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Oral History Number: 422-004, 005
Interviewees: Doris Haasch and Harold Haasch
Interviewer: Suzanne Vernon
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Note: Doris Haasch and Harold Haasch was interviewed in 1999 for the Swan Valley Oral History Project. The Haasch family homesteaded near Glacier Creek. Harold lived near Condon most of his life. His wife, Doris Haasch, was raised at Woodworth. Her parents were Claude Homes and Nina Wright, and they came to Gordon Ranch as caretakers in October 1924.

Suzanne Vernon: Were you born up here?

Doris Haasch: In Woodworth. I was born in August. They [parents] came up here in about October. 1924. Doris' brother, Bob "Uncle Bob" was about 7 years old then.

SV: I thought I had written all of this down the first time, but I didn't. I wonder who was at the Gordon Ranch caretaking before your folks.

Harold Haasch: I don't know for sure. I think Jim Frye was there. Jim was there a lot. He had that place there along the road. At one time, right about then, he was the...his place, the road now goes right through the middle of it. You know there by where you come off the hill where the mules are? That's Jim Frye's place. The house used to be...Shorty planted those pine trees on the east side of the road. The house burned down. There was a nice little field in there, too, where those pine trees are.

SV: Frye must not have had any outbuildings then. Just a house?

HH: There was an old hay shed once somebody tore down. It was kind of more where the road is or something, the hay shed was. That was where the hay field was. That Beaver Creek Road used to go right across that meadow and over to Bill Frye's over on Beaver Creek. Bill Frye went back across the creek. You crossed the creek to get over to his place.

SV: There's a place in the creek where you can see an old bridge.

HH: That would be it. I don't know if there's any buildings left over there at Bill Frye's or not, over there by Trollers. It's a big meadow. You go down before you get to Trollers, and you got to go in on the Beaver Creek Road and cross the creek, back to the old original road.

SV: There's some old buildings in there. I didn't realize that was a Frye.

HH: That was Bill Frye. Anderson was a son-in-law. [Not related to Andersons at north end]. Old Charlie Anderson lived there at the Frye place, when the house burnt. Not related. His

homestead was over on Glacier Creek. The one that Mabel and Clarence Stilwell got—that was Charlie Anderson's place. I don't think it was a homestead. He lived there quite a long time.

I think the other time I told you...Joe told me that over by Underwoods, he said that was the Birch (Burch?) place. I thought that little place up by the Frye place was the Birch. I had it wrong I think. That was Beck's there, by the Gordon Ranch. No relation to Ed Beck.

SV: We'll get it all straightened out.

HH: That was the Birch place next to Underwoods.

SV: Somebody told me the original buildings there were under water from building the pond.

HH: They could have. Dad worked up there when they were building the pond.

SV: How many of these ponds around here were built? Was this a built pond?

HH: Yeah, it was. I didn't build it the first time. It was just a kind of a little meadow. It was just real shallow where it come out. It was a little lake, but it never dried up. Real shallow where it come out. We put some fish in it. They done all right. Then when I got over here and had...I don't know what year, I cleaned it all out and built a big dam on it. Got a bigger body, deeper.

SV: There's fresh water goes through.

HH: Yeah. We had a ditch go down through it.

SV: Some of those, like at Underwoods, that's a little spring.

HH: Yeah, the creek starts right there close. Then that one of Lundbergs is built.

SV: How about the one at Whites?

HH: Yeah, that was built. We used to have a flume and stuff and that didn't work out. Quite a dip in there. Then when we had water come through here. There's an old ditch out here that Dad and them made with a team and that. Wise, during the war, Alfred, he got ahold—or Vic—they put in that good dam, then dug this. In fact, they come all the way from the creek with a real good ditch. Down here. Then we really had the water then; before, had a flume. It dries out or breaks. Then we had a ditch on top of a fill. Really anxious to get water.

SV: What did you use the water for?

HH: Just go down here in the lake.

SV: It wasn't necessarily for irrigation?

HH: We did that after I got a ditch comes out of there for this. We use irrigation out of that. We use that. We used to have ditches. We use pipe now. Just gravity. We use that four-inch sewer pipe. Plastic pipe joints. You talk about dandy for easy to change and talk about get water out of there. I got a couple places where pipes are in the ditch in the bank. She just sticks on that pipe on there and takes the cover away. Then on the far end we have plastic. Black pipe. You get a lot of water down there with that.

SV: Do you have fish in there?

HH: There's fish in there now. We haven't had that good of luck with the fish. Birds and everything. The osprey are the worst ones. I don't know if they are the worst ones. The mergansers are real bad on the little fish. Ken, over here, Huston, he said he set over there on the bridge and watched the mergansers drive those fish about that long [6-8 inches] right up out of the water on the bank and grab them. He said he set right there and watched them. He said they'd dive in that big hole and drive them right out of the water. If they didn't get them, they'd just be after them enough. Isn't that something? He's telling the truth. He spends a lot of time just sitting down there by the bridge.

We had the mergansers, the osprey. Then them old long-legged....blue herons. They stand out there. I seen them. Just wait. (shwoop) they stand in the shallow water. We never bother them. Al and them, they don't want to shoot the birds.

SV: What about otters?

HH: I think we do. We never really seen them. I've seen otter go through here. They'll eat a lot of fish. But it's nice. We have the lake. It's pretty. We got a boat out there. I think maybe one thing that we might have done. It used to be all just windfalls and stuff laying out in it. We got busy and I think we cleaned it too clean. Not a stick there. We do have lily pads; that helps. We always figured maybe we should have left more logs in there. I did. They'd a had a better chance from the birds, too.

DH: Annie gets more enjoyment out of the lake than we do. She canoes out there.

HH: She sits on their dock by the hour, when she can. She can't anymore like she used to. She watches the fish. We tell her there's no fish in there and she says, "I saw the fish!" (laughs) She sits out there, used to; she's too busy now. It's really nice out there.

