Passport in Time interview on the Lewis and Clark National Forest

Interviewees: Joe and Diane Morse

Interviewers: Judith Pressmar (PIT), Sarah Jaffe (PIT), Dave Wanderaas (Forest Service)

Sept. 10, 1997

This interview is with Joe and Diane Morse at their home, south of Two Dot, Montana on Big Elk Creek. The date is September 10th, 1997. The interviewers names are Judith Pressmar, Sarah Jaffe, and Dave Wanderaas.

Judith: Diane, can you start out by giving us a little of your background?

Diane: I am Diane Morse. I was born and raised here and my father was born and raised here. We always had a Forest permit. When I was about nine, we sold the sheep so we changed the Forest permit to cattle. My memory of the Forest Service is rather limited. I do remember tending sheep camps up in the mountains. In the spring, when we would go up with the sheep, the sheep herder would always quit because the lambs all died because they ate so much camas. We have always had loco weed problems.

We used to go to the mountains in the wagons and put the fence in. My family built the fenceline that borders the Forest Service between them and private land and State land, I believe in '39, maybe '36. That was all done with horses and wagons. Pretty tough fencing; not much new has been put in since then. We always ran cattle on the Forest. I think when Joe and I were married, Joe went up and cross fenced the Forest Permit. We have three sections, three different pastures. We used rotational grazing.

We put in redwood spring tanks, camped up there, put them in on Bear Springs which is now called Station Springs, which was not very attractive. At Cinnamon Springs we put in a new redwood tank. Since then we replaced it with fiberglass. We don't have many creeks that go through our allotment, so there is not much maintenance on that part of it.

I've been to the top of the north Crazy mountains, up Big Elk Canyon on horseback to Shields River, out to Wilsall and back over the top to Sweetgrass.

Judith: You mentioned camas. Is that still a problem?

Diane: Not with cattle. Cattle do not get poisoned with camas, sheep do. Cattle get poisoned with larkspur. When they had sheep up there, they ate the larkspur and it is just now starting to come back, largely because we have not had sheep up there. The larkspur does not bother sheep but the camas does, especially young lambs. When they have been trailed and put in hungry, then they would nibble on camas. The locoweed get's both (cows and sheep).
Dave: Did you folks have sheep down lower on the Forest, or on up at the high allotments?

Diane: We had them where our cattle permits are on the lower part of the east face of the mountain. Because we didn't have very many cattle in the early days, the sheep were on the top. I have not been to the very top allotments.

Dave: Dennis Tandberg mentioned you knew some of the folks who built a watering trough up on top of the Crazy Plateau. Were there several separate allotments that were titled to you folks to the south?

Diane: I don't think the Magers and the Martins ran together. I would think the Pumps came in there at one time. The Smith brothers would have been the big sheep allotment on the west side, which would have been Gals.

Dave: Is that farther off to the west, the other side of Cottonwood Creek?

Diane: Well, I wouldn't think that far. I would think Lost Horse, I believe, was the Smith brothers. There's this big sheep camp there yet isn't there?

Dave: I am not sure. That's on the Gallatin side?

Diane: No, it would be between Cottonwood and Bear Springs.

Joe: There's a building up there anyway, and it's apparently a new building. Isn't it?

Diane: No, it's an old sheep camp is what I called it, but that was 20 years ago. We don't know that it's still there.

Dave: Were the Smith Bros. the original permit up there, or at least they had Magers take over (for Smith Bros)?

Diane: They would have taken over a portion of the Smith Bros. permit, I think. I don't know how big a sheep permit that Magers had.

Dave: I don't know either, I don't think it was very big.

Diane: Yes, because we had Bear Springs in our sheep allotment. Then Magers would be Section 8, the next section back. I may be mistaken, but I believe Pumps' had sheep at that time.

Dave: Did you folks have the permit that your parents had?

Diane: It was my grandfathers. My dad didn't care for sheep so they sold them when they split the ranch amongst the four children. My dad sold the sheep. I want to say in '46, they sold the sheep. It got to be a labor problem; you didn't have herders. I don't ever remember when my father took over, that allotment, that we ever trailed sheep to the top of the mountain. I think that
probably ended in the '30's when it was hard to get help. I think they quit taking sheep to the top then.

Dave: There are two sets of watering troughs up there. One is toward Cinnamon Peak and the other is in the head of a fork of Big Elk. Would that have been what your grandad had?

Diane: That's what I understood. I never went to those. We never took sheep there when I was a young person. I don't think I even knew about them, 'cause I'm sure I would have ridden to them had we known.

Joe: Your father inherited the Forest permit didn't he?

Diane: Yes.

Sarah: How about your grandfather, when did he first start in the sheep business?

Diane: He first came in 1883 to this area. He worked for Perry Moore and took his wages out in sheep and that is how he accumulated his herd. He worked with sheep and that was his main income. They didn't have very many cattle at that time. We had a big shearing plant up here. He ran a lot of sheep until he split the ranch up among his four kids. He bought this place in 1894 and the house was built in 1883 by Pound's (Edmond Pound's relatives). Mrs. Pound still lives in Harlo. It was called the Elk Horn Ranch at that time.

Dave: Would that be the log building we're in right now?

