

## *Gathering Our Voice*

Interview: Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center (Part 1)

Interviewer: Nancy Warner

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NW: Thank you all for being here. Before we get started I'd like to go around the room and ask you who you are and where you are from in North Central Washington? I'll start with you.

GH: George Honey, Entiat.

BM: Bill Moody, Twisp.

WL: Wayne Long, Wenatchee.

MB: Maggie Bailey, Wenatchee.

DS: Dave Spies, East Wenatchee

JH: John Husselton, Entiat.

CW: Chuck Wolf, Entiat.

SG: Steve Goetz, Cashmere.

DA: Dave Anderson, Leavenworth.

DG: Dick Gormley, Wenatchee.

DB: Doug Bowie, East Wenatchee.

NW: Ok, great. Thank you. Now, I'd like to ask you each individually how you got involved in the Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center. I know that some of you have been involved more recently and that some of you go way back. So I think if we just go around the room with that question, then we'll build on it. So, could we start with you this time, Doug?

Doug: Well at the very beginning I guess you could say that Nancy [Belt] and I used to work together, and it was Nancy's dream to have something saved from our lookouts. When the program that the regional forester developed had some challenge dollars, she submitted her recommendation that we do something with some of the lookouts that are either in hibernation or being assessed or whatever, that we could put one someplace so that they could tell a story. And the rest is history. And then as I retired later on people said if you have some free time, please come and join us. And that's what I did. So that's how I kind of became familiar with Columbia Breaks.

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NW: So what year was that?

Doug: Oh my golly, it must have been in the early 90's...late 80's, early 90's when that program first started that the regional forest established.

NW: And what was your job with the Forest Service at that time?

Doug: I was the lead dispatcher, fire dispatcher for the Wenatchee National Forest.

NW: Could you tell us how you got involved?

Dick: I believe it was because I was president of the North Central Washington Fire Chiefs at the time and I was the fire chief representative and my relationship with Nancy, you know, it went back quite a ways too. So when she proposed the idea and got the funding to initially launch it, I was part of the group from the very beginning.

NW: So could you tell me, and we'll have her do this when she gets here, but what was her role, what was her job in the Forest Service? Nancy...

Dick: Well I think Doug could best answer that.

Doug: I had two primary assistants and she was one of them.

Dave Anderson: I got involved in, I think it was February of '92, I retired in January and Grover Payne called me after I retired and asked me if I would come to the meeting. I think it was at that time held down in Wenatchee at one of the banks. But I showed up and I don't think I was there ten minutes and I was on the board. It was pretty quick there. At that time things were just getting going and they were looking at ways of raising funds and whatnot. I've been pretty steadily involved since the winter of '92.

NW: So what was it that made you want to get involved? Why did you agree to be on the board after only ten minutes?

Dave Anderson: Well, I of course had a whole lot of interest in fire; my whole career was in the Forest Service in fire. It was a natural for me to get involved in something that would keep me involved in fire to some degree. I think that was part of it. And I believed in the concept of a training center, an information center on fire, that wasn't available in this area. In fact at that time, nowhere in the country was there such a place.

NW: Really? In 1992?

Dave Anderson: Yes. That I'm aware of, there were no information centers that were dedicated primarily to fire.

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NW: How about you? How did you get involved and why did you get involved?

Steve Goetz: I guess it was around 2000-2001 I was asked by my supervisor if I'd like to be a, basically an agency rep for the board. So I started coming to the meetings. And it might have been a year, I can't remember exactly, but I was asked if I'd like to be a board member. So I said yes and I guess the biggest reason is just to educate the public. Its part of what the DNR [Department of Natural Resources] does in fire prevention so I thought this would be a great way to get that education to people out on fire prevention and wildfire.

NW: So that lookout model is right behind you...and I'm looking at that thing, and they started to take them down in the late '80s...

Group: Early 50's-60's.

NW: So when they started coming down, there was less information going out to the public on fire management. Is that right? Do you think that's true?

Steve: Less information...I don't know. During fire season there is always public awareness in the news media and everything. I know when I was growing up we used to take visits to the lookout...when I was a kid...two or three different lookouts in the area. Well, they are gone. So the young people nowadays, you know, they don't see a lookout, they can't visit a lookout. There are a few, but they are far and few between.