SV: I suppose when Underwoods and Lundbergs built their ponds, it was kind of the same reason?

HH: Enjoyment. I know very well that's why Underwood's was built. Pennypacker built it. He really had some fish in there, too. Cutthroat I imagine that's what he had. He had more trouble with the neighbors than the birds. We had them come in here, when Mom was over here by herself. They'd come in from the backside and fish it in the wintertime.

SV: If they had come and asked you, you probably would have said go ahead.

HH: Yeah, and it was a kind of a relative, too. One guy, I said, we was talking about fishing. There wasn't much fishing anymore. I said, "Yeah, Goddammit," I said. "You were over there and fished that pond out, too." "Oh I didn't either!" Then I said, "The hell you didn't!" (laughs)

SV: There's quite a few ponds around. Must all of them be built otherwise they'd be going back to swamps and meadows?

HH: I don't know. It's just something about trapping the water and having a pond. Ken made some nice little ponds up there at Conrad's. He had one real nice pond right back of the house. He didn't take no logs out of it or nothing. Put the dam in. Just a low dam.

SV: So the water holds pretty good...

HH: It's all clay here. Most of the places are. Spent quite a little time and money. I have a pipe and a tailgate out there. My pipe is way down low. Comes up like this, then into this tailgate that has a screen, then drops off. The cutthroat went up that pipe, but the other ones, they didn't go up that pipe. We went down there one time and it was plumb full. Big fish like that. We ate a couple of them, too.

SV: What about brook trout?

HH: We had some nice eastern brook trout in there once. We didn't think we had a fish in there. We finagled around and got a gill net. Put it in there just to find out what we had. Went back over to the bar, Russ and I did. Then home. Stayed away for about forty five minutes. Come back. The net was out of sight. The corks. It was just plumb full of big eastern brook trout. We give them away, and fried them. (laughs)

DH: They were sorry they left it so long, then.

HH: Sure, we didn't think there was any in there. We figured we'd catch some old rough fish. [suckers, perch, sunfish] I tell you, those gill nets are deadly. If anything gets in them, it don't do much good to take them out. That's the only experience I ever had except watch them out on the coast.

SV: What other wildlife is around the pond?

HH: The deer come. They're going to stay close to water. We got another little pond back there about the size of this house. Never dried up. Get some lily pads and stuff in it. Water sits right there just like a little lake. The cattle drink it. They like it. Must be a spring. Right next to it is a big meadow, lower than it by quite a bit. In the spring, it's just a big old lake. This other one, it doesn't get much bigger in the spring.

SV: Are there cattails?

HH: No, just grass. It's funny because it generally has enough water. It's a lake, not a meadow. Those other big ones there, you could hay. We have hayed it. This has been the best year we've ever had out there. You see it more. Pastured the hay fields. Didn't go out there as quick. You talk about some beautiful pasture. The cows like it. We don't have any in the timber; don't have any timber grass left. We've always planted. This year, it had a chance to seed that tame grass out in the woods. Anytime we logged or scratched around, we threw some seed out.

SV: If there's fish in that pond...

HH: I think there's some bigger fish and they've eaten most of the sunfish. I think there's some big fish in there. [Talking about the pond right beside house. About four acres.] Far as I'm concerned, they can stay there. No fish in the little pond out back. There's different little fishes.

SV: What about the moss in the pond?

HH: I think it comes in cycles. Comes and goes. It isn't an algae. Not something that pollution causes. If you want to see some pollution, go up to Lindbergh, in the river where it comes out. That's algae growing there. Slimy. I was up there in '37, '38. They took the water right out of the river for that lodge, and for quite a few years they did. Finally, there wasn't ever much said, until Carlson was going to subdivide it. Then they run some tests on it and made him put a filtering system in. Elaborate filter system. Comes right out of the creek.

SV: Was the water wheel in there then?

HH: Yeah. That was nice, real nice.

SV: There are ponds at the Gordon Ranch. What were they for?

HH: Up above was the mill pond. They used to throw them in a float them. A lot of the dirt and stuff come off of them. A lot easier on the saws. Some places, they had a big old pump and a spray. When they come out of the pond and come up this chute, had a real high-pressure spray and sprayed those logs on two, three four side. All the way around it. Knock off mud, some bark. Those rocks are a little hard on the saws.

That was one of your pretty early industries in here, was sawmilling. People worked for the Forest Service. Dad, he worked for the ACM in the wintertime. Clear out there at Greenough.

SV: How early did Strom's store start?

HH: 1946. There was a little store down at the Post Office, Hollopeter's. A long time before that, they didn't have no big store. They had a few little things. Frank. The whole family lived down there. He had the mail run, he and Royden. They had the mail run. They had candy, tobacco, a few essential things like that, and gas. They hauled gas in with barrels. They thought it was so bad; gas at that time was twenty-five cents or something. They charged forty-five or fifty cents. Double their money. They pretty near had to roll the barrels in here to get them in here, so they deserved to double the price. They brought in like chicken feed and stuff for people.

DH: When do you think they started that store?

HH: They were there in '28. '27. Easy, by '27. Maybe before, I'm not sure.

SV: That was on the old road?

HH: No, down there by where old Harlan Jensen lived. Right on the bank. Make that last bend down there on that subdivision. You go a ways and the barn and stuff stood right in there somewhere where the houses are right by the road. You turn there and Harlan Jensen had a home there. Another one. You go a little farther, and I think there's a house there now. Right out there was where the house and everything was. It was pretty near right in where the road is. Right over the hill is a real, nice big spring. Water. Same way down there where...

DH: Didn't the old road go down along the river, kind of?

HH: You come down there, come through back behind the ranger station; went down through behind there. The Smith Creek Road, or the main road, it turned off just about at Ed Nixon's. Somewhere in there.

