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Interviewee: John W. Hanes
Intervener: Dan Hall
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Dan Hall: Today is December 3. This is Dan Hall. We're here with John Hanes in Houston, Texas, and we're going to be making an oral history interview for Boone and Crockett's Oral History Project. John, I'd like to begin interviewing you by asking you when and where you were born.

Jon Hanes: I was born in New York City in 1925.

DH: Where did you get your education?

JH: Deerfield Academy and Yale.

DH: Can you give me just a brief synopsis of your career?

JH: I spent about three and a half years in the army in the Second World War, went back to college, spent three years in Germany after that working for the U.S. High Commissioner and for CIA; came back to Washington with CIA, almost immediately moved over to the State Department as Special Assistant to the new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. I was in the Eisenhower Administration for 8 years, my last position being Assistant Secretary of State.

After 1961, I joined the firm of Wertheim & Company in New York, investment bankers, as an associate; became a partner a couple of years later; stayed there till about 1974 or 5 when I became a limited partner. Let's see if my years are right. That sounds right; yeah. I then was in more or less what you'd call the private investment banking business. I was head of an SBIC and worked privately in investment banking and with various companies, some of which I helped start, some of which I was involved with and also as a director of some larger companies really pretty much up until my retirement which has been gradual over the last five or six years.

DH: Where did your interest in the outdoors and hunting come from?

JH: From my very earliest days. I was shooting and fishing when I was six and eight years old. I started bird shooting, I think, when I was eight if not a little earlier.

DH: Do you recall when you first became aware of the Boone and Crockett organization?

JH: Probably at just about the time that I went into it. I've been trying to remember who proposed me. I don't really remember who it was now, it was so long ago. I know at that time one of these people who were in there then approached me and asked if I would like to belong to the Boone
and Crockett Club. It seemed like a good thing, so I said "Yes." I hope the record would show who it was because I can't remember. [chuckles]

DH: Have you sponsored others who joined the Boone and Crockett?

JH: Oh, yes, over the years, a fair number.

DH: Do you think there's a relationship between the sponsor and the new member in essence showing them the ropes of the organization?

JH: Very strong. There should be.

DH: What positions have you held during your membership with the Boone and Crockett?

JH: Almost every position except president, which I turned down two or three times. The one that I served in the longest was secretary.

DH: Why did you turn down the office of president?

JH: Because I didn't feel I could give it the time that it required.

DH: In your role as secretary for the Boone and Crockett, did you see any changes in that role as you had that office?

JH: It's hard to say whether there was a change. My predecessor as secretary was Bob Ely and in those days the Boone and Crockett Club was really run by a very small group of people largely because it was very difficult to get most of the members to be willing to put any effort into doing anything. It was that much more than anyone wanting to keep it in a small group, and that really was true in varying degrees, I'd say, up until -- well, it's had its ups and downs. When I first joined I suppose there were a half a dozen people that really ran the Club. Bob Ely was certainly one of them. When I became Assistant Secretary, and sort of built into that job, I can't remember, two or three years with Bob gradually wanting to get out of it, and then I took over as Secretary and the number of people involved in running the Club remained very small during most of that time, although the people sometimes changed as some would die and move along -- Archie Roosevelt, who was very active, became less so and died. Bob Ferguson, in due course, Bob Waters and these various people who were there all eventually moved along.

For a while, about the early 70's, we were able to enlarge the number of members that took a fairly active role from maybe 4 or 5 or 6 to maybe 10 or 11 or 12 and that continued, with some ups and downs. Really, I think it sort of went up, then it went down a little -- but not until we have had all of the recent reorganization have we gone back to having a larger group that takes an active role. In fact, I would say that there is today a larger group taking an active role than I ever saw. But we did have times when we had executive committee meetings of 18 - 20 people and...
everyone who came to those meetings was really taking a fairly active role, more or less, some more and some less.

But in general, the president and the secretary were always kind of the center continuous people. The secretary ran the office and the staff, such as it was, when we had a staff. The secretary pretty much structured the meetings along with the president, kept the committees operating, moving, did all of those things. I may have been a little bit more proactive than Bob Ely but not much. I mean, Bob was very much in the middle of everything, so I’d say that the role really didn’t change a great deal.