Dave Spies: Wasn't fire education mostly the prevention part?

Steve: Yeah, Smoky Bear.

Dave Spies: It wasn't much to do with management, the lookouts then so there wasn't a lot of emphasis on getting information out. That's what I feel.

NW: Maybe Dave you could talk about how you got involved and why you did get involved.

Dave Spies: Well, there are a couple of reasons I got involved. I had fought fires for about ten summers with what's now called "Hot Shot Crew." Chuck was my boss in fact. It's something I loved doing and often I wished I would have stayed with it. Any firefighter will tell you that once it gets in your blood, it doesn't get out. You'll see a retardant plane fly over, or you'll see the engines go out, you know you want to follow them; you want to be there you know. I had a love for it and then I've taught for 35 years. For about thirty of those years I was involved in environmental education and resource education with Project Learning Tree and WFPA for Washington Forest Protection Association. And so I've been teaching a lot about the environment for a lot of year to both students and teachers...mostly teacher workshops. My passion was to first of all get kids excited about what's out there first of all and to know what's out there. And then, once they know what's there, you know, where's it been, how have things changed naturally, how have people changed it? What's people's role in managing our resources? And there are a lot of different vehicles you could use to teach that. You could use

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the forest, you could use wildlife like project WILD does, and Project Wet uses wetlands and water. And fire is a perfect vehicle for getting kids hooked on...you know you teach the same message no matter what resource you are talking about pretty much. That's how I got involved with the board. I was invited to a board meeting, and like Dave, after about ten minutes I was on the board.

NW: Chuck, how did you get involved?

Chuck: Well, I guess I was the sounding board for Nancy. And at that time in the late '80s, there was a lot of concern throughout the Pacific Northwest about losing the history of the lookouts. That they felt that that was an integral part of fire management. That most people, they knew about a lookout, but they didn't really know the background in which the lookouts existed. From there, she got the idea, why not a fire center? And using the lookouts as a symbol to talk about the need for fire not only fire management and controlling wildfire, but also fire management as a tool. It's an integral part of the environment. And being the number one disturber, it's a necessary evil so to speak. And from there we just talked on through it to find out. Then I retired in '90 and kind of got involved in it when the Entiat Development Corporation come along; which was a group of local people who gathered their money together in shares and started an effort to try to do something within this community to raise up the economic status of it which was bottom ground. Through that, then the land here was purchased by that corporation. And at that time I was the president of the corporation. We got involved in that through Mike Asher, who was the chief of the local fire district and also the chairman of the board. He knew the landowner's sons and knew how to locate them. And together we got up the ability to make a loan based upon personal records...of individual's financial records and purchased the property then because the board didn't have any money at all. And through the board and the Entiat Development Corporation, who had the ability to make a loan, through a bank in Chelan. Then the efforts went on from there. I've been involved ever since kind of in the background, which I prefer. I spent my life in fire and a lot of fire management in prescribed fire throughout the Pacific Northwest. And I think it's an integral part of saving our forests and the management of it in the future.

NW: What was your position in the Forest Service when Nancy came to you?

Chuck: I was a fire management officer on the Entiat Ranger District.

NW: What's your story? I know you are very involved with the Chamber of Commerce...

John Husselton: I first started getting involved with this group in the early 90's. I was mayor at that time and this site was basically being purchased. And I'm really a tourist-oriented person; I try to promote tourism where I can. And I see this as a great opportunity for Entiat that would have a site that would attract tourists to come into the area. I've been involved off and on with the group. I've been on the board and off the board, and on the board, and off the board. And now I just kind of come to the meetings and listen to what's going on and participate where I can. Currently I coordinate the information center part of this now that we're working in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and the Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center to

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keep this open on weekends so visitors can stop, view the videos, pick up brochures and those kind of things. And I help coordinate the personnel because it's all volunteer...we have no paid staff. So that's basically my involvement.

NW: That's great. And you live across the street don't you?

