

Gathering Our Voice

Interview with Bruce Zahn

Interviewer: Carlene Anders & Eric Zahn

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Transcribed September 2008 by Diane Mckenzie

Begins at 00:13

Carlene Anders: Okay. Bruce, your place of birth and when were you born?

Bruce Zahn: Oh man, you're getting a little carried away here. (laughter)

BZ: I born in Seattle, and my dad worked at the Seattle PI newspaper in display advertising. And my mother was born in the Methow Valley, and so her father still lived there. And so during the Depression Era in Seattle was not a very good place to be, she felt, and so she conspired with her – with her father to plant an orchard with the help - dad of course in on the monetary. So they planted an orchard in the Methow Valley and it got several years old, it got too much for granddad to take care of. So, so we moved over and - and lived – this was about 1935 – and became a - in the orchard business in the Methow Valley. I went to school at Gold Creek – a little one-room school house with one teacher, and it was quite a change from the Seattle school where we had - I - how many kids I don't know, but we had A and B grades in the same grades so you started kids at – in mid-term at the school - and I don't know if they still do or not - but it was a big school and had, you know, flush toilets and all those things - that we didn't have at Gold Creek - didn't even have running water of electricity at the school there but – it was kind of an interesting change and very - I didn't mind it at all.

CA: What grade were you in when you started in Gold Creek?

BZ: I think I was in about the fourth grade something like that, fifth grade.

CA: Do you have any impressions of differences? How did they compare?

BZ: Well - entirely different. Because the one...

Eric Zahn: As far as the education was concerned?

BZ: Well, hard to tell in grade school how much you're getting out of a - out of school. We had a good teacher and she did a bang up job. It was very interesting. We had black boards and so part of the class – I think I had three kids in my class – and we could - would be doing arithmetic on the blackboard while she was teaching some lower grades and she could look over and see what we were doing so that you it know wasn't all bad. So it was very good. We had a - well let's get back to skiing.

CA: Sorry. What was your birth date? When were you born?

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BZ: (pause) September thirtieth, 1925.

CA: Okay

BZ: Makes me older than I feel like I am. (Laughter)

CA: What was the ethnic heritage of your mom and dad?

BZ: What?

CA: Ethnic heritage of your mom and dad?

BZ: Oh we're German combinations. German – Dutch, German- Swiss

CA: And how many years have you lived in the Northwest?

BZ: All my life

CA: Always –

BZ: Yes

CA: Your whole life? Okay. And you said your mom was born in the Methow Valley?

BZ: Yes

CA: And what about your dad? Was he in the Northwest also?

BZ: He was born in California xxx It's a long, long story on that kind of thing. He went to Alaska as a baby in the Klondike Gold Rush and was packed over, supposedly, Chilikoot Pass in a washtub. And the, and the - and he lived until he was about ten years old in the gold fields of Alaska, where he the only kid in both the mining camps. And so, I think, they even sent out for a wind-up crane for him one year at Christmas. The miners all got together because he could do no wrong. But his dad died when he was about ten years old from something or other up there, and they came back to live with – with his grandfather down in Oregon who had a - who had a dairy and logging operation. He learned when he went to school that he wasn't the only kid in school and (Laughing) he could do - could get in trouble. But any way those are things...
(interrupted by interviewer)

EZ: So in Oregon

BZ: ... he went to UW later in life and met my mother there.

EZ: What was her name? What was her name?

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BZ: Eva. Zahn. Countryman was the last name

EZ: Countryman

4:57

CA: Countryman, yeah. And um, so then so his grandfather – your great grandfather was already here in the Northwest too then is that right? You said in Oregon?

EZ: Yes – my dad’s father came west from Minneapolis as a young man, and why he lost complete communication with anybody back in that area. And there was, I looked in the phone back a few years ago back in Minneapolis and I think there was three or four pages of Zahns there, so there’s quite a few of them – probably a lot more by now – this was probably twenty years ago when I was looking in the phone book then. But they - so it’s a - we never ever contacted any of the people back there. They lost completely the communication with them. And they – Dad’s story was – you had to know my dad, he was great for improvising stories on things - and I asked him why we didn’t check on some of those and he said, “Well we looked one time and we found that one was a horse thief and one was a Civil War deserter so we quit looking.” (Laughter)

EZ: But you had to know my dad’s idea of a - this was a good reason for not looking he thought Let’s see. But ... Doug and I grew up there on a ranch in the Methow during the Depression era and people didn’t go very far or do very much. But we were only a couple of years of age - he was about two years older than I was. So we did most of our palming around together because that was about all there was to pal around with so we skiing in the winter time because that was what you could do. We weren’t great but we did a lot of cross country skiing and going here and there on skis and some on snowshoes, but skis were easier than snowshoes so we used skis.

CA: So out in the orchard actually?

BZ: No, out in the fields out in the woods. Oh Yeah, yeah, yeah. We do considerable cross country up in the hills.

CA: So that was at about what age?

Pause

CA: That you started skiing more

BZ: Well, some place past ten years old. I don’t know. (Laughter)

CA: Okay.

BZ: Probably at our early teens.

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CA: Okay. And what about education and training? What's your educational background?

BZ: Well, I went to Washington State and earned a degree in horticulture.

CA: And your Dad was at UW, huh?

BZ: Huh?

CA: And your Dad was a UW grad?

BZ: No he didn't graduate. He went there and the World War came along and he joined the marines during World War I.

CA: And, any other training of yours.

BZ: Not particular that I can think of.

CA: Okay. And then what about occupational experience?

BZ: I've been in the orchard business, I guess, all my life

CA: Okay

BZ: And I'm still working with pruners.

CA: (Laughs) Today. Okay, anything else that you've done besides orchard work?

BZ: Not particularly that I can think of that would be of any...

CA: How does orcharding fit in with skiing?

8:34

BZ: Well it, it – there's not too much you can do in the winter time in orchards sometimes so it was a good opportunity to get around. And we felt a number of - my brother and I particularly, because we did so many things together - that there was a need for recreation here in this remote – fairly remote – area, and that the kids could - had nothing to do in the winter time, and so if we could get some sort of a ski area going. That was about the time Ralph Parks got started on his ski hill up here on the Okanogan and shortly after World War II, and we - so we joined – we didn't join him yet but we skied there and enjoyed it and it kind of tried to keep things going because it was a losing proposition for Ralph Parks – he never made any money on that hill and, but he put a lot of time and effort into it. He built all his own - all his own equipment and he had two thirty-horse Wisconsin engines that ran – he had two tows and it ran the tows – one here and one up the hill. And it was pretty much a bunny hill by today's standards but still it was a ski hill and something that pulled you up the hill, you didn't have to climb up – up until then we had to climb hills to slide down them and so that had a lot of advantage. We had a number of people that showed up to that ski hill. But Ralph got a little tired of

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putting effort in, and he finally turned it over to a ski club that we were – I was part of – I think, I was probably the president of the thing.

CA: What was the name of it – the ski club?

BZ: I don't know – the Okanogan Ski Club or was it the Loup Loup Ski Club – I've forgotten.

CA: Okay

10:29

BZ: I don't know if those brochures talks about it or not. You might look in that folder and see.

EZ: I think it was Loup Loup.

BZ: Probably Loup Loup. But it was a – it was something. We had buses coming from three or four schools and....

CA: Which schools?

BZ: Well Brewster had one I remember. Pateros...

EZ: Pateros

BZ: ...always had one. I'll get into Pateros in a little while.

EZ: Okanogan. Omak.

BZ: Yeah. I don't think Omak did earlier. Okanogan did. And even Winthrop did at one time. And so we were doing real, real well up there. And any of us who could even put a pair of skis on became ski instructors, because that way you had to start people going. We had a pretty low core of skiers in Okanogan Valley. This was a cow country and you didn't ski. In the winter time you took to a fire and in the summer you'd do your stuff. But it was – it slowly caught on and so we got into a - a certain amount of interest in how we do the- how we skied. And there was - I remember having - teaching skiers whose kids whose mothers and fathers I'd taught to ski way back years ago. And they – so it was a case of working.... And then at that - some where in there we were losing – people were losing interest in the ski club – it was getting down to only a few that were running it – we had an old family – the Pewthers family – did you ever know them?

