

The Oral History of a Mortician
As Told By Gary Madsen

Collected By Nichole Madsen

Nichole Madsen
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Oral History: Interview Release Form

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INTRODUCTION: Gary Jenkes Madsen was born December 7, 1947. He was born in Sandy Utah. He now resides at Castle Dale, UT. The interview took place in his home. He moved to Castle Dale 17 years ago. He was a mortician for 8 years. h

Nichole: How did you become interested in the mortuary business?

Gary: I answered an ad in the paper, I was a commercial artist at the time. I answered the ad because I wasn't making very much money. It sounded interesting to me, so I went and applied and they told me what I needed to have in order to be an apprentice embalmer. I needed a two year degree, and a suit, a white shirt, and a tie, and a hair cut.

Nichole: A two year degree in what?

Gary: Anything, underwater basket weaving to water buffalo hygiene. It didn't matter as long as I had 90 quarter credits at the time that could be a two year degree in anything. That was to become licensed in the state after a years worth of apprenticeship. So I answered the ad in the paper, they liked me and at 10 in the morning I answered the ad, interviewed, and went down and

got a copy of my transcripts, and dressed in a suit and a white shirt and a tie. I showed up to work, went and picked up my first body at the, it was the L.D.S. at the time, no it wasn't, it was the medical examiner's office because it was some 22 year old greek man that was laying in bed with his wife and somebody came in and shot him in the head with a twenty-two, execution style. He turned out to be a drug runner, it was a hit because he didn't pay his bills. I was up to my elbows in blood and guts at 1:00 in the afternoon doing a full post, that means a person that has had his brain removed and all of his internal organs removed and then I was embalming him. And that was my first embalming experience.

Nichole: You didn't even have to take a course, or a anything first?

Garry: No, an apprenticeship program is you go work for a firm and they teach you how to embalm, they teach you how to be a funeral director, what to do, what to say, how to write an obituary, how to interview family member, how to sell a casket, how to do merchandising, those kinds of things. And then you just practice by doing.

Nichole: Were you ever a grave digger?

Garry: No, a grave digger is called a sexton, they work strictly for the cemetery's. All they do is dig

holes that the vault goes in that the casket fits in. A grave digger, when they, my nickname is digger because there was a radio program back in the twenties and thirties called "Digger Odell", and he was a mortician.

Nichole: What is your most memorable experience.

Garry: I have more than just one memorable

experience,(laughing) I have hundreds, hundreds of experiences because I have embalmed approximately two thousand bodies so each one of them are almost indefinitely printed on my memory banks. So it is wether they were police calls and I picked dead bodies from whore houses or down at the University of Utah, you know, a bodelo where college students earned extra money,(laughing) there was dead people laying in bed with just there jeans on and no identification, it was a miracle how they ever got in and paid their bill or do anything, so the tricks, the girls, would rob them blind after they died in bed. Or wether it was embalming motorcycle accidents were we looked for the dead man and all we found was his body and his head was gone and was stuck in the tree in his helmet(laughing). Or wether we picked up the bodies from hotel room that had been dead for weeks and stuck to the carpet and you could smell

them for miles and miles away. Yeah, some of the had been dead for over a week. They lived in apartment buildings, or hotels, or motels, or whatever. People died everywhere. I embalmed one guy that was pinned to the floor with an arrow. As in a bow and arrow. This indian, this guy was two timing his girlfriend, this indian's girlfriend. He came in and caught them and he shot this guy and he severed his femoral artery and he pinned him to the hardware floor.

Nichole: What is the femoral artery?

Gary: The one that runs down your leg. It is the first division from the decending aorta the one that splits into the femoral artery. Anyway, he shot him and pinned him right to the hardware floor with a hunting arrow. He bled to death and that is how we got him we had to take the arrow out of the floor and pry him up off the floor and cart him off to the medical examiner's office.

Nichole: How do you find out so much about their backgrounds?

Gary: You learn that afterwards, and you see, there is police all over the place, there is cops all over. And they are just happy you show up because then they don't have to touch the body. People have an inversion, or a fear, of dead bodies.

Nichole: And you never have?

