



Jim Denison Oral History Interview, September 24, 2014

Title

“A Life Spent in Oregon's Forests”

Date

September 24, 2014

Location

Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, Oregon.

Summary

In the interview, Denison discusses his family background and his upbringing in Salem and Klamath Falls, Oregon, including his earliest memories of working in the woods. He likewise reflects upon his enlistment in the United States Navy and his military experience during the final months of World War II.

From there Denison remarks on his undergraduate years as a discharged GI at Oregon State College. He speaks of various classmates in Forestry as well as influential professors, including Walter McCulloch, who became Dean of Forestry during Denison's time at OSU. Denison also notes field classes and other practical learning experiences that made an impact on him while he was an undergraduate.

The vast majority of the session is devoted to an examination of Denison's career in forestry. In discussing his various jobs and employers, Denison speaks frequently of changes in land acquisition and logging practices. He places particular emphasis on his time working for Cascade Lumber Company and Publishers Paper Company, noting the impact made on the latter company by its parent corporation, *The Los Angeles Times* newspaper.

Denison also describes his and his wife's co-founding of both Denison Surveying and, later, Coastal Land Management. He shares his memories of various clashes between logging interests and environmentalists to which he was privy, and also remarks on the controversy created by legislation to protect the northern spotted owl. Denison likewise shares his perspective on federal forest policy and administration, and discusses his associations with George Peavy, T.J. Starker and Tony Van Vliet. The interview concludes with Denison's thoughts on the present state of forestry in Oregon.

Denison's wife, Betty, also participated in the interview.

Interviewee

Jim Denison

Interviewer

Mike Dicianna

Website

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/denison/>

Transcript

Mike Dicianna: Okay, today is September 24th, 2014. We are interviewing James M. Denison, Jim Denison, class of 1950. We are in the Lebanon Public Library in Lebanon, Oregon. Today we're interviewing an alumnus of the class of '50 that came with a big influx of all the veterans returning from World War II. Also today, present is Jim's wife Betty. And what we'd like to do is kind of start with a little bit of a biographical sketch, and a little about your childhood, where were you born, and where did you grow up, and that kind of thing?

Jim Denison: I was born in Eugene, Oregon. My mother had married a railroad man that came from the Brownsville area in the early 1920s. I was born in 1927, my brother in 1929, and my mother and her husband split up two years after my brother was born. And so we moved back from Eugene to Lebanon, where my grandparents lived, and spent a couple of years in Lebanon before we moved to Salem. And I guess that really, a little bit of the family history, my mother and my uncle, Frank Groves, went together in high school, but Frank's later years, found my aunt a little more of the wilderness type.

Betty Denison: [Laughs]

JD: And they camped trips, and he married my aunt, then, Louise. She unfortunately developed tuberculosis early in life. She was a school teacher, graduated from Oregon Agricultural College, had a real good background, but I understand that she had a horse step on her foot, and for some way, that that ended up with tuberculosis. She spent a couple of years in the sanitarium in Salem. Released finally, and then I think developed pneumonia and had to go back. She passed away in early—her early forties. Frank has always been an interesting history, which I am glad that you were able to come up with some of these, their background, as I'd understood it. He was a World War I veteran. He was still able to wear his uniform when he was 99 years old, in the parades and all of the—

MD: I remember in those parades. [Laughs]

JD: And just admired him, as an uncle, always an uncle. You know, time from the Lebanon days, and we—my mother married my stepfather, Arthur Denison, another railroad engineer, at that time a fireman. He started stoking wood in an old steam locomotive down in Grants Pass area, and finally when we were in Salem he was running a rail line from Salem out to Dallas and Falls City, an old-time logging community. And he had that running for a number of years. 1936, I can remember a year that we had three feet of snow in Salem. We lived across what they called the Shelton Ditch from the depot.

BD: Train depot.

JD: What?

BD: The train depot.

JD: The train depot. And I can remember he wrapped his legs with burlap sacks and galoshes, and off he went to the depot to make his run that day. And I think that was about the largest snow—I think we almost had three feet of snow in Salem that year. I attended the Bush School. I started out in Park School. They burned the school down when I was in third grade, so they had to build a new school in the neighborhood, and that was the Bush School. And I was fortunate over years later to go to the 50th reunion of my class in the Bush School.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: That era was a fun time. My brother and I would ride bicycles. [0:05:00] You could ride bicycles from Salem to Dalles, or out to Silverton. You try to do that today and there's no way you can do it. But a lot of, a lot of fun. We played

BD: Capitol Building.

JD: What's that?

BD: Just, the Capitol Building burned.

MD: That's right.

JD: That was in 1936. We were coming down the street on our bikes, and facing the Capitol, and saw all of this smoke coming out of it. And my brother says, "There's no chimney in the Capitol Building."

MD: [Laughs]

JD: And so we spent the whole night watching the Capitol burn, and the big, classic dome, it had fall into the building, and papers were circulating around Salem for about three days.

MD: Floating in the air? Yeah.

JD: All the paperwork that had been in the libraries and things there. And Shelton Ditch today is kind of an example of a total turnaround. It used to be a place where people dumped everything. They dumped tires and automobiles, and there used to be some suckers and shells, we call them, that face in there. Now it's a pristine stream that runs down through Salem.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: And it's very interesting; you can go back and look at that once in a while. In my junior high school, I went to Leslie High School in South Salem.

MD: Right.

JD: Two years, it was a three-year junior high school, but after two years my dad got a run on locomotives that ran from Klamath Falls to Crescent Lake, freight trains. And so we went and spent one summer in 1939 at Crescent Lake. He rented a log cabin up there, and my brother and I, for several weekends for almost a year, would transfer back and forth from Salem to Klamath Falls and spend the weekend with my dad, and then back to Salem to go to school. But then when I finally—we moved to Klamath Falls in the start of my four-year high school, in Klamath Union High School, and we were there from, well, I can remember being in a home room of the high school when President Roosevelt announced the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

And I put in three and a half years in high school, and was pretty active in a lot of things. And one of the things that in the high school years, of wartime, we were able to get jobs as young kids. I spent a summer on a fire suppression crew at Rocky Point, on the west side of Klamath Lake, working for the Forest Service when I was sixteen. The next year I was on a forest lookout for a summer, south of Lake of the Woods, and looking down on Camp Nine of the old Weyerhaeuser Logging Camps.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: I watched the steam engines when they fired them up. The first morning, I didn't—no one told me that there was a locomotive barn down there, and I saw this smoke, so I reported a fire.

MD: [Laughs]

BD: [Laughs]

JD: And probably the background I got working with the Forest Service those two summers is what really got me started. And I had a fortunate trigonometry teacher. She was a lady in high school at Klamath Falls. Her husband was an architect. She taught trigonometry and drummed it into—that was the best thing that ever happened to me as far as my Navy career. I ended up with a quartermaster that worked with a navigator of a ship. When I'd had this experience with a fire finder, it was about the same thing as we were doing a lot of things on the ship.

MD: Yeah, I wanted to kind of back up a little and talk a little about your experience in World War II, because that's always, a story, really, of things important to capture.

JD: Well, I—

BD: First of all, tell how you went into the Navy.

MD: Yeah, let's go from there. Yeah.

JD: Yeah. I think maybe a little bit about Klamath Falls when I was in high school. I took a radio class starting at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. [0:10:00] All the kids left school, and I took an hour-long radio class where I learned how to operate a radio, how to build a radio, even. And there was opportunities that we had. I joined the Sea Scouts rather than the Boy Scouts, and so that got me started thinking a little bit about water. And we had a whale boat that we refinished down there, and had a heck of a good time on Klamath Lake with that. And I think that those experiences of things you could do as a youngster then, you can't do today. And a kid can't get a job today.

I worked as a box boy for part of one year. I worked on a Marine barracks construction down at Klamath Falls, wheeling cement, because I was a pretty good sized kid. No weight, but I was tall and husky. And trucking freight for almost a year in Southern Pacific Docks there. And got pretty good money working for the Forest Service two summers. I can remember \$90 a month were our big wages, but we got our meals and a little cabin to sleep in at Rocky Point, where our fire crew was located. So it was the fun type of work. And I think that probably today kids can go out and look at the woods and walk trails and things. We did trail maintenance when we weren't on fire watch, and did all kinds of opening trails with power saws, an old drag saw, they called it.

MD: Yep.

JD: And little bit of axe work and chopping, and things like that that. We opened up to the Skyline Trail, and quite a bit of the miles of the Skyline Trail there north of Klamath Falls and south of Crater Lake.

MD: Right.

JD: It was the kinds of things that kids today would love to do, but can't do. And I got started I think in—heading for the time that my mother found out that, in my senior year just before Christmas, that she had a friend on the draft board, and my number was coming up pretty shortly.

MD: Right, okay.

JD: I didn't want to sleep in a foxhole. I figured that a warm bunk on a ship would probably be a little bit better than that, so I went down Christmas time, two other classmates there, and we joined the Navy. I think we joined the Navy on December 29th of 1944.

MD: Mm, okay.

