

This interview was conducted by Rickie Lee Bird and Teresa Bird. These girls are the daughters of Richard L. Bird of Cleveland, Utah.

Q: What is your full name?

A: Vonal Knight Allred. Ha! Ha!

Q: What is your birth date?

A: 15 September 1922.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Cleveland, Utah.

Q: Who were your parents?

A: John Franklin Allred and Isabel Knight Allred.

Q: Have you lived in Cleveland all your life?

A: No. I went to Arizona for about seventeen years.

Q: What traits did you admire in your parents?

A: Everything about them.

Q: Were you named after someone? How did you get you name?

A: They said my sister tried to figure out a name for a long while. She just went down a list of names Ronald, Donald. Finally she said, "Vonal" and that's what they picked.

Q: Where were your ancestors come from?

A: I don't know. I heard one time that they said, "The devil raised me on a stump and the sun hatchcd me." Ha! Ha!

Q: Did you have a nick name?

A: Pranks. See I just pulled one on you.

Q: Who are your brothers and sisters?

A: Oh, in the order they came?

Q: If you want to do it that way is fine.

A: Russell, Harold, Doyal, Mary, Utahna, Pranks.

Q: Did you get along with your brothers and sisters?

A: Up until 1958.

Q: Where did you live while you were being raised?

A: In Cleveland. I went to school in Cleveland and Huntington.

Q: In what community events did you participate in?

A: Nothing.

Q: What was the best birthday you had as a child?

A: I think it was my fourteenth birthday.

Q: Why was it your best? What are some of your memories.?

A: I had Rabies, Rabbit fever. I had been sick for a long time, then they thought I died. They wrote my obituary in the paper. That fall I was fourteen years old and I was just glad to be alive.

Q: Did you see the other world like they say on t.v.

A: Oh no. I never did see that. I have wondered about that. I had a fever of 105 degrees for thirty six days. I was unconscious all that time. I went to sleep in early April. It was still cold. No leaves on the trees, no green grass, or nothing. When I woke up the lilacs were all bloomed out, the trees were bloomed out. It was green. I will never forget that.

Q: What was the naughtiest thing you ever did as a child?

A: Well, always pulling rotten pranks on different people I guess. Ha! Ha!

Q: How did your parents punish you?

V: How'd they punish me?

I: Yes.

- A: Pulled my hair. Never spanked me. They always pulled my hair.
- Q: What was your favorite meal?
- V: Meal?
- I: Yes.
- A: Mashed potatoes and gravy, oh no sour dough biscuits, fried potatoes and mutton. In the sheep camp. Does that sound all right?
- I: Yes. Ha! Ha!
- Q: What were your favorite games or toys?
- A: Flipper was my favorite toy. Do you know what a flipper is?
- I: A fish?
- V: No, you know, a flipper.
- I: Oh yes like a sling shot.
- V: Like a sling shot. And a guitar.
- Q: Do you still play the guitar?
- A: Well I do but I don't. My hands has gone bad.
- Q: What games or sports did you like?
- A: Baseball and checkers and Pollyanna. You don't know anything about them now days because they don't exist. Well baseball does but checkers and Pollyanna don't.
- Q: What is Pollyanna?
- A: You shake dice. If you get a five when your dice rolls out you take five jumps forward. It was a good game. That's all I remember about it really.
- Q: What family activities did you like?
- A: Riding horses, mostly.

Q: What chores did you have to do?

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A: Milk cows and I hated it.

Q: I bet that was the time before electric milkers?

A: Oh you bet. I had all kinds of chores, feed chickens, milks cows, feed pigs, gather eggs, herd sheep.

Q: How long were you on a sheep camp?

