

**Oral History Interview of
H.W. Mullins**

**Interviewed by: David Marshall
August 8, 2017
Ralls, Texas**

**Part of the:
*General Southwest Collection Interviews***

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This interview features H.W. Mullins as he discusses the construction of housing in Ralls in the mid 1900s. H.W. also describes some of the intricacies of the plumbing business.

Length of Interview: 00:37:59



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David Marshall (DM):

The date is August 8 of 2017. This is David Marshall interviewing HW Mullins in Ralls, Texas at the Mullins Plumbing. Is that what you call it, Mullins Plumbing?

HW Mullins (HWM):

Yes sir.

DM:

Just a couple of follow-up questions from when we talked last week. We were just talking about how you got attacked by bees, by the way. [HW laughs] You mind telling that story real quick on here? I think that's interesting because they might be Africanized bees, and it might be a trend that's happening out here on the South Plains from what I'm hearing of those stories.

HWM:

Well, the two-story building next door to us has had bees in it twenty, twenty-five, maybe thirty years. We've watched them. They just fly in and out. Mostly no problems. I've mowed down beside the buildings for twenty-five, thirty years, and last Thursday I was mowing and they attacked me. Just a swarm, a large swarm of them. As we finally got them cleared away enough that we could open the door of the ambulance and carry me to the ER. When I got over there, they said they had pulled a hundred and fifty stingers out of me but I had no ill results. I came home, take a little nap, got up and went about my average work. They gave me a lot of Benadryl. I guess that's the number one anti-serum. We had watched them for years. They had never bothered. We just watch them fly. In cold weather they didn't move as much as hot weather. We've always talked about them. But why, they attacked me riding that lawnmower right where I drove it for years.

DM:

That was amazing. How long were you down before the ambulance got here? That had to have taken a while.

HWM:

Well, it seemed like they got here real fast but we couldn't get in for probably twenty minutes. Of course, it's just a block to it over here, but we couldn't open the doors and put me in. They couldn't do anything because they couldn't get out. The bees were swarming so they didn't want to get out. The doctor, me and—I was not suffering. I was very [inaudible, 00:02:24]. One of the city employees said, "I'm going to run to get some diesel at the city barn." He went over and got some diesel and he couldn't find the rag so he'd taken his shirt off, soaked it in diesel, set it on fire, and helped smoke the bees away. So, I need to call him and tell him, "Hey, what size shirt do you wear? We want to do it [inaudible, 00:02:45]." [laughter] He set his shirt because he

couldn't find anything at the time real fast to set on fire, try to put on a stick and smoke the bees away.

DM:

That's something he thought about.

HWM:

We got an ambulance. Like I say, we didn't do anything till we get over there then they started an IV with Benadryl in the ambulance. Then they doubled it up and gave me a couple of shots after I got to the ER. Then they started—but they were questioning me very thirty seconds nearly if I was breathing all right because they just knew that if right around my neck and head that I'd probably start swelling. I don't know what they would've did if I was. They don't do surgery over there but they might have or called the helicopter or whatever.

DM:

Put a tube down you or something.

HWM:

Tube or something. I just really had—I just couldn't believe I didn't have the ill effects of it.

DM:

And here you sit, fit as a fiddle. [laughs]

HWM:

Just a normal day. Come Friday I was back down here at 6:30, 7:30 the next morning. Everything was pretty well normal.

DM:

You said the guy from Amarillo came down and got—

HWM:

And then they came that night and got the bees.

DM:

How many?

HWM:

He said fifty-something thousand. Now, I don't know. That might've been all his cages hold or he would've gotten more—and got a hundred and fifty pounds of honey.

DM:

And they're still swarming around out there.

HWM:

Still swarming. There's plenty, plenty of bees over there. They don't seem to bother—I was sitting out there in the alley watching them just as if—they're moving but they're not swarming. They haven't attacked me.

DM:

Little too much excitement in Ralls, Texas.