The role today, the Secretary does a lot less of those things because there are more other people doing more of them but for a long time I was the only officer of the Club that was around on a continuous basis because the office, on purpose, was right -- for a time it was in my office and when it wasn’t it was right down the street.

That was because, when we had to move out of Pittsburgh, I had to move it somewhere. We were in a museum out there. We couldn’t stay there any longer. That was not a good arrangement any more. That had gone back to the times of Dick [Lt. Gen. Richard] Mellon. So, having no place better, I put them in a room in our own building for a while, then eventually down the street and eventually farther out.

DH: Where was the office when you say "in your building"?

JH: Alexandria.

DH: Why did you have to move out of Pittsburgh?

JH: Well, our relationships with the Museum were increasingly distant. They had gone back to the times when Dick Mellon was the Museum, and what he wanted was there, and that was why the office was there. But there were no longer the close connections. There were people who were close but they were retiring, getting older. It was distant. There had been a lady who did a lot of the secretarial work. She retired. There was no way we could get anyone else on the Museum staff. I mean the whole thing was just -- there wasn't anyone in Pittsburgh who was being active. It just didn't make any sense. So I arranged for the library to be moved down, and the records and all those things. We had quite a long negotiation with the Museum over the books. We eventually resolved that and got our hands on them.

DH: Was there a problem there?

JH: Yes.

DH: Can you tell me about that?
JH: Well, they didn't want to give up the books, and we had some long negotiations and we eventually prevailed.

DH: What was in this collection of books?

JH: There are records as to what we moved. I hope, without too much confidence, that the particularly good ones are still in our library; but, as I say, I have to be worried that there was a whole time after the office had moved out of my ambit and when I was no longer secretary, I think there was a lot of carelessness in handling many things including, probably, the books. So I have never checked to see how many of those -- but we have careful lists that are in the records of what our books were and what we moved. Some of them were quite valuable. They were all hunting books, gifts of members, as well as early editions of Boone and Crockett publications. My recollection is that there were 400 volumes, give or take. Something like that.

DH: When did Boone and Crockett open the offices in Dumfries?

JH: Dumfries was much later. That was after -- I can't remember exactly. You'll have to look that up. That was after I ceased being Secretary. Because first we were in my office, then they had offices about 6 blocks from there.

DH: Still in Alexandria?

JH: Still in Alexandria. And then the Dumfries move was, I just can't remember the dates. In round figures, I think they [the records] were in my offices for 3 or 4 years and in the other offices for, like, 5 or 6, something along that line, and then in Dumfries until they moved down to Missoula.

DH: You mentioned "and staff whenever you had them." Has the Boone and Crockett always had staff members?

JH: No. At the time that we moved from Pittsburgh, there was no one. I just hired a very nice, quiet young girl named Andy Ward, and later I hired Kitty Beuchert [Gyongyver Beuchert]. Kitty remained for a number of years and did an excellent job. Kitty also did the oral interviews, or most of them. We felt we had to get started on this, as we were losing our older members, and, with them, the memories. In conducting an oral interview if someone does the research and can ask the questions with the names, it's an awful lot easier to remember. That was, incidentally, what I always made Kitty do in interviewing people, because you find that everybody's memory is terrible. If you remind them of something, they're going to remember, but just free-flowing discussion is very hard.

My memory is that the first person I hired was Andy Ward (that's a girl,) and that Kitty was hired after her. But it's possible that I am missing somebody. There may have been someone else in between or at one point or another.
DH: Who was the president of Boone and Crockett while you were the secretary?

JH: Well, there were a whole bunch of them.

DH: Can you tell me who they were?

JH: I can't tell you all of them probably or in order because I don't remember, but John Rhea was, Wes Dixon, Bill Spencer. Again, all of these things are in the books. I'm not adding much here.

DH: I understand that you played a role in the selection of the TR Ranch in Montana.

JH: Yes.