A: Up until I was about fourteen years old dad had sheep. I spent my summers in a sheep camps. Dad homesteaded out on what the called Whitmore Park. He took up a homestead in 1929. He proved on it. I stayed on it with him all the time. When I was about twelve years old he got sick. He got Asthma. I will never forget that. We rode all day. He rode a horse we called Tommy. I believe I rode a horse we called Blue Goof. Ha! Ha! We rode all day long. We got to the cabin just at sun down. Dad took the saddle off the horse and turned him loose. He went to put the saddle on the porch of the cabin and he just fell over. I was scared, I thought he was dying. Well he was dying. So that horse rolled over. You know when you turn them loose they go out and roll? I caught that horse and put the saddle on him and put dad back on that same horse he'd rode all day and took him down to the head of Soldier Canyon and sent him home. I went back to the cabin and stayed. As a matter of fact I stayed there all the rest of the Summer and took care of the sheep and cows. It was seven days before I ever found out whether dad got home dead or alive. Boy I was scared.

Q: Did you ever have to go to the hospital as a child?

A: Yes.

Q: Why?

A: I had appendicitis. Gang Green set in on me and they had to operate on me.

Q: Did you have a pet?

A: Dogs and cat. One time I took the cat up on the mountain to the ranch. We left it there in the Fall. We couldn't find it when we came out of there in the Fall to go to school. I felt bad. But I was coming home from school i walked passed the chicken coop this was in the latter part of December and that cat that we left on the mountain jumped down on my shoulder. It had come clear from the mountain. It was about thirty six miles through the short cuts at that time. That cat come home. We left there in October and it was the last part of December and it came home.

Q: Who was your best friend?

A: Voien Gilson. He got killed in the war, world War II.

Q: What did you do together?

A: We mostly ride horses around. Chased Jack Rabbits on horses. If we could find coyotes we'd chase them too.

Q: What was your house like?

A: There was different houses. We'd move from one place to another in them days. It was in the 1930's. The house I was born in belongs to Van Jones. Do you guys know Van and Dora Jones? Renae Jones that lives in Cleveland now? Just down off the hill East of the store on the South side of the road. Who lives in the now? One block East of the store right agin the main road, that's where I was born in that house. It was a great big house. We tore it down and remodeled it. Another house I was in when I had Rabies or Rabbit Fever was a grainy that Roy Jensen has down by his corral now. Roy Jensen down East of Cleveland. Do you know Roy Jensen? It's a granary now.

Q: How did your family cook?

A: On a wood cook stove.

Q: How did your family do laundry?

A: On a scrubbing board and I had to help too.

Q: How did your family heat the house?

A: With the cook stove and a wood heater.

Q: How did your family celebrate Valentine.

A: Well that I don't know. The only thing I remember we did in School.

Q: How did your family celebrate Easter?

A: Go out on the mountain ridding on a horse.

Q: How did you celebrate the Fourth of July?

A: We'd come to town in a team and wagon or else on a horse. My mother would give me a quarter and I get some ice cream and soady water and pop corn cause

everything cost a nickel so I got five different things on the Fourth of July with a quarter. I thought I was the richest kid in town. Ha! Ha!

Q: How did you celebrate Halloween?

A: I don't like to tell you that but we went tipping toilets over. Ha! Ha! What you laughing at? I was a little stinker.

Q: How did you celebrate Thanksgiving?

A: Well the only Thanksgiving I can really remember that stands out in my mind I was in the fourth grade. I walked home in six inches of snow. We had to walk back and forth to school, we didn't have school buses. I walked home in six inches of snow on Thanksgiving Day. We had school that day.

Q: Did you have a big dinner?

A: I think mother had a dinner when I got home, that's what stands out in my mind. We always had Thanksgiving dinners.

Q: How did you celebrate Christmas?

A: Well I'll have to tell you the best Christmas that I ever had. My mother made me a marble bag and filled it with marbles. That's right I didn't lose any of my marbles I still haven't lost my marbles.

I: Your Christmas' were about like that.

V: They used to make everything. They didn't have this crooked deal like they got now days. All the business people get together and make people think they have to buy big expensive presents that isn't worth anything and spend thousands of dollars for Christmas. It's a pain in the hind pocket I'll tell you that.