CA: Who?

BZ: The Pewthers from Okanogan

CA: The Pewthers.

BZ: I'm not sure what he did. They were very interested. We had a lot of support from the Forest Service in those days. Howard Culp was very instrumental. In fact, he was snow ranger on the old

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hill across the way as they called the recreation specialist for the Forest Service. And he helped. About that time we were - he was finding from his people that we needed a Ski Patrol of some sort that could do something, so finally Howard and my brother Doug and I formed a Ski Patrol. And Doug and I spent some time at Steven's Pass, because Mission Ridge was not even heard of at that time. And we spent some number of days at Steven's Pass working with Ski Patrol up there to where we would have some expertise on what Ski Patrol did. And from that we formed a Ski Patrol. By that time we had moved over to this hill here, and we had turned the hill over to the Kiwanis Clubs of Okanogan and Twisp - [they] decided to help manage the ski hill. And for - I don't know how many years they operated. I lose track of the time. I don't have a timetable in my mind on it. But they were there for two or three years or longer. And they helped move - we had a little ski hut there at the - on the old hill that got hauled over here in the winter time one time. It's still down on the hill as far as I know.

CA: It is.

13: 59

BZ: And it was a.... Frank Burge who used to be a - and his wife were the first cooks there. Frank...

CA: They were the first cooks where?

BZ: At the ski hill.

CA: On the other side?

BZ: On the other side hill, yeah, they ran...

CA: And they were cooks? They were...?

BZ: Well, they had - they ran the concession, whatever you want to call it.

CA: The concession. And what - what kind of things were offered?

BZ: Well I might talk about Frank Burge for a minute. Frank Burge was an old time ranger from Winthrop district and retired, but he and his brothers - his brother Chad Burge - were I wouldn't say cowboys but they were packers and when they ran the survey for the between Canada and the US to put monuments up there, the Burge brothers were the packers that packed in most of the monuments. And a very interesting individual. I don't think he was a college degree man but he was back in the days when you could become a Forest Ranger without having a college degree - this part I don't know and don't want to spell out very much because they were good people - very, very good people. And that's probably enough on Frank Burge.

BZ: But we moved across here and we put the rope tows in on this hill and the Kiwanis helped. And with help from the Twisp Wagoner lumber and loggers we were able to do a lot of the clearing on the hill for the ...

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CA: Was there a sale?

BZ: Yeah, it was a sale originally in there that went up through where the outlet of the chair lift that went that way - up through where the chair lift is now on this part of the hill. And we put the one rope tow first in and then we put another rope tow up the top the ridge for some considerable distance - I've forgotten just how far. At that time we had a - in the Twisp Forest Service office we had Greg Thayer. And Greg grew up around Oroville and was working with the Forest Service as a snow ranger for this area out of the Twisp office, and he was very instrumental in doing a lot of work up there and helping us make things go and so he helped....

CA: And that was - that second rope tow was up by Stump Patch. Is that right?

BZ: Yeah

EZ: Not quite that far. Below the island where the racers start. Below the island in there.

(three people talking at once) Okay.

BZ: Yeah - and that us a chance to open that whole area up for skiing. And it ran for - until they put the Poma lift in. The Poma lift was the next thing that came along. We were able....

CA: The big Poma?

BZ: Yeah.

CA: The big Poma?

BZ: The big Poma, okay. The only Poma we had - ever had. But that ever operated anyway - we had some parts for other Pomas here but they weren't ever used. So we used the - we were able to form a club after the Kiwanis left - and were getting tired of it. And we had a chance to borrow money from the Farm Home Administration for a winter time recreation day and mainly for children anything. The built a lot of golf courses and they built a couple other ski areas. But so we were able to - I think we borrowed I don't know - do have the figure anywhere? I don't have it in my mind.

CA: The amount?

BZ: Yeah.

CA: I do have that somewhere I don't know what it is.

BZ: It was either \$150 thousand - either we did it in two pieces I'm not sure if we did it once and then added a little more. I've lost it right know, but I know we borrowed somewhere around \$150 thousand - give or take a certain amount - which built that lodge and did a certain amount of clearing. We were having a lot help up in here from different community groups - Mac Lloyd who had a logging outfit came up here with a couple of big cats - D-8s - and to help pull stumps In fact when we first built the hill, this whole area looked about like it is out in here from timber - it was that thick. And the whole flat down there was that thick. And the loggers got in there and they

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cleaned that whole flat off and I kept saying, “We don’t ski down there – we ski up there.”

18:38

BZ: And “We have to have an outrun” they said, you know, from skiing.” (Laughing) “When you come down the hill you have to have somewhere to go.” Well it never got used, but the - the hill was just completely cleaned – they pulled all the stumps out and they took - there was just a level field when they got through with it but it was pretty hard to keep these guys controlled they were all going like crazy, but they got the hill cleaned too, which was the most important part of the project. And we used the – where are we – used the money to - first we were thinking about buying a chair lift but that was about almost twice the cost of a Poma lift and we didn’t see how we could ever pay for it on ski tickets. We had a tendency to run our rates awfully low here, because we aren’t in a very affluent area for money to get skiers and it was a – and it never made very much money and we were - even with a Poma lift we were not making it. And then some good years you’d more than break even. We were able to pay interest on this FHA loan all the way through, but we made only – didn’t make an awful lot of payments on the principle. and so finally FHA got a little tired of that and so they decided they’d foreclose on us. And they put it up for bids. And so a different group came in of the same people more or less and which is now the Loup Loup Ski Association or something along those words. And so they – they bought it out for not a big price, so we were able to continue to operate up here. And that was probably the main part of it. The main thing I’d like to give credit to would be Ralph Parks in the early development up in this area.

20:48

CA: Go ahead

BZ: He put an awful lot of his time into building the thing and keeping things going. He built the first snow packer I ever saw. They had a small – the first expenditure up here to build the lodge and put the Poma lift in – we had a small sno-cat. And so Ralph Parks devised the idea in his own mind being the - a what is it – a nephew of the owner of Hamilton Farm Equipment - he was able do a lot. He was also a machinist. He was able to quite a bit of work building things in their machine shop. I also want give credit in this thing for Hamilton Farm for all the work they have put in helping things go here, most of which has never been documented in any way. But there just are a lot of things done by them to help make this thing go. But any way, Ralph when he built this snow packer he took an old-remember seeing an old dump hay rake the kind that the teeth coming down like this with a set of wheels out here - he took the hay rake part off and he bolted two by fours across on these steel wheels. The wheels were about this high and the complete - the two by fours were about this far apart. And then he pulled that up the hill with the sno-cat and that packed the snow. Before that time we had to – everything had to be packed by either skiing or by side-stepping and that was quite a project sometimes on a beginner hill we had to – we were out there with the - with whoever we could lay our hands that could stand on their skis and side step the hill to where they – you could put a beginner in there on that hill. And they...

CA: We heard that you and Doug used to grab everybody coming off the buses and line them all up and that was the first thing they had to do when they got there.

BZ: Yeah that’s right.

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EZ: It was off the lift. They let you get your skis on and go up the hill and think you were going to get to go.

I2: And then they'd snag you.

EZ: Yeah. (Laughter)

23:02

BZ: At least make one trip down the hill side stepping that's the main thing. And it helped widen out a little for you.

I2: Huh.

BZ: But the thing, you know, snow packing - the trouble with his snow packer was that it hit a rock or two big a spot and break a two by four and then he was constantly putting two by fours on this - on the snow packer of his. But it was a clever idea. He was coming up with things all the time that we needed to do.

CA: Can you tell us any information about Ralph himself? You know, what made him think to start this and did he...? BZ: Well, he grew up in the area - I think he grew up in Pleasant Valley. At least he lived there a lot. And so, he wasn't very far away so he figured there was a place for a ski area - not a money making ski area - but he felt the country needed one.

CA: What did he do? What was his job?