JD: And we were the fourth class in '45 in San Diego, in the boot camp. We went to Portland and took the train down to San Diego, and some people pay a lot of money to go to San Diego in Christmas time, and well, that's a beautiful climate. I always thought that maybe when I came back from the service that San Diego might be the place to go, and I've gone back to San Diego a few times since then, and wondered what happened. But I think the population just overwhelmed that country. We went back recently and found out that even the Navy base is gone down there now. They've turned it into a subdivision. They're going to—

MD: Oh yeah. And they've moved everything around, yeah.

JD: It's interesting how you can look back to what you knew then, and as a kid in the Navy I thought that one time with a couple of the other fellows, we'd go up to the top of the—where the hotel is there, to see if we could get a beer or a cocktail, and you'd look through our draft cards or our Navy cards, and, "You're not old enough to be up here. Get out of here."

MD: [Laughs]

BD: You got your diploma.

MD: Yes.

JD: Well, I did have enough work with my radio class and things in school that I got a diploma sent to me from the high school.

MD: Oh, okay.

JD: While I was in the Navy. I think probably my Navy years, I started out in a boot camp, three months in San Diego. Most of the class I was in were assigned to ships that were being kamikaze bombed out in the Pacific. [0:15:03] I guess because of my experiences surveying and such, then mathematics, they decided I could go to quartermaster school in the Navy, which is actually a person that works with the navigator of the ship, not a clothing dispenser like they are today.

MD: Right, right.

JD: We took care of the charts for all of the places we were going to be going on the ship, even had to wind clocks. All of the clocks on the ship had to be wound at a certain time, and that was one of the chores we did. I was assigned to a ship after quartermaster school. I may back up a little bit. After boot camp, when I came back to San Diego from, I think we had a week's leave, crews were being sent out to the Pacific to ships, and I thought I would be assigned to a ship, but I was assigned to the Navy base in Gulfport, Mississippi.

MD: Oh.

JD: And at that time there was a program in most colleges called the V-5 program, which were pilots for the aircraft in the Navy. And I all of the sudden found out that they didn't need any more pilots, as the War began to wind down, so that most of the class that I was in in Gulfport was disgruntled pilots-to-be.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: And most of them came from the New York-New Jersey area, Brooklyn and places that, they were a terrible lot of people!

[Laughs]

BD: [Laughs]

MD: [Laughs]

JD: Gulfport was an interesting base, because they built these barracks on piling, excavated a hole in the ground underneath the barracks before they built it, and then when you get the four inches of 90 degree weather and rainfall in the afternoon, those puddles filled up, and mosquitoes were terrible, along with a few other of the critters that run around that part of the world. Gulfport was an interesting place, but I guess being able to travel back and forth to New Orleans on weekends was kind of the fun thing. And that's where I finally found out why they had these signs in front of the bus, that if you're white you can sit on the front part of the bus, but the blacks had to sit in the back seat, and.

MD: Something you had never run into growing up?

JD: I had never grown up seeing that. We had one black individual in high school when I was in high school, and a Greek family that was very friendly, a lot of people that—mill towns in Oregon, you know, were people that grew up from Scandinavian countries mostly.

MD: Yeah.

JD: So that was kind of a—well anyway, I spent, I think it was, three months in school, and was on a troop train coming back to be assigned to a ship, and we went to Chicago from Gulfport. And just as we were leaving Chicago, they announced the surrender of Japan.

MD: Okay.

JD: And so I was fortunate, the ship assignment that we ended up in to Livermore, California, out of the Oakland area. We spent almost a month waiting for a ship to be assigned to, and I was assigned to the USS *Spangler* DE, Destroyer Escort 696, in a shipyard in San Pedro, California. And so my wartime experience is kind of unique, that they were converting these destroyer escorts. They originally had a three-inch cannon on the front of the ship, and they had torpedo tubes, and they were used to escort these troop transports and things to Europe. Maximum speed was about 25 knots, but they cruised at about 15 knots, and they really weren't fast enough to keep up with aircraft carriers, and cruisers, and battleships. [0:20:00]

And so they were bringing these ships, deep destroyer escorts, into different shipyards to refit them, and they refitted this ship with two five-inch cannon turrets on the bow and the aft part of the ship, and put depth charge canisters on the deck, and had torpedo tubes on them. I think they were probably successful in the Atlantic once in a while. I think they just weren't good for anything, I don't think, other than what we finally ended up being, as a courier to run back and forth. This ship we went out on finally got the shipyard work done, went out on a run down to Port Waineme, where they were going to load the munitions that the ship carried.

I was assigned as the helmsman, as special sea detail as you're going out of harbor, and on general quarters when they had reason for general quarters. Most of my experience was just in practice runs and things that they did. In Port Waineme they would assign a harbor pilot to take charge of the ship, and we had to turn the ship around, and with lots of backing up and going forward. And then the first thing I know, we backed up right underneath the dock and took out the depth charge racks that had been installed at the shipyard, so, back to the shipyard again to finish the work.

BD: [Laughs]

JD: And we finally went out on a trial run, and they got the orders they were going to be sent to Hong Kong, and so we ended up leaving, going through Pearl Harbor for about one day in Pearl Harbor, no leave, just at the end of the War. And we were assigned to work with a cruiser *Los Angeles*, and a couple of destroyers in Hong Kong harbor. And that was where it was seven days to get from San Francisco over to—at that time we left the Los Angeles area, seven days to end up over in China after we left Hong Kong, or left Hawaii. And for seven days out seeing nothing but ocean out there, you marvel at what kind of a navigation we had, and the ability of the ship's navigator, and that navigator—we'd keep changing our courses as you keep a dead reckoning on how you're going according to the compass variance and the speed of the ship, but then you end up taking star shots and then sun shots, and things to find your actual location. Because of ocean currents and things, you can be quite a bit off from where you're supposed to be.

But I'll be darned, if we didn't hit the knots that, you go behind the big island that Hong Kong Harbor's in, right dead center, just when we first could sight land, that was where we were heading. [Laughs] Today they have all of this modern technology, with GPS, and back in those days, early on the coast here, we had a few Lorentz stations where you could get a radio fix for bearings.

MD: Right, yeah.

JD: And that took me back to the days of the firefighters, and that's the way you found fires, with taking a bearing and a distance that you estimate to a point from on the map, and some other lookout calls in his information, and they try and triangulate it, and get a location of where the fire is located. So my early experience helped me in the Navy quite a bit. Came back from China; I had enough points to get discharged if I can get back. And there were three destroyers leaving Hong Kong Harbor, and they were going the way of Suez Canal, and over across the Atlantic, and I thought that was going to take a heck of a long time. They were going to the east coast, too, when I was going to the west coast. [0:25:00]

They had a big tanker ship that was heading to San Francisco. So we left; we finally ended up going from Hong Kong to Shanghai, then we left Shanghai, and 60 days later we ended up in San Francisco with a—we had to escort half a dozen little yard oilers that had a diesel engine, and they ran around just like a little bunch of ducks, with a mother that took care of them, you know. And the diesel engine every once in a while would quit, and so we'd be circling around. And the only pleasant thing about that trip, I got to see where the atomic bomb was set off at Eniwetak.

MD: Uh-huh, yeah.

JD: We did pull into a—that's the thing about those atolls out there. You don't see them until you're within about five miles of the land, because they only go up about three to ten feet in elevation.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And so I did get to see that. And on that trip I got to listen to Joe Louis fight one of his famous battles, on the radio. And I guess the only thing, it was a long time getting to Mayor Island in San Francisco Bay, and on a train to Bremerton, Washington. I used to get hay fever in the valley when we lived in the valley, and I never had hay fever anytime as long as in the Navy and at sea. Coming back through Willamette Valley, I started sneezing again. My hay fever came on. But we ended up in Bremerton, and about two days later I had my discharge papers, and papers to head for home, and boy, that was what I did.

BD: It was interesting, his uncle—he had an uncle that worked on the atomic bomb.

MD: Oh, wow!

JD: Yeah.

BD: Helped design it.

JD: He worked also on air strips, Forrest Newton. That was my stepfather's—I call my dad, but really my stepfather. He took us under his wing and we actually were adopted, my brother and I were adopted, before I went to the service, and I had to show some papers, and so I had adoption papers. And he was a great man. He was able to work with Southern Pacific until he was 70 years age. They normally retired at 65, but he got good health climbing up and down into locomotives.

MD: Yeah. And so he probably was going clear up until the 1950s?

JD: What's that?

MD: Clear up until the 1950s or '60s?

BD: How long did he work? What year did he quit?

JD: Well, I think he quit—let's see, I was back out of the service and so on, in—

BD: It was in the early '50s, wasn't it?

JD: Yeah, it must have been mid '50s, early '50s, anyway. He went the whole route from wood-burning locomotives, to the last ten years were on diesel locomotives. But prior to diesel, I always admired the mallet, they have an articulated mallet that the railroad used to go through all the tunnels they have between Oak Ridge and Klamath Falls.

BD: Mm-hm.

JD: And it was a, that's—my pride and joy going to railroad museums, which I've done a lot of.

MD: Me too, yeah. Yeah, my father worked for Southern Pacific out of Eugene, and went down to Crescent Lake and that whole run down to Klamath Falls. I wouldn't doubt that they knew each other.

