

Alvin "Ag" Anderson
Retired Professional Forester
Started with the Forest Service in 1942
Worked on Rogue River, Siskiyou, and Siuslaw National Forests

Interviewer: Lee Webb
Cloverdale, Oregon
June 15, 2004

Lee Webb: ...Lee Webb. It's June 15th and I'm with Ag Anderson in Cloverdale, Oregon. He retired from the Forest Service a few years ago. Ag, would you state your full name and spell your last name for me?

Alvin Anderson: Alvin G. Anderson, A-N-D-E-R-S-O-N.

LW: How did you happen to become "Ag"?

AA: Well, "Ag", that started when I was going to college – A.G. Anderson – and pretty soon I started signing myself "A.G.", and became "Ag".

LW: So that became your name.

AA: So that's where I got "Ag".

LW: That's how I heard about you. What year were you born?

AA: 1922.

LW: Where?

AA: In North P-er, in Sutherland, Nebraska.

LW: Sutherland Nebraska. What's your family background? What did your folks do?

AA: Well, my dad was a carpenter and my mom was a housewife. My folks split up about 1935 and Mom brought us kids to Oregon and we've been here ever since.

LW: We heard the bird clock there for a second. How did you happen to come to work for the Forest Service? When did that happen?

AA: Well, about 1939 I was a member of Troop 6 Boy Scouts in Klamath Falls, Oregon, and we formed the first explorer scout troop in the state of Oregon. It was a forestry troop, and Ranger John Sarginson and his assistant Bob Webb taught us map-reading and compass and pacing and all that kind of stuff. And then when I graduated from high school in 1942 I graduated on a Friday night and went to work for the Forest Service on the next Monday. We went to fire school up on O'Brien Crick and got trained in smoke chasing and more compass and firefinder use. While we were there at O'Brien fire school, the Japs bombed Dutch Harbor, Alaska. So that gave us all a little sense of excitement and we started watching for things in the woods. One time we were prowling around and we come across one of these weather

balloon deals. We thought maybe it was a bomb, you know – we'd never seen one before. So, lots of excitement. And that's the way I got started in the Forest Service.

LW: You worked for the Forest Service for a couple of years. You ended up in the military in World War II, is that right?

AA: Well, I went, uh – after I got out of fire school we went to Moon Prairie Guard Station and worked trails, and that was in the spring. And then I went up on Old Baldy Lookout for the summer. And in the meantime I also did some work up Sevenmile Guard Station up west of Fort Klamath. I hiked the five miles in to Fort Klamath to register for the draft. And that fall I got my draft – the draft board wanted to see me, so I came in and joined the navy. I figured I knew where my bed was going to be if I was in the navy and it wouldn't be very far from chow, so I joined the navy.

LW: That would have been...

AA: 1942.

LW: Late in the year.

AA: Yeah. But the navy took me up, inducted me, and then sent me back home. So in the meantime I went to school taking machinist training. Christmas Day 1943, I think it was, I got my call to go to Farragut, Idaho. From Farragut, we went to University of Kansas to machinist {making 5:23} school and then to Melville, Rhode Island to PT boat training. While I was there Jack Kennedy was one of my instructors – he later became President.

I got through the PT boat training and we went to New York and we got a brand new boat at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. On my twenty-second birthday we shipped out to England - we were going down the East River heading for England. It took us - I think it was twenty-one days to get to Liverpool, and then we unloaded the boats off the ship there and we went around to a place called Portland Bill, and prepared for the invasion.

We worked with the British torpedo boats in the English Channel, and right before the invasion we escorted the British mine sweepers that swept the lanes right off the beaches of Normandy. We were out there a day or two before but they called us back because they delayed the invasion. The day of the invasion we were right off the coast on Utah Beach. And then we were there for about a week and then a big storm blew up and we went in the protection of those artificial harbors that they built and during the night a runaway barge had come down and smashed about six feet of our bow in and we ran around there in reverse trying to keep ourself from sinking. Some guys on a ship threw us a line and we tied up to our forty millimeter, our stern. We tied stern to stern I guess, and the only reason why the ship wasn't washed up on the beach was – its screws was tangled up in the buoy lines [laughs]. We did patrols and got in a couple of cat fights with the Germans down in the Channel Islands.

When the war was over I came back to the States. I was on the fire department at Melville for a while. Then they shipped us out to the West Coast and we were in Camp Shoemaker California when the war with Japan was over. They shipped all us new blood out to the Pacific to take the place of the guys who had been out there for a long time. We ended up in Tokyo Harbor. I was on a repair ship, the USS Argonne. The repair ship was responsible for taking care of this old Japanese battleship, the Nagato. So I

was sent over there as the chief engineer – I was a first class motor mechanic and the chief engineer on a battleship. From an engineer on a PT boat to an engineer on a battleship!

LW: This was after the war ended?

AA: Yeah, this was after - the war was over before we went out.

LW: So you got to be on both theatres.

AA: Yeah.

LW: When did your duty with the navy finish?

AA: I don't know, 1945, '46, I don't remember. I came back and went back to work for Johnny Sarginson at Klamath District as a – no, I guess Johnny was gone, it was Bob, Bob something or other, can't remember his name – but I was a patrolman working out of Scott Crick on what they call the panhandle, the little strip of land between the Klamath Indian Reservation and Crater Lake Park. I had from Fort Klamath to Diamond Lake Highway was my patrol area.

LW: This was for the Rogue River National Forest.

AA: For the Rogue River Forest

LW: They were set up a little differently then, the forest...

AA: Yeah, but, I patrolled the highway for fires and I checked in. I had several points along where we had – that was before we had radios like we do now - but I had several places along to hook on a telephone line and an emergency phone to call and check in every little bit. And then, let's see, that summer there was a suppression crew at Scott Crick and I stayed with them. Then after they left I took care of Scott Crick one night and Lookout Butte the next night. If we had a thunderstorm coming up, we'd run for the lookout and report any fires. If we seen a fire, we'll report it in and head for the fire.

LW: You were doing the lookout duty too and then going out to the fire also.

AA: Yeah.

LW: How many lookouts did you work on?

AA: Well, I worked on Old Baldy, and Lookout Butte, Rustler Peak, Blue Rock, and Buck Point, I guess, up above Butte Falls – just short times on each one of them. But I went through school and then graduated in 1950, and had a suppression crew at Lake of the Woods. That fall I got my orders to report back to the navy, so away I went to Korea. I got out in December '52, got married and went back to work for the Forest Service. I got my junior forester appointment in 1953 working for – I went to work for Bob Beeman at Butte Falls and John Henshaw was the district guard there. In 1947, I guess, or '48, I had a crew at Scott Crick. We pruned pine trees, pruning the limbs that had dwarf mistletoe on them. We spent the summer there working trails up out of Sevenmile Guard Station. One of the guys on the crew was Bob Tracy, and when I came back from Korea Bob Tracy was my boss at Butte Falls [laughs].

LW: How long were you in Korea?

AA: Just a little over a year.

LW: To back up just a little bit: you got your degree from?

AA: Oregon State College.

LW: Oregon State College, in forestry.

AA: In forest management.

LW: Forest management.

AA: Yeah.

LW: Well, you came back from the navy again, after Korea, and worked for somebody who had worked for you before. Let's pick it up from there.

AA: I went back to Lake of the Woods – no, Sevenmile. My wife and I had a little cabin there at Sevenmile Guard Station. We had a crew. We were pruning trees and smoke chasing. We went on several fires that summer, a couple of them over on the Umpqua. And then I followed - when the crew disbanded I went to Lake of the Woods as a smoke chaser there. My wife went up on Pelican View Lookout and she reported several lightning fires and I went to the lightning fires. My wife sent me to the fires [laughs]! Then we moved over to Butte Falls at Lodgepole Guard station. We lived there until the spring froze up and we ran out of water and then we moved into Butte Falls itself.

LW: Was it called Butte Falls Ranger District then, or ...

AA: Yeah. Butte Falls Ranger District.

LW: Were most fires caused by lightning in those days? Did you have much human caused fires?

AA: No. Just about every fire we was on was a lightning fire. There were very few human caused fires.

LW: While we're discussing fire, do you remember when Smokey Bear came into the picture?