HWM:

I guess so. [DM laughs] It's strange. After we—it wasn't like we didn't know they were there.

DM:

That's amazing.

HWM:

We were just watching them.

DM:

I'll be thinking twice—

HWM:

We didn't do anything about it. [laughter] You might watch your—just in case. They get mixed out there.

DM:

I'll keep my bee suit handy.

HWM:

I'm going to get me a bee—I'm going to—I think I might get one before I mow again. If it keeps raining, I'll have to mow it because, like I say, I mow it once or twice a month for all summer.

DM:

Or something you could put over your head, maybe.

HWM:

Something that would just—put gloves on. I had my shirt sleeves rolled up. It was a nice, warm day. Shirt sleeves up, my little ball cap on and here I was going. I was having a great time.

DM:

For a while.

HWM:

A little while and then that was the end. It all came to an abrupt end.

Dolores Mullins:

They finally blocked the street.

DM:

Oh really?

HWM:

They even blocked the street so people wouldn't come down there and they get in the cars with them. I mean, they came in—I don't know how many—but thousands of them. Whatever led them, I don't—something led them. You'd think one or two might wander out but there was thousands of bees out there. After it was pretty well over and we were gone, my son went out to get the lawnmower out of the street. He said he got on there and when it started, here they come. Several attacked him. I mean four or five. There's something about the noise of that lawnmower that offset them that day.

DM:

I'll be. Well, I'm glad you're all right. I wanted you ask you—we were talking a little bit last time about where you grew up, and I thought it was interesting back in the thirties and early forties, people had outhouses, still had outhouses. You mentioned that you had an outdoor faucet where you got your water. One thing I didn't ask you about was the typical house construction back then. This was back before REA came in, right, or before you had—

HWM:

[speaking at once] Well, we had power. This was in town. The old building two blocks down, which it's considered as the ice house. They made ice and made the electricity for Ralls at that spot there. We had electricity.

DM:

As far back as you can remember. Were your houses—they were wood-frame construction, I guess.

HWM:

This was a real—yeah—real old—

DM:

Were they two-walled or did they have—they had an interior wall?

HWM:

No, they were the what's called "boxing strip," no two-by's.

DM:

So they're vertical board and batten boxing strip.

HWM:

That's where we lived.

DM:

And no internal wall then.

HWM:

One wall but it just—one-by-twelve standing up. Because I remember a time or two there was a lady from Crosbyton that would come over and nail canvas on that, paper it. Man, we thought we were—now then you get a paint brush and paint it.

DM:

That's what I was wondering, if you had any kind of sheathing on the inside, if you had some cheesecloth or some kind of—

HWM:

I think it was just the cheesecloth. Part of the reason you kept it papered, so the wind wouldn't blow through it so bad.

DM:

And dust, I guess, because I know dust would come in the—

HWM:

These ole windows back then. I don't know how old that house was that we lived in at that time.

DM:

Was it typical of the other houses in town?

HWM:

Well, in that neighborhood. It was just typical.

DM:

They were all up here on pier and beam, I guess.

HWM:

No, it was beams and cement slab at that time.

DM:

Was there any slab at all in town that you know of?

HWM:

Not other than the businesses.

DM:

When did slab construction come in in Ralls?

HWM:

Probably the mid-fifties to late fifties. Mid to late fifties.

DM:

So by the time you got into plumbing in '72, it was already pretty standard.

HWM:

It was all slab. Most of our plumbing—if they did a remodel or add to a house, add a bedroom and a bath, it was all pier and beam because all the houses, mostly, that they were adding to at that time was all pier and beam housing.

DM:

I have seen houses that were—there's the original part is pier and beam and then they added a slab floor section to it. Well, this really impacts the life of a person in the plumbing business.

HWM:

Right.

DM:

I heard you talking a little earlier that y'all don't do any big concrete busting.