DH: Can you tell me what your role was?

JH: Well, basically, I guess that the concept of doing something significant for the hundredth anniversary, I won't say it was any one person's concept, but certainly one of its great champions was Bill Spencer, the president. What we did was, first of all, to have more or less of a competition among the states, a number of which wanted to do something, as to suggesting sites that would be suitable for the Boone and Crockett Club to purchase in the way of a property. In some cases, they were specific sites, but in other cases (as in the one we selected) it was really a regional site. It was, in this case, the east front of the Rocky Mountains, without a specific site as such.

I guess I would say that we probably had a couple of other people involved at different times, but for all practical purposes, the people involved in doing that were Bill Spencer and me. We looked at properties. John Poston, who is an attorney in Montana, was often involved in some of the discussions, and certainly sometimes with suggestions. In the process, Bill and I really looked at the properties. One or the other of us pretty much talked, negotiated. There were several properties we looked at. A couple we were quite serious about and we engaged in some negotiations. One particularly was a nice property but the people got much too greedy and we couldn’t work out anything.

When we eventually settled on this ranch as being a good property (and it was not the first; this was a fairly long process) I did the basic structuring of the transaction and a lot of the negotiating because it was a complicated transaction. In the first place, we didn’t buy that ranch, we bought a ranch in Wyoming, and traded which was what they wanted and traded it for tax reasons, so it was a complicated tax structure transaction.

Secondly, there was debt outstanding on the property we bought and it was held by a variety of people: banks, individuals and others, and it took a lot of negotiating to work out something, eventually I was able to buy out a certain amount of the debt at a discount which substantially reduced the price that we had to pay.
Third, we didn’t have any money to pay for it anyway, so we had to arrange for some credit and that was really done through an arrangement with the Nature Conservancy, where they advanced us basically what became about a million and a half dollars, half a million of which we repaid and a million of which was a grant. In fact, that was negotiated by Bill and myself.

So you asked what role? I would say that Bill and I bought the ranch, and it was Bill’s vision that we needed something of this sort for the future. He drove this through. We worked on it hard; but I mean his leadership and his willingness to step up and make decisions was what made it go through because I would say that, at any time that we had really tried to take a vote, we would probably have lost it. Most of the members didn’t understand this, thought it was crazy, didn’t want to get involved, thought it was too much to do, but basically Bill did it.

We so structured the meetings and the circumstances so that, in fact, really controversial matters like, “should we do it?” never came to the forefront. [laughter] The wisdom of that is pretty visible today. Everything good that is happening today is because we took the initiative because he did this crazy thing. I mean, we have in the files letters from the members in the files, you know "You guys have got to be out of your skulls," and "there’s no way" "this is a terrible thing for the Club to do," "this is a nice little gentlemen’s club; you’re making everybody work and think," and so forth.

DH: Did the Club lose members because of this?

JH: Probably. I don’t mean that people resigned on account of it. There may have been one or two, by the way, who did. But I think probably this whole change of direction probably lost members. Of course, the time that the Club really lost members was when we had the big fight over the basics of the Club, when Doug Burden tried to alter the whole structure of the Club. That had been 10 years earlier. At that time the Club lost probably 30% of its members.

DH: I’d like to get into that in a few minutes, but for now there are some more things on this ranch purchase that I’d like to explore. You say that you, in essence --

JH: Don’t misunderstand. There were some very strong supporters, other former presidents -- Wes Dixon, Fred Pullman, John Rhea, all of these people were very strong supporters of this whole thing. But it was the great mass of the members who really basically don’t want to be bothered with much, who couldn’t see it. Also this lack of support was evident because for the first two (maybe three) years after we got this, getting contributions out of the Club members was just like pulling teeth. And that was because a lot of them just said, "Well, Hell, we never were for this in the first place; it’s a silly idea; I’m not going to contribute to this thing."

DH: You had mentioned that you, in essence, opened a competition with those states on the front that wished to have the Boone and Crockett ranch. How did you go about doing that?