AA: Oh yeah, that was about 1932, somewhere in there. I understand they got a big fire going in Arizona now where Smokey Bear was found.

LW: We'll find another singed bear.

AA: Yeah. Talking about bears. When we were at Scott Crick that place was overrun with bears. It seemed like there was a bear every time you turned around, raiding your garbage can at night. I shot my first bear there with a thirty-eight special pistol. He was raiding my food stash that I had in the cooler there outside the cabin. Bears rear up and tear the signs down, so old Wally Robinson he – that give him the idea that – instead of putting the signs up four or five feet in the air, you know, you put them down on the ground level so the bears can read them and then they didn't tear them down [laughs]! So that's what they did. They put the signs down just a couple feet off the ground and then they didn't have any more trouble with the bears tearing them down.

LW: Who knows for what reason [laughs]. Who were the rangers who were in charge – the district rangers in those days?

AA: Well, I went to work for Johnny Sarginson, and Bob Webb was his assistant. I can't remember there was a – when I came back – there was Bob something or other, I can't remember his name. There was Bob Beeman at Butte Falls and Andy Pearce was FCO at Lake of the Woods and I worked for Red Thomas. I was assistant district ranger - Ashland when Red - Harold Thomas, and then that's where I first got to know Tennie Moore. He was the fire specialist on the forest. I was to later work for him when he was supervisor. I just can't remember the name of the Bob something or other I worked for at Klamath there.

LW: When did you move over to the Ashland Ranger District?

AA: Oh, I don't remember. Probably about 1954, something like that. I stayed there for several years and worked for Red. He used to get these terrible migraine headaches and sometimes they'd knock him out for several days so I was just kind of flying around on my own. I took care of the – I had a brush crew and a {planting 20:36} crew and I had a fellow – Red hired a fellow, name of Bob Asher as headquarters fireman. He and I, we partnered up and did all the trail maintenance. He packed stuff in the lookout. He had two lookouts. But Bob Asher and I became friends of long standing. We still write back and forth to each other. He eventually became the fire regional dispatcher in Portland. He lives down in Arizona right now.

LW: Did you work on preparing any timber sales?

AA: Oh yeah, that was one of my main jobs. I spent years preparing timber sales, locating roads, which I just loved to do – going into virgin country, locating roads. Timber sales, yeah, we had timber sales, several of them there in Ashland. I took care of – in the wintertime we had all this lava rock and stuff, and the loggers like to work on the snow in the wintertime because you get the {cats 22:39} around on top of this lava rock without breaking up their equipment in the packed snow, so I spent time marking timber on snowshoes. We did that. I did so many different jobs it's just hard to tell.

LW: Jeff mentioned the Dead Indian timber harvest. You might have been at the beginning of when that happened?

AA: Yeah, well, when I first got back – when I first went up on the lookout in 1942 there were no timber sales to speak of. There were a few operations where they were cutting posts and stuff like that but during the war the timber sale business really took off. There were not very many people who could handle the cruising and mapping and stuff like that, so that's what I got stuck with, mostly, between other jobs.

LW: What did the forest look like before we really started entering and cutting timber? Do you have any recollection?

AA: Well, it was just – you might say – an unbroken canopy of trees, except where previous fires had – but where there wasn't any trees there was big brush fields. Manzanita brush, mostly.

LW: It wasn't all old growth?

AA: No. Well, most of it was old growth. There was areas of second growth but most of it was old growth.

LW: Were there a lot of small sawmills in those days? How did the timber industry operate?

AA: Well, when I first – I can't speak before the war. After the war there was sawmills just about in every town, you might say. I mean, Steve Wilson had one down at Central Point and there was one right down the street from my house in Ashland there. I don't remember the name of it, but they sawed twenty-four hours a day, logging trucks going and coming. But not like it is now.

LW: Were the cutting operations – were those subcontracted to gyppos, folks that, you know, just did jobs one at a time?

AA: Well, it was – customers would buy a timber sale and gyppo it out. I don't think many outfits had their own trucks – it was all gyppo trucks. I remember when Butte Falls' Medford Corporation had a railroad that ran from above Butte Falls into Medford and they sent out a trainload of logs a day but they were logging on their own land, Medford Corporation. And they logged some f lands.

LW: There was a lot of private timber harvest going on, too, at the same time.

AA: Right. It was mostly private. The Forest Service was just getting into the business back in those days.

LW: Before they got the really large cuts. We talked before about the old Lake of the Woods Ranger district. Was that in place while you were working or was that before?

AA: Oh, that was when I first started working for the Forest Service. The old Lake of the Woods ranger district, the headquarters was at Lake of the Woods. They had an office in Klamath Falls because in the wintertime it gets snowed out. That was before the highway that runs between Medford and Klamath Falls was in place. They had the district warehouse there.

LW: Yeah, it covered – what you told me –the Klamath ranger district which is now on the Winema. The Butte Falls ranger district, and, I guess, part of the Ashland ranger district – the Cascades part of it. That was the Lake of the Woods district?

AA: The Lake of the Woods district ran from Highway 66, I think it is, between Ashland and Klamath Falls, that highway there, north clear to Diamond Lake Highway in between some of the cascades and the, you might say, the Klamath Lake. It was a long string. It had a ranger station at Lake of the Woods and a guard station at Sevenmile, which is about five miles west of Fort Klamath. Then it had the lookout at Lookout Butte and it had a little guard station at Scott Crick.

LW: What would the work force be for a district like that in those days?

AA: Well, when I went to work there we had – there was about six or eight of us. We had a lookout on Buck Peak, Old Baldy, and, um, another lookout. And Devil's Peak, and Lookout Butte. Let's see, I can't remember the name of the lookout. It was off down to the west there. It was five lookouts and Moon Prairie guard station and Lake of the Woods and Sevenmile. That's three guard stations.

LW: That's not a huge work force.

AA: Well, you might say there's one man to each place. There was no crews – suppressing crews – everybody took care of their own snakes, you might say.

LW: The Winema – when did that come into existence – the Winema National Forest?

AA: Well, I really don't know when the Winema – one day, some time when they disbanded the Klamath Indian Reservation, and somehow the Forest Service got control of the timberlands, but I don't know exactly when that was.

LW: That's when the Winema – in that period -

AA: That's when the Winema-

LW: - came into existence.

AA: Yeah. I don't know the dates of that.

LW: The Rogue River was already converted from the Crater National Forest when you started, right?

AA: Right. That was the original name of the Crater Forest. And they had Applegate District, the Ashland District, Butte Falls District and the Union Crick District. Four districts.

LW: This is back when you started?

AA: When I started, yeah.

LW: Were there a lot of big old pines in the cascades?

AA: Well, the pine forest ran generally to the north from about Pelican Guard Station. The old growth pine like in the {panelb 31:27}, see, there's a transition forest between fir and mountain hemlock mostly, and there's pine – well, most of the forest was I'd say was douglas fir or shasta fir and hemlock. But there were drier parts where there was pine like Union Crick and the north end of the forest was pine.

LW: Do you remember any of the permittees by name that did grazing? Ranchers?

AA: I have no idea. I met a lot of them but that's history – long out of my mind.

LW: Was there much grazing in those days?

AA: Well, there was grazing permits. There was a sheep permit up on the panhandle, an old Basque sheep herder. I used to stop and have supper with him once in a while. He was a fine old guy. He had a bunch of sheep and they watered there at Pothole. It used to be Pothole Guard Station but there was nothing there but a well at that time. There was cattle – two or three cattle allotments farther south in the forest. I can't remember much about them.

LW: How big would this flock of sheep be that he had to take care of?

AA: Oh, I'd estimate about a hundred.

LW: Did he use dogs?

AA: Yeah, he had dogs. He'd bring his sheep in there to water them at Pothole, and once in a while when I was traveling between Scott Crick and Lookout Butte I'd stop and have supper with him. He was a fine old gentleman.

LW: Ag, tell me about Dan Pederson, the man with the famous tree.

