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Interviewee: Wayne "Butch" Harmon
Interviewer: Suzanne Vernon
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Wayne Harmon: My grandfather was here in 1917 as far as I know. My dad came when he was 18, after he turned 18 he showed up. Grandfather was from Wisconsin. Family separation and all that stuff.

Suzanne Vernon: Was your grandfather a logger?

WH: Yeah. He came out with the Great Northern Railroad. See, there was two ways of getting here. Northern Pacific and Great Northern. Which is all, what do they call it now? Burlington Northern.

SV: Was he born in Wisconsin?

WH: Grandfather, I don't know where he was born. Does it tell on the homestead documents? Does it tell on the birth certificate? Somewhere I have my uncle's.

Nationality? I'm not sure. Mostly Irish. He might have come down out of Canada, or his father came down out of Canada to Wisconsin.

SV: Why did he come out here?

WH: I believe he came out here to work for Somers Lumber Company. When he came, I don't know. My dad came out in '29 or '30, I can't remember. From Wisconsin. And when he came out my grandfather already had the homestead at Salmon Prairie. Had one house built, and the river took it. Just a cabin.

Grandfather homesteaded in 1917. Most likely at Somers Lumber Company before that. My dad was 18 when he came, '29 or '30. He came in March. I believe my dad was ten years old, nine or ten, when my granddad left Wisconsin. So he came, that figures out pretty close to right. In '17 he homesteaded pretty close after he (granddad) got here.

He came up in the summers to prove up on it and worked at Somers otherwise. He worked in the sawmill some, and down at Swan Lake, too. That might have been how he got up into the Swan was because of that camp (at Swan Lake).

SV: Did he ever tell you any stories about what the country looked like.

WH: I can barely remember my grandfather. There are several stories. One thing I remember hearing is that they drove cattle using dogs on the west side of the river down I don't know how far, but they was more on the west side of the river for a long ways. From Salmon Prairie down on the west side of the river, instead of where the highway runs now. But I do remember hearing of them going down there. They used both sides. It's possible that they only went down to the bridge at Fatty Creek. That was the only way they could have got across. There was a bridge down there somewhere that they used. That might be why they were going down there.

Shay's, and somebody else, where that ballplayer bought? (Brickowski) That was the Shay place. They built bridges. Tom Hulett was telling stories about them bridges. Building them so high to keep the logs from taking them out. One of the abutments, the cribbing, is still there. It still might be. The river has run all over the place so you can't find hardly anything. It was still there in 1965. One of them was still there in 1965.

They might have come across on Whitetail Road (what they call Fatty Creek now, that was how you got up Whitetail when I was a kid). You can find Whitetail Creek on the map. But it went up. They had a lookout up there, I think they called it Whitetail lookout. CCC's built that road. That's when that road was originally built. And they built that bridge, in the thirties. So my dad told me stories about them running cattle down there. Piper Creek was still a big crossing at that time. They took a lot of horses over the mountain there, over onto the reservation for winter pasture. The people came out of there for hunting. In fact Bud Cheff's book tells about that. I bet up with Bud Cheff sometime in the sixties, late sixties I believe it was. He told me the first person he met when he came into the valley was my grandfather. He came over with the Indians and they always stopped at my granddads, just north of the Piper Creek trail, the place they call, one of them they call Tipi Creek and Tipi Meadows. They used to camp there quite a bit when they came over the mountains.

Piper Creek Trail came out, you know when you go up to O'Korn's? Just before you get to where his road turns off, there's a meadow. Piper Creek Road. Just before you get to his drive there's a meadow and pond off to your right. That's Moore Creek. That particular meadow was called Preacher Smith Meadow. And Piper Creek Trail crossed almost where the road crosses. Then it went on down to Salmon Prairie. There was another trail that went. . .

SV: How did it come into Salmon Prairie?

WH: Just about where the road comes in now. There's a road down there, and there was a bridge, they tore it out. My Granddad and Fox's built that bridge, the original bridge. They had bridges all over in there. They tried corduroy and whatnot across that bottom, but they wound up building the bridge there.

