

Monograph No. 1

**MABEL HEDGPETH**

Crater Lake National Park

Oral History Program

*Royal G. Jackson*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

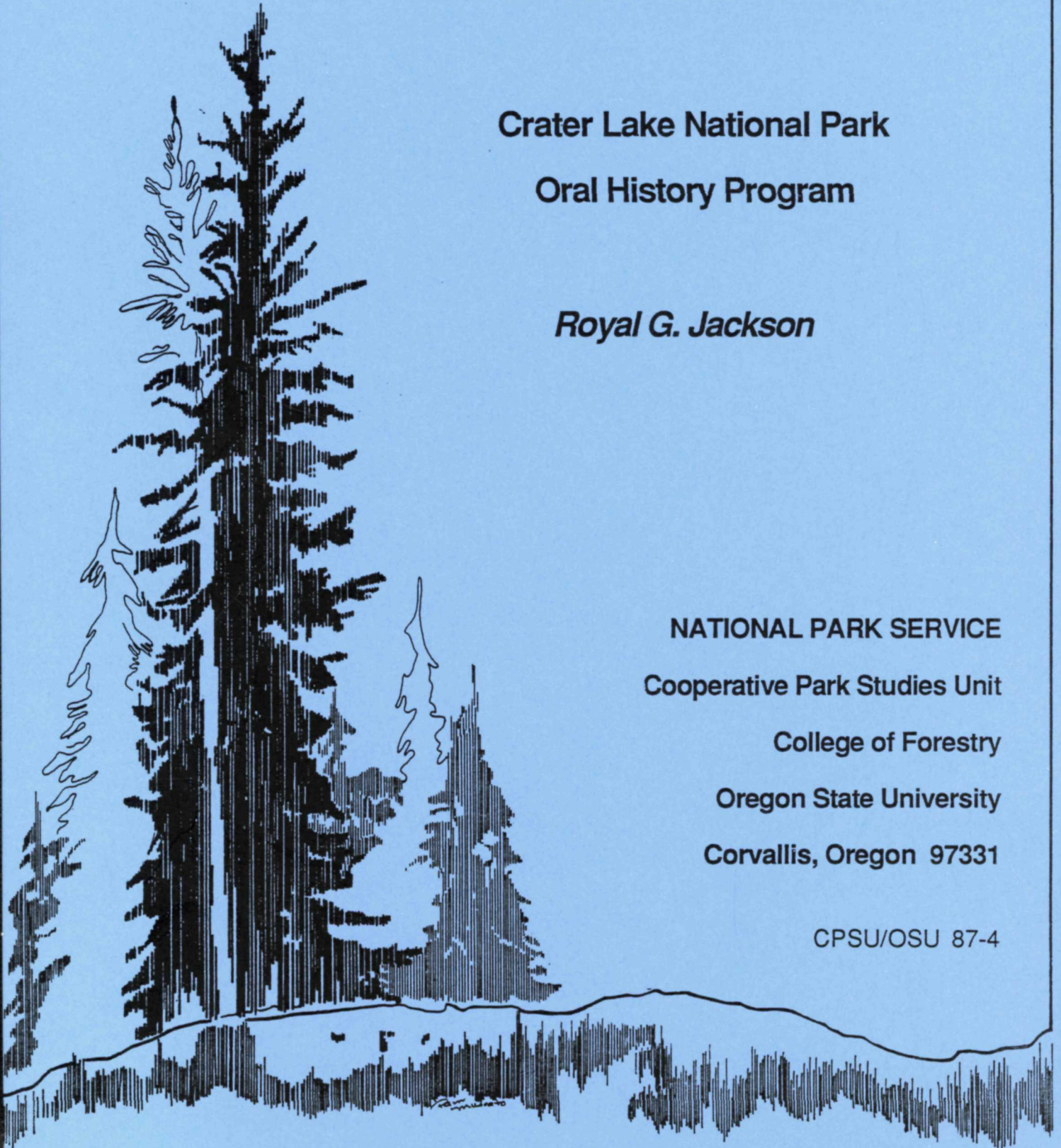
Cooperative Park Studies Unit

College of Forestry

Oregon State University

Corvallis, Oregon 97331

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Fall 1987

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## INTRODUCTION

The taped interviews from which this transcript was prepared were carried out as a part of the continuing program, on the part of the National Park Service, of collecting historical information about Crater Lake National Park. This particular project was initiated by Dr. Stephanie Toothman, Regional Historian for the National Park Service's Pacific Northwest Region. The interviews took place at the informant's home in Central Point, Oregon on August 23, 1986 and June 18, 1987.

Mabel Hedgpeth worked and lived at Crater Lake with her husband Clarence Hedgpeth, from 1930 to 1943. During those years she was a part of the small community of people who made the park their home year around. She witnessed some of the major building projects such as the Sinnott Memorial and the headquarters building, cooked for hungry fire fighters, served as postmaster, personally knew William Gladstone Steel, saw the changing camping styles of the visitors, and came to hold a profound appreciation for Crater Lake. "I fell in love--twice," she noted. "My first love was Clarence G. Hedgpeth . . . Crater Lake National Park was my second love."

Mrs. Hedgpeth also loved the outdoors. She regularly fished in the lake, hiked the trails, viewed the wildlife and skied--she was the first woman to ski around the rim of Crater Lake. She noted that, "I've always been an outside gal, I liked anything outside." Throughout the 13 years, in all seasons, she explored and enjoyed the park's unique resources.