AA: [laughs] Yeah. Well, old Dan, he was quite a character. He came to America as a sailor on a windjammer. When I knew him he was quite elderly. I guess he'd worked for the Forest Service for several years and he had a cabin about a half mile off the Dead Indian Road up between Lake of the Woods and Ashland. He built Old Baldy Lookout and I guess he built the famous lookout tree, a big old Shasta fir that he'd bored holes in and made rungs out of yew wood and spiraled around the tree. I remember it was about a hundred feet tall. He had his lookout spot up on top of that. It was on Brushy Mountain. It had a little cabin right up at the head of Big Draw Crick and near a spring that he lived in. It was still there in the '50s, I remember seeing there. That spring was the same one I used when I went down from Old Baldy to get water. I'd take four one gallon canteens on a pack board and one in each hand and go down and get water out of the spring. But old Dan –that old gentleman – he'd slip around and sneak up on me every once in a while up there on the lookout. He always wore an old black suit, carried a big umbrella and carried on old forty-five peacemaker. That's all I remember of him.

LW: Did he have an accent?

AA: No, no. He might've had, but I understood him perfectly well. Chin waggin', he'd point out various spots in the country, you know. He was quite well versed in where he was at. Once in a while I'd slip down in the evenings to get my mail – the Forest Service had a box nailed up on a tree there by his cabin. They put the mail and stuff in it. I'd slip down there and sit around and chin wag with him, and come back up the trail in the moonlight. He made the best flapjacks and biscuits you ever tasted. His sourdough starter he kept right in the top of a – he had a hundred-pound sack of flour with a hole hollowed out in the top of it and his starter sat right in there. You know flour, it gets wet, it just seals itself. Like the old timers found out, in a boat, if they lost a sack of flour they didn't have to worry about it because it would seal itself and the flour inside would be nice and dry with the seal on the outside. So Old Dan, he made sourdough flapjacks and biscuits.

LW: I'd like to visit him myself. This walkway he made on the tree, which he spiraled around the tree – you climbed the pegs to get to the top?

AA: Yeah. He just drilled holes in the tree about every so [indicates approximately six inches] far apart spiraled around the tree. He drilled holes and drove yew wood pegs in the thing. There was no outside rail [laughs].

LW: None at all?

AA: No outside rail at all. You just walked and you kept your hand on the tree going up. It was about a hundred feet tall.

LW: And you climbed it, right?

AA: Oh yeah, it was still there in 1942.

LW: Do you know when the tree was – when he did that? When he first did that?

AA: Oh, I have no idea.

LW: It had been there a while.

AA: Been there a long time, because the Old Baldy Lookout had been there for several years when I was there.

LW: It had a little platform on top.

AA: The tree had a platform on top but I didn't go up to the platform. I climbed up for enough to be saying "I'm stupid being here" so I went back down.

LW: Was he still climbing it then?

AA: Oh, no. No, no.

LW: Nobody was.

AA: No, no. It was abandoned. Old Baldy was used instead of Brush Mountain. But apparently Dan, when he came in that was the first lookout they had in that area, and he built it.

LW: So they used that whatever period of time until they built the new lookout?

AA: Yeah, until they made the new lookout at Old Baldy. It was just, oh, I'd say a half mile or maybe a little farther apart from the top of Brushy Mountain to the top of Old Baldy.

LW: You probably got a lot more visitors to the tower than you did to the tree.

AA: Yeah, yeah.

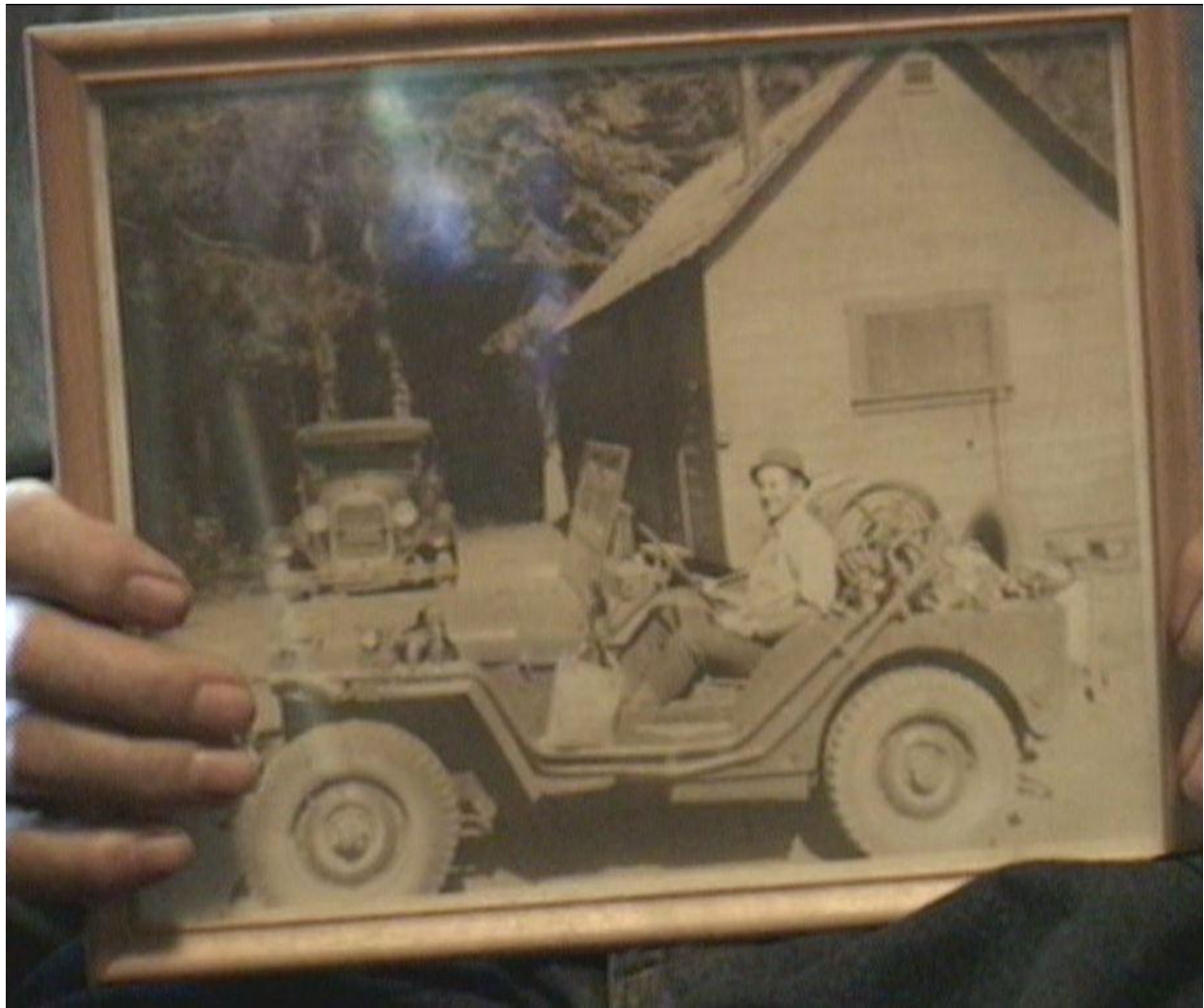
LW: I wonder if anyone else ever got up there besides him.

AA: Oh, I don't know. I have no idea.

LW: it just seems frightening to think about, even attempting it.

AA: [Laughs] Yeah.

[The tape is edited here, at 40:27---a black and white photograph in a frame shows a smiling man in the driver's seat of a stationary jeep. The jeep is parked in front of a small building surrounded by woods. A Ford Model A automobile is parked next to the building in the background.]



LW: Ag, tell me about this picture you've got in your hands.

AA: Well, this is a picture of me at the Scott Crick Guard Station back somewhere about 194- [considers the year], I don't remember – but we had this little- it was right after the war and the forest picked up a bunch of these jeeps. They bought about a hundred gallon tank pump in and we used it to patrol the roads to spot fires and stuff like that. That old Model A Ford sitting in the back was my first car. I traded it in for a – or sold it to somebody and bought a Jeep and I've still got the Jeep sitting out in the garage.

LW: Today?

AA: Today. It's kind of beat up, but I'm getting ready to restore it. A 1946 Jeep.

LW: Good grief. Well Ag, we've been talking about the Rogue River National Forest. Who were the forest supervisors when you were there?