SV: Which Fox?

WH: Well, I think that place was Wilbur Fox. Hulett's have Roy Fox place. Wilbur, then Jimmy, homesteaded just south of my grandfathers. Dee Morton's place.

SV: Who has your grandfather's place, now?

WH: I don't know their names now. They built a big fancy house up there on the hill. The place is on the other side of the river. He had 200 acres and he got 40 of it from Lars Anderson. I don't know who. . . I think Lars had, that might be, Jimmy might have gotten a forty off of that, too.

SV: When your grandfather originally had it, he must have had 160?

WH: Right. Then he bought forty from Lars Anderson.

SV: North or south?

WH: I'm not sure. It must have been on the same side of the river. I think it was the southwest corner. That might be hard to trace. But you should be able to find the abstract for that place: for Dee Morton's and that place. That's kind of a shame that they've dropped them abstracts. I have it on this place, up until the time I bought it. There should be one more entry on it, because I borrowed money on it.

SV: Homestead era. Your grandfather comes out here. He's gotta homestead this place. So he puts up a building, close to the river. Did he have a barn?

WH: Later.

SV: He built another house, then, besides the cabin that got washed away?

WH: Oh yeah. I even got some pictures of it. Took them last summer. You can go down there and take pictures of them. The last house he built is still there. They've kept the house. They haven't tore the house down. Next to Dee Morton's. There are some other buildings built around there, too. (goes and gets pictures)

(Picture of grandfather with bear. Trees cut off high in background.)

WH: Cut them off with an ax. If you cut the tree off higher, up like that, when you hook onto them with a team of horses, they have a better chance of pulling it over.

SV: Your grandfather must have been pretty young when he came out here.

WH: He died in 1946 at age 61 or 62. Heart attack. Pitching hay into the barn. (He was still here when he died.) Fred Kaser found him.

(Pictures) That's my dad. Chaps (bear skin). Bear hide. He made them. (Another picture.) This is the last picture, as far as I know of, where he posed for a portrait.

Grandfather had a team. Cattle. He worked for the Forest Service, too. (Pictures of Kaser's meadow. Taken from right up by the house.) It's been logged since. Other people have logged it. Good picture of the foothills of the Swan.

Grandfather had a good team. I don't know what breed. Picture of hay, beaver slide. Before barn was built. Cleared out, it was all lodgepole. 1930s. These pictures here that I have, most of these, after my granddad died. My dad knew that he had two brothers. Orville, the one that was married to one of the Andersons, Art Anderson's sister, he came out the following year after my dad. Dad sent him the money to come out. My dad was the oldest. So they were here until 1946, sixteen or seventeen years. This younger brother was three when they were separated. See, they put them out into, not actually adopted, but put them out on the farms to work. Grandmother died. They took the kids away from both parents. Oh yeah.

Anyways, here's the picture of my granddad the summer he died, taken at Kaser's. Kaser's house, the old log house. There's the building down below.

When my granddad died, my dad tried to find his brother and they wouldn't tell him where. Well, there's an estate to settle, now. So they got in touch. So they let him know. They separated families back in them days, just for the hell of it. He got his brother, found his brother, corresponding, they sent a lot of these pictures to his brother. My dad sent these pictures to his brother. At any rate, then he came out after granddad died. They called him Ike. He stayed out here off and on. But dad gave him this piece of ground that Ted Graff is on. And this little green cabin that's out here? It was built over there. Some of these people (another picture) Russell Fox (you can see his bad arm), and I don't know this one, and John Hulett in the back. These are Fox's. I think that's Gene. (Etc. on the photo ID.) One of them is Wanda's dad (Rod). From the dog picture, this could very well have been the spring before he died. Kaser's branding.

SV: I've heard a few stories about Kaser's brandings.