Diane: It is basically the same. We remodeled the upstairs and kitchen area, but this is identical. I have pictures of this room with my grandmother and grandfather in it. It was the same.

Dave: This is in the national register of historic places, isn't it?

Diane: Well, actually it isn't. My mother bought that sign a long time ago because she liked the looks of it!

Dave: You sold me! It looked like an authentic sign.

Diane: The barn down here was built from lumber from the Crazy Mountains, more over to Sweet Grass Canyon. The Ward's had a sawmill up there and they hauled the lumber down and built the barn. I want to say 1917.

Joe: The garage was built in 1917, along with the barn.

Dave: That was when the Cosgriffe's had the sawmill, and not the Brannin's? The Ward's and the Brannin's were related.

Diane: The Brannin's and Ward's were related. That's Barbara Cosgriffe's family who had the sawmill up there.
Dave: Up above Carroccia's?

Diane: Yes.

Dave: Did your dad or grandfolks know the Brannin's over in Sweetgrass?

Diane: Yes, they used to visit. My family used to go to Melville to do a lot of shopping, or Bozeman. The kids went to school in Bozeman when they were growing up. They didn't go here, they went to Bozeman. I think in the wintertime they left this country. I guess the shepherders took care of the sheep because they went to California or Bozeman in the winter.

Dave: That would be your grandfather and father?

Diane: My father went there as a young man and he went to school in Bozeman.

Sarah: Where were your grandparents from?

Diane: Missouri. My grandmother was from Ohio and moved to Missouri. Grandpa Martin went down in a raft to pick up his bride. A paddleship went by and tipped them over or got water all over them. Later, they were still going down the river and the paddleboat was caught on a sand bar and they sailed on past and waved. They came to Fort Benton and then he brought grandma Martin up on a boat to Fort Benton. My dad was born here and two aunts, and she went back to Missouri to have Uncle Wayne.

Judith: So your dad was born right in this house?

Diane: Yes.

Dave: Was there an overland trail coming down from Fort Benton coming down this way? I suppose that would be the Carrol Trail?

Diane: I think so. My family went to Big Timber to do a lot of shopping. If they had to go somewhere they went that direction. They visited with the Brannin's and all those people and the Rein's. They must have had a lot to do with those people 'cause they knew them well.

Joe: You said this used to be the Elk Horn Ranch. You have a bunch of elk horns out here that are 70 years old or better and some new ones too. There's more elk here now than there was in the old days.

Diane: The elk horns were on this porch. I have a picture of my father laying out here bare naked with the elk horns and one where I'm bare naked, and I have a picture of our oldest son, but I don't think he is bare naked. They said that the elk horns were here when they bought it, I always understood that they were a tangled up mess, but I think somebody must have put them that way. In the '30's there wasn't very much wildlife in the mountains. Everyone was hungry so they killed them off. We didn't have elk up there again until the '70's.
Joe: There's pictures taken of the creek too and there's no cottonwoods on the creek. There's a lot of cottonwoods now, but there are places that they are dying out and have really gone down.

Dave: There's been a lot of recovery over the years. I think buffalo had a lot of vegetative impact.

Joe: Tell them about the buffalo jumps. There is an actual buffalo jump right up here about 1/4 mile away.

Diane: Yeah, we have a buffalo jump up here and there are the rock lines that go out from it. We've gotten a few arrowheads there. In the old days, my uncles came in with the cat and dozed up all the buffalo bones to sell them. They made bone meal out of them, so they destroyed a lot of the arrowheads and whatnot that way. In the mountains, people have found the wikiups with the tent poles, but I don't have any idea on the Forest Service where any camps were.

Dave: I haven't heard of any up there. I have heard of some in the Castles.

Diane: We have fields down here that we have plowed and one we had leveled. We were not aware that it must have been a campground until after it was leveled. We had a boy from the ASCS and he was an Indian boy. He was surveying ditches. By the time he got to the end of the field, he had a whole pocket full of obsidians. That was the first time we found anything. We have found scrapers since.

Dave: It was kind of the last stronghold of the buffalo right around here, in Montana at the edge of the prairies against the mountains. Was there buffalo in the country when your grandad came in?

Diane: I don't believe so. I think they were pretty much gone by then. I don't ever remember any stories about the buffalo

Judith: Did he talk at all about Indians coming through, or any interactions?

Diane: I can't remember any stories about my grandfather interacting with the Indians. Perry Moore, his family, I remember them telling stories about the Indians coming through. I think by the time my grandfather settled down here, the Indians were not in the area, were they Joe?

Joe: I can't recall any stories.

Diane: I was young when my grandfather was alive. I think I must have had more important things to do. I don't think I listened real well!

Joe: Your grandfather worked in Yellowstone Park for a year or two.

Diane: Well, he drove stage.
Dave: That's a story unto itself, the Yellowstone Park story and how it was established. There has recently been a series in the Billings Gazette on the Yellowstone Park story.

Diane: I wonder about their accuracy. The Indians, as I understood, always felt that that was a rather frightening place to go. Now all of a sudden it seems to be like it was the Indians favorite spot. I think that the Indians viewed it as mysterious and they were really rather shy of going into there. They really didn't like it too much until they were ready to hide out from somebody.