HWM:

No, we just—

DM:

Oh boy, that's a whole different—

HWM:

That way you need somebody that can get—we're just not that big of a company. If people got trouble, they need it fixed, they need to get back in business, they have no trouble getting a plumber to come out of Lubbock for something like that.

DM:

Right. When the construction was coming in and they were laying slab, were you involved in plumbing for new construction or were you mostly repair?

HWM:

Mostly repair. Nearly all of the builders were out of Lubbock, so they bring their electricity, their concrete men, their plumbers. We didn't—occasionally we'd do a little bit.

DM:

When did they start sheathing on the inside of houses out here, or at least using sheetrock?

HWM:

I bought a house—we bought a house across the street from where Dolores and I married, just a two-bedroom. It was—we bought this house in '60 and it had been moved in here as a ready-built house out in Lubbock. It was sheetrock. I traded that, or sold that, and bought a house up the street that was built in '31. It was solid—it had two-by-fours, but it had solid wood on both sides of two-by-fours then someone had remodeled it over the years and put sheetrock on that.

DM:

On top of the wood sheathing?

HWM:

On top of the sheathing. This was a nice, two-story brick house.

DM:

That's pretty stout.

HWM:

That house will be there when all the houses in Ralls is gone.

DM:

Was it planks on the inside? Was it diagonal planks or was it horizontal?

HWM:

Horizontal. It was shiplap, the tongue and groove.

DM:

And then they sheetrocked on top of that.

HWM:

Put sheetrocks on top of that so they could—I guess with the lumber, all you could do would be to paper it, so they'd come back and sheetrocked it with just a quarter-inch thin sheetrock. This house, it was built in, I believe, '31. We didn't buy it till about '80. But it had had two or three—but one farmer moved to town. I meant, one farmer out in the country built it or moved to town and built it in the thirties. It was brick. It was a nice home. But age is about to get the best of us so we sold it because it had an upstairs and Dolores and I didn't need to climb the stairs. We didn't need to climb the stairs. It's kind of odd. Where we were at—real fast—this house had been vacant, where we live now. For four or five years it had been a nursing home. She built it new in the mid-fifties, her and her husband. Wife went up there, after she passed away, and the kids were having an estate sale. She'd come home, threw glass, crystal bowl or something it belonged to Ruby. I said, "Is that all you bought? You buy everything?" She said, "No, I didn't." I said, "What'd you want that you didn't buy?" She said, "The house." And we really had not considered—I mean, we were pretty well content. But we got to thinking, so we talked to the lady that had it listed to sell. We told her if she would sell our house before that one did, we would buy that house. Well, she just quit trying to sell that house because if she sold ours, she sold two at the same time. So, it'd taken about four or five months. Some lady, her and her husband, he was getting out of the service. She looked at it, she'd come by, I saw them up there and I stopped because the real estate person didn't show up, told me what they was doing. I said, "I own the house, I'll open it and let you go look." She walked in the door, looked and she said, "Told you we was going to buy this house. I saw it on the Internet." They did get their VA [Veterans Affairs] loan and they bought that house. It made it real easy on the real estate people because as they sold one, she automatically had two sold.

DM:

Pretty good, pretty good.

HWM:

Looks like their getting ready for the rodeo.

DM:

When is it going to be?

HWM:

Two weeks from—

Dolores:

Eighteenth and nineteenth.

DM:

They're putting up the red, white and blue bunting and they got flags out. Well, that's your flag.

HWM:

That's my flag. I fly it daily. We take—the Chamber sells—handles the flags. They get a few dollars for handling the bookwork and collecting for them and all.

DM:

They use the arena up here on the south side of town?

HWM:

Right. Right. I believe it—I forgot what that—sixty-sixty? Sixty-sixth annual rodeo.

DM:

I just might have to come this year. I think about it every year. I'm always busy on something. Anyway, I also wanted to ask you when plywood came in, plywood sheathing out here, because at first in most places it was wood plank, and then went to plywood for walls and roof sheathing.