WH: I've got some movies about it. Yeah, ole' Jimmy Fox out there. Funny, there's a lot of the same families represented at that branding. Picture taking in them days was still kind of. . . (more pictures) Grandmother died after my dad got here. He was homesteading down there. He had a cabin up about four or five rounds. After she died, he just lost interest.

SV: So what happened to that?

WH: It's still there. But he went and signed the papers and turned it back to the government.

(Picture of Butch's dad, Orville and Ike, taken down in Missoula at Orville's house.)

Butch's sister has some more pictures, too. What he has is just the ones that came from Ike's side of the family.

WH: Cedar Lookout. Granddad worked for the Forest Service. Manned cedar for quite awhile in the 1930s. Dog in the picture is Jack. Airedale. Black and tan Airedale cross. Quite famous. He killed bear. The only thing I can really remember about my grandfather was him laughing at us when his rooster was chasing us. He had milk cows, too. We got our cow from him. The calf. He had dairy stock.

SV: Did he ever talk about working for the Forest Service?

WH: I remember stories my dad told me. He worked for the Forest Service, too. He always had this dog with him and the dog was always getting him into trouble with bear. Grandfather.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

BH: One of the stories that my dad told me, you've heard of Marshall Gray, Gray Lumber Company, well he and two other kids were supposed to be roaming around up there in the Missions and they went up to the lookout, when my grandfather was there. They proceeded to steal his groceries, pack his groceries out, slipping a little bit out at a time. Grandfather let them do it for awhile then he caught them, he knew they was doing it. Told them to bring it back and he'd cook some of it up and feed them!

Anyway, Marshall Gray was supposed to have remembered that and told my dad about it.

SV: Where was the trail that went up to Cedar at that time?

BH: To get up to Cedar at that time, from his homestead, he would have went over to hit Piper Creek Trail. He might have went two different ways. He could have went up on a trail that went across from Piper Creek across Cedar Creek and on over to Fatty Creek. You can go that way. Then there was a trail went up Cedar Creek bottom. I don't know if it was an official trail or not. But the trail crossed and worked its way up to Cedar Peak from that direction. You could go up Piper Creek and across to Cedar Lake and up that way. They had a real fine network of trail in this country. Quite frankly I think that the Forest Service and Plum Creek, with the business of closing all these roads, should at least relocate the trails and put the grade on the roads that you can cross the trails. What they've done, we build all these roads and destroyed the trails. With the logging you can't find them. And you can't get through. You can hardly get through there on foot. Now they've closed all the roads. The roads are considerably longer to get from point A to point B, following the roads, than the trails were.

SV: Your grandfather trapped, too?

BH: Oh yes. Everybody trapped in this country at that time.

SV: Did he trap beaver on his river bottom property?

BH: Yeah. Of course. Jim Creek comes into the river, the Jim Creek bottoms, is on what is Morton's now, and the Fox family, across the river, which has been broke up. Donnie Hanson has part of it, and Dorne, who has the mouth of Jim Creek.

I have a picture of Grandfather with a bear. He did trap bear. He had four bear traps, supposedly. Three small ones . . . the Newhouse 5, actually it said right on the pan, the one I had that got stole from me. The story is that somebody way back when, packed 300 traps into this valley on mules and had them set all over the valley, back when there was a bounty on the bear. That's where most of the bear traps in this country came from. He left a lot of them and they forgot where they were. They had the offset jaws on the little ones, like the ones that I had. And I got a picture of the last bear that that one caught. They were Newhouse traps. And they called this a 114 or maybe a 15. See (shows me a trap) here, this has extra high jaws. This

is a special made wolf trap. This is a 114 Newhouse. Offset teeth. It's a gap between the jaws and the teeth.

Anyway, I had one of them because – and there's the picture of the bear – the length of a 30.30 carbine, a 94? Well I held that when my dad set the trap. I could just barely look down the gun when my dad set the trap. I could just barely look down the muzzle. (Shows picture of himself, other kids, with bear and dad?)

