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Interviewee: Harold Haasch

Interviewer: Suzanne Vernon

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Harold Haasch: Like on the west side, next to Lundbergs, was the Sheehan (?) homestead. Right across the road is Deegan's (now subdivided, Brenner, Iverson, etc.). (Kraft Creek Road) Across from Deegan's is Whalen (now Donaldson). The road you're on I think was Christie's. (Cushman, Richardson, Stone, Trotter, Vernon.)

Suzanne Vernon: Can you tell me about Christie?

HH: Oh, it was just a couple come in. Most of those people there were railroaders. A lot of them had somebody else stay on the place while they done the improvements, see. Deegan was a big promoter. One of the big promoters to get this country settled. He worked for the NP railroad, see.

Then on Loon Lake, that was Saterstrom (?). A schoolteacher. Then on Stoner Lake, that's Stoners old homestead. Then there was, right in there, there was two Knupf's, right on Glacier Creek. One on each side of Glacier Creek. Kind of north and west (of Stoners). North of there down the creek was Andersons. This is the old Charlie Anderson (trapper). He was an old trapper and he's the one that they figured the grizzly bear killed. He always said, he was an old trapper, he'd go in for the oil and the skins. He'd go in there with a twenty two in the den and use 'em up. He always said one day an old grizzly is gonna eat me. That's what they figured did. He was old and he walked out into the woods. That's where they found him. The bear had eat him. They don't know if it killed him or not. (See also: Bob Martin notes; Warner Lundberg notes.)

Anyway, Roxcene was another one right in there. And there was the Roll place. That would be Lundbergs. Two places right together. Wonder how far we want to come down? Let's go in on the Swan River road now.

At the south end, there, was Ole Semling. Bachelor. There was a lot of bachelors. They trapped. Wanted to do their bit. Then back in there, was Peterson. I don't know the first name, where Ann Reinhardt is, the old Peterson place. Then Jack Johnson's. Pete Rude, right across the old road from him. The Kettleson place is the Guest Ranch (Girls School) now. One of the first ones. They were in here the same time as the folks came in. Maybe a little ahead of us. See it's only just a little ways through here. Then there was a Dean, he joined us, kind of, right here. You know. Oscar Southern, that's the place across the road here. He's another bachelor. Dean was a bachelor, too. I'm pretty sure he was. Well that's the Dean place. It's the one, somebody has bought it and is trying to get back on it. They got the roads all blocked. The Plum Creek, has got that barrier. And the ones joining them over here won't let them go, over here at this

settlement. That would be. . . well, then. We're here, across the road, this is our place. Haasch. Then there's one here, I gotta think just a little bit now.

Go down on the Swan Centre, now. First one on the right is Jess Forster, he was a married man, family. (Newman's now.) Clarence Preston, across the road from him. Married man. The next place is one of them places that I don't know who the homesteader was. All my life I knew it as the Maloney place. I don't know, I think Maloney might have been one of them that come on it to settle it, too.

Then we go back up. the place is Monrad (Gyda Newman) clear up on Elk Creek. Then we'll go in on the road going to Elk Creek, where Camps and them are. First place is Brunson. Family. Then there's be Lawson. And Sias. Kottke. She was another school teacher, single lady. Wisner. Wisinger. Williams. Another bachelor. So was Wisner and Wisinger. Sias, they had, oh, a bunch of children. Now I got one of them, I know who it was. Otto. There's another name there. I just can't think of the name. That's the one Bud Moore's got. Two or three owners since it was homestead.

I give you Red Williams? Well, that takes us down, clear down, to Cold Creek Road, on that west side. I don't think I'll go into the Salmon Prairie end of it. I don't know it well enough. never was down there, too much.

Do you want to go on the east side of the river now?

Just off of the Summit, up Beaver Creek, was an Anderson. (Trollers, now.) Yeah, then there was Bill Frye. He was up there. Jim Frye is part of the Gordon Ranch, where you come down off the hill at Frye Meadow. Then the Gordon Ranch, I'm pretty sure. Now this I don't know for sure, but I think a fella by the name of Weathersby, cuz then Gordon come along. Back up in that area, Gordon, back east there, there was two homesteads. The Hartwick place is Hopkins now, or Clark. Then there's a fellow, another bachelor by the name of Jack Phalen (Falen?).

