't let me and I was afraid he was going to put her back in that black bag and take her off.

SUZANNE: How old were you when she was born?

FONTA: 7. That's probably not my earliest memory but I can't think my earliest memory. Actually I think is about my mother and father because I'd hear my Dad get up - they had wood and coal burning stoves and he'd get up and make the fire and have it warm for everybody when they got up. I can remember lying in bed waiting for him to do that. Then he'd always come in and grab me by the toe and say "You have to get up. It's time to get up." And he'd act like he was going to pull me out of bed. As soon as he got up in the morning he'd put on a frying pan and put some meat or something on the stove to start cooking. I think that's my earliest memory because I can remember that so vividly.

SUZANNE: Sounds and smells too. What did you have for breakfast a lot of the time?

FONTA: We always had a big breakfast. Mother always made biscuits or hotcakes or always had meat. We always had cereal. We either had potatoes and gravy = these big, big meals because they had to work hard and it was early. We always had hot break or corn bread - some kind of hot bread, then cereal and fruit and anything you wanted actually.

SUZANNE: Did you learn to cook a lot of this wonderful food from your Mom?

FONTA: We all learned to cook – we all had to do everything. It was taught by our Dad and Mother because they both cooked.

SUZANNE: Tell us how many brothers and sisters you had.

FONTA: I had 3 brothers and I had 3 sisters. I have one living sister now – the rest of them are dead.

SUZANNE: What are their names?

FONTA: The oldest one was Mitchell L., the second one was Nora Lavon, then the third one was Eldon B., and the next one was Theora (she died at 8 years of age – she never was well) and then Lamar and my sister Mary Lou.

SUZANNE: What were they like growing up with them? Do you have any stories?

FONTA: Well my oldest brother I can't remember too much with him because he was in the service and when he came home from the service he was in the CC and then he was off to college and then married and I never saw him much around. My other brother, Eldon, we really got a lot of fun out of him because when he'd go to sleep he'd talk in his sleep and he'd walk in his sleep and we learned if we uncovered his feet and talked to him he'd tell us anything. I got along better with my younger brother, we argued and fought all the time, but we did everything together. I can remember one time they put the Christmas tree up and Christmas tree decorations were popcorn and Mother would make cookies and there weren't candles, only they put on a tin base and put them on the tree and we never could light them until Mother and Dad was there to see that we wouldn't burn up but I remember when Mother and Dad had gone to Ferron to get some groceries and my brother and I crawled under the Christmas tree and we'd raise up and see who could take the most bites out of the cookies that were on the tree. Of course when they got home and Mother discovered it, it was me that did it all.

I remember another time I was washing the dishes and I handed him a pan to dry and he said "It's not clean – you've got to wash it over " and I grabbed the pan and hit him over the head. That was the end of him helping me wash the dishes that day.

My sister Mary Lou, there were 7 years difference between us, and I was jealous of her. She had beautiful long ringlets clear down to her waist and every time I'd go by her I remember I'd yank them. She'd cry and Mother would want to know what was the matter? "Nothing – she pulled my hair." I said "I did not." I remember another time about her – we didn't have birthday parties and that like we do nowadays but Mother always made a big cake and punch and stuff and made a big deal over it in the family. At this one year I remember they told her that she could have some friends and as they were coming in the door Mother and Dad welcomed them and she asked one little girl said "Did you bring me a present?" My Dad heard it and he got her and marched her into the other room and told her "You do not do those kind of things. They do not bring you presents." I remember that so plain that there were no presents allowed and no asking about them either.

SUZANNE: Did you have a nickname?

FONTA: No.

SUZANNE: Who were your best friends as a kid?

FONTA: I had so many I don't know. Most of them were boys. Girlfriends were Kenna Jensen and Loretta Duncan and Ruby Aiklen, Dora Snow and then as I got a little older I made friends with Gwen Johnson and Madge Larson and Carol (I can't remember her last name now) and Dorothy Brock and Merlin and Eldon and Jan and Merrill and Seeley and Mac. I went and played ball with those boys more than I did with the girls. But we were all friends. Everybody was together. They all went horseback riding together, we all played ball together. we all did everything together.

SUZANNE: As a child tell me about any stunts or pranks you guys did. Do you remember any of them?

FONTA: Oh that would take years. There used to be poplar trees growing on each side of the road and we'd gather up all the eggs we could find and throw eggs at the cars as they went by – that's on the main road that went through town. We'd stretch ropes across the road – cars would slow down and a lot of times we got chased and we got paddled for it. We used to turn over everybody's toilets. We didn't have indoor bathrooms – we had outdoor toilets and we'd always wait till somebody got in there and push them over. Go to the graveyard and run around the headstones three or four times and ask the ghosts to come out and talk to us. Many, many things that I shouldn't have been doing but I did. There used to be a man named Billy Price and we'd set cow manure on his front step and light it on fire. He'd come and stomp it out. One night he had a shotgun and he shot at us – he'd put salt in it. I got some on my behind and on my legs.

SUZANNE: I can see where Troy gets a lot of this.

FONTA: I wouldn't dare tell you some of the rest.

SUZANNE: Are you still friends with any of these people you grew up with?

FONTA: Most of them are gone. Actually they're all gone, with the exception of Gwen Johnson but I haven't seen her for several months. But everybody else has gone to the other side.

SUZANNE: So you were born and raised in Clawson?

FONTA: Yes

SUZANNE: So other than what you just told us about, what did you guys do for fun?

FONTA: Well at night time if we were at somebody's house - it didn't matter how many kids were there they'd stop and eat. You didn't go home to eat - you just ate where you were and people by the name of Wright – we loved to go there because we'd always have bread and milk and boiled eggs. And we thought that was great. Another time to Wayne and Melba Blackburn's – he'd fry potatoes on top of the stove, slice them and put them on top of the stove and fry them, and they'd kill their pigs and take the

rinds and put them in big black drippers and they'd put them in the oven and fry them and they call them pork cracklings now but they'd do them in their oven and we'd sit there and eat them. Then she made a big chocolate cake and it had about an inch of grease floating in the bottom of the pan. We loved to go there and we'd have some of that chocolate cake and fried potatoes and pork rinds. We were always welcome. It didn't matter if it was day or night or when. I remember one time we went and we'd steal chickens and go fry them, or corn and potatoes and roast them. Everybody had kids and everybody's kids were there and they didn't do anything, they just let us do it. My Mother if she'd call us I'd kind of ignore her but if she whistled I knew it'd better head for home and head fast.

