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Oral History Number: 297-001, 002
Interviewee: Archibald "Archie" Roosevelt
Interviewer: Gyongyver "Kitty" Beuchert, John Rhea
Date of Interview: February 15, 1977
Project: Boone and Crockett Club Oral History Project

Note: Part of the audio for this interview is very poor and has not been transcribed.

Gyongyver "Kitty" Beuchert: This is an oral history interview with Archibald B. Roosevelt, Honorary President of the Boone and Crockett Club, on February 15, 1977, at his home in Hobe Sound, Florida, by John E. Rhea, member of the Executive Committee of the Boone and Crockett Club, and, Gyongyver "Kitty" Beuchert, office administrator of the Club.

Unidentified Speaker: Kitty's voice is very soft.

Archibald Roosevelt: Well, you tell me what you want to know.

GB: Okay, what I'd like to know first of all is your birthplace and your birthdate, the approximate time.

AR: Washington, D.C., April 9, 1894.

GB: And the name of your parents and your brothers and sisters, and a little bit—

AR: Theodore Roosevelt, Edith Kermit Roosevelt, Alice Longworth, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Kermit Roosevelt, Mrs. Richard Derby (Ethel Derby), and Quentin. That gives the whole schmeer.

GB: That gives the whole schmeer. Okay. What schools did you attend? Basically your higher education.

AR: Let's see. I started with the Cold Neck School in Oyster Bay—Cold Neck, Oyster Bay. The (unintelligible) School, the Friends Select School, Groton School, Phillips Andover, and Harvard University. That does the whole schmeer.

GB: As a young boy, a little bit about what it was like to live in the White House.

AR: Well now, that's silly.

GB: No, it's not. (laughs)

AR: Well, I think that's silly.

John Rhea: When did you move to the White House, Archie? You were how old?

AR: '99. I think it was '99.

JR: In 1899.

AR: That would make me five or six years old, wouldn't it?

JR: I thought it was seven, but yes, six or seven years old. Was it an upheaval for you to move to the White House?

AR: Not that I remember. I was a little bit on the youthful side.

JR: Sure, sure you were.

GB: But before you left, I mean, you were there a great deal of the time, really, and I was just wondering—

AR: About seven years weren't we?

GB: I was just wondering what it's like for a child in the White House.

AR: It was a lovely village, Washington was, one of the nicest I've ever known, and it was lovely country house in the village. That's just about what it was.

JR: Unlike today?

AR: Oh, very different. That place where you live in now is awful, John.

JR: Happy I don't live there anymore.

AR: Where do you live now?

JR: Fort Myers.

AR: Oh no, really have you given up?

JR: Yes. (laughs) Been there for two years almost. Love it.

When your father was elected president and you moved in, was it a major ordeal to redo rooms, that sort of thing?

AR: Oh yes, they did the whole thing over. (Unintelligible) did it over.

JR: Yes, I seem to recall something of the sort.

AR: Then it's been done really over twice. It was redone then, and it was redone by Mrs. Kennedy.

JR: Yes; I remember (unintelligible). Jackie redid it.

AR: It needed it both times.

JR: Did you have central heating at that point? Or do you remember?

AR: I'm pretty sure we did.

JR: I would have thought so. Tell me what was your feeling about the first official dinner at which you were present or had something (unintelligible)?

AR: I wasn't present at any dinners.

JR: I thought you were brought in to say hello or something.

AR: I don't think they ever made us do that.

JR: (Unintelligible)

US: Grandpa, was it true that you had a horse at the White House?

AR: We had lots of horses.

US: You did?

AR: Yes. There's a thing here that'll show you it. Where the book is I don't know.

US: Well, did you have a regular menagerie of animals?

AR: Well, they had a stable. Everybody had a stable.

US: Didn't you take one into the White House?

AR: Oh, a pony; yes. I didn't, but my brother Quentin did.

JR: Into the White House?

AR: Oh, yes. Took him up in the elevator.

JR: How did that come about?

AR: I had some disease, diphtheria or something like that, and Quentin thought it would be fun to bring the horse up. That was all. Wait a minute, let me think about the Boone and Crockett Club.

JR: We're coming to that.

AR: Of course, if I remember rightly, the first meeting that I was conscious of the Boone and Crockett Club—and I was only conscious of it—was at the White House, is that true?

JR: I think this is right.

GB: Yes.

JR: It wasn't the first meeting, but—

AR: No, no, no. It was the first meeting that I remember anything about.

GB: That's one of the things I wanted to ask you is if you remember any Boone and Crockett Club meetings at the White House.

AR: Well, I just remember that a lot of the old friends came down there at my father's, and I think Horace Albright will remember it.

JR: He probably will. We're going to get—

AR: How old is Horace now? Must be 90 something.

JR: He's in his 90s. He's 92, 93.

AR: Great old fellow, isn't he?

JR: You bet; you bet.

GB: Getting back to—

AR: Now then coming into the Boone and Crockett Club, Gifford Pinchot was one who was one very might member at the time.

JR: No question. How well did you know these people?

AR: Well, we knew Mr. Pinchot very well.

JR: He was a good friend of your father's.

AR: And Dr. Lambert, you remember him—about him. Alex Lambert (?).

JR: Yes. Do you consider—

AR: And then our (unintelligible) "Ding" Darling [Jay Norwood Darling], but he was a younger member.

JR: Yes. Who do you think had the greatest influence on you father insofar as Boone and Crockett Club and the general conservation ethic is concerned?

AR: Well, he just started with...he started with his uncle Robert, I think it was. Uncle Robert was quite a naturalist and the only politician at that time in the family. He was the man that discovered the golden trout of California. Called the Roosevelt trout now.

JR: Was his name Roosevelt?

AR? Roosevelt? Yes. The Roosevelt trout, the Roosevelt trout. It was named after him, and he was a might naturalist.

JR: Do you think that Gifford Pinchot had considerable influence on your father?

AR: Well, they both had influence on each other.

JR: Yes, of course. But it would appear to me from the records I've read that he was quite an influence on your father.

AR: Oh yes, he had studied forestry in Germany, and he was the first...See, I think the first fellow of the Interior was old General...What was the first Secretary of the Interior under Johnson? [James Harlan and Orville Hickman Browning were the two secretaries who served under President Johnson.]

JR: I don't know.

AR: I'll think of his name in a minute.