Gary: Being raised on a farm, I was around dead horses, and cows, pigs, and chickens, and those kind of things, and I used to hunt when I was a kid and those kinds of things never bothered me. Blood and gore have never bothered me, per say. I can get emotionally involved if I think about any of my children, or my wife, or family having traumatic experiences or trauma preformed on them I think I would get emotionally involved and it would taint my perspective and my objectivity and I have gotten emotionally involved in a couple of cases I have worked on. I remember an eight year old boy that ran out between two parked cars and a car hit him, he ran out into the street and a car hit him and broke his neck. He had one small, little bruise on his forehead where he slammed into the pavement, and other than that he looked perfect, a little blond headed kid, tiny kid. In the mortuary industry, for children, you'll notice that in an adult casket the head, or the panel, the head panel lifts up and you only see to the waste because the foot panel is still closed, so you've got two panels that open up on an adult casket. Well on a child's casket the panel is one piece, so when you open the panel to view the body it's all, you see the whole body. They don't make a separate paneled casket for a

child. It is just too much work I guess. So, I embalmed the boy, and he looked really good, his parents bought a full couch, that is what it is called is when all of the panel lifts up its called a full couch. And he had a beautiful pink satin interior to in, kind of a light pink. They buried him in his Cub Scout uniform, and he had all of his little doo da's, and arrow points, and his insignia's, and his braids and all of that stuff on his uniform and then they put in the casket his favorite pocket knife in his hand, and they put his favorite stuffed animals in his casket, and some of his toys and then this dirty ragged old blanket and he used to drag this blanket around with him where ever he went. So here is this beautiful baby, eight year old kid, in this casket with this dirty old blanket and all of his favorite toys. I wept, because I just got too emotionally involved and I wasn't objective. I didn't do a really bang up job with the family prayer, and getting the people organized and seated and the casket moved into the chapel, those kinds of things, you have to be really objective, and aloof when you're handling a funeral service and it is because I just got involved with the family. There were two or three cases like that in my work experience as a

mortician. One was, another one was a young newly wed. This guy had just got off his mission, married his high school sweetheart when he got back off his mission. She was a beautiful, beautiful young woman. She was going to work, she and her husband had been married six months, so they were still, you know, supposedly, technically on their honeymoon. She was going to work and a guy ran a red light, slammed in, a guy driving a truck, ran into her broadside and broke her neck. So she died and then they found out she was three months pregnant, so it killed her and her little baby. I remember how long I worked on her making her absolutely beautiful. I did probably the best cosmetology job I've ever done my whole life. Gave her just beautiful color, I remember using the same shade of lipstick that she had in this one photograph, and if you use the lipstick as a blush also, then it ties the face in because the lips are the same color as blush and the eyeliner and that kind of stuff, and then you hit the high points where the blood is close to the surface and it just, that is what gives you your color is blood, and when you embalm a body you drain the blood and you replace with a fluid that chemically reacts with the protein in the body, but you have to add

dye to the fluid to make it look like blood. So the person looks alive, or resting, or comfortable, or, you know, those kinds of things. Physically appealing and they look as if they are just asleep, and if people come in and say that they look so natural and everything like that, that is a probably a mortician's greatest compliment. And that is when you smile on the inside and you say, yeah I did a good job. And their mouths don't pop open, and their eyes don't pop open, and they don't gurgle, and they don't spit up fluid or anything like that then you know you have done a good job. And the family wept openly around the casket, and I remember getting to involved in that case also. I felt for the young man so badly. He lost his wife and his baby all in one afternoon and it happened just like that,(snaps finger), the snap of a finger and his whole world was gone. And here I had my wife and my family just started, I was fine, but he wasn't fine anymore. I felt for him and I probably got too emphatic. I lost my objectivity again. I have done a lot of wild cases, in Salt Lake City you wouldn't think back in the seventies, back when I started my apprenticeship.

Nichole: Which years did all of this take place?

Gary: I got out of the army in '71. I was a commercial artist for about six to eight months and then I answered the ad in the paper. So I started in, the last part of '71 and '72 as an apprentice embalmer and a funeral director. After I did a year of apprenticeship then I went to school in San Francisco, the college of mortuary science in San Francisco, and then that was a year and that is where I was also a deener at Franklin Hospital. A deener is a person who does all of the autopsies on the dead bodies out of a hospital. Fascinating job. It made me a better mortician because I can take them apart as well as put them back together. Everything removed surgically I had to photograph, so if a homosexual came in with a candle crammed up his rectum, if they removed it surgically I had to photograph it, and I have had pictures of candles, lightbulbs, and all of those kinds of things that homosexuals, and San Francisco is full of them, had removed,(laughing). And you can joke about something like that but it was semi-horrible experience,(laughing). Graphing all of that kind of stuff and logging everything, it was a wild experience, a real wild experience. I also had to photograph therapeutic abortions, which was real hard for me to do. Then after I

graduated, I graduated in the top ten percent of my mortuary class. '74 is when I graduated, and I got the moo sigma alpha award.