SV: There was kind of a fork?

HH: Yeah. It went down Smith Creek and all the way back in there and come out at the old ranger station. This other one, it went right down there to where Girven's live, and that was the end of that road there. It went over to...

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

SV: Where was Drury's then?

HH: Drury, this is the one. That's the Drury place.

SV: Who first did it?

HH: Drury. Homestead.

SV: Hollopeters homesteaded some places too?

HH: Up where all those big houses are now. No, that wasn't their homestead. They just went down there and lived in it. Drury didn't care. He was a railroad guy, along with Deegan and Sheehan.

SV: Everybody says the mail was at Drury's, but Hollopeters actually had it?

HH: Yeah, Drury never had it [mail].

SV: Was there anything else in here when Stroms started their store? When was the bar built?

HH: No, just the store. About the same time, before, maybe. Just about the same time.

DH: You and I moved up here, '46?

HH: One of the bars is that little cabin up on the hill, going past Logue's, a little cabin there. That used to be...that's where we lived first.

SV: I have to go back just a little bit...When your family moved to the Gordon Ranch in the twenties, did they stay long?

DH: I think just one winter.

SV: Then they went back to Woodworth?

DH: We went out to Washington for about a year. First I remember anything was over at Woodworth. Went to school all eight years there [high school]. Had to board in Missoula—with whoever would take us! We had some friends I stayed with the first year; stayed with my brother and his wife the second year. Two years I stayed with them.

SV: Which brother?

DH: Cecil. This was another brother.

SV: I have to write down all your brothers or I'll never get this straight. How many brothers?

DH: Four. Daryl. And Cecil [married Beth]. Hank [married Florence Matthews, Johnny's sister]. Then there's Bob. He was already married when I was born.

SV: How many sisters?

DH: Two. Nessie and Marion "Mame" who married Liquid Louie Krause.

SV: Too many names!

HH: Yeah. Then people say they are all relatives. They aren't all relatives. Look at the new people come in got the same names.

DH: I have to tell you my first teacher was Florence in first and second grade, at Woodworth. Hank married her. My next teacher that came there, taught for four years. And Cece married her [Beth]. She taught there for four years. I don't remember the other two.

SV: I wish I would have met Florence.

HH: She was a nice lady. Matthews were real nice, anyway. The whole family was. Marion Matthews would know...

SV: When did you graduate?

DH: 1943.

SV: You were in high school when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

DH: Probably was in school that day.

SV: (to Harold) Do you remember where you were that day?

HH: I don't remember just exactly where I was, no. I bet I was working for the Fish and Game because that was '41. I was working down at the sugar factory. I worked down there when they processed. I worked there three different years. Go down there and make a stake; come out of there with five hundred dollars or something. That was a lot of money.

SV: When were you guys married?

DH: March 5, 1943. I was still in high school; hadn't graduated yet when we got married.

HH: She had a job and they found out she got married and they run her off. (Laughs)

DH: I didn't care.

HH: She probably told them two or three times so they would. That's the winter I worked for the Fish and Game. She finished school. I packed for the Forest Service. She got to go along.

SV: We talked about that the first time. What a honeymoon.

HH: Talk about a trip. She seen the country. I packed there the year before, over in the North Fork Country. I packed some there at Seeley, but just on the short string, if they moved lookouts out or something. Otherwise, the big go around was out of Monture. That was a big station. It wasn't a main station, but they had all those lookouts, all those trails, all those telephones. They had, the first year I was there, it must have been probably fifteen or up to twenty people worked there.

We went over there the other day. All that's left there now from when we were there is the old ranger station. The warehouse and the old ranger station burned. The old log house—used it for a bunkhouse—was right close to that other one that's there now. By golly, that burned. The pumphouse burned. The warehouse burned. I don't know if the barn is standing there now or not.

It was really nice. We had a nice warehouse there. Nice barn and corrals. Had grain and hay. That was a switch for me. Anything I wanted for packing: equipment, grain, and stuff like that. When she come, the ranger said, he asked me if I'd like to take her with me. I said, "Boy I didn't figure they'd ever do that." I said, "Boy I sure would." "Well," he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. If she wants to help around a little, why we'll board her." Had our own saddle horses. He said they would shoe the horse. Away we went. I never forgot that.

DH: The guy who did the cooking, he didn't want me in the way.

HH: "Get out of the road," he'd say.

SV: What was the best part of the trip? Just being together?

HH: Yeah. We'd fish. We seen a lot of country. We gypsied those trail crews. Take the trail crew and their camp and the whole works and just start out with them. They'd cut trails. Say they were going to be at Lake Creek tonight. They'd cut the trail. We'd pull down there with a string. They'd leave one or two guys, ff we'd need to we'd set up camp, but otherwise we just set up a fly for kitchen. The next day, maybe sometimes they were going to go on a side trail. Why we'd set right there till...then they'd go on some more. Then we'd move the camp.

That backcountry over there, out of North Fork, that's a big country. It's just about the same. It's just big. Had a big district. Clear down to Danaher. Dwight Creek, is where Big Prairie come up. Flathead. We went as far as Dwight Creek. Cabin Creek. Dry Forks. There's divides all over. The divide at North Fork, or Dry Creek, you don't even know it's there. You don't even notice when the water changes. You come to a meadow sort of country, beaver ponds. All of a sudden, the water is going the other direction, toward Big Prairie.

SV: Did you see much wildlife?

HH: Seen bears when they were trying to be a nuisance or something. You see they had all those lookouts out there. Peaks. We had to take care of them.

SV: Did Jens work in there?

HH: He was in there long before this. '29 or something. He was just a kid. I think he was probably close to my age; he was a little older than I was. He could go to work. He was in the South Fork, worked on trails. They flew him in there with a Trimotor and they had a load of freight and sacks they laid on top of them he told about. He'd look out. Here's this old Trimotor trying to crawl out of here. They loaded him up here at the field. Somewhere.