How he set the trap, he had kind of a penned in thing. He'd throw a deer in the back of it. Spring-killed. There was a big tree in the back of it. The tree was the back of it. He just piled some logs up there. The trap, the pen where the trap was set, was just about where Jenny Siloti's house was set, as near as I can remember. Right over yonder here. Right by the river. The bear took the trap and drug it down over the hill where Steve Burdo's house is, right down in there by his house. It was a small brown bear, black bear. He's a young bear. See that dog there? Look at the size of his head. The bear isn't much bigger. That was our Spotty dog.

Dad lived over here where the Formulary is at when he was trapping. In fact that year when that bear was taken, we had a garden right here.

SV: Tell me more about the guy with the 300 bear traps. Somebody packed them in here, and set them. . . .

BH: Set them, back in the days when there was bounty on bear. I have no idea. This is just a story that I've heard of, where these traps came from. My granddad wound up with three of the small ones, and one – a number 6 – a big one, a grizzly trap. The one, my dad went and got it, it was down, he had used it down on Piper Creek, and he went and trapped this bear down here. He brought it home and went and trapped this bear down here. That's the one that I ended up with, the 5. And one of the small ones, as close as my dad and I could figure, is buried on the fill on the Piper Creek Road. He hid it there. They didn't pack them out, they'd just stash them until they'd use them again.

The other small one, my granddad set it for a black bear and a grizzly came along and got in it and mashed it on the rocks. And then he went and got . . . I don't know if I want to go any further with this because I still have hopes of finding it. This grizzly trap. To make a long story short, I'm not telling the entire story. They caught the black bear, and the grizzly killed the black bear, and they cached the trap there, the guy that went with my dad, pretty much on location. My granddad told my dad where this trap was. This was in the 1920s, that they caught the black bear. And my dad went up and looked for it, and probably in about 1934 or 1933 in that area sometime. And it was gone. Well they knew who moved it. The other guy who was with him. Well he told somebody else it was his trap and where it was located, and I haven't been back to find it. But I did go back and find the toggle pole, and big pole that went through the ring on the trap for the drag, I found that, where the trap had been set, where my granddad and this other guy had left it. So I have hopes of being able to walk to this No. 6 if I ever get up there. It's quite

a ways. But the instructions I've found for locating stuff like that, I found a few different things that way. And you can walk to them. I walked right to that toggle pole, when my dad told me where my granddad had cached the No. 6. I walked right to it. I had to paw around a little bit to find the remains of it, but I found the pole with the nails in it.

I trust the information enough that I don't want anybody else to beat me to it.

SV: I have heard other stories about traps being cached.

BH: The directions on this are perfect. I trust the directions, because the same person, it's about second-handed.

SV: Did your grandfather just trap bear during the bounty time?

BH: No, bear in them days, bear was their biggest source of lard. That's what they used them for. They ate the bear, too, but they wanted the bear grease.

SV: Were the hides worth anything?

BH: Yes, and Dad made his chaps out of bear hide. Bear hide chaps was . . . see, Angora chaps was the real thing. Some of them made chaps out of mountain goat in this country. But you know, the movies and Angora chaps was the big thing, in Montana, the cold country. Well they substituted them with bear hide.

Dad made them for himself.

Granddad trapped marten, he trapped everything. He trapped in the river bottom, he trapped up Piper Creek, over to Jim Lookout. He was on Jim Lookout for quite awhile, too. It would be the '30s, '40s, whenever the lookout was built. He was on Cedar and Jim. Jim is below the Piper Creek Road. He might have been on Van Lookout, too, I'm not sure. Wherever the Forest Service wanted him. My uncle, Orv (Orville) was on Holland for awhile and my dad was on Sunset and up on Elbow quite a bit. I think he was even on Elbow when him and my mom got married. 1930s.

Well, there's only one story I can remember about my grandfather's trapping, and that was his method of selling his fur. He never caught very much. Well, he would take and bundle his fur up and ship it off to one of these fur buyers that looked like it was the highest, best, one to sell to. And he'd put a little note with it telling them that this was a sample of his furs. And he was wanting to get prices on it. It seems like they would always pay a higher price than normal because they was wanting to get this guy's fur.