JH: There was a committee. I can’t remember who was on it. I have a memory that Art Popham, who is here at this meeting, may have been one of the members of the committee. It’s possible
that Bob Model was; I don't remember. There was a committee of people, two or three, that circulated the idea (this was before we decided on any place.) There was a regular procedure. They went to the various western states, I don't remember how and in what manner, but we got, oh, I think something like ten or twelve proposals. It may be more. There was a whole process and the committee recommended back and the final recommendation of the committee was the east front of the Rockies.

DH: Can you tell me who at the Nature Conservancy you dealt with in your negotiations?

JH: Yes, I think so, if you'll give me a moment -- Greg Low, who was Executive Vice-President and Bill Blair, who was President. Bill and Greg and Bill Spencer and I did this deal one day over at Bill Spencer's office, the four of us sitting there. Bill Spencer and I were both involved in the Conservancy as well as the Boone and Crockett Club.

DH: What did the Nature Conservancy have to gain by assisting the Boone and Crockett?

JH: They were very much in favor of the fact that, in the first place; the east front of the Rockies is a significant priority for the Conservancy. One of their biggest preserves, Pine Butte, is right there, practically next door. The guy who was the head of the Big Sky office -- his nickname is "Top Rabbit" and I'm trying to think of his name, but when you get old you can't remember your good friends' names quickly. He thought that this was a tremendous priority. Greg Low is a very visionary fellow, and he understood the importance of it, and I think that they felt that this was a major initiative that could be very helpful in the whole range of conservation.

The Conservancy has traditionally worked in partnership arrangements with people who see things their way, the same way. Also there was money available for this kind of thing from the Ordway bequest which was really there to be used for imaginative ideas of this sort and which was administered by Dick Pough. He was involved with the Conservancy but he was also kind of the executor of the Ordway estate. We were all pretty good friends, and this was a logical place to go for help. So a lot of these things were also done on personal relationships.

DH: Did you have a set of criteria that you set up when you were exploring ranches for the needs of Boone and Crockett?

JH: Well, we knew that in the first place it had to be something that had some significant wildlife resources because we knew that our purpose was to try and set up a demonstration of the viability of good ranching and good wildlife management. Well, you've got to have a place that has good wildlife resources in order to do that and you obviously have to have a place that is amenable to ranching, so that's a criterion. We knew that we wanted the eastern front area; we knew that the size had to be large enough to be able to be viable as an experimental resource, which meant that really you were in the six or seven thousand acre minimum out there. And we knew that we had to get something that was within striking distance of our ability to finance eventually [chuckles].
DH: How do you feel when you visit the ranch now?

JH: Well, I feel very good about the whole thing, obviously. I think the ranch itself has been what we hoped and I think we've had good people running it. But I think that's probably the least important aspect. It has served the purpose of being an excellent research laboratory and a window to the world for that kind of thing. Most importantly of all it has done what we hoped it would do in terms of really giving the Club a direction and an emphasis and bringing together an active group of people willing to work, almost all of whom weren't in the Club at that time. So I mean it's attracted that kind of people we wanted and all of these things, I think, are totally attributable to the fact of the ranch.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]
JH: Equally impressive is the fact that we have paid for it which, for a long time, was not clear that we were going to be able to do. [chuckles]

DH: But aside from the money from the Nature Conservancy, how else would the Boone and Crockett fund the ranch?

JH: We funded it by getting contributions. That's the only way you can get it. I mean, that's where it's come from, inside and outside.

DH: Who solicited the monies?

JH: Various people have worked on the fundraising. Sherm Gray has done an enormous amount of work. There are others. We have had some professional help. I don't think all of it has been effective, but I think that's in heavy part due to the fact that the members always wanted to let the professionals be in charge and do everything about the fundraising, and you can't do that. Any fundraiser will tell you that it's got to be the members who do it. I don't fault the people we have had. I think we've had better and worse. But basically this reflected the fact that it took a long time before we had any consensus within the Club that this was a good thing. I'm not sure that we changed many people's minds. I think we've changed many people, and there are a lot of people in the club today who think it is a good thing and they aren't necessarily the same people. [chuckles]

DH: You mentioned a few minutes ago the controversy with Doug Burden and the organization that had occurred before the purchase of the ranch.