Dave: I have heard and read that, too. It wasn't a favorite spot, with evil spirits. On another subject, last fall we were talking about some of the routes used to take sheep to the top of the Crazy Plateau. Do you folks remember those spots? I think there were a couple of different routes we talked about.

Diane: Up by Elk Lake there was a road that goes to the top, up the ridge on Section 29, and above Section 29. Probably would be in Section 30. I don't know if that's how they trailed them to the allotment or not. I was never a part of that, I was too little. Later, they just didn't do it anymore. We had two sheepherders that I can remember and I don't remember any camp tenders. I don't think we had a camp tender, I think my dad did that. I don't think he packed horses, in fact I know he didn't, and I think you'd have to pack horses up there. So when I came along, I don't remember going to the top of the mountain. I don't even remember my dad talking much about it. Of course, he was kind of a quiet fellow and he didn't like sheep so he probably didn't have much part in sheep camps.

Sarah: Were there any support cabins up there at all?

Diane: No cabins, there's not a cabin that I know of. There used to be, they say, a whiskey still. We have looked and looked for it but I have never found a still on our ownership.

Joe: You saw the little cabin on that section though, it's only about 6' wide.

Diane: It never had a roof on it at all, that we ever saw. But the Arthurs lived at the end of the lane on what we call the Arthur place. White's own it now. We depended on them a lot when we'd go to the mountains and tend the allotment. We always got stuck in the creek and had to get pulled out.

Dave: That was the Arthur family? The Jack Arthur ridge and that first cabin going up there was their homestead?

Diane: That was where they lived. I'll tell you somebody that might give you a lot of history is Harry Cosgriffe. He is a grandson of Arthurs and Harry is about 75. He was up here a lot. They used Big Elk Canyon for cattle, they didn't have sheep. We traded land with them, or my grandfather did with Mr. Arthur. We always went to Big Elk Canyon with Arthurs for picnics. Every summer we would go to Big Elk Canyon for picnics, by that big rock that's still in the middle of the creek. Harry Cosgriffe lives in Two Dot. I never thought of him.
Joe: He lived on the Moore Ranch, he married Margaret Moore. Do you know Steve Moore? It is his uncle and Steve runs his part of the ranch.

Dave: Are they related to the Cosgriffs down in Sweetgrass?

Diane: Shirt tail. They spell their name differently. One has an E on the end and one doesn't. They used to run cattle in Big Elk Canyon. I guess they had a Forest Service permit for cattle. That would be on the Arthurs. I don't know but what they didn't help trail sheep to the mountains for my grandfather, but I don't remember. I don't even remember trailing sheep back and forth from here to the mountains. I was kind of a cowgirl.

Joe: Well, you are a sheep woman too. You have 100 head of sheep.

Diane: I have a strong streak in me that will never be rid of sheep.

Joe: I have one son that is here on the place and he doesn't care much for sheep either.

Diane: No, he is just like my dad.

Joe: This boy told his grandmother that the day she died, the sheep were going down the road. She always got a kick out of that one.

Sarah: Diane, when you first started school, where did you start school and what type of transportation did you have to get you there?

Diane: I went to school in Two Dot and we had a school bus. We had a little station wagon that took us to school. There were probably 8 from this area that went to school in Two Dot. My father went to school one year in Big Elk School, which sets just this side of the American Ranch down here. It was a little log building. I don't know but what he went one year to the Bear Creek School, which sets up above here on the way to the mountains. The rest of the time he went to school in Bozeman. I went to 8 years of school in Two Dot and then 4 years of school in Harlo.

Judith: Would it have been common in your dad's day to send children away to go to school?

Diane: Most of the families moved to Bozeman or California in the winter to go to school. The Moore family, I think they always went to California. I don't know if my father went to school in California. I know he went to school in Bozeman, they all went to school in Bozeman. I know they did go to California. I have a picture of 4 little kids on a donkey, they were just leaving California. It was kind of a joke, about how wet it was and how bad the roads were, but I don't think that's the way they went. The Arthur family spent the winter here. McFarlands, I think they spent the winter here. I think there were a few families that stayed in the area. Mary White went to school in Two Dot and Big Elk and Bear Creek. So I think some of the families in the area stayed.

Dave: The Bear school, where was that?
Diane: That was just above the Top Hat. Do you know where the Top Hat sits, just above Whites? It's kind of caved in.

Dave: Is it along side the county road, going past Whites to the right?

Joe: It's on the right as you are going up the road, just past the turn in to the Top Hat Ranch. It's the White Ranch now, but it's farther up than Whites.

Joe: It's just one building. It's kind of caved in, it's almost hit the ground. There was a story that Harry Cosgriff told us, that some woman from Washington came out for 12 or 13 years and took pictures of it to tell how it was falling in.

Dave: She possibly went to school there?

Joe: I don't know about that. She did take pictures a number of years.

Dave: You also spoke of the Big Elk School?

Diane: Big Elk School sits down between the corner and the American Ranch down here. It's still there. It still has a little fence around it.

Dave: Is that the one that is visible at the "T" corner, that sets in a little to the south from the road, down by that gate?

Diane: Yes, that's the Big Elk School.

Judith: Did you spend winters here?

Diane: Yes, when I came along times were a little tougher. I think I've made about 3 trips to California.

Judith: Were there any particular winters that were memorable?