BZ: Well he worked with Hamilton Farm Equipment. He did a lot of things there. He was not only a mechanic but he was also a salesman. He did lot of selling things - tractors and those kind of things.

I2: Did he have an orchard too?

BZ: I don't think so. The family had one but I'm not sure whether he did or not...

I2: He was somehow involved

BZ: Yeah he was involved with a lot of those things.

CA: So when he decided to do this over here, did he approach anybody, was it a committee, were there meetings?

BZ: Which part?

CA: For the - across the road.

BZ: The first hill?

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CA: ...the very first hill.

BZ: No, that was entirely his idea. He didn't – there was nobody else involved. Well he had some guy working with him, but I think they were paid.

CA: Okay. And then as he started getting a little bit more tired he handed it kind of over to you and Doug or...?

BZ: No, no to a ski club.

CA: To the club. And Doug was president of that club?

BZ: No – Doug was somewhere else at that time. I think he was still going to school.

CA: Oh. Okay. Who were some of those people in that club – what are their names?

BZ: Well I can think of the Pewthers family I'm trying to think of... They had an arrangement with a Judd Longhorn – what was his name – a forest service ranger in the Okanogan area. Longhorn sticks in my mind – Judd - I'm not sure.

CA: How many people do you think were in that club, about?

BZ: Oh, I don't have any notion on it. A lot of them were there – John Neff in Pateros was very instrumental in it very and was always a supporter. You've heard more about him. You know a lot about him.

I2: Raines is a name that I've heard. Francis Raines from Brewster?

BZ: No they were never involved. Not at that time. They were later, up here. Francis got real involved. He never learned to ski until later.

26:05

EZ: So Bruce, do you remember the old guy that used to run that lift – the first lift that went up the hill. We always called him Bones but I never ever knew his name. To me, I always thought he was a hundred years old, but he really couldn't have been because he paid pretty close attention to us kids, but I still thought he was about a hundred.

BZ: I do I've forgotten his name.

EZ: Do recall him - was that what they called him, was Bones?

BZ: Yeah, I think so, yeah. Because he was so skinny – good name. See what the... The ski club was not a big club, it was just almost in name only. I can remember taking - starting the tows, taking tickets and teaching skiing all at the same time. So it was not a big group of people involved there.

CA: So it was basically volunteers doing...

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BZ: Yes

CA: ...concessions and all those work positions?

BZ: We took in enough money to buy the gas for tow and that was just about it. Nobody paid there...

CA: So what engines ran the tows at that time over there?

BZ: I think I mentioned, we had two thirty-horse Wisconsin gas engines and they could handle on a rope tow – could handle, oh about four or five skiers something like that at the most.

CA: What did they sound like? What were they like?

BZ: They weren't a big engine – they were pretty small engines. They had a big engine over here on this tow. This tow went up the side of the hill which I'm sure Barry and the guys can tell you about because he grew up skiing on that side of the area.

CA: So when the tows moved over here those were the actual tows moved over or were they different?

BZ: No, these are different.

CA: Okay. And what happened to everything that was over there?

BZ: It just grew up. It's all timber now.

CA: Were the rope tows taken out at the same time that this transferred?

BZ: That was the Kiwanis doing that, so I wasn't in on that. At the time it got switched over, they showed an interest and our ski club was kind of getting down to where it wasn't doing too much, so it nice to have somebody else come along who was interested and taking it. And they came in gung ho and were real good. And they got a lot of loggers involved on cutting trees down and these - so that was....

CA: And when you were over on that side, what days of the week did you usually ski, hours, that kind of thing.

BZ: Just weekends.

CA: Just weekends.

BZ: Yeah

CA: From dusk till dark?

BZ: Oh, something like that. That had a starting time I'm sure – about the same as today.

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I2: Did the Kiwanis help out financially as well as with - with physical help?

BZ: Well, they put the finances into what they did. But there was nobody else to help out because there wasn't any – the ski club was more or less abandoned by that time. At least it went in limbo to where there was nothing left of it. The – because – they kind of took over so there wasn't much use – the ski was not a really a very social organization. I remember having one potluck up there in the little shack down there up at the – up on the old hill, in which I had a bunch of pictures I'd taken – I think some of Sun Valley and what have you - where I'd been. And they - we had a thousand watt generator out in the back - you could hear it putt putt-putting away - and we – and I had a thousand watt projector. And so when you turned the light on that projector you could hear the engine kind of pull down on the putt-putt. I was running the projector and when it got down too low, I cut the light off for a while until the engine would speed up and then you'd turn the light back on again. It was kind of interesting. There were no lights in the place or anything. There were lights but you didn't have them on when you were showing pictures. So anyway – it was kind of neat up there having a small group there. We were maybe a dozen at the most. All you could put in that little house anyway, really.

30:14

BZ: Then when we moved over here to start the new hill we needed to log a little more logging – the logging had only gone over originally to about where the chair lift is now. And so we had to go north of that for some logging and some trails. And we got Miles Coleman at that time interested in logging, and I've forgotten their timber boss' name. Heck of a nice guy. And it was somewhat of a donation for them to help the area. So they - they came in and pretty well did a lot of logging in there. The Forest Service went - I don't know – leave this out – And they did a nice job and when they got through they even donated at D-6 Cat for about a week for us on runs punching stumps out all for free which was.... The Forest Service [said] we had cut more logs up there than they had surveyed and so we – but when they got around to checking it the found the stumps had all been pushed out so they couldn't even count the stumps...

Laughter

BZ: ...so that was pretty well forgotten. But anyway, it was the only ski area in Okanogan National Forest at that time and so we couldn't see that they were losing that much on having some development taken care of.

BZ: Brother Doug and I laid out the original runs that were here, not because we felt – nobody else was doing it. We had a logger coming in to log and he asked, "Where am I going to log? What am I going to cut?" And they –because they're happy to take, you know, they cut out the good logs but also everything else down. And so they - we up there busy as the devil having never laid out a ski area in our life, we were good busy marking where they would go and how and why, and we would tie ribbons out on trees - this is the extent to what you do from here to here and they – we had loggers only a hundred yards away from us cutting trees down while we were still tying ribbons up there as to where they were going to go.

(Laughter)

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BZ: It was kind of... But it worked out pretty well.

CA: So which runs were those that you had laid out?

BZ: Well, there was the Ridge Run, the Park, the Bulldog and the Loup.

CA: And were they all originally named those?

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BZ: Yes. Well, originally we started – we were going to name the runs after the high school ball teams, like the Bulldogs were the Okanogan and that's how that run got started. But the rest of them all fell by the wayside – they weren't natural. The Loup Trail was a natural because made a big loop around with the trail. The Ridge was a natural because it followed the ridge all the way down. So there was not too much of a chance to do much else there.

CA: And then the Park was named after?

BZ: Well we thought the Park – it looked like a Park at one time – a lot more trees in there then than there is now. It's been cleared several times since that time. Islets taken out and what have you of trees.

CA: Huh. Well there was a rumor that it was named after Ralph Parks – so that was what I was wondering.

BZ: That's a good rumor. I would just as soon leave it that way. Yeah. (Laughter)

I2: And I've heard that there's a Double Zee up there – Double Zee Run. And that's named after you.

BZ: Yeah, They had a contest to who was going to name it and I think Joe Hamilton came up with that name, so it got picked. I wasn't on the Board in those days – I was on the Board for years and years and President for at one time for a while, but I got off the Board. Actually my brother and I were on the Board at the same time. He was on the Board toward the end of it so instead of having two Zahns on there we thought one's enough.

34:31

CA: How many years on the Board?

BZ: I have no idea

CA: Do you now about when you got on the Board?

BZ: Well, I'm sure I was on the Board at the very beginning, and I don't know when I got off. I don't keep track of the dates.

CA: Okay

BZ: During the originally build up and what have you. But John Neff - I might get back into- from Pateros was a gung ho skier and he did a lot of things to – he thought that Pateros should be able to have the kids go skiing. And so he went to Spokane and bought all the used ski equipment from the old Simchuck Ski Shop – they had a lot of rental equipment and he bought the whole works out one time and gave it to the town to Pateros School as a basis for skiing on, and so they built on that. And along came a teacher by the name of Wally Scroggie who was a fairly gung ho skier, and he helped run that run until he died really. But it was a good thing and Pateros was - always had a bus up here and I assume they still do.