SUZANNE: Did you ever learn to whistle like her?

FONTA: Nope. I tried and tired. She'd do it with her fingers and through her teeth and I was never able to actually whistle good.

SUZANNE: How did your Dad call you? Did he just yell?

FONTA: He never spanked me – he never used a willow on me or anything. But when he used a certain tone of voice we all knew we'd better move. But my Mother would willow me – she'd make me go cut the willow and she'd willow me good. One time she sent me down to some people by the name of Jensens to get some eggs – they'd buy their eggs from them. I took my sister Mary Lou with me and I got playing on the way back. I had a pan about like this and I dropped them and broke the eggs. When I got home and there was a fence we crawled under (it was shorter than going through the gate). We crawled under that and Mother was standing there and the eggs were broken and she wanted to know what happened and I told her that Mary Lou had pushed me and broke them. Mary Lou just stood there and looked at me. But anyhow she knew it wasn't her fault. Anyhow she made me go get a switch and she switched my legs good. When I broke the eggs after that, I told her I broke the eggs.

SUZANNE: You learned a lesson. Did you enjoy school?

FONTA: Yes I loved school. The only thing that was bad – all of my friends were older than me. My birthday was so late I didn't get to go till a year after and of course all of the friends I ran with were in a grade ahead of me and that was hard for me. We rode the school bus to Ferron to from Clawson to Ferron – it's 4 miles to and from.

SUZANNE: Do you remember when the Marshall or Sheriff in Ferron was shot?

FONTA: I remember it but I do not remember the details. It was over water. They had a lot of problems with water. People would steal each other's water turn and they'd get in fights and this time there was a murder and he was killed. There was another time – this guy's name was , I can't remember. Anyhow there was another one.

SUZANNE: Were you grown or were you a child?

FONTA: I was little. I remember every time they said they were going to change the water I'd wonder if my Dad was going to get shot or killed.

SUZANNE: So tell me some of your best memories of elementary or high school. What was your favorite subject?

FONTA: It wasn't math because I was scared of the teacher. I liked history and I liked English a lot and then they had chorus – I liked that. I played tennis. We played tennis a lot. Football wasn't played at school when I went to school – they played baseball. I just enjoyed school.

SUZANNE: What did you want to be when you grew up?

FONTA: Nothing special. I did want to go to college. My Dad wouldn't even let me get a job when I got out of school. He didn't want me leaving home. But I won a scholarship to St. Mark's hospital, a 2-year scholarship. And I finally did get to go. I went to the Price college for just a few months and he finally decided to let me go and I went to Salt Lake and I went to St. Mark's and then I didn't finish that. I didn't like it. They put me in a maternity ward – I didn't like the women. They were too ornery and crabby and awful. So they assigned me to the nursery and I liked that pretty good but then I got attached and they had me go into delivery and I didn't like that because I saw a doctor abuse the babies as they came out and I couldn't handle that so I just quit and went back home. The folks raised turkeys and I went home to help raise turkeys. I never did go back to school and I never did finish my scholarship – I just couldn't handle that.

SUZANNE: In Clawson were there any great stories or legends that surround Clawson that you know of?

FONTA: Well they tell about how Clawson used to be Kingsville or Kings something and it was in another place at Rock Canyon and the Apostle came down to Clawson and told them they needed to move it because the alkali was going to be so bad they'd have to move their houses and everything in a few months because the alkali was getting so bad their houses would sink. And he told about he went over where the church house was built and he had a team or horses and a new buggy and every time he'd get ready to get in the buggy and go the singletree would break and they were brand new. So they would fix it and he did that the third time and he said "This is where the town is supposed to be" and they named it Clawson after him. They did move their houses and stuff there and it's good they did because the alkali came in the water and it raised up and it is a big swampy mess down there. Other than where the church was on the hill and that's where they decided to have the town of Clawson.

SUZANNE: You mentioned when storms would come, your Dad could hear and you would go out and watch the floods. Tell me about that.

FONTA: Well when the storms would come we'd hitch up the wagon and horses and we'd head for Rock Canyon to watch the washes because by then you could hear the floods coming down. It would be rocks and trees and the water would come clear to the top and go over the banks and it would last sometimes an hour or two. It would just flood everything that was in its way and then we'd go back home. We didn't get too close because it was great big boulders and trees and everything coming down.

SUZANNE: Could you hear this like your Dad could?

FONTA: Everybody could hear it. You could hear it rumbling and coming down. That's when they'd hurry and hitch up the team and away we'd go. Not just us - everybody and there were no cars. So they went in wagons and teams. Everybody just loaded in to go watch it.

SUZANNE: Were there any great characters that came from Clawson that you know of?

FONTA: They were all characters.

SUZANNE: That would make a fun town I think.

FONTA: It was a fun town. One thing about it is that Coxes had a little grocery store and the post office was there. The mail would come from Price on a truck and he would gather up milk and cream going and coming. Everybody would hurry up to the post office and always go early and sit up there and gossip and talk and tell what was going on. The mail truck would come through about 8:00 in the morning going towards the south. They'd sit up there and visit and talk and stay there many hours sometimes and when the mail truck would come back sometimes people would catch a ride to go to Price with him. He'd stop along the way and gather up the milk and cream cans.

SUZANNE: How long has it been since you've seen Clawson?

FONTA: The last time I was down for Thanksgiving.

SUZANNE: Has it changed a lot?

FONTA: Yes. Lots and lots of houses there now that wasn't there when I was a kid and lots of the houses that were there when I was a kid aren't there any more. And the main road doesn't go through there either. It goes up above Clawson – it used to go right through the middle of Clawson.

SUZANNE: You mentioned a store.

FONTA: Coxes store-it was on the main street of Clawson at that time. It was on the south end.