Nichole: What is that?

Gary: That is the top honor, for the highest academic endeavors at of a mortuary class, and there was sixty people in my college class in my mortuary school. And I graduated the top or the second man academically out of all of those students, but I was married and I knew what I wanted to do and I just put my mind to it and studied hard and got good grades. Part of the things we learned in there were merchandising, casket displays, and sculpting; you had to do ears, and noses, and eyes, and mouths out of wax and put them on.

Nichole: Like plastic surgery?

Gary: Yes, only you would have to take off of a photograph and then you do you measurements off of the photograph and then compare them to the measurements off of the human head and figure out how big the ears are, the nose, the eyes, and the lips. Then you can sculpt them out of plastic or waxes and then apply them to the face if they were missing and then they would look natural, or normal. So, you would have to add all coloration to the waxes, and we did ears and I was very good at what I did because I was an artist. And

mortuary science and embalming, I'd say, it is an art form. It's so much science and then it's so much art. I would say that it is 75 percent art and 25 percent science. There is quite a bit of chemistry involved in the human body when it is dead, and how you treat it. I could give you the formula for formaldehyde, formalizing gas mixed with water makes formaldehyde. Formaldehyde agglutinates all of the protein, the amino acid groups in the protein and forms tertiary amies, and when it forms a tertiary amie it solidifies protein. You know the body is made up of proteins, carbohydrates, and lipids, or fats. It doesn't touch the carbohydrates, and it doesn't touch the chemical composition of fat. It just touches protein, but if the protein becomes insolvable then the whole body is preserved, because nothing but the proteins will break down and cause petrification and decomposition in the body. Carbohydrates and fats stay solidified any way, and unless the proteins break down then they just stay put and solidified by themselves. So, you react the form of formaldehyde with the protein, you glutenate it to make tertiary amies and that becomes insolvable, and it just stays that way. One of the by-products is water and so it lifts moisture as your embalming. And'

that moisture, as your going into the circulatory system, which is a closed system, because the arteries all run into veins eventually, and then back into the heart and from the veins back into the arteries. So, your working with a closed system, you pump your fluid in and that pumps the blood out, and you just drain the blood until you see fluid come out and then your know, and then you look at the palms of the hands, the eyelids, the tip of the nose, the lips, and the toes and the soles of the feet. As soon as you get the dye coming through the fluid you know you have a completely embalmed body, and it also stiffens it. There are natural processes that happen to the human body when it dies. Rigormortis is one of them, Lybormortis, halgermortis, post mortem sagulation, there is all of these technical terms all it just means is that blood settles to the dependent portions of the anatomy, if your laying on your face it will go to your face. If your laying on your back, it goes to the back, and your buttocks, and the back of the legs. So, always die on your back, never die on your face, in a prone position,(laughing), because actually after the blood leaves and the fluid will get into cells and either stain, with the heme, which is the red portion of the blood, it leaves

the vascular system gets into the cellular bodies and will stain it red and it also causes swelling. So, die on your back, then your face won't swell up,(laughing). And if you find somebody dead, of a heart attack or something else, turn them over. I have lots of good tips,(laughing). So anyway, there are certain things that happen to the dead body, and if you are aware of what they are you can treat them. So we drain all of the blood, and you have approximately two gallons of blood in the human body, and we pump in two gallons worth of fluid and pump out the blood, and then the formaldehyde treats, or reacts with the proteins and then you got a preserved body.

Nichole: Do they still use formaldehyde today?

Gary: Oh yes, it's the only thing they can use. They used to use mercury, but that is a heavy metal and so they accused a lot of morticians of killing the bodies because they used heavy metal poisoning. So they couldn't do that anymore, so they use formaldehyde. Now formaldehyde is going to kill you, but it is not a poison, but heavy metal like mercury is, and they used to use that in embalming solutions.

Nichole: What do you have to do with the face?