GBK: It wasn't Carl Schurz, was it?

AR: No, Carl Schurz. Yes, he was.

JR: Schurz was, yes.

AR: He was the first Secretary of Interior. Do you remember the time that you and somebody else had locating his portrait? "Pink" Gutermuth [Clinton Gutermuth] it was.

JR: Oh yes, Pink, that's right. I remember that.

AR: they took him down from the cellar, took him from the cellar and hung him over there, and he's hanging up there now.

JR: In Sagamore Hills.

AR: No, in the Department of the Interior.

JR: Oh, Interior. (Unintelligible).

AR: Pink Gutermuth can tell you all about finding it.

JR: Might make a note of that, Kitty.

AR: I don't know what his real name is. We always called him Pink, didn't we?

GB: It's Clinton. Clinton.

AR: C.R. Clinton, yes.

GB: I want to get back to you just for one moment because we're going to lead into the Boone and Crockett Club, and I wanted to get a little bit of your biography down. Your military service. Just a little bit about it.

AR: Well, there wasn't very much of it except in pieces. I was in the 26th Infantry in World War One in France, and then I got knocked off there. Then I was in the 162nd Oregon National Guard, god knows why. The Army did the same usual thing. They shuffled you back and forth.

GB: Then I'd like to know a little bit about your career and how and why you selected it.

AR: Well, I haven't had a career.

JR: That's a good answer, I guess. You got into the bond business, didn't you?

AR: Yes, but that's not a career.

JR: Oh, (unintelligible).

AR: I was a peddler.

[talks to someone else] There we are. No, this is all right. I can get another one.

GB: Then one of the things I'd like to know is if you had occasion to go hunting with your father, and if so do you remember the trips?

AR: We had one trip which you can find in a book called *Outdoor Pastimes of the American...What was it? Outdoor Pastimes of an American something or other [Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter]*, in Arizona, and that's what he wrote. You can find that in a book.

GB: Are you mentioned by name in the trips?

AR: Oh, yes. We're all mentioned by name who were there. That was the north rim of the Grand Canyon. The Kaibab Plateau. Have you been there?

JR: Yes, I've been to Kaibab. What were you hunting? Deer?

AR: Mountain lion.

JR: Mountain lion. I never read that book.

GB: Do you have any memorable hunting trips that you'd like to tell about?

AR: No, nothing particular. I took Archie up in Alaska, and he shot his sheep there. You remember?

Archibald Roosevelt, Jr.: Yes, I do.

AR: You got lost up in the mountains and I had to come up and find you? (laughs)

JR Was this Dall—Dall sheep?

AR: No, no.

US: I've heard Archie tell about trip (unintelligible). You must have more to tell about than that.

AR: Well, there wasn't very much to tell about it, was there? Do you remember that lovely fellow, Walter Sullivan?

JR: Yes.

AR: Writes such good books, too. Have you read any of his arctic books and things, Walter Sullivan?

US: Famous explorer.

AR, Jr.: He was a New York Times scientific writer.

JR: He's still writing.

US: He can tell you about trips to (unintelligible).

AR: Oh, yes. Yes, that's right. Archie could tell about that. Will you ever forget that fellow Sullivan trying to run down a caribou? He didn't succeed, but he did awful well. (laughs)

US: What happened?

AR: Well, the caribou broke out. It was on a dry riverbed, wasn't it, Arch?

AR, Jr.: Yes.

AR: The first thing you and I saw was the caribou coming out like the dickens and right after that Sullivan, and I'm not sure he didn't run faster than the caribou. (laughs) Nice boy.

GB: Now, I'd like to know how much was your interest in conservation and hunting influenced by your father?

AR: Why, I think entirely.

GB: Entirely.

AR: Yes. You asked about the first hunting trip, and the first hunting trip was after wild turkey, down near you.

JR: What?

AR: Don't you remember the Coles'—Miss Charlotte's son-in-law?

JR: Oh sure, (unintelligible), yes.

AR: Well, his uncle is Peyton Coles, I think, yes. Peyton Coles used to do an extraordinary thing. He'd get on a horse and whooping and yelling, he'd run the turkeys.

JR: Really?

AR: Right through those pine woods. Every so often the horse would go "Brrrt" like that, you know. Uncle Peyton.

JR: You hunted turkeys with—

AR: With what?

JR: You hunted turkeys with him? Peyton Coles?

AR: Oh yes. Hunted turkey with him. We hunted quite a bit of turkey in those days.

JR: There's still turkey there.

AR: Yes.

JR: On the (unintelligible) place?

AR: Yes, we hunted further to the west. I forget the name of the place, but things were so awfully simple then. We used to take a train to Charlottesville, and then they hired a wagon and drove out to the place—this dreadful little hut that they had, an old Vigo (?) hut—and we stayed there. Open plumbing and the entire water was taken in a bucket with a gourd floating around. Do you remember where they had it?

JR: Oh sure.

AR: Wonderful. I used to go quail shooting with Dr. Rixey [Preston Marion Rixey]. He was Surgeon General of the Navy. You know, in those days, it was so much fun. He would call one

day, and he'd say, "We're going hunting next week." He'd hitch up two horses to a wagon, and in the back he'd put four kennels, one with the setters in and one with the rabbit dogs—

JR: Retrievers?

AR: What do they call them? Beagles Then sometimes we'd let out the beagles and sometimes we'd get out the rabbit dogs...the quail dogs. Of course, he was related to everybody in Virginia the way everybody in Virginia used to be, and he used to drive along with these dogs in his wagon and then you'd stop and stay at a house with some cousin of his—a farmhouse.

JR: Just move in for a day or two.

AR: Just move in for a day or so. Of course, the old farmer would quit all his work and go hunting with us. (laughs)

JR: What years were these?

AR: Well, let's see. They'd be in the early 1900s. John, you remember this, I remember the gun I had. Twenty-inch barrel, side-by-side Parker.

JR: (unintelligible). Very fine shotgun.

AR: Yes. Cylinder barrel.

JR: Well, you were shooting at pretty close range. (unintelligible).

AR: Best ruffed grouse gun you can get anyplace.

JR: I agree.

GB: The question that I was asking you about your insight and your influence and interest in conservation by your father, I'd like to combine another question with it too. A little bit of insight into how he cultivated that interest in his children and what was he like as a person. Not the official side that we all know from history, but as a person.

