

Aunt Pat's Interview, 2005

This interview with Pat Ramirez took place in the kitchen at the Pino Ranch in 2005.

The Old House

Pat: But they really enjoyed each others company.

Paul: Were your mom and dad living in the old house, and this house was here too, or

Pat: After we moved from the old house, Pres and Esther moved into the old house. Pres and Esther used to live in Carrizozo. It's all mixed up.

Paul: Kept moving around?

Pat: We had the house in town and then there was the old house and then in the meantime they were like siblings growing up and getting married and it wasn't like there were nine people living in a two bedroom house. By the time that I was a teenager my sisters were married. And some of them were away from home, and some of them were back with children. But that was fun.

Greg and Ray

Pat: I really loved my sobrinos.. Like little brothers and sisters of mine. Like Greggie, he was so cute. Esther always dressed him up in I guess it's called ... those that snap, one piece, with blue stripes, coveralls or overalls. Coveralls.

Pat: Carmen would dress Ray in cowboy pants and cowboy boots and they were about ... I remember Ray Saavedra's hair was - it kind of grew like kind of like it grows now, I think, real full. He looked like a little skunk, real black hair but kind of like a stripe. And Greggie, his hair was all over his head. I was starting to look like Greggie here now with ... I mean his hair, black hair, and it was all over. And Esther. You know the girls would clean up the kids of course and in the morning they were always bright and pink, they'd go out and play. Greggie would come in with buggers down to here, seemed like he'd been playing in the mud. Dirt, dirt, dirt, dirt all over. The snaps, maybe he had to go, snapped the wrong way. But so pleasant, I mean, he had a big smile, beautiful. And Ray Saavedra kind of a little more _____, but he was a little smaller, but more or less the same.

Pat: And I remember Ray, little tiny Ray, speaking kind of grumpy, sounded like his dad I think you know. And Greggie he was just a big teddy bear. Each one was so cute.

Paul: They had each other to play with?

Pat: They were always together, always together.

Sad Ray

Pat: And I remember one more thing that I remember about Ray, don't quote this, this is just between us, just comes to my mind at the moment. I remember once Ray Saavedra was sitting out on the stoop here, looking very unhappy, little tiny kid, I guess he was still wearing a diaper under his levis. Anyhow I said - What's the matter Ray? Me peore mama. Jose me hole mama. Porque Ray?

Ray said ... Porque me care (or me y me) mis calzones y me hue carada estos. (I think this is I have wet my pants)

Essie: How do you like me now!

Pat: And I think that sort of describes Ray.

Paul: You want to scoot around with me. Do you want to mess with me, do you really want to go there.

Greg and the Pumpkin

Pat: There was a cupboard there, somewhat like that, but kind of out with big doors, right behind the door there. And they had put a pumpkin down in there, a great big pumpkin. And I guess it kind of rolled into the door and it rolled out and little Reggie was out here and he happened to be seeing it and all of the sudden like "big ball, big ball" and he ran. It was like the big ball had taken on a life of its own, how scary.

Pat: Maybe this was somewhat later on than that. Maybe somebody had already explained about pumpkins. And he said - you take the pumpkin, you throw it on the ground. You put it in the oven and you eat cake.

Question: Did you throw that one on the ground.

Pat: I suppose somebody we did, I don't remember, but he must have gotten that from somewhere.

Paul: His cooking lesson.

Crops

Ginny: What kind of things did you - what kind of crops did you grown. When you said pumpkin I wondered where that might have come from.

Pat: I suppose they bought it from somewhere. They had a garden there outside the old house toward ... some years. Grew vegetables, I don't remember growing big pumpkins.

Ginny: You probably grew chili.

Pat: Yes chili, and cabbages, tomatoes. And I remember the windmill, it was always ... it would be always chugging along, anywhere you were you heard the clink, clink, clink clink

Essie: That rhythm, I remember that.