SUZANNE: So how long have you lived up here in West Valley?

FONTA: 55 years.

SUZANNE: What was it like when you moved here?

FONTA: Well when we first moved here we lived in Kearns and there was a school there. We lived on the corner across from the school and a few houses. My sister lived in Kearns at that time. But when you went up over the railroad there wasn't a house or nothing up across there this way, only two or three farmhouses.

SUZANNE: How has it changed now?

FONTA: There are houses and stores and people and people and more roads. I remember when we lived there we 'd go for a ride just in back of our houses and there were washes and we had dogs and we'd let

them run through there. Kids would go through there with their BB guns hunting and that. There were no houses or nothing. You see what it's like now. We lived in another house before we came here. A little white house and then we moved up here and there were just this house and 7 others. There were fields and no more houses at all. So all of that has been built since we were here.

SUZANNE: Tell me how you and Grandpa met.

FONTA: Well I belonged to South Emery High and he belonged to North Emery High School. That was big competition and there would be basketball games and after that there would be dances. I was in the pep club and at the intermission we did our whatever we did and when we sat back down some of my friends said "Look at those guys that just came in. I bet they're from Huntington." And they were. And of course I saw Grandpa and my girlfriend said "We dare you to ask him to dance" when the game was over and I didn't for a long time and they just kept it up so they said "Oh you daresn't ask him" so I asked him to dance and he was very reluctant – didn't want to dance with me. Anyhow I danced with him that dance and then he had a couple of friends that asked two of my friends to go to a movie and they went with them in the next week or two but I never heard anything or thought anything about him and then one day he called me on the phone and wanted to know if I wanted to go to the movie with him and two or three of his friends and their girlfriends and I finally said I would. Anyhow that's where I met him. He'd just got out of the service. He hadn't been out of the service too long. He didn't finish 12th grade –he joined the service.

SUZANNE: Where did he go?

FONTA: He went into the Marine Air Corps in California – the first place he went. Given the history I can't think of it.

SUZANNE: What did he do?

FONTA: Well he was going to be a mechanic and that's what he started out as and one time the commanding officer came in and asked him if he knew how to drive and if he had a driver's license and he told him he did and he said "I want you to take me and so-and-so to this place" and he did and he ended up being a chauffeur. He never did do any mechanicing. He was the chauffeur if they would go to a different place he'd fly with them and then chauffer them around and they 'd feed him. He did that most of the time he was in the service. They said he'd have to take his turn standing guard but not too long. Anyhow it was at the Marine Air Corps Base in California, wherever that was.

SUZANNE: Did he ever tell you any war stories?

FONTA: No, the war was over when he was there.

SUZANNE: How many children did you two have?

FONTA: Six.

SUZANNE: Tell me about them.

FONTA: Well there are five boys and one daughter. I love them dearly. I would like to smash their heads together a lot of times but if I'd learned that they had lives and they had to live them the way that they needed to live them. I tried to make them live the way I thought they should live and that isn't the way it's supposed to be and it didn't work that way. We'd all have been better off if I hadn't tried to push them so hard to do the things I thought they should be doing. But they just had to live their own lives. It took me many, many years to realize that. We 'd all have been better off if I'd had brains enough to know that before. I'd probably do the same thing.

SUZANNE: Who's your oldest child?

FONTA: My oldest child is Lynn J. Anderson.

SUZANNE: What was he like? Do you remember his birth or what he was like growing up?

FONTA: Yes because that was I think one of the highlights of my life is when they placed him in my arms. Because I had such a difficult birth with him. He could draw friends like honey. He just gathered friends from day one. He'd come home from school and he'd have a dog or a cat or a squirrel or anything. "Look what followed me" he said. "This followed me all the way home. Can I take it? It's sick." A lot of times I'd see him coming in with his shoelace wrapped around its neck, dragging it along, bringing it home.

Very, very intelligent in school. Scott had to work so hard. He had good grades but he'd stay up lots of times most of the night studying. And Scott always had a desire to make money or have a job. We got him a little red wagon and he'd go around to Coxes and get people's groceries for them and haul them for them and he'd charge a nickel or a dime or something. There were two or three widows in the ward who were glad to have him do that! He was always trying to make money and Lynn was always trying to jew him out of it. His kids say that he still has that first nickel he made. But he got something and he'd and to this day he has poor health because he'd lay awake at night trying to figure out some way to make more money.

Lynn never went on a mission but he brought more people into the church than most missionaries.

SUZANNE: He had quite a rapport with people. Who was next?

FONTA: Scott, and I told you about him already. He went on a mission, served a good mission, and he's been very active in the church all his life. He's a great guy and has a great family. Lynn has a great family. With just so many things together and we're very, very close to all of them. I wish we were still that close. Our next son was Kenneth and he was extra intelligent. He had such a brain on him. He was the President in the classes and the Vice President and the Vice President of the high school and just very, very intelligent. And it wasn't a struggle for him – it was just easy and he made friends easy. Then he got in with the wrong crowd and it was one thing after another. He wanted to join the Army and we finally signed to let him go and he went to Germany. Actually the only thing he'd drink is beer and he'd become an alcoholic. By the time he got home he was an alcoholic from drinking all that beer and it seemed like he just had one kind of problem after another. But a great, great guy – he'd do anything for you or anybody else. Him and his wife would go to the homeless under the underpass at that time on

Christmas and Thanksgiving and furnish all the food and serve them breakfast and lunch. And the most of the time bring 3 or 4 of those people home with them to eat dinner with them Just something like that all of the time. Always giving somebody something or bringing somebody home to eat or take care of them.

Then there's Carla. She's always jewing her brother out: "I'll do your job outside if you'll do mine inside." They all wanted to play musical instruments. She had a violin she wanted to play and she played "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" till the boys would ask if I'd make her go out on the step and practice.

SUZANNE: How long did she do that?

FONTA: Three years. Fifty million "Twinkle Twinkle Little Stars". That's about as far as she ever got. The same way in her dancing. The teacher said "I'll pay you to take her home. She's such a klutz. I'll pay you if you won't bring her here."