AR: Well, he was absolutely delightful. I just think we always grew up with that thing, that's all. I can't tell you when we began to be interested.

JR: I don't see how you could have helped growing up (unintelligible).

AR: It would be difficult—

GB: But he spent a lot of time with you in spite of the fact of how busy he was.

AR: Oh, yes. He spent a great deal of time. I'll tell you who was a great friend of his, and the sons are still alive in the (unintelligible), that was old Mr. John Parker who was governor of Louisiana, and this, dear, you won't be interested in in interesting but you will [refers to John Rhea].

Governor Parker was a very well-known, wonderful man and when they had that terrible trouble with the Mafia in New Orleans. The mayor was in pay of them and everybody else. They were in terror—everybody was. John Parker said, "I'm going to fix this." He got up a posse and he went out and he hung all of the Mafia, which is a good way of straightening it out. Very quick.

JR: Oh yes.

US: That took care of that.

AR: Everybody said, "This is the most terrible thing in the world," and the people turned around and elected him governor of Louisiana.

JR: For that action.

AR: Yes. My father and he used to go out hunting out in Oklahoma. I remember they went out to bear hunt there, and Governor Parker kept saying, "Now, I do want you to come down in the canebrakes and hunt bear in the canebrakes of Louisiana." Maybe you've done it. I never have. But they hunt them with hounds, and Governor Parker heard that the best many with hounds—the finest pack—was an old colored fellow way out in the middle of the canebrakes. So he went out there, riding a horse—there weren't automobiles then—and he finally located this old boy—very jealous about his hounds. He went up to the old fellow, and he said, "Jim,"—I'm putting his name in. I don't know what it was really—"Jim, I want to borrow those hounds of yours."

Jim said, "Gee, Governor, ain't nobody going to borrow them there hounds of mine."

"Oh, well," the Governor said, "I want you to go with them."

"Gee, Governor, I don't want any strange folks going around with my hounds."

Finally Governor Parker said, "But this is for the President of the United States, you know."

Old Jim said, "Well, if it was Booker T. Washington himself, I wouldn't let him have them hounds."

JR: That's a good story.

GB: That's marvelous.

AR: I think it was one of the favorite family stories.

GB: Now, I'm going to get a little more into the Boone and Crockett Club, which you want to get into. What led you personally to become a member?

AR: Well, we all wanted to be a member of it. These were very famous people, weren't they, at that time?

JR: Absolutely.

AR: I mean Governor Pinchot—he wasn't governor then—and all those people were very famous people. It was a great honor for any of us to meet them even. So that's how we got in. At first, all we did was listen agog to what they were telling us. We didn't ever open our mouths we were so impressed by them, and I didn't really get into the running of the Club until after World War Two.

GB: Do you remember who proposed you?

AR: Who?

GB: Do you remember who proposed you as a member?

AR: I think my brother Kermit. I can't remember. But you remember after World War Two, we dear old Senator Walcott [Frederic C. Walcott]. Did you ever know him?

JR: No.

AR: He was a wonderful fellow at it, and then his mind went. When we came back from World War Two, the club was practically out of existence.

JR: This was around '45, '46.

AR: Yes, somewhere around there, and I remember very well Bob Ferguson and Dick Borden and Dick Derby—my brother-in-law—and I were up shooting ruffed grouse in New England somewhere. I think it was Dick Borden or one of them said, "Pity the old Boone and Crockett Club is gone to hell in a hack." We said...Oh, and (unintelligible) was with us.

We said, "Well, why don't we start it all, get it going again?" I remember we were on a lovely mountain after one of those long days when you never saw a grouse anywhere.

JR: I've seen some of them.

AR: (laughs) We sat down on the side of the mountain, and we said, "All right, let's rearrange it." So we picked the people we thought would be good for the different offices and went to the next meeting and pushed it through with the aid of Charles Frick who as you know was a mighty man. Then Charles Frick got in Dick Mellon.

JR: Who did you appoint as president at this point?

AR: I'd have to look back.

JR: (unintelligible)

AR: We didn't appoint it, we just put a lobby in. We put a lobby in, and he was elected.

JR: Boone and Crockett Club has never been renowned for being a democratic organization as you know.

AR: No. In a way it was very democratic, and in other ways it wasn't democratic at all. It didn't seem to have any rules at that time. See, that's the course that you and I have gone and will never come back—the institution now.

As I was saying, the method that we...for instance when the Key deer became what they call now an endangered species were you in on that?

JR: I was in the Club just barely.

AR: It was decided something must be done about it, and we all sat down there together and we had a meeting. Charles Frick put in some money and Dick Mellon, who practically just joined, put in some money, and we put in some money and Fairfield Osmond's Zoological Society [Henry Fairfield Osborn, Jr.] put in some money. Dear old Mr. Grant put in some money.

JR: Madison Grant?

AR: No—

GB: DeForest?

JR: DeForest Grant.

AR: Yes, Deforest Grant. Madison had died by that time. We hired a boat, and we got a man who was deputized by the Florida Government and deputized him. I may be wrong in that. It may be the federal, I think, that we got. Somebody—I think Pink—got ahold of a man who ran a column in the big Miami paper, and he started a great hullabaloo about protecting the Key deer. It was that one little boat and that one man, financed by three or four people in the Club—that started the protection of the Key deer.

GB: Ding Darling did famous cartoon on the Key deer too that he later (unintelligible) for the Club.

AR: Oh yes, he did some cartoons on it, I believe, too. Show her...I've got it in case you haven't, the wonderful cartoon that Ding left for us.

JR: Yes, (unintelligible).

GB: The office—

AR: I've got them here. They found out when he died—his secretary found—he'd left a cartoon, and he said, "When I die, give a copy of these to the members of the Boone and Crockett Club." You see it in there if you want to. Every one of us got a copy. Didn't you get a copy?

JR: That was long before my time.

AR: That was before your time. Gee, I didn't know you were such a youngster.

JR: Thank you. I appreciate the compliment.

GB: I just looked this up for you. It was Senator Walcott who was made president in the '40s and then you followed.

AR: I followed, was it? I'd forgotten I'd followed.

GB: But one of the things I was going to ask you is a little bit about some of the offices you held. Now, if you would prefer to wait and explain them as we go through some of the events maybe that would be easier.

AR: I think that's better.