John: Yeah, I live right across the street so that's why I get to do the coordinating and doing things here. And also I was very involved with the building itself. I helped kind of lay out the pattern for the floor plan and worked with all of the contractors when the building was being put in. I just kind of oversaw that and that's because I live right across the street and it was handy for everybody to get to me so I ended up having to do that. But I enjoyed it. It was a good contribution to the organization.

NW: So Maggie, how did you get involved and why did you get involved?

Maggie Bailey: Well, I was working at Wenatchee High School at the time and John Spencer was currently on the board. About 1993-1994, the secretary on the board had resigned and they needed somebody to fill in that position and John knew me and knew that I was organized and invited me. Well he actually told me about the project and I think this was about the time that the land had been purchased, and a lot of fundraising efforts were going on. So I thought about it for a while, and I do have family members...my father-in-law Bill Bailey, was a lookout in the St. Joe region during the CCC days and I have cousins who were "smoke jumpers." And so I thought, well you know, that's kind of an interesting thing and I think I would be really interested in being a part of that group. So I came on board and my job basically was to keep everything organized and help with fundraising and promotion and I think my skills lend very well to that. I stayed on the board for twelve and a half years and have been off for, it doesn't seem like it, but two years I think. But I'm still connected to the group.

NW: Wayne, how did you get involved and why was it something you wanted to spend time on?

Wayne Long: Well you know I'm a lot like Dave and Chuck and so many people, I spent my entire career with the Forest Service in fire but I left here in 1966 and went to central Oregon. And after I retired in 1990, we kind of bounced around the Northwest and finally settled in Wenatchee. And someone invited me to one of the meetings. I guess I was invited to attend one of the preliminary meetings in Wenatchee when Columbia Breaks was first being thought of. I walked away thinking, well, us retired people have deep pockets and maybe they want some money out of us. And I really didn't get involved then. Four or five years ago I was invited to attend a meeting and I saw what was happening out here and there were some people that did some mighty fine work. There has been talk of maybe having a ranger, somebody paid to stay out here and promote this area. But it's been fixed up so nicely that it's a self-contained tour that you can walk around out here and learn about what's going on. It would be nice, you know, if we could open up the lookout so that people could go up there whenever they stop by. And eventually I think that will probably happen. I enjoy working with some of the guys that have put this thing together. I'm not much of a promoter, but I do like to do maintenance kind of stuff and it's a good time out here. You get to talk about fires and stuff.

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NW: How about you Bill?

Bill Moody: I think I'm here because Nancy Belt was a very persuasive lady...very persuasive. I had known Nancy through her Forest Service career coming off the Okanogan we did a lot with Wenatchee through dispatch and I knew that she had been a lookout. So when the concept was pretty much bought off on in the early 90's, she was putting together a board and asked me if I'd be interested in serving on the board. I think part of that is because I had just retired and also I had been with the Smoke Jumper Program 33 years and I had a real interest in fire history. I liked the concept of this becoming a training center and being able to inform people more about the role of fire. Also, I think maybe because I was a representative from the north country, which kind of tied that in not only with the smoke jumper base history, but also be a representative in another area that had a lot of fire.

NW: So how long have you been involved?

Bill: I've been involved since the very first board. I was trying to think if that was late '90, or '91 when we had the first board to kick off down at the Wenatchee Convention Center and so I've been on it continuously since that time.

Dave Spies: Dick were you on the original?

Dick Gormley: Yeah I was on the original when we were looking for a place to put this and when we stomped around the bushes out here.

NW: George, we've come around the circle, so tell us how you got involved and what there was about it that made you want to spend time here.

George Honey: A good friend of mine was in the forest tree consulting business and he was president of the Columbia Breaks Association at that time and asked me to be on the board with Arnie Arneson, who everybody knew. Him and I were good friends and after I retired from the Forest Service in 1989, Arnie and I worked together for, several years, going all over the country in forestry consulting. Having a background in timber management and fire, it just seemed something worth doing. And I know there is a lot of disagreement in maybe how we are fighting fires today versus how we did thirty years ago. And they need to educate us as well as the public on what's going on. When they see a fire burning out there for three days before anybody gets on it, they want to know why. And there might be some reasons and I think we need to educate the people.