AA: Well, there was Karl Janouch, the old-time forest supervisor, and Jack Woods was there several years. Tennie “Tennessee” Moore was his fire staff. Tennie and I got pretty well acquainted because he used to go with me on the tours around when I was patrolling. When I went to the Siskiyou Herschel Obye was the forest supervisor. When I moved up on the Siuslaw, Herschel’s son Allen was clerk at the Hebo. In those days everybody was a big family. Everybody moved back and forth between places more like a big family than it is nowadays.

LW: So when you moved, you knew the people. You knew a lot of them already.

AA: Yeah, generally you’d been on fires with them, or you’d been in conferences with them, and you generally knew where you were going. You knew the people when you got there. You generally knew their wives and it was just like a big family. But that kind of went out of date in the... {got a [unintelligible] 43:51 } [indicates something, possibly a tea kettle, off-camera].

LW: Yeah, I can hear it. Well...[the tape jumps at 43:57] ...Tennie Moore?

AA: Yeah. Tennessee Moore.

LW: Tennessee Moore?

AA: Spencer T. Moore. He was the supervisor. He was fire staff on the Rogue and then he moved to supervisor on the Siuslaw. When I was down at Powers I essentially was drafted to come to the Siuslaw to go to work.

LW: We’ve been talking about the Rogue quite a bit. Before we move to the Siskiyou and the next phase of your career, is there anything you’d like to talk about that happened on the Rogue – to you, or to who you know of?

AA: No, I – we had – everything outside of normal carryings on - at Ashland, at the Christmas party one year, I was advised that I was going to the Siskiyou with an increase in pay. Jack Woods, he held up the transfer until my second son was born and we moved to Powers.

LW: When would that have been?

AA: Oh, about – [laughs] dates are – it was in the ‘50s. ’58 or something like ’59, something like that. And when we got to Powers, Herschel Obye was forest supervisor and Herb Rudolph was a ranger. Chief Frye, Elwyn Frye was the fire control officer, and then Curt Townshend was the clerk. I started to work there and the timber sale program was way behind. I don’t know what they’d been doing, but anyway, I took off. About a month after I was there, a cliff - I was surveying a section line with a fellow, and I led him up through this set of bluffs. I went back and picked up the line, and when I went up through the bluff caved out from underneath me and I broke my leg – I broke my ankle. The fellow that was with me went down the road and got some loggers and they packed me out and took me to the hospital. I spent a month in the hospital and when I got out of the hospital I had a different ranger. I had Ted Burgess!
[laughing]

LW: At Powers?

AA: At Powers.

LW: Oh, so he was at Powers too.

AA: Yeah. When I got out of the hospital I had a new ranger. I had a walking cast on there for a while, and everything could go along pretty good except I couldn't stand to be pinned up in the office. So I was out marking timber on the flatland and I got a bunch of yellow jackets up my pant leg and that kind of created a stir [laughs].

LW: You couldn't move too fast.

AA: I couldn't too fast. I got stung pretty good. But when I moved to Powers there was a road from Powers to Agness, then a road that went off from the Agness Road up to Eden Valley and wandered around, come out way up on the – oh, I can't remember – Illahee and way off in there.

LW: Towards Glendale and out that way.

AA: Glendale, yeah, it come out at Glendale. But a couple of years after the Powers this government road construction outfit come in and fixed the road up over to Agness. Outside of Powers there they call it "Half Bridge Hill" [laughs]. Half the road was on rock and half was on a bridge [laughs]. It was one lane and half of it was a log bridge and the other half was on a rock ledge. That was "Half Bridge Hill".

I located miles and miles of roads. In fact there was very few roads on Powers when I got there. I look at a map today and ninety percent of the roads that's on the map is ones that I located. I can't believe it – miles and miles of roads. But we had a timber sale program – got it going and we were doing pretty good until the Columbus Day Storm. We were working on our last sale – to have our layout two years in advance of the sale, and the Columbus Day Storm wiped us out.

LW: Tell me about that Columbus Day Storm if you can. 1962, is that right?

AA: Well, I don't remember what year it was, but I know that it started out fairly calm and the wind just kept blowing and blowing, getting higher and higher. Before it was all over it had killed – up by the experimental forest, which is above Powers on the road to Agness – a tree came down and killed a lady in a car, smashed the car. It killed a lady down in Broadbent – a tree fell on her. It knocked all the power and everything out. I was going night and day there. The next morning after the storm hit we organized a bunch of people and we started up the road, leapfrogging, sawing logs and cutting timber out until we got up to where the car was. We took the tree off of it and waited for the coroner. Then we proceeded on up over the hill to Agness and got the road opened for the people. When the bidding started we sold over two hundred million feet of blowdown timber in two years. I got an award for my part in it – a cash award. By that time Bob Dunlap was a ranger. Ted Burgess had moved to Gold Beach and Bob Dunlap was a ranger. I had some real good help. Chuck Graham, who had just retired as forest supervisor on the Freemont was one of my helpers. I can't...

LW: You had {Don Denison 52:37}?

AA: {Don Denison 52:38}. Well, he was my right hand man. He was a woodsman. And oh, {Clyde Thorpe 52:44}. I had a whole series of young foresters that came in and helped. Tom Ellis is in the regional office, or the Washington office now, and like I say, Chuck Graham, he retired as forest

supervisor, he was there, and a fellow named {Vic Bayer 53:11}. I had some smoke jumpers to do surveys.

LW: Did the Columbus Day Storm do more damage on Powers than other parts of Siskiyou National Forest?

AA: Yeah, it apparently did. It just laid down – the Foggy Crick Basin, for instance, about three miles from top to bottom – we got a plane and flew the district to see where the damage was. We flew up to Foggy Crick and looked down and we couldn't really see any damage. It looked like all the trees were standing. But what it was – all the overstory had fallen down and the understory was sticking up. It practically wiped out the whole basin. I mean, three miles long and half a mile wide was stripped there.

LW: How many acres did it cover – were affected by the blowdown?

AA: Oh, I don't know.

LW: Thousands.

AA: The whole district was essentially hit, but the main part was Eden Ridge, Foggy Crick, and Experimental Forest.

LW: Did they actually harvest any trees from the experimental forest?

AA: Oh, yeah.

LW: The Port Orford Cedar Research Natural Area, I guess it is now?

AA: Yeah, we had regular timber sales there.

LW: Do you remember that Ferris Ford building?

AA: Oh yeah, I stayed several nights there. In fact, we had a fire patrolman who operated out of there in summertime. I hung up several deer in the garage there. Back in the days when –

LW: When you could take a gun with you?

AA: [laughs] When you could take a gun with you. One time Curt Townsend and I were out inspecting timber sales and we come back, we had two deer, a bunch of quail, grouse we brought back with us when we come back in the evening. In those days you didn't work from eight to five, you worked from "can't-see" to "can-see", or "can-see" to "can't-see", or whatever you might say.

LW: Working conditions were a little different then, weren't they?

AA: Yeah, eight hour days were pretty rare. I used to kind of let my wife raise the kids and I worked. I'd put in my day and then go back in the evening and work several hours after dark.

LW: Doing paperwork?

AA: Paperwork and stuff.

LW: Did you live at the compound in Powers?

AA: For a while they had a little house off the compound. Then they built a new ranger station down north of town there. We moved into the old ranger house over at the old compound. [Waves to LW] There, your light's blinking.

LW: We've got five minutes left. You were south of town. You started at the old station south of town.

AA: Yeah.

LW: The old compound.

AA: Yeah.

LW: Then moved up to the new one.

AA: Yeah, there was an old – I don't know if you've ever seen the old office there. An old – looked like a railroad depot.

LW: Mm-hm. Yeah, it's still there.

AA: No, it ain't.

LW: Well, some of that stuff's still up there [laughs]. I didn't see that one, then.

AA: There was a ranger's house and a park control officer's house there on the compound, and then there was a crew house for a crew, and garages and a warehouse all right alongside the railroad.

LW: The railroad went right through there, then.

AA: The railroad went right alongside there. From-the old railroad from Eden Ridge logging camp way up on the mountain there came down right through alongside the ranger station. They had a big log pond there across from the ranger station and would reload right there – they loaded cars. They used to take a million feet a day down that railroad – a million feet of logs every day.