GB: Okay. One of the things I wanted to ask you is if you remember any of the important activities of the Club. Like you say, you were in awe when you first joined, but in the '20s and '30s, like when the Club was first incorporated and the reasons for the incorporation.

AR: That, you see, was ahead of me in a way because I was, just as you explained, you just come in there first and listen to everything.

JR: And nobody spoke to me for about three or four years.

AR: Takes them a long time to even speak to you. You sit beside some fellow that you don't know, and you glare at him distrustfully and he glares at you distrustfully.

GB: Well, you were mentioning some of the important people that were in office at the time you joined, and they were George Bird Grinnell as president and Madison Grant and Charles Sheldon were vice presidents.

AR: That's right.

GB: And your brother Kermit was secretary, and the treasurer was Redmond Cross. Do you remember anything about these people?

AR: Give me one at a time, and I can tell you.

GB: Okay, George Bird Grinnell.

AR: Oh well, everybody knows George Bird Grinnell.

JR: Yes, but your opinion would be helpful.

AR: I only knew him personally in the Club. He was a perfectly magnificent fellow.

Madison Grant was a cripple when I knew him. He was, I suppose, it was arthritis. He was in a wheel chair.

Then his brother, DeForest Grant, came after that, and wasn't he a lovely old man? Do you remember him?

JR: You bet. Just as I came in the Club, he died.

AR: Lovely old man.

GB: Charles Sheldon was very active (unintelligible).

AR: Oh yes, and now you can find out more about him from Dick Borden and—

JR: And Billy Sheldon his son.

AR: Billy Sheldon, but Billy's pretty sick, isn't he?

JR: Yes, he is.

AR: You better get up to see him quickly—

GB: But it's arthritis.

AR: Yes, he's got something awful. You better get up to see him quickly because I don't think he'll be here long. Dick Borden is full of vim, vigor, and vitality. He lives up in Concord, Massachusetts. Have you got a picture of that tame coyote he's got?

JR: Yes; yes.

AR: Isn't that a funny thing?

JR: (unintelligible). He's made a good movie (?) of it.

AR: Has he really? I never knew you could tame a coyote, did you?

JR: Sure, you can tame them if you get them young enough.

AR: It walks around after him, like a dog.

JR: You can't stop them from killing chickens, but you can certainly—

BBR: Well, a lot of dogs can't either.

JR: That's right.

GB: You know, one the people that was an active member at the time the Club was incorporated was Norman O. Whitehouse (?). Do you know—

AR: I don't remember him at all, do you?

JR: I know who he is, but...His son is Charlie...or his grandson, I guess, is Charlie Whitehouse.

GB: He's alive but I don't know the state of his health.

US: (unintelligible).

JR: (unintelligible)

AR: I don't know him either.

JR: I know him fairly well.

AR: I think you'd get more out of him than—

JR: If you could get to him (unintelligible).

AR: He's sick, is that it?

JR: No, no. He's in good shape.

US: He's ambassador—

JR: He's ambassador to Thailand now.

AR: If you can get after him before he's shot or something.

GB: Do you remember the Game Preservation Committee, and was this the forerunner of the Conservation Committee as we know it?

AR: Yes it was. I don't remember who...I think Dick Borden was in the Game Preservation Committee.

GB: He was the first chairman of the newly revived Conservation Committee after the '40s when you all put it together.

AR: Then I think before that, he was on the Game Conservation Committee.

JR: Why was the name Game Preservation taken out and Conservation put in?

AR: I have no idea.

JR: It's a good move but—

AR: I have no idea.

JR: I wonder if it was an attempt to fight some of the do-gooders who didn't want anything—

AR: I have forgotten.

JR: You ask Dick Borden then.

AR: Yes, Dick knows an awful lot of this stuff, and he can give you more about the Sheldons than anybody. He knows Bill Sheldon.

GB: You don't remember anything about the formation during the '40s of the revived Conservation Committee, would you?

AR: I remember we had awful row, which nearly broke the Club up. A fellow called—

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

GB: —Horace Albright.

JR: Horace Albright was on the other side of the (unintelligible).

GB: Well, you know who else was involved, because he mentioned it to me and asked me to ask you about it, was Dr. Gutermuth.

AR: Pink. Pink was right in it too. Terrible fight we had.

JR: He would have been on Albright's side.

AR: He was on Albright's side. Well, it was the most awful fight you ever heard in your life.

GB: What he couldn't remember is what the formal stand of the Boone and Crockett Club was, and he was hoping you could.

AR: Well the formal stand I can't remember, but we all came out on Albright's side and Billy (unintelligible) promptly resigned.

JR: Which would have been the conservation side as opposed to the elimination side.

AR: They have been proven (unintelligible) were right too.

JR: No question about it.

AR: I remember Charles was so mad. When Charles got mad, he took no prisoners, did he?

JR: (unintelligible)

[Excessive background noise]

GB: In the conservation movement, DeForest Grant was very—

AR: What?

GB: In the conservation movement, DeForest Grant was very, very influential.

AR: Oh yes, he was.

GB: Now he also got a Sagamore Hill mount for his contribution.

AR: Wait a minute I can't hear a word.

[Excessive background noise]

We got to be careful (unintelligible).

US: What time do they close the restaurant?

AR: When do they close the restaurant?

US: Two they stop. You can't get in after two.

AR: It's 12:30 now. Suppose we cut this off at one no matter what.

JR: Or we could cut it off now.

GB: We could pause now, and you might be a little more refreshed.

AR: I can't tell you anymore that I...I've just forgotten a lot of stuff.

US: You are doing very well. I am amazed. I couldn't remember anything that happened yesterday. You've got a terrific memory.

AR: Well I may have made some of it up.

JR: If so, you made up a good story.

GB: Well, Colonel Rhea and I have some reminders for you, but I think there are some things that you would remember with the reminders. One of the things I'd like you to tell us about is the Sagamore Hill medal.

AR: Well, that again I've sort of forgotten, but we started that after that meeting on the Hill. We collected the money from the family, and it was turned over to the treasurer—whoever it was, I think, (unintelligible). Those medal were struck off, weren't they, in Forrest Hills (?) by some (unintelligible) fellow.

JR: That sounds right to me.

AR: And we still have quite a few of them.

JR: Yes, there are a number left. We are pretty penurious about giving those things out anyway.