NW: Ok. I think Nancy might have just pulled up, somebody just pulled up, so we'll ask her that same question when she gets in here. But now I mean, she's pretty well introduced through you all and we know she's very persuasive. So that's a good characteristic. So we'll back up and ask her this question, but then I want to kind of open it up a little bit for some discussion. One of the things that I'd kind of like to hear from you all right off the bat is what are some of the things that you're most proud of at this point? You've been at this for twenty years and what

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are some of the successes that have kept you going? I think that would be really good to hear some of those so I don't care who goes first on that one, but you look like you have something on your mind.

Dave Anderson: Well I always have something on my mind...I think, to me, the biggest success is our middle school fire curriculum and our fire box that teachers take to the schools and teach the fire curriculum and then bring them out to the site and three to four hundred middle schoolers from East Wenatchee come out here and learn, not only about fighting fire, but how fire fits in to the ecology of things here both with the flora and the fauna. And Dave Spies has just done a wonderful job on setting that program up and going through the teacher workshops and getting the teachers educated to where they can pass it on to the kids. I think to me that's kind of the gold star...the biggest achievement we've had on a yearly basis.

NW: Have any of your students gone on to become seasonal firefighters or career Forest Service people do you know?

Dave Anderson: I do not, but Dave [Spies] may, they'd probably almost be getting to the age where, the program started about four years ago, five years ago...My memory is not that great but it seems like it's been about five years. So some of them are probably still a little young, but they do have, some of them do have a good deal of interest I know that when they left here. That time on the lookout, when the kids came through the lookout, you could tell which kids were really interested in fire. We planted some seeds I'm sure.

NW: How about you Maggie? What are some successes that you look back on? It sounds like you did a lot of fundraising...you must have had a lot of successes to get this far.

Maggie: Well, like some of the others I'm not really big at raising money but it was for me just watching the site develop. Everything in the early days, I mean, we spent Saturdays picking trash up all over the property...just cleaning it up...hours and hours people spent doing that work. And then to see the first lookout...Chelan Butte moved to the site, Bill Moody was really responsible for getting that here and then the move of Badger and the development of the interpretive trail and the signage and the kiosk. Each step I mean, just kept us motivated. And then, the support we had from state politicians who believed in us also and would help get funding for our project. There are just so many hours of work, and the work of Dave and Wayne...the site needs people to keep it in good repair so it looks perfect. And you know, we've had a lot of trouble with vandalism here, but I think it's just the location of the site and not a lot of people presence. It's just everything, this office, and meeting space and all the work that everyone's done. And it was mentioned earlier that this board has always been a non-paid, totally volunteer board and people just buck up and get the work done. It's taken us a long time, we're not a flash in the pan, and we've never been one to be. We've been conservative, you know, in our planning. And this is the result that you see and there are people that come out here every day to walk. The kids that come out to the site, middle school kids, I mean, that's been part of our education. It's just all the little pieces over the years that I've seen and the commitment of the people that believe in this project.

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NW: Very gratifying. Well Nancy, welcome!

Nancy Belt: Thank you! Glad to be here. You don't need to go to me! Let me gather my thoughts for a while.

NW: Ok, we can do that. We'll come back to you and loop you in. But we're really glad you're here.

Other Interviewees: We've been talking about you so...

Nancy Belt: Nooooo . . .

NW: Your name has come up, we know several things about you already and we'll be circling back to you. Right now I'll ask you, we are just getting into the topic of what are the successes that people feel individually or together as a group... Bill I want to ask you, what do you think? You've been involved from the very beginning and so you look back on that and you were just describing a lot of different things to feel good about. What is a couple that just stand out?

Bill Moody: Well I think the fact that we have this facility that we are in here right now. Originally we were looking at a multi multi-million dollar facility by now but the whole board has kind of hung in there, and within our financial means we've added different components to the project here. And I see this center here and I see the interpretive trail and I see the lookouts that we have, and also the things we have planned for the future. So I can see there are a lot of successes over the past 18-20 years and potentially we are going to arrive at that dream facility just because of everybody kind of hanging in there and working together. And just as a society, you know, the people that have been involved in this, although the board has evolved through the years, there is just a real serious attitude towards achieving the objective. And it's already, been mentioned, just a lot of the donated time and people working together. We still have our goals and we will achieve them.