Diane: I want to say the winter of '49 and '59. We had snowbanks tall as the house almost, very tough. In '49, we were feeding hay with horses and the snow was deep. It was in the spring, the middle of April, the calves all got sick and we had to have bulldozers plow trails and it was an awful mess. It was an awful winter. Times are easier now. Even if we have a rough winter, we never go a day without feeding the cows. Our conveniences are maybe a little more reliable. That is probably why we are not going to California in the winter. Since we got the tractors, we don't take vacation!

Judith: I was surprised to hear from another gentleman that we spoke to that it was not common to feed the stock over the winter, until maybe the late 1950's. Was that your experience also?
Diane: We always put up hay and always fed the cattle and sheep. I think maybe in more open country, you might be able to get away with that. We don't have the wind here like some places, which would blow it clear so cattle could graze. My memory is that we always fed cattle and the sheep with loose hay in the early years. We used to have 12 people putting up hay here with horses. Now there's the three of us and sometimes we get the hay up!

Joe: Did you say how old you were?

Diane: No I didn't Joe! I was born in 1939 though. When I was growing up, I don't know that I was so interested in the past. Some told stories. My mother's family told more history of her growing up on her father's place than my dad ever did. I guess we were expected to know it because we were here, or maybe my interest wasn't in what had happened in the early years.

Dave: Your mother was from this area?

Diane: She was a Muir from the Muir Ranch and they were sheep people. He had eight, ten thousand head.

Dave: Their ranch headquarters would be just outside of Harlo?

Diane: Yes.

Joe: Duain (Meyer) lives in Harlo in the addition on the west end.

Dave: Yes, I have met him. Earlier, we were talking a little about the numbers of sheep and cattle that went through Two Dot on the loading chutes on the railroad. Do you have any recall of that? You probably shipped all your cattle through there?

Diane: We did. I used to help drive cattle, but I don't ever remember taking sheep. I remember the cattle. That used to be a fun time when we got to take the cattle to Two Dot to the train.

Joe: Cattle have changed a little.

Diane: We used to raise shorthorn cattle. That is all we had, and now we run black angus.

Judith: Could you talk about the cattle drive a little bit? You said it was a really enjoyable experience.

Diane: When we were growing up, most of us as young children liked to ride horseback. We were on horseback all the time. So, everyone that needed help, we were right behind them. Whether we interfered with them, I don't know! We trailed yearlings and cows. I don't remember how the calves went, because I am sure we didn't take the cows down and ship the calves. I don't remember how the calves went, maybe we only shipped yearling cattle until later years. We would always have to bring the horses home.
Dave: I know they say more cattle were shipped out of Two Dot than any other place in Montana. Do you remember anything about numbers or corrals or several ranches at one time coming in?

Diane: The Glennies, the McFarlands, the Haymaker, and the Moores would have been your big cattle outfits. By the time I remember, my grandfather's ranch was split, so we were 4 little outfits instead of one big one. Our operations were different that it had been because when grandpa Martin had it, it would have been one big sheep outfit. Then we became four little sheep and cow outfits.

Dave: There must have been extensive corrals at Two Dot?

Diane: Yes, there were, although I think that they divided it into days. The American Ranch would ship on one day and White's would ship on another day so that all the cattle were not in there at the same time. For wool shipping, we shipped the wool from Two Dot. I can remember that. I remember that because we always got to play on the wool bags in the big wool warehouse. They had a big wool warehouse there. You'd take the wool to town with a team of horses and a wagon into Two Dot. That was quite a change because they had always had to go to Big Timber and across the Yellowstone with the wool before that. It would get wet and they would take it out of the sacks and dry it and put it back in.

Dave: That would be quite a job. When did the bridge across the Yellowstone go in?

Joe: The bridge that is in now would have been one of the first ones. The one at Reed Point would be older than the town. It must have been in the '30's when that one went in.

Sarah: What did you do with the wool here?

Diane: We would take it in wagons to Two Dot to the warehouse and weigh it. We had a big warehouse up here between Kay Martin and us. That's where we sheared. We had a big shearing plant and then they must have taken it down to Two Dot and weighed it and then it went out on the train. They had lots of carloads of wool.

Dave: How many sheep did your grandfather have, two or three thousand?

Diane: More than that, at least five, if not ten thousand

Joe: He had a ten thousand head permit didn't he, in the Crazy Mountains?

Diane: Five thousand, which was probably what he ran. Then he had a lambing shed down here. We still use one of the lambing sheds for a calving shed and its over 120 years old. My son keeps thinking he needs a new calving shed and I think "my lord, it's only 120 years old". We just got one built. One thing on our Forest Service permit, when grandpa Martin quit the sheep, we had a 40 head cow permit and now we have a 70 cow permit, which has changed since we cross fenced and put spring tanks in.
Dave: There's a lot of grass on the Forest now.

Diane: Particularly this year.

Judith: How about lookout towers or lookout points?

Diane: No, we didn't ever have any fire towers that I know of, or looked out points. The Forest Service came in and put a fire trail across there and used to maintain it. Other than that nobody bothered us. I think this is rather insignificant use, and the Forest Service never had a public access to where they had to deal with a lot of people in the area. There are no lakes. It's just a piece of mountain with trees and the fewer people that know about it, the better off we are.