Gary: When the body come in, it is usually clothed, you

usually get it from a medical examiner, or from a hospital, or nursing home, or a private home. Those are about the scenarios where you are going to pick up a dead body. Sometimes you actually go to the scene of a wreck, or whatever. When I was a mortician in Idaho we actually ran the hearses to the scene of an accident half a dozen times, picked up the bodies, loaded them in the back of the hearses and brought them back to the mortuary and then embalmed them. I remember the case in Idaho that was really, really sad. This old man and lady, grandma and grandpa, in a car full of, it was a big car an L.T.D. back in the early, well late sixties early seventies, they were big cars, humongous cars, gas hogs, big cars. And a big semi came out of the fog, and they were in the fog, they were traveling slow because it was right around christmas, and their car was full of christmas presents, wrapped christmas presents. The semi ran over the top of them and pushed them into a pond. It crammed the lady into the dash, you could take her out of the glove compartment, that's where she ended up was underneath and in the glove compartment. And the men was driving, was through the steering wheel and underneath it. So they were just busted up like nothing I have ever seen. I don't think

there was a bone in their bodies that wasn't broken. So the cops were there and they pulled this L.T.D. out of the pond they had to go in and hook up to the bumper, or whatever, with this cable and then they drug it out of there. There was moss and gore and gunch all over there bodies and we had to pry them out from underneath the dash. It was horrendous, glass in their hair, all broken, bloody. And I remember looking back at the car and here is all of these smashed christmas presents and they never got to deliver them. So all of these, you know, the family they were going to visit, and all of the small children that they had never got to see them and never got their presents for christmas. And that was a horrible experience, but I went to a scene to pick up the bodies on that one. They were difficult to embalm because all of the broken bones had splintered and punctured the arteries and you have to know your anatomy quite well to embalm anyway. You normally would make a subclavian incision on the clavicle its self along the neck muscle on the right side then you would dig down inbetween the sternum masticodius muscle and you would serrate that with you finger and then raise the artery, which is the corradeded artery, and underneath that lies the

internal jugular vein, and that's your system, you would snip the corraddaded artery and you would put a caniluar injection and hook up your hoses from your embalming machine and turn you pressure up to about 20 to 40 psi. The heart generates between 2 and 6 psi. So you were over powering the arterial system, or the vascular system, with the pump in your embalming machine. And you would pump the fluid in, and then you would snip again the internal jugular and then the blood would be pushed out and drained. Onto the table, then into the gutter, on to the sewer system. A mortuary is classified as a legal nuisance because we still put blood and guts and fluids like that into from the human body into the sewer system and in would have to go into a treatment tank and be taken out and cleansed. So, anyway they were hard to embalm because they were all broken up and their arterial system wasn't complete any more, it snapped, and up braided, and punctured, so there was a lot of swelling with the bodies when we embosomed them. I remember combing through this lady's hair, bits and pieces of glass from the windshield and windows and everything continually poured out on the table. Tiny little pieces, you know that safety glass fractures into tiny little pieces

that supposedly don't cut you. So I was combing that glass out of her hair for hours, and hours, and hours. So that was a sad one. So, any way when you go to these different places to pick up the dead bodies you run into different scenarios, but when you get a body back to the mortuary you have to put them on the table, and it depends on how long they have been dead as to whether their cold or their hot, because when you die your body temperature actually goes up because you don't have a blood system your heart is pumping any more and that dissipates heat, because it makes your body, as the blood goes through your body you sweat and you breathe and you do those things and that dissipates heat. Well, if you die you are no longer pumping the fluid in but your cells are still alive for 48 hours. They live between 24 and 48 hours, and so they are still using energy and one of the by-products of energy is heat, and so your body actually rises in temperature. It goes from 98.6 to maybe about 100.3, 100.4. And so you can tell how long a body's been dead as to whether the outside temperature, or the atmospheric temperature, or whatever temperature your surroundings. If it's cool and their hot, then their fresh. So you leave the body on the table. You take their