NW: Are there any particular obstacles that you had to overcome over the years? Any particular things that stand out? You have the ongoing challenge of maintaining the site I know, cleaning up trash and some vandalism and those sorts of things, which is kind of typical of a site, but are there other things that you kind of worked as a group to overcome in the early days of getting this going?

Dave Spies: I think funding is about the biggest hassle. Nobody wants to go out and beg for money. You know it's hard, it takes a lot of time and there are a lot of other things that people want to give money to. It's the least fun part of the job I guess. The education part, you know working on the lookouts and trails, is more interesting than having to go out and raise money. And the worry, the constant worry of where's the next dollar coming from, is always at the back of our mind and kind of weighs upon you. And I think that probably discourages a lot of people that it doesn't happen faster I guess. So it's finding those funding sources and then taking the time to go out.

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NW: So what were some of successful grants that you got to build the building and so on? The first grant, maybe Nancy we could loop you in now.... Can we loop you in?

Nancy Belt: I think so.

NW: If you could please just say your name on tape and say where you live right now

Nancy Belt: Ok, I'm Nancy Belt and I had an idea once upon a time. I was born and raised in the Entiat Valley and had a background of being exposed to fires. Had some family that were involved in fire and went to work for the Forest Service in '68 on Chipperhoof (sp?) Lookout and the rest of its history. I ended up going to at the Entiat Ranger Station. Kay Johnson hired me there. I did a variety of things, got away from the Forest Service, came back in 1982, and Chuck Wolf hired me back in there as a district dispatcher. I worked in Entiat '83 and '84, then in '85, Wenatchee Centralized Dispatch, in Wenatchee. And I went in there, and at the time, Doug Bowie was the forest dispatcher and I worked for Doug and I learned a lot. That first summer in '85 we brought up the incident command system, we brought up the data general system, and we had five project fires. And so it was a constant learning experience. I have found that fire knows no boundaries. It is a catalyst that makes things happen and that we work after the fact in trying to pay the bills, resolve the problems, resolve interagency operations, communications. We had some fires where people couldn't talk to each other. Couple of the fires we had, one was the Vista Point fire on the Vista Point right above Rocky Reach Dam. A week to the day later we had another fire that was 500 yards directly north. And those were two kind of effective fires in heightening the attention to the interagency operations and communications and those kinds of things. In working, central dispatch was in the supervisor's office and the Forest Service believes in good customer service and good host and caring for the land and serving people. And those are just words until they're put into effect. I would sit there and hear phone calls come in and we didn't have to answer them on the weekends...you know the reception number...but a lot of times we'd pick up the phone and we'd get a question from somebody in Quincy saying I want to go up to Entiat and cut wood. Well maybe the Entiat Ranger Station wasn't open on Saturday, so we'd have to tell them, "Well, if you go to Leavenworth and you get a wood permit, then you can drive up to Entiat and cut wood." So that's not very good customer service. The other thing, I do not feel that the Forest Service has done a very good job of educating the public, and, interpretation. So I saw an opportunity to move a lookout because the state and the Forest Service were moving past the lookout days and rather than go up and burn them down or them down or whatever, it made sense to me to take a lookout and relocate it to a place like the Vista Point right above Rocky Reach Dam, and make that an information center and a customer service center where it could be open year-round, seven days a week. The public would know to come there and they would get what they needed or we'd find out. The regional forester came out with a program called "The Regional Forester's Challenge, Pro Round," and I put in a suggestion and I asked for \$5,000 for a fire support project and nothing happened. So, Douglas, he'd say, "Are you ready to go on an assignment?" So I'd go some place, go to work, and come back. In '88 I went to Yellowstone and I worked for a month there in area command. And that was a pretty instrumental year all over the place, because not only did we have the fires in Yellowstone National Park, we had the '88 Dinklemann fire here which was a pretty good impact in the valley. So when I came back, I