AR: Yes. We had some very interesting rack of heads in those days.

GB: this is one of the things I started to ask—

JR: DeForest Grant was given one for his general work in conservation. He certainly deserved it.

AR: He was the only one that didn't get it for the—

JR: For a head. That's right.

GB: That's what I wanted to find out.

JR: That's the only one I recall (unintelligible).

AR: I'm sure it is the only one, and he deserved it if anyone did.

JR: I believe he bequeathed some money to the club—100,000 dollars or (unintelligible)—to be used for conservation.

AR: I imagine it's there still.

JR: Well, it is not all there. (Unintelligible). But it's basically still there.

AR: Then we had one we never could understand. Do you remember that we always used to discuss the Wadsworth (?)?

JR: Oh yes, the memorial.

AR: Nobody ever did find out what it was for, did we? In fact, when we looked for it, it wasn't there.

JR: (unintelligible).

GB: There is a mention of it, and I was going to ask about that but—

AR: We never did find out what it was or why it was there. It wasn't there by the time we really got interested in looking for it. And we never found out why it was spent, did we?

JR: Not that I had determined, Archie, or that the treasurer—

AR: I think it came in...The final resolution came in with you, didn't it?

JR: It did. (unintelligible).

AR: You were just as mystified as the rest of us, but it was only shortly before that we had a bookkeeper in. Remember to try and straighten out the books of the Boone and Crockett Club, and the last we remember, I think he was put in an insane asylum. I think.

JR: He probably should have been.

AR: It was too much for him.

GB: (laughs) That doesn't say much for me. For my future.

JR: Well you are not trying to organize the bookkeeping.

GB: I would like to ask you just a little bit about the records of North American Big Game Committee. I know that the first book was published in 1932 by Prentiss Gray.

AR: That's right.

GB: I was wondering if you know how the trophies were picked for it because at that time I don't believe it was a competition.

AR: No, it wasn't a competition as first, was it?

JR: I don't know, Archie.

AR: As far as I remember, it was just two people who were the officers of the Club picked it. Mostly due to Prentiss Gray's influence.

GB: They just searched for—

AR: Searched (unintelligible) finally. It was easier then. Do you remember there was a lot of publicity, before you got in, about the big game medals and all that? A Texas paper, a local Texas paper, wrote about what the Boone and Crockett Club was doing in conservation and hunting and all that, which was quite a record then because there weren't any organizations. Then at the very last paragraph, it said, "Now, perhaps the readers of this want to know how to get into the Boone and Crockett Club. The answer is you can't." (laughs)

JR: Which was the truth almost.

AR: This was true then. Yes.

GB: One of the things about not getting into the Club about getting into the records keeping program. Do you remember when it changed into a competition, and how that came about?

AR: I think it came when Dick Borden was—

JR: I don't know.

AR: I don't remember that either.

GB: Okay, I do know that—

JR: Elmer Rusten might be able to answer that question.

GB: Okay, good.

AR: Pink will remember an awful lot of stuff.

JR: Yes, of course he will.

GB: Yes. I intend to interview him too. Now I do know that in, I believe, it was very early '50s or the last of '49, you appointed a committee on revisions with Sam Webb to head it.

AR: On what? On measurements?

GB: In order to make an equitable system of measurements.

AR; Measurements, yes.

JR: To revise the measurements system.

AR: Sam Webb was chairman of that. If you get him in a good humor you can find out all about it, but he is very hard to get in a good humor.

JR: Yes, he is matter of fact.

AR: I tell you there were cantankerous old birds in that Boone and Crockett Club. They were just about as soft-skinned as a porcupine. Isn't that true?

JR: Absolutely true.

AR: They were tough.

GB: Now, I wanted to ask you this. Sam Webb and James Clark, whose systems were apparently combined into the new measuring system that was evolved and still in use—

AR: Well, the measurement system was really Jimmy Clark's because he was a professional. Jimmy Clark's measurements were done because of the American Museum of Natural History, weren't they?

JR: Yes, sir.

AR: Because he was their sculptor there.

JR: He was? He was on the (unintelligible), wasn't he?

AR: Yes. He and...Oh dear, me such a wonderful fellow too. His great friend the sculptor and the American Museum of Natural History man. Carl Akeley.

JR: Oh yes.

AR: Carl Akeley. He was one of the most important men of the Boone and Crockett Club—Carl Akeley. You can find out a lot about him in the American Museum of Natural History.

GB: The thing that I found some record of, but not enough to make it clear, is that there were some competitions—and I don't know if the Boone and Crockett Club was involved with them or not—but James Clark was prior to the North American Big Competition.

AR: Well, undoubtedly it was due to Jim Clark that we got it in then, but I couldn't tell you how to find it out. I've just forgotten.

GB: Do you remember anything about Grancel Fitz and how he became involved?

AR: No, I can't tell you that either.

GB: Then it's Sam Webb that I should ask these questions.

AR: I think so. But I think we better go and put on a nosebag else there won't be any nosebag.

JR: Yes, good idea.

GB: Okay, I'll just pause.

[Break in audio]

JR: This is a good book of explorers and hunters who got together—

AR: —who got together to swap experiences.

JR: The Club had an equal social aspect to the conservation aspect. I think there's no question about that.

GB: But they were also a group of men that saw a need, didn't they? A need to try and start—

AR: I think they all saw that, yes, but I think it's what you said, John. There were people who were interested in the outdoors and were friends.

JR: Who could swap exploratory stories and (unintelligible).

GB: Now would you by any chance know how they arrived at the main Boone and Crockett Club?

AR: Yes, I think I can give that. I think that is my father's idea. He wrote a book called *The Winning of the West*, and it was showing how the English-speaking people had expanded from the East Coast west to the Rockies. Daniel Boone, the long hunter as they called him in those days, and Crockett [David "Davy" Crockett], the fellow who eventually had so much to do with taking over Texas, were heroes of that period. Right, John?

JR: Absolutely.

AR: I think that's how it came about. If you read the book, *The Winning of the West*, you'll get the idea. It is the English speaking people taking over the new continent.

GB: Okay, now this goes back a little bit to the original question about the forming of the Club and the reasons. I was going to ask you the original purposes of the Club, but let me word it this way. Was it formed more as a social club in the beginning and then it evolved into a conservation—

AR: I would say that, wouldn't you?