clothes off, and you put a tag on their toe to identify who they are, because if you work at a mortuary like the one I worked at you get 600 cases a year, that's approximately 2 1/2 a day. And so sometimes you have more than 6 to 10 bodies in your embalming room at the same time. And you don't know these people,(laughing), you know before you talk to the family and find out who they are and what they did and get pictures and those kinds of things. So the only way you know who they are is with a toe tag, and that's how you identify them. So everybody in the mortuary in that's not walking around on their own power has a toe tag, and their all on tables, and cooling off, and either getting embalmed or getting dressed, or cosmetized, or casketed, or whatever they're in these different stages. So you get them on the table, you take their clothes off, you put an identifying tag on them, and then with women you wash their hair, and you pose their features and that means you have to close the eyelid, and there is a science in just closing the eyelid. Did you know that? Yep, the upper eyelid has two go down 2/3 rds and the lower eyelid comes up 1/3 rd. and if it's anything other than that your eyelid looks screwy. So, and they don't like them smiling,

they don't like teeth showing. Well, I used to make them look pleasant, and that's not so bad. And it depends on whether they had dentures or not, if they don't have their dentures with them and they family forgot to put their teeth with the body, or they lost them, or swallowed them, or did whatever then their mouths are really caved in and they look like a prune. So what you do is you have to wire their mouths shut.

Nichole: Don't you do that any way?

Gary: Well yeah, but if they don't have dentures you have to pack their mouths with this stuff, it's nonwater soluble. It's a material that won't absorb water. And so when you put it in the mouth and fluid that might be in there won't soak through and make it compress. So it stays it's original density and fullness. You stuff the mouth with this cotton. What you do is you inject a little bar with a wire wrapped around it into the mandible, underneath the lip line and underneath the tooth line. It would hurt like, all get out if you were alive, and you use this little machine called a needle injector and it looks like a metal syringe with finger holes. And when you push it, it sends a rod down and and hooks this needle and it jams it into your bone and into your skin and into the bone, and it's

barbed. So once it's in it usually stays and you can't pull it out. And then you inject another one, you lift up the lid and put it right into the top part of the maxellia. And again that would really, really hurt if you were alive. But their dead and they don't complain too much. And then what you do is you close the mouth, and if they haven't got teeth you just kind of have to guess how far to close the mouth without scrunching up the lips, and that kind of stuff. You just close it so that they barely touch, and then you fill out the mouth, and you fill out the face so it looks natural and pleasing. You just wire the two pieces together and then use forceps and you shove the stuff in there, the cotton stuff. And then after that you have eye caps, which is flesh colored plastic pieces with little, kind of barbs in them, and you put it over the eyeball, and then close the eyelid and that keeps the eyelid in place. Because it sticks on those little plastic barbs. Your eyes will be closed if your asleep, if your awake they're going to be open. And if a person stays dead a while with his eyes open that's one of the signs also, is that there's aqueous and vitreous humor in the eyeball. Aqueous humor is in the eyeball it's self. Vitreous humor is inbetween the cornea

and the eyeball. So theres two fluids. Well, the longer you've been dead the flatter your eyeball gets and it's the vitreous humor that starts sinking first. Because if you've been dead for a while and your eyelid flattens, I mean your eyeball flattens your eyelid its self stick in position and you can't close the eyelid. It won't close, it just stays there. So what you do is you use, theres an instrument called the canula hook and it's got kind of a little hook and it's made out of metal, one end gots a vein expander on it and the other ones just got a little hook, and that's what you grab the arteries and veins with and then if you snip it then you just shove the one end down and it expands it out a little so you can get a vein expander in it. And then you can pull out all of the blood clots and stuff when your embalming. Well one of these hooks, these canulas, your stuff it under the eyelid and you pull down and you stretch it and you move it back and forth and it actually stretches the eyelid out and relaxes it. So that you can close it where it needs to be closed. So, you fix the eyes, you position the eyelids, you close and you wire the mouth shut, you fill the face up, if they had dentures or you put the dentures in and you wire them in and those kinds of things. And

you make them look as comfortable and natural as you possibly can. Then you embalm them, because if you did it before you fixed the features then that's how they would look, so you fix the features and then you embalm them. It takes a while for the body to set up, about an hour for the formaldehyde to react with the proteins. So you got a little bit of time, and most of us would start the embalming process and then pose the features, wash the hair, and then wash the body because as your washing the body your massaging it and breaking up all of the riggermortis, and all riggermortis is, is lactic acid that the body produces when you exercise and your sore the next day that's lactic acid. That's one of the natural constituents of exercise and muscle use. Well riggermortis is that lactic acid reacting with oxygen, and you have some oxygen residue in the cells and in the muscles and stuff like that. With the blood not pumping any more it doesn't carry that stuff away, it doesn't carry the lactic acid away. And it doesn't clean the blood any more, so it stays in the muscles and that's what causes them to stiffen. They start in the muscles in the head and neck and then they move down to the extremities and that's how riggermortis comes and it leaves the same way. So