LW: That was when you were there. There were using the logging railroad, which was operating. Was it narrow gauge, or standard gauge?

AA: Standard gauge.

LW: Standard gauge.

AA: They went from Eden Ridge into Coos Bay.

LW: So they'd haul it all the way to Coos Bay.

AA: Yeah, well they had a mill in Coquille but it usually went to the mill at Coos Bay.

LW: What company was this? Georgia Pacific?

AA: Well, it turned into – it was Coos Bay Lumber Company to start with, but Georgia Pacific bought them out.

LW: Was most of this coming off private land, or federal, or both?

AA: Yeah, it was coming off of Coos Bay lands, most of it. They had a road from Powers down Sixes River and you drove on the inside coming back uphill. So you might be driving on the left-hand side or the right-hand side, whatever the road – and they'd have these big trucks with nine-foot-wide bunks on 'em, and they come in – just logs stacked on, sometimes the tops of the logs'd be dragging behind. They had a dump there – they dumped them into pond, and cut them to size and stuff and loaded them out on the railroad. Like I say, a million feet of logs a day. That's a lot of damn logs, you know!

LW: That's a lot.

AA: After I'd been there about three years and the government had fixed the road up I located a road up Coal Crick. It went up to Delta Saddle – ended up at Delta Saddle up by Cedar Swamp. That enabled – located the tie-in – a road coming down from Eden Ridge logging camp. They could come down and come out at Coal Crick instead of – then they took out – that ended the railroad. The logging trucks could come down into Powers on the road then. That was three, four or five years after I was there we got that going. The road into Delta Saddle, we got that in just before the Columbus Day Storm. Up around Cedar Swamp there the whole country blew down. While I was monkeying around up there salvaging timber at Cedar Swamp I got together with Jim Adamek. There was – I don't know if you ever heard of him.

LW: I have, but in fact this tape is about to run out. We're going to stop it, then we'll talk about Jim.

[tape 1 ends]

[tape 2 begins]

LW: We were talking about the Adamek family. Tell me some more.

AA: Well, old Jim and I, we got to be pretty good friends. I was in the Lion's Club there at Powers and Jim was one of the members. He had two boys named Noble and Jimmy. They had an arrow-wood factory there in town. They used Port Orford cedar to make arrow-wood shafts, and I guess they're still operating there today. Noble has grown up – he was in school with my boy, and he's grown up now – he's the mayor of Powers!

Jim and I we used to get along pretty well. During the aftermath of that Columbus Day storm up by Cedar Swamp we had a bunch of blowdown on the other side of a big draw there. It could have been drug behind a cat out to the road but we figured if we built a road across to it and made a fill we'd have a dam for the water in Cedar Swamp. So I conjured up some culvert pipe and we put it down in the bottom of the draw. Jim, he built a cat road across – about a six, seven foot high dam across – cat blade with. So we had us a dam, and later on I put a tube upright to hold the level on the pond up. I did all of this on the sly, of course. The ranger came in one day and said, "Do you know there's a lake up there?" I said, "How about that?", you know!

{Don Denison 2:24} and I used to go fishing down on the Coquille – catfishing at night. One time we come back, had a whole sack full of catfish and dumped them in the tub. Lo and behold, there was a

whole bunch of them still alive, so I threw them in the back of the station wagon and took 'em off up there and dumped them in the Cedar Swamp so we had a catfish pond up there. Old Dave Heckerth, the district game guy, he found out about that and he come in raging at me about putting fish in the upper Coquille. I says, "well, what's the difference? They just took 'em out of one end of the river and put 'em in the other." [laughs] He raged around there, and when I got up to Hebo somebody had put some catfish in Hebo Lake and of course Dave was right on my back, saying he heard about that.

Anyway, Jim Adamek was a pretty good friend. He built the road from Coal Crick clear up to Delta Saddle and did a lot of logging there. I guess Jimmy and Noble are still running the arrow-wood factory there at Powers and they got a little mill down by Broadbent there somewhere.

LW: Yeah, he's got an alder mill that they run halfway back to Myrtle Creek, but the arrow-wood factory burned down a few years ago.

AA: Oh, it did?

LW: Yeah. I got to visit it a couple of times. It was pretty fascinating. Do you remember any particulars about the Arrow-wood factory?

AA: Nothing sticks in my mind outside of they used a lot of arrow-wood. They were always having trouble with cedar poachers.

[tape jumps at 4:42]

That all comes from that tub full of catfish that I brought in there! [laughs]

LW: Now I know the history of Cedar {swamp 4:51}. I've been there a number of times – we've done various projects up there. I didn't know all that background.

AA: Well, that was Jim Adamek and me that did that [laughs].

LW: Some things just happen, don't they?

AA: Yeah! [laughs]

LW: They're not really planned out. You mentioned Ted Burgess before. You went over to Gold Beach. What was he like as a ranger at Powers?

AA: Oh, he was energetic. I can't remember outside of I lived in my world and he lived in his. He was a ranger and I was the assistant. I was a timber man and I got along with him all right.

LW: As long as you got the timber out, you were.

AA: As long as I got the timber out.

LW: You mentioned that you had known Bob Mansfield, who worked on the Siskiyou then.

AA: Yeah. Well, Bob was the guy who took care of our right-of-way stuff. Of course, we didn't have too many right-of-way problems, but we did have a few, mostly with Coos Bay or Georgia Pacific. But he handled that stuff for us. I worked with him off and on.

LW: He went back to the – oh, gosh, he started in the '30s, I think he told me. At one time he worked on Olympic National Park.

AA: Well, he was pretty elderly when I was there.

LW: It was in the early days. You mentioned you knew Don Wood - that you'd met Don Wood.

AA: Yeah. I went to college with Don Wood. He worked over at the Grant's Pass side. I never did see much of him. Once in a while we would have fire school and stuff like that.

LW: Any other folks at Powers you'd like to mention?

AA: Well, there's Jack Bushnell. He was the mayor of Powers for a while. I guess Curt Townsend was mayor of Powers for a while, believe it or not [laughs].

LW: Was that a big honor?

AA: I don't know [laughs]! When we first set up – well, I engineered a football field. I don't know if you've ever been up to Powers High School.

LW: Up on the flat there? Yeah.

AA: Yeah, that was a Lions Club project. I designed and engineered that football field up there. Before, they had to go clear downtown on the flat down there. We had a Lions Club project and we got Coos Bay Timber involved, and I designed that thing and staked it out. In one day Coos Bay Timber, they moved thirty-some thousand yards of dirt. Carved it right out of the hillside – you how steep that hill is there – they carved that big flat area out of that hillside. They did all that in one day. Norm Smith - he was the engineer there for a while – he went down to Brookings – he designed the grandstand [laughs]. I got a Lion of the Year award for the football field [laughs]. I run across that plaque every once in a while. Anyway, I'm kind of proud of that football field. Every time I go to Powers I've got to go up there and look at it.

LW: They still play with small teams, don't they? Football team?

AA: Yeah, I really don't know. I think they're a seven-man team, or something.

LW: Seven or eight, or whatever it is.

AA: Yeah, eight. But I also located and designed the trail that goes up the hill from the old grade school up over the bluffs into the high school up there. That was a Lions Club project also. We built that.

LW: When you left Powers the railroad was still running to town then. Or were they?

AA: Yeah. It, uh, let's see. I can't remember when they took that railroad out – I think that was – they had a big flood and it washed a bunch of their bridges out, and they stopped hauling on the railroad and they

started – by that time the timber volume was way down. They had pretty well logged out Eden Ridge so they weren't hauling that million feet a day. It was mostly Forest Service timber they were hauling out by truck. They took out the railroad. It still runs between Coquille and Coos Bay, but they took out –

LW: There was a mill in Powers then, is that correct?

AA: Yeah. There was a mill right near where the new ranger station is there. There's a big park there now. The park and the mill pond is the fishing hole there in town. There was a stud mill there. It had the old wigwam burner, you know, that you used to see, and all that stuff, and a lot of logs from the forest going in there. I can't remember whether that was a Coos Bay outfit.

LW: I think in the end it was Georgia Pacific, I guess.

