

Maureen and Mike

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The following transcript was provided to Archives and Special Collections by the Upper Swan Valley Historical Society with its associated audio recording.

**Oral History Number: 422-077, 078**  
**Interviewee: Vern Guyer and Joanne Guyer**  
**Interviewer: Suzanne Vernon**  
**Date of Interview: December 7, 2001**  
**Project: Upper Swan Valley Oral History Collection**

*Note: Conversation starts with looking at John Stark's old photos, then turns to more general conversation. The second portion of the interview focuses on Marie Stark's photographs.*

Suzanne Vernon: What kind of fish are these? They look so fat.

Vern Guyer: They caught them right down here in the river, I suppose.

SV: These would be good photos to copy.

VG: Yes. You could see the whole lake then. 1939.

(Continue looking at dated photos. Landscape photos taken from Elbow Lookout, where (?) worked for a couple of years.)

SV: When did you first meet John and Marie?

VG: I came out here in '49. Working for the Forest Service out here, then I moved into that little cabin right down here, on Lindbergh Lake, the Guard Cabin. That was a time they had the blow down up on the hill up there, so I had to go up and scale the timber up there that they were hauling out by truckloads. I spent a whole summer here, scaling timber up there so I got to know them. So this has been ever since.

SV: What was your impression of the blow down?

VG: All the green trees went down of course because of the wind resistance, but all the snags and things they stood there because they didn't have any resistance and it didn't blow them down. So it looked just like a field of snags up there. Then the roots were all tipped up and exposed, and they had to saw these things out. It was just like big jack straws, you know, that you play with. But they finally got them all cut and moved out and down to the saw mill down here. That's the road down here, right after the hairpin curve down here as you head down. Percy Wilhelm had the sawmill set up.

SV: You said you scaled it? What time of year?

VG: It was the summertime—May and June. I worked right up until September when I had to leave and go back down to the university [University of Montana-Missoula] down here.

SV: So what time of year was the blow down?

VG: It was the year before—I think it must have been in the fall sometime.

SV: I hear about the blow of 1949, so all of our dates refer to the windstorm here of 1949. But it must have been January of 1949, if it was the same.

VG: I don't remember, I guess, the time of year exactly it was. The Forest Service must have it in their records.

SV: When you started scaling, who were the next people to come in and start working in there?

VG: The loggers started. I was just, as they dropped the logs and stuff with a cat, before they loaded them on the truck, I scaled them on the landing and then the logs went right down to the sawmill. Everything was down. Except the dead stuff, which they just piled up in piles and burned them after they got the merchantable trees out. They had to get them out pretty soon because it was mostly all spruce up there, and the bark beetles got in there and started multiplying, and spread into the surrounding country. So they were forced to remove the green spruce as soon as they could.

SV: How old were you there?

VG: I graduated from high school in '46. Three years after that. Early 20s. I had worked in the Trout Creek and Thompson Falls area when I was still in high school, Forest Service. I was 15 and the war was on of course and they couldn't get anybody to work. So they hired all us high school kids to do the district work. I worked over there for a number of years, and I decided I'd like to try some place else. A good friend of mine went into the smokejumpers. He said, "Boy that country out there east of the Missions really looks interesting." He said I ought to try that. So I wrote a letter to the Flathead Forest, and they told me to come out.

SV: Where was your home?

VG: Fargo, North Dakota. Where I was born and grew up.

SV: How did you get the scaling job here?

VG: Same way. I had been working on regular trail maintenance and smoke chasing, putting out fires, and building telephone lines as well.

SV: So you were staying at the little guard station which isn't there anymore?

VG: No, it's down at the place that used to be Bob Seaman's place. Bob bought it from the Forest Service. He moved it down there and put it on his place. It's only so big.

Joanne Guyer: There is one little building up here, yet.

SV: Where is that?

JG: Vern said it was the hay shed. The building that is still here. Kind of where the old campground was, before they moved it over, up the hill a little bit. It's got some beds and mattresses.