SUZANNE: I'll bet she's a lot of fun.

FONTA: Next was Phillip. He was very demanding (and still is). I shouldn't say that but if things didn't go his way when the kids would play games and he didn't win, he'd sometimes lay on the floor and kick and scream and bawl "They cheated me. They cheated me." He also went on a mission and he didn't go till he was 20 but he did go on a mission and he's a lot better. He's learned to control his temper and he's doing good.

And then Lee is our baby. He was everybody's baby. I don't know if he ever cried. If he'd act like he was going to whimper or cry somebody would grab him and hold him or feed him or play with him and he was always so tall and skinny we couldn't buy clothes that would fit him so I made his clothes. For his 12th birthday his Dad asked him what he'd like for his birthday and he said "Could I have a pair of boughten jeans?"

SUZANNE: I'll bet it was hard to find pants for tall people.

FONTA: At times they didn't have them. And his feet were long and thin – we'd have to send someplace and get his shoes. Kenneth would go through a pair of shoes a week. The toes – what he did to get those holes in the toes of his shoes. He'd go through a pair of shoes once a week and shoes would last the others maybe six months unless they outgrew them.

SUZANNE: Your family spent a lot of time outdoors camping and hunting and stuff like that.

FONTA: Fishing. As soon as the fishing season came we were off. We didn't have even a tent most of the time. We just spread camp quilts out on the ground and took a sack of potatoes, onions and some jam. I'd stay dry trying to keep the kids out of the water while Dad would go fishing.

SUZANNE: I'll bet there are a lot of great memories.

FONTA: I went on one deer hunt and that was enough for me. I couldn't stand to see them shoot the deer and it was too cold – it snowed. That was the first and last deer hunt I went on.

SUZANNE: Were you in cars?

FONTA: Well my family had a car. The radiator on the one leaked so bad we'd have to haul water in cans and stop and fill it up before we got up the hill. We shot and ate a lot of pheasants.

SUZANNE: How has being a parent changed you?

FONTA: Well I guess it didn't change me as good as it ought to. As I said I wish I did things a lot different than I've done but I did the best I knew. The only thing is I screamed at them a lot and I wish I hadn't have screamed at them like that. And I'd spank their bottoms sometimes when they really got in trouble, and I'd do all of them – not just one if there was any trouble and they'd say "What are you spanking us for? We didn't even do it." "That's because you're going to do it. "

SUZANNE: Who was your favorite relative? Tell me about your relatives.

FONTA: I couldn't tell you about them all but I think the most fun relative was my Uncle that lived in Montana. My aunt and uncle were big, big huge people. His name was Louie Hitchcock and her name was Aunt Dora. But they would come at least twice a year and when they'd come the folks would have to brace up the bed because it would break down . It didn't matter what they did – it would break down. And then they'd lay in bed and smoke cigars and that whole house would stink horrible. They'd make a bed all over the front room floor for the kids and when they came it was so fun – we just had good times. And when we'd go to eat he'd always want to eat his dessert first. Finally I asked him why and he said "I want to make sure that I've got room for it. And I'd get some." But they were just such fun people. In those days everybody would come and everybody would sleep for two or three days, not just one night. We had good times.

SUZANNE: What did you and Grandpa do for a living?

FONTA: He worked in the coal mine and construction. And he took me in Leemaster's coal mine – he was driving a truck for them and he took me up to get a load. I rode up with him and he took me in the mine – that's the first I'd been in a mine. And he left me up against a wall and told me not to move, to stay there – he had to go find Mr. Leemaster to tell him something. And I could hear all that equipment and everything going on. After I'd been there he said "You're never going back in that mine again ever." And so we came to Salt Lake and he went to school to become a diesel mechanic.

SUZANNE: How many mines did he work in?

FONTA: About five near as I can remember.

SUZANNE: Tell me their names.

FONTA: Well the first one was Hiawatha then Sunnyside and Royal, Castle Gate and then he worked at the Robinson Mine and a Church Mine that he didn't work there all the time. They needed somebody for a few days or weeks or something and he'd go give them a hand. And then there was a mine between

Emery and Ferron, I don't know what the name of that was, but he worked there for a while. It wasn't Consol.

SUZANNE: Was it Brown?

FONTA: I don't know . I can't remember. I know it wasn't Brown but I can't tell you what it is. He worked construction when the mines would go on strike.

SUZANNE: And he came out here and was a diesel mechanic?

FONTA: Ummm hmmm. He worked for I and L and I can't think of the last one where he retired from.

SUZANNE: Tell me about your jobs, the things you've done.

FONTA: Well the only jobs that I've ever done I was in the cooking industry. I was a chef at several restaurants and then B.G. Scott was a contractor or something and I cooked for him. And did parties and things for him. That's about the amount of it. I cleaned houses one time for people to move into and of course I'd do that at night while the kids were in bed. Then when June changed his shifts I had to quit that because we didn't want to leave the kids alone and I didn't want to leave them with anybody.

SUZANNE: If you can do anything now, what would you do?

FONTA: I would probably go to a place where there were handicapped children or people (mentally disabled, not as much physically as mentally). I have a soft spot in my heart for people who have problems and people who are on drugs. In fact I went to Whittier School and they had a special class where I worked and I really got attached – I just did it as volunteer service. I went to LDS Services and did that for several years and it was just for people to more or less listen to their problems and encourage them and I loved that. I loved that a lot. But I'd get so attached and I'd go down to the detention center and I'd do that at night sometimes from 12:00 at night till 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning. They'd need somebody to stay there and I just feel so bad for them. But I loved that and if I could do that I'd do that.

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SUZANNE ANDERSON: I'm Suzanne Anderson and I'm conducting an interview with Fonta Tatton Anderson at her home at 39 West 3640 South, West Valley City, Utah, 84128. Today is October 6, 2016.

Tell me your name.

FONTA: My name is Fonta Tatton Anderson.

SUZANNE: And what day were you born?

FONTA: December 10, 1930. It was very cold and it was snowing. This is what my Mother told me.

SUZANNE: Who are your parents?

FONTA: My father is Luther Tatton. My mother is Mary Abigail Barney Tatton.