AA: Georgia Pacific.

LW: That mill was gone when I came to the forest in '75.

AA: Yeah, well they took that out right shortly after I left there. I can't remember when. I was always down there scrounging around looking. I got several timber trespass cases that I'd prosecuted – people stealing logs off the forest. They'd get rid of them at the closest place and then I'd track the logs down, then I'd do a lot of pond monkeying jobs, going around looking at logs in the ponds, you know [laughs].

LW: See who they belonged to.

AA: [tape jumps at 13:00]Used to come to town on Saturday night – come down on the railroad from Eden Ridge camp, and come into town there. Everybody'd get drunk, fight and squall and carry on. Sunday morning they'd all nurse their headaches and get back on the train and go back up to the camp [laughs]. Wait till the next Saturday night and – all over again [laughs].

LW: It was a little more lively town then in those days.

AA: Oh, yeah. There was a lot of Lions. The Lions Club was real active. There was projects going all the time. We salvaged that old fire engine – I don't know remember that was, but there was all kinds of activities. There was a moose lodge for the ladies and there was always a Saturday night dance. There was a railroad station there – I can't remember – the old station guy was Ed something. You'd get stuff shipped in on the railroad right there to Powers. There was a couple of bars and two or three restaurants. Seems to me there was three restaurants, a couple of stores and a movie theater, and they had a skating rink there. The skating rink was where the city library is now. There was a doctor, had an office there. Oh, it was quite a going concern.

LW: Contrast that with what you saw three years ago when you visited.

AA: Oh, there's nothing there now. They had the – oh, I can't remember the name of the place – the café – and there's a bar there, I can't remember the name of it. Red & Helen's was the restaurant – owned by Jack Bushnell. Red Costello, he was a real character, and his wife Helen [laughs], but I don't -

LW: What was unusual about Jack?

AA: He was just energetic. He owned several businesses there and I guess he was mayor at one time. He's still kicking around. I seen him last a year ago when I was down there. I stopped in to visit Curt and Pete Townsend.

LW: Well, I've stopped at – must be Jack's restaurant – that's the one where I would eat in when I went over to Powers to work.

AA: Well, it's called something else now.

LW: Everybody refers to it as "Jack's" now. That's the only way I remember it.

AA: It was always Red & Helen's when –

LW: Are there any other folks or things that happened at Powers you'd like to talk about before we move to the Siuslaw?

AA: No. I see Barbara. I don't know whether you've met {Barbara McDonald 16:59}. She used to be the clerk at Powers.

LW: That sounds familiar.

AA: I visit her. She lives in Cottage Grove. I stop and see her every year when I go down to put flowers on my wife's grave down in Roseburg. And Helen Call, she- and Chuck Graham, he married one of Helen's twin daughters. Always tell him he married a Call girl, you know [laughs]! Jack and Helen Call had a ranch right outside of town there, and had two daughters. Chuck married one of them. He ended up as forest supervisor over on the Fremont.

LW: Did Kenny Likens work in there then?

AA: Kenny was there then, yeah. He was also in the Lions Club.

LW: Yep.

AA: Yeah.

LW: He was sale administrator when I was working there.

AA: Oh, well he must have joined the Forest Service after I left, because he was a scaler, I think.

LW: That's right, I remember you talking about that.

AA: And that – I don't know whether you've seen the scaling platform just south of town there –

LW: Yes.

AA: I built that.

LW: You built it?

AA: Built it on my own time, on weekends. Had it moved over there. We didn't have much money so we scrounged the lumber and stuff and we built it free gratis and moved over there and had a scaling station. Before that they had to stand on the ground and scale from the ground. It's still there. I'm surprised it's stood up as long as it has.

LW: I remember seeing them scale loads right there.

AA: Yeah.

LW: When I was working. What other projects did you – any other specific projects you worked at Powers that you remember?

AA: Well, no, not really, outside of that football field and locating a jillion miles of roads, and burn and slash and going on fires. And catching all kinds of steelhead in the river [laughs]!

LW: You liked the hunting on Powers too.

AA: Yeah, well, Johnny got a deer every year, no problem. After I moved up here I went down a couple of times, and we got elk, {Don Denison 20:19} and I. I remember the three of us got three elk there one year in just a couple of days.

LW: Power is a good place for elk herds.

AA: Yeah, well, I don't know how it is now, but there was quite a few elk if you knew where they were.

LW: Still pretty good I think there. Anything you remember in particular about wildlife – elk or other animals, other things you hunted there?

AA: No, I had my second encounter with a cougar there [laughs]!

LW: Tell me about that!

AA: I got – well, I'd been locating road, and there's a trail up above the Kelly Crick bluffs there, an old miner's trail. I was coming up the trail and just as it topped out on – just out on top – here come a cougar padding along the trail coming the other way. He didn't know I was there, of course. We met eye to eye and all I had was my machete and my hardhat. So I threw my hardhat at him and that scared him off [laughs]. He went bounding away, probably more scared than I was.

LW: You were holding the machete in reserve.

AA: I was holding the machete in reserve [laughs].

LW: Tell me about the first cougar encounter.

AA: Well, that was when I was on Old Baldy Lookout. I'd got what they call "cabin fever", whatever you call – I'd been up on the lookout for quite a few days and I hadn't seen – that was during the war, and there was nobody allowed in the forest without a permit, you know and the only people that were in the forest were cattlemen or permittees. So I got cabin fever and one night I decided I'd go where there was some people. I took off hiking and hiked into Lake of the Woods Ranger Station so I could talk to

somebody besides on the phone. I was going down the Dead Indian Road there and I had a cougar parallel me for - just about a hundred yards away, he just paralleled me along the road there for several miles. He just kept - and I had an old forty-five automatic, and I just kept watching him [laughs]. He never bothered me, he was just curious, what the hell that was walking down the road. Of course that kept my steps going fast and I didn't take very long to get into the ranger station.

LW: That would tend to make you a little bit nervous. It would me, that's for sure. You told me a little story before - going back to the Rogue- about cooking, getting recipes over the phone.

AA: Oh yeah. Well, that - Bob Webb was the district assistant fire patrol officer, and his wife - in the evenings we were allowed a one hour talk session, all the lookouts. They'd put the switchboard and key everybody in so all the lookouts could talk back and forth and have a chat hour. All us young kids were just out of high school up there on the mountains. Bob Webb's wife would give us cooking lessons over the telephone - tell us how to cook this and cook that. That was our initiation into cooking. She was real good. Whenever we got stuck on something we'd call Alice Webb up and she'd give us the scoop [laughs]. That was how a lot of us learned how to cook.

LW: Who would have ever thought?

AA: Yeah.

LW: You read cookbooks you don't get it over the phone.

AA: Well, the old guard handbooks had recipes in them but they didn't tell you how to cook or anything [laughs].

LW: Well, you left, I think you said, in '64, '65, or so you left the Siskiyou, Powers...

AA: '65. In '65 I left Powers and came to Cloverdale and to Hebo. The ranger was Wendall Jones and the old FCO was Willis Horner. I took over as a - I came up as a GS11 and took over the timber business at Hebo. I was in charge of reforestation, timber sales, landline, and wildlife.

LW: Wildlife too?

AA: Well, I had quite a time here for a while trying to get used to the timber at Hebo. I had been here on visits before when I was going to college. A friend of my family had a house out at Pacific City. We used to come over here and hunt up on the hills here on weekends so I'd been up in the country but I had quite a time getting used to the timber here. Down at Powers we had as much timber - or volume - in one tree down there as you had in a whole acre here. It took a little while getting used to that.

LW: The trees are smaller up here.

AA: The trees are just toothpicks compare to what - you know, you'd get those six- and eight-footers down there at Powers. But it took me a while to get used to that. Then I had quite a time with the sales administration. They started out here, we had four junior foresters and myself. The junior foresters rotated; one would rotate through the timber sale appraisal job then rotate through the planting job, but they weren't really getting any experience. Finally, I ended up, I had a reforestation specialist and I wrote up a job description for a timber sale appraiser. A lady in the office got the job as timber sale appraisal.