Joe: There's only been one or two fires on the northeast end of the mountains in our memory.

Diane: We have had very few fires that we know of. The Forest Service, as far as building or any structures, they just have not done it. We used to have an old man that lived in Big Elk Canyon, that used to mine for gold up there. He had quite a few diggings around. Then there was a fellow who built a little cabin up Big Elk Creek and he had his outhouse. That went over out over the creek, but they (the Forest Service) made him take that down. Probably was a good thing.

Sarah: Is that cabin still standing?

Diane: No, I don't believe so. I think they burned it down.

Joe: No, I think they tore all those cabins down and burned them.

Dave: Is that the only cabin(s) up there? I didn't realize that there had been cabins up Big Elk.

Diane: There was Mr. Cass and Harry Poulos. Mr. Cass had lots of diggings up the canyon and on Section 29 for gold. Some people say he found some and some people say he didn't. I can't imagine him doing that much digging if he didn't have some reason to do it. Those are the only two cabins I can think of on ours. We were up there in the summer and then we were out of there. We never went back up until the next summer. Nobody wanted to stay up there. As kids, we used to go up and camp but nobody stayed up there.

Dave: Would that be Bobby Cass's relative?

Diane: That would be her husband's grandfather. We have some old maps here if you would be interested in them.

Dave: Yes we would. If you have old pictures or old maps, we can duplicate anything you would be willing to loan to us. Particularly pictures.

Judith: We are looking at a township plat of T10, R13.
Diane: That must be the townsite of Two Dot.

Dave: I wonder if there is a date on this. It is definitely old.

Judith: It shows the names of the commercial buildings as well as the private homes.

Dave: It looks like it must be 36 sections, centered around Two Dot.

Diane: Yes, that would be the McFarland-White's ownership near Two Dot, down there over the hill.

Diane: Here is an allotment map.

Dave: This is an old allotment map going up into Big Elk, Bear Springs, Cinnamon Springs. It shows the private, then up into the Forest at Buzzard Creek, and Big Elk, formerly Big Elk Ranger Station.

Diane: This one has 1916. I think that's just my mother's note.

Judith: Do you have any sense of the age of this particular map?

Diane: No, I don't.

Dave: It's probably 1920's?

Diane: This one is 1916. I'd say that one was before this one.

Joe: Yes, I'd say that.

Judith: This says type map: "Big Elk Division, Cattle and Horse Allotment".

Dave: 1916, and field work by J. S. Paddock, Forest Service person. There's Big Elk Lake. That is unique. We have a few of these old maps in our folders.

Judith: This is nice, it's showing the open areas and the timbered areas. There's a meadow, open grassland, heavy timber.

Diane: I don't think it's changed a bit. There has been no timbering, no fires. There hasn't been much to change anything. I could build my "Super 8" up on Section 29 then!

Dave: Next will be the Martin-Morse Guest Ranch!

Diane: This is picture of Grandpa Martin bringing sheep down from the mountains.

Joe: That's the Crazy Mountains in the back.
Dave: Yes, I recognize Big Elk and North Fork Big Elk.

Diane: It looks like coming out Big Elk Canyon, doesn't it? That's what I thought too. I don't have any pictures of my grandpa other than these. My dad didn't get any pictures when his family died. His sister's took them and if it hadn't been for one of them giving me some of these pictures I wouldn't have had any. This picture is in this livingroom.

Sarah: How would you describe that on this tape recording? (Painting)?

Diane: Black and white combination desk and bookcase. This is my grandparents and this is my dad and this is my Uncle Wayne.

Dave: That would be about 1900, 1910?

Diane: Yes. These two chairs are the original chairs.

Judith: There is another photograph here labeled G.D. (George) Martin, Big Elk Montana. Do you know the approximate date on this one?

Diane: That would be about 1894.

Dave: That is this house?

Diane: That is the house without the siding.

Joe: There are no trees around the house either. These trees were planted in 1900.

Diane: The spring house is still here. We used to have a water wheel that ran down here. I think he put the ditch in to grow the trees and the water wheel off of that. Here's the 5,000 head of sheep and it is all faded out.

Dave: This old black and white picture would be about 1894 too?

Diane: Yes, approximately.

Dave: Is the log building, the barn, still standing?

Diane: That one isn't here anymore.

Joe: There is only one log building down there anymore.

Diane: Yes, the grainery.

Joe: The Duffy house was torn down last year.
Diane: Here is view of the ranch looking west. The cottonwoods are real small. This had to be in the early 1900's.

Sarah: Who is this?

Diane: I understand that was Sanford Moore's wife. They were good friends and they lived down at the American Ranch, east of here. This is the house without the siding. That's a picture of Sanford Moore and Perry Moore and those people are related to the Moore's over there. These pictures we tried to get redone and they can't do anything with them. They can't restore them at all. It's too bad that they are this faded out.

Diane: There's my dad and his brother with a little sheep.

Sarah: Have you had any copied?

Diane: Not off of here. I've had copies of these. This horsehair chaise lounge, I got it out of a log building we were going to tear down. It was too far gone to get recovered. My mother wanted to get that redone, but none of us would go into that old building and get it out for her. This is a hanky from the Worlds Fair in Chicago in 1893. This is a Hopley allotment map.