SUZANNE: Tell me what your parents were like.

FONTA: They loved each other very, very much. They did everything together and you could hear them in the morning when they'd wake up - you could hear them kissing each other and loving each other. And hope you slept well. You could just tell they loved each other. All of my friends said they wished their parents were like my parents - they're just kind and loving, and as long as I can remember they were like that.

SUZANNE: What is your earliest memory?

FONTA: When my youngest sister was born. We were at home and the doctor came and he had a black bag and I thought she was in that bag and she started crying. I wanted to see her and they wouldn't let me and I was afraid he was going to put her back in that black bag and take her off.

SUZANNE: How old were you when she was born?

FONTA: 7. That's probably not my earliest memory but I can't think my earliest memory. Actually I think it's about my mother and father because I'd hear my Dad get up - they had wood and coal burning stoves and he'd get up and make the fire and have it warm for everybody when they got up. I can remember lying in bed waiting for him to do that. Then he'd always come in and grab me by the toe and say "You have to get up. It's time to get up." And he'd act like he was going to pull me out of bed. As soon as he got up in the morning he'd put on a frying pan and put some meat or something on the stove to start cooking. I think that's my earliest memory because I can remember that so vividly.

SUZANNE: Sounds and smells too. What did you have for breakfast a lot of the time?

FONTA: We always had a big breakfast. Mother always made biscuits or hotcakes or always had meat. We always had cereal. We either had potatoes and gravy - these big, big meals because they had to work hard and it was early. We always had hot break or corn bread - some kind of hot bread, then cereal and fruit and anything you wanted actually.

SUZANNE: Did you learn to cook a lot of this wonderful food from your Mom?

FONTA: We all learned to cook – we all had to do everything. It was taught by our Dad and Mother because they both cooked.

SUZANNE: Tell us how many brothers and sisters you had.

FONTA: I had 3 brothers and I had 3 sisters. I have one living sister now – the rest of them are dead.

SUZANNE: What are their names?

FONTA: The oldest one was Mitchell L., the second one was Nora Lavon, then the third one was Eldon B., and the next one was Theora (she died at 8 years of age – she never was well) and then Lamar and my sister Mary Lou.

SUZANNE: What were they like growing up with them? Do you have any stories?

FONTA: Well my oldest brother I can't remember too much with him because he was in the service and when he came home from the service he was in the CC and then he was off to college and then married and I never saw him much around. My other brother, Eldon, we really got a lot of fun out of him because when he'd go to sleep he'd talk in his sleep and he'd walk in his sleep and we learned if we uncovered his feet and talked to him he'd tell us anything. I got along better with my younger brother, we argued and fought all the time, but we did everything together. I can remember one time they put the Christmas tree up and Christmas tree decorations were popcorn and Mother would make cookies and there weren't candles, only they put on a tin base and put them on the tree and we never could light them until Mother and Dad was there to see that we wouldn't burn up but I remember when Mother and Dad had gone to Ferron to get some groceries and my brother and I crawled under the Christmas tree and we'd raise up and see who could take the most bites out of the cookies that were on the tree. Of course when they got home and Mother discovered it, it was me that did it all.

I remember another time I was washing the dishes and I handed him a pan to dry and he said "It's not clean – you've got to wash it over " and I grabbed the pan and hit him over the head. That was the end of him helping me wash the dishes that day.

My sister Mary Lou, there were 7 years difference between us, and I was jealous of her. She had beautiful long ringlets clear down to her waist and every time I'd go by her I remember I'd yank them. She'd cry and Mother would want to know what was the matter? "Nothing – she pulled my hair." I said "I did not." I remember another time about her – we didn't have birthday parties and that like we do nowadays but Mother always made a big cake and punch and stuff and made a big deal over it in the family. At this one year I remember they told her that she could have some friends and as they were coming in the door Mother and Dad welcomed them and she asked one little girl said "Did you bring me a present?" My Dad heard it and he got her and marched her into the other room and told her "You do not do those kind of things. They do not bring you presents." I remember that so plain that there were no presents allowed and no asking about them either.

SUZANNE: Did you have a nickname?

FONTA: No.

SUZANNE: Who were your best friends as a kid?

FONTA: I had so many I don't know. Most of them were boys. Girlfriends were Kenna Jensen and Loretta Duncan and Ruby Aiklen, Dora Snow and then as I got a little older I made friends with Gwen Johnson and Madge Larson and Carol (I can't remember her last name now) and Dorothy Brock and Merlin and Eldon and Jan and Merrill and Seeley and Mac. I went and played ball with those boys more than I did with the girls. But we were all friends. Everybody was together. They all went horseback riding together, we all played ball together. we all did everything together.

SUZANNE: As a child tell me about any stunts or pranks you guys did. Do you remember any of them?

FONTA: Oh that would take years. There used to be poplar trees growing on each side of the road and we'd gather up all the eggs we could find and throw eggs at the cars as they went by – that's on the main road that went through town. We'd stretch ropes across the road – cars would slow down and a lot of times we got chased and we got paddled for it. We used to turn over everybody's toilets. We didn't have indoor bathrooms – we had outdoor toilets and we'd always wait till somebody got in there and push them over. Go to the graveyard and run around the headstones three or four times and ask the ghosts to come out and talk to us. Many, many things that I shouldn't have been doing but I did. There used to be a man named Billy Price and we'd set cow manure on his front step and light it on fire. He'd come and stomp it out. One night he had a shotgun and he shot at us – he'd put salt in it. I got some on my behind and on my legs.

SUZANNE: I can see where Troy gets a lot of this.

FONTA: I wouldn't dare tell you some of the rest.

SUZANNE: Are you still friends with any of these people you grew up with?

FONTA: Most of them are gone. Actually they're all gone, with the exception of Gwen Johnson but I haven't seen her for several months. But everybody else has gone to the other side.

SUZANNE: So you were born and raised in Clawson?

FONTA: Yes

SUZANNE: So other than what you just told us about, what did you guys do for fun?