There was some monkey business going on with the sale administration and one of the guys quit. So after a while I got two professional sale administrators, {Eddie Gorey 28:48} and {Bob Reingall 28:49} for sale administration. I had Sue Kellow for appraisals and several fellows went through the job - presale work. Fred Walk turned out to be a ranger. He's over in eastern Washington somewhere as a high muckymuck in the Elks or some outfit. He's retired. Don Woods was a ranger up on the Olympic. He's retired. I can't - a fellow named {Bob Chicken 29:34} - I just can't remember all these people that were under my wing at one time. You know, training and stuff.

LW: You go through a lot of people in a career like that.

AA: Oh yeah, I have a hard time remembering names unless there's something special. Wendell Jones is a ranger. He comes down about every spring. He and district engineer Doug Porter live up at Boring. They come down in the spring and we get to get together. We usually get together with Sue Kellow and we go out to the restaurant - the {Cape Kiwanda Café 30:38} or whatever it is - and have a chin wag for a day.

LW: It's good to get together. You say you were on a regional fire team?

AA: Yeah, I got called pretty regularly. I was a sector boss on a regional fire team and every year I'd get called somewhere. When I was down at Powers I had [laughs] a crew down there. Seemed like every fall my wife would go in to take the kids to the Coos County Fair - she'd get back and I'd be gone. I'd be gone to Wenatchee! It seemed like every fall we went to Wenatchee for a fire. I've been on fires from the Mexican border to the Canada border. I finally - the last fire was up by Dufur. I can't remember the name of it. Doug Porter and I went up there as service chiefs. It was forty-six hours from the time I got up until I got to go to bed. I got back from that fire and I told old Tubman, "Heck with this. I've had enough fire and I'm getting too old for this monkey business." I turned in my red card and quit the fire business. But I'd been on fires up and down the West Coast - like I say - from the Canadian border to Mexico.

LW: How many different fires did you think you went on?

AA: Oh, I have no idea.

LW: Dozens?

AA: Hundreds.

LW: Hundreds! Do you remember the names of any of the big ones?

AA: Well, one I can remember was the volcano fire down out of Sacramento that impressed me. I started out down there as a sector boss. I fell in a hole and hurt my ankle so they made me a service chief. I remember this place down there, they had a fire trail about a hundred yards wide, and a fire engine sitting out in the middle. The fire went right through it - burned up the fire engine. That was the volcano fire. I don't remember what year that was, but that one impressed me [laughs]. It come a'roaring up out of the American River canyon and it took several weeks to get it surrounded. We had one down by the Hollywood Bowl, on the hills back of that one time.

But, Bob Tracy. I went down there with Bob Tracy [laughs]. I could tell you lots of funny things about Bob Tracy. He was a big tall skinny guy, you know, and - (here's) little short me. Somehow he would

burn up his pants or something and we had to go to town and buy some clothes. You know, we'd been down there for a while. So he borrowed a pair of my pants, and of course, me, I'm only a little over five foot and he's over six foot. He was going around with my pants on, and he was big enough around the waist, but the legs – he looked like he had pedal pushers on [laughs]! Oh, I kidded him about that. But Tracy lives over at Bend. He was in the regional office and in the Washington office for a while. I don't know what he did, but – he was a ranger. I think all these guys that were on my crews then got big positions [laughs].

LW: Well, that's good. You must have trained them well. Did you have any close calls when you were doing any of these fires?

AA: No, not really. We always - outside of one down out of Los Angeles, the fire took off and roared over the top of us. That chamise brush down there burned like kerosene and we had to scramble a little bit. I can't think of any – oh yeah. The first year – I was still in high school. We went on a fire down at Weed, California. You know, we used to go down to the employment office and they'd hire firefighters back in those days. We were down at Weed, on a big fire up out of Weed somewhere. It had a spike camp on the crick there. The fire turned and came down through and we all saved ourselves by laying in the crick. It burned right through the spike camp and kept on going but it never hurt anybody. It was a pretty close call. That's the only time I ever had a close call.

LW: Was that before the days of fire shelters?

AA: Oh yeah, that was back in 19 – had to be about 1939. '38, '39. [The clock strikes noon with birdsong.]

LW: We got our clock going again.

AA: Yep. It's noon.

LW: Looks like a house finch.

AA: Yep. That's what it is. I can't think of any other close calls.

LW: Well, that's good [laughs]. We were talking about the Siuslaw which was the last part of your career. When did you retire? What year was that?

AA: 1977. July, 1977. I had thirty-two years of government service in and I see the handwriting on the wall. I bunched her.

LW: What was the handwriting?

AA: Well, first thing, they hired some women fire patrolmen. One day one of them called in and wanted somebody to come and cut a tree out of the road. I asked her how big it was and she said it was about six inches in diameter. I got to thinking about that and I think about all the times I chopped myself out of the woods, chopping logs out of the road with a marking axe. If you've ever seen a marking axe, how clumsy they are. I got to thinking, what is this outfit coming to? A fire patrolman can't cut a six-inch tree out of the way? That's just standard procedure, you know. Between that- and then the next thing is – they hired a personnel clerk who couldn't speak English. I thought, well, that's going a little bit far. And I had this,

what I called the Hippie Ranger over there. I could see the handwriting on the wall – this guy came from California with his weird ideas and I figured it was about time for me to bunch it. I had over thirty years in and I think, well, I don't need to stand around and take this baloney. I could see what was coming. All the Sierra Club nuts and carryings on – spotted owls that – I'd never seen one – I never have seen one. So I just decided, well, time for me to go home and rest [laughs].

LW: So you saw some change in your career. And since, I imagine, in the Forest Service.

AA: Oh yeah, well, the Forest Service has turned into essentially a National Park Service – essentially mostly recreation. Just about all the people you see are recreation oriented. People with badges and wear guns now, instead of the – required to wear guns, instead of – we used to carry guns just to pop a grouse off or protect ourselves because it was wild country back in those days. But we got it pretty well roaded now so you can just about drive anywhere you want to go.

LW: You mentioned before that Forest Service was more of a family then. That's something that's changed.

AA: Yeah, it's kind of –

LW: The work environment...

AA: The environment is more, “all for me and the hell with you”, kind of attitude, you know. It's still pockets of this family business, but it's not like it used to be. You knew everybody from all over the forest and here you don't know anybody but – people.

LW: Did paperwork change over your career? Is there more of it?

AA: Oh yeah, it just multiplied a thousand fold from the time I started to the time - I have to write all these impact reports. They don't mean anything but they make nice reading for people [laughs]. I can't believe it. I got to deal – thinking about the silliness of words. I got a letter from Tillamook County, some commission in Tillamook County - a big, four or five page letter asking for comments on “animal shelter platforms” at one of our neighbors down here. You know what an animal shelter platform is?

LW: No.

AA: It's a pile of dirt that cows can climb on when the river comes up.

LW: Oh! [laughs]

AA: And that's typical of what's going on, you know. I couldn't believe that. The paperwork increased terrible much. It used to get so back and (with) so much going on at the office I'd take my portable typewriter, put it in a pickup, go sit up on a logging landing and write my reports where nobody could bother me. The last couple of years I was there, there was so much interference and monkey business I'd go out and write my reports out there in the brush [laughs].

LW: That sounds like a good idea. Hard to do that with computers now.

AA: Yeah, well, I don't know anything about computers. I refused to learn. Last time I used a computer I was playing a chess game on it and I had it beat – I had one move to make to capture the queen – and the thing says “program error” and knocked the table over, and I said the hell with this [laughs]!

LW: Sounds like it was a poor loser! [laughs]

AA: Poor loser [laughs]!

LW: If you were going to beat it, it shut itself down. Has the way the public perceives the Forest Service changed over your time, do you think?

AA: Well –

LW: What the public thinks of the Forest Service?

AA: I don't know. I think it used to be that the Forest Service was kind of held in high esteem, and now it's just a bunch of people that boss you around with their rules and regulations. Back in the old days, you were part of the family but now you're just an outsider imposing rules on people, charging you for camping and, you know, walking up a trail. Back in the old days, of course there wasn't as many people around, but it seems like there's more bureaucracy than there used to be.

LW: You're probably not in favor of that “Northwest Park Pass”, as we call it. The trail pass.