Dave: Did you folks have an allotment up at Hopley?

Diane: I don't know. Kay talked about having an allotment on Swimming Woman. Grandpa Martin does have land up Hopley, so whether he had an allotment up there, I don't know.

Dave: Kay talked about the 16 mm tape that she put on VCR, that she thought viewed coming down North Fork of the Musselshell?

Diane: She has left that here and you could take it with you because our VCR is kaput.

Dave: That would give us a chance to look at that, as we have a VCR at the office. I think she said she thought it was of the North Fork of the Musselshell.

Diane: Frank Williams, who was down here, I think he had that allotment and they used to go up there and have big parties.

Dave: I don't know when 16mm came out. Probably in the 50's.

Diane: Earlier, because Uncle Wayne took those 16mm of Dorothy and Norma when they were little girls, and that would have been 1925, or in the '20's.

Sarah: Do you have any idea what approximate age this East Hupley topo map is?

Diane: No, I don't. It might have been Grandpa Muir's allotment too. I don't know. It was just in the file with the maps. You can tell I haven't done a lot of research.
Sarah: The interesting thing is, with all these old maps and photographs, we don't think to label them at the current time.

Diane: I know that on one map, my mom kind of protected it, because it was old. I think they were hand drawn for specific allotments. I don't know why they didn't put the date on them. This is Tweeten, that is the Mager allotment. That would be who it is, not Mager back then, but Tweeten. It's Arlene (Tandberg's), grandmother's family. From her mother's side of the family, not her dad's side.

Dave: They retained a little piece down there in the last 10 years or so. Dennis (Tandberg) was talking about her granddad building several of the troughs up on top.

Diane: Do you suppose everybody claimed the troughs.

Dave: My guess is that he built them, but it wasn't on their allotment.

Diane: Oh, he might have built them. In the old days, the Forest Service actually did some of that work.

Joe: Was that Harold Krause who said that they found a beer can in that trough and the beer can was 1945. Was it Harold or Dutch Callant?

Diane: It was Dutch Callant. They found it in about the '70's and it was full of beer at the time, and cold! Pump's had these allotments so I don't think Tweetens had a very big allotment. So maybe Pump's built the water tanks. Does the Forest Service have any paperwork on the spring tanks?

Dave: No, we don't.

Diane: Was it before the Forest Service was established?

Joe: Can you tell me the date when the Forest Service moved in up here?

Dave: The Lewis & Clark was established in 1897. This part of the Reserve may have been around 1902.

Diane: I think probably because of the Forest Service is why the Crazies continued as public lands. It was every other section and was very difficult to manage, so it was unmanaged for the public. There weren't a lot of lakes and there wasn't really a lot of recreation in this area so the public didn't really need a way in there or there would have been. My family never kicked anybody out for years and years, but nobody ever wanted to go there.

Joe: Is the southern end of the Crazy Mountains checkerboarded?

Dave: Yes.
Judith: Talking about the Forest Service, maybe I shouldn't even ask this, but going back in time, what is your perception of the relationship with the Forest Service? How did people feel about it?

Diane: I think my family has always gotten along fine with the Forest Service. In years past when we put our livestock on the Forest Service, the Ranger was always there and counted them in and we counted them out. The Ranger always came and rode with us probably every two or three years. We would ride through the allotment and talk about the grasses such as what was being used, what could be improved, the different changes. Salt grounds is one of the items that have changed over the years. In the old days you specifically put the salt out where the marker was. Now we put the salt out at different locations every time we salt. We've always had good working relationship with the Forest Service. We've never had a problem, I don't think we've ever been a problem. The Rangers in the old days maybe had more time to work with the cattle allotments because there wasn't so much recreation to worry about and campgrounds, etc. That's probably the biggest change I've seen. We haven't had much change with us and there hasn't been too much controversy. We get along fine.

Judith: You're fortunate. It's not true where I live. That's why I hesitated to ask that question.

Diane: There really hasn't been. I think what the people and what the public's demanding from the Forest Service, maybe makes it a little difficult to run cattle like ranchers have in the past in some areas. I think that's probably where they conflict, maybe with the public. I don't know on the recreation. I think recreation is the biggest difference. We haven't had too much of that in our area. We don't have snowmobilers.

Joe: I think too, if we were not allowed to have our cows up there, the grass this year would be tremendous. Any lightning that came along would probably cause a fire, then you lose trees and everything else. I think where the government does let you graze, I think it does good.

Diane: But, we have never had any problem with the Forest Service. We always knew the Rangers. In the old days, we knew the Rangers probably better than we do now because they had time, at least, to take one day a year out and go through the allotment with us.

Judith: Can you remember anyone in particular?

Joe: What was the name of the one that moved to Red Lodge? I thought I'd never forget his name.

Diane: Kalitowski; other names I can't remember. Is he still there? They seemed to be interested in grasses and that aspect more than now. I think probably that you have a different workload. There's a lot more paperwork than there used to be. A lot more on the recreation part so I'm sure the Rangers are spread a little differently. I think where the recreation, where the public want to recreate and do those various things, it makes it a bigger strain on permitees with cattle and sheep allotments. That runs into conflict a little bit.
Dave: Yes, there's a lot more recreation use and demand for recreation than 20 years ago. And we're between Greatfalls and Billings, with a lot of recreation use coming from Billings.