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CA: Yes

BZ: They used to have a carnival to help pay for it at one time – I assume they still do. I haven't been

CA: Actually just the Apple Pie Jamboree and then there's a winter fund raiser that they do. This year it was selling of apple pies.

BZ: Good. It's a good thing and its good for – many, many kids have learned to ski and that always gives us a heartwarming – to see skiers and I can skiers that ski far better than I do now and, you know, they're up there skiing which is great.

CA: Um, so were you involved with any of the new runs beyond the original four runs?

BZ: Not really too much, no. I kind of got – I wasn't on the Board any more – I kind of got off the Board and they were....

CA: Can you tell us anything about the [Sunny Hill] and the back side at all?

BZ: Well, we built a road through up that ridge and that's about the only thing. The Sunny Hill we always looked for always for the possibility of making some sort of a run down through there and maybe having gone - having spent some time at Sun Valley... They - Sun Valley they made a lot of runs that would not come back to the end of the ski - chair lift. They would end up miles away in kind of a remote area off of - they had a mountain and they put you up there but you could come down way over here and the chair lift is over here. And they had buses that would come around and meet the skiers and they were kind of neat cause they had little pockets in the side of the bus that you could put your feet upright in and turning them that way. And these were free buses. They went right through the town of Ketchum, but they never stopped. – you couldn't stop in Ketchum couldn't get on or off. You had to go clear to the ski resort itself or to a beginning of a chair lift.

BZ: So we thought maybe there was a place to put a run down though there. But the snow in summer- in the spring doesn't stand up very well over there, so that wasn't a very good - on the sunny side of the hill – and it wasn't a good spot for it. We did have a lot of interesting Ski Patrol [incidents] down through there. The kids loved that because they could come down off the top of the hill – off the top of the hill on the backside and xxx come around and pick up the ridge but you'd be down in areas that weren't cleared and they were – they had runs that went like this up and down over logs and through this. And getting a toboggan down through there to drag a kid out –it was always interesting. We had several in there that had to be taken out – somebody would come up and say so-and-so got hurt back here - we need you to help. They weren't too serious an injury. Still they had to be pulled out on a toboggan.

CA: So where when you started the patrol, where did you find people to do patrol?

BZ: Well, it was - they were all volunteers. We just kept – people would see us doing it and think that would be fun to be part of. So we got a lot of good people. A lot of people went through it – we had a number of Forest Service personnel. We had....

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CA: Did you start with uniforms or did you ...?

BZ: No. I don't think we had a uniform. If we did, it was a little later on. I can remember skiing at Stevens Pass when there was no uniform – you had little black band that said Ski Patrol on it - you put it on your arm. But you had to be a – had to have a First Aid card to go join and then a lot of times they'd pick up volunteers on the weekend - the first ones who came and had a First Aid card could ski free. And that was always fun in the settings. But most of the novices would be put on a bunny hill somewhere and then you had to stay there all – most of the day – maybe half a day. Or you'd be - you [didn't] get to see everywhere. So it was kind of - it was a little different than we had here. We had a good toboggan group and they were – and they all... - I think brother Doug and I both became First Aid instructors just so we could - to teach some Ski Patrolmen to be First Aid. And by joining the National Ski Patrol- which is a pretty gung ho outfit - and they have doctors in their group that write a first aid manual that is probably the best I've ever seen. Having been an EMD on ambulances in the town of Bridgeport, we had nothing compared to what the ski patrol puts out for first aid. It's a very classically done and they revise it every now and then. So it's a – these Ski Patrolmen have pretty good basic training. And they have so many hours, or so many days, each year as a refresher so they have to – they go through some part of the manual each year and get outside advisors in. We've had a number of the doctors as advisors – we had Bill Henry for a while, if anybody knew Bill Henry the doctor from Twisp, probably the most outstanding instructing doctor I've ever seen. He was great. He was a – he could always bring you interesting things. He didn't stay on a subject too long but he was always on something that would pertain to what you're into, and he was really the best I've seen as a first aid instructor.

41:30

CA: When did you first get toboggans on the hill? How did you get people off the mountain at first?

BZ: Well, they used to have the old, what they used to call Sun Valley – old wooden army toboggan, but they were terribly heavy and they didn't work too well. So we bought some from a supplier that put out these – I think some of the same ones we always still got here.

CA: When you say “we” was it a club...?

BZ: Ski Patrol, the Ski Patrol, no Ski Patrol bought them.

CA: Okay. So it was just a corresponding group with the Loup Loup.

BZ: Yeah Well we started out – we go the money to start with the ski area but then we got into starting ski swaps, which we put on one every year and that was making enough money that the Ski Patrol could supply their own equipment. And they were no longer getting any money from the ski hill. And I think they still do – although I'm not....

CA: Do you know when those swaps started about?

BZ: Yeah – I remember one of the first ones – they were held in Okanogan for years. No, I don't remember.

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CA: Okay.

BZ: I can't keep track of that. Dates don't stay with me, not unless they have some kind of reason to....

CA: What about the shack on top – the ski patrol shack on top or buildings were related to the patrol?

BZ: Yeah. We have a new one now. The – we started out with an old outhouse. And old Forest Service outhouse that we didn't do much remodel on. I think we cut a window in it so they could look (laughing) down the hill and that was about it. And we had telephones in those days. In fact, the very first telephones we had – we didn't have radios – the Forest Service used to have telephones all over the forest – I don't know if you remember that it was all single wire grounded system. And having been involved in telephones in my early days in the Methow we, we took all the really old Forest Services telephones we could find to – and built a little bit of a link up the hill, particularly at the top so you could communicate with – and then eventually radios came along which were far more efficient.

CA: Oh. And were you involved with this new shack at all?

BZ: No, not this one right now, no.

CA: But there was another one – intermediate one – correct? After that?

BZ: Yeah. Yeah – somewhat. I wasn't horribly involved in it. I haven't been too involved since they put the chair lift in. We built the Poma lift in here- we thought that was about as far as this hill should be - should go. We in a, you know, limited snowfall area and I – we don't get replenishment snows through much of February which is historic here – we're in the rain shadow of the Cascades. And so I always felt that if had to do it there would be a better place to build a ski area than here in the Loup. This always should be this kind of an area that we have, and that it could probably never afford a chair lift. And this was our early thinking, and we put in a Poma lift instead of a chair lift. I always look back in further areas to see if there was someplace we could get to that would provide a better replenishment snow cover. But unfortunately on the east slopes there really isn't too much to – Mission Ridge has the same problem we have – they just don't get the replenishment snow because they're in the rain shadow of the Cascades. When the storms come straight from the west across the hill they go over the hill and then come down and then that becomes the rain shadow so you get almost becomes to Moses Lake before you start picking up more rain again. So we always felt maybe there's a better place to put a ... but we picked this area because it was close to the highway and we could get in here without too much money. We could maybe find some way to maintain – get the skiers in. And I looked at Starvation Mountain but there's a heck of a lot of road up there to have to road – plowing snow was a problem. That's another point. We had Ted Pitts was our president of the ski hill about during the time of construction of the Poma lift and the ski lodge, and he got idea that we could we could get the Okanogan School District to request the Highway Department to plow snow in the Loup Loup. And even if the School District had to pay the Highway Department for the time involved with the snow plows in there – we had no snow plow equipment when we first started up here and anyway to do it and so that worked out fairly well. It didn't hurt that about that time I think that my dad was chairman of the Highway Commission about that time, so (laughing) so I think he reminded me that Loup Loup is the only place they plow snow for a ski area. (laughing) And I

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heard that several times. But it was a – and that worked out quite well and it was pretty cheap because most of the snow plow drivers also had kids ski up here. And they thought we don't need to spend that much time in there. Actually it was a pretty short run and so the bill was not too great, and the ski hill paid back the School District for plowing the snow. It worked out real well for a lot of years until finally the Highway Department – I think, Dad was gone about that time – and so they were – you guys have gotten by for a long time up here. Up on Steven's Pass they used to have all their snow plows up all their equipment on top of the pass at one time. And they had to – they spend half their time plowing snow for the ski area and so they decided to get out of they, and they moved on down to where Hyak is now – where their base is, so they didn't have to plow snow for the ski area - and that's not the whole reason – they also had a water problem there. But they anyway - so we – so Ted was real good on that and did a great job.