Pat: And then intermittently you'd hear the water, see the pipe must have been kind of high, the water pouring down into the tank, such a soothing sound, a little spicket? under the cottonwood tree.

The Cottonwood Tree

Someone: The cottonwood tree. The cottonwood tree I bet spanned a bigger space than this room, much bigger, a tremendous tree.

Pat: And I remember lying across there listening to the water, reading a True Story magazine, can you imagine. We had to hide True Story magazine. She knew, I guess but she didn't want to encourage it. She liked for us to read.

Paul: Now people make water fountains to get that sound. I remember those trees. I think they had white bark and they were like real tall and had ...

Pat: That's something else. That's something that grew inside the ... The water used to gather. When it flooded it was like an earth tank there, and I remember Pres planted those like a dark green with a white underneath. But that was many years after the cottonwood. (The later tree) - The green was like real deep green, and silver leaves.

Paul: It kind of branched out like that, but it was real big because all the kids used to climb up there, real high. And look out toward town and see people coming. So there was a big cottonwood there before ?

Pat: Yes, right beside, here's the windmill, right here was the cottonwood tree. The windmill ... the aluminum tank that gathered the water, and then the cottonwood tree...

Paul: To the south.

Pat: Yes, all kind of together. A beautiful spot. We sort of gravitated out there, the kids, well everybody.

Essie: When you say cottonwood is it that same one that's there?

Pat: No, You know after my dad died that tree died. I don't know, it seemed to be a real healthy tree, but it happened.

Ginny: I wonder how those trees came to be there, did someone plant them? They're nowhere else, right?

Pat: Do you know what a cottonwood looks like? I don't think there's any cottonwood trees around here. It's like what you see next to the rivers, like going to Nogal you see these bright beautiful ...

Essie: Don't the trees have a white trunk but not necessarily.

Ginny: The underside of the leaf is sort of silvery?

Paul: No, they're just all green. They get real big. They grow along the Rio Grande and

sometimes where there's ...

Pat: Where there's running water.

Essie: In Farmington they have those great big trees in the back yard of ___ house. ditch...

The Well and the Windmill

Pat: I was thinking it occurs to me that the trees grew there on account of the well, it must have gotten its water from the well, because it was a tremendous great tree.

Ginny: I hadn't realized that the windmill had fallen down.

Paul: It didn't fall down, but ...

Ginny: I thought it maybe just from age, but it was a storm?

Paul: It didn't fall down, but my dad took it down because it had gotten twisted up by a freak storm. He just came here one day and got ... after how many years it was there, he couldn't stand seeing it that way so he took it down.

Ginny: It must have been a Microburst or something. We had one go through there in our neighborhood where Bob's shop is and it took down trees, huge trees. It didn't hit our yard but ... It was a microburst.

Tia Louisa

Paul: So what do you remember about Tia Louisa, what stories?

Pat: One comes to mind this moment. When my dad was very sick at the old house, Louisa and Alfred, they came and went from Carrizozo, and they came over one time and Michelle was it was night time and she was getting ready to go to do a promise, she had promised that if dad improved or whatever, or maybe this was just begging god for him to get well, so she was going to walk to town ... she was religious to start with, I mean really, like churchy, and all that, and I was the rebel. I didn't feel at home in church from the moment that they separated me from my family and put me over there among the little Catholic kids that knew what they were doing and they looked at me like I didn't belong there - "Where did you come from?" And you had to stand up when they did and sit down when they did and all that at an early age. But then I grew up. I always loved God, in my own way, but I don't feel that I had to be in a certain place.

Paul: But Louisa was into it?

Pat: Louisa was into it, and all the rest of the girls. But anyhow, she had promised, and going it must have been cold weather - she was looking for a jacket and all that, and I didn't know about this - where are you going hijo, well I'm going to go to the church to say a rosary, whatever, a novena.

Richard: That was one thing about my grandmother. She went to church religiously.