I: Sometimes you were lucky if you got a little pocket knife.

V: That's right. Like I say she made a pink marble bag and put draw strings on the top of it and filled it with marbles. That was the best Christmas I ever had.

Q: What school did you go to?

A: Cleveland Elementary and then Huntington High. I can't remember what they called it. High school in Huntington is all I can remember.

Q: What was your favorite holiday?

A: Christmas and Easter.

Q: What did you like about school?

A: When the bell rang to go home.

Q: What did you hate about school?

A: When I had to get up in the morning and walk to school.

I: Tell me about trips or vacations you had as a child.

V: Well I guess the best trip I ever had was when school would let out I ride the horse up to the ranch that dad homesteaded. We didn't go on any other trips. We didn't go on any trips. We mostly had to take care of business, chores, cows, sheep and horses.

Q: How old were you when you learned to drive?

V: To drive What?

I: Anything.

A: Well I was about two years old when I learned to drive a horse. I guess I was about fifteen when I learned to drive a car.

Q: What was your first vehicle?

A: My first vehicle was a Model A Ford. I can't remember what year it was. It was already wore out the first one i owned. I think it was in the early 40's the first one I owned.

Q: What was your first job for pay?

A: First job for pay, I went to work for a guy South of Price on a ranch. I can't even remember his name. I think I was sixteen years old or about that.

Q: How old were you when you started dating.?

A: Mercy Gracious, I think I was about eighteen.

Q: What did you do on dates?

A: Sit there and stare at each other. Ha! Ha! Scared of each other. What do you do?

I: I don't date.

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

A: I never could figure that one out. I learned at a young age to take what was handed to me. Or what was in front of me.

Q: How did your marriage happen.

A: I think I just said, "Let's go get married."

I: We need to know you wives name.

V: I've been married twice. My first wife was Agnes Irene Oviatt. My second wife was Anna Doris Schmidt.

Q: What was your wedding like?

A: I got married in my aunt Ida Mortenson's place. Bishop Eden married us. Jack Witcherly witnessed it.

Q: How long were you married to your first wife?

A: From 1942 to 1974.

Q: And how long have you been married to Ann?

A: Two years.

Q: How did you meet Ann?

A: I got stranded in Arizona on the Navaho Reservation in deep snow in a gully. She helped me out and took me to a hogan and slept in an Indian hogan that night. That's how I met Ann.

Q: So she's Navaho?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did you live after you were married?

A: I lived in Cleveland but I can't remember which house it was now. We moved right to Castle Gate. When I was first married I went to work in Dug Out, that where I went to work at. I worked there three days and got in an explosion and got burned all to pieces. Even my hair and clothes was blowed off of me. So

actually I guess me and my wife first lived in Castle Gate after I got out of the hospital I was working in the coal mines in Castle Gate.

I: Tell me about your children.

A: I have three sons living and two daughters died. Franklin D. was my first son, Kerry V. was my second son, Steven K. was my third son, Vona Lou was my first daughter, Mona K. was my second daughter. I think that's right. They only lived two days. Each one of them.

Q: What happened?

A: When they was born their lungs collapsed. One only lived twenty four hours and the other about thirty hours, something like that. They died as infants.

Q: What was the best thing about being a parent?

A: Playing with my little kids.

Q: What was the most difficult thing about being a parent?

A: Raising those kids and making a living for them.

Q: What did your family enjoy doing together?

A: We didn't have much time to go anywhere on trips or anything but I guess the main thing we enjoyed together was sitting down to eat.

Q: How did your family make a living?

A: I worked in the coal mines and where ever I could. And my first wife worked in Sears store.

Q: Did you enjoy your job?

A: No, I hated every minute I was in the coal mines.

Q: What skills did you learn that are important to you?

A: Well I never learn anything very good, I'm still pretty dumb. The only thing I did learn that I like is playing the guitar. I learned that by my self. I never had any lessons.

Q: Do you sing with the guitar?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you write your own songs?