VG: Yes, that's right, it's the old hay shed. Last time I saw it, it was all full of hay. You threw the hay in there. They had a corral out there for the people from the Forest Service to put their horses there and keep them overnight and so forth. At that time of course there weren't any roads here. You had to just travel by horseback.

SV: So how did you get from there to the blow down?

VG: They built a special road up there, the one that is up there now. Just to get that timber out. That was just put in, maybe '48 perhaps. The Forest Service might have a record.

SV: Who were some of the people you worked with?

VG: The first ranger I worked for was Ray Gardner. You have his picture and time frame up there on the wall down there at the Condon Work Center. And Jack Alley in Missoula. I've been going to call him up, but I've been a bit reluctant to do so. It's been a long time.

SV: What was a typical day like?

VG: All about the same. Drive up there in the pickup and start measuring the volume of the logs as they were loading them onto the trucks. This went on usually until dark. I'd get back in the pickup and come back down and stay in the guard cabin pretty much all by myself except once in a while somebody else would come through. Fix something to eat, sort of like being a lookout, pretty much working by yourself.

SV: Was there anybody on the lookout that summer that you remember?

VG: There must have been, but I don't remember.

SV: So how did you meet John Stark?

VG: That summer, we were only a short distance back and forth, then. Again, I forgot exactly all the details involved.

SV: He was a pretty young man at that time.

VG: He was working on furniture at the time. I was pretty interested in how he did, so I watched him for quite a while. He showed me how to do some of the things. He showed me how he cut all the mortises and tendon joints and so forth. He had his diagrams all laid out. He could do it pretty fast. After that I never did much with it for quite a few years. Later, I decided it would be a good idea to try and make some of this. The first few chairs I made I just threw away because they looked so terrible. But gradually I got the hang of it. I still build quite a bit of (?), but the problem is there are so many people making it now and the stuff to me looks terrible. I've been following his patterns more than anything. Been developing different types of finishes to put on that what he had. He just used linseed oil.

SV: What kind of wood?

VG: Lodgepole.

SV: Did he sell it to make a living around here?

VG: He sold quite a bit. He had pretty good "in" with the people because of the lodge. These people would come out for vacations and so forth, and they would see his furniture and they'd think, "That would really look nice in my rec room." So they'd order furniture from him, and he'd have to ship it out after they went home. He'd take it down and usually send it out by rail freight. So he had a pretty good business going making his own furniture. They'd contract to do the whole dining room. Chairs and tables, and so forth. My gosh, there must have been 50 chairs involved. So he had a pretty good business. He had various friends around in Missoula who would buy it off from him. Hardly any of his market was local. Nobody sells anything up here, it doesn't seem like.

SV: People were just starting to move into the valley because of the logging...what was the road like?

VG: It used to be a mile farther up, but on the other side of the Gordon Ranch. It sort of wandered around. The main road wasn't all that good, either. It wandered around and had a lot of potholes. Up and down hills. But I've always thought that I wished they'd left that road the way it is rather than building that new road that they've got there now. The damn thing kills so many deer. I guess I think there's just too much development, really, in the valley. I guess that's the way it is. You can't stop progress.

SV: In 1949, when you came, this house would have been ten years old?

VG: Yes. He built both cabins at the same time. There was a friend of his over in Idaho, Carney—Dick and Mabel Carney—and of course she was the school teacher down at the Swan

Valley. He built them at the same time, I'm sure, because he needed the money to buy materials to put into this house.

JG: This one was started in the summer. They did all that excavating for the basement (shows pictures), and I think the other one was started in the fall. There's no basement in it.

SV: So Carneys moved over here and lived in that.

VG: They retired, and he was quite a bit older than she was. They moved over here and lived in there. She got a job teaching school down at the Valley school. [taught at Wineglass and Smith Flats?]

SV: Did Marie work?

VG: Just at the lodge, at that time. She would be working down there. She didn't work outside.

JG: She did lookout two years, and I think she did some cooking for the Forest Service. I think that was in her diary.

SV: Did the diaries have any detail about the neighborhood or the community?