Pat: Okay, so I just hated to see Louisa, well she had to walk. Alfred had driven, they had driven over but she had to keep her promise by walking. And I just couldn't stand to see her walking by herself, and so I said wait a minute, let me get a jacket too, and I got a jacket and there we go, too, too, too, too, too, we had a nice walk, full moon, we were in no hurry, but we walked over there, and then we walked back. That's when the west was wild.

Paul: How old were you do you think?

Pat: Oh I must have been 15.

Essie: Julie ...

Richard: My second cousin? We have got a big family.

Essie: Well, the Martinez ...

The Cudner Ranch

...

Pat: He married her. But before then she got a job at the Cudner ranch because it took

Paul: It was the boys.

Response: Hopefully it was the boys.

Response: So the Cudner ranch?

Pat: Oh the mosita said that he was on a diet. And she said oh, but the freezer is full of good food and everything. Those were hard times for people like us. And then Mrs. Cudner would sit next to him when he was eating. And ...he had everything but his health.

Q: John Eliot and all those. Was that when you were young, like a teenager.

Pat: I was a teenager:

Greg: But then they sold it two or three times. It's been sold

Pat: The Cudner place.

Greg: Yes, and then they sold it, they sold it again and again.

Pat: Yes, they sold the Cudner place.

Pat: And then I heard that that their son had come back and bought back the old ranch. He had been a child ... and he came back

Greg: Somebody else has it, who who has it now? Who were the people that had the

helicopter?

Pat: Yes, who was that? James ...? They were'n't that. Every time the Cudners were missing I think James or something maybe like the managers or something.

Silvas and Others

Paul: I read in the newspaper or heard somewhere that Clark Gable lived out there and some other big movie star that they gone out to that ranch and stayed out there.

Pat: Oh, that they stayed out there? I wouldn't doubt it. Got to ask Aunt Mary.

Greg: She was brought up on the ranch out there?

Pat: And Chavez. I think their mother died young. I think they were orphaned young and and so really they didn't have that much of a life then.

Greg: So they were brought up with the Silvas?

Pat: More or less between the Silvas and and my mother.

Essie: They would come over and her mom would do their laundry like they were little orphans.

Pat: This was like they were all grown up, I think they were living up in the mountains, the Silva ranch. But I remember driving down the trail .

Greg: I went out there one time, with Henry, on horseback.

Greg: And then I remember they would both come down every once in a while ... they were together and would visit for a couple days. then go back.

Essie: Both meaning Uncle Henry and who.

Greg: Rafael.

Essie: Rafael Chavez, so they were uncle and nephew?

Greg: I thought they were brothers.

Pat: Oh, you're talking about Henry Silva. They were good friends. Henry Silva Jr.

Greg: Henry Silva.

Pat: Oh, they were good friends. I just loved Henry. All those Henrys. And I liked Fred Chavez too, he was real.

Greg: Yes, he was real.

Essie: That aunt that you never knew, Aunt Edujiven who married a Chavez - do you know how many kids she had. Do you have any idea how many Chavez's there are?

Pat: I mentioned Juan Chavez, que no.

Paul: Did Henry used to play music or who was that

Pat: Henry was the only one that didn't play.

Paul: What instruments did they used to play?

Pat: I think they played the guitar, I don't remember.

Greg: It was Peraltas that were the musicians.

Essie: Hita married a Peralta, he was a Silva.

Pat: I hear that he was a mean old man, Peralta.

Essie: Now that's another thing that mom was figuring out because we were talking about the Silvas there and then you were saying Quita was the first one, and then somebody else but then you said wait a minute, Katie and Susie, but she never knew Katie and Susie from over there, she knew Katie and Susie from town.

Pat: Katie was our neighbor, and Charlie was her kid and all that, so I never connected her with the Silvas but she was one of them.

Greg: Oh, she was one of them, that's how Charlie Leslie got involved.

Essie: What about Susie?

Pat: Susie was a professor in Las Vegas for ever and ever, and had all kinds of honors. She married an Archuleta, Tony Archuleta, from around Las Vegas, a good looking man.