HWM:

I'm going to think that that happened—

DM:

Well, in floor too.

HWM:

--About '55, around the mid-fifties.

DM:

And what about asbestos siding. Did that come in out here?

HWM:

That was real plentiful in the old house that we moved into in '55 and we got married. I bought asbestos shingles and put on it because it was insulation. The tar paper behind it was a sand-break. They were pretty popular. We did that old house and then the one we bought across the

street. Which, I guess, on the ready-built—and a lot of them come out of Lubbock. Lubbock was really saturated. That was the place they built them ready-built houses. I guess everyone that came to Ralls had asbestos siding.

DM:

You see it in Lubbock too for that era, fifties, early sixties maybe.

HWM:

Right. I've got two rent houses—I've got three rent houses but two of them were built on the site in the late fifties, and they have the asbestos siding. The other one was built in '27 but it—the ole corrugated—it's what 102 siding. Of course, I had insulation and metal siding put on it some years later. Asbestos siding really got plentiful in the late fifties, all through the sixties into the seventies.

DM:

What was it—what kind of siding did you have out here before asbestos? I know pretty far back you had boxing strip. Did you have—

HWM:

Most of the boxing strip even had the corrugated wood siding on the outside. That was pretty well standard procedure. It was a tongue and groove and it would shed the water. Ninety percent of the houses—either stucco or that. That's about—everything had the siding, ripple siding as I've always called it, or stucco.

DM:

It's the shiplapped on the outside so what you're talking about—horizontal shiplap—or stucco. Was there ever just boxing strip though? Just vertical planks with the strip?

HWM:

Yes. Right.

DM:

That was probably earlier and then it came is as what—stucco was pretty early too, I guess.

HWM:

pretty early. Lots of them stuccoed over that because the wire would carry itself from the strip and they would stucco.

DM:

So, when you're talking about the shiplap, that's a little—slightly later than—

HWM:

It came—I guess the better houses were built with it, if you were building a nicer home. Other than that you had the strip and paint, of course. All paint was oil-based paint. It did stay. That water-based paint don't hang on that ole wood too well. The ole oil-base, people had really had kept them up. They looked pretty nice.

DM:

And asbestos siding. What about—when did brick become common around here?

HWM:

I guess brick was common from the word go in the better houses. It was an expensive route to go, but the nicer homes all started out as brick.

DM:

Has that pretty well covered it? Stucco, and shiplap, and—well, boxing strip early on, asbestos, brick. Are there other kinds of sidings that have been used out here?

HWM:

Well, that basically—I don't—

DM:

I guess maybe hard-board siding later on.

HWM:

Later on. There wasn't but twelve on here. Hard-board. The main was either the wood siding or the brick for several years.

DM:

You might not be old enough to remember when two-by-fours were really two-by-fours.

HWM:

Oh yes.

DM:

Oh, do you?

HWM:

They were full two-by-fours.

DM:

Full two-by-fours. When did that change out here?

HWM:

Probably in the fifties.

DM:

Oh really? Okay. That's later than what I thought.

HWM:

In the seventies they went to—instead of an inch and three-quarters they went to the inch and five-eighths.

DM:

Shaving a little more off.

HWM:

A little more. Get a little bit more lumber out of it.

DM:

Did they ever go in this area over to steel studs?

HWM:

Very few.

DM:

Okay. There are some houses here?

HWM:

A very few. I don't know of any houses. This building across the street was remodeled, and they used the metal studs in it. As far as a house, I don't know of a house in town that has the metal studs.

DM:

Do you remember also that same diminishing dimensions on plywood sheathing?

HWM:

Oh yes.

DM:

Because it also—

HWM:

Used to be three-quarters and then it went to—

DM:

Three-quarters wasn't three-quarters anymore.