JD: Well, when we first went to Crescent Lake, you couldn't drive because Highway 57 wasn't opened yet. And so you went part way; just up above Oak Ridge you had to cross the Saw Creek up there, and then you end up going up to what they called Fields, between one of the tunnels up there, and they finally had a jeep road that went into Crescent Lake then.

And so that was really primitive, but on that, above Fields at one time, they've had to use these two pusher locomotives to help get trains up the grade from Oak Ridge to Crescent Lake, and one of these trips, two of these locomotives went into

Crescent Lake, and the crew went and got lunch, and the crew was working on tracks not far from Fields. [0:30:00] And they didn't tell them that this crew was coming back with these two engines, and so the two engines, they have the track was not nailed down, and the two engines just flopped over upside down and killed one of the—I don't know whether, I think it was a fireman. And my dad and my brother and I went back down that jeep trail to see where those locomotives were.

That's the only real—well, one time my dad—coming into Klamath Falls there's a real steep grade coming out of Klamath Falls in about the first five miles, and coming down that grade somebody left a switch open, and his locomotive didn't fall over, but it just left the rails and then just went down the ties. But they're only about four feet, eight inches wide, and how those locomotives could stand upright was beyond me!

MD: Yeah.

JD: But he was fortunate. Those were some of the things, childhood memories, anyway.

MD: Wonderful, wonderful. Now, so you came back to Klamath Falls, and you got back in the summer, obviously, of '46.

JD: Got back in July.

MD: Yeah, '46.

JD: My old high school gang, there was about eight of us that used to run around together, and we'd drive up to Klamath—or Crater Lake, and ski in the wintertime. One guy would drive the car up the hill, and there were no ski lifts, there were just trail skiing, but you could get right up to the top up there and then ski for three miles down these trails. And somebody would the car back down, and then somebody else would drive it up.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: That was our ski lift. But the kid that had the automotive transportation was a close friend of mine, and he ended up at Oregon State, and at my urging he spent some time working with me and surveying. It took him ten years to go through the school, but he ended up working for Boeing then for over 40 years. But his job was working with the hovercrafts that Boeing was building.

MD: Oh, wow!

JD: He was a nut for high-speed boats, and motors, and things. So he's still alive and lives out at Seattle, just over on the east side there.

MD: So you ended up deciding to go to Oregon State College. What influenced that decision?

JD: Well, I think my uncle had gone to Oregon State, and my mother had; she put in about one term there, and that was enough.

MD: Yeah.

JD: It wasn't to her liking what they had to do in college. And I think she got a pretty good education in high school. My aunt ended up with a four-year degree going to Oregon State. So it was a family thing. And I think that the Forestry School—at that time Oregon State was about the leading Forestry school in the nation, and has been that way for a long, long time.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And they did have a class in logging engineering, which I kind of thought that with my experience of both the Forest Service, and working in the Navy as a navigator and such, that Boeing engineering was what I wanted to do. And so I enrolled as a logging engineer at—I think our freshman class, there were over 500 students coming back from the service, and we graduated 120 out of that class of 500. Most of the fellows had put into jobs before the service, went to service

maybe for four years, and came back and spent a year, and either didn't like it, or they went and found such a good job that they had families a lot of them, and so the mortality rate was pretty high.

MD: Yeah. Now that would have been the Forestry School, or, yeah?

JD: No, that was the Forestry School, right.

MD: Yeah, within the Forestry School. Yeah.

JD: Right. I think there were 120 when we graduated, and out of that there were about 22 forest engineers.

MD: Oh, okay.

JD: And all of the engineers, most of them were much older than I. [0:35:01] I think I was the next to the youngest kid in the class of 50, and we had, well, Jim—Jim Bagley, was one of my real—he was a captain in the Army. When he came back, he went to work for Coos Bay Lumber Company after he got out of school. He was probably one of my ideals. I had several mentors that I worked with over the years. Burt Udell was another one that was a surveyor that I worked with that family for a number of years. The class, probably all of the class had jobs offered when you're starting in their sophomore, they'd spend a—the freshman class you had to wear a green beanie, you know. I think that was one thing that turned a lot of these fellows that were in their late twenties—

MD: Yeah.

JD: —said, "Why do you have to do something like this?" But we did wear a red tie on Wednesdays to honor our Dean Peavy. And that was something that—everybody would accepted that, because he was a role model.

MD: Now that's an interesting tradition I had never heard of. Now, is that—all of the Fernhoppers did that?

JD: The Fernhoppers did, yeah, yeah.

MD: They would wear a red tie.

JD: It was all fellows in the Forestry School.

MD: Yeah, I'll have to look that up. That's interesting.

JD: You probably were not dress code, if you didn't. That was where I think, I don't know whether it was Wednesdays or something, you had to wear your red tie. And that was kind of a thing that I think, that the time Dean Dunn was the Dean of the School of Forestry for my first two years. McCollough then was the next two years.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: Mac was very stringent. A lot of people didn't like him, but I thought he was a great man. And his experiences working in logging camps are what—talks about leaving cottage cheese outside to keep it cold at night, then the locomotives would fire up in the morning and the things were covered with soot.

MD: [Laughs] Yeah.

JD: He used to have experiences that he'd talk about that would just keep you in stitches sometimes.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: But he was one for punctuality. If you didn't get on that crummy at eight o'clock in the morning, 8:01 you were out of a ride.

MD: Yeah, your luck gone then.

JD: Later in my life, in school—the first year in school we did live in the plywood dormitories they built.

MD: Okay, now where were those?

JD: Those were located down where the present Forestry School is. They were down where the U.S. Forest Service now has their laboratories.

MD: Okay.

JD: And I think there probably were some that even were up across the street, closer to the MU from where the present Forestry Building is.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: Or, Forestry School is now. The Forestry School at the time was up on the corner, right across the street from the MU, next to the gymnasium.

MD: Yeah, in the present day they call it Moreland Hall.

JD: Yeah.

MD: And that's where Psychology is at now. [Laughs]

JD: All we knew was that was the Forestry School, and they had an arboretum right behind the school—an awful lot of number of trees. That was one of the things that—classes, that you asked a little bit about the classes that we took. And Forestry was not an indoor sport. It was very few classes in the logging engineers that they had indoors. It was mostly field work, a lot of tree identification such as that. Do you ever have any information about the submarine scalers? Well, we all, one of our classes was, in I think our junior year [0:40:01], we went out to a log pond at Philomath, to Clemens Lumber Company out there.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: And the Starker family had a mill, and as long as there were big logs on the pond it wasn't too bad to walk a log, and you had to measure the length of them and you had to measure the diameter. Well, the diameter is measured with a stick that you stick down below, and you hook it, and then measure the diameter inside the bark. And if you fell in, oh, you ended up with a certificate at the end of the year as a submarine scaler.

BD: [Laughs]

JD: And quite a few of our class became experts. [Laughs] You learned how to walk on water sometimes.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: But our field classes, that were laying out logging settings and such as that, all had to be outdoors, a lot of transit work. I've got a picture someplace of one of the Fernhopper, what do they call the—there was an Annual put out annually for the School of Forestry.

MD: Oh, *The Fernhopper's Guide*.

JD: I think it's the Fernhopper's. Yeah. There is a copy there. I had a picture in there of me looking through a transit, and I think Jim Bagley was in it, and somebody else. Hank Repito was another. Bagley went on in his career with U.S. Plywood over a number of years, manager of facilities down in Coos County. And Hank Repito was another one of our logging engineers, ended up at Weyerhaeuser for a number of years at Coos Bay—big companies.

When I got out of school, I was offered a job with Crown Zellerbach, but it was more of a forestry job, and I really wanted to work—I had worked one summer in school. We had to put in three, at least two, and I ended up with three summers worked—one summer working with the Coos Bay Lumber Company on a skyline logging system. We got a little bit of experience with cat logging, and working by an arch. And then Bill Radcliffe was another of my high school buddies, and he and I roomed together for the first year in the plywood dorms. But Bill finally went to work for McCloud Lumber

Company, and then taken over by U.S. Plywood, and his career was with U.S. Ply down in Eugene as a tax man. His son is one of the trainers for University of Oregon track. Bill is a very close friend of Klamath Falls too, and Don Erickson was the bowling buddy that we had.

All of the fellows from that class of 22 ended up with jobs as soon as they wanted a job to get out. My third, second year was working down in Medford for the Forest Service with Johnny Bell, and we worked on cruising and area photo projects, in the Rogue National Forest. We spent most of the summer up at Blue Ledge Mine, which is buried under one of the dams of the Applegate River now. But they had an old-timer that was in charge of that mine up there to keep track of it. We lived in a cabin, and listened to his old tales about wartime experience. They did do quite a bit of mining in there during the war, and then they closed the mine down after the war.

That summer with the Forest Service was good experience, and then the next summer I went to work for Stub Stewart finally, down at open Talbot operation down at Oak Ridge, and got to know Stub and his brother Fay real well. They were fraternity brothers back in the '30s of the fraternity I finally ended up in in my second year in school. Bill went to one fraternity. I went to Kappa Delta Rho. [0:45:00] And Johnny Bell, I think, enticed me to go there, and so I was in the fraternity for a couple of years. We lived in a dorm on 23rd Street at that time. And that fraternity finally folded up after I got out of school. They have just reinstated that fraternity now, though, so it's coming on again.