They were good planes, though. They're pretty good sized, but not that big really. Had three motors on them. Boy they had power. I flew with them. There was a spot down there at Seeley, a spot to throw stuff out to a fire. We went out to the end of the field. Drop off. I swore to God we were going to just keep dropping off. The tachometers was out on the wing. You could look and see them. Little needle. They never did wreck one that way. They'd wreck them—wrecked some of them landing. They wrecked one in at Big Prairie. I don't know as they wrecked very many of them.

SV: What brought you guys back to Condon?

HH: Had to try to think about making a living. They were starting to log. Family was here. Sawmill. We tie milled. We sawmilled before that, quite a while before that. It was about that time they were starting to stir around here.

SV: Strom's was being built then?

HH: Did that in '46. I know that date. That's when my oldest brother died, Carl. It was just starting to stir around. Open up. That's why Strom's built, too. They started building some roads.

SV: Tell me the story of Liquid Louie's. We keep getting sidetracked, but it's all good.

DH: They must not have come up here till '47.

HH: I think it was '47.

DH: They didn't start the bar for a while.

SV: When you say they...that's Marion and Louis. Louie was Krause. His relatives are...

HH: Marylou [his daughter].

DH: That's the only one here. All of his relations are in Canada or something.

HH: Marylou has a sister in Reno and a brother in Las Vegas. It must have been about '48.

DH: They were living in that little log cabin that Harold talks about, that's up on the hill there. It was down here. Started a little bar in a little tiny building.

HH: Right alongside of there.

DH: On the west side of the road, then.

HH: It was about a twelve by twelve. They had the beer in a tub on ice.

SV: The bottles?

HH: It was all bottles then. We used to sit around in there...

DH: There wasn't any electricity or running water or anything.

HH: That was when the sawmills was a-going, up at the Gordon Ranch, because they used to come down, all them guys. They were really starting to log then. For the sawmills. They hauled the lumber out, but they didn't haul many logs out then yet. Used to come there to the bar and get in the beer. If they stayed in there too long, there was always an argument started. First thing the fights would start. They knocked the little air tight heater over. After that, when it looked like there was going to be a fight, somebody would just grab the heater and take it outside. That's the truth. I don't remember who did that, but the first time...it'd be one of them smart guys. All of a sudden, he just grabbed the heater. Said, "You ain't gonna burn this place down." Then they put the bar over in the other one, where they lived. That little log house. It set right there.

DH: It was right beside...

HH: It used to be down there right where Logue's trailers are.

SV: They built another log building?

HH: No. That was it. That's where we lived. Then they decided to have the bar there. They built a restaurant on it, the side of it. This is why the people that had the restaurant painted it kind of a pink. Went right over on the logs. That's why that pink color is still on them logs. I can hear Russ yet. "Why did they paint it pink?"

DH: I don't know just when they moved across the road, where the bar is now.

SV: Who cooked at the restaurant?

HH: Different ones had it, Dorothy and Frannie [Major]; somebody would take it. Buck [Triplet] and his wife had it. First he worked up there at the mill before they come down there. She took the restaurant.

SV: How did people receive that restaurant?

HH: Boy, they had a good...they really done the business. They always had good cooks, too. They had that going when they started on this road, too. Boy they had. She worked quite a few people. Start real early in the morning. She'd stay open till 11 o'clock at night for them beer drinkers. Dorothy, mostly, and Ann.

SV: Marion and Louie ran the bar?

HH: Part of that bar was their home. When Russ & Marion decided to use the house... [Louie died in '52. Russ later married Marion]. The bar wasn't across the road yet in '52. It was still in that...Russ, they didn't move that until Russ was around there. It used to set another direction, the house did. Then they turned it around. They built onto it.

SV: It sounds so funny to talk about turning a house around.

HH: Just...they had it all ready. I took the cat and pushed it around, pushed it onto a foundation. Anyway, that had to be after Russ come back from Korea [Korean War, 1950]. Must have been...

DH: Russ and Mame (Marion) were married in '55.

HH: They were living in a nice trailer. Caught on fire. They got it out, but it burnt pretty much. Russ, he went to...Russ restored it. He said, "I wish they'd a stayed away and let it burn." You never could get the smell out of it. He always said, "I wish they'd a all come and blowed on it." We didn't have no [fire department]. Not too long after that, they built that home up there on Cooney Creek where you go by going to Forders.

DH: They built down in the bottom first.

HH: Yeah, that was '61 when they built that. That's when they built the Condon Ranger Station, the new one. In '61. Anyway, we went to the fire down in Idaho. We come back in 13 days or 14 days. They had a house. That contractor had a bunch of material left over [from the ranger station] and he says, "I'll build you a house cheap." By golly, they put the crew in there and built it in about two days. Nice little house. Wasn't big. Still there.

SV: When Louie died, there was a few years before Mame married Russ. Did she still own the bar? Were you helping her?

DH: Some. Yeah, we helped.

HH: That's when Dorothy had the restaurant. Frannie tended bar at night for Marion. She had a bartender every night. [She did the day shift]. There wasn't that much during the daytime. They had all them workers. They wouldn't be around during the day. That's all that come there was workers.

SV: Some of the bars, like in eastern Montana, were more like a community center. Was Louie's like that?

DH: Yeah. A lot of them did.

HH: Drink a beer with their friends...lie to them! It was always a good feeling amongst those loggers, the sawmill people, the ones that was around here. They were always happy, talking about somebody else that he pulled a joke on them or something like that. It was really a nice bunch of people. Boyd Kessler and them was up at the mill then. When they were just young. Then the logging part of that was just going into that sawmill.