Paul: Crystal's friend is an Archuleta, Paul Archuleta, they've been up in Taos forever.

Essie: Do you think that might be the oldest of Uncle Henry's kids.

Pat: Well, after Frances maybe was Susie. She married this Tony Archuleta, good looking, young, a little younger than her, but he died very young. They had two kids, Gloria and Tony. And she was teaching. How could she teach with two kids, so she left them at La Tia Rita's with Aunt Rebecca and every once in a while she would come over. And they called my Aunt Rebecca Mama.

Greg: Who were the kids?

Pat: Gloria and Tony Archuleta.

Greg: How old are they now?

Pat: I think both of them have died, of cancer. All of their family died from cancer, the Peraltas

Greg: Maybe they were cancer prone.

The Bomb Testing

Pat: Maybe the fallout from the testing and all that, I think they worked there, around Los Alamos.

Question: How far is it from Las Vegas to all of that testing.

Pat: It was just like an epidemic among those people..

Someone else: Maybe from the testing and all that.

Greg: Maybe it was the water or something.

Essie: Greg, tell us if you remember when they blew up a bomb out there.

Paul: How was it when the thing went off?

Greg: I don't remember it but I was here.

Essie: You don't remember, was it a bright day?

Greg: I was probably outside running around but I don't remember even seeing it or hearing it. Just think, It was about 14-15 miles as the crows fly, and it blew out in the atmosphere.

Pat: I didn't know that,

Essie: That explains a lot.

Greg: We all go irradiated here. I don't remember it but I was here. Maybe I might have seen it.

Paul: I heard you all were going somewhere to an athletic event early in the morning on the bus. They said that it was so bright there was a guy that, well, they were driving down the highway from Albuquerque to TRC or Las Cruces or somewhere and he saw this bright light. He said what was that. The guy was blind all his entire life but he saw the flash of light, it was so bright.

Paul: Some other people said it was so bright that they were on this side, they thought the sun was coming up on the wrong side of the earth. They thought this is the end of everything. The sun's coming up on the wrong side of the world.

Greg: Pat, where were you in July 1945? Were you right here?

Reymunda's Death

Pat: I was right here because I think my mother died then. She died on St. Patrick's

Day. She died 17 March, 2 days after her birthday. She was all dressed up to go for a checkup. She walked in through that door, and there was a chair right there. She came in and Louisa was over here making dough, right here in this kitchen. My mother kind of like - it seemed like she stumbled and sat down in the chair. Louisa looked up and she says -ad one too many too early or something like that, kidding. Then we noticed that there was something, that she was in trouble and she started touching her face and then somebody ran out to call Pres, who was going to pick her up to take her to her check up. And he was all dressed up ready to go. So he ran in here and he came in here and he picked her up. She was real slight, kind of tall, and very slight. He scooped her up and took her to the bed that's in this room. Then he drove off to get the doctor and by the time the doctor got here she was gone.

Paul: It sounds like a stroke.

Pat: Yes, And the Dr. brought us girls in here and told us. He said it was the worst thing in the world that could happen. But actually it would have been worse had she lived, because she would be forever the way she is now, unable to see or to speak or do anything.

Essie: She wasn't that old.

Pat: No, she was 50. And you know, by the time I was 19 both my parents had died. No wonder I'm so traumatized today. I never was really brought up. I rode horseback until I was 19 and never got to see my parents, and then they were gone.

Death of Gregorio and Others

Essie: Carmen was just four months ...

Pat: Carmen died three months before dad died, same thing.

Greg: Same thing that your mother died from, heart attack, stroke?

Pat: No, My dad died of Brights disease. Kidneys.

Essie: So in your life the first one to die was Carmen.

Pat: Carmen was an acute case and my dad was ... had it for months ... chronic. And you know like now they could have kept on living - you know, like Joe, get a new kidney

Essie: Like Joe, he got a new kidney.

Greg: But in those days you just died.

Essie: They didn't have dialysis.