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thought more about it and talked to the folks, and talking to Chuck, and I can still remember talking to Chuck and thinking about what kind of name could we put on this you know, and, listening to Chuck over the years I learned a lot from him, not by questioning him and asking him direct questions. Though he did teach me a lot in a variety of ways, but, I'd hear him explaining and he'd talk about the fire dependent ecosystems and living in an area that is controlled by fire - effected by fire. And talking about the Columbia Breaks. And you know you hear about Columbia Breaks and it's kind of a catchy thing. So, we mulled that over and called it the Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center and asked for \$25,000 and submitted that. Wrote it all up, submitted it again, and lo and behold, got that \$25,000. So now, you know, I used to walk it and talk it and live it and breathe it all the time. I live in Pendleton, Oregon now, I have been there as a dispatch center manager for the Pendleton Interagency Communications Center and work for Umatilla National Forest down there. And so in the time that I have been down there since May of 2000, I have not been involved in Columbia Breaks hardly at all. These people here in this room and some of them from its inception have been the ones that have supported it all along. So at my retirement party on Thursday night, Columbia Breaks comes up, and oh man, I sat there and struggled for a little bit, how do you encapsulate and make sense...twenty years of a project and all it involves. And so I didn't spend a lot of time on the way up today getting my mind together. I'm a wordy person and so it takes me a while to get it organized and deliver the message.

NW: That's fine, that's great. So I do have a question for you. I'm relatively new to this area - I've only been here since 2000 and I've never actually been here [Fire Interpretive Center], physically, until Randy [Ulrich] invited me to come to one of the board meetings. So I came and then Dave took me on the trail, and I'm going, "why did I not know about this sooner?" because it's so great what you all have done here. But the name, tell me a little bit more about the name, the Columbia Breaks is a big fire break? Maybe somebody else could pitch in here...

Chuck Wolf: Columbia Breaks, it's essentially a fire zone, one of the worst fire zones in the United States. I think it was classed at one time as being the 8<sup>th</sup> worst area. Fire history within our lifetime points that out, and that we live in a ponderosa pine environment and a fire environment. When I was FMO (Fire Management Officer) on the district, we went through and started a fire history back beyond...back to Columbus. And it was that the frequency of large fires in this area was anywhere from 8-13 years. Being on the Columbia Breaks, draining into the Columbia River, is how it matches together. This falls all the way to the Wenatchee clear up to the Okanogan.

Dave Spies: Actually, I had never heard of the word, Columbia Breaks, until I came to this center. I didn't even know this area was called that until I started here.

Chuck: I really coined that because it falls directly into the Columbia Breaks...the breaks that falls into the Columbia. And there is a microsystem within the Columbia breaks slopes, which of these immediate slopes, has an entirely different fire history than the ponderosa conifer forest, which is very infrequent.

NW: You mean more of a spruce-fir forest, higher elevation forest.

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Chuck: No, more of a bitterbrush-sagebrush type area.

Dave Spies: When I bring the students out there, we tell them, “you know, this is kind of a transition zone between the shrub step over there on the other side of the river and then somewhat on this side, transitioning into the ponderosa pine.” It’s kind of a combination.

NW: I didn’t know that there were these fire zones, because I’ve never worked in fire, so that’s something I did not know; although I almost got to go to that fire in Yellowstone that summer, but I didn’t. I was working for the National Park Service that summer in Utah. So, other successes from some others of you who haven’t spoken up on this yet, successes...maybe some that came easily, usually they don’t come all that easily, you have to work at them. The fundraising...that was really cool to get a \$25,000 grant off of that and it’s awesome that you’ve kept it going and there’s all this commitment around the room and other people that aren’t here. Were there other things that kind of kept you going, you know those little successes that just kind of keep you involved?

John Husselton: I think the fact that we have a senator and a couple representatives that are really interested in our project, and they have worked with the state to get us a couple grants to keep us going. This building is here because of a grant that was put together by Senator Linda Evans Parlette and Mike Armstrong and Cary Condotta. Support of those people really adds a lot of credibility to what we’re trying to do.

Bill Moody: After what John said, he’s given a lot of credit where it’s due but also I think a very important reason we are where we are now is because we excellent support from the Entiat Chamber. Just all the little day-to-day things and help facilitating permits and just general support. So that has been very very important to us. Also, the Entiat Ranger District...and they have given us a lot of support and time and furnishing some labor and sometimes some equipment and things that we need. And I think beyond that even just the Entiat community, just different individuals; have contributed a lot of their labor and a lot of their resources to help us in projects around here with excavation in just a number of ways. The immediate local support here has been extremely important to getting us where we are.