Now we're back down. See now we're, that one going into Underwoods, that way. I have trouble sometimes on the names. Stillwells, now this is one of them places that I don't know. Old Charlie Anderson, he wound up with that place. This old fellow, that was his place, when they got it. He left it to Mabel, I think. I don't think that's a homestead. I wouldn't say one way or the other. Then there's one in there somewhere, Underwoods, I think, was a piece of NP too. By Lundbergs, now. I missed that in there when we was on the west side of the river.

Back on the east side, again. There's a fella by the name of Halpin. That's over there at that nice place there where Hultmans were. See there's all kinds of places there, now. Then there's some NP property sold in there. A whole lot of that was NP. Then we get down to the river there, there's a Hall. By the name of Hall, behind Mrs. Jette, there. Mrs. Jette is on a piece of NP ground, originally.

SV: Hall, that old cabin is still there?

HH: Oh yeah. One of the daughters, or granddaughters, of Mrs. Hall, was a Schall. They have it. I don't know which one of the girls has it. Kalispell.

Right next to Hall place is Tom Haggerty. That's another bachelor. They come in here by gosh and they helped everybody. They survived pretty good, cuz they were single. Let's see, where are we. Haggerty. The next place is where Joe and Lucille Wilhelm are. Was Walker. He's another bachelor. Just below them was Courtney. Man and wife, just two of them. Kinda bachelors. Where the school is, was Carb Benson. I gotta stop and tell you a little about that one.

It used to be all open there. A little cabin set on the hillside. He built 'er just right on the hillside. You had to step up inside. We was coming down the road. Dad worked for the county (?) and they was in the wagon. They was sitting there coming in from work. He says, I helped build that. Ole' Jack Johnson says, "Boy I'd never say that!" Sitting right on the hillside.

And that where Bruce and them live, was Mrs. Rovero's place, homestead. Wound up Jack Johnson was there, cuz he married here. He didn't homestead it. She was there when I was a little kid. Her name was Rovero. That was Pete and Alvin's mother. Ole' Jack Johnson married her. He built it all up. She just lived in a little ole' chicken coop.

Well, now let's see. We go east over toward the hills, and that's the Hill place. It isn't up Cooney (Rumble?) Road but it's up in that country. Yeah, Buck Creek. That Kortbein (?) was on Buck Creek, too. It's the one that says, Koch, or something. Then there was Broten, that's where Doc Berner is. Man and woman, no kids. Then there was Stroms. Arneson. That's where Mahaffey and all them are, is on the Arneson homestead. That's all up the Cooney Road (Rumble Creek road).

There might have been another one in there, but I don't know.

Now we come down the road. Now, up the loop up Smith Creek. There was three different Hollopeter homesteads. One of them, they're building a great big house on right now. Up there, the old boy. . . Well, Roxy, he's the only one that's left, he can't believe what's going on up there in their old homes.

Then a fellow by the name of Dotz lives. . . (?) is Joe Berger. I don't know how come I thought of all these. I been thinking on them for quite awhile.

Now, when we come back outta there, they were way back there by themselves, those three or four people. Boy there wasn't anything in there for a long ways.

Then we get down there below the Condon Ranger Station. There was a little homestead right there by . . . but I don't know if it was bought or sold. By where Ed Nixon lives. Some people lived there for a long, long time. Part of it's there across the road where Bill Logue's got it. Then it was all Forest Service down through there to Drury. That's where the first post office we had. Down there where that settlement . . . (Charles Road).

Drury. You go down there to the last road, on that you know, where you go around the loop on that. All the buildings were, there's a bank. There's a big spring back down there. The buildings were right there, the barn and stuff. All right in that corner. On that bank. Above the Swamp, you know. Yeah, that's our first Post Office. The road come right in behind, kinda where the road is there past. . . down the straight away from the highway. They built a, the Forest Service, built a little air strip in there one time where all those houses are. That's when they built all those air strips over in the Bob. They found out they could land that old Tri-Motor on a place that size. Boy, I'll tell you. You talk about hairy. They come off of that, like that old field down there at Seeley Lake and they 'd come off and she'd run out. Use it just like going off of a ship. I went out of there a few times myself with them.