Greg: You just suffer so much and you can't take it any more and poof.

Pat: You can't even say that. It wasn't in your hands.

Essie: You didn't live too long without your kidney functioning at all. You can go a long

time with just 5 percent, 10 percent. But once they're gone ...

Essie: What year did Aunt Carmen die, Ray Saavedra's mother?

Pat: 1942 I believe. Yes, December 7, when the Japanese flew into Pearl Harbor. I believe that that was when ...

Essie: And then your dad right after.

Pat: Pres tried to keep your grandpa alive too by talking about him all the time after he died. I can imagine because I remember once his telling us that he had mentioned your grandpa to you (Greg) and that you were playing you picked up a piece of mint and came and handed it to him and said, here daddy, here's your grandpa. That's as much as you remembered already. But I remember you (Greg) when he was sick I remember you helping him to walk to the bathroom, to the outdoor toilet, and of course you were so little and he had to kind of bend down, and somebody mentioned, oh, he's not helping much. And dad said, oh you'd be surprised how much he is helping. But you were very protective of papa.

Essie: When was the atomic bomb? And when did your mother die, do you know?

Pat: I'd say 1945.

Essie: What was it, the atomic bomb? Carmen died the same year as Pearl Harbor?

Pat: That's what I said before I think.

Essie: Okay, when did we say that grandpa Gregorio Pino died?

Christy: Carmen Pino died December 7, 1942

Essie: So Gregorio Pino, Carmen was in 42.

Christy: Gregorio Pino died April 5, 1943 is what I have, of nephritis.

Essie: And Reymunda was 1945, two years after her husband.

Christy: Reymunda's mother was an Indian, Petra, did you ever know her at all?

Pat: No. In fact I think ...

Essie: She died before you were born.

Pat: No, in fact I think my mother was 17 or maybe younger when her mother died. I don't know where she'd been living before then. But she went to live with Uncle Henry. No, wait a minute, it was her dad that died. Papa Mendez died. And so she and her mother went to live at Uncle Henry's ranch. I heard that the oldest of the Silva girls were jealous of my mother.

Essie: My dad died before and my mother was ... our uncle.

Christy: Petra's husband, Juan Andres Silva, he just died riding his horse?

Pat: I heard even like.

Greg: Didn't Henry Silva die the same way?

Pat: No, he got run over by a car, he was drinking.

Essie: Not your uncle Henry. We've got to say Jr. or Sr.

Christy: Juan Andres Silva died in 1907 riding a horse near Nogal.

Pat: Yes, I think it was what they used to call the Indian Divide in the Capitan mountains.

Greg: Who was that?

Pat: Papa Andres. I think somebody.

Greg: Rafael

Pat: Maybe.

Christy: Did he just fall off the horse?

Pat: He must have had a heart attack, I can imagine.

Essie: When did Aunt Bea die?

Christy: 1984.

Essie: Then after Aunt Bea, who died?

Greg: Aunt Louisa maybe died.

Pat: Somewhere in there Ernest died.

Essie: Paul when did Aunt Louisa die? Do you remember? When did you quit drinking? Because I remember that you quit drinking right around the same time that Aunt Louisa died. Ginny do you remember when Louisa died?

Ginny: Mom had spent some time with me on her way home she stopped by and stayed with Aunt Louisa.

Essie: About 15 years ago? 1990?

Ginny: It was the year we got Tiger (the cat) I think because Granny had spent the summer with you.

Pat: ___ was depressed or something.

Ginny: It was the year we got married so it was 91.

Essie: That was the year Aunt Louisa died, 1991?

Justin: I've had that cat a long time.

Essie: 1995 Uncle Pres died. That's the year Chris died, the same year.

Essie: And then Aunt Esther.

Christy: June 14, 1997.

Essie: What about Uncle Julian and Uncle Alfred?

Same year Uncle Talley died too.

Christy: Talley died May 2001.

Essie: And that was Uncle Julian too?