MD: Yes, I saw that, yeah.

JD: And they had a lot of encouragement from eastern colleges, and a few active members that were here. I was too far removed from the Corvallis area to be very productive for help for them. I guess I worked to Open Talbot then the first summer, my junior, between my junior and senior year, worked—there were three foresters that had been hired prior to my time about a year, one from Cal, one from Oregon State, and one from Washington. And I could see three foresters ahead of me that I probably didn't have a great opportunity there, but I did get to work with a civil engineer that was doing the road construction work, and I got to do quite a bit of instrument work with him, and then doing, laying out a part of the reservoir boundary for the Hills Creek Dam.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: That was on Open Talbot's property, a lot of it. And Bob—let's see. Bob Kenniston was the professor for Economics, Forest Economics.

MD: Oh, okay.

JD: And Bob worked with me the first summer up at Open Talbot. And he and I and the three foresters up there spent most of the summer camped out. We'd come in on weekends and pack in; we were on road locations, and lots of times we had to hoof it for three to five miles to get to where we left off the week before, and take in a week's supply of grub with us, and learned to drink a lot of coffee with boiling. Kenniston wore—a lot of students didn't like him. Forest Economics was one thing that, unless you ate that kind of stuff up—

MD: [Laughs]

JD: —it's present value and future value, and all of the things that were probably important to a lot of knowledge, but most of the fellows were more interested in finding a job that was either setting chokers, or doing something or other that looked like it was productive. And Bob had—I think his failure rate for most of the students was really pretty high.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: For some reason, I got through his classes. I think probably it helped that I worked with him one summer. [Laughs]

MD: Okay.

JD: He'd wear a pair of old tin pants, if you've ever seen these double pants that—they get almost as hard as steel, you know, and he'd wear those things, and get a jagger or something in them, and he got a couple of infections while we were camped out. And everybody would make fun of those tin pants, but I—[laughs]

MD: Yeah.

JD: Levi's were the name of the day, and you had to stagger. You'd cut off the hem down off the bottom, so that if you got a jagger or something working on a choker, it didn't catch a hem and jerk your leg out of a socket. And same thing with gloves. You had to be careful. Most of these old chokers had lots of little jaggars that stuck out of the things, so you wore gloves that were pretty substantial to be able to handle the—and it wouldn't take very much to—first job with Coos Bay Lumber Company, I was out there logging a skyline logging system, and we took the crummy out of Myrtle Point the first morning, and went up to a little area called Remote, which was remote, on the highway on the way to Roseburg.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: And then we headed off south towards Agness [0:50:00], the top of Old Bold [?] Mountain. And we were up in the fog, and you couldn't see what the spark hole looked like. And the guy, when we got out of the rigger, the rigging squares, says, "Well, follow me." And down over these logs he went! And I thought we went for about a half mile. It probably wasn't quite that far, but it was a long ways down into this canyon, jumping on logs, and the cork boots you had, you had to have cork boots on. And all of a sudden the whistle started tooting, and he'd signaled for the lines to be sent down, and here out of the blue coming out of the clouds, here comes this big sky line with a cable attached to it. And he said, "Grab one end of the belt and get that around a log." And so I knew what he was talking about, but you had to be awful careful because those logs were sitting on a lot of other logs.

MD: Yeah.

JD: I think it's fortunate that you lived with two, Radcliffe and I both lived through that summer.

BD: [Laughs]

JD: We had, well, we finally went over and worked on the cat side for a while. The steel wheel arches, the tractors just backed those up for the arch to drop a bunch of chokers, and with a steel wheel, oh, they backed up over trees that were about that big, about six inches, that all the sudden that tree just flops down. I thought I was standing back far enough to be out of the way, and all of a sudden, wham! A tree went down alongside of me, and if I had been over about a foot farther to one side then I would have gotten it right on the head. That would have ended my career.

BD: [Laughs]

JD: You learn why they wear tin hats.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And you learn to be fleet of foot. And cork boots are an essential part of your armament. If you didn't have cork boots, you couldn't stand on the logs to start with, and cruising timber was, lots of times you watch these old-time cruisers, and they walk across a log that's about 40 or 50 feet in the air over a stream someplace, and got slick bark on it, it's been down for a long time, and once in a while you step on one of those slick barks.

MD: Fall off, yeah.

JD: I guess the other interesting experience, wearing cork boots, you wore Levi's with the fairly tight legs on them. And cruising timber, you put a tape around the tree, and then you take the tape around to get a diameter. These trees we were working with up there were, a lot of them were 30 to 60 inches in diameter, big sugar pines mixed in with the Douglas fir. Standing one day and running a tape around, I stand there, and I look down, I was standing on a yellow jackets' nest.

MD: Oh!

JD: I don't know how I got my jeans off over those cork boots. I could never have taken them while I was running.

MD: [Laughs]

BD: That happened a couple of times.

JD: Sometimes the cruising of timber wasn't that much fun either.

BD: That happened to him and his daughter once too. [Laughs]

MD: Oh, wow. So, when you were on campus, you were there from '46 to 1950. During that time, there was this giant influx of the incoming GIs.

JD: Right.

MD: How did that affect campus life? Because those people are grizzled military veterans, and they're coming back to a real life in a campus. What was campus life like?

JD: Yeah, I think that's the reason our mortality rate was so high, for people that had either a work experience or even had a couple of years of college before they went to service, and then spent three or four years in the service, came back with a real urge to get an education, or at least get a good job. And I think the younger kids, there was kind of a mixed class, you know. Forestry, I think we were—practically everybody in the Forestry School was an older generation than the present kids coming out of high school. I've always felt that the experience I had both in high school, which I was fortunate to be able to have, is an essential that for today, when kids go to school for two years in college and don't have the least idea what they want to do.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And I think every student that went through the Forestry School and completed it knew what he wanted to do. [0:55:00] You may not have taken a job in Forestry, but you knew what you wanted to do. You were an accountant, become an accountant, or the business part of it was something that was interesting. They needed lots of people within the hierarchy of companies that went off to war and lost a lot of people, and so there was lots of hiring of people like Jim Bagley. He worked with Al Smith at Coos Bay Lumber Company in Coos Bay, and Al Smith finally ended up down with Med Co, I think, in Medford.

BD: Mm-hm.

JD: But Jim Bagley had all of the requirements of being an official in the company, and being a captain in the Army to start with, he knew regimentation and had good experience in the School of Forestry, and was a logical man to hire for those. And they were a premium—I mean, they were premium jobs that, I think that I—my two, I interviewed for two different companies, that I thought that I liked what I saw with Crown Zellerbach, and I had good friend of mine, Mac Daniels. Mac Daniels was another one of my buddies, fraternity brothers. We lived together in a little garage annex for the KDR fraternity our junior year, and he went to work eventually for Crown Zellerbach, high up in the job. But his dad was an arboretum forester for the original arboretum out there at Camp Adair.

MD: Oh, okay!

JD: And prior to the state getting their seedling nurseries around the state, the first nursery was there at the arboretum, and his dad was McDaniels, and I can't remember his first name, but Everett was my counterpart there in the—we even slept through one class that McCollough, 8 o'clock meant 8 o'clock. For some reason we missed breakfast call and decided to get up, and found out that the bus was heading for a tour of eastern Oregon to look at some pine over there someplace, and we missed the buss. Old Crummy, we called them. I drove a crummy for a couple of years in college.

I got married between my senior and junior year, and so lived in a duplex on 29th Street when my daughter was born then in February of 1950. And my first wife and I spent about fourteen years together. I think, unfortunately, my work years required a lot of travel, and out of the area, and she could see there might be more potential in doing something different than raising kids. We did have four youngsters, though, and all of them have done well for themselves over the years. And Betty and I met working for one of the companies that we worked with after I left this part of the thing that we've been talking about here. That might be where we ought to go.

I can talk a little bit more about the college. I don't know. My college experience then was more married life my last year, and then my buddies from Klamath Falls came down and put in a shindig of some kind that got us up at about 3 o'clock

in the morning, when we had this youngster that had been born in February. February of 1950 I can remember vividly, because I rode a bicycle to classes, and they had an ice storm that year, and bicycling and ice storm in Corvallis were not a good mixture of things. [1:00:04]

BD: [Laughs]

JD: But after, well the wife at that time and I, we moved to Oak Ridge when I got out of school, went to work for Pope and Talbot again, and after about six months I had a job offer down in Grants Pass to work with a consulting engineer. He had a—the client was the Glendale Lumber Company, and so we did a lot of work for—and so I decided my chance is with three foresters at Oak Ridge, and going to work for an engineer as consultant might be a good increase in my background. I think that a lot of people started out working for companies and thought they could work 30 or 40 years for a company, and you retire then. And I probably was the classic example you don't do that.

MD: Yeah.