47: 47

CA: So the road was put in by the Forest Service?

BZ: Well the first road came straight up the hill with the old road that went up to Starvation Mountain and then also to the Loup Loup Campground. And it came right straight up – a real steep hill and people had to put chains on most of the time when they came to the ski hill. I mean it just isn't something you don't think of as being much of a problem any more, but that was a standard thing – you didn't think too much about it. You tried it and if you didn't make it you jacked up one rear wheel and put chains on and came on in. And we spent a lot of years getting the Forest Service – John Neff was pretty instrumental on this one, he put a lot of time on them - on getting the road we now have that comes further back and winds around in through here so you don't have to put chains on to make the ski hill.

CA: Was this new road put in a few years after or ...

BZ: Quite a few years after.

CA: Quite a few years after. Was it after the lodge or...?

BZ: Oh, yeah, after the lodge

CA: So it would be in the seventies....

BZ: Well, it....

EZ: It was probably done in the what - late seventies?

BZ: Yeah. I'm hazy on time.

EZ: I'd say mid-seventies – because when they put that road with the big curve in it?

CA: Hm hm.

EZ: That was like, "What are they thinking?" Well they wanted scenic. I didn't think about things

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being scenic, but it had to be - it was put in so it could be a scenic and you wouldn't see just one long straight road, it would be a big curve. Well that big curve at times causes issues even now. But it's much safer than just blasting right straight out on the highway like it was in the old - you know the old times, because then there was times you couldn't stop coming off that old grade.

BZ: Yeah it was a pretty steep grade - step road when you cross it - its still there. It goes down like this to the highway.

EZ: [unintelligible]

CA: Was that the biggest reason it was changed was because of the...

EZ: Yeah.

CA: ...of how difficult it was?

BZ: Yeah. The safety thing was a good factor but the main thing factor for us was putting chains on every time you came up the hill was a little deterrent on getting skiers there.

(Laughter)

BZ: I mean, you know: you got some fresh snow there now, I'll have to put chains on - oh forget it, I think I'll go do something else.

50:03

CA: (laughing) Have coffee?

BZ: So that was an improvement - you know, they paved the road and you know and those kind of things. And the Forest Service was actually - they were slow sometimes but they were a great help.

CA: Was it a dirt road? Was it asphalted? Was it ...

BZ: Well they asphalted it two and a half [years? miles?]- it was dirt to start with.

EZ: I don't ever remember it being asphalted.

BZ: I think it was, wasn't it?

EZ: I don't think it was. It was all dirt.

BZ: Okay.

EZ: I think.

BZ: I've forgotten.

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EZ: It was dirt.

BZ: I was pretty sure they did some [asphalting]. Anyway that's not too important. It was a good road.

EZ: If it was asphalted, it wasn't for that many years.

CA: And the parking lot was down there originally? In the [bowl?]

BZ: Yes.

CA: And has it always been here since this new road was in?

BZ: Yes, since the lodge was built we put the parking lot up here.

CA: Okay. And how – just kind of looking back again – where did people get their equipment to be able to ski...originally?

BZ: Well, there weren't too many local ski shops so mostly [we went] to Wenatchee, Spokane.

CA: And most of them were bought? Were there any concessionaires here, rentals?

BZ: Not in the early days.

CA: To start?

BZ: No.

CA: Okay. And then do you remember who had rental – who did the first rental shop here? Any memories on that?

BZ: Oh, yeah. What's his name?

EZ: Was it Corky Ott? No. He was in there. He wasn't the first.

BZ: No (pause)

CA: I know Barry's dad or Alice and Henry's were kind of involved a little bit in some equipment.

BZ: Yeah. That was pretty early, back in the rope tow days. When Alice was there. And (pause) lets see. I think Ike Howard was the first operator of the ski hill – of the Poma lift – I'm a little hazy on that though. He operated it for a number of years there.

CA: What about your personal equipment? Where did you get your first set of skis?

BZ: Oh, that goes back a long ways.

CA: Too far? (laughs)

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BZ: My brother and I did a lot of padding around on skis. We skied back - you know a few cross country trips - we skied back in the mountain lake one winter. I think I was a senior in high school and he was a starting at the UW in engineering and we decided this Christmas vacation we'd ski into Coony Lake. Well Coony Lake is a pretty high lake - it snowed all - we were breaking trail, you know, so much trail - we were pretty gung ho kids. But it was - it snowed the whole time we were gone on it. And we started to build a fire and we hadn't ever built a fire on snow before and the snow was about yea deep and we got a good fire going and about the time it got dark and the fire got down in the water and went out. Here is was dark and our fire had gone out and we were getting cold and it was snowing like crazy and so we thought we better - so we did have a hatchet so we cut some green sticks to make a raft or whatever you want to call it to build a fire on. And that was pretty good. But we didn't have a tent or anything, just had some tarps or something over our sleeping bags. We had about yea much snow - fresh snow on our bags in the morning.

Laughter

BZ: But for young kids who didn't know what they were doing it was a kind of an interesting process.

BZ: But then later on we took a ski trip back into Spanish Camp, and you're familiar with Spanish Camp. We - there was a building back there the Forest Service had - I haven't been back since they had the fire -but, I think, they ruined the country with the fire. We had - the Forest Service allowed us to use this cabin in the wintertime. And we - we decided we'd go back and there were about six guys who were going to make the trip- three of us finally made it. And we - in the fall before we took some pack horses and packed some supplies in there, so when you got to the end of the trail - end of the deal - you'd have something to eat and something to work on. There was a stove in the cabin - it was a log cabin, real, real nice cabin. And they - so we had to leave from Eight Mile to ski in, so it took us three days to get in there - it's about thirty miles - and ten miles on skis is a pretty good day, particularly when you're breaking trail, those kind of things.

I2: Where did you camp along - how did you camp along the way? That was three days that you were getting into the cabin.

BZ: Just make a bough bed to keep off the snow and you know.

(Laughter)

BZ: It was not - no it was - we were a little younger then too - but it was kind of - it was not. The third day was not a long day - it was pretty good. If you're familiar with the country, it's an alpine meadow country back in there - real, real pretty and real ... and so, I think we spent three days in there just touring around different spots and seeing what we could find. There wasn't too much wildlife up there, but, you know, the snow was - it must been about eight feet of snow or something like that back there - I'm guessing that - but it was not a- after we dug out the doors and what have you - the place - it was a nice place to go - lots of food - we had enough food for six people back there so it - we left a lot of food there.

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CA: So what about your bags, your sleeping bags, though. Did they get wet? Did they...?

BZ: Oh a little bit. After three days camping out it becomes a survival thing.

Laughter

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BZ: You didn't really – you lose a little bit of the fun - stuff gets wet, you know, and you've got no way of drying it out unless you - you haven't got time to stop and hang it by a campfire to dry it out particularly if it – it wasn't snowing– this was spring by that time, a little later than this, but I think it was probably in late March or something –it was still winter back there, but still it was a- we had nice sunny weather, beautiful weather. It was a nice trip. It was a fun trip, really. In fact, we had a longer trip planned for later to go clear over to Harts Pass up through that –do Andrews Creek over to Harts Pass and then come down Harts Pass. But [there's] another cabin along the way there at the airport the xxx airport the Forest Service have a cabin there and it was still there. And we were planning to get someone to let us use it, and then stop at Spanish Camp and then come across. There's two meadow areas you could come down on through pretty fast. Trails had to be zigzagged their way around but you could come down we thought pretty fast. We knew about what the terrain was in there. But we didn't get around to getting that one together.