Then there was another one right next to them was, boy I had it and now I lost it. . .

Well, leave a little space there. I'll think of it.

Then we'll go on this. (Photo) I was going to tell you about this. This is the old highway, back out through the woods. Out around Smith Creek and you come out clear down by the Condon Ranger Station (see Kauffman notes, too). The old Work Center.

SV: What's this bridge across?

HH: A mud hole. They used to call this corduroy. I don't think it's across Smith Creek. It could be. It's real interesting. They've logged in there and tore stuff up, you know. But you can still find parts of that old road. It went right out here past Ed Nixon's and went out through there and stayed out way back in there and come out at the old work center. There wasn't no road from this Post Office down to where the next names I'll give you down there, for years. And it wasn't that far, either. We've always wondered why they never. . . instead of going way around there. Because they didn't come to no civilization really easy. It was only about one place fairly close to that. Well, there was two places fairly close to that road. So I imagine they come in there first, and built them a road, see.

Well there was the Smith Place. That's another one of them places where that big. . . go past Kauffman's there. That big house and stuff in there. That's the old Smith Place. We lived down there one summer. They had it rented. We hayed the field.

SV: Had somebody cleared that?

HH: Well, some of them. A lot of those meadows were there. They never cleared any ground. There's one over there, behind them there, it was a big meadow. (See Kauffman)

SV: That wasn't the Smith Creek school?

HH: There was one there, but this is the later Smith Creek there. There's a little old school setting down there on Smith Creek before it gets to Condon Ranger Station. I think it was there not too many years ago cuz I went to look and see if it was there.

SV: The whole building is there?

HH: Yeah. That was the first one. The newer one is up here, they called it Smith Creek (Smith Flats) behind the ranger station. They moved it, they moved that building somewhere.

SV: Who's in this picture?

HH: That's my dad, driving. The little picture is hard to see anything. Rollie over at the bar, blew that up. He wanted one. Boy, whoever is doing that work for him is really doing a job blowing them old pictures up.

[End of Side A]

[Side B]

HH: He's really, that's what he's gone in for. . . whoever is doing that is really doing a good job. Some of the picture's he's got, was pretty poor. The little one.

SV: The detail in that is good.

HH: I thought that was one of the nicest pictures. Besides my dad is in there. I rode around with him a lot when I was a kid. I rode around with him a lot when I was a kid in that wagon. One of the guys is probably Tom Edwards. They were all Forest Service. They had these crews that built trails and roads. They hauled them around in the wagon. Saved 'em walking.

SV: They all have suspenders on.

HH: Oh yeah. They were all lumberjacks. (the one without) probably couldn't afford suspenders. Isn't that a pretty team? Mutt and Jeff. (laughs) I just happened to think of that. They brought most of that out, sawed it out. . .

SV: That's an excellent picture, with all the harness. . .

HH: Isn't it though? The picture was taken about 1925-26. I was about 9 when we were on the Smith Place. We lived there at the station, too, one year, in a tent. Spent the summer down there, so the family could be together. That way, why Dad would be home. Right at the old ranger station. They had the big trail crew. Then they, a lot of the young fella, well, they weren't all young fellas. They were on lookouts, too. These bachelors, too, quite a few of them went on lookouts. Ole' Charlie Anderson, Bob Hartwick. Those fellas, I can think of right off.

SV: Who built the original ranger station?

HH: The one they are living in now they built in about '29 or something. The log one, that (people) live in now. But there was on on the hill there, where you are going up. The original station was a little ole' log house on the left hand side as you're going in there. That was a pretty big operation there, when they got started. I don't know for sure, I think a ranger by the name of Hutchinson was the first ranger. He was there I know before the ranger when we were there.

SV: Who built the one in '29?