Essie: What about Uncle Alfred? Poor Uncle Alfred (Martinez)

Justin: Emma's daughter. Theresa

Essie: She was here once one time. Theresa was here once

Essie: Pat was here a long time ago when we were in Tularosa.

Essie: Nobody remembers when Uncle Alfred died. So that's everyone in your line.

Notes, not on tape:

Sky in the Cistern

One of the kids, Sky, fell into the cistern at Louisa's house in Tularosa. Somebody heard a little boy yell for help. They said "What are you doing in the well?" Something happened, I heard the kids got him out. It's a wonder that all those kids survived.

Penco

Penco - every once in a while they would lend this horse to someone in town.. Pres had gotten him in town. He had found him in town wandering around in the alleys. The owner sold him to Pres like he was a house horse. He learned tricks and then grew up and became kind of a trick horse. You could see that horse act up like a bronco. He was a slight horse. I mentioned when he was being ridden he would not gallop. He just jostled until you worked the reins and made him get into a galloping rhythm. He reacted to people who weren't familiar with him.

She had a house in town and they they went and somebody had ridden Penco to the house in town and tied him up in the front yard and would you believe Penco turned on the water and filled the tub. How smart! If he was that smart he would have turned the water off . It was running off the street.

There was a big gate over at the _____. It was a big game. Somehow he would open that gate and let all the rest of the horses come in. They would eat the trees and get into the yard. They ate ____ and when somebody came outside they became wild. The first horse out of the yard was Penco.. He would close the gate behind him and leave the other horses.

There were wild horses on this land. They were all over the place, lots of horses. They were eating grass that the _____.

Penco and Virginia and Pat

We were riding and came across a little stream path. The horse stopped.. I was in the saddle, Ginger was behind me. All of the sudden By that time the horse was spooked. The horse went close to the side of the barbed wire fence. Virginia was in the saddle with me. He put his head way down. I was sitting on the saddle and trying not to fall off. My foot went through the stirrup. Virginia was on top of me. Posts were going past me, and barbed wire. Then Virginia was sitting on the saddle. I had nowhere to go. She was over me and my hands were on the reins. But she was on top of my hands so that I couldn't do anything. I was trying not to fall off and she was plummeting. On one cheek I could feel the horses leg muscles and on the other side of my face were the posts and the barbed wire. And my foot was through the stirrup. All of the sudden Virginia fell. Thank goodness. I would have been dragged all over the place with my foot in the stirrup. I managed to work my way back into the saddle and I got control of the reins.

I went back to help Virginia up. She was knocked plumb out. Virginia had not one button left on her blouse. Her eyelashes were full of dirt. She wasn't even trying to breathe. Just that day I had read a Readers Digest and they printed an article about

mouth to mouth resuscitation. And it was fresh in my mind and I did that, and after a while she started breathing again. Emma was over at the Gallegos house and saw what happened. She had taken the pickup to go get Virginia. We got Virginia back into the pick up and we took her over to the old house where we lived at the time. She was afraid because her dad was very strict and she had come over without permission.

Ray Garcia

Pat wonders about Ray Garcia, a handsome boy who went to her school. Ray asked her to go to a dance and she said something like she would see him there. She gave him a mixed message. He was there and danced with her but danced with other girls too. Later Solomon told her Ray had asked about her.

Bits and Pieces

Louise - got a infection in his leg when he was born.

She would reach out and get his bottle.

My husband

Everybody loved him.

He brought his goat. She got the short

Got my goat,

They had been trying everything. He couldn't keep anything in his stomach. He was the healthiest looking person he didn't have to work out at all. 5'6", 5'7".

It will get real windy.

Raised the rafters with a lever. 2 x 4 then have these guys hold it and and some friends he hired from old Mexico.

Richard's grandfather - it was about 6-7 years ago.

That was the last time I saw him.

Richard: I remember meeting him 6-7 years ago. We would come. My dad was Ernest.

It was after ... the way from the gate