JR: I'd say half and half (unintelligible) really.

AR: Yes, I think so.

JR: I think everybody realized a need for this sort of thing.

GB: It was because of the stature of men that joined the Club that it evolved into the conservation organization that it did.

AR: Right. I think so, don't you, John?

JR: Yes, I certainly do.

GB: Now most of the members from the very beginning have had a high stature either in government positions or other conservation organizations that were member so of the Boone and Crockett Club, but—

AR: No, no, you're wrong. They didn't at that time have the high stature. My father wasn't president, you know. He had just been beaten as mayor for New York. Nobody knew of Mr. Pinchot. He was completely unknown, wasn't he? Governor Parker, he was unknown. There were great men, mind you, but they just weren't known at that time.

GB: Well, I've read about the great friendship between Mr. Pinchot and your father, and the fact that even after he was president he used to walk down to Mr. Pinchot's home on 16th Street.

AR: Oh yes, he was great friends. They were great friends. Mr. Garfield and Mr. Pinchot and Mr. Proctor. You wouldn't know him, he died years ago. I think it started more as a social club, don't you?

JR: It think it is about 50-50, but yes, basically it was a group of explorers who (unintelligible).

AR: Great people who loved the out-of-doors, and that is how I think it started. I think that's how Mr. Grant got into it.

JR: Madison Grant, yes.

GB: Now, do you think the Conservation Committee is as active today as it was years ago.

AR: Listen, I haven't been in the active business of the Boone and Crockett Club for ten years.

GB: Oh...The records show otherwise—

AR: No, I haven't.

GB: —but what I mean by today is by in this generation as opposed to way back when the Club was started.

AR: Yes, but it's very different.

GB: How?

AR: Well, conservation has become popular now. It wasn't then.

GB: So in other words, it was more of a struggle then.

AR: Yes. John, conservation didn't become popular until what 1900 and something?

JR: Oh, I'd say conservation didn't become popular until almost 1950.

AR: Pretty close to it.

JR: The situation was different.

AR: Very different. You see, we had unlimited acreage then. Unlimited forests stood. Edward White's book will show you that.

GB: But the thing is if it wasn't for the farsightedness of these men we wouldn't have anything to fill this land and forest and habitat with nowadays.

AR: Well, yes, there were a lot of men interested in it. Actually, the Army started the Yellowstone Park, didn't it? The United States Army.

GB: But the Boone and Crockett Club had a great deal to do with Yellowstone.

AR: Yes but it was the Army that started it.

GB: But the Club supported the—

AR: The Club wasn't very important in those days. It only became important after my father became president.

JR: That's true.

GB: You know that was one of the questions I was going to get to is how did his presidency affect the stature of the Club?

AR: Enormously, enormously, yes. See, Pinchot and my father being in the Club and working through the Club with the help of the Club made the Club very important.

GB: In those days they had the power to effect legislation a lot more than they do now, don't they?

AR: Oh yes. Yes, yes, because they were the only people really organized group, and it wasn't very well organized. But everything is so different, isn't it, John?

JR: I want to remember a quote out of your father's diary which said something to the effect "Well, looks like to me that we are in some conservation problem; therefore, I best call a meeting of the Boone and Crockett Club and get this bloody thing decided."

AR: Yes, I think that's possible he did that.

JR: I know I've read it. It's in his diary.

AR: Because he had the best conservation brains there.

JR: No question.

GB: Now, let me ask you this. In your opinion—this strictly your opinion—should the Boone and Crockett Club be involved in trophy hunting in today's conservation-minded world?

AR: Yes. I agree with that. I think it is a darn good thing. I know 80 percent of the members won't agree with me.

JR: Oh, I doubt that, Archie, but 30 percent. But we have gotten rid of a lot of dead wood so it's probably higher now.

GB: I'd like to know a little bit about why you feel that way. I think it is important to know why you feel that way. (laughs)

AR: Well, because we never had any conservation for the hunters took interest in it, and the trophy hunters were the much the most important conservationists of the whole lot, weren't they?

JR: Surely.

AR: They wanted more trophies.

GB: You know one of the things that strikes me is that I don't think the people become aware of the conservation problem unless they have been out there active.

AR: Of course, they can't. They don't know anything about it.

GB: Then the hunters are the active ones obviously.

AR: How can a silly ass like this fellow Nader [Ralph Nader] know anything about conservation of game when he has never even seen a wild deer? He has only seen one in the zoo somewhere. We want lots of wild deer, but we don't want the lot of wild deer to eat themselves out into starvation.

GB: Isn't it kind of a proven fact that through hunters the herds have actually been improved and built up?

AR: Oh yes. I think there is no doubt about that.

GB: And habitat has been improved and everything.

AR: How do you think these poor animals lived without predators? Before human beings (unintelligible). An elephant, as you know better than, here is a man who knows elephants. He goes up to them and speaks to them in their ears and all that, but an elephant, unless you control them, would ruin all the forests in the world. He's well in the way of doing it in Africa until they finally stopped it. Cleaned the whole forests out, there wouldn't have been a thing left.

GB: Do you feel that the records keeping program can be used as a conservation tool?

AR: Yes, I do. I couldn't tell you now much about it, but I think it can and it was.

GB: Can you tell a little about how?

AR: I'd rather have Dick Borden say that.

GB: Oh, I'll ask him too, but I'd like your opinion.

AR: I haven't any opinion except that everything that any fellow that's gotten a record, his one idea is to get a bigger one the next time. He wants every chance so that something will grow up bigger. It is a very primitive idea, but that's the way it is.

GB: Well, I think that it's also a very good gauge of how good the habitat is, wouldn't you say?

AR: Yes, of course, they have got to have the habitat or else they can't live. (Unintelligible) that's in Westchester County, New York. They had to put in all sorts of things so that nobody could shoot them and there were no wild cats—no cougars—to kill them off. They starved off. Do you remember that time we went up to Dick Mellon's?

JR: Absolutely, absolutely.

AR: Dick had no predator thing, and by golly, the deer were starving to death.

JR: It was a biological desert.

AR: Wasn't that awful to see those trees?

JR: Sure.

GB: Now, I'd like to ask you this. The records keeping program is the one singular thing that has made the Boone and Crockett Club really famous. A household word among hunters or the hunting fraternity.

AR: That I wouldn't know, would you?