HWM:

Wasn't three-quarters. Now then—it's down now—I don't even know what size I'm buying sometimes, thirteen- thirty-sevens or something. They say, "Well, the glue's better so they can get by." That's the tell on it. The glue they make it with is a better quality glue so they can use thinner lumber and still get by with the same quality of strength.

DM:

How about construction with that OSB [**Oriented Strand Board**], that patched together oriented strand board.

HWM:

They used a lot of that, a lot of that.

DM:

Do you know about when they switched from plywood to OSB around here?

HWM:

I really don't. I really don't.

DM:

I know that a lot of that depends on wherever the distributes are, if they're in Lubbock, or Fort Worth, Dallas or wherever it's coming from.

HWM:

I've never liked it. And they use it—I guess the reason, being in the plumbing business—and they use it for sub-floor—if it's gets any water on it, it just does—we're always going under it. I'm sorry. This mold has been leaking and there's no way that we can set it. The floor is just everything. That's what I've always—the reason, I guess, I've hated it because we were always running into a leak in the kitchen or someplace and it just—trailer houses, mobile homes. If they ever get water in them, it's gone.

DM:

They all have soft spots.

HWM:

Real soft spots. You think you're going to fall through, and it's so rippled that you cannot set the fixtures back on it, back where they need to be, and you tell them they need a carpenter. "Well don't you carpenter?" "No ma'am, I'm sorry. We're plumbers but we're just not carpenters."

DM:

You go to draw the line somewhere.

HWM:

You got to draw the line somewhere.

DM:

[Laughs] Can you tell me any interesting plumbing stories, funny things that you found a drain, in a P-trap, clog in a septic—a sewage line?

HWM:

About anything that—I think I have one particular, years ago, out here and cleaned—a commode would not drain. We worked and worked. Finally we pulled and got it out, and we got a toothbrush out of it. Of course, I knew the people real well. She said, "That's"—she said, "Donny lost his toothbrush." I said, "Tell him if he'll quit brushing his teeth in the commode, he wouldn't have any troubles." [DM laughs] They laughed about that for years and years. But we have pulled lots of cellphones out of commodes, a lot of cellphones.

DM:

[Laughs] Well, did he want his toothbrush back after your pulled it out of the toilet?

HWM:

I don't know. We left it laying there and she said, "I'm going to show it to him." I said, "Just tell him not to brush his teeth in the commode and all of his problems'll be taken care of." But they laughed about that for—he and his wife both—for years.

DM:

I have heard of—several times—I've heard of little kids, little two-year olds, throwing their parents keys down the toilet. Is that something else you found?

HWM:

Found keys. The worst thing—they're not as—is a little glass bottle. We've had those get in

there and you cannot—we've had to break commodes just to show them what was in it. They wedge themselves in. They're slick. There's no way you can grab them. A plastic bottle, you can eventually get a hold of it and move it, but a glass bottle, it just—you can't get a hold of it and it's already locked itself in the trap. I said, "We can't do it." We'll work, and work, take a cable on one end and—I said, "We'll try but we're probably going to break it.", "Well, just break if you got to." You show them what's in there, "I told him not to be playing with that." [Laughter]

DM:

"That's where it is."

HWM:

I guess we've been through a little of everything. I guess no different than any average plumber. We've run into more because percentage wise, we probably go to more houses here than any one plumber does in Lubbock percentage wise. Lots of houses and lots of plumbers over there. 90 percent of the people we work for in Ralls, Crosbyton and Lorenzo, we've worked for them for years and years.