JG: Mainly, each day she would write a little bit about the weather and some little things they did that day. They did things like, Bandy's used to live at the Gordon Ranch. They'd go down there and get a chicken, or go down there and play cards. Things like that.

SV: Just kind of keeping track of the days, more than doing a lot of writing?

JG: Just two or three lines each day. Yes.

SV: That was typical of the diaries I've run across. It was a popular way to do a diary in those days.

VG: That's what he'd do, too. A few lines about the day, the temperature and so forth. Nothing significant.

JG: One of the most interesting things that was in the diary was when Cap Laird and John and one of the ranch hands he had...It was late December, they skated, ice skated, up Lindbergh Lake, to the end, and then snowshoed into Crystal and fished. Then they came back. I was trying to figure out, because reading in the diary before that, she mentioned that they'd had a lot of snow. I wondered how they could ice skate with all the snow. Then I realized, it dawned on me, that in the early part of December, the lake was open yet. So the snow just went into the lake, but then it froze over at some point.

VG: It was very skateable, anyway.

SV: That's a long lake!

JG: Then they had to carry their snowshoes and fishing stuff. Three miles to the Crystal. I thought that was one of the most fascinating stories that was in the diaries.

SV: Harold Haasch worked for Cap Laird beginning in about 1939 in the fall hunting camps. He was just a young teenager. I think the fishing in those high mountain lakes right at the ice was forming, was just outstanding, because that was pretty popular. He said there were many years when it was worth all of the work to go up and ice fish.

VG: Of course, these lakes were all full of fish then. Because there wasn't very much going on. After they put the road into the blow down, Bunyan Lakes up there, it was really good fishing up there. The loggers would haul these fish out by the gunny sack full. We didn't have too many laws—game laws—in those days. That's what happened up there. They opened up this network of roads and just ruined all those good lakes for fishing. Everybody would go up there and fish indiscriminately.

SV: Do you remember what kind of fish?

VG: Cutthroats.

SV: People who lived here on the lake probably didn't have to fish the river too often, because they could fish in the lake?

VG: Not too much. They used to have a dam across the river down here, and of course there was a pool right below it. There was always a big bull trout that would come up there and take over that dam—that hole under the dam—and feed there. He'd run all the other fish off. You'd go down there with a fishing pole and you'd drag him out. He was a good sized bull trout. Then another one would come up and take his place. I remember John saying he lost one. He came down here with a little fly rod. He was fishing down here, and he hooked into one of those bull trout. It just took off downstream and just took his whole outfit.

SV: Did you fish that first summer?

VG: I didn't have too much time. I did catch a few fish right along the lakeshore. Just a break in the food.

SV: Did you see very many of the guests that stayed in the lodge?

VG: Not really. I didn't go over there much.

SV: Were you in the service?

VG: Army, before I came out here. I was over in Italy during the occupation.

SV: There were a lot of young men who worked for the Forest Service in the summers...they ended up getting drafted.

VG: I enlisted before the draft. I guess more or less enlisted off of the GI Bill to go to college.

SV: Was it worth it?

VG: Oh yes. It was the best thing I ever had.

SV: It was quite a turning point for America to have that whole program.

VG: It was amazing. The GI Bill would pay for all of your expenses at the University. They'd give you 75 dollars a month on top of that. Pay for all your books and the whole thing.

JG: You didn't spend that much time in the Army, either. You were only in for a year and a half.

VG: Something like that. A year and a half, or two years. Pretty close to two years.

SV: So the war was over in '47.

VG: '47, and they extended the GI Bill to September 30 of 1946. I graduated from high school in '46. Came out here and worked for the Forest Service, went back and enlisted in September.

SV: What an adventure. When you came out here in '49, you got to know John a little bit. How long before you came back? Where did you go to school?

VG: Graduated from the University of Montana in 1952. It took four years. I came back here to work in the summers. It was a good place to work. Interesting. It wasn't developed at all. Very few roads around the country. You could take off usually on horses and so forth. I'd had quite a bit of experience previously in the Thompson Falls area in the Forest Service. This was different—not so much developed. Back there they were selling quite a bit of timber, things like timber sales. But here, at that time, there were very few timber sales and only one or two mills. There was Rother's mill down at Wineglass Mill was operating, but they weren't cutting very much but all that pine down around Holland Lake.