if you find a body and their head and neck are stiff and their arms are loose then you know that their just going into riggermortis. If you find a body and the head and neck and their extremities are tight then their coming out. It takes approximately 24 hours to go into it, a little bit less about 6 to 18 hours to go into riggermortis. And it takes about 24 to 30 hours to come out of riggermortis. And a body will come out of riggermortis naturally, all on it's own if it's given enough time. So any way you look at these kinds of things any way if you consider foul play. You inspect the body to make sure it doesn't have any knife wounds, gun shot holes, those kinds of things depending on where you picked it up. After posing the body and embalming then embalming it and massaging it to make sure it gets all of the fluid in all the right places. And then say the hand doesn't pick up the fluid, you can tell because it's pure white, pasty, left side. You have to know your anatomy because then your going to pick up an artery and you actually would dissect the body, and pick up the artery and inject the fluid down it until you got fluid into the hand and the vein system is still intact and it will still drain the same place. So, thats the embalmers job is to

make sure the body is preserved. Because that's what the people pay the big bucks for, is they want to know that their loved one is not going to change in death. That's one of the jobs of the embalmer, the other one is to disinfect the body. And when you have a body and you don't know what killed it, if you had a viewing without an embalming whatever they died of could kill the rest of the people that can't visit the dead body. So it is a Utah law that if you have a public viewing you have to have an embalming. If you have an immediate disposal, and no public viewing, then you don't have to embalm the body, if you bury within 24 hours. You don't have to embalm if you don't want to. You could cremate, but then you got to have all of your paperwork done. Because they can't exume a cremation and figure out what killed it because all they've got is a handful of ashes. So they are very, very careful and they have to have the death certificate, the doctor really has to be on the case and say he definitely did not die of anything we that we ever need to exume him from, or her. So you can cremate, it takes a little bit longer, getting your death certificate for a cremation that it would be for just a burial. So after you embalm the body, like I said one of the

natural reactions of the embalming solution is to carry away moisture, so think of your self laying on your back on a porcelain table. Where is the moisture going to leave your body when it evaporates?

Nichole: The highest points?

Garry: The tip of your nose, your lips, and your eyelids. The highest points. So this is the one that turns brown, so do your eyelids they get crusty and your lips. So what we do is we coat the entire face with a lannelin, kind of like crisco in consistency, like crisco, and so you coat the entire face with a brush and you would just paint it right on and that way if it does evaporate, the formaldehyde does evaporate, it won't go out of those areas. It won't get crusty and hard looking. It seals the moisture in and theres no way to evaporates, and when it evaporates thats when it gets hard and the tip of the nose would actually shrink away and get pointed and round. So any way we protect against that, we also clean the fingernails and older people have a tendency to have really long fingernails and not take care of themselves, especially in nursing homes. Or if they've been in a wreck and they've got grease, or whatever. So, we clean the fingernails we make sure the

body is clean all over and then we coat them with that Jannellin paste or whatever, and we wash their hair and comb it out. And then they sit there wrapped in a sheet, and we pose the hands over the abdomen area. So that they look comfortable, they got a pleasant expression on their face, those kinds of things. And then we wait for the family to come in and make arrangements, they tell us what kind of cosmetology, we usually have someone at the mortuary that can do hair, female hair, we had a beautician. I did my own cosmetology. And I would talk to the family at great length. And either have a color photograph, or a description of how they wore their make-up. And then they would either bring in their favorite lipstick, eyeshadow, those kinds of things. Then I would do their faces up, and make very old women look very young and pretty. That was my great talent. And people that had died horrible deaths, say they had trauma to the head, a head wound has a lot of blood and it would spread all over the face and they look like they were in terrible, terrible pain. All you have to do is wash it off and suture internally, the trauma to the head, and then wax over you suture marks and close everything off and do a good cosmetology job and

