

Mike Acedo—Barrio Anita Transcriptions

Interviewer: Oh, it stopped I don't know why, but you're...you're doing great. Um, um, what was um, is there something like that is trad—like a tradition, like that was a tradition there in Barrio Anita...that you can think of?

Mike: Well u-uh you know uh one of the—one of the traditions and—and we still have it every year is we make uh, uh my daughter, uh my wife can't anymore because of her health but uh my daughter is the one that does the uh green corn tamales.

Interviewer: Green corn...

Mike: Yeah Green corn tamales, and uh my dad started that tradition that if we going to have green corn tamales you have to have short ribs. Grilled short ribs. And that's—that's uh that's a combination that we still go at it you know. And then pozole and uh and because of the fact that my mom always had these—all these people at the house you know she used to make uh uh little uh cheese tortillas, you know corn tortillas with cheese, and uh they used to make a uh what they called uh Atole. It's a drink made out of I guess flour and stuff like that you know, but uh and every now and then we don't make it anymore but uh uh my momma when she was here, she used to make it. And uh but uh you know that's, that's about uh it as far as I can remember, you know as far you know traditions like that you know. I mean I loved to go to the movies back than—I haven't been to a movie in years but uh back than that was all we did was go to the movies you know. And go to the store. There were so many Chinese stores in our barrio and the Lo family, Lo that's the one that was closest to our house, and uh back than it was all on credit you know you would get your little what they used to call a Cartera—was a little notebook—and you'd go there and you'd get what you wanted and then they would mark it down and then at the end of the month you would pay 'em. Sometimes I would go over board to the point that sometimes a Cartera wasn't available to me because I mean the charges were uh (laughing) way over budget you know (laughing). You know buying sodas and cakeitos and you know all that junk stuff you know.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mike: Yeah but uh yeah it was a good ole, good ole times.

Interviewer: Did—did they also live there in the—in Barrio Anita or did they just own their store there?

Mike: No, they lived there, they lived there, they owned a store and they lived there, it was small uh you know but I remember me uh going there watching tv 'cause they...the Tellez families and the Lo family were the first ones that had TVs back in the 50's and so I would spend some time you know watching tv at their house and uh 'cause we didn't—we didn't have a phone we didn't have—nothing like that. I remember my mom bought me a small little radio and I would listen to the radio a lot you know, and I would read a lot. You know when I was a kid my father worked with the sanitation department he used to bring back a lot of magazines—a lot of inside detective magazines, a lot of comic books, boxes of comic books, I wish I had half of the comic books that I used to have, brand new in cellophane you know and uh and so a lot of the time I would spend time reading you know. This is what I

encourage my kids to do now you know is read if you learn how to read and comprehend uh it will help you in the—in life as you—as you go into your career you know.

Interviewer: and so then you, you said you went to Davis school...

Mike: um huh, Davis School, yes.

Interviewer: Was it—how were the instructors? Did they teach in Spanish or English...or both?

Mike: No, no shoot when I went to school the only because I was raised with blacks—African Americans. They had from where we lived right in back of us there were the Moore family. Beautiful family. Church going family, very responsible. And uh then on the other side across the street from us was the Nobles, Noble family and down the line we had then we had Author Bert and various African Americans there and it was mainly Chinese, Mexican American, African American and there was like maybe one or two Anglos and but that was about it you know it was a—it was a comprised of those three groups, of people.

Interviewer: And did the like the Asians, and the African Americans, did they also get invited to the gatherings? or was it just like...

Mike: They were kind of too to themselves you know, one thing they did get involved in and they called it the Chingo-American club and uh it was uh, it was uh, softball. So, they were good at softball and so there was a competition there. They used to play the Chicanos you know, and uh, and they were good and so they all knew Spanish.

Interviewer: Oh, they did?

Mike: the same thing with the black African Americans, the Nobles they knew Spanish they were at my house all the time they loved to eat those bean burros you know (laughing) and as a matter of fact there was on—I remember the Moore family, Warren. I used to sit underneath the Mulberry tree and I used to tell warren, this was in the summer time, “Warren just pretend you’re a barber” and uh he would start just with a couple of sticks uhhh you know kind of going through my hair and so forth like he was cutting my—he wasn’t cutting my hair but he was just kind of rubbing my head and so forth and I used to go asleep. And he would—yeah two hours, an hour and a half later I get—I’d wake up and he was still going at it you know and uhhh but I knew what he wanted, he wanted a bean burro

Interviewer: (laughing)

Mike: That was—that was the payment, a bean burro. Yeah.

Interviewer: Ahh that’s so cute.

Mike: Yeah, but uh you know it was a a a great time, a great time there in the barrio. I mean I’ve been here 50 years and I think I know only about maybe 3-4 people you know. Yeah, so that’s th—that’s the difference, that’s the difference.