JH: Before the ranch was ever contemplated. I mean, this went back a number of years before that.

DH: Can you tell me a little bit about what was going on here with this controversy?

JH: Yes. Doug Burden, for whatever his own reason, was a very flamboyant character. He had been a great hunter and as one of my colleagues on the Executive Committee put it, "Doug Burden, having shot everything in the world, now wants to guarantee that no one else will ever have that opportunity." So he became a great champion of the abolition of hunting and wanted to have the Boone and Crockett Club alter itself completely, become a totally conservation organization, and cease having a records program. And in that he mobilized a reasonable number of the members including a lot of professional members who were scientists, not exclusively those, but that was certainly the larger number. He made this an ethical issue. It's sort of the animal rights issue basically. He also made it a great ego trip for himself. Of course, Doug Burden's entire life was an ego trip, so this was simply another one of his excursions.
He was very persuasive and this controversy went on for a couple of years and it really split the Club very much and as a result, I don't remember the number, but it was a significant number of members ended up resigning and it eventually came to the point that when we finally voted on whether the Club would alter itself, and the vote was "no, it won't."

We then lost a fair number of members. A third may be high, but it's not very high if high at all. A number of them were scientists and some of them were some very distinguished people who had been important to the Club. So it was a difficult time. However, it was not without its usefulness. There were things that Doug Burden was opposed to that I think we all should have been opposed to and that as a result of all this have been changed. One of them is that the records keeping had really become literally a "competition" and that we changed.

DH: How so?

JH: You cannot make people not be competitive and want to have the biggest trophy, but the Club should take a position that it is basically the keeper of the records and the keeper of ethics and as a result of this -- that was the beginning, really, of our taking a very hard look at the whole ethical question because this competition thing had been bending that. There was a lot of incentive for people to get a trophy at any expense and in any manner.

By the Club taking a much stronger position on looking into how trophies have been taken. Of course, again, I say this -- these things had all been evolutionary. Forty, fifty years ago, these weren't problems because people weren't doing things like that. As you had a new generation, a group of people from different backgrounds; and changes in the hunting business, more competition among guides for these things -- these things had blown up, but the Club had probably not taken an aggressive enough position to change its own rules and regulations to meet the changes, so I think we were kicked into that by this controversy, and that was a good thing.

One of the important things we have as a result of being the record keepers, if we say something isn't going to be accepted, it isn't going to be a record. If we say that a species isn't going to be eligible for the record book because it's a threatened species, then there isn't going to be any incentive for someone to try and get a Boone and Crockett trophy, because it won't be. So we recognized the enormous ability we had to influence these things. So as I said, there were usefulnesses out of all of this.

Another usefulness was that it was probably a necessary precursor to the sea-change that has taken place in the Club. The Club had become increasingly -- "defunct" is too strong a word -- but increasingly it was irrelevant other than to the personal predilections of its rather small, tight group of members. A lot of people should have been out of the Club because they hadn't been in it for years in any meaningful way. We did lose, as I say, some people that I wish we hadn't. We lost a number of people that, as far as I was concerned never will be missed. That made the leadership of the Club reexamine everything we were doing, and it made us go out and get new members to replace those that had left; and to decide what we wanted in the way of new members, and where
the Club was going. That led directly, really, to the whole kind of thinking that went into what became the hundredth anniversary project of the ranch.

All of these things were probably necessary way stations in changing something that had -- if the Boone and Crockett Club had continued without upset (and I don't say that there may not have been other things that would have caused it to change but none has ever been apparent) if it had continued without something like that, it would have just dribbled away and died.

DH: When you say "the sea-change in the Boone and Crockett" can you give me an idea of the time we're talking about and just briefly tick off the major mileposts of this change.

JH: Well, we've been talking about some of them. I think maybe it's useful to step back and look at a longer overview in answering that question. Going back before I came in, let's go back even fifteen years, twenty years before I came in. There was a very, very small group of people -- Dick Borden, Fairfield Osborne, Bob Waters, Bob Reeve, certainly Bob Ferguson and very prominently Dick Mellon and Archie Roosevelt. These were dominant figures.