Joe: Thank heavens the biggest share of them moved to the Beartooths.

Judith: Or up to the Flathead!

Diane: Winter is going to erase quite a few of them. I understand there is quite a lot of property for sale up there in the Flathead Valley.

Dave: The Forest Service person we discussed earlier, his name is George. I can't think of his last name.

Joe: It starts with an S. (Schaller).

Diane: The lady I used to play bridge with, Lord, I can't even remember her name.

Dave: Jim and Jackie Hertel?

Diane: Hertel, yes.

Dave: He (Jim) just retired from Great Falls 3 or 4 years ago.

Diane: I think everybody knew the personnel a lot better in the past. Well, there weren't so many. It used to be one office in Martinsdale with a Ranger and two workers.

Dave: That's right. Moyra Lewis's dad worked out there with one or two forest workers, and a couple of assistant rangers and that was about it.

Diane: So, you did get to know them better.

Dave: There was a Ranger at Musselshell Station at the mouth of Spring Creek, I've been trying to track down the building and when it stopped being used and where it was moved. It was sometime in the 30's when they stopped using that building as a Ranger Station. You folks recall that at all?

Diane: No, I sure don't. Didn't the Forest Service build a Ranger Station right there across from Emmit Teig's? Then sold it to the Bair Ranch?

Dave: I think we leased it from the Bair Ranch.

Diane: Would that have been after the one below Indrelands?

Dave: Yes, it probably would have been.
Diane: If you had people like Emmett Teig and Ox Thorson telling you stories, I know I couldn't top either one of them.

Joe: I was wondering if either of you gals had been through the Bair Museum? You should go through that too.

Judith: I certainly plan to.

Diane: Kay is so interested in it. Aunt Margaret, Kay's mother-in-law, bless her soul, was just a talker, and she would reminisce. She would go back 5 generations or so, you kind of got so you just shut it off and you never really listened. I think Kay is wishing she had listened, and I never did listen. I didn't pay much attention. I am real sorry.

Judith: There aren't any old stories that you remember that your mother told?

Diane: No, not about the Forest Service allotments or any particular incidents up there. It was just part of the deal, we just did it. They didn't have picnics or fun times up there. I think the sheep herders took the sheep up.

Joe: We used to go up Big Elk Canyon.

Diane: We used to go up Big Elk Canyon, but not anything to do with the allotments. We always used to have a picnic up Big Elk Canyon. I think the Forest Service has probably lost their access up there. That's who put the road down there, the Forest Service. Nobody else put it in there, that was for fire control.

Dave: Too bad we the Forest Service didn't get a deeded easement at that time.

Diane: It's going to get worse.

Joe: Where are your accesses around Martinsdale. Down here at Big Timber Canyon aren't they?

Dave: Yes, that's it. It's really not enough, coming all the way from Cottonwood Creek on the north end clear over to Big Elk and Big Timber Canyon. It's tough.

Diane: I wasn't there, but I am quite sure that the Forest Service built that road. I think they did a lot of that to be able to put out fires. I don't know what they do now, helicopters I guess, because the trails are certainly not real well maintained right now.

Dave: We depend a lot on retardant planes for initial attack, then smoke jumpers that will come in, and also helicopter access. Then we have fire protection responsibility on some of the private lands within the natural forest.

Diane: I think everybody in the area went up and cut post and poles and I don't know that it was any big deal.
Joe: We went up there about 1965 or something and cut poles one year.

Diane: Pete White was talking that they used to go up there and get post and poles. People just went up there and did it. Nobody said anything. There was never any mechanized equipment used on that.

Dave: Were you saying that they would chain up the wheels on the wagons bringing, or skidding, the poles out of there on steep trails?

Diane: That I don't know.

Diane: I think all the neighbors went there and cut poles and posts. It was never any commercial type deal. We always trailed our cows up into the mountains in June and I think they went on the Forest Service the first of July. That was always a big day, to take the cows to the mountains. We'd get up at 4 in the morning and all the neighbor kids, and anybody that rode, we'd go to the mountains with the cattle. It was an all day deal. Now, we take three 4 wheelers and go to the mountains, and it's not much fun.

Judith: How about the use of dogs? Are they used now?

Diane: They were used. We had a little dog farm down here when my grandfather had it. They raised their own sheep dogs. Our family always had Border Collies and Australian Shepherds. They used dogs with sheep, but we never used dogs with cattle.

Sarah: Do you remember your parents telling you stories about hard times due to lack of money or having to do some bartering?

Diane: My folks, in the early years, had it fairly easy. It was easier to make a living. I don't think they had hard times until, probably in the '40's. They always seemed to have enough. I don't know that we had a lot of frills. I don't think they ever bartered. My father always had money. Whether he should have or not, he always had money. In the '30's, my mother was married previously to when she was married to my father. When she was in Oregon, her first husband worked on Grand Coulee Dam. They had hard times, where they lived in a tent and Readers Digest was all they had to read. That was kind of tough for her. My father never had hard times. I think there was probably more profit in ranching in those days. You had hired men and you didn't have to do all the work.

Judith: Where would most of the hired men come from? Would they be local?