JR: Yes, I'd know.

GB: I know because...This I'd like to add. I do know because I'm not, say, a prominent hunter or somebody who is really knowledgeable, but I heard of the Boone and Crockett Club as a child because of the records keeping. Many of its prominent members have resigned because they feel that the Club should no longer be associated with the records.

AR: Well, I am not so sure that they were so damn prominent, were you?

JR: No, I am not.

GB: But if they did so—

AR: Publicity-wise that stupid little ass Harold Coolidge was prominent.

JR: But he didn't resign.

AR: Yes, but that is what his reason was.

JR: He did not resign.

AR: Oh, he did not?

JR: No.

AR: But he made a lot of noise.

JR: Well, he talked a lot, but he went to (unintelligible).

AR: Who else resigned? That silly ass up in New England.

JR: Burton (?)?

AR: Yes.

JR: He resigned. He took up a cudgel for his own reasons. I thought he was misinformed.

AR: They got all mixed up with that silly Roosevelt memorial, and then they got mixed up with that awful gang that they had in the American Museum of Natural History.

GB: Is that in New York?

AR: Yes.

GB Can you think of anything that could take the records keeping program's place?

AR: Take what?

GB: Can you think of anything that could take its place in keeping the club as a unique organization?

AR: Well, I haven't gone that far. They might. I don't know.

GB: Because, you know, a few of the members—

AR: You know the records keeping thing isn't as important as you think it is. The Club existed long before that.

GB: Oh, I know.

AR: I think it will exist long after, but I think the difference is that some day or other they've got to reconcile themselves to the fact that they can't be the Boone and Crockett Club and a great...What are these things? Like the Rockefeller...a great foundation as well. They've got to be one or the other.

JR: True.

AR: It will be as struggle as to which it comes.

GB: You mentioned a while back during the interview that in the '40s a lot of the prominent members felt like there was a need for strengthening the Club and strengthening the membership of the Club again, and we are kind of facing that now 30 years later. Have you any opinions of how this could be done?

AR: It is very different from the '40s, isn't it? All of the people who are the hunting age were off in war and either killed or back trying to straighten themselves out. So this it is very different. Now they are all balled up with people like Nader and the rest of these jackasses. I don't know it's become that way. It is like the bleeding hearts of the Indian. I am terrible sorry for the Indian, but he didn't have a chance. When they talk about the poor Indian who was so beautiful, just read a few things of what the Indians did to each other. All those people seem to be in the same group, don't they to you, John?

JR: Same basic category.

AR: They're bleeding hearts.

GB: But you know your word is very respected in the Club even now although you say you're not active.

AR: They don't even know who I am now, and they don't give a damn.

GB: Oh, I would not say that. You know I am absolutely new working for the Club, but I have heard an awful lot about you.

AR: I've gone long ago.

GB: No, I think they still respect your word and that's why I am asking this question. Do you know how the Club...Do you have any opinions on how the Club could be strengthened now?

AR: No, I don't because we're in a different era than what I was in. The trend is great big institutional stuff, and the Club wasn't that to begin with and hasn't been that up until quite recently. There's been no talk of it. I don't see how it can resist the trend, do you, John?

JR: No (unintelligible).

AR: I hate it too, but I don't know how they can resist it.

JR: Suppose they have to stay with the changes.

AR: Look at these silly things that you see. Mr. Carter, the President, gets up, and he says “Nobody can belong to a club which has certain rules.” Even though the club has nothing to do with maybe a dining club or club to play bridge with or chess or something like that. They’ve got to have rules that do this that and the other, or they can’t belong to it. Well I think that the Boone and Crockett Club is the same way. I don’t think they want that kind of a club. It isn’t in the modern current. What do you think, John? I think that. Look it they made such a big fuss about some idiot...Not idiot, some poor devil that belonged to a club as I belong to the Knickerbocker Club.

JR: Sure.

AR: There are a lot of genial people there. They don’t take Negroes so far as I know. I don’t know about Jews. They may take those, but as a club we go in there and have some friends. Why the hell shouldn’t you?

JR: I agree.

AR: Here’s this silly ass Carter. He won’t let his child go to a school where she should go. She should go to a school where she isn’t wondered at for being a three-headed sheep or pig or whatever. Now, if they’d sent her to a boarding school...Of course, they wouldn’t allow that’s such a terrible thing. Nobody would have known whether she was the president’s child or who she was. But here they are all trying to do political stuff with her, or else murder her for ransom.

GB: This is marvelous. When you were a president’s child, did that cause any problems?

AR: No, because it was a village. There weren’t any things like that.

GB: It just didn’t cause any ruckus or

AR: Nobody payed any attention to it. No, they didn’t pay any attention to it.

GB: I think that’s marvelous. I wish it could be that way now.

JR: You didn’t have Secret Service around you all the time, did you?

AR: No. They had a Secret Service that walked up with my father to church, and then they had a Secret Service man at Sagamore Hill. Quite rightly, I think. You couldn’t tell when nuts were coming up. They just didn’t have that. It wasn’t necessary. It isn’t Carter’s fault that—

GB: Oh I know..

AR: It is his fault for sending a child to a public school. That I agree.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

Note: The audio for this part of the interview is very poor and has not been transcribed.

[Tape 2, Side B]

AR: Do you know what they did? They used to...the grizzly bear, you know, are not...Humans and grizzly bears do not get on well together. That's a fault of both of them, particularly the grizzly bear.

JR: You were talking about the Craigheads.

AR: Craighead boys. So these Craigheads were rushing along on their own and getting nowhere, and then they wrote it up for the Boone and Crockett Club. There again, we had that wonderful situation that existed then and can't exist now. We had a meeting, and we sold this to "Fair" Osborn and Dick Mellon, and in three minutes we had the money to pay them. Not even three minutes. We just wrote it up. Boom. It went like that. You couldn't do it today. If they put it into the Rockefeller Foundation, it'd take them six months to even find out about it, and then they'd have to get consent from hundreds of people. It just went like that, and these fellows figured out a transmitter thing and they hung it out. They caught the bear by shooting it with dope. Then they tied this transmitter, and then they followed him around with their transmitter so they knew everywhere he went so that they could find out their migration during the spring. They found it out, and by golly, they're going to save a lot of the bears.

So you see it's not easy, and it can't be done institutionalized and yet you can't have a thing like the Boone and Crockett Club anymore. Anymore than you can the independent farmer.