CA: Huh.

BZ: Got too old to do it.

CA: Well can you tell us exactly what the skis were like on those trips? I mean, was it free heel? Was it.... . What were they like?

BZ: Well, no. Well ,definitely free heel. We just used cable bindings with a bear trap toe piece. The old-fashioned way that you could lift your heel with a fairly flexible boot. Just almost what they're using today.

CA: A leather boot or ... what kind of boot?

BZ: Yeah, yeah, they were leather. Yes.

CA: Was it laced.

BZ: Umm.

EZ: Yes.

BZ: I think so, I think so.

EZ: You would take the strap – the cable strap - off of the back by the heel. You'd loosen those and then put the [trap?] in back.

BZ: Oh, yeah, it was a good trap. We used a climbing wax and, if you are familiar with wax, it's a – it's one of those things you learn by using them. You put wax on the ski so it's fairly soft, so when you step down the snow sticks slightly to the wax on the ski, and then you won't backslide. But if you want to go forward slide, you slip a little bit and it will actually slip, not nearly as good as a downhill running wax will be, but it's an art. These alpine cross country racers use them all the time. They have all different techniques they use on waxing - it's a secret – everybody has their own secret for what they use for wax. The army put out some in World War II that was pretty simple. One was for wet snow and one was for dry snow. One was orange and one was blue. And they were pretty

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simple and they actually worked. In fact, we used that on the trip. It saved putting on these climbers that are heavy things that you can't slip either direction with. But it was – if your snow changes then you have to stop and get out a little can of gasoline and wipe off the old wax and put the new wax on, you know, for – if gets to where it's sticking to the snow board and actually lifting up snow with your ski then you got the wrong kind of wax and you got to do some changing. But it's an interesting art.

59: 46

CA: What about – did you have ski pants or what did you wear – wool or...?

BZ: Yeah I think wool pants of some sort, yeah. I forget, I think I had some sort of liner you could put on – a waterproof type.

EZ: So, Bruce your tarps – they were real tarps, they weren't these plastic tarps we have today? They were actually the canvas, heavy tarps?

BZ: Not that we're carrying, no

EZ: Oh, you didn't carry those?

BZ: Oh, no, no.

EZ: You carried plastic?

BZ: Well we had kind of like the old ponchos you used to have – nylon with a - some sort of veneer on it of some sort so water wouldn't come through.

CA: And, um, how has the equipment changed over the years - to the last when you were skiing?

BZ: Oh it's been dramatic - a lot more than that. The – the first skis were made with out of solid wood, basically hickory. But it had a tendency to warp with time, in fact, we used to put them in a press in the summertime so they would hold their – you'd tie them together top and bottom and put a beer can (laughing) or something, you know, like that in there to hold the bow on them, so that they wouldn't warp. But still one would warp more than the other and then pull the other out of shape. Then they came to using veneers and making them out of built-up wood instead so they wouldn't warp so badly. And that became quite a – that became quite an art of different sorts. And then a fellow name of Howard Head built this – the first sandwich – metal sandwich ski. And that really revolutionized the ski business – almost completely. And he was – they were considered self turning skis. You didn't have to do anything, they just turned themselves. And they – well, they've come a long way since that time and they were just a little bit fragile. In fact, I use a pair of Head skis on our trip into Spanish Camp. And they were rugged enough – they're pretty strong – they're stronger than wood skis. And they did a nice job. They didn't stand up quite so well under real extremely hard skiing, like everybody skis today. But they - it was – they were – and from the Howard Head sandwich ski we've gotten all sorts of sandwich skis now. They're the only kind. Nobody ever makes a soid ski that I know of.

CA: And has – what did that do to your skiing? Your personal skiing as the equipment changed

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toward the end.

BZ: I assume it helped.

CA: You assume it helped? (Laughs)

BZ: Yeah I guess they did. It was kind of – it was a learning process.

CA: Okay. How was the ski area itself maintained? I mean, like through the years? Did the Forest Service do most of the maintenance? Did other people?

BZ: We got a lot of help from the Forest Service. We had a ranger out of Early Winters – was it Maitland?

EZ: Medland

BZ: Medland, Medland. And he was – he ran the - I think he ran the – a lot of the burning crews for the Forest Service. After logging they were doing burning and he also ran the blasting crews when they blasted for roads and stuff. And he would bring his crews up here to teach them blasting to blast rocks up in the ski hill.

Laughter

1:03:44

BZ: And it was, you know, it was a place to learn. This was part of the – he was a – he and his family went down – he had some kids that became great skiers. They went down to –where did they go?

EZ: Somewhere in Oregon.

BZ: Yeah, eastern Oregon – eastern Oregon – I’ve lost it right now.

EZ: Ashland or...

BZ: It was a real good family. And they were – so we had a lot of help on - from Forest Service on a lot of those things particularly if we had some stuff to burn up here they’d come up and help burn it with their crew. If they had standby time and they weren’t doing something else this would be a good place to practice burning.

BZ: On the hike I mention Greg Thayer, who’s now a – he’s a recreation ranger in the Wenatchee River District somewhere. I don’t know how old he is – he must be getting up there near retirement.

CA: And he was one of the first managers or president...?

BZ: No, he was a - yeah – one of the first - he was after Howard Culp by a long ways.

CA: [very quiet side comment – could not hear – “snow ranger”]

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BZ: We were still using rope tows here.

CA: Um. Okay. And uh, can you describe some of the different tasks people took on in order to keep the place operating?

BZ: Well much of the clearing was done by volunteers and many parties were up here in the fall cleaning up brush and stuff. There wasn't much money in the old days to hire crews and so we had to do – we did it either by volunteer work or it didn't get done.

CA: Did – what about the positions like the ticket window and those kind of things – the operators?

BZ: That was paid, yeah.

CA: Those were eventually paid? And what about the Wenatchee Valley – anything when the Wenatchee Valley students came up?

BZ: Well, that's right. I forgot about them. There was a time there when Wenatchee Valley had a ski program going on at Squilchuck and Mission Ridge and they were –and the school was teaching ski hill management. And so they offered to have a few students up here on some weekends to take part in our operation in which they would be actually working up here. And they would be – they would do all kinds of different things in maintenance and almost every phase of the ski hill that they could take to when they went to some other places. I'm not sure how many of them ever went any where else but it was good experience for them.

CA: Okay, and what - was there anything done in the off season on this hill or the hill across the road – any activities or was it used for anything in the off season?

BZ: Not too much.

EZ: Cattle. They ran cattle there.

BZ: Oh yeah.

CA: Cattle?

BZ: Yeah this was a cattle range area for the Forest Service.

CA: Okay. And, in terms of during your during your ski patrol days, how did you handle accidents? Was there anything special or ... when you had accidents come off the hill, what was your...?

BZ: Well, actually it would be assessed to see how - what the problems were as whether or not, I think Ike mentioned the fact that, if the patrolman on the hill thought something was serious enough that needed it, he would call down for an ambulance clear up on the hill. And then they would get one dispatched out of either Twisp or Okanogan so by the time they got the person down here it wasn't very long before they could be put on the ambulance. But they'd usually be stabilized here first, before they were moved out. And there've only been a couple cases - that one real bad injury up

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on Loup trail where they - where they brought the helicopter in and flew him out. I've forgotten his name now.

CA: Glenn Kike?

BZ: Yeah. Yeah. That's the one. And he - he was a - that was probably as serious as we've had up here as accidents. We've had a few that are - few broken bones and what have you. Not as many as you might think.

CA: Well, when you were starting the patrol did you ever worry about liability issues?

BZ: Well ski patrol has a little bit of a liability package.

EZ: Not much.

BZ: Well, no.

EZ: The Good Samaritan. That's pretty much what there is.