NW: I have to say that even though I had never physically been here until recently, I did hear about this project from a number of people in the region and it was always in a really favorable light. I just never had a real reason to come here, but I think it does have a really good reputation because of all of the things you are talking about.

John Husselton: It’s really interesting because even though, as he’s said, we’ve had a lot of support from a lot of individuals and like the Endico corporation that Chuck mentioned, and a lot of different people that helped get this thing going, that it’s still a problem in educating people who live right here that have never been on this site that don’t know even that it’s out here. So that’s just kind of the nucleus of the big problem that we have of trying to educate the whole community, not Entiat community, but I’m talking about the state of Washington that this is here, and it is a great thing for them to have and that when they’re traveling it’s one of the things

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that they need to add to their agenda. And I would like to say that I think, and this is, I'm speaking as a citizen, not a firefighter like most of these people, somebody who's never been involved in firefighting, just a citizen out there, that I cannot understand why our Congress people in Washington D.C. when they landed on the Potomac as it's been referred to can I get the message that if they could spend even a million dollars to build an educational site like this, that it would save them millions of not having to fight fires once we can educate people not to start them. And so I would hope that somehow, as we expand our educational program, that somehow we can find a way to get the message to the people in Washington D.C. that they need to support something like this.

Dave Spies: But I think it's a nationwide attitude. If you look interpretive settings around the country, and historical current interpretation center especially, that their attendance is way down. People have lost interest...it's like a whole generation has lost interest. They'd rather go to the Six Flags...you know, the amusement park type things. And so they drive by places like this. Now that, besides the funding, our biggest challenge is getting people to come through the gate to even look. You know, no matter what you put out there, you have to get people somehow motivated to get off the road and look at some sort of educational sight instead of an amusement park type-site.

George Honey: It's not the kids that wouldn't enjoy it, it's the parents. They are in a hurry to get somewhere.

Dave Spies: We have 600 kids come up here and they are totally excited after they leave. Just getting them in here because they come with their classroom through a program, but just getting the adults off the road...

Dave Anderson: I guess when I look at the successes of the Columbia Breaks Interpretive Center; you know I see a lot of small ones along. But you know I think one of the biggest successes of it is the board and the strength that they have because nobody has ever really lost sight of the goal and that's what we all work towards of that goal. When we talk about a lot of...you know, why isn't the public more interested than the rest of us...and what I think is really paramount is we have to redesign our culture a little bit through that education. What Dave is doing with the middle school, that's where that is going to come from is that education there to let them go back, show them what our history is here, the way it used to be, and how technology has changed and what lies ahead. And we talk about Six Flags and what's important today, and it lies within education of the young. But the biggest strength you could have in any organization I think is with the caliber of the people and the dedication that they've had. Here, to me, that's a tremendous success...and maintaining the goal.

NW: Well what we're hoping to do with this project is we are hoping to get high school kids to do oral histories...gathering the story, telling the story. When they start telling the story it will be their story too. So that's what we are hoping.

Dave Spies: And Entiat High School is interested...the principal and the superintendents is behind this project. Mike Wyant. He e-mailed me and said that he is interested in having this as a senior project or whatever, having kids interviewing.

NW: Oh great!

Dave Spies: So that will be our next step.

NW: So I think five years from now, maybe there will be more young people involved.

George Honey: Well when they become parents and say, hey you know how to tell the age of a tree out there and when a fire starts and what kind of information it can give you. Things they'd never thought of.

NW: So can I ask you guys something...I think it would fall into the category of success and I imagine a certain amount of adventure. How did you get those fire lookout places here? How did that happen? That can't have been an overnight deal.