These people did a lot of good. They would get together and, when something needed to be done, they'd decide to do it; and in terms of paying for it, they'd pass the hat and they'd toss in whatever was necessary to pay for it. They were all able to do that and that's what they did. It was much more the kind of thing that it had been in the very early days a very small group of personally influential people, probably having less impact in the world than was the case with their predecessors fifty years ago, not because they were individually less effective but because it was a much bigger world.

But it was still this. And when I came into the Club that was still essentially it. Dick Mellon was no longer there. Most of the others were, and as Jack has told you, what happened was, we'd meet at Bob Ferguson's apartment in New York. That was usually the gathering place, and that was the Club. I mean, that was the business of it. We'd have dinner and drinks. Everybody would decide what we were doing and we'd do it. That was where the Rampart Dam was discussed and it was decided to go and fund a scientific study to point out how silly that was, which was probably the one single thing that sank the Rampart Dam. This was still, however, a very, very small private group that really wasn't very anxious to expand much, [chuckle] with a larger group of nice people as members who didn't want to get very involved and didn't get very involved and would come to the annual meeting once a year in the American Museum and bring a guest and everybody would have a good time.

As the Sixties moved on and the torch passed to newer people, newer being a relative term, the difference being people who had been young -- me, John Rhea, Wes Dixon, and some of these others that came along -- we no longer met at Bob Ferguson's. We'd go there as long as Bob was alive. We usually would go up there and visit with him, but he became increasingly ill and so we took to having meetings elsewhere in the country with the Executive Committee trying to get more members involved. We tried to get more people in, but it was still essentially a pretty small
group that was struggling to find new roles to emphasize again conservation.

"Conservation," of course was a word that wasn't known in Teddy Roosevelt's time. It's a new term. What they did was conservation but it was indistinguishable from a lot of other things. This group felt that we had to more identify the conservation thing as a separate thing; to recognize that the world was no longer what it once was, and you couldn't just have the head of the Park Service and the head of the Forest Service agree to do something and have it get done. You had, now, unpleasant interfering people such as secretaries of Interior and Congressional committees and vast numbers of people of that sort who were quite likely not to want to do what you told them to. So it was a different world and we were seeing how we could adjust to it.

I think we're making some progress. We got a pretty active conservation committee going and we began to really think of the history of the Club in the sense of looking at it also for the future.

It was right into that period that Burden threw his whole thing. I repeat, I think probably if I had it to do over again, I'm not necessarily sure that I would have, if I had the ability to say that shouldn't have happened, that I would have done so. I think maybe it should have happened. It was a difficult way of doing; it was, in many ways, unpleasant. It had a lot of fallout that was not good, but that's true with anything that changes a lot of things. I'm not sure that I could think of much else that would have accomplished the same purpose. So it did end up with a quite different Club in the sense of memberships, a lot of people who really are interested -- and I think some of the people who resigned, some did it for cause and I think some did it just because they didn't give that much of a damn anymore anyway. This was a convenient reason to not be around.

We got a lot of new people. I would say, however, that in the period immediately following, while there was a lot of change, there wasn't as yet any new focus. It was not what it had been but it wasn't clear what it ought to be or what it was going to be. That was where this thing -- and again, I give Spencer 110 percent of the credit for the vision that something like this ranch could provide the glue to make a mission, something that would, again, make the Club "a relevant factor."

We still had an enormous reputation, although it was becoming questionable as to how deserved it still was, but the one really flowed into the other. Throughout this period in general we have had some extraordinarily good presidents, strong presidents and people who had vision and who were consistent in their ideas, and basically [Bayard D.] Rhea and [Wesley M.] Dixon [Jr.] and [William J.] Spencer, certainly Steve Adams -- again, my memory is such [that] I'm probably leaving out one or two people (we have had one or two that were less effective); "Red" Duke was a superb president. Just those five, if I picked no one else, there were five very strong people, all of whom were quite willing to make decisions and do things to lead, to push, to kick, to cajole, to do all the things you have to do and to give time to it. So I won't say that twenty years ago somebody woke up with a clear vision and we've pursued it steadily. These things evolve. The two big things that helped shape it were the big fight, and this whole concept of doing something for the next century that was not going to be something looking back but something looking ahead to the next century. That gradually crystallized into doing a project and that had these research and other overtones

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and things of this sort. Does that make any sense?