JD: You don't do it today, especially, because companies are coming and going. But working for this consulting engineer for about a year at Glendale—I lived in Grants Pass—and then did a little bit of a research on some lands that were supposedly surveyed in northern California, south of Cave Junction.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: And it was all fraudulent survey, and I got a little bit of a background on what fraudulent surveys were. Some surveyor sat in a bar in Yreka, and drew up a beautiful set of notes, and sent them back to the government and got paid, and there was never anything on the ground out there, other than—.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: Some of those notes indicated that he might have stood on a ridge, and tried to guess at where the river was down below him and the next mountain was beyond him, but they didn't make much sense otherwise. And so that's where I spent one of the years that Don Erickson that went to Boeing, spent with me working with this consultant down at Grants Pass. The consulting business kind of looked interesting to me, but I suddenly got a job offer from Wilden Klein, who is one of the logging managers for Cascade Plywood here in Lebanon.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: But he went to work for Southern Oregon Sugar Pine down in Medford, and his son was a class ahead of me in college, in logging and engineering, Bob Klein. Bob started the first high line logging in southern Oregon, working for his dad down there. And Wilden wanted me to come and work with Bob, and so I didn't end up with the logging part of it, but I got to do a lot of road location for them. They, Southern Oregon Sugar Pine, acquired the first large timber sale on the Rogue National Forest.

MD: Yeah.

JD: About 55 million board-feet of timber up right on the Crater Lake boundary at Prospect, between Prospect and Butte Falls. And so we spent—located miles of road on that timber sale. I probably would have stayed with Southern Sugar Pine, but I could see that they were more of an investment firm. Actually, that company was formed with Glen Jackson, who was a head of the Highway Commission here at Oregon.

MD: Yeah, I know the name.

JD: Elden Jackson was a manager for the operation out of White City, and they were acquiring lands in southern Oregon. Bob Klein and I looked at several mining claims down in northern California, on the Salmon—oh, above Klamath, California.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And it was a good experience, but I suddenly got a letter from my wife's uncle [1:05:01], who was managing a mill over at Newport, and he just started up this mill and was buying lumber for a firm back in New York. Most of the early days lumber out of the Newport area went to the New York, New Jersey harbors, where they used it for subterranean shoring.

MD: Oh!

JD: Hemlock and spruce were not being used a lot, and in the local trade Douglas fir was valuable for the timbers that were being cut, but they wanted this low-grade lumber to use for shoring for five stories of basement for parking lots, and a lot of those skyscrapers. So they called this Jew plank that they cut, and it was a three-inch thickness, a rough cut, and put on ships. There were Calmar Lines that came into Newport, from the Suez Canal route, getting out to the West Coast. They brought steel out from the East Coast and delivered steel, and took lumber back to the East Coast again. And it looked like an opportunity of maybe something I'd like to do, and they wanted me. John Delzell was my wife's uncle. His dad, or his brother was the head of Portland General Electric, and so, working for some fairly influential people, and they wanted a forester. And I thought, "Well, I probably qualify for this."

Well, I found that their work was kind of spasmodic. They wanted me to work more as a consultant and work for them, which I did. At that time there was a land purchaser that was buying up tax delinquent lands like T.J. Starker had done. His name was Bill Weinberg, and Bill Weinberg wanted to know if I would do some work for them too, in locating lines and running lines, doing a little bit of timber cruising. And so I kind of formed a surveying company, Denison Surveying, out of Newport. My brother eventually took that company over, but I worked actually for Triangle Pacific, which was one of the first mills there in the area.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And I worked for Bill Weinberg, did a lot of—that's probably where I lost my family, I think, was because of the travels, that I was in up in Canada buying tax delinquent lands, as well as down in northern California, and up and down the Oregon-Washington coast. And I got a good view of the countryside, of knowing what timber grew where, and how to look at timber and buy timber, and buy timber lands. And Weinberg was, along with T.J. Starker, were buying some of these lands at five and ten dollars an acre. And some of the lands on the Oregon coast, these early-day mills right after World War II, were cutting Douglas fir ties for the railroad. They were called tie mills. They could move the mill around. They just—and the mills they set up some place, maybe at a spark hole and get all those logs in, cut the logs up, move the mill and the spark, raise the spark tree someplace else, and so that these tie mills weren't cutting anything but Douglas fir.

And so a lot of these tax delinquent lands had hemlock and spruce on them, and auburn, and brush. And so we ended up with a company like Weinberg, and like T.J., with land ownership that you go to tax delinquent sales in the different counties. And of course, one of the things in British Columbia, they had all of the tax sales on one day of the year. And so Weinberg would hire about five foresters to go up and attend at these tax sales, and he had got a list of what was being sold. [1:10:00] And if you had a photograph of your land, you were lucky. You had to kind of guess at where things were located, and that was our job, was to spend a day or two before these sales and try to figure out what was on these different parcels that were being sold.

Weinberg ended up with lands in northern California, scattered up and down from Mendocino County to Humboldt County, and in Oregon and in Washington, Pacific County especially. Early days in the Depression years, he made a living by playing cards and selling illegal deer that had been shot from some place or another. He was a character that I—I guess it was a good experience working for him, but he finally ended up buying half interest in the Portland Meadows and got involved with a race track crowd, and that's about as crummy looking bunch of people as you ever wanted to deal with.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: So, I could see the writing on the wall there, that there probably wasn't a lot of things that I was going to get involved with those people. And at that time, the Miller family had had a mill up in Cascadia, above Sweet Home. George Miller was the dad, and he would open the gates in the morning up there, and logs would flow in, and he'd buy what he wanted. And it just seemed like there was no end to it, until all of the sudden I think they woke up one day and found

out Willamette Industry had built, was building a mill up in Sweet Home, and suddenly the logs weren't flowing quite as freely, and the competition really got to the point where they decided they better do something different.

And so they bought a piece of land out at Toledo, Oregon, upstream from the town, where the Georgia Pacific Paper Mill is now, upstream from that. They moved a lot of the mill they had at Sweet Home, had old growth timbers that were such, and they used those to build a long log saw mill over at Toledo. And I did some work for them for my consulting business, and surveying, and looking at timber lands, and then they had a forester they had hired, was Henry Kristloff, to work for Silverton Lumber Company up in Silverton, Oregon, which later became part of the log mill, Longview Fiber lands.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: And Henry ended up with some back problems and finally had to retire, and the mill manager was a friend of mine, and he wanted to know if I would be interested in a job as a logging engineer for the company. I said, "Well, I've done everything else; I guess I might as well be a manager for something or other." So I was the chief cook and bottle washer, was working with Jim Miller, which is one of the vice presidents of the company. The two sons of George were Bob and Jim. Bob handled the milling activities, lumber sales, and Jim and I would take care of the lands, and the timber acquisition, and logging endeavor. They had a wonderful family to work for.

I think George Miller was probably one of the people that you have to admire, an old gentleman that started the saw mill [chokes up], spent most of his money taking care of the people on skid row. He bought 20 pianos one time and shipped them off to Korea, to put in orphanages. But his taking care of people was something you had to admire. Jim and Bud were the same way. The Millers decided, I think—in the early 1970s, they decided that they had been offered—[1:15:00] they had been talking with Longview Fiber people, and Al Brandes was one of the timber men for Longview Fiber. And he ended up in some way in connection with the Publishers Paper Company.

And I think that they finally decided that they were going to have to sell. They didn't have any youngsters interested in the forestry business. Jim had two sons. One of them was in the military, and the second son was—I'm not even sure what he did now. But that's been the problem with most of the family-owned ownerships that eventually had to face the wall and figure out what to do with their lands. And so the Millers decided to sell the Publishers Paper Company, finally. And Publishers had a good name, they had the mills, paper mills primarily, and I think they wanted to get into more of the milling end of it, so they bought what this big long log mill in Toledo; it could cut 40-foot logs, and cut a lot of 40-foot timbers. And then they built a mill up at Tillamook, and my job was, Cascadia paid my retirement up with Publishers as if I would work with them all the time I worked with Cascadia Lumber Company. And so actually then, in 1983, Publishers faced the wall too, you know.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: *The Los Angeles Times* owned the Publishers Paper Company. They bought it originally for a paper source. One of the speakers they had at one of our SAF meetings here in Corvallis. I asked the president of the company to come down and talk a little bit about the future of the timber industry. He said, about the first thing, "Most companies don't need the land that they have acquired for their timber source." And I could see the handwriting on the wall there, that suddenly they were buying up cable television stations in southern California.

BD: Oh!

JD: And of course one of the worst press we ever got was the *The Los Angeles Times* in some of the editorials they had about poisoning America, and we were up here in Oregon spraying all of these people that were dying from all kinds of Agent Orange, and this. And that didn't go over too good. But his prediction was right, that these companies decided that they didn't need all the land that they had acquired for the timber source, resource. And about that time they were buying up these cardboard boxes for recycling. Recycling really got its start. And with that, suddenly you find out that the mill was using, the paper mills, were using about half their supply in cardboard boxes, and they only needed new fiber about half the time, so.

It ended up that Publishers Paper Company decided to sell their milling operation, which they were at one of the real downturns of the market in the early 1980s. They sold off a mill at Hampton with something like a ten-year cutting right of 100 million board-feet of timber. And the Toledo mill—oh, they went to Hampton originally, I think, and then Hampton turned around and sold it to the Siletz Indian tribe.

MD: I remember that.

JD: I ended up working, then, for about two and a half years for *The Times Mirror* Land and Timber Company. That was my last retirement from—I retired from Cascadia Lumber Company for my own consulting company before that [1:20:01], and then retired from *The Times Mirror*. Betty and I decided that—we haven't talked much about Betty, but we'll go through that in a minute.