they look 100% better, and all you've done is washed away the blood in essence. And most morticians have a tendency to over cosmetics, they put way too much, they over cosmetise because they layer it and it doesn't look natural. The lannelin you wipe off before you cosmetise, that's just to keep it from dehydrating. So you clean the body all off and you make sure that it's all clean, and then you put a base coat of, there's a special dye that you dip brushes in and just kind of brush on and it gives the face a full flushed look, and then you add your base coat to that after. Your concealer, and those kinds of things, and then you do eyeliner and you make sure that the lashes are clean. You make sure that you wax the lips afterwards, it gives them a moist look, plus you mix in your lipstic into your wax. And then you can coat the lips and make them look full, or whatever, or however they looked in natural life. And then it depends on where you put the color on the body. There's color in the cheekbones, there's color on the upper lip that's superficial, there's color on the chin, and then there's color right above your eyebrows. And if you dot that on and blend it, then a person looks normal and natural. They don't have to look like

their completely made-over for make-over pictures where it looks like they've been spray painted. They don't look like that, they still have their natural wrinkles and everything like that but they have color where it's supposed to be. The tip of the nose, down the bridge, a little bit down the sides, underneath the eyes on the cheekbones, high or low depending on whether you're old or young. Believe it or not, out or in. It depends on your face structure, it depends on a lot of things. Depends on how they wore their make-up initially themselves. And then right here above the eyebrow, those are the shiny and colorful parts of your face. And then earlobes, right down here. They actually do the earlobes, and you put color there and you blend it in and then a little bit down the neck. So, after that, after you dolled them up and made sure their hair was done, then you could dress them. And dressing a dead body is an art, in it's self. Because they don't cooperate, they don't help you put anything on. And they wear the weirdest things sometimes, the family will bring in the weirdest things. For men sometimes they bring in cowboy boots, there's no way to put on a pair of cowboy boots if you don't point your toe. Have you ever noticed that? You can't put a cowboy boot on, it won't fit. So

sometimes we had to split the cowboy boots up the back, actually cut them in order to get them on the foot. Your toes are naturally pointed but then how do you straiten it, when they get down to the bottom ever if it's like that. It was different. And getting them in blouses, and shirts, and underwear, and all of those things. And knowing what different religious codes and ethics are. Catholics wear a shield, Greek Orthidocs wear a shield. So you had to cut a cross out of a piece of cloth and then cut a head hole in it and slip it over the hole and that was their shield and it looked like their cross. And that would be on the front and the back. And then you would dress them in their regular clothes after they had their shield on. An LDS would go into the garments and the temple clothing with the robes and everything, and then you would have to make sure everything was pressed and then when it was on the body, it had, all of the peaks had to be exactly right on the temple robes, and the bows had to be full and no scrunched up portions of you sash or apron or anything like that. So you really had to know quite a bit of different dressing techniques. And then putting the socks on and making sure the fingernails, on most of the men and women we would either do, they would

bring in nail polish that would be complimentary to their make-up or we would use a clear coat to make the nail look shiny. We would do all of those things. And then getting them in the casket so they would look posed and natural in the casket rather than just bunched up and uncomfortable, there's an art in getting a body in a casket to. And some of them that didn't have sertain perfect sleepers in them, so caskets have mattresses in them, and they have tilt mechanisms. The Baitsville caskets, are the Cadillacs of caskets. And they had a slot where you could put a little handle and turn, and it would adjust the mattress height, up and down in the casket. It would tilt it back and forth so it was quite the deal and you could position it easier. It made our job a little bit easier, but people bought that because they figured the dead body would more comfortable. And we're just talking about the corporal remains but some people that was very, very important. And that's usually why they would go with a Baitsville casket to, is because they had rubber gaskets all the way around the top part of the casket. So when you clamped it shut and sealed it, no air, no water, no moisture got in or out of the casket. So any excess fluid that evaporated would

evaporate gas. So it would preserve the body even more on the inside of the casket as it evaporated and the body dehydrated a little bit. It used to be one of the big worries that people used to have was that the person in the casket wouldn't be dead. And they had elaborate schemes, they had ropes that you could pull that would ring bells and they would dig them up and check them occasionally. And occasionally they would find someone that was in a coma, and then buried. And they would take the headliner and scratch it off. And there would be claw marks and stuff like that on the inside of the headliners of the caskets. So yeah, some people did get buried alive before they had embalming. But now it will kill them deader than a doornail. That formaldehyde will kill them, mainly because your draining the blood. So you take the blood out and nobodies going to live through that. No one will live through that. But one of the things they like about a Baitsville casket is that it has the gasket sealed at the head and the foot panel, and so nothing can get in or out.