Then this Rother took the mill [Wineglass]. Rother took it and he had tie mills in here for Burlington Northern. He had that mill; kept it till they started thinking about setting up a mill in Missoula and hauling the logs to Missoula. Then they quit loading lumber cars at Clearwater. Going clear to Missoula. Big change. We didn't have no roads in the wintertime, just kind of like the Cooney Creek road. A lot of places not as good. Steep hills. All them down by Lake Alva and that. The main road went down by the lake, up the hill and down the hill. Coyote Hill. Summit. It was all...I worked there. I hauled lumber. We made some money. We made a living and we made some money.

SV: You worked at the Wineglass?

HH: I hauled lumber for the Wineglass. [Didn't work at own sawmill very long. Brother died]. I had my own truck. We just hauled to Clearwater. They had a crew down there that just loaded

it in box cars. Pretty near all that stuff was shipped green. A lot of it was shipped green back east. The pine and that, they dry kilned in the air up here.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

HH: Late winter. Roads. Plowed with a cat. You know what a road is when you plow it with a cat. [Talking about road between Seeley Lake and Condon. Winter. 1940s.] We were thankful that...it was plowed. Before, it never was plowed in the wintertime.

SV: Before, you couldn't haul (lumber) in the winter?

HH: No. I don't know the exact year, but it's in that...in the '40s there, is the first time they ever plowed it.

SV: You said there were six or seven trucks up here.

HH: Yeah, lumber trucks. Just about all of them had old Army trucks. To start out, we had six wheelers and stuff like that. They'd get along pretty good. Later on, they had to beat a track and plowed. But it was narrow.

SV: What happened when you'd meet a truck?

HH: The empty truck he'd drive out in the snow just as...try to get off the road. The loaded truck then would pull him out.

DH: The loaded truck would go by him and pull him back out.

HH: You talk about "six marks" as we'd call them.

DH: Six marks is when somebody goes off in the road in the snow. Yeah, I rode with him. We'd meet a loaded truck, and go just as hard as he could go out into the snow bank. Get his truck, the empty truck, out of the road.

HH: You'd get out of the road. Yeah, everybody you know was hauling. They were making a living and they were having a good time. We'd meet down there and have coffee at Seeley Lake. Everybody had a tale to tell about what they'd done or something. I think there must have been six, seven, or eight of us hauling. Just straight trucks.

SV: You said the lumber you were hauling was green?

HH: Just come right out of the mill.

SV: The stuff that was dried up here, it was just stacked?

HH: They stickered them. Like that down there by Clearwater.

SV: They didn't have any kind of a drying...

HH: No, that up here was all hand piled. They hand loaded us, too. That dry stuff, we had bunks, they called them. We could really haul a load of that dry stuff. Yeah, we got thirteen dollars a thousand [for hauling]. Then they wanted us to go to Missoula. The road wasn't that good and they had that old poor oil road that they did have. They were so tough on the load limits. Most of our trucks were single axles—gig single axle. The one that done it, he only got nine dollars to go clear to Missoula.

I did haul a bunch of dry lumber one time. The fellow that had the Pyramid Mill to start with, they put a whole bunch of dry lumber down there at...where the gravel piles are at Clearwater. They were going to put a planer system in there. Anyway, they went broke or something. So Russ and I moved all that to Missoula. It was hand loaded. It looked just like haystacks. That old dry pine was so light.

SV: Was Russ helping you then in the '40s? Or was that after he came back from Korea?

HH: Mostly after he come back. I had three trucks, once. Little trucks. They weren't very big. The fellow lived here in the cabin drove one of my trucks one winter, an old Army truck. I got rid of them, and got a little semi-truck. I hauled lumber for Bob Wilhelm and then from Ovando to Missoula. I had a driver. We logged, another fellow and I did, when they had the mill at Ovando. I had a fella drive for me.

SV: Who had the mill?

HH: Dobb and Ting. Dobb and Bill had it, the other brother. Had a nice mill down there, but they didn't make a go of it.

SV: Sounds like a lot of people who had mills didn't always make a go of it.

HH: No. We had another a little later. Lee and Perce Wilhelm had that nice mill there at Swan River, where you go up to, just above the road before you get to the bridge at Lindbergh Lake.

SV: Did you haul from that?

HH: No, I didn't. [Don't know when that mill operated]. If you could find out when they had the big blowdown up at Lindbergh, that's when they put the mill in there.

SV: Do you remember? Were you here when that happened?

HH: I don't remember, but it was sure a mess. Over there and up there. Yeah, that was about the time. They set the mill up really to log that—all that downed timber. I don't remember when it was. Well, I do too remember when it was. They had the fire in '52 [fire in the

blowdown]. That would have been after the logging. Roxy had a little sawmill up there at Meadow Lake at the same time when they had the fire. Little mill.

I know it was '52 because I was in the hospital in '52 and they had my cat up there. Bud, it wouldn't start, so he drug it out into where it burned, saved burning it up. He pushed it out into where it had already burned. They burned up some cats up there, too. That's when they had the fire. That was quite a while after Lee and Perce logged there. Then they shut that mill down. When Gray's mill burned, he leased it and started it up again for about...I think while he was building the other one back. Six, eight months. It was setting there all ready to saw.

SV: Everybody called it the Wilhelm mill.

HH: Yeah, the Wilhelm mill.

SV: Actually several Wilhelms had several different mills.

HH: Yeah. (laughs). Lee and Perce...Joe's dad, he and Joe sawmilled quite a little. Sawmilled together. They sawmilled there at....right across from Nan's. Wasn't no house or nothing in there. They had the mill where that Kindy (?) lives, right across from Nelson's, out there on the East side. They had a sawmill there. Joe and [Babe].

SV: Where did the logs come from for that?

HH: They logged a bunch up there off of the place before Foss got it. Berger place. There was another forty acres or something in there belonged to somebody else or something. I never did get it straight. They logged it.

SV: Did you know this Berger?