SV: I heard stories that there were fur buyers that came around?

BH: Yeah, I can remember a buyer came around and he bought for Pacific, his name was . . . I can't remember, Jerry something. I can't remember his last name. He came back out of Alaska and bought fur here when the fur prices were. . . well, 1973 or 1974. Tried to buy fur. The prices were just coming up good then. He was a son-in-law to Ted Buscher (?) a long-time fur buyer for Pacific in Missoula.

SV: Otherwise the trappers went through catalogs to find buyers?

BH: The fur houses used to send out price lists and brochures to every licensed trapper.

SV: Warner Lundberg remembers his uncle going through some kind of list . . .

BH: Fur price list. They were trying to get you to buy some of your supplies from them and to sell to them. Last year, last fall, a year ago this fall, I received from Pacific Hide and Fur in Great Falls a notice that they would not be buying fur. First time in probably since the beginning of Pacific Hide and Fur, what they used to call it, that they did not buy fur in the State of Montana. It should have been a story somewhere. They sent the letter out a year ago last fall. In September or October, from Great Falls.

SV: Did your grandfather have cabins or tents?

BH: He never had a long line, like that. My dad and his brother, Grandad helped them, they built a cabin up on Fatty Creek, that the remains are still there. I can walk right to it.

SV: Did you ever document that?

BH: I've told people. Whether they want to believe it or not that's another thing. It was built in 1931 or 1932. The year after Dad's brother got here. I have some pictures of it someplace. You can walk to it from the existing road. Depending on which way you go, and how far into it. It's on Section 2, on the west edge of Section 2. It's pretty hard to miss it, it's within 50 feet of the creek. If you went to walk up the creek from that cut-across road that goes over to Piper Creek, you are on the Fatty Creek Road and turn off on the road that goes over to Piper, drive down to the creek or walk if the gate's closed, and just walk up on the north side of the creek and it's . . . you'll find the stumps in there, old stumps, and if you . . . it's about three quarters, maybe a half a mile at the most, but it's just a 100 yards or so from the western edge of Section 2. A Forest Service section. Even numbered sections were Forest Service and odd numbered sections were railroad. Section 16 and 36 were school sections. It was theirs. They lumped them together. That reverted to the Forest Service when the State lumped their sections together for management purposes at Goat Creek.

SV: Were there any other trapper cabins in that area?

BH: There's one started up on Moore Lake. It's on the southwest edge of Moore Lake. In fact there might have been two or three rounds and that was started by Babe Clothier. There is the remains of another one up in Jim Basin. And that was built with a tent over it by Ed and Earl Beck. The last couple of times I've been up there and tried to find it I couldn't find it, but it is there. I know approximately where it's at. My knees was not in good enough shape to look when I was up there. Very little blowdown in that particular area. It's way up. I found one, the last one I was up there, I found one of Beck's marten notches, I believe it's one of his, in a spruce tree a few hundred yards from where the cabin is at.

SV: Your dad and your uncle trapped and built this cabin. . .

BH: Yeah, just that one year that they trapped together, and my uncle didn't go up there very often, my dad did most of the trapping. The trap line ran from the homestead. The way they went up, you see the cabin is right close to the trail that comes across from Piper Creek. The trail that used to be there, part of it is still there. Most of it is destroyed by roads and logging. I haven't been up there for a few years, and they went up there stripping logs out of everywhere, the old burn, half of that. It burnt in the 1930s. You know they've been up there taking them nice young lodgepole out of that. On that cut-across trail, you know, the road.

SV: So what about Babe Clothier?

BH: He trapped quite a bit. My dad trapped off and on as far as I can remember, all the time. He worked for the Forest Service and he worked for Laird's Lodge at Lindbergh Lake. Building buildings, he built that originally built that rock boathouse for Hawkins, that owned it. (Kotschevars?) When he bought this place here, this is on the abstract, I think he bought it for \$250, this 160. He had to borrow money to do it. He borrowed it from Tyler Tipling, and I believe the house that Kotschevar has, well, he was working building that house at the time. Nat, my dad, was.