SV: What were you doing for the Forest Service when you came back? You did scaling the first year...

VG: Building telephone lines, smoke chasing, putting out the little fires that they had. We had to put them all out in those days.

SV: So tell me about the telephone lines.

VG: The lines ran up and down the valley and had spears going off of it to all the lookouts. John had always worked for the Forest Service before also. They put a line into this little guard cabin down here so he was able to get a telephone over at his house here. It is sitting right on the wall out there. So he was one of the few in the valley that had a telephone, but the commercial telephone people hadn't gotten around to building lines in here, and they didn't have electricity, either.

SV: Was there a phone at the guard station the first year you worked there?

VG: We always had one there. We'd call back and talk to the people at the ranger station. Then this line also connected down to Seeley Lake. You could call out farther, if you wanted to, from Seeley. I remember putting telephone lines into all the lookouts. They'd have to do it every year. The trees would blow over, the telephone line would go down, and you had to do a lot of clearing. Make sure the telephone line is up and not touching any trees that would cause it to ground. It was only a one-wire system. Number 9 wire. They went to a 14 or 16 copper wire, too. It was lighter and cheaper. Most of it was the old number 9 galvanized iron wire.

SV: When a piece broke, what did you use to splice it?

VG: You either put in a Western Union splice—where you twist the wire around and get a good contact, or you had a thing you called a mico press (?) where you put the two ends of the wire into this sleeve, and have a clamp, that you clamp together. That was the favorite way to do it. It was a lot quicker than to put a Western Union splice on.

SV: What were the trails like to some of these lookouts?

VG: They weren't bad at all. We had to saw the logs out that had fallen over the previous winter and keep the trails open so you could get back in with a horse. Had to brush them out a little bit, too, so they looked a little better. Most of it was just cutting the trees out. We used to use crosscuts, almost all together, but at that time chainsaws started being developed. So we got chainsaws, and it made it a lot quicker that way, to cut them out.

SV: There weren't any roads...so if I saw the lookouts one by one, will you tell me if you remember where the trails started? Sunset?

VG: It took off right down here, the Jocko Trail, and you switched over at Beaver Creek canyon, they had a trail up there in Beaver Creek. Right up on top on Sunset, ended up there, the telephone line ended up there.

SV: We have a picture of the lookout up there, and it sat almost down to the ground.

VG: About ten feet off the ground. They tore it down and burned it, later. Most all of them were torn down.

SV: We are having a hard time finding the date for when they were torn down.

Now, Elbow Lookout, at that time, in the early 1950s...

VG: It was up 20 feet...

[End of Tape 1 Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

SV: From Elbow Lookout, there was a trail that continued that was called the Foothills Trail.

VG: It continued over, just over to where you could look down in Glacier Creek canyon. That was a place they had to go through also. They had a fire finder set up there. They had to walk over there and look back up into Glacier canyon for fires after a lightning storm. They had the firefighter and everything set up there, so it would just have a canvas over it to keep the rain off of it. They continued doing that until the trees got too tall and you couldn't see out of there anymore. That was old trail number 33. It went over there. It wasn't very far, maybe a mile and a half, over to where it drops off. The trail is still there. It goes down that canyon, and you end up at Glacier Lake. That's the way they went fishing a lot. They would take dudes over there. That was the way they usually went. Climb up to the Elbow Lookout and go out there to that overlook and go down the other side to the lake down there.

SV: Part of that old burn would have been in that area.

VG: I guess there were burns all over.

SV: Glacier Lake was really popular?

VG: It was. But they didn't tend to over fish it. They'd take dudes up there, and they'd only catch so many fish and come back out. It's not like the promiscuous fishing they had in days after that. I think the early people were pretty conservation minded. They didn't overfish.

JG: They took what they could use.

SV: Did you have to go to Holland Ridge Lookout for your telephone lines?