AA: No, no. We used to maintain the trails. Congress would give us money to maintain – I guess they don't do that anymore, so you've got to have money from somewhere to do the work. But that was automatically part of the job when we started out. And we had miles and miles of trails. I remember maintaining the Skyline Trail from Coal Springs to Crater Lake Park. We'd take the old mule and load him down with stuff and work along the trail, cutting trees and hanging the telephone line back up. Come night one guy would go ahead and set up camp while the others kept working their way into camp. By the time they'd get into camp supper would be ready and (we'd) bed down there. The next morning two would take off and work up the trail, and the other guy would pack up camp and pass us up, for about thirty miles of that trail there. The old mule lived on huckleberry brush and we made out the best we could. Nowadays they hire specialists and contract out the trail. Of course there's a lot more people using trails these days, but the trails are still there, in the same place.

LW: Do some of those episodes you were talking about – on the trails, hanging the wire – were those, with age, you remember with fondness?

AA: Oh, yeah!

LW: Yeah.

AA: Yeah, that was fun! That was fun, you know. We didn't think it was a hardship at all.

LW: What things that you did in the Forest Service really stick out in your mind, thinking back after all those years?

AA: Well, my road location. I just loved to be the first man on the ground locating roads. I expect I've located five hundred to a thousand miles of roads and trails in my time. That was one job I took on myself – I located roads. There's lots of roads that have been built in my footsteps [laughs]!

LW: Got your name on them.

AA: Yep!

LW: There are a lot of beautiful places on the national forests. Which ones do you remember especially?

AA: Oh, the Skyline, up on Skyline trail, between Coals – Pelican Butte and Crater Lake Park, Seven Lakes Basin. I remember going in there. One time Bob Beeman caught up – I was locating road up on one of the forks of the Rogue – and he caught up late one afternoon and handed me a radio and told me and the guy with me to take off for a shelter up there in Seven Lakes Basin where they had fire tools and stuff stashed. They had a couple of lightning fires up there. We took off and camped – found the shelter that the tools were in, had some k rations, or jaybird rations there. We laid out there all night - slept there without any blankets or sleeping bags or anything. The next day we went and found two fires up there, and we put lines around them. Al Hansen, the old warehouseman there on the Rogue, he come over and dropped sleeping bags and food and clean socks and stuff to us. That was kind of an adventure.

LW: One thing you can have in the Forest Service, I guess, is adventures.

AA: Oh, yeah.

LW: Do you like being out in the woods?

AA: Oh, Yeah. Yeah. I've got a – a friend of mine's got an old homestead over in the valley. I go over there all the time. I go over there and cut wood. I do all the things I did in the Forest Service. I located trails, I did this, I did that... I get a deer tag every year - I've got a deer stand over there. I just go over there and sit and wait for a deer to come out. I shoot one every fall. I just love to be out there in the woods.

LW: You're still getting out in the woods, even though you are retired!

AA: Yeah.

LW: The Forest Service's first hundred years are just about over. Got any ideas where the Forest Service is headed in the next hundred years?

AA: No, I have no idea. One of these days they're going to have to swing around and start utilizing the resource that they're supposedly saving. Letting it burn up like it is in California - all that timber down there that the bugs have got into, and like the Biscuit Fire where they're squabbling over whether they should cut the trees or not. What a silly bunch of people we got in this world. If a tree is dead, cut it down and make some use of it. Just because it's back in the country don't mean you can't take care of the country. You look at the Tillamook burn and think how bare it was. Now you look at it and what would have happened if the people would have excluded you from planting trees or cutting the snags and stuff from the Tillamook burn? The Tillamook burn is green and providing jobs and recreation for people and will forever. That's the way I see the Forest Service, just going the way of a bunch of bureaucrats and

namby-pamby people that – can't believe the Sierra Club has got such a stranglehold on peoples' minds. They're mostly a bunch of lawyers that get money from their so-called constituents. I just can't believe it.

LW: Do you think the Forest Service will continue to exist as an agency?

AA: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I think it will be there as long as there's a government.

LW: Public lands are – when I think about public land, it just a great thing that we have so much of it.

AA: Yep.

LW: It's not all in private hands and it's there for the public to enjoy.

AA: It's too bad some of it don't have much on it but it's a great asset and it should be used to pay its way.

LW: One of the results of this project that we're working on with these videos is that there's going to be a celebration on the Washington DC Mall next year, 2005, in July. The Forest Service is going to be part of the Folklife Festival and they're going to be bringing exhibits and people back there. There may be interest in having folks who have earlier careers in the Forest Service being on panel discussions or something like that. Would you be interested in talking?

AA: No.

LW: Not at all?

AA: No.

LW: Okay. Well, we've got you on record here.

AA: I swore when I got back out of the Navy last time I would never leave the state of Oregon. The only time I have was to go on fires.

LW: That was it.

AA: That was it. I've had big opportunities to go elsewhere, but no way.

LW: You like this corner of the earth.

AA: Yep. I'm gonna die right here [laughs]!

LW: The Forest Service in the last couple of decades has a motto: "Caring for the Land and Serving the People." Makes sense to me. I'm not much into mottos, but yeah, caring for the land is what we do. Have you got any thoughts on that?

AA: Well, I'd say they're doing a very poor service to the people by not allowing the timber harvest and reforestation. All they're doing is letting it die from bug kill and burn up. That's not very good service to the people. As far as caring for the land, I don't know about that.

LW: As long as it's still public, I guess.

AA: Yep.

LW: One other thing I want to do here is get to have you show some of the carvings you've done – that you did with your wife. Ag, after you retired you took up a little pastime. You carved birds out of wood. Tell us a little bit about it.

AA: Well, in 1961 my wife was doing toll painting and stuff like that in a class and she wanted a couple of decoys to paint patterns on. So I went out cut up a fence post and made her a couple of duck decoys and she painted them up. Then after I retired she got me started – on one of my birthdays she gave me a book on bird carving and we went on from there. She did the painting, she's a real good painter and I carved the things, and all together we've made somewhere over four hundred birds. This grouse is one of her things that she made. It's all wood except for the feet and legs that are wire, and these feathers up on top here are copper. But we made all kinds of birds.







LW: You sold them, too. {unintelligible 58:04}

AA: She liked to go to bazaars, so she'd take the things to the bazaars and sell them. Like I say, out of the four hundred some odd we've got maybe a dozen around the house here that – some are yet to be painted and some are yet to be finished. I'll get around to it one of these days if I find somebody who can paint.

LW: Your wife passed away a few years ago, you say?

AA: My wife passed away in 1994 after forty some odd years of marriage. I miss her. Her ashes are in the family cemetery down at Roseburg, and I go down and visit her every year on Memorial Day.

LW: If you had to do it all over again would you still join the Forest Service?

AA: Oh, yeah. I don't think there's any finer occupation in the world than working for the Forest Service. You may not get fat and rich but you sure have a lot of fun. You see a lot of country and it keeps you out in the open and you know where the good hunting is [laughs]!

LW: Even if you can't haul the game home in your pickup truck anymore.

AA: Right.

LW: Ag, this is a picture of you and your wife in 1977 at your retirement party. Was your party fun?

AA: Oh yeah [laughs]! All the dirty laundry got aired [laughs]! I really had a lot of fun. Sue Kellow and her buddy really worked me over [laughs]. And I had a lot of friends come and wish me goodbye. People I hadn't seen for a long time.



LW: You enjoyed yourself.

AA: Oh yeah, we had a big party that night. And we had members of the bowling team – we had the big bowling tournament. We got a few bowling trophies from Wendell Jones and Doug Porter and people I can't even name. We bowled for about seven, eight years, as long as we could get a sponsor. We even won money down at Reno one year bowling.

LW: How about that?

AA: We bowled at Las Vegas and all the state tournaments. We were bowling at the state tournament in Medford when Mount Saint Helens blew up. That created quite a stir. People on the team were getting called for emergency work.

LW: Ag, here's picture of you in the military in 1943, the year I was born.

AA: That was a boot camp picture. The other pictures – a log rolling contest I won in college [laughs]. I won a championship in log rolling and third place in high climbing, and I had a lot of fun.





LW: Looks like you were having a good time.

AA: Yeah.

LW: One last pict-[tape ends]