HH: Yeah, he was an old bachelor. He was a Welchman or something. Little old...real nice guy. Hell, he'd visit with us kids.

SV: He tried to make a little farm out of that place...

HH: Yeah, they all did. Tried. He had some fruit trees there. Something else he had...he had...one of those old phonographs with the cylinders, with hundreds of those cylinders. He had them all sitting on the shelves. He died and, before anybody knew it, somebody stole that whole thing before anybody could get in there and watch it, or settle it.

SV: How did he die?

HH: I don't know. He lingered on for quite a while. I don't know what he had. He wasn't that awful old, I don't think. They buried him up there.

SV: He's buried on the place?

HH: Yeah.

SV: It is marked?

DH: I doubt it.

HH: I was up there; looked around. I think I finally found it once, but there wasn't nothing, no marks or nothing. The reason I thought I found it is because the ground was sunk right there like it would.

SV: (Doris brings something out). What have you got there?

DH: My diary.

HH: She settled a lot of arguments.

DH: I missed five years since 1936, I think. I quit writing once for about five years. I started in again in '53 and I have every year since then.

SV: Good for you. That's remarkable.

HH: She settled a lot of arguments. She has a little trouble finding stuff sometimes without reading it all.

SV: Clara Hollopeter had diaries, too, but she wasn't involved in business; more the daily routines.

HH: (to Doris) Yeah, but you've got stuff that somebody done this or that, like the road crew.

SV: Good stuff to have. Are you still keeping diaries now?

DH: Yeah.

HH: Marylou had to write in it for a while for her. Surgery. But she's back in there, now.

SV: What are you looking up now? Louie's?

DH: Yeah. When they worked on that house and moved it over there and made a bar out of it. But I don't know exactly.

HH: When they put that addition on there, this old...he was a Bill something, the people that live way over there, the big nice house that's there, way over on Elk Creek. You didn't probably know him. He's dead now. Anyway, this fellow, they were building on that house. On this here, he'd get everything cut and everything ready and we'd come from work and pick up two or three other guys always. We built that...what they done, Russ says, "I bet we're going to be dancing in here the Fourth of July." Somebody said, "Ahhh..." It was just, only a few days. By golly, they danced in her the Fourth of July. It wasn't all finished, but it had the floor, the walls.

SV: Where did people go for dances?

HH: They had, I suppose, Rumble Creek school house. They whooped her up. Stacked the kids in behind the stove. They done quite a little in homes. They'd have a party.

SV: One or two people said Babe Wilhelm had Fourth of July parties. Was that at the lodge?

HH: They had, Babe was in partnership with Holland Lake. They opened on...you probably got more dates on this, but it had to be in '24 or '25 that they opened. That's the first guest ranch that ever opened in here.

SV: That was before he built the 33 Bar?

HH: They lived there. He was...I remember they always had doings for quite a while like Fourth of July, stuff like that up there. They'd get, later, another few years. Skillicorns played there. That whole family played. Skilly's Yellowjackets. (laughs) That was started...they started coming in there in the early '30s, late '20s. I know they worked like...that was another deal. They worked real hard. They had horses and slips and stuff in there to improve that road so they could open on the first Fourth. They come from Missoula and all over. They had a big...it isn't the same lodge. They had a big lodge.

SV: You would think during the '30s, the Depression, that outfitting would have been tough, and yet the stories I hear are that wealthy people flocked here.

HH: Yeah, that was the privileges. They came. That's when, I would say, they probably done as good as they ever done: just before the Depression and right after the Depression. The Gordon Ranch, he had quite a deal. He was a doctor. He had these patients that needed some relaxation. He'd send them to the Gordon Ranch. They were friends and relatives. Place to go rest. That's all they did then. Rode horseback, maybe a little, but about all they done was just took it easy and somebody took care of them. By that time... that started early. They were building those cabins and that in '24. The old lodge it was there before that.

SV: That must have been a homestead cabin that was in there before that.

HH: It was way down. Somebody...I guess we all knew it. There was a nice old house: real low, but nice old log house. They tore it down. Burned it. It was down, way down below the cabins. Down about where the last cabin is. It was there yet when I was there.

SV: It was there when Bud came. He commented that he and Lena had to burn it down. Shorty wanted it gone. [1946 or '47].

HH: They were...that was pretty big business early there. There wasn't hardly no roads or nothing in here then. They...I think Lairds come in in '26 because they were pretty well established in '27 when...they might have come in in '25.

SV: There's probably a pretty good record of that.

HH: That's when Lindbergh was there and they changed the name of the lake [1927]. It used to be Elbow. It had that big elbow in it. There was a big old tamarack snag, stood out there upside down. As long as I can remember until about the time I'm going tell you what happened. We used to have the lookout up there. I remember old Cap...somebody said, "What's that out there?" Old Charlie Anderson was up on the lookout, and he said, "That's old Charlie Anderson swimming." "Way out there?" they'd say. "Yeah," he said, "he's tough." In later years, Jim Busch's family, they were there with the boat and they hit that snag. One of the girls drowned. Fell out of the boat. The county sheriff, they blew it. Blew it off.

SV: That was Jim and Gloria Busch?

HH: Yeah. Nobody probably wanted to say too much about it, but that's what happened. So much boating, it was a hazard.

SV: Do you remember much boating when you were working up there?

HH: Not too much. People went to the...I don't know if anybody ever brought a boat in there except the boat that was at the ranch. They used it to go to the head of the lake when they put the camp, or the fishermen up Crystal. That boat, they just used it...it wasn't for pleasure. (Talking about the time when he worked for Cap Laird.)

SV: People brought rowboats or canoes?