SV: Roxy and one of his brothers, John, worked on that house, too. Might have been Pete. Earl Woods worked on it, too.

BH: They fell the trees and they hand mucked them and used boats and what not. Got them into the water and floated them down there. They fell the trees up around the lake into the water, the trees for the house. They were larch. They got them up around the upper end of the lake. They got them in the water and took them down across the lake with boat, green trees. Got them over there and peeled them.

SV: Looking at that place now, it's hard to believe you could get a cabin like that in there, because the trees that are in that point are so huge now.

BH: Horses, drag them up there. It was no problem to move them, block and tackle. There was an outfit called a BB hoist, it was quite an outfit. The horses and the BB hoist. They did things different in them days than they do now.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

BH: Tear off a sheet of that paper and I'll give you a little bit of a picture. They would lay the pole up here, fairly steep. You've got the log wall here. Now the ropes went from here, they'd tie them off here someplace, and the rope went down and over and the other wall is over here, and the rope will go over here. Then they pulled this up, they just rolled this up. Sometimes they could move an awful lot of weight just by hand that way. (The drawing is in my file.)

SV: There are some pictures in the Gordon Ranch album, in the 1920s, there is something like that. You can see the ropes, but they are only up about this high.

BH: The ropes are movable. They moved them every log, and from one side to the other. It was kind of like a sling, it rolled up the log. You see it was tied here on this pole. They might have just had a notch in this or whatever, and generally you know where the log sticks out on the end of the cabin, they'd lay that on there so they were flopped over there on that log. There was logs going this way, too. They'd just roll them up.

SV: You know I never heard the name Earl Woods too much up here, until I got to talking about Tipling's place. Now Seeley Lake he did a lot.

BH: There was a George Woods up here, in them days, too. I don't think they were related. He was quite a trapper. I don't know how long he was here but he was in there where Dwayne Forder is at. (Ojala homestead?) I can remember names of two of them. Arla was the oldest daughter, and young George was a boy that was my age. He was supposedly a little bit retarded. There was another daughter, too. I don't know where they moved to. I don't know if they were related or not. I remember him doing a lot of trapping. I remember him and my dad, he had a sale for a live bobcat. And he caught this bobcat back up in Cooney Creek someplace. Him and my dad went and tied it onto a pole and brought it into the house alive. They'd stick a leather mitt down there and that thing would just poke holes in there. Chomp that mitt. They'd leave their fingers in one end of it and as soon as they'd pull their hand out he'd drop it. I can remember that. With all of us kids setting around there, you know.

SV: Did your dad trap lynx?

BH: Right behind Ted Graf's. They was all over here, they were right here in the yard. Could have shot them in the summer out there in the yard. They came in looking for rabbits. 1960s.

SV: John Hulett tells similar stories and I couldn't get a date out of him.

BH: Bobcat on the other side. I have some pictures here of the cats. When I was trapping. Dad trapped off and on for several years. I happen to have by the way, out there, I should go get that, the last year my dad trapped beaver I have the sizes and the prices. I've got it out there

and there's a few other things in his book. He was the Assessor one year up here, I remember that. I remember him doing it one year.

I can remember my dad telling, right after we moved back up here after the war, when that bear picture was taken, that he only needed \$400 a year. And you could get a permit, a lot of people didn't trap, like Forrester's didn't trap, well my dad got the landowner permit and you'd get a permit for 10 beaver. Well 10 beaver, sometimes they brought forty bucks apiece. You see how important the beaver was? I mean, I could remember my dad selling a marten, a marten, about 1946 or 1947, for \$20. A black market, illegal marten. And if you figure \$400 was all you needed for the year, what was that marten worth in today's prices?

SV: Illegal marten?

BH: Because of the every-other-year restrictions.

SV: Why did you move away for a bit?