DM:

You know them. As far as sewage lines, or septic lines, you have problems with trees, roots in the—

HWM:

Well, we did. That was a continual—the good heavy-schedule plastic, that kind of eliminated that. The old oil sewer lines were a two-inch clay and had a bell on one end. They would get in there and work the joints. That's pretty good but then that clay ground settles, it'll crack. Then they came out with what they call the Orangeburg, which is asphalt and paper rolled together. It came in ten-foot joints. It was wonderful. Everybody tore the old sewer lines out, threw them out and put—but about that time, the detergents got much stronger and different, and they deteriorated from the insides. It would peel up, get rough and then it'd catch everything. Then you'd finally just have to replace it or what's left of it is—if it's what they called the Orangeburg, it's just a fiber and asphalt—if it's out there, it's no good. And there's a lot of it out there. We spend a lot of time cleaning it. You know, "I can afford sixty, seventy, eighty dollars bill, but I can't afford a two-thousand dollar sewer line." So we do a lot of that. It was wonderful when it first started. Plus, about the time the construction hit, they started importing it from Japan back in the early fifties, sixties. That's when it got to a different quality. The people that stuck with their old clay lines, two-foot joints cemented together and didn't jump in there to—they're some of them still out there working and working good. They're working great. We pulled out about twenty foot last Thursday of one that had been there in that house. That house was probably built in the seventies. It had finally—the roots had cracked it, and the ground had

settled because it don't have any give to it. Plastic will kind of adhere. Plastic is definitely the going thing. And the chemicals doesn't bother the plastic.

DM:

Is it Schedule 40 that you use?

HWM:

Schedule 40. Anything less than that, it's really—and they put in a lot of led. The Schedule 40, they'll put it in. It's just nearly trouble for you. If it was anything, it was ever trouble for you. If you lay it right, get the fall on it, be careful—so many people think, "If a little'll do a little good, we'll do a lot." They want to put too much fall on it, make the solid go off, leave the tissue behind, then it dries and caves in there. If you get you right fall, it doesn't take much on that slick plastic, it doesn't give any trouble.

DM:

When you're putting in main water lines, do you use Schedule 40 on that?

HWM:

Schedule 40.

DM:

How deep out here below the freeze?

HWM:

The frost line is considered eighteen inches. We usually lay twenty, twenty-two. I don't think the frost line is as deep as it used to be. I mean, it has to be as deep. I think, basically, our winters does not get as cold as long periods of time. We go eighteen, twenty inches. We never have any freezing with it.

DM:

That's great. I remember—it's been years ago—but Tech wasn't low enough. There were trenches all over that campus. [laughs]

HWM:

They had a little trouble here. One time I can remember, the city had half of their meters down, but it just got bitter cold and stayed and stayed and stayed. They had a lot of trouble.

DM:

I guess that's it, huh? It's the duration of it. If it's cold and it just stays cold, never gets a chance to—

HWM:

If it stays and stays—if it gets cold for three, four, five days that's not a big deal. But if it just stays below freezing and it just keeps seeping and seeping down, then it don't thaw very fast. It does not thaw very fast when it's below ground and frozen. And you don't know where it's frozen. We get lots of calls, of course, "We still own frozen pipes.", "We can't do anything for you. Where's it frozen?", "Well, I don't know." I said, "You don't know where it's at and you can't dig the frozen ground up." Most houses are heated better but sometimes you get that and they just can't believe that you can't just pull it up there and thaw it out when there's no telling where that it might be that it's frozen.

Dolores:

They ask, "Can we use a hair dryer?" [DM laughs]

HWM:

"If you put it in the right spot."

DM:

I know what I do, I keep a bunch of water stored up. [laughs]

HWM:

There you go.

DM:

You also probably work with a lot of garbage disposals, don't you?

HWM:

Oh yes.

DM:

What do you find in those things, besides silverware.

HWM:

Silverware, rings, shells. I don't know why we get as many shells out here. Shells, twenty-two. I don't know where they come from to get in, but we get a lot of those. The other day a pretty good customer that lives out there by you got some apartments in Lorenzo. He said, "I need a new disposal in the apartments." I went over there and I said, "I'll take a brand-new disposal to apartment number nine." They come home, set the disposal back up here. I said, "What'd you do?" And I've gotten out—they started the naming the stuff that was in that disposal. They'd take it out, got it out in the yard, cleaned it all up, worked and it's as good as a new one. It was just unbelievable the items they got out of that. We've got some—kind of like commodes, sooner

or later it's—like I said, lots of silverware. Most of the silverware, they get that out themselves. Of course, it's a little beat up. We get small things, rings.