BZ: Yeah. Yeah, pretty much. We do have - in the State of Washington there is a Good Samaritan policy that if you're not paid for what you're doing you're a Good Samaritan. If you're paid for what you're doing - I went through that once - I was on ambulance in the town of Bridgeport - we were paid, I think something like \$10 a call, but it didn't go to us, it went into the ambulance fund. But unfortunately I had to leave the ambulance service because the State of Washington also has a Deep Pocket Law, in that if you're part of a crew that performs something and something is done wrong, even though you weren't doing it, you're part of that Deep Pocket. And you could be the one that could be assessed for the damage. And so I had to leave the ambulance service because the city didn't have enough liability insurance to cover - to cover anything. So it was just one of those - one of those things. But the - it was a - but, yes, ski patrol are not paid so they're pretty well protected by the - Good Samaritan Laws in the State of Washington almost nobody has ever sued someone and collected who's a Good Samaritan.

EZ: You're trying to help. That is the reason I've never continued to be an EMT or moving in that direction.

BZ: Yeah.

EZ: I could see no reason or advantage for me. As a First Aid worker I can be an effective First Aider. If I had an EMT label, then the Park would look at me in a little different light.

BZ: Well particularly if you're being - if you're being paid. If you're not being paid its not - it's a little bit of gray area.

1:10:28

CA: So Bruce when you were on the Board of Directors did you ever have any concerns in terms of safety and you know just liability concerns for the hill itself.

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BZ: Oh, all the time safety is a factor. You're always worried about what's going to happen to someone either – particularly involved with the lift. When they're skiing they're pretty much on their own. If they run into a tree, you can say that's entirely their fault. But if there's a ski - some sort of a piece of equipment - a ski lift or what-have-you involved - then you're getting into you know definitely liability thing. So we do our best to - to protect what they have – and to have all sorts of controls to save somebody from getting hurt in some way or other. They're always – we've had kids jump on the chairs up here and it, you know, its kind of a “just-for-the-fun-of-it” I think, but they – and you raise merry hell with them when you catch them, because it's something you don't want to see done. Because there's a copycat situation with kids and then the other one is that you just want that squelched right away. All sorts of things...

CA: It is actually a state law now...

BZ: Yeah.

CA: To not ...

BZ: Well that doesn't.... Kids don't know what state laws are...

Laughter

BZ: ...so its kind of a case of what do you do to – you know – you do your best and you can usually do a pretty fair job if somebody's done something wrong you keep - we've got a pretty mature group in that on hand and they'll do a job if.... If somebody's skiing too fast, you catch them and say, “Hey, that's enough of that.” You can threaten them with all sorts of things and usually that's enough – it's all it takes.

CA: What about um permits and regulations over the years – have you seen any differences in ...?

BZ: Oh, yeah, they change. I'm not entirely familiar with the...

(side comments and background noise – words not discernible)

BZ: ...the latest that have come up but...

(fairly distracting background noise)

BZ: We're a small ski area here and we operate – we've always operated particularly on a theory that we're that we're operating, you know, above board as much as we can. And that we – the books said you do this then – but is that really necessary to be done here where it doesn't apply? We've gone through that with snow rangers at times, and they usually will come along and agree with you. And if it's not a nitpicky thing and if there's not safety involved... I can't think of an issue right now but there's been a number of those. So we do...

CA: What about social events, Bruce, here and over on the other side – were there any social events that you remember that you liked, or...?

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BZ: We've had them but not too many – haven't been on that many social events.

CA: Okay. And then – did you have any involvement with any of the competitive events that are here?

BZ: No not really.

CA: And, how does the area provide employment for the local residents?

BZ: Well, that's the ski hill managers prerogative entirely and we don't get into that – you might suggest that so and so is not your best – but that's about as far as we can go. That's his business and so we don't - ski patrol doesn't get into that. As a bystander I might make a comment, but that's about it.

CA: Okay. And can you compare costs from then and to now – in terms of cost?

BZ: Well, yeah. Things have – the old rope tow day, you know, we were below ten dollars a day sometimes – you know, five or six dollars a day for skiing. And that was about all anybody, it seems like, could afford. So it was kind of a – we put together a lot of different packages for schools and what have you, and part of different things which you're well aware of because, Carlene, you grew up under this system here at the Loup Loup – I can't remember what time you got involved with it but you went to the Pateros School program. When were you in the school program?

1:15:07

CA: Well I started in the school program in 1974. I started teaching in '78.

BZ: I see.

CA: Under [Walter.]

BZ: We had an interesting thing with teachers. We first put the Poma lift in we had a lot more people coming and all of a sudden we were - we were short on – we had no real ski school here at that time and so we organized a ski school which was almost everybody, as I say, who could put a pair of skis on...

Laughter

BZ: ...and knew how to walk around in them to take various levels of people. So we divided them up into – we graded them out into levels and had these free school for all the buses that wanted to come up from the schools, we would - they could have free ski lessons. And the whole idea was to build up a cadre of skiers. Otherwise, we were – we had this fancy machine thing we were running up here with a new lodge and this fancy Poma lift which was, you know, something its day, we thought. And having climbed hills in my day to ski down them, it was a big change and beat the devil out of rope tows in which your one arm was longer than the other when you hang onto the rope. And we had a pretty fast rope tow on this one on this side over here. And it really zipped you up the hill

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and when you locked onto it you were really moving all of a sudden. People learned how to do it.

CA: And that was ran by what kind of engine?

BZ: I don't remember. It was a big six cylinder engine. Something Ralph Parks came up with.

CA: Yeah. Was it his personal...?

BZ: Nah, I don't know where he found or where it went to. I hope he got something out of it.

CA: [Laughing] Okay. And were you able to work off passes and, you know, things – were people to do in exchange for volunteer services and...?

BZ: I didn't personally get in on that. I don't think very much. I talked about some help – getting a help for a path or something with some kids working. I'm sure there were some of those. I wasn't actually involved in any of that.

CA: Did you ever pay for tickets or did – were you always a service person.

BZ: Oh I may have sometime in my life – not very often. I was on ski patrol the whole era of this ski hill.

CA: Okay. And um, lets see. I'd like you to – could you talk about the lodge and when that went in a little bit. Just how it was built or who designed it, how it was...?

BZ: I give Ted Pitts – we were under Forest Service scrutiny, as I say, how much of this I actually want to put out I don't know for – you might, if you're going to do some work on these things which your taking some things out, I just as soon put the Forest Service in a good a light as possible and you delete all this – there's nothing to be said. But they're at basis a pretty nitpicky outfit on some things, and if you build a lodge you have to go through their architects to pass it. And they sometimes can work about some darn little things and you have to – and to build it you have to have a full-fledged architect do the design or at least sign off on the design, and that's pretty much what we got accomplished. So we were able to pass their grade without having to hire an expensive architect for more money than we thought we had. We had a lot of volunteer help on that – one of the retired doctors at Omak – I've lost his name – was involved in quite a – he had a second wife, his first wife...

I2: Pres Bratrud?

BZ: No, not Press Bratrud, before his time.

I2: Cohen, Bratrud?

BZ: Before his time. Before their time. Huh?

I2: Duey? I've run out of doctors.

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Laughter

BZ: I can't think of it either. I should remember all these names but I don't, but that's beside the point. But there was a number of people involved on painting and what have you when they build the lodge, it wasn't just the.... I've forgotten who the contractor was. I wasn't too involved with that.

CA: What about the building over there?

BZ: That was put up later. I think Duey made that and he's a good person to talk about that. I was somewhat involved but I wasn't really involved at that time in – I'm not sure I was still on the.... The floors were all two by sixes on edge. You know, back when lumber was pretty cheap.

CA: And, um, can you tell us anything about the fireplace?

1:20:16

BZ: Oh, that was theirs – what's his first name –

CA: Um

BZ: On the tip of my tongue

CA: Um, it's not John?

[Editors note: Ray Ayres]

BZ: No

CA: Well its – he's related to you how?

BZ: Well, he's married to my niece. Or was married to my niece. And he was a real gung ho skier, probably one of the better ones we had. He goes back to the days when most of the kids in the Twisp High School skied. Barry Coles and Ayres - and some others I can't think of right off hand - were about the same grade and they were also basketball players. And the coach came – the coaches came in and said, "If you play basketball, you can't ski." And so, the basketball team – the coach lost his whole team. (laughs) They had to – anyway, so finally he changed that to where you can't ski the same day the night you're playing basketball. Which was more reasonable, and so that went through. But Ayres was real gung ho – probably one of our better skiers we produced up here at that time, and when he died the family decided to build a memorial – it was just a stone fireplace that was in there which wasn't there originally.