BD: Uh-oh! [Laughs]

MD: [Laughs]

JD: She and I decided we would form our own company as a consulting engineering firm. For about six months I thought maybe I had better draw unemployment and see if I could find a job someplace. Well, of course, they don't need foresters in California, and I thought maybe California was a place we should retire to. I found out that was not what I wanted to do. In fact, you had to have a reason to get up in the morning. I think I learned that early on, someplace or another. Somebody said that retirement's fun for a little while, but if you don't have something to do to keep your mind active, you retire too soon and too quick.

MD: Yeah.

JD: So we formed a—well, we actually went to work for my brother, then, with the company I started out over in Newport as Denison Surveying. And we worked for about four years for Denison Surveying. At that time Betty had this job with Oregon Tree Farm System, as looking after some of their record keeping.

BD: I was the director.

JD: And I think then after that, we decided working for my brother was all right, but why don't we work for ourselves? So we decided to set up a little company, Coastal Land Management. And Coastal Land Management, from about 1990 to, well, four years ago—

BD: Three years ago.

JD: Two years ago.

BD: Three years ago. Yeah, two years ago.

JD: We did land surveying and timber cruising, and lots of consulting. I had a lot of good friends in the consulting business. Burt Udell was probably my prime candidate that got me started. Bob Lindsay from Crown Zellerbach Corporation got me involved with Small Woodlands Association, and I was president of the state organization for four and a half years in the early '90s, and met a lot of wonderful people travelling with Betty's, with the Tree Farm System and such, that we travelled all over the United States. Been to every—she hasn't been to Hawaii; I got to Hawaii with the Navy, but we've been every place else in all of the states of the union.

BD: And I took him to Alaska, and he hadn't been there, so.

MD: Yeah.

JD: You've been to Alaska.

BD: I said, I took you to Alaska and you hadn't been there until. [Laughs]

JD: That was the benefit of having my wife working for the Tree Farms Program, that she did a lot of speaking engagements with the small woodland ownership in a lot of states. And I think, I don't know, maybe that's a good place to kind of go into Betty and my career.

MD: Well, let's catch up a little bit. A couple of things I was interested in. I was involved with the timber industry through my last career, and here during the time of the spotted owl controversy.

JD: Oh, yeah.

MD: So you were right in the middle of that.

JD: We were the culprits. I can think—what was your favorite company, got the name for spraying a bunch of radicals that were in one of our clear-cut units we were going to spray for after logging it, up at Rose Lodge? And what's her name? Well, we got a lot of bad press from these people who were out in this unit, running around, and we went ahead and sprayed it. But what we were spraying wasn't Agent Orange.

MD: Yeah.

JD: 2-4-5-T was the prime candidate for spraying early on, and did a wonderful job of brush control after logging. [1:25:01] And we've developed chemicals over the years that have taken the place of that, but I think the action, I think that project up there, they actually sprayed these people with water. The helicopter just loaded up water and took it out there, and sprayed the unit. But they all claimed that they—

MD: It made them think that they were going to get sprayed.

JD: —something terrible was going to happen. And that made a lot of press, real bad press. *The Los Angeles Times* was great for promoting it then. And one of the helicopters we had doing projects down at Toledo, got burned up overnight. We thought we had the thing parked in a safe place in some of the company ownership out in the hinterlands, and a couple of people down there snuck in and torched it off. And it was just one thing after another, you know. Elsie River drainage was just a prime candidate for a bunch of weirdoes that wanted to live as hippies, and didn't want spraying. They talked to counties even into doing away with the spraying program on county roads.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: Put salt water on the county roads to see if—they tried that for an experiment, about as successful as doing nothing.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And the names evade me right now. Why, I think I wanted to forget them. That were the people you had to deal with, but it was a time, in the timber industry, that you're getting a lot of bad press, and the Forest Service was going overboard on trying to accommodate all of these people, you know. I don't know how many planned, planning events I went to with the Forest Service, trying to—you'd go to meetings trying to talk to them about your tenure plans, and what a waste of time. And it's just still, some of the things that are going on. You know, they try to accommodate all of these little groups of people that are against this and that, and something else. Whether it's roads and culverts now is the big thing, you know. And we're polluting the streams with all of this roadside—well, there have been roadside prior to the time people worried about it. Most of the counties dumped all of the slime slides into the stream so they get rid of the dirt.

MD: Yeah.

JD: If you look back at history, the Yaquina Bay was formed down there by landslides. It's been in landslides forever, and there wouldn't be all of the dredging they have to do all the time on any of these estuaries if you didn't have mother nature producing landslides. And of course, the spotted owl first, and then the marbled murrelet was the next bird they found a problem with. And then pretty soon we found that these—I think research, science and research, is probably what killed the forest industry. Because people started studying then what animals and what are we affecting, and then pretty quick it's the little toads and frogs and tadpoles, and this and that, and something else.

And probably the classic was we had the studies that told us we need to clean these streams out after harvesting. I had a sale that we logged down on Lost, what's called Lost Creek, between Seal Rock and Waldport, that we had to clean a half a mile of stream that you had to yard across with a cable logging system. And all of that debris in the stream today would look wonderful, because science says now we need that streamside shade, and places for species.

MD: Yeah, you want the shade now.

JD: We spent millions of dollars on cleaning streams on government sales, and cutting all the debris out and getting it out of the stream beds, and so fish would have a gut shot to get from home to first base, you know.

BD: [Laughs]

JD: That science only lasted 20 years. [1:30:00] I think it's probably the classic of—talk to Mike Newton sometime. Mike did a study on part of the Willamette National Forest; it's the MacKenzie River, and what is it? It's a research area that the Forest Service has up there. Right now I can't—the name will come to me as soon as I leave, but.

MD: Yeah. [Laughs]

JD: But Mike did a study of regeneration of alder on a unit up there, and twenty years later, suddenly the Forest Service is going to do a study of alder regeneration. Mike asks me, he said, "Could you go take a look at what I have already written about up there, and see what you think of it?" And I did. All they were doing is just duplicating what Mike did. We'll find out the same results, you know.

MD: Yeah.

JD: Most of the time it's either you find out it's 180 degrees wrong, or it's right. [Laughs] And I just have personally felt that we need the science, I guess and all, but when the small groups take a lot of the science, take a little bit out of some technical paper, and print it, and you can prove anything with science. And unfortunately, that's what's killed the timber industry. It's killing the oil industry today, because we've got some problem with putting the oil line in some lake, and it's done undoable damage to the economy of the United States. And I think this has been a country that's been developed by people that were hard workers, and we did the science that was necessary to live with what we had to live with.

And unfortunately, you look back, and cable logging wasn't the best system to be logging in certain areas. In some places it's good for ground disturbance. The old time—I can show you places that are pristine, and what people would say is it's a marvelous place for stream frontage; they had a saw mill sitting right in the creek where the saw dust went down the creek. They had a yarding spark hole there that yarded all the logs downhill that accumulated in front of the mill. And now you look at it, it's a nice stream. It's all cleaned out, and clear, clear water coming down. If you want a good example of what—the aquarium at Newport is the best example where a saw mill and a log pond were located.

MD: Right.

JD: This uncle of my wife's that hired me had his mill there, built the mill there, Triangle Pacific. And they put a log pond in, and the logs were towed in in log rafts, and wrapped up, brought over to this little pond they had. That pond now is part of the exhibit for the otters, and all the wildlife we have in the aquarium.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And so, if man can create disasters, and then make disasters prime real estate for whatever we want, maybe that's the science we ought to be studying then.

MD: Well, that's one thing. You have actually lived through all of the changes in the timber industry, technologies.

JD: 180 degrees most of the time, from what—we knew the grounds to service was for early cable systems, you didn't have a tower you could move around to get it in the right spot. You raised trees, or you rigged trees that were sitting on the spot on top of the ridge. Well, lots of times the ridge went out and only sloped over, and a cable system coming up doesn't go a ways in. And we learned later on, well, maybe you at least ought to water bar some of these things, and

turn the water off. And nature's been doing that for 100 years or 1000 years, with these landslides. And the landslides they've had every place in, up in Washington County and Columbia County, you know, most of those were created by early railroad systems for logging. [1:35:00] But still, I went through the era of it didn't get quite—I should have told you about—Pat Patterson was my first professor in Logging Engineering. And Pat Patterson was an old-time railroad logging engineer, not a locomotive engineer.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And so one of the things we learned early in my freshman year was about how you built rail line. We weren't interested in building truck loads; we were interested in how we were establishing rail lines. And I learned early on what a frog line, what they called a—

BD: Frog line.

JD: Not a frog line. A frog angle.

BD: Angle. Angle.

JD: A frog angle is the angle dispersed from the main line of how much you need to get to the spur line out, so you don't have two trains rubbing each other going down the spur track.

MD: Right, yeah.

JD: Well, a frog angle, I never thought was—this was useless information I learned, but when I went to work for White Sugar Pine down in Medford, one of the first things you had to do was help locate a spur line into the White City Mill.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: And I'll be darned if I didn't have to put a frog angle into the design of that! So what you think is sometimes as kind of hopeless, that was interesting.