GB: The Club still has the facility for supporting that—

AR: Well, it's got to be very different, though. It's no longer really a club, or it can't be. It's an institution. It's a foundation.

GB: Do you really think it needs to be that way?

AR: I'm afraid it does. I don't want it. I wouldn't fuss with it myself, but I think that's what it has to be. There aren't the same type of people anymore. There aren't the people that have a comparatively good income because of there no taxes or anything like that. Now, all the taxes go and they're put into these national farms and parks and things like that. They didn't have the taxes then. These fellows who were able to save or have a little extra money could push it in. They can't have it now, so they have these enormous foundations, and by the way, they're good, too. Do a lot of good. But the Boone and Crockett Club is different, or was different, and I just don't think there's much of a place for it now. But I think there is a place because I think it will change. I think that these people like the (unintelligible) and the Rockefellers will preserve enough of it to find it's very useful. They'll get idiots like Mr. Rhea to do some work for them and get not paid at all and booted around by little bureaucrats that think they know more.

JR: What you say is true.

AR: That's right. But it'll accomplish something. You see, the gentlemen hunter is gone—for two reasons. One of the reasons is that there aren't any gentlemen, and the other reason is that there are very few hunters.

GB: Of the kind that there used to be.

AR: No, there aren't any real hunters now. There's people who go out for a day in an automobile and get two deer and quite rightly there's reason to kill off the deer. Or something of that sort, but there are no gentlemen hunters. At least I don't know any, do you?

JR: There're not many, Archie. There're not many.

GB: But there are a few, wouldn't you say? I think part of the problem is that this day and age is so busy that the people cannot get out for a three-week or a two-month hunt like they used to.

AR: They don't want to.

JR: Most of them don't.

AR: They don't want to.

JR: You're personalizing. Don't do that.

GB: I know.

JR: But there are a few.

AR: They don't want to go out and sit around with the rain dropping down the back of their necks in order to get two days of glorious weather. I can't imagine my grandson thinking it fun to go up in a canoe in the northwest and get upset in the rapids, catch two fish which you ate and had nothing else or anything of that sort. He'd think I was crazy.

JR: And so must you (unintelligible).

AR: Yes. You could fly in there by an airplane.

GB: Very true, (unintelligible).

AR: Things change. Clubs change. Has to change a lot more. And it won't be a club in a way. You saw the last of it, John.

JR: Yes.

AR: You were the last president of the club.

JR: Yes. It was a club then.

AR: I remember going to you and saying to you, "Listen, John. These fellows always do what they want, not what you want.

JR: Of course. You were, too.

AR: I was right at that time. You get up and you have the best argument for everything you've ever know in your life, and 50 of these fellows would get together and they howl you down.

JR: Many times.

AR: They'd go out and telling everybody what a slob you are.

GB: Did they howl you down?

AR: Sure. They'd howl everybody down. We'd do the same thing to somebody else.

JR: They had no respect for me or Archie or anybody else.

AR: No. They didn't give a damn. They didn't give a damn for the President of the United States.

JR: Or Booker T. Washington either.

AR: Or Booker T. Washington either. (laughs) Don't you think that's a great story.

GB: Let me ask you this one. There was this Citizens Committee on Natural Resources formed back in around 1962, and Dr. Gutermuth was the one that tried to get the Club to support it. It was a lobbying organization for conservation groups. Do you remember anything about that?

AR: No, I don't. Do you?

JR: Yes. (unintelligible)

GB: Okay, I just wanted—

AR: He'd know all about that. And Pink would. But you know, we weren't so excited then. We thought all we'd have to do is to make a few parks and make some hunting rules and everything would be all right. We didn't realize what was coming on, and I don't blame us for not knowing.

JR: No. It was very different (unintelligible).

AR: Yes. We never thought of an energy problem. We just built another fire and put out a lot of smoke and that was all right.

[To barking dog] Shut up!

GB: (unintelligible)

JR: I think you've covered it pretty well.

AR: Between the two of us, I think we've done a pretty good job of that.

JR: For an oral history, you've got a lot of material, tremendous.

AR: But I do think Pink would help more than anyone.

JR: Pink will be a very big help. She's going to interview Pink.

AR: And Dick Borden (unintelligible).

JR: (unintelligible).

GB: Sam Webb.

JR: Sam Webb. (unintelligible) and Bob Ferguson. So a tremendous amount.

AR: You'll find a lot of them aren't sure. You'll find in case of mine that we've forgotten things or misquoted things. As you get older, you do that. Then also you always like to put yourself in the best light. I shouldn't have told them that, should I?

JR: No, I think it's a very true statement because as you say—

AR: It's true, but the truth is not always—

GB: But you know one of the reasons why it's so important to have your opinion on things because you do represent a very special person to the Club.

AR: No, I don't agree with that. If you knew the Club as well as I do, they're damn conceited and think they're the best of the lot. I remember poor John Rhea came in there, and he was going to be real president. I told him, "This is a bunch of Bolsheviks. They always believe they're right and you're wrong." Of course one of the great things is to see Fair Osborn and Coolidge fight with each other.

JR: Oh, yes. [Laughter] I'm sorry Fair is gone too. He would have made a terrific interview.

AR: He would have given you the best interview in the world. Is she going to get ahold of Albright?

JR: Oh, yes.

AR: Because he can remember stuff we didn't even know about.

JR: True. In the earlier days, he's perhaps the best one you can get.

AR: And you better get ahold of him pretty soon because he ain't going to be with us too long.

JR: He's 92, I guess.

AR: But his mind is as good as ever. I had a letter from him the other day.

JR: Did you?

AR: And also from our crazy Alaskan, Bob Reeve.

JR: Bob Reeve, oh, yes.

AR: Can't see anymore.

JR: No, but I keep pretty well informed on him through Dick, his son.

AR: Well, I've had letters from him.

JR: Who's making a pretty good member, by the way. I'm really impressed by him.

AR: I liked him. You remember that awful fight. I forget what it was about.

JR: On what?

AR: Bob Ferguson. Said he saw the blood oozing from the cracks of the door?

JR: Oh, this was the big game commission.

AR: Yes. Terrible row.

JR: I can't remember what it was about now.

AR: Neither can I, which is nice. I'm glad I don't.

[End of Interview]