CA: And how did he die?

BZ: Well, he was – he was a parachute jumper, whatever you call them. And there's a better named than that I guess. Well, anyway, for some deal down at Brewster, I forget – Bonanza Days or something – he was doing a wing walk on an airplane and, of course, he had a chute on, but for some reason or other he fell off which was – but wasn't able to get his chute open, probably got tangled up

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or something, and landed in the river – I think he probably drowned. It was a – but he was a pretty strong skier....

CA: Okay. And then is there anything you'd like to tell us about season changes, or snowfall or anything like that.

BZ: Well this area is – has always been a reasonably low snow area. And we recognized that almost at the beginning. But we do have cold snow and cold weather, and we don't get a lot of rain and moisture which tend to destroy your snow. So our snow pack stays very – in good snow. And, it didn't help us too much before the days of good snow grooming but now that they have some good grooming equipment they can maintain not too big a snow pack and have real good skiable snow. In fact, people are always quite amazed when then come here from the coast or somewhere. People will come over and vacation at Sun Mountain or somewhere and do some cross country skiing and decide they want to try some downhill skiing because that's something they've done, and they come up here and they'll be amazed as to the conditions we have here and what we have to offer and the fact that there's almost no crowds of people here, you know, lined up to go and you can ski just about as much as you want, and which has always been a great thing. But we're able to groom snow better than we used to be able to. We have far better snow conditions here than Mission Ridge has and certainly than the mountain passes have. But we don't get a lot of it. It would be nice – we need more replenishing snow. We get into – if we get a good snowfall like we did this year in December, that's real good. It puts us through Christmas, which is mainly our snow area, but if we don't get it then, look out- it's going to be a short winter. And February is usually a pretty dry month through here, historically. And usually we get maybe one or two more replenishment snows and that's about it for the year. And so we're – so we kind of - we go through - every year is different – seems like there's been some years there's more snow than others. And we had some discussion here a while back about one year when they didn't operate up here – I think the Poma lift was here at that time – and they – it was a cold, cold winter. As I say, Allen Lake froze over out of Pateros, and we ice-skated up there for almost a month – the whole lake!

1:25: 21

CA: Isn't that – wasn't Wally Scroggie doing brodies on the - out on the lake - had his rig out there? (laughs) I heard.

BZ: Somebody has a rig out there. But anyway – kind of a – I think there was a couple of snowfalls. But that one winter there were almost no snowfalls, there just was – I forgotten how much snow there was up here – I've lost it. But we didn't – I don't know what else there is.

CA: Any real high snows that you remember –that were really fun?

BZ: Yeah, we've had some pretty good snows. I remember the one year the Department of Transportation – Highway Department - had to bring in a snow blower to widen the road on the Loup Loup which was kind of – almost unheard of. The road got so narrow that they couldn't have two lanes of traffic and so they had to - the pusher plows when they get to the point that it is now you start getting some more snow it starts to comes in because you can only push it so far. Those pushers throw but when you have a bank like this they don't throw over too well. So they it got to the point where they had to come in and widen the top a little bit. It was a pretty good year – I forget which

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year it was or how much snow we had here then. But we had – we've had some snowfalls. We had some four foot snow falls - four foot over on the old hill I remember that. We had a few years in there they were heavy.

CA: Have you noticed anything like with your orcharding that kind of signals we're going to have a good year or a bad year?

BZ: Good year for what?

CA: Skiing. For skiing and snow. (laughs)

BZ: I don't think there is any good...

CA: No good precursors huh?

BZ: Well [xxx xxxx] winter coming that's a pretty good sign.

CA: Okay. Anything with vegetation that you'd like to share? Have there been changes in vegetation here at the hill.

BZ: Well we've done a lot of experimenting up there with - on hills, taking trees out, even reseeding some grass. I think they experimented one time with some herbicides and some young re-growth stuff to see if it would work or not, but it wasn't very legal so we didn't go very far with it.

Laughter

BZ: I didn't say what the herbicide was.

CA: Okay. And then, um in terms of the future, what kind of future do you see for the hill here?

BZ: I think it's got a great opportunity. I was going to stop by the ticket office and see how they're doing this year. I haven't been in. I was familiar with it for years and years and years. I used to stop in almost every week and ask, "How are you doing? And how are the ticket sales today? How are we adding up in here?" And it – I'm kind of off on that. I don't think anyone knows who I am in there any more. But that's beside the point. It's –Yeah I think we got a facility here –it's always going to be different – it's never going to be a land office business, its never going to be a destination area but we – like Ike said, We've got a family area and that's the biggest thing we have going for us. If we can teach kids to ski – give kids the opportunity to ski something, if we can keep ski rates down to as low as possible so kids can afford to be – get involved in it – it's a great thing.

CA: Is there anything else that you want to share. Any good stories having to do with the Loup or ...

BZ: Well there's lots of them you don't always think of the darn things at the time you're coming up with stuff. I think I've told you quite a few of them but then – when they cleared the whole area off out there – a good five acres I think they cleaned – at the time let's get up on the hill. We've had some real good people on ski patrol we had lot of Forest Service individuals on ski patrol which I got to see more than anything else, being involved in it. We've had a bunch of them go out for what we

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call senior exams and become – I was thinking of Hawley Wooschlager who used to be a ski racer back in Buffalo, New York, and he was with the Forest Service out here. He was a great help on a lot of things. Bill Clayton who was followed me as a ski patrol leader and he was a great – he was a great help on a lot of things. Was he on ski patrol? Yeah, he was on ski patrol. And Rod Dodge from Princeton was involved and the ones that we still got there we got Duey Hatfield. We took a bunch of them to senior exams, and I think Doug and I thought it necessary that somebody get a little more advanced so we became senior patrolmen real early in the game. And then we got a national rating, and we took a bunch of the guys up to different places and they were able to pass their exams as seniors and a number of them became nationals. Hawley Wooschlager became a national, Rod Dodge became a national. Let me think about it. I ‘m losing track right now. Erik – Erik is a national – my nephew.

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CA: Now those are pretty neat. Anything else?

BZ: No I think that's it.

CA: Oh you did, great.

BZ: You've heard more than you need.

CA: And you said you didn't have anything to say. Look at that. You did good

BZ: I grew up in a lot of this ski area here. I think I was here for fifty years or so – maybe not quite that long.

CA: A big part of you is.

BZ: It's come a long ways and I look back at people like Ralph Parks who, I think, was the instigator and put an awful lot of his time and effort into it and money really. Somebody had to build up these things. He took the old – there used to be a lot of stationary sprayers in these orchards around here and they were driven with - the spray pump was driven with electric water with a rather small feed bill and then they had a big wheel that was about this big that was on the pump itself to slow the pump speed - pump down. And they had grooves in them for the vee belt – three or four – at least four vee belt drives. And he found a bunch of those and he machined out all the grooves and made a - or all but two of them - and then he was able to run them – and that's how the rope pulleys were built. He ran a rope around those which was tied by gears to a gas motor and so kind of xxx of how he put things together.

I2: I was wondering if there by was, by any chance, any pictures of that original snow groomer that he made with the old hay rake?

BZ: Somebody must have one. I may have had one but I gave a lot of my pictures – loaned them to somebody – they were slides in those days and I don't know where they are. I've lost them.

I2: If somebody saw the pictures they wouldn't know what it was.

BZ: I'm sure there are pictures of it. Did you ever get a picture of that snow packer that Ralph Parks built with the two by fours on the hay rake?

EZ: Do you know, I think I saw – I remember seeing it, Yes. I definitely remember seeing it- I don't know if I ever had a picture of it.

BZ: Yeah. I must have had one – I don't know where it is.

CA: Well if you ever come across anything, Bruce, let us know.

BZ: Okay dokey

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CA: All right, thank you.

BZ: Yeah.

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