BH: We were in Missoula, my dad worked for the railroad during the war. I think he worked out in the shipyards, too, for awhile. It was the end of the war when we came back. The Wineglass hadn't started up yet when we came back. We were back here when I was five years old. I was born in 1941. I might have even been younger than that. I can't remember. I can remember when we moved back. I remember living in Missoula when I turned four. I know that the kids from the Wineglass Mill were in school when I started. I went to school right behind the ranger station up here, Smith Flats School, and Mrs. Carney was the teacher. If anybody didn't like Mrs. Carney it was their problem. I had a disadvantage; I was the teacher's pet. That was a great disadvantage. You didn't get away with nothing. She paddled my hind end several times there in that school. The last time I seen her, would be 1963 or 1964, down in Missoula. I was in my twenties then. I tell you something, if she'd a decided that I needed my hind end paddled right there in the street, I'd a got my hind end paddled.

SV: She must have come to the Smith Flats School after the Wineglass school closed?

BH: No. Before the Wineglass School opened she was here, then she went up there and Lee Anderson's mother went here. Martha Anderson.

SV: Sharon MacQuarrie inherited all of Mrs. Carney's possessions. They lived next to John Stark's.

BH: Well it's that cabin right where you go around the bend. That's Mrs. Carney's house.

[Break in audio]

Andy Kirk was Howard's father. I think Howard's sister might be alive yet, living over on the reservation somewhere around Ronan or St. Ignatius. I don't know what her last name is. But Leonard More might know her name. I think Howard's wife is still alive down in Clinton. But Andy Kirk packed for the Forest Service, packed wire for the main line over on the South Fork. I grew up listening to stories of Andy Kirk and his packing. One story about Andy Kirk was the fire up here in Cedar Creek that burnt right out through Cedar Creek. He was up there someplace with his pack string when that fire blew up, in the 1930s. They give him up for lost. And he came out a couple of days later. He came out, I can't remember whether he came out Jim Creek or Cold Creek, but he took that pack string through that country and bypassed Piper and he came through. I think I know where he came out. Across from Piper Creek into Jim Creek. There's remnants of a trail up there. There's a big notch between Jim Basin and Piper Creek. It would be south Piper. Anyways that was quite a story about Andy Kirk coming through there with his pack string after they had given him up for lost.

SV: There was a whole network of trails along that side. He must have been doing something else packing for a lookout?

BH: He was packing for the fire. They knew he was in there. And the fire blew up. The fire went right up to the divide. It flew right up across between Piper Creek and Cedar Lake. That whole area that's burnt up in there, that's where the fire went. He was coming in through Cedar Lake and was going to come down in there someplace with the pack string, but he didn't want to come out Piper because he was afraid that fire was going to go into Piper and he wanted to get a few drainages over. Anyway, I grew up listening to stories of Andy Kirk, Howard and his sister. Howard told me that he was in the class, the last time the Smith Creek school was used and he was in the class the first time the Smith Flats School was used. I had never met him. I'd heard of his dad, and him and his sister, all my life. I got job cutting logs up here on Cold Creek in 1973 for a guy by the name of Jim Meeks. When I got up there I met Howard Kirk for the first time. It was kind of odd, we knew who each other were. We spent a lot of time, he came down and visited with my folks and all. And he tried to get me to join the Montana Trappers Association at that time. I refused. I didn't want to. Later on I wound up as President of the Montana Trappers Association. I got Howard, I actually got him appointed, director for the region down here.
Region 2.

SV: How did you finally decide to get involved with that organization?