VG: I did that one, too. I remember that one very distinctly. We climbed up there in the morning. We left all the way from the guard cabin at Holland Lake. Climbed all the way up there and got up there about noon. Put the line up on the way down. We got done just about dark, when we got down that night.

SV: Part of that building is still up there, isn't it?

VG: The building isn't there, but there is something else. Bud Downey (?) took me up there one day, and we threw (?) over that and they've got some sort of a small shed of some type there. But the building wasn't there anymore. They burned it. I'd like to climb back up on top of the Holland Lookout up there. It's a tremendous view. In fact in some of these pictures I've got, I remember taking some from up there. Real nice view from up there. You can see all up and down the valley. The problem is in the afternoon, the sun is over here. You get to looking into

the sun, and it's kind of hazy and not too clear. It's best to be there in the morning. It's a tough trail up there.

SV: Do you remember other traffic up and down these trails?

VG: The one that went over into the Bob Marshall, of course, was pretty heavily traveled then from the Holland Lake—the people there had it. The one up to the Lookout wasn't traveled at all. Like you say, there were foot hills trails on either side of the valley, also, both on the Swans and on the Missions. Various trails took off of them.

SV: Do you remember going to Hemlock Lookout?

VG: It was a regular one that stood on stilts. I think it was about ten feet up. The trail went in the same place. They put a telephone up there also.

SV: For some reason, we haven't found a picture of that one.

VG: I don't think Hemlock had too many visitors. It's a tough trail getting in there and a long one. Cooney, of course, and Jim, were much more accessible.

SV: Was Cooney built later?

VG: It was just about the same as all the rest of them. I think it was on a 30-foot tower.

SV: The pictures sure look like it was always way up in the air.

VG: Jim Lookout was on a 50-foot. It was a pretty tall one. We ran the telephone line up there, and it didn't take very long at all. Of course, you had the one main spine of telephone running through the valley, and then the branches that went up to the various lookouts. That's about what they had, I think. I think some of the places like Wilhelm's over there on the 33 Bar, I think they probably hooked in, too. A few of the other ones. The Gordon Ranch.

SV: Rich Nelson, remember a phone on the homestead cabin at his place (Barber Creek) and that would have been into the 1950s. So from Cooney, the next one up would have been Jim, on the Missions side. What about Owl Peak, where they had an old tent and fire finder?

VG: I don't remember that one.

SV: Cedar?

VG: I don't remember that one. They did have an 80-foot steel tower right at Condon. The old ranger station.

SV: There are pictures taken from that—a panoramic photo. So there were phone lines there.

VG: Of course they had a phone line there at the ranger station. I remember they just built that then, and they were finishing it up upstairs. It was only six feet, or eight feet, square at the top. It had a fire finder up there. There was one fellow working on it—besides the alternate ranger—old Scoop Scovel. There was a hornet's nest up there. He activated this nest of hornets. They came and stung him, and he killed every one of them with a crescent wrench! He was putting this thing together—the bolts on—with a crescent wrench. But he got stung multiple times. I did take quite a few pictures of the ranger station up there, but I don't actually know where they are right now.

SV: The Forest Service has a few but not too many. They were making a transition about then. About 1960 when they built the new facility.

JG: One thing, too, in Marie's...when she was on the lookout—Elbow Lookout. It was at night and a lightning storm hit, and she must have spotted a fire. Then the phone wasn't working. So she hiked down that trail in the dark—I think she had a flashlight and her dogs—to the guard station to call it in.

SV: People weren't afraid of the bears.

JG: I don't recall her writing anything about bears.

SV: You've got the 1940 elk story that you started to tell me about. That must have been John Stark's elk they drug in just off the road here in January, you said?

VG: Yes. They fined him 500 dollars, and that was big money in those days.

SV: What was the furthest north that you went checking phone lines?

VG: I think it was Jim. That was the end of the Swan District for my route. We'd been up in the Piper Creek country also, doing trail work up there. Piper Creek and Fatty Creek and on the other side, too. I made it once up to Van Lookout. That's as far north as we'd been anyway. At the time the Fish and Game had a trap up there because they'd trap these mountain goats up there. There were quite a few mountain goats up there. They'd trap them and tranquilize them, of course, and put them on a mule and bring them on down. Then they'd take them to some other part of the country where they'd want to introduce the mountain goats and let them go.