HH: Yeah, but there wasn't nobody there really. There wasn't anybody there... '30s, yeah. The first people was there was just across the lodge, old Doc Hawkins from Helena. They built him a house there, a cabin. Right there by Fitzgeralds. Just across from the lodge. There wasn't absolutely no other...Then about the last year I was there—it was the last year I was there—John and Marie Stark came, and they built that...where he lives. After that, all kinds of things happened. A fellow Dick Hickey and a fellow by the name of Cannon decided to subdivide that shoreline.

SV: Dick Hickey's family would remember that stuff.

HH: Get ahold of Sharon. She's a talker. She knows all about what happened.

SV: When I visited with Ed Underwood, he talked about building the houses up there.

HH: Yeah, they had to build a bridge and build the roads at that time. Those lots now would be worth a hundred thousand dollars. At that time, they were worth ten thousand dollars.

SV: When people talk about the old KOA where are they talking about?

HH: There used to be a...Dick Hickey had the KOA franchise. That's over there on that little lake, Cygnet Lake, where they built the new bridge there. We made it into a house. When I was last there, Busch had it. They run it; had somebody there working. It had to have somebody to have the horses and stuff there and take care of it. Anyway, we made it into a house, home. When we first did, they had all them big bathrooms. Later on—I think he was a dentist—he took them all out and made it more into living rooms. It was really a beautiful home.

SV: It's hard to believe that much activity was going on up there.

HH: We put in a water outfit, pump, out there in the lake. They put a filter in. They got a bunch of money for that place.

SV: Were any of the cabins built on Holland Lake then?

HH: Yeah, there was a fellow from Butte: Waite, his name was. He built the first one. There was no road. They ferried everything over there with a raft; brought a bunch of it from the ranger station end. There was a real nice beach; place to load. They hauled, went up with a barge, raft. Built a big huge fireplace. I imagine it's pretty old now. It's really nice. That was the first one they ever...There wasn't any others on there I don't think until they built the road.

SV: That was Forest Service lease. It was developed differently because of the way those leases were worded [Special Use]. Lindbergh was private. I don't hear stories about the carpenters who worked up there [Holland Lake].

HH: People who worked on Waite's, they're all dead: Jack Johnson, Alvin Rovero, Lester Perro, and (unintelligible). Maybe some of the Finlanders might have worked on it, that particular, big building. That was quite a contract. They had to take those logs and get them on this side somewhere out of the woods. Get them over there; get them up to where that was. It was a lot of hard work, pulleys. Another one of the first ones at Lindbergh, we call the island, the point—that was about the next one. I think that one sold in that bunch of lots. It was sold before. I don't remember who had that.

[End of Tape 2, Side A]

[Tape 2, Side B]

HH: (discussion about drilling for water at Lindbergh Lake) They'd drill and they'd break one of them drills or the rock falls in on their drilling tool and there they are. You can't...there's some wells there now, but up on that shoreline, you talk drilling to a well driller. He might have been there and he'll say, "You talk to me about Lindbergh? Boy you can't get a well out on that shoreline." They break them. They hit them big old boulders. They go through them. They broke them [drills]. Old Tranquility, their water system's out in that little lake.

SV: Just a different kind of geology?

HH: It is. It's something. That's what they tell me, the well drillers.

SV: Who were some of the well drillers?

HH: Bob Hudson. He was one of the first ones to use a cable outfit.

SV: Is Terry related to Bob?

HH: Yeah, it's his dad. He drilled a lot of wells around here. That old cable outfit.

SV: Terry sure seems knowledgeable about...but he doesn't talk very much. He knows what he's doing.

HH: He don't say much. He's been with it ever since he was a kid. All over the country. Just a little baby. They had a trailer or something. Wherever they landed, the fall, that's where they stayed. They stayed one winter over here by the bar in their trailer. Little old trailer.

I could tell you a story that his mother told us. They were coming from over there out by Butte or over there somewhere. Bob was bringing the driller. She had the pickup and the little camper. They stopped, checked stuff over. Had a little visit. Old Bob, he was out of cigars so he went in the trailer to get a cigar. She took off while he was in there. She says they'd been doing this all the time. "Do you see your dad coming?" She said to Terry, "Is Dad coming?" "Yeah, he's coming," he'd say. He was up there in the front window of the trailer! They'd go for a while, and she'd say, "Is Dad coming?" Yeah, he's coming, Terry would say. He's waving at us! She looked, then. She told us later, "I should have killed him right there." (laughs) That's the way she'd talk. "Is your dad coming?" "Oh yeah, he's coming!" They had to go back and get the well driller. She had some stories about that drilling, I tell you, and she could tell them.

SV: Is she gone now?

HH: Yeah, she died quite a while ago. Bob is in the rest home now. Terry lives just past that peat moss place, back on that little road.

SV: I wish he would talk more about the well drilling. Those guys know a lot about the geology.

HH: When they keep a sample, they look at that. Russ went with him one year over by Helmville for assessment work. He says...you talk about interesting. They hauled out some gold you couldn't believe with that, samples. I guess there's really a hot mine over there. I think somebody's got it and they just don't want anything big to get in there. He had jars of samples setting around with all kinds of gold. They told them to leave those samples along.

They were bailing...that gravel just like they do when they bail out...it wasn't a core drill, just the old cable drill. They were dumping them like they dump it when they clean out their drill. Their bailing bit. Throw her in a bucket or throw her in a jar. They had how far they'd gone and how much they had. Now they're talking pretty deep and it isn't no hard rock. It's just piled in there sometimes. Drilling with that cable outfit. Russ told me, he was over there. He said there's more gold over there setting around in that cabin in those jars...It always surprised me that somebody hasn't gone in there and hijacked them.

SV: There's quite a few mines in that area. They tried to make it into wilderness same time some of this other stuff. They couldn't.

HH: I was back in there south of Helmville on the east side. I went out there. A guy come and got a mining claim. Come and told Jim, "I got a bunch of house logs I want to take out." He and his wife were going to live up there. I tell you, I went, and I went, and I went. I'd be on the wrong road. Finally, I got to where there wasn't very many people up there. I got to tracking this where the road had been used. I found it. He had seven trees, is all he had. (laughs).