BH: Maybe because of Tex Baker. I didn't trust him. I was over to Bud Moore's we were just getting things ready for trapping season when Bud was building his house. Here come Tex Baker, who I knew. I never really trusted the man. He came into Bud's with this hippie looking character by the name of Ed Nentwig. Big beard. So they started talking about this Montana Trapper's Association. And what they was going to do, and how things were going to be. They sounded like they were going to start prompting the fish and game department to start making regulations. Well, boy, this Tex Baker, is he going to get involved in this? I decided I'm going to have to keep an eye on this bunch. Because I just didn't trust Tex Baker. So every time I hear

they are having a meeting here and there why I got there. So Bud and Janet were talking about, I was over at their house, and they were talking about a guy by the name of Dick Davidson, who was the original president of the outfit. He was supposed to be director for Region 1, for this area, but he wasn't doing anything. They were talking that Ed took it over, kind of a self-appointed president to get this thing going. It was after they had the first meeting in Missoula after Ed took over. It was that next winter. I think they'd already had one in Lewistown, too. They needed a director for this area. I said, well, I'd take that on. So there was a meeting out at Tex Baker's. Which is in Region 2. Nentwig, with the approval of the rest of them, appointed me as director for Region 1. And the next year or so I wound up, they asked me to run for vice president, and I did. Then I kind of dropped out of the leadership for a little while, I might have remained as Region 1 director. Anyway, I got more involved. Run for vice president again. I held the Region 1 director and vice president job for two different terms. Both jobs at the same time. And of course when I went for president, I found somebody else for director. I was president for four years. I dropped out of it completely after that pretty much. Got going to Alaska.

It's hard for me to be around the outfit without getting more involved than I really want to. You have your idea how things should be run. That's what got me into it in the first place. I don't want them people doing this or that, without doing it my way. There's several laws on the books today, that were originally my suggestion. In fact, most of them that we got put on the books, actually were . . . There's problems that needed cured. So with Janet's (Moore) help, she got me involved in that part, we got into the legislative business. One of the first ones that I suggested down at the meeting was this, getting it clarified on this trap theft business. That took awhile to get that done. I don't know if I suggested it, but it was one that took a lot of work and never got done, we failed in legislation to get it passed. Getting a training for kids. Janet just about got it passed. Quite frankly I'm glad she failed. Because there was no program lined up. Then the fish and game wanted to double our license fee and we blocked that. Then we had to let the license double to get, it was kind of a trade off, to get the trap theft thing passed. We wanted to get some management of the furbearers. That's how we stopped them from doubling our license at one session because they weren't doing anything for the fur bearers. When they did pass, double the license fee, it was supposed to go for furbearer management. Which they did some. That's another story that goes back to the history thing. One of the reasons I mistrust this history business . . . the one thing I remember quite well, they wanted to put a restriction on marten, which actually wound up into quite a fight for quite awhile. Got into a big argument and won with the director of fish and game. Anyways they was using the harvest records to determine the number of animals out there. And the South Fork of the Flathead, the Bob Marshall over there, I can't remember the exact numbers but Bud has them on records. They cited the number of marten taken out of the South Fork and out of that part of it over there, and all they had was the number of marten that Bud brought out on Christmas. They had totally lost the records of the marten that he had tagged when he came out for the last time. That was not in their records. There was several other incidents around the state where the harvest records showed none or half or less of the fur bearers caught that I knew of, the sale records proved that. One time, I even have a picture of the Canadian lynx

here, that was never recorded. Them two cats hanging on the wall there were never recorded. I had them tagged. Mike Quinn was the warden when I caught them cats. Guy Shank was the warden when I got this one cat here. That's the kind of records that they were using to cut the season off. Not increase which is just as bad. But anyways, that's how their harvest quotas are set, by inaccurate incomplete records. If they threw them away on purpose to curtail the trapping, I don't know. Anyway, that was one of our big fights and we won at that time.

You get pretty burnt out, disgusted, whatever you want to call it, mainly it's just plain disgust with the system, when they come out and want to start a study for a short period or start changing rules and regulations based on their supposed records. I can't trust their records. I know that they've been pretty bad in the past. They've not showed me yet that they have corrected that problem. It's just something that's got to have a handle on it. How to get that handle is something that I'm not sure of. You tag the marten the beaver the cats whatever and the reason for that is supposedly to have a record of what is caught on these animals that need special attention. Well, if them records are never turned in by the person who tags them, what chance does the fur biologist have of putting together any reasonable management plan.

[End of Interview]