SV: On Van? I didn't know that.

VG: What was his name? McDowell. He was working for the Fish and Game at the time and he was doing a lot of that work. I got to know Mac pretty well. He was a very close friend here of John and Marie's also.

SV: Where was he from?

VG: Helena. And down in East Missoula—he had a place down there in one of the little valleys off to the north of the highway. I guess they found out he had gravel on it, and the state needed a lot of gravel. So they bought the whole thing from him. He made a mint of money on it and retired from the Forest Service, or the State Fish and Game.

SV: It's funny to think that they transplanted mountain goats out of the Swan to other places, because you just don't think about mountain goats up here too much.

VG: There were quite a few of them up there. Up on the east side of the lookout up there.

SV: How did you get into the trail?

VG: Take the road right from the highway. You go right on up there—Lion Creek—and you finally run into the Van trail. I've got one of my old trail maps around here somewhere—my old trail maps from the 1950s. But we didn't have roads off the main road very much. They hadn't been doing too much logging yet in the valley. Homesteaders, you know, they had places up here and they had roads to them.

SV: So to get to a close like Hemlock you would have had to drive into the homesteads back there.

VG: You didn't drive in very far. That was the beauty of this country. It wasn't all that developed, besides a few homesteads around. You didn't have the retirement community that you've got now.

SV: People struggled to make a living then.

VG: They did. I don't know how they ever made it.

SV: A Forest Service job was a decent job. Where did you stay in the summers when you were working on the trails?

VG: Condon Ranger Station. We had a bunkhouse. There were several buildings there, and I think they are still there. It would be a good idea to restore those. I've always said that would be a good place where you ought to have a museum. Because you have so many artifacts around there. But they tell me they'd like something right on the highway because people don't like to drive off the highway too much. They talk about the Rustics place down there, to get that for the library or whatever, museum. But to me it would make more sense to use the old Condon Ranger Station up there.

SV: There is a creek that runs right by there.

VG: Smith Creek. We fished there all the time. We'd catch brook trout down there. Wonderful place to fish.

SV: Who else was around there?

VG: Oscar Southern. He worked there. He was an older fellow that retired and so forth. I guess I learned more about woodsmanship from him than I did from anybody else. Scoop Scovel was the alternate ranger then.

SV: What kinds of things did you have to learn?

VG: You go out on a lot of these fires, and you didn't have trails, so you had to go cross country. Afterwards you'd have to find your way at the same time. It was just like doghair lodgepole because of the fires in the 20s. Stuff was growing up. You couldn't see anything but straight. So we ended up carrying our belts and our spurs along with us—we'd done a lot of telephone building—and our packs, and we'd climb some of these old snags. You'd get above the rest of the trees so you could look out and see where the fire was. But you could wander around this valley bottom for days looking for a fire and have a hard time finding it.

SV: You were probably glad when the airplanes came along. There were a few lookout trees in the early days.

VG: We didn't have any of those. Of course there is that one on Spook Ridge up there. It was easier to take our climbers along and climb a tree.

SV: You sound like you really liked the work.

VG: It was good work. You'd get out in the summertime and it was completely different than what you'd find anywhere else. Coming from the flats of North Dakota, it was a big difference for me.

SV: Did you encounter very much wildlife?

VG: Always. I remember seeing an awful lot of grizzly bears out there, even when you were working out. They usually stay out of your way. They didn't bother you at all, except the problem we had, we had a camp—a trailer camp setting out there. When we were away during the day, they'd come and raid the camps. Especially, they were fond of the groceries we had. Of course you ran into deer and elk almost all over.

SV: Did somebody on the crew ever carry a gun?

VG: No, we never did. The hardest time we had was with the porcupines. They'd come raiding the camp, looking for salt, mostly. They'd chew your axe handle because it was all sweaty. They'd look for things to eat. You don't see very many porcupines, now.