DH: It does.

JH: I’ve tried to give you a much broader picture of where things are going. What has now happened, as was visible this morning, is that you now have a really quite large group who are actively involved. We have a whole bunch of subcommittees now and things like that and they’re working and people are doing things. A very important side-effect of that is that the Club has taken back its own management. (I’m going to indulge in a little bit of personality on this.) We lost control of the Club by letting staff take too much control not having, at that particular moment, people who were willing to step on them as they should have been. I don’t say that this was invidious on the part of staff people, but it turned out to be, I think, very invidious for the Club, whether consciously or otherwise. But when I was there we ran a pretty tight ship and the staff worked for the officers. There was a period when the staff was pretty unsupervised and [William H.] Hal Nesbitt had his own agendas. We picked one or two bad people. One was a real mistake.

DH: Some of the other presidents have mentioned problems with staff in the past.

JH: Yeah. In this period that was sort of an interim period because there wasn’t anybody riding herd on the staff. But as a result of all these things, I don’t think this Club is ever again going to have an executive director. I think that’s good. It means that the members are now again running it, as they once did. When I came into the Club there was no staff. There was one lady in the Museum in Pittsburgh who typed minutes when somebody gave them to her. The best staff that the Club ever had were those that I hired, and they were under pretty tight rein and they were, literally, staff. Then there came this time where the staff took over and we had executive directors and all of this kind of stuff and now we have reversed that.

DH: I’d like to ask you, in speaking with Red Duke, he would not answer my question about the accomplishments that he was proud of during his tenure as president. What would you say? Would you answer that question [for me?] What are the accomplishments when Red was president?

JH: Again, it is very hard for me to remember dates as to when events happened and that’s really not the answer to the question anyway because specific events other than maybe the actual purchasing of the ranch could have happened in one president’s tenure when in fact they were something that came out of earlier decisions. What all of these people did in common was to have a very continuing view of the need to reshape this thing and make it relevant to today.

Now, Red Duke’s wizardry is his ability to lead and inspire. He is an incredible talker. He can charm anybody out of anything. He gave us a public face, at a time that that was very useful. His television appearances and all of these kind of things were very important but he also had a very inspirational effect on a lot of the members, getting, particularly some of the newer members, to come in and do things because Red is very self-effacing. He wants to get other people to do it and

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to give credit to them.

So each of the strong presidents has had his own different style. When I think is that the evolution of the concept of the ranch, what it has become, and the setting up, probably if I had to pick one thing that I think Red had a very major role in getting our professorship funded and set up, and getting Hal Salwasser. I don’t even remember if at the time Hal Salwasser came Red was still president -- he may or may not have been -- but Red was very directly responsible for it. Whether he was still president or not is immaterial because, as I say, the time that actual events happened doesn’t always coincide with who did what.

DH: Exactly.

JH: Rhea and Dixon carried the Club through this terribly difficult transitional period and the whole Burden fight and all of that [and] kept something together, put it back together and came out of it with something that was stronger than when we went in. Spencer took this and created the concept of the dream, and Duke and Adams have taken and made this dream a reality, if you want to put it, again, in simplistic terms. That’s what they have accomplished.

DH: I want to go back and touch on this establishment of the chair at the University of Montana. Who were the people that were involved in that, Red Duke and --

JH: Involved in what? Establishing the chair, selecting the person or what?

DH: Recognizing the need for the chair.