FONTA: Well at night time if we were at somebody's house - it didn't matter how many kids were there they'd stop and eat. You didn't go home to eat - you just ate where you were and people by the name of Wright – we loved to go there because we'd always have bread and milk and boiled eggs. And we thought that was great. Another time to Wayne and Melba Blackburn's – he'd fry potatoes on top of the stove, slice them and put them on top of the stove and fry them, and they'd kill their pigs and take the

rinds and put them in big black drippers and they'd put them in the oven and fry them and they call them pork cracklings now but they'd do them in their oven and we'd sit there and eat them. Then she made a big chocolate cake and it had about an inch of grease floating in the bottom of the pan. We loved to go there and we'd have some of that chocolate cake and fried potatoes and pork rinds. We were always welcome. It didn't matter if it was day or night or when. I remember one time we went and we'd steal chickens and go fry them, or corn and potatoes and roast them. Everybody had kids and everybody's kids were there and they didn't do anything, they just let us do it. My Mother if she'd call us I'd kind of ignore her but if she whistled I knew it'd better head for home and head fast.

SUZANNE: Did you ever learn to whistle like her?

FONTA: Nope. I tried and tired. She'd do it with her fingers and through her teeth and I was never able to actually whistle good.

SUZANNE: How did your Dad call you? Did he just yell?

FONTA: He never spanked me – he never used a willow on me or anything. But when he used a certain tone of voice we all knew we'd better move. But my Mother would willow me – she'd make me go cut the willow and she'd willow me good. One time she sent me down to some people by the name of Jensens to get some eggs – they'd buy their eggs from them. I took my sister Mary Lou with me and I got playing on the way back. I had a pan about like this and I dropped them and broke the eggs. When I got home and there was a fence we crawled under (it was shorter than going through the gate). We crawled under that and Mother was standing there and the eggs were broken and she wanted to know what happened and I told her that Mary Lou had pushed me and broke them. Mary Lou just stood there and looked at me. But anyhow she knew it wasn't her fault. Anyhow she made me go get a switch and she switched my legs good. When I broke the eggs after that, I told her I broke the eggs.

SUZANNE: You learned a lesson. Did you enjoy school?

FONTA: Yes I loved school. The only thing that was bad – all of my friends were older than me. My birthday was so late I didn't get to go till a year after and of course all of the friends I ran with were in a grade ahead of me and that was hard for me. We rode the school bus to Ferron to from Clawson to Ferron – it's 4 miles to and from.

SUZANNE: Do you remember when the Marshall or Sheriff in Ferron was shot?

FONTA: I remember it but I do not remember the details. It was over water. They had a lot of problems with water. People would steal each other's water turn and they'd get in fights and this time there was a murder and he was killed. There was another time – this guy's name was , I can't remember. Anyhow there was another one.

SUZANNE: Were you grown or were you a child?

FONTA: I was little. I remember every time they said they were going to change the water I'd wonder if my Dad was going to get shot or killed.

SUZANNE: So tell me some of your best memories of elementary or high school. What was your favorite subject?

FONTA: It wasn't math because I was scared of the teacher. I liked history and I liked English a lot and then they had chorus – I liked that. I played tennis. We played tennis a lot. Football wasn't played at school when I went to school – they played baseball. I just enjoyed school.

SUZANNE: What did you want to be when you grew up?

FONTA: Nothing special. I did want to go to college. My Dad wouldn't even let me get a job when I got out of school. He didn't want me leaving home. But I won a scholarship to St. Mark's hospital, a 2-year scholarship. And I finally did get to go. I went to the Price college for just a few months and he finally decided to let me go and I went to Salt Lake and I went to St. Mark's and then I didn't finish that. I didn't like it. They put me in a maternity ward – I didn't like the women. They were too ornery and crabby and awful. So they assigned me to the nursery and I liked that pretty good but then I got attached and they had me go into delivery and I didn't like that because I saw a doctor abuse the babies as they came out and I couldn't handle that so I just quit and went back home. The folks raised turkeys and I went home to help raise turkeys. I never did go back to school and I never did finish my scholarship – I just couldn't handle that.

SUZANNE: In Clawson were there any great stories or legends that surround Clawson that you know of?

FONTA: Well they tell about how Clawson used to be Kingsville or Kings something and it was in another place at Rock Canyon and the Apostle came down to Clawson and told them they needed to move it because the alkali was going to be so bad they'd have to move their houses and everything in a few months because the alkali was getting so bad their houses would sink. And he told about he went over where the church house was built and he had a team or horses and a new buggy and every time he'd get ready to get in the buggy and go the singletree would break and they were brand new. So they would fix it and he did that the third time and he said "This is where the town is supposed to be" and they named it Clawson after him. They did move their houses and stuff there and it's good they did because the alkali came in the water and it raised up and it is a big swampy mess down there. Other than where the church was on the hill and that's where they decided to have the town of Clawson.

SUZANNE: You mentioned when storms would come, your Dad could hear and you would go out and watch the floods. Tell me about that.

FONTA: Well when the storms would come we'd hitch up the wagon and horses and we'd head for Rock Canyon to watch the washes because by then you could hear the floods coming down. It would be rocks and trees and the water would come clear to the top and go over the banks and it would last sometimes an hour or two. It would just flood everything that was in its way and then we'd go back home. We didn't get too close because it was great big boulders and trees and everything coming down.

SUZANNE: Could you hear this like your Dad could?

FONTA: Everybody could hear it. You could hear it rumbling and coming down. That's when they'd hurry and hitch up the team and away we'd go. Not just us - everybody and there were no cars. So they went in wagons and teams. Everybody just loaded in to go watch it.

SUZANNE: Were there any great characters that came from Clawson that you know of?

FONTA: They were all characters.

SUZANNE: That would make a fun town I think.

FONTA: It was a fun town. One thing about it is that Coxes had a little grocery store and the post office was there. The mail would come from Price on a truck and he would gather up milk and cream going and coming. Everybody would hurry up to the post office and always go early and sit up there and gossip and talk and tell what was going on. The mail truck would come through about 8:00 in the morning going towards the south. They'd sit up there and visit and talk and stay there many hours sometimes and when the mail truck would come back sometimes people would catch a ride to go to Price with him. He'd stop along the way and gather up the milk and cream cans.