HH: Well, the Finlanders. Maki and Kohlemein. Another little side line. I was there, just a kid. This Tom Wiles was the ranger then (1924-1931). In 1943 I was over, went over on a game county or survey for the Fish and Game. We went over to, August ranger station, that's where we started. This fella come up to me and said, "What do they call you when you're away from

home?" I said, Harold Haasch. It was that ranger that was there when I was a kid. Yeah, he said, "What do they call you when you are away from home!" That was quite a few years.

SV: Drury was the last homestead. . .

HH: Well, anyway we go out around on that Kauffman's Road. Back over there, Chris Sorenson. Bachelor. Then the Smith place. Huugbruin. (?) And the one that Kauffman's on (check Kauffman transcript.) Well, we'll go on down. Kohlemein place is the one where the Super 8's on. The Maki place is the one that Leistiko's own. Just across the river is the Beck place, that's Tom Parker's. Just below them is Erickson place. Oh, I missed up here. I missed two places.

Morris Thomason, was the boy, I don't remember what his dad's name was. They each had a homestead. There's another homestead there . . . (have to look it up) First one there where Greenough's live. Thomason's up on the Cooney Creek road (Rumble?) That's the one that belongs to Ken Conrad, got the both of them. We gotta get onto Cooney creek, there. Back of the bar. Fellow by the name of Ico John (eye-co John). What was Woods' place, Doris? Ole' Oscar Southern lived on it to prove up on it. It was another railroader.

Now where are we. Right out on the Condon Road, the old work center road, clear out on the end, was a lady that had that homestead. Harris. Mary Harris. I think that takes care of all those there.

Across the road down by the river, Erickson.

SV: I hadn't heard the Erickson name before. . .

HH: I think they were close to the Finlanders. I don't know what the next place was. It's changed hands, across the road from Leistiko's. That's another homestead there. But I'm not going any farther there.

(Salmon Prairie Discussion)

HH: There's Fred Kaser's, Fred and Rudy Kaser. Both of them homesteaded. Actually was three homesteads in there. Down by the school there was Carl Anderson and Ainerd Johnson, that's where Dan Hamilton is now. Across the river there's Harry Harmon.

SV: Was Harry Harmon a trapper?

HH: He probably done quite a bit. His boys lived there on the place. Butch, that's the third one down. They had that place that I'm trying to think of the name. . . .

Over on the east side. The one that Meyers have. . . when they logged they got a whole bunch of them places. They weren't (Fenby) the original homesteaders. Quite a bit of that like Fox, Roy Fox, he was there where John Hulett is. Some of that was NP. (See Hulett transcripts.)

(discussion)

HH: Roxcene, he got killed out there. Wagon run over him. He gave us his dog. We never had no fence around that garden. They never did then. That dog slept there right by that house. A big ole' shepherd, black. Don't remember what we called him for sure.

SV: Did you guys have other pets?

HH: Oh, cats and dogs, and calves and cows. . . (laughs) Yeah, we had . . . Animals are pretty nice to have. I used to raise rabbits. Just for food. There was a nice little bank right down there. . . and I dug in there for them. Set their house out and dug in for them. Put a piece of stove pipe or something, then they had their nest back. Raise the lid and clean the nests. I love rabbit. Always had them, they were warm and clean. Always, the pen faced over there towards the sun. Rabbits were nice. It was hard to kill them. Generally Dad would do the killing for me. They are fun. Rabbits are nice.

SV: Where did you guys get your water?

HH: Out of the creek. It wasn't too far down there. (Didn't have to pack it too far.) Up there at Monrads they packed it half a mile, pretty near. They had one of them yokes you seen 'em? They had two five gallon cans, the buckets, the square ones. With, they had a wood handle in them. You'd hook them on there. Walk over there to Elk Creek. . . In the spring and in the fall, for washing, there was a spring in the meadow over there. Just rainwater. We always wondered why the old fella never built over by the creek to start with (See Gyda Newman transcript.) Then the boy and I built a nice log house over there, just a cabin more or less. Then he got killed up in Alaska. Well, then I don't know if they burned it down. They put a new roof on, got a nice cabin now. That's the boy's, Larry's, now.