JH: Well, that was part of the original concept. Once we got the whole concept of the ranch it was going to be the ranch, and it was going to be a research center, [and] the research center was going to be run by somebody, and to give them the stature we would like to set that up as a chair at the University of Montana. That was all part of the package. I won’t say it sprang full blown, but pretty early on it was clear that that was where we were going. Now the first thing was, we needed the money to pay for the ranch. But we established the professorship long before we had the money to pay for it, just as we bought the ranch long before we had the money to pay for it. [laughter]

I don’t know who got involved in the search for Hal. I think Red may have been involved, but I really don’t know on that one. But whoever it was, they couldn’t have picked anybody better. In the first place, Hal was a real reformer within the Forest Service, a place that is not generally comfortable for reformers. He’s a very visionary thinker and he’s just been a real leader through this thing. I don’t believe (but I don’t know this) I don’t believe that Red as such was much involved in finding him, but I could be wrong on that. I simply don’t know. I know that a number of us interviewed him once he’d kind of been identified and everybody who did thought that we’d stumbled on the Promised Land.
DH: How would you characterize the negotiations between Boone and Crockett and the University of Montana?

JH: I had nothing to do with it.

DH: The strategic planning process of the Boone and Crockett, that has been ongoing the last several years—

JH: A totally new concept.

DH: Is this something that might have alienated any members?

JH: Oh, I suppose we have some members that could be alienated. [laughter] I think "alienated" may be a strong term. I'm sure we have people who don't think much of the planning process and that includes me if the planning process isn't done right. I think there was some thrashing around in the first part of this where it didn't go very far, but I think that in the final of analysis the way it worked out, the planning process is doing well and has now come out generally with the kinds of things it should. If you asked whether I agreed with all of it, I would say, "No," I don't -- it doesn't necessarily mean that everybody agrees with everything that has been done. You will always have some increasingly few left, but probably a few left, who really would be just as happy if the Club consisted of one annual dinner that they would come to and a thing that they could put in their biography. We have been trying to gradually change that kind of member. There still are a few.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]
DH: [What kind of] documents does the Boone and Crockett Club keep that they should be keeping for the historical record?

Philip Wright: You guys talk so quietly, I didn't know you were still at it here.

DH: Just a few more minutes, Phil. We'll be done.

PW: Okay.

JH: That depends a lot on who was where, when. When I took over the job of secretary the records of the past were pretty casual -- they really consisted of the minutes, old minutes and the volumes of the library. There was not a lot of "else" because there was no staff and not a lot going on. Some committees would keep minutes but mostly they were minutes of Club meetings. The records, when I was there, were quite voluminous because we were going through these various things we have discussed, and because of the fact that so much of this was fundamental, I don't like long minutes in general, but for this whole period of the Burden fight, I wrote the minutes and I wrote very long minutes because I wanted to make sure that everyone in the Club really could participate in this whether they were at the meetings or not. I even included, as adjuncts to those minutes, some of the letters that came in on both sides so that everybody would see it and the records, in that case, became quite long. I was just saying to Phil I hope that they have survived because I ended up with large file cabinets full of records.

At that time we also began documenting the activities of the committees much more and we became much more involved in correspondence because the Club was taking now, a more active role vis-a-vis the outside world. I think that in the time as the Club got down into the whole Dumfries area I think they kept extremely good records of things they were interested in, which was book sales and stuff like that, and I think a lot of the rest of it suffered. I think that there are things probably that got thrown out or lost because I've never been able to find them. So I think that was a period of question as to records and I have no knowledge of how they're doing now.

DH: Last question. How would you like your family to look back on your association with Boone and Crockett Club?

JH: As having helped it to change from something that had been very meaningful in the last century to something that will hopefully be very meaningful in the next century. I have been privileged to play that role with three other organizations now, the Audubon Society, World Wildlife, and Nature Conservancy as well as Boone and Crockett. I think that the thing that has always made me the proudest was to be able to be one of the agents of change and growth as something adapted to a new type of world.

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DH: Is there anything that I have missed or that you would like to cover in detail at this time?

JH: Not that I can think of. I may well think of some things and at some point I may want to revise and extend my remarks like Jack.

DH: Okay, John. I want to say thank you for your interview.

[End of Interview]