SUZANNE: How long has it been since you've seen Clawson?

FONTA: The last time I was down for Thanksgiving.

SUZANNE: Has it changed a lot?

FONTA: Yes. Lots and lots of houses there now that wasn't there when I was a kid and lots of the houses that were there when I was a kid aren't there any more. And the main road doesn't go through there either. It goes up above Clawson - it used to go right through the middle of Clawson.

SUZANNE: You mentioned a store.

FONTA: Coxes store-it was on the main street of Clawson at that time. It was on the south end.

SUZANNE: So how long have you lived up here in West Valley?

FONTA: 55 years.

SUZANNE: What was it like when you moved here?

FONTA: Well when we first moved here we lived in Kearns and there was a school there. We lived on the corner across from the school and a few houses. My sister lived in Kearns at that time. But when you went up over the railroad there wasn't a house or nothing up across there this way, only two or three farmhouses.

SUZANNE: How has it changed now?

FONTA: There are houses and stores and people and people and more roads. I remember when we lived there we'd go for a ride just in back of our houses and there were washes and we had dogs and we'd let

them run through there. Kids would go through there with their BB guns hunting and that. There were no houses or nothing. You see what it's like now. We lived in another house before we came here. A little white house and then we moved up here and there were just this house and 7 others. There were fields and no more houses at all. So all of that has been built since we were here.

SUZANNE: Tell me how you and Grandpa met.

FONTA: Well I belonged to South Emery High and he belonged to North Emery High School. That was big competition and there would be basketball games and after that there would be dances. I was in the pep club and at the intermission we did our whatever we did and when we sat back down some of my friends said "Look at those guys that just came in. I bet they're from Huntington." And they were. And of course I saw Grandpa and my girlfriend said "We dare you to ask him to dance" when the game was over and I didn't for a long time and they just kept it up so they said "Oh you daresn't ask him" so I asked him to dance and he was very reluctant – didn't want to dance with me. Anyhow I danced with him that dance and then he had a couple of friends that asked two of my friends to go to a movie and they went with them in the next week or two but I never heard anything or thought anything about him and then one day he called me on the phone and wanted to know if I wanted to go to the movie with him and two or three of his friends and their girlfriends and I finally said I would. Anyhow that's where I met him. He'd just got out of the service. He hadn't been out of the service too long. He didn't finish 12th grade –he joined the service.

SUZANNE: Where did he go?

FONTA: He went into the Marine Air Corps in California – the first place he went. Given the history I can't think of it.

SUZANNE: What did he do?

FONTA: Well he was going to be a mechanic and that's what he started out as and one time the commanding officer came in and asked him if he knew how to drive and if he had a driver's license and he told him he did and he said "I want you to take me and so-and-so to this place" and he did and he ended up being a chauffeur. He never did do any mechanicing. He was the chauffeur if they would go to a different place he'd fly with them and then chauffer them around and they 'd feed him. He did that most of the time he was in the service. They said he'd have to take his turn standing guard but not too long. Anyhow it was at the Marine Air Corps Base in California, wherever that was.

SUZANNE: Did he ever tell you any war stories?

FONTA: No, the war was over when he was there.

SUZANNE: How many children did you two have?

FONTA: Six.

SUZANNE: Tell me about them.

FONTA: Well there are five boys and one daughter. I love them dearly. I would like to smash their heads together a lot of times but if I'd learned that they had lives and they had to live them the way that they needed to live them. I tried to make them live the way I thought they should live and that isn't the way it's supposed to be and it didn't work that way. We'd all have been better off if I hadn't tried to push them so hard to do the things I thought they should be doing. But they just had to live their own lives. It took me many, many years to realize that. We 'd all have been better off if I'd had brains enough to know that before. I'd probably do the same thing.

SUZANNE: Who's your oldest child?

FONTA: My oldest child is Lynn J. Anderson.

SUZANNE: What was he like? Do you remember his birth or what he was like growing up?

FONTA: Yes because that was I think one of the highlights of my life is when they placed him in my arms. Because I had such a difficult birth with him. He could draw friends like honey. He just gathered friends from day one. He'd come home from school and he'd have a dog or a cat or a squirrel or anything. "Look what followed me" he said. "This followed me all the way home. Can I take it? It's sick." A lot of times I'd see him coming in with his shoelace wrapped around its neck, dragging it along, bringing it home.

Very, very intelligent in school. Scott had to work so hard. He had good grades but he'd stay up lots of times most of the night studying. And Scott always had a desire to make money or have a job. We got him a little red wagon and he'd go around to Coxes and get people's groceries for them and haul them for them and he'd charge a nickel or a dime or something. There were two or three widows in the ward who were glad to have him do that! He was always trying to make money and Lynn was always trying to jew him out of it. His kids say that he still has that first nickel he made. But he got something and he'd and to this day he has poor health because he'd lay awake at night trying to figure out some way to make more money.

Lynn never went on a mission but he brought more people into the church than most missionaries.

SUZANNE: He had quite a rapport with people. Who was next?

FONTA: Scott, and I told you about him already. He went on a mission, served a good mission, and he's been very active in the church all his life. He's a great guy and has a great family. Lynn has a great family. With just so many things together and we're very, very close to all of them. I wish we were still that close. Our next son was Kenneth and he was extra intelligent. He had such a brain on him. He was the President in the classes and the Vice President and the Vice President of the high school and just very, very intelligent. And it wasn't a struggle for him – it was just easy and he made friends easy. Then he got in with the wrong crowd and it was one thing after another. He wanted to join the Army and we finally signed to let him go and he went to Germany. Actually the only thing he'd drink is beer and he'd become an alcoholic. By the time he got home he was an alcoholic from drinking all that beer and it seemed like he just had one kind of problem after another. But a great, great guy – he'd do anything for you or anybody else. Him and his wife would go to the homeless under the underpass at that time on

Christmas and Thanksgiving and furnish all the food and serve them breakfast and lunch. And the most of the time bring 3 or 4 of those people home with them to eat dinner with them Just something like that all of the time. Always giving somebody something or bringing somebody home to eat or take care of them.