BD: [Laughs]

MD: Comes up, yeah, comes up. One of the other things I was really interested in finding out is, you knew, and like you say, you guys wore red ties in honor of George Peavy. He was just towards the end of his life when you were in school. Did you ever meet Dean Peavy?

JD: I think he talked to one Fernhopper banquet. I can't say for sure, but I think he did. T.J. was more the era that I came in, and he taught part-time. But that was one of the things that I learned from T.J., is that he was always preaching, you ought to buy some of this tax land, you know, that it's forest land; you can do something with it. And most people didn't take him seriously, but he and this Bill Weinberg were battling it out in Lincoln County, and down in Curry County. And the Agnew family in Curry County had the ability to cancel timber sales, or county land sales down there. Whenever they heard Bill Weinberg was going to show up, well, they'd cancel the sale.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: And the same thing happened up in Washington in Klickitat County. Bill Weinberg bought quite a bit of land in Skamania County, but he found out that there were clicks that were working land all over the place, but at five and ten dollars an acre, but you had to look and see what the land looked like, and you couldn't go wrong. I even felt when I got—finally we were paying up to \$1000 an acre for clear land, because you're looking at what the land value was, and what the potential was of putting trees on it, and by the time you get some trees established on a piece of land, it's worth over \$1000 an acre. And we were looking at lands that had been cut over, but either receded naturally in places down, went down.

My division ran from the Umpqua River north to the Tillamook County line, and took in Lincoln County, and Benton County, and some of the best land we ended up with in Benton County was out west of the McDonald Forest. We ended

up saving most of that. I always thought we would start doing some thinning, and I wanted to get started at early age thinning. And I talked to Burt Udell about it, and a couple of other studies that had been done, and when the company sold out, that was the first piece that was prime candidate to be sold to somebody else. So, the guy that bought the saw mills, and anyway [1:40:00], he went through that 15,000 acres in Benton County so quick that you couldn't figure out what happened to it.

BD: His name began with an E. Does that help you any? [Laughs]

JD: Yeah, yeah. Engel, Bruce Engel.

MD: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

JD: He bought a lot of bankrupt sawmills, and then bought these pieces of land that companies were spinning off real quick and trying to get some cash.

MD: Now, the McDonald Forest was the home for the Fernhoppers cabin.

JD: Right.

MD: Now, I have photographs of the rebuilding of that cabin after it had burned. Now, were you involved with that building?

JD: We, I helped put the roof on that, the new building. Marv Raleigh—if you haven't done anything with Marv yet, you should, because Marv was one of the classmates of the class of '50. He was in the Army prior to going to college, forestry school. He'd have a hard time talking now, but if you can get him to write up some write ups. He ended up in the School of Forestry, in charge of McDonald Forest.

MD: Oh, okay.

JD: But they had a sawmill up at Oak Creek, and cut the lumbers up for the rebuilding of the cabin, and that was part of the—we really had three distinct units in the forestry school. Logging engineers and the management people were the ones that wanted to go work for the Forest Service or the State Forestry. They weren't park rangers; they were foresters. Very few of them wanted to go work for the National Forest or National Park Service, but as recreation became a big thing then, a lot of the resource people that went into Forest Management ended up with the Park Service.

MD: Mm.

JD: But you also had a good start on the forest products, and as a few people got into that end, it was a very small group, but they all, practically all, went into the sawmill business someplace or another. And we built a little sawmill out there on Oak Creek. It's the one that cut the lumber for the cabin. We even had a forest fire out in McDonald Forest. When I came back from that fire crew and started school, about the first thing they did to you, call for all of the foresters that had fire-fighting experience to go out and put a fire out.

MD: Is that what took down the cabin, the original Fernhoppers cabin?

JD: Well, I don't remember if that was what caused the cabin fire. But I can't even remember, someplace on Oak Creek there.

MD: Uh-huh. Now, the other person that—now, you had dealings with T.J. Starker, and then how about the sons?

JD: Oh, very much. Here's my latest correspondence from the Starker family. Gary Blanser's one of my—I'd been up until the first of October, asked for the tree farm representative for okaying inspectors for different properties for sustainable forestry. And I've worked for the Starker family for—T.J. I got to know fairly well, but his son Bruce and I did a lot of work together. That's when we were looking the land. We got the first cutting right on Starker lands over in Lincoln County on Mill Creek. Started this 631-A tax program that's available for exchange of lands for timber, or like.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: One time it was like-for-like, and T.J., I think, got this thing set up to where it was at least it was timber could be exchanged for land. And we were buying land, as Cascadia Lumber Company, all over the state of Oregon, practically, but primarily up in Washington and Columbia Counties, and down south. And Bruce and I used to go out, and he had a hard time turning anything down because it was such a good buy, that I think I made good buys for the company, you know, and Millers wanted me to look at a piece of property, and I'd say, "Oh, I'll take a look at it." And then I'd say, "You'd better buy it." And so the Millers would buy it, and then they, "We'll exchange this for cutting rights down on Mill Creek down here." [1:44:59] They had I don't know how many couple of sections of timber there right south of Toledo and close to the mill.

And so Bruce and I would head up to Vernonia and look at two or three parcels, and always had to stop and have a milkshake on the way back. Bruce was a great one, and I spent a lot of time looking for his plane when he crashed with it, with Bart—not Bart, Bruce. And very familiar with the family. The boys' mother was very instrumental in getting the aquarium started over in Newport. And since the two boys have run the company, I've had lots of contact with them, but a lot of my contact has been through Gary Blanser. Gary's a very, very close friend. Put together this thing that you need to get in touch with, because I'm sure that what they're putting into the library is going to end up someplace, to make sure it doesn't disappear.

MD: It needs to be in our library.

BD: Yes. He's got a lot of people in the timber industry from way back that he's interviewed. He's spent hours interviewing them. You need to get that.

MD: Yeah, Oregon State Special Collections Archives and Research Center, that's one of our main focuses, and that would be the home for this collection.

BD: Good.

JD: So much of this stuff gets sidetracked someplace. Betty and I have been trying to do some research on our—really the family history, and people didn't have time to do a lot of this family history. My dad and my uncle Denison, John Denison, he worked for Morris Knutsen during the war, then finally got into real estate in Los Angeles. And my dad, being a locomotive engineer, didn't have time to start chasing family down. He found a few of the relatives, and my uncle found a few, but we did learn about the Denison estate back in Mystic, Connecticut.

MD: Hm.

JD: And that's where my stepdad's homestead still exists back there. It's even a bird sanctuary with the old house on it, with four different eras of furniture in it, and a really interesting history.

MD: Yeah. One of the other people that we've done an interview with for our OH150 Project is Tony Van Vliet.

BD: Oh, yeah.

JD: Tony would have been a good one, right.

BD: Mm-hm.

JD: His help in the legislature has been the time that some good things happened in the forest industry. But then unfortunately, he got sidetracked with a bunch of people from Eugene, that were led by Courtney and a few of the rest of them that are still around, that it's a wonder anything's happened. And I think that's about our problem. I'd advocate about a five-year moratorium on all legislative sessions, both federal and state.

MD: [Laughs]

BD: [Laughs]

JD: And see if we can live with the laws, and throw out the ones we don't need.

MD: Yeah. [Laughs]

BD: Elect someone to put in a law and elect someone else to put in a new one. [Laughs]

JD: That didn't sell too well either.

MD: Yeah. [Laughs] Well, one of the things I always like to ask is, as a Beaver alumni and a person who was at Oregon State during a real interesting time in our history, any other reflections about your time as a student, and as a Beaver, that you want to impart to people who are watching these videos?

JD: Well, I wish there were more I could say about the—I've been active in the Masonic Lodge. I started as a DeMolay in high school, and probably the reason I went to a fraternity after my first year in school. I think there's a lot of learning both you can learn in manners and in how to treat people in both of the [1:50:00]—I belong to the Elks Lodge. I got more involved in Lodge work, especially when I was away from—I got out of school, out of college; I applied for a commission in the Navy.

MD: Mm, mm-hm.

JD: And I took enough correspondence courses to get to the ensign grade. I started on my lieutenant JG grade when I found out that they didn't think they wanted to continue the program, unless I would go to Salem and stay in the Reserves in Salem. And I was driving back and forth, up and down the coast half the time and not home, and I figured out it was just one more thing to add to the problem. So I finally dropped out, but I did get an ensign rating in the Navy Reserve.

BD: Mm-hm.

JD: But I with all of the Lodge work and such I was involved in, that was hard to do, too, and so I didn't feel that I had a close connection with Oregon State that some of the younger generation had, and being closer to it. People lived in the valley here, and were able to go to football games every weekend, and basketball games, and such as that. We did some basketball games once in a while, and a football game or two. The success of most of these entities, like my fraternity went broke, and there just wasn't an interest in fraternity life for a number of years.

Masonic work has been the same thing. The elderly—as the lodges get older and older and older, no younger people coming into it. There are problems. The same thing with Sunday schools and churches, and such. We worked with several churches on the coast on presbytery committees, and all of them envisioned a large youth program. That's what they wanted to get started, but didn't know how to do it. And most of them, like Lincoln City Church got down to about 25 members out there, still one of the highest per-capita givers in the church, but they finally got to the point where they built a new church, and did attract a little interest in the younger generation. But church life has fallen to the wayside, and practically every—the advent of television has killed everything.