Bill Moody: Well I think we identified the fact that we wanted to have lookouts on site. We looked for candidate lookouts and readily came up with two locally that were pretty much excess to the Forest Service DNR needs and one being Chelan Butte which they had hoped to take down and the other being Badger Mountain. So we made contact with the Forest Service because they were on the historical register. We discussed it with the Wenatchee National Forest. I can't remember if we did it at the DNR or not, I believe we did and got that pretty much all cleared and they pretty much supported what we wanted to do. So then I contacted Cusick Construction as a possible vender who would have the ability to remove the lookouts. We looked at different options; one was to go to the military as a training exercise with the big Chinook helicopters. And also we contacted Ray Cresset who had written a book on all the lookouts and had quite a history...and also had quite an experience...more than one experience...with the military and their weekend warrior projects of moving lookouts. Some became detached from the extraction line and still laying out there in splinters. He pretty strongly discouraged going that route. So talking to Cusick, they said they had the ability to remove the lookout, piecemeal it, pretty much number the boards and so on, put it on a flatbed, and bring it down. So we negotiated on that and they in fact did, and put up the first one out here and we shortly after that went for the second one at Badger. I can't remember if we did that in halves, or not, but we still had to get the big lift.

Dave Anderson: Yeah that large crane that they had to get up to the cabin separately I believe from the catwalk.

Bill Moody: So then each site, this sight out here on Chelan Butte didn't present us any problems in terms of a building site, but the one up here in the hill with Badger was a little more of a challenge. We actually had the latrine backed up as far as we could on the hill and started putting pieces up there...laying the footings and so on. Also, this is a sidelight, I believe the folks up there at Cusick Construction had also had a parent who had been involved I believe in

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some of the construction of the lookouts back in the '30's and 40's. So they had kind of a history and a real interest in doing the project. We felt that they did a very very good job and put in significant probably between the two maybe \$70,000 to do the two lookouts. We are now looking at a third lookout. We will start in September of this year...it's the East Flattop Lookout...and that's all in the mill. We have the folks from the Forest Guard Lookout Association who originally took down the lookout. It's all on a trailer bundled up, ready to go, and they have agreed to come up in early September, with our assistance, and place that lookout, restore it right here alongside this building so we have good ground access to that lookout. They and two to three people from the Lookout Association will be here with our folks. It will probably be about a two, maybe three-week endeavor to get it put back together. We have enough actual equipment from the previous lookouts that will pretty much fully equip that lookout. Then we just found out that in the end of September the National Forestry Lookout Association, which is a national association, they are having their annual board meeting in Snohomish - Western Conference - and they've already planned to come over here in conjunction with that and visit, hopefully, the East Flattop Lookout sitting right here.

NW: When is that going to be?

Dave Spies: September 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>. So they'll be here on a Sunday I think is when it is.

NW: I just want to ask about any other things you are particularly proud of. Not everybody has spoken to that yet and things that you feel personally proud of, proud of the group...either one.

Nancy: I'm really proud of this group because as Dick just mentioned, so many times you have an idea and you create a project and when somebody else takes it on, takes ownership of it, it goes in some skewed direction and this has just stayed on the straight and narrow. In addition to that, the commitment of that group and their dedication to their life's work of fire and being involved in fire and their "can do" attitude has continued to do the job of getting it done. The networking...I kept saying, this is really going to happen...and this is really going to happen! And Bill Moody touched a gentleman by the name of Eric Bakke who did a lot of the legal work, pro-bono, to clear everything. There were some complications with acquiring a site, but you know, that was a major accomplishment when the Foundation acquired 17½ acres of land. And that really was a big step and it was "wow!" So again, that commitment and dedication and that volunteerism. Lanny Quackenbush from Washington DNR was an assistant southeast region manager and Lanny would, after working all day, he would get in the car and he'd drive from Ellensburg up here to the Columbia Breaks meeting, sit there in that meeting for two or three hours and then he would drive back home to Ellensburg and then have to get up in the morning sometimes and drive clear over to Olympia. So that kind of commitment and interest...and Maggie...when I had to finally back out of the support of the project, the way I had been doing, the timing was, Maggie stepped in there and took that on with all of her energy and continued it for a long time. So the timing, I mean, sometimes things are just meant to be.

NW: So I want to ask you guys one other thing, because you were talking when we got here and getting some good stories going and everything. Usually when a group hangs together as well as this one, it's usually because there is a fair bit of fun.

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Continued on part 2