You talk about back in there. I thought...Kelly's had a big dude ranch up in there. They had that big ranch like they did here at Holland [Keewaydens]. What a beautiful place, right up on top of that mountain. Yeah, they had the boys. This outfit had the girls. Then they switched. The girls would go this way through the South Fork. The boys would come over here. That was about the end of their vacation.

SV: When they put the restaurant on the bar, did a lot of families come to eat, or was it just working men?

DH: Mostly working guys.

HH: We didn't go out and eat much. It was for working people. The ones that had families, they might come on a Sunday. They had their own homes. Most of the guys that eat there, people are away from homes. Bachelors. They come in there and had to stay for a week. Quite a few come from Bigfork. That road...they didn't just run back and forth. Quite a few of them worked at the mill up here.

SV: The Wineglass was going before the Van Evans got started?

HH: Yeah, they'd been gone a long time before Van Evans started.

SV: Then Gray's Mill had already had their fire. The Wilhelms were done up there at Lindbergh.

HH: Gray was one of the first ones that ever come in here for logs. I'm not going to say just how this worked. This was about the time that Van Evans come in. Gray was in on that stuff like on Porcupine. They'd go clear to the top with a road. They'd give him the stuff off of the right-of-way. They'd give him a piece of timber. This was Forest Service. Burlington North never turned loose of anything until...we could buy a few thousand fee.

They never done anything until that Van Evans set that mill up. They were building this mill and in the meantime they were building this road, fixing this road. Quite a while before it was a road from the summit, there was a little narrow oil road already from Seeley. They were going...they were going full blast in '61. I went to work for the highway. I'll tell you, it was just like playing Russian roulette, all those trucks. The roads wasn't that good, especially down around the lake. Ot's so crooked. We had one time... we had a hundred individual trucks going through Clearwater Junction. A bunch of those were going three times a day, too.

SV: Did they still have the railroad cars at Clearwater?

HH: No, they went to Van Evans. Everything went to Van Evans at that time. Along with...that was Plum Creek or Burlington Northern, besides quite a bit of Forest Service. They told me that BN had to guarantee them 380 million feet before they'd set the mill in there. They put in something over 500 million. Then they stopped. When they shut it down, they just...didn't all come out here. Come out of Idaho, a bunch of it. Old Jack Long had an outfit in there. I asked him one time. They were talking about how they were really logging. I asked him how many thousand feet in a day. He said his biggest day was 600,000. Isn't that a lot? When they saw the end, they just quit.

SV: What did that do to the community here? It seems like, Louie's was started, you got a restaurant, you got Strom's Store...and the Buckhorn must have started around in there sometime.

HH: Yeah, we forgot about the Buckhorn. Must have been '46 or somewhere.

SV: Everybody was dependent on the loggers, mill workers, road workers...

HH: They all worked. I bet there wasn't hardly anybody in here that didn't work in the woods or something. Drive truck.

SV: The outfitting picked up a little after the war.

HH: But the Gordon Ranch never opened again. Neither did Lindbergh. He did for a while, but all at once he was in the development business. Then Carlson got that, cut that ground up so that each building set on a lot. Before he could do that, he had to put that sewer system in and that treating system.

SV: Babe must have been outfitting out of Holland, and he had his own...

HH: Yeah, they did. He went on the outfitting. That was his sister that had the Lodge. White. But then Babe went on his own on the outfitting. The Lodge didn't do that much outfitting, except the Keewaydens. But they had the Lodge and the cabins.

SV: That must have picked up a little bit.

HH: Yeah. I think hunting, yeah. Packing. I don't believe the ranch [dude ranches] went down. I think people wanted...when they come, they wanted a place to stay overnight. A lot of them stayed someplace else. They wanted to go into the hills. It wasn't like...they weren't all the same either. Lindbergh, in the summertime, had some sightseeing, mountain climbers, but most of those people just come to sit. They'd ride horseback. They'd go up the creek, fishing. We used to pack the canoe up there for them. They didn't have...two people can go right along with a canoe, but it's not easy.

The only one that really got serious about a guest ranch, and that's Potters down there [Potomac]. That is strictly...Greenough, that is a kind of a working ranch. They get some people out there that help hay. They had what we called a dude ranch. They have never given up. They never eased off. They've been way bigger than they was at that time. We see their houses down there. Fifty head, fifty-five head, of horses when they first turned them out there. Those are all saddle horses. I don't think they pack in the hills or something. You talk about a money maker. By the hour. Up there at Holland when you charge fifteen dollars an hour per person.

(discussion about special use permits at Holland)

SV: The Gordon Ranch was always private.

HH: Yeah, Koessler, as far as the dude ranch is concerned. Tony's dad was the first one. The guy before that was just starvation. Somebody trying to make a living. Somebody owned it. It was going real strong when I was there. He had some nice registered Hereford cattle. Good horses. He told me that that outfit, the hunting trips paid for everything and he made money. They didn't pay much, but they had a crew around there all the time. He'd grumble about getting stuff but he'd always get it. They fed good and had good equipment. No, he'd have cooks. Plenty of help. Maids. That was a dude ranch.

SV: I wonder if when game populations started dropping in the South Fork that must have had a big impact on the outfitters...

HH: Yeah. I think it did. When we...the last time we was in there...the last time with Buff. We were in there after that. Like we told old Buff, we wasn't going in there and lie to them no more about the game. I remember I told you that Russ and I was in there and it was dry. You can't do that. Buff, had a chance to sell that. He didn't sell that ranch then. He had that Roll place and all that over there. All that, he owned. He had a chance to sell that. Bought the ranch at Drummond. That's when he left. He sold some to Burns.

(discussion about pictures)

[End of Interview]