SV: One of the things we are trying to do is place names. I think Cap Laird supposedly named a lot of the places around here but there are a few we still can't figure out. One of them is Jim Creek. I think places like Lace Lake and Angels Bathing Pools were named by Cap Laird.

VG: I don't know about that.

SV: Who named Cygnet?

VG: It was probably some of the old surveyors. I've always argued that this isn't a lake. It's just a wide spot in the river. I think they'd kind of like to keep the name Cygnet Lake so it is developable. They make more money that way.

SV: When, as you kept coming out here in the summer time, did you start to visit them in the summer just as friends?

VG: He was continuing to do his furniture. When I was going to school at the University, I came up every now and then. He was working on his furniture and he built cabins up the lake. He built Doc Hawkins cabin, and that was probably the first one—Downey's now. Successively on up the lake. I've forgotten the names of the people involved. Log cabins and one A-frame also. I was helping him at the time put the shingles on it. The thing was so steep you could just stand on a board there without bending over. I've forgotten the name of the people. Of course, Bovington's (?) he built one for them. He built Whistle's (?).

SV: Did he furnish them, too?

VG: Yes. Hawkins, or Downeys, they still have the furniture, and it's very similar to what we have here. I suppose the other ones up, too, have some. I remember one fellow lived out in Yuma, and he lived up here in the summer time. He had his trailer parked here because he couldn't get up that road. He asked us to come up, so we went up one time and looked at the furniture he had and the place he had. But we haven't kept in contact with almost anybody up on Lindbergh Lake anymore. They have their own ownership association and so forth.

SV: After you graduated from college, when did you get married?

JG: We didn't get married until 1961 so this is all before my time.

VG: I worked for about two years for the Northern Pacific, in the land department, scaling and cruising timber. All over here and all over the western part of Montana. I think it was about that time that I decided I didn't care that much for timber management, especially the way it was

being practiced by the NP. I left them and went back to forest products rather than forest management. I went back to North Dakota and got a degree in chemistry and went to work for Archer Daniels as a forest products essayist and things like that.

SV: Could you explain?

VG: Particle board and plywood. Mostly adhesives for particle board and plywood.

SV: So what are the biggest changes in the way the timber industry is using the logs?

VG: It used to be they'd just go through and cut all the big ones and leave a lot of the small stuff. But now it's more of a selective cutting, and the even aged management that they have now, well, it was just clear cutting where they cleared everything. There was no thought of reforestation at all, like planting. Clearcuts are all right of course if you maintain small plots. They do seed in pretty well from the adjacent timber. But the plots had gotten too large, and there was very little seeding in. There was virtually no planting at all.

SV: Did you keep coming out here in the summers to visit?

VG: After we got married, we came out here almost every summer. The kids and I would come back out here camping and everything else.

JG: We have two daughters. Two or three years we camped on what was the old campground next to the lodge. Then they closed that off and opened the one that is there now. So we would camp there for several years. That was started to be kind of crowded. So we bought property. We bought that gravel pit, first, right on the other side of Carney's. (?) We bought it from Fred Norris, who had the lodge at that time. We must have had it before that, because when they closed off the old campground, Vern had John bring one of the old outhouses over and put it on that gravel pit lot. Then we camped on that for three or four years. We had the outhouse, and we'd come over here and get water.

SV: Did John have a well here?

VG: He had a well just over the hill—a hand dug well—and he put a culvert down about 12 feet.

SV: I hear a lot about the old signs that were at the campground at Lindbergh. Were they talking about the signs at the old campground or the new campground? They evidently told about the history of the area.

VG: I don't remember the signs. I remember trail signs, for the one that goes up to the campground and the one that takes off and goes up to Loon Lake. You live not too far from Loon Lake now, don't you?

SV: Yes. Where was the trail to Loon Lake?

VG: It took off right from the corral there, down and across that road, now, right where Plum Creek had their gates there. The trail wandered back through the woods there and came out right at Loon Lake. We tried to follow it, and we finally gave up because you get down around Loon Lake and they've done so much cutting, it's just obliterated any sign of a trail.