MD: [Laughs]

BD: [Laughs]

JD: I blame that on my predecessor owners, down in Los Angeles.

MD: Yeah.

JD: Bought all of these cable television sets, and lines that they decided were a better investment than the timber industry.

MD: [Laughs]

JD: And we're going to end up with, I think someday, a nation of idiots, with the cell phones and the games they play, and the television they watch, they're not going to know anything about what's going on in the world. We bought a piece of property from Moe Bergman. Moe Bergman's another protégé of mine, worked with Willamette Industries, the chief forester; finally he retired. Gene Knutson was the president of the company, was an ex-Beaver Forest Management. But we bought the piece of property from Moe down on Canal Creek, and we bought a piece of property from Moe up on

Salmon River, out of Otis. And I thought the one at Otis would be an ideal piece, if you remember about the Richardson Estate that the college received? Burt Udell, and several others, and myself went to talk to George about converting that into a showplace for small woodland owners.

MD: Oh!

JD: Of course, interest of building buildings on campus was more interesting than how you spent the money when somebody donated the property to you, so we didn't win that one. That's why I thought maybe the piece I had would be a challenge for helicopter rowing [?] or something on the Salmon River, because it doesn't have access because of Forest Service roads [1:55:00], or it doesn't have access because it's across the Salmon River from Highway 18. And it could be a challenge for some skyline logging system, or helicopter system, or something that—logging engineers ought to spend a year trying to figure out how to get the logs out of it.

BD: And fishery, too.

JD: It's got about a quarter of a mile of stream frontage, with fisheries access. And all of the things that we're having to face today when we're repairing areas and such, but it does have about 150,000 board-feet of good-sized fir timber on it. And I thought, well, maybe I will donate that to the foundation, and see if the college wouldn't be interested in it. Well, we spent about three years meeting different people, and different people all—it's the curse of trying to get properties traded with the Forest Service. You never met with the same people twice in a row, you know.

MD: Yeah.

JD: I think the change of people, and then they wanted something to turn—they didn't want something to study. And so we did get a couple of good football game tickets and things out of the Foundation, but—

BD: They didn't want it.

JD: Unfortunately, I still have the property, and I guess I'm going to find some kind of a group that needs that type of property someday.

MD: Mm-hm.

JD: It's twelve acres, and I bought it originally because I thought I could survey out 100-foot frontages on it, and sell little places for cabins you could get.

MD: Yeah.

JD: Walk across the little swinging bridge or something, and not have to drive to it, and of course, that's killed with all of the land use planning we've had in the state.

MD: Yeah. And so, you can't do with your land what you want, so yeah.

JD: That's the biggest problem, I think, professionally, today, is that an elderly generation of small woodland owners, if you look at the average age, most of these people are 60 or 70s, and on up to my age or 90s, and you can't find a family that wants the kids on it, that want to be doing the same thing that most of us did. Clint Bents is probably the classic example, the Clint Bents family that were in real estate and had property in Linn County. And I think the estate, when Clint's dad passed away, they're still able to hold it together, but it's one family. He puts on a pretty good course that covers other generations.

BD: Estate planning.

JD: Hmm?

BD: Estate planning.

MD: Mm.

JD: Hm?

BD: Estate planning.

JD: Yeah, estate planning. But that's what we're into right now. We're trying to figure out—we've I think got our wills and things taken care of, and those are the problems we've got to face. But I don't know if I covered anything for you.

MD: This has been absolutely fantastic. Especially the history of the timber industry in the Pacific Northwest is just, is solid gold to us, because it hits both of our areas, university history and the history of natural resources in the Pacific Northwest, which is another thing we focus on, so.

JD: Did you ever run into the—what's his name, that put out the rigging shack?

MD: I've looked it up.

JD: You've looked it up?

MD: I've got some got some stuff on my computer, yeah.

JD: Oh. He was a classic for getting interviews with most of the elderly loggers and such, and he came down and met with Betty and I one time, and I don't think his name would walk out the door.

BD: [Laughs] You've done very good. You've gotten very well with some of the names you've pulled out of the clear blue sky. [Laughs]

JD: Well, over time, there's a lot of people we've met, and I think probably more so in working with small woodland owner organizations, like my presidency for five years, almost five years. We met a lot of people from eastern Oregon that are small woodland owners. They had a program that Boise Cascade put on for a number of years, of signing up people for managing plans. The state forestry encouraged that, and of course, most of the people, they don't consider themselves foresters, or loggers, or landowners that are forestry-oriented. They're cattlemen. And the president of Small Woodlands prior to me was a real cattleman! [2:00:00] He wore a scarf around his neck most of the time, and he herded cows, and had a big ranch, had a big ranch out east of John Day, and ran cows in the summertime up in the Strawberry Wilderness country. And I never would have thought I'd have an interest in meeting people like that, but that's been a classic for it. [Laughs]

MD: Right. [Laughs]

JD: The Freese family is another family over there that were very active, and we got involved with Extension people, with both Betty's program with the Tree Farm, and mine with the Small Woodlands Association. Extension has been one of the great programs that almost got shot in the foot, too, because of lack of funding.

MD: Yes. And Oregon, the OSU Extension has got a long, long history.

JD: It has, and it's done wonders for the small woodland owners, as well as the ag people. And again with the 4-H program with kids that, they've brought kids on that, if you had a kid that went through 4-H, you could hire him. If you had a kid that spent summers working as a lifeguard at a swim place someplace? I went through lots of interviews with people, and as far as people coming out of schools, you know, a lot of these would have to go—they'd finally decide they had to go five years, because they didn't know what they wanted to do after four years of college. So they take a fifth year, and get some kind of a master's degree in something or other. But you start looking at the resume, you know, and they were a lifeguard in this, and did a recreation tour for something else.

BD: Golf camps.

JD: And never had anything that had to do with what was productive forestry. And if the kid went out and worked on a planting crew in the winter time, that was one up for him, as far as going to work. And I had a crew of about fifteen people there in Toledo, and we made a lot of headway. We started out with a program that we were going to reforest

40,000 acres of under-productive land. And Lon Madison and Ray Lousie were my two bosses I had at Publishers Paper Company, had convinced the company in a ten-year program of restoration of these cut-over lands. And so that's how we got started down in Toledo. And the WW Lumber Company was out of Eddyville; it was one of the prime candidates—about 3,000 acres of land that there wasn't hardly a fir tree left on it, and they had the sawmill right there at Eddyville.

MD: Yeah.

JD: And so that was one of our early restoration projects. We started with two 700-acre units—no, two 400-acre units, right about two miles up the road, just south of Eddyville. At that time, our burning projects were started with primacord and jellied gasoline, and boy, you set off a—I had to admire a couple of foresters that came down from Tillamook to do most of the layout of that, because they had to run up and down all of this junk the material was on. And we slashed all of the stuff, and so it was standing, and so you had lots of debris on the ground. But they had to run down all over this stuff laying this primacord jellied gasoline, and then when that was set off, it was just a Hiroshima-type 40,000 feet that you put a plume of smoke up in the air. But I think instant fire, and those units cleared up slicker than a whistle.

MD: Yeah.

JD: The problems after that we had was, the mountain beaver were probably the major problems. And again a little story on science that Hugh Black? There were two foresters that came out of the science entity here, and they were going to do a study of how to get rid of these mountain beavers. [2:05:02] Putting traps out was probably the successful thing, but you had to load the trap with something. And they tried all of the wild apples people would get, and finally found a delicious apple that came out of Washington state that someone was very successful in doing it. I think one of those fellows spent twenty years studying, and never found out what you can do to get rid of mountain beaver.

BD: [Laughs]

JD: Except the counter-bear trap was the—if you caught one and killed it, you knew you had a dead beaver then.

MD: [Laughs]

BD: [Laughs]

MD: Well, Jim, you have been a gem.

BD: Probably got a lot more than you ever wanted.

MD: Oh, it's fantastic!

BD: Oh, he loves to talk.

MD: And on behalf of the Special Collections and Archives Research Center, and the OH150 Sesquicentennial Oral History Project, we want to thank you for your stories. They are very important to our project.

JD: Well I hope I haven't insulted anybody. I can look forward, and I can look backwards, you know, a little bit, and I can see that the science has probably been—is probably going to stop all of our industry, if we don't be careful about how we use the science. And we may have critters disappearing all over the world, but that's been a thing that's been happening for a million years, and we're not going to solve that problem. And I think that we have to live with the dodo birds that didn't exist for my generation, and we'll probably live with it if the tadpoles don't make it out of the salamander pool, or something or another. It may make wonderful science to study these things and know what we develop from that, but when it kills other industries, it's not doing a good thing for us. We put an awful lot of people out of work that have had to find other means of surviving.

And maybe I had the benefit of ten different jobs that I had. That's probably good. I think the fact that going to work for a company like some people thought they could do, and stay for 20, or 30 or 40 years, will never happen again, not in our lifetime or anybody else's, I don't think. These companies are folding up and forming new companies, and merging, and doing all kinds of things. So the longevity of a job is something we had probably learn about, and how you can handle it.

MD: Well, I couldn't agree more. We thank you very much, sir.

JD: Thank you.

[2:07:50]