A: I've wrote three songs.

Q: What accomplishment are you most proud of?

A: I've never stopped to think about that. Staying alive I guess mostly.

Q: If you could spend a week doing anything you wanted what would it be?

A: Going on the mountain camping and riding my horse.

Q: Which age of your life would you most like to revisit and why?

V: I guess what your asking is what part of my life did I enjoy the most. Is that right?

I: Yes.

A: I think the part between when I was a young guy fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old running around.

Q: What is the biggest change to happen in your life time?

A: I think the biggest change to happen in my life time was when I left this country and went to the Navaho Reservation to work on a trading post.

Q: Is there anything you've always wanted to do but didn't?

A: Yes, I've always wanted to go to Alaska and to old Mexico.

Q: Who were the people to influenced you most and why?

A: I guess I'd have to say my kids and my wives.

Q: And why did they influence you?

A: Because I had to do what they said. Ha! Ha!

Q: What advise do you have for others to live a full life?

A: I guess I have to say, mind your own business and do what you think is right.

Q: What are your hopes for the world? page 11

A: Well I wish and hope that they find a way to keep peace through out the whole world.

Q: What is your most memorable family experience?

A: About the main thing I remember about my mother was when I was about two years old, I never will forget it. A big old goose had a hold of my neck with his beak and he was choking me to death. My mother came running out and beat him off with a broom.

Q: What was the scariest moment in your life?

A: When I was in the explosion in the Dug Out coal mine. I'll never forget the date it was 11 August 1942. Also there was the time I told you about when I sent my dad home on his horse and it was several days before I found out if he was dead or alive.

Q: What was the most embarrassing moment in your life?

A: I don't think I'd better tell you that. Ha! Ha! I've been embarrassed a lot of times.

Q: What was the funniest moment in your life?

A: Ha! Ha! The first thing to come to mind when you said that, reminds me of the time when I was ridding a horse on the run. I wasn't going fast just a slow lope and instead of jumping the ditch the horse put his front feet in the ditch and fell down. I wasn't using a saddle so as he went down I put my foot on his head and push it in the dirt and just went on a running. Did you think that was funny?

I: Yes.

V: You sure laughed.

Q: What was the babies names?

A: The yearling colt's named Bo Charo. He was registered. Keno Rich is a horse they've got him on the mountain. His dad's name was Too Rich I broke my ribs about six weeks ago and I haven't been able to ride a horse very much. As a matter of fact it was the horses that broke my ribs. I turned that colt loose with the other horses after it had been gone all Winter. They took after it chasing it, kicking it and biting it. I hollered at the colt, it will come to me when I holler at it. It come back to me too fast, they were chasing it, I couldn't get out of the

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road. They hit me on the point of my shoulder and broke my ribs. I haven't quite got over it yet, it's been about six weeks now.

Q: Do you spend much time with your sons?

A: No, I don't get to spend much time with them. They stop and see me once in a while. Steve stops once in a while. Kerry will call or come see me once in a while. I don't see the rest very often. I get home sick for them all of them. They have their own business to take care of.

Q: You said you got along with you brothers and sisters till 1958.

A: Well that was a bad, bad, bad, bad business. I bought my dad's ranch. When my dad died all the rest of them got mad at me and threw my mother and me into court trying to take it away from me. They took us clear into Supreme Court. Anyway I won the case but the tried to take it away from me and mother. It was a sad, sad thing. There are still hot sparks flying there. It hurt awful bad. As a matter of fact that's why I had to leave. I went to Arizona and went to work in a trading post. You can't run from troubles and so I guess I just have to sit and fight with them. They won't leave me alone seems like. She could tell you a few experiences with them but I don't think we should do that.

Q: How long were you in Arizona?

A: About sixteen or seventeen years. I can't remember for sure.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to tell these young women about life?

A: No, I don't think I'd better give anybody any of my advise because it seems that some of the things I did didn't work out very good. Hai Hai!