SV: There's quite a few stories about elk hunting along that trail in the early days. It must have been part of the Foothills Trail at one point. Did the Elbow Lake trail ever come down to it?

VG: No, there's another trail up there. That one went up to Glacier Sloughs, and it took off right down here at the campground. It took off, and you see the sign up there now on the road, No. 41 to Glacier Sloughs. Before you get to Glacier Sloughs the main trail takes off to the right, but if you take a left down to Glacier Sloughs...

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2 Side A]

JG: ...no, no, that's over here though because you said the Clark Ranch would call down, and they had shot a bear or something and you guys would...

VG: That was over at Trout Creek.

JG: Was that Trout Creek area where you'd get the bears?

VG: Yes.

SV: I know a lot of the homesteaders here, though, did supply stuff for the lodge: eggs and baked goods and...

VG: They probably did.

SV: I think there was one lady, I'm thinking Mrs. Rohl (?) or else Lambert (?), made quite a few of the quilts that were at the lodge. I don't know if they're still there or not, but for all the beds and stuff, they had handmade quilts and what not.

(Break in audio)

VG: (unintelligible), but meat wasn't too readily available. The bears discovered that mutton was probably pretty easy. There was a fellow who had a ranch above the ranger station. Whenever he'd get a bear, he'd call down, and we'd go up and get it. That was at Trout Creek.

SV: I'd like to go through your pictures, would that be all right?

(Summarized comments about Marie Stark's pictures)

Pictures include: Glacier Lake, Laird's Lodge, John Stark's furniture. Lots of photos of John's furniture and Vern making comments about the cabin where they now live and the furniture as we go through the photos. This would be valuable if we ever get Marie's album copied.

Some of Vern's comments:

Salt lick: Was over by where the bridge is, before the bridge was built. The deer and elk would always come in there.

Log cabin construction: Marie prevailed, wanting certain rooms made certain ways, in spite of John wanting his log work to be seen.

Joe White: shared in John's estate. He was from Washington.

Marie always used to hang the deer skins out on the end of the house out here and the woodpeckers who come for the fat.

Photo of overlook from Elbow Lookout shows clearly the burn and the blow down. Rock outcropping. 1946. Before the blow down, so this was an earlier burn. Maybe the FS has maps of the old burns.

Jocko Ridge Trail, good photo. Trail goes all the way up to Buck Lake, ten miles.

Inlet of Lindbergh Lake, interesting picture. Earlier burn, from the teens or the '20s.

From the Lookout, several burn areas visible.

Several good landscape photos.

Several photos from the mid-1940s showing continuing construction of buildings near John Stark's cabin.

Photo of MacDowell with nice whitetail buck. "Everybody up here knew Mac."

Eagle photo.

Old bridge across Swan River at Lindbergh Lake outlet.

Black dog. John and Marie had dogs. Poncho.

John's carvings. He started carving when?

*Spokesman Review* August 17, 1952, article about John's carvings. He sold a few but not very many.

Joanne and Vern knew they were going to inherit the house and contents and the carvings were in the house. Joanne and Vern talked to Dale Jackson who was John's conservator. "We thought the carvings should be where people could see them. Dale made arrangements to give them to the library." - Joanne

Lots of pictures of the carvings. John had a good eye for animals.

Good pictures of the Lodge. More trees.

Cap Laird photo, and lion, and Bob Lee (?). Some big mountain lions.

Water wheel.

John Stark lived in Idaho, too.

Stark also built cupboards, everything inside the Guyer cabin. Rocking chairs, lounge chairs, all out of lodgepole. Some of the more modern ones. Good photo of John Stark in his workshop.

Stark did a lot of the Holland Lake furniture. In the early years.

Tyne Laird. Clementyne. McKay photo.

John and Marie photos. Can't read date. When John still had some hair, shortly after they were married.

Vern and Joanne don't look at pictures very often. They went through stuff when they first moved in. Uke wanted copies of anything that pertained for the lodge, and he added a lot to their collection.

[End of Interview]