Interviewer: Umm uh do you remember—it—was there ever like any like dramatic experience that happened? or...

Mike: I think there was a fire, I think there was a fire uh—uh at one time that really excited a lot of people there and just scared them you know there was a big fire and I don’t really quite remember,

that's what I heard from the uh old folk there but I do remember the time when there was an explosion that killed lot of the, a lot of the neighborhood women. And it was a cleaners, it was—by cleaners I'm talking about uh it was like a laundry type of place—and they used to call it supreme cleaners at it was located up on the a, up on grant and stone up in that area. And uh there was a gas leak, and somebody turned on the light switch and it sparked and the whole thing just went up. And there were about um—well a lot of people died but from the barrio I would say there were about a good uh uhhhh 8-12 people that were young, young people. Mothers, others that weren't married, that were students, and so it was a dramatic experience. Yeah very dramatic experience back then.

Interviewer: (Inaudible) And there were never really any murders? Or like any Violence? (Inaudible)

Mike: Umm no, no, the only—the only violence that was uh I think that uh you know maybe one of the husbands uhh would go out and get drunk and he come home and started banging on the windows or stuff like that, but we already knew who it was you know so I mean it—It didn't bother us. We--like you mentioned earlier, we used to sleep outside in the summer time you know and there we had a grapevine and we used to water it down and that was our swamp cooler because if there's a little breeze you know it would come through the—the leaves of the grapevine and kind of cooled things down you know. And but uh you know then we used to...I remember there was a family by the name of Garbanza, Simon Garbanza, and he would—he would play his guitar—he had a 12, 12 uh, sting guitar. And he would sit out and we were so close by that that was the music that put us to sleep just listened to his guit—professionally turned professional, the guy was very good at it. Uh you know uhh he had his own mariachi group uhh that he used to teach uhh at one of the high schools; but uh you know it was quiet, it was quiet, the neighborhood was quiet, not much going on. We had one bar there by the name of—the bar was uhh back then—the lady that owned it her name was Goldbon. Uhh and then from there uh one of the uhh neighbors his name was Cara—one of the Carabajales—Venturo Carabajal, he used to own that bar so most of the men used to congregate to the bar there. And then we had a—a ballroom by the name of Victoria and yeahhh that's where some of the fights would occur you know. And you see what I used to do is that every morning—they had you know, the the, t-the dances were on Saturday—every morning I used to get up, early, and go scout the parking lot and then I would find change and sometimes you know when they were fighting someone would lose his watch. And so, I'd you know go in (laughing) and so I'd come—I'd come out to sometimes you know little little—I used to call them little treasures you know. But that was you know, that—that was a what went on back in those days you know yeah but it was—it as a good experience you know.

Interviewer: Umm well I have one more question. Umm, umm what do you—like what's like one memory that you just have, that you can't—that it's just there recorded forever like from Barrio Anita?

Mike: Well you know one of the—one of the memori-memories that uh th-that comes to my mind often is uh that uhh the love that I had from you know my uncles and especially my-m-my mom and then I had another mom, and uh my birth mom, and so I was lucky. But that—one of the memories that stands out is that when I was going to school we had a tub, a bath tub, and we used to—on the woodstove—we used to heat water so we could go ahead and we used to what we called cuartear and we used to make sure we had enough hot water in there and then we would turn it on and get a good medium and we would use that good medium heat. And then getting out and then trying to get dressed when it was so cold and I-I said to myself, my God no. You know now at days things have changed you know to the point that I think uh some kids are spoiled I think now at days because you know they have all the

luxuries, and but back then in the winter you did cold and uh you would just put another army blanket on top of you just to keep warm. But uh it was just growing up in that type of environment its unheard of now and to me—to me I feel very fortunate to be able to have grown up in that environment. It was tough you had to go to work, the work ethic back then there were no gimmies from nowhere you had to work for what you had. And when I started working with the City I was very young, and uh I bought my first car when I was about 17 years old and uh and you know I just kept on working, kept on working and uh now I'm retired and uh you know just enjoying my grandkids. I think there is a party every week of some type and following my granddaughter, I follow her, she plays in California a lot, you know we go to mainly up in Huntington part, Huntington Beach up in that area—love to go up there. And we follow her to you know New Mexico. She's been to—I kind of kid with her because she has logged so many miles because she has played in Georgia, uhhh she's played in Saint Louis, Texas, California, New Mexico, Utah, all over the place so, but uh We've just enjoyed them—Las Vegas especially. I think there is a tournament coming up in March by the way that I'm looking forward to going, but uhh that's you know just kind of relaxing a little bit just trying to you know—hopefully you know our health uh you know, uhh stays along with our enthusiasm and we'll be alright.

Interviewer: yes.

Mike: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, well thank you. Thank you.