Diane: A lot of them were locals. Later years in the early '50's we used to get bums off the railroad. They didn't know anything, and oh Lord, you'd get some dandies, but there is no railroad anymore. In the '40's and early '50's, times were a little tough around here just before 50 cent calves. Those were the years before 50 cent calves. Now we've got 75 cent calves, so big deal, huh?
Joe: Calves were worth a little more than that this year.

Judith: Were there other ways in which the railroad changed life here.

Diane: The shipping of the cattle. I think that would have come about whether the railroad had gone out or not, just because trucks are so much faster. Other than that, the railroad being out hasn't impacted us very much. Electricity we got in '46, we always had a wind charger on the hill to generate our electricity. Electricity probably changed our life as much as anything. That was REA that came in.

Sarah: What does REA mean?

Diane: Rural Electric Administration. Government does this, the power companies wouldn't come into the remote areas because there wasn't enough profit, so the government lent the REA's enough money to have small co-ops to come in and put electricity in. That was a big deal to get electricity.

Judith: When you were a child, what would be the most popular form of recreation?

Diane: Horseback riding. We didn't have television until the '50's and so we listened to the radio. I don't think I listened to the radio very much. My dad listened to basketball games and my mother listened to the soap opera. I think it was always on. But we rode horseback, that was our recreation I guess. We didn't have a lot of dances in the area.

Joe: We have C-span anymore!

Diane: That is probably the biggest change in my life; get up at 2 a.m. and watch the hearings! Other than the mechanized way of doing things, our place is basically just like it was. I don't know if that's good or bad. I think it's nicer than it was. Going to the mountains to the Forest Service allotment hasn't had any change in what we do up there. There hasn't been a great deal of change in this neck of the woods.

Joe: We got the (second) house down there in the '50's early '60's. It was the newest house on the creek at the time. Then Pete White built his.

Diane: People haven't changed in this area. This area is rather unique in that the land hasn't changed. My four cousins and my dad's three brothers and sisters, their families still own the land also that they were given. Which doesn't happen very often, that somebody doesn't change their way of doing things.

Dave: Your four families, were yourself and the Martins, David Martins, and ... ?

Diane: The Sedgewicks and the Glenn's. On the Glenn Ranches, they lease their place out and the kids live in Bozeman and Billings, but always kept their part of the division. Land hasn't changed and the people haven't changed. It's basically the same people. Sometimes we speak to each other and sometimes we don't, for the last 100 years! We have two boys. Our oldest son
lives in Columbus; he was raised here too. Our youngest lives here on the ranch. It's not big enough for two sons. We didn't do like people should, we should expand to include both children, but it is rather hard to do that.

Sarah: You think your youngest son will stay on here?

Diane: Yes, he is good (at ranching) and he likes it. My other son has 3 children and a family, and it takes quite a bit of money to raise kids anymore. They both have good jobs. He and his wife both work in Billings and they drive back and forth to Columbus. It would be nice to have the grand kids here, but that isn't the way it is anymore. They like Columbus schools better than the Billings schools. How do you find this different from Washington DC, Sarah?

Sarah: There is really quite a difference. But I have always wanted to travel to this part of the country.

Diane: Well, I hope you enjoy!

Sarah: It's been very interesting.

Diane: I have never been to see Washington, I think I will put that on my list. I should have some old cowboy stories and I don't.

Dave: I visited with Ox (Thorson) yesterday, but I did not get out to visit with John Duncan and Emmet Tieg.

Diane: I bet Emmet had good stories didn't he?

Judith: I didn't get to visit with him, I visited John Duncan.

Diane: I figured Emmet would be pretty good; he was born and raised right up there in the mountains. I think it was just like going back in time to go there; way back in time.

Joe: You might tell them when your mother and father died.

Diane: My dad died in '60 and my mom died in '87. When we were little, 14 or, 15 or 16, the oldest was 18, we got pack horses (5 girls) and horses and rode through the mountains. There was no trail, we didn't have any ax, so I don't know how we got through. We rode to Wilsall for malted milk! Two days from Big Elk Canyon was all it took us. Then we came back over the top of Sweet Grass Creek over the divide. The mountain goats were just as tame as they could be and lots of them. We rode down to Moose Lake from the Wilsall side and camped there. That was our last day and we had saved this hamburger and my sister was cooking supper that night and she would say, "do you think this is spoiled"? Well it was, it was just awful! Then we rode home out through Reins Ranch.

About 4 years ago, three of us made the trip back up to Moose Lake, only we went up through Reins the easy way; we didn't come over the other side of the mountain. I spent a lot of time in the mountains. Not many good old stories though.
Dave: Well, you girls going over to Wilsall, I can't imagine any high school girls doing that today!

Diane: I can't imagine why they let us go, they must have had faith in us is why they let us go. The first night we rode to Big Elk Canyon we had the pack horses hobbled. Next morning we got up and couldn't find this one horse. He'd gotten all the way down to the road from Big Elk Canyon, hopping. We took the hobbles off and that poor horse couldn't walk for quite awhile, he kept hopping. We had a good time doing that. I think then there were more girls that liked to ride; or at least there were a lot of us girls that liked to ride.

Judith: This has been a lot of good information; I can't think of any other questions. Thank you very much.

End of tape