There's another place over there I thought of. Did I give you Kottke? That was over across the creek, kind of. That was a settlement. They had a school, see, over there by the creek. Straight over here at this first crossing. I went just a little while. I was too young.

They had a school in that little cabin right here at the side of the landing field where that lady lived? You know right here below the community hall.

SV: They had a school there?

HH: Yeah, I went to school in that? Smith Flats I think.

SV: That means there were three "Smith" schools?

HH: Yeah. That little building right there, that that lady lived in, by the log house, that was a school house. I remember the school teacher boarded with Forrsters here. Yeah, I went to school there. I don't know what grade it was. One of the later grades. Might have been about the sixth. Alice Brunson was teaching.

SV: Did you ever get in trouble in school?

HH: Oh, did I ever get in trouble?! We won't talk about that. We'd get whacked then. I mean there wasn't no "keep your hands off!" Those young teachers, they'd get pretty ornery, too. I went to school over here at this old Smith Flats school all by myself, with the teacher. You don't think that takes up a little bit of time! Yeah, we started out there was a whole bunch of kids. Then they just. . . I wound up, about after Christmas, by myself.

Then, I used to walk down through there, come through Guest Ranch road and down through here. Mom used to come meet me every day. (Talking about Rumble Creek school.) There was an old bachelor made furniture. Pete Rude there. I used to stop and see him. He was always nice. Would visit. About that time Mom would come. That was about, I don't know, about the second grade, third grade there. It was quite a little walk. From here over to that, out by the Guest Ranch, over to that schoolhouse, used to be up where that little mailbox/cabin they saved. Right straight east of the. . .

SV: Did they call that Rumble Creek?

HH: Yeah. It was a pretty good sized building. They didn't have no teacherage. Just a schoolhouse. The teacher used to board around with different people. Joe's mother, she stayed at, they had some little cabins right there across, under the hill, by where you turn to go. . . she stayed there at one of them little cabins with a couple of the kids so they could go to school. (Eva Wilhelm). It depends on who's on the board. . . If we had two on this end, we'd have a school in this end. If you had two on that end. . . you had a school on that end. (Smith) There was a schoolhouse on the hill going over there to the old Roll place, too. The Roll School.

SV: Was it Pete Rude who made the furniture?

HH: He was the original one that made a lot of that furniture at the Gordon Ranch and up there at Lindbergh. They all talked about John Stark making all that furniture. John took that off, you know, the pattern, off the old furniture up at Lindbergh Lake. . .

SV: The furniture that Pete had made. . . ?

HH: You bet. There's some of it up at the old Gordon Ranch, yet. They have some new stuff there that Tony tried to replace. Said don't look much like that old, good stuff. Yeah, this Pete

Rude, he built it right in his house there. He had, I remember he had a loft, in that littlest building there, where those buildings are there across. You come off, where you turn and go up toward Ann's? You come and go up there just a little bit and on the right (talking about guest ranch road, Ann Reinhardt, etc.) there's two or three buildings in there now. But he had a little cabin in there, had a barn. But he'd go out and cut this timber and let it dry. Dry timber. Had it stored in that loft. He'd build it right in the house, in the winter time, mostly. He was a cook. He cooked for the outfitters quite a bit.

SV: Did you ever eat any of his cooking?

HH: Oh yeah. Oh he was really a good cook. I tell you there's a lot of those good cooks, those bachelors. This kid over here is a pretty good cook. He's talks about eating. He said, I'm a good cook--Kenny Huston. He liked to cook.

SV: Why does the old furniture look so dark and red?

HH: They left that dark bark on there and sealed it, generally, with Linseed oil. That's all they had then. Some of it, they left that bark on, that cambium. Then they made a lot of that out of larch. Dead larch. It was darker. They used mostly lodgepole. But linseed oil done that, made it dark. If you didn't rub it in, it would peel off. You spray that on a house, which they used a lot. And it turned white. Kind of bubbled. Then they started mixing stuff with it.

SV: Stuff to make it penetrate. . . ?

HH: Yeah. It would stand up, then it would peel off. But that's all they had then was linseed oil. You could always get linseed oil.

[End of Interview]