DM:

What is the biggest thing that you're called out for? What's the most common something that needs repair?

HWM:

The lavatory faucet.

DM:

Why is that I wonder.

HWM:

I don't know. It's just used so much more than—but we get more calls for lavatories than we do kitchens.

DM:

Lavatory faucets leaking.

HWM:

And sewer lines. We still get a lot of calls on sewer lines.

DM:

That's interesting. I wonder why that is.

HWM:

And now one of our biggest calls is on water heaters, gas water heater repairs. I mean, good later—the government has put so many controls on them. They've made them—I guess the government thinks we're all dummies. They want to say—if you want to set a can of gasoline here in front of your water heater, it can't set your house on fire. Like everybody's going to set a can—but any fumes that go into a water heater cannot come back. It has to ignite it and go out the chimney. But it cannot—it cannot back track—used to you had the door open. Half the time your door wouldn't be. But every burner has to be in a sealed chamber where the air will only go through it one way, which is a good safety feature but I can't think of maybe two houses in my forty-five years of plumbing and twenty years with the gas company—fifteen years with the gas company—that was had fires because of something from a water heater. And all of them—they've got such tedious controls that you're fighting them all the time. They're overheated and cutoff.

DM:

Y'all sell water heaters?

HWM:

Sir?

DM

Do y'all sell water heaters?

HWM:

Yes, uh-huh.

MD:

What all appliances do you sell?

HWM:

Basically water heaters is—I never got into refrigerators, washers or dryers. Disposals and water heaters.

DM:

Do y'all sell submersible pumps?

HWM:

No sir.

DM:

Leave that to the well drillers.

HWM:

Leave that to the well people.

DM:

Like we were saying, you got to draw the line somewhere. You got plenty of inventory on other stuff.

HWM:

You've got to have something to pull that pump out and put it back. We just stay. Most plumbing companies are also an air conditioner business, but we were—I was going to get started, get my feet on the ground, I was going to go to school. Well, we've always had plenty to do without taking on the refrigerated air conditioning. Used to we had—we did a booming business on

evaporative coolers. I sold a lot of—but now then the water is so rough and the coolers is such light metal that you can buy a window unit, put it in your window, refrigerate it just about as cheap, no trouble, and don't have to fight the mosquitos coming through the straw and everything. We don't do much evaporative cooling anymore. We had some big units at Ford House. We'd get up in them and clean them. I mean, they were that large. We do a few of those smaller window units but not many anymore.

DM:

I used to like those evaporative coolers because I could fix them myself.

HWM:

You can fix them and it's a good air—

DM:

They were pretty simple.

HWM:

Unless it's a terribly humid day, it's awfully good air to breathe and smell that straw going through there.

DM:

It's real nice. Well, now they make those little window unit air conditioners that's kind of just disposable if they break.

HWM:

Right. You don't have that much in them. You don't have to get them worked on. I notice lots of stores now—and I notice them in Allsup's more than any where their air conditioner units go out, they've got a unit that sets up, the lines run right into the building in these kind of self-contained laundry units sitting out on the floor outside. I see a lot of those in different business and such. And more used to you'd-- they used to have a big unit up on the roof or out at the back, run all of your Freon lines. Looks like these are kind of self-contained. I see those lots of places. Probably don't have any duct work. You just mount it on the wall, run your lines up there, mount it, blow across the building, put one on the other end, blow back the other way. There's a lot of that I see.

DM:

Well, I just wanted to get an idea of some of the changes in construction around here and a little bit how that affects plumbing. It sounds like the pattern here fits--

HWM:

I guess pretty well.

DM:

--Pretty well. Fort Worth, Dallas, and other places I've talked to about construction development. So, I'll turn this off.

[End of Recording]