Then there's Carla. She's always jewing her brother out: "I'll do your job outside if you'll do mine inside." They all wanted to play musical instruments. She had a violin she wanted to play and she played "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" till the boys would ask if I'd make her go out on the step and practice.

SUZANNE: How long did she do that?

FONTA: Three years. Fifty million "Twinkle Twinkle Little Stars". That's about as far as she ever got. The same way in her dancing. The teacher said "I'll pay you to take her home. She's such a klutz. I'll pay you if you won't bring her here."

SUZANNE: I'll bet she's a lot of fun.

FONTA: Next was Phillip. He was very demanding (and still is). I shouldn't say that but if things didn't go his way when the kids would play games and he didn't win, he'd sometimes lay on the floor and kick and scream and bawl "They cheated me. They cheated me." He also went on a mission and he didn't go till he was 20 but he did go on a mission and he's a lot better. He's learned to control his temper and he's doing good.

And then Lee is our baby. He was everybody's baby. I don't know if he ever cried. If he'd act like he was going to whimper or cry somebody would grab him and hold him or feed him or play with him and he was always so tall and skinny we couldn't buy clothes that would fit him so I made his clothes. For his 12th birthday his Dad asked him what he'd like for his birthday and he said "Could I have a pair of boughten jeans?"

SUZANNE: I'll bet it was hard to find pants for tall people.

FONTA: At times they didn't have them. And his feet were long and thin – we'd have to send someplace and get his shoes. Kenneth would go through a pair of shoes a week. The toes – what he did to get those holes in the toes of his shoes. He'd go through a pair of shoes once a week and shoes would last the others maybe six months unless they outgrew them.

SUZANNE: Your family spent a lot of time outdoors camping and hunting and stuff like that.

FONTA: Fishing. As soon as the fishing season came we were off. We didn't have even a tent most of the time. We just spread camp quilts out on the ground and took a sack of potatoes, onions and some jam. I'd stay dry trying to keep the kids out of the water while Dad would go fishing.

SUZANNE: I'll bet there are a lot of great memories.

FONTA: I went on one deer hunt and that was enough for me. I couldn't stand to see them shoot the deer and it was too cold – it snowed. That was the first and last deer hunt I went on.

SUZANNE: Were you in cars?

FONTA: Well my family had a car. The radiator on the one leaked so bad we'd have to haul water in cans and stop and fill it up before we got up the hill. We shot and ate a lot of pheasants.

SUZANNE: How has being a parent changed you?

FONTA: Well I guess it didn't change me as good as it ought to. As I said I wish I did things a lot different than I've done but I did the best I knew. The only thing is I screamed at them a lot and I wish I hadn't have screamed at them like that. And I'd spank their bottoms sometimes when they really got in trouble, and I'd do all of them – not just one if there was any trouble and they'd say "What are you spanking us for? We didn't even do it." "That's because you're going to do it. "

SUZANNE: Who was your favorite relative? Tell me about your relatives.

FONTA: I couldn't tell you about them all but I think the most fun relative was my Uncle that lived in Montana. My aunt and uncle were big, big huge people. His name was Louie Hitchcock and her name was Aunt Dora. But they would come at least twice a year and when they'd come the folks would have to brace up the bed because it would break down . It didn't matter what they did – it would break down. And then they'd lay in bed and smoke cigars and that whole house would stink horrible. They'd make a bed all over the front room floor for the kids and when they came it was so fun – we just had good times. And when we'd go to eat he'd always want to eat his dessert first. Finally I asked him why and he said "I want to make sure that I've got room for it. And I'd get some." But they were just such fun people. In those days everybody would come and everybody would sleep for two or three days, not just one night. We had good times.

SUZANNE: What did you and Grandpa do for a living?

FONTA: He worked in the coal mine and construction. And he took me in Leemaster's coal mine – he was driving a truck for them and he took me up to get a load. I rode up with him and he took me in the mine – that's the first I'd been in a mine. And he left me up against a wall and told me not to move, to stay there – he had to go find Mr. Leemaster to tell him something. And I could hear all that equipment and everything going on. After I'd been there he said "You're never going back in that mine again ever." And so we came to Salt Lake and he went to school to become a diesel mechanic.

SUZANNE: How many mines did he work in?

FONTA: About five near as I can remember.

SUZANNE: Tell me their names.

FONTA: Well the first one was Hiawatha then Sunnyside and Royal, Castle Gate and then he worked at the Robinson Mine and a Church Mine that he didn't work there all the time. They needed somebody for a few days or weeks or something and he'd go give them a hand. And then there was a mine between

Emery and Ferron, I don't know what the name of that was, but he worked there for a while. It wasn't Consol.

SUZANNE: Was it Brown?

FONTA: I don't know . I can't remember. I know it wasn't Brown but I can't tell you what it is. He worked construction when the mines would go on strike.

SUZANNE: And he came out here and was a diesel mechanic?

FONTA: Ummm hmmm. He worked for I and L and I can't think of the last one where he retired from.

SUZANNE: Tell me about your jobs, the things you've done.

FONTA: Well the only jobs that I've ever done I was in the cooking industry. I was a chef at several restaurants and then B.G. Scott was a contractor or something and I cooked for him. And did parties and things for him. That's about the amount of it. I cleaned houses one time for people to move into and of course I'd do that at night while the kids were in bed. Then when June changed his shifts I had to quit that because we didn't want to leave the kids alone and I didn't want to leave them with anybody.

SUZANNE: If you can do anything now, what would you do?

FONTA: I would probably go to a place where there were handicapped children or people (mentally disabled, not as much physically as mentally). I have a soft spot in my heart for people who have problems and people who are on drugs. In fact I went to Whittier School and they had a special class where I worked and I really got attached – I just did it as volunteer service. I went to LDS Services and did that for several years and it was just for people to more or less listen to their problems and encourage them and I loved that. I loved that a lot. But I'd get so attached and I'd go down to the detention center and I'd do that at night sometimes from 12:00 at night till 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning. They'd need somebody to stay there and I just feel so bad for them. But I loved that and if I could do that I'd do that.