Her residence in the park spanned the C.C.C. era, thus she came to know many of the enrollees in the two C.C.C. camps at Crater Lake--Annie Springs

and Wineglass. She recalled with special fondness, the young men who worked on the many conservation projects which took place during this period: "Real neat bunch of kids. We had a lot of fun with them." She also favorably remembered the park personnel, including the four superintendents who served between 1930 and 1943; Earnest Leavitt was held in special regard.

Like other residents of Crater Lake she recalled with vividness some of the more dramatic occurrences such as chief ranger Godfrey's death, falls into the lake, disappearances, and other related human misfortunes. Mabel Hedgpeth's fundamental disposition, however, tends toward the upbeat and optimistic--a trait which was evident throughout the interviews. "Didn't you get lonely in the winter with all of that snow?" "No . . . I did a lot of knitting and sewing; that's all we had for recreation. It was great; I played in the snow, my husband worked in it." Her concluding thought well exemplified her outlook on life:

This ends the chapter of our lives at Crater Lake, 13 wonderful years . . . all good things must end so even better things may begin. We had two precious daughters and we all four accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior. What more could anyone possibly want?

MABEL HEDGPETH

August 23, 1986

Central Point, Oregon

Interviewed by Royal Jackson

Perhaps we can start by having you tell me when and where you were born?

Do I have to tell you when? [laughs] I was born in Illinois in 1911, so you know how old that makes me.

And what was your maiden name?

Hale.

Were you raised in Illinois?

No, my parents left there when I was two, we moved to Idaho, we lived eight years in Idaho and we've been in Oregon since 1921. We lived for several years in Bend and moved to Medford, and Medford's been home all these years really, even [when we lived at] Crater Lake, Medford was always the town where we went. When we went to town, we went to Medford. And it was there that I met my husband, he lived with his brother and his brother lived next door to us, so it was natural.

When did you meet your husband?

About 1928.

What was he doing then? Did he already work for the Park Service?

No, he drove truck for Pacific Fruit for a while, and in 1929 he went to the Park Service; he worked at Yellowstone [National Park], and next year he came back to Crater Lake and that's the year we were married, in 1930.

Why did he go to work for the Park Service? Do you recall?

No, I don't. That was the Depression, and he just took any job he could get.

What kind of work did he do in Yellowstone?

He fired boilers in some hotel. Mammoth Hotel, I believe it was. For that one summer, and he planned on going back but I think I kind of interrupted his plans. [chuckles] So we went to Crater Lake in 1930, we lived there, well we did a lot of things by the time we left.

What was his job at Crater Lake?

He was heavy equipment operator, he drove supply trucks and that sort of thing, mechanic in the summertime and in the winter he drove a snowplow. Our first four years at Crater Lake were just seasonal jobs, just summer jobs. Our first summer there one of the girls in the kitchen cut her hand and she couldn't work, they needed someone right now to fill her place; so I was available. They asked me to fill her place which I did, and I worked for the next three years in the kitchen and dining room.

The dining room at the lodge?

No, at park headquarters. The government run that dining room then, they hired the help, they bought the food, and that sort of thing, but about 1934 they let it out on contract. And that's when I quit, because the fellow that had the contract had a family of his own, so they run the mess hall. And that was just fine, because that gave me time to explore the park, and I certainly did. I've been all over it.

Tell me about your first impression of Crater Lake. Do you remember what you first thought when you saw it?

I thought that was the most beautiful place I had ever seen, and I still think it is. I love that place, I just love that place. In 1934 my husband and one of the rangers at Crater Lake, Rudy Lueck, were stationed at Lost Creek. There was a C.C.C. camp there and they did snow removal while they were there. Of course I had to go along. Because I loved the out-of-doors, we had never been on skis before, neither one of us, but they took us around on [Highway 97] and we skied on the east entrance highway into Lost Creek, that's about eight miles and it's all uphill; there was a ranger camp and a C.C.C. camp there and we stayed there that winter and early spring we moved over to Government Camp. And my husband got his permanent position then. We moved into one of the cabins in back of the administration building with the bears.

Were there a lot of bears?

Oh, a lot of bears, and they did some damage.

Tell me about that.

Well, when we lived in the campground while I was working, we lived in tents, they made a frame and set a tent over it. And those bears, canvas was nothing to them, you know, ripped the side of the tent out and take whatever they could reach. They got in our car, we had a new Chevrolet roadster with a rag top, they were in that, and we could hear them, we made a noise and they would disappear. Well, this one disappeared right through the roof of our car. It happened several times like that. But when we moved from Lost Creek then back over to Government Camp, we moved into one of the Park Service houses back of the administration building. And something happened to the cook down there so, "Mabel, will you come



down and cook until we can get another cook?" "Yes, I will." So we had to sleep down there because we had to get up in the middle of the night and get that stove going so it was hot enough to cook breakfast. My husband went up to the house for something for me before breakfast, he came back and said there were some bears in the house last night. And they nailed some boards over windows, and after breakfast went back and the bear was in the house. The house had windows with just little panes, and one of them was broken out and they had cardboard over that. Well, he stuck his nose in that, the cardboard went, and the rest of the window went. And the bear went in. We didn't have furniture there, the Park Service had just enough furniture to get by with. But the bears came in the kitchen and pulled the cupboards right off the walls. The stairway in that house went to the corner and turned and opened up in a bedroom, there's no door at the top of the stairs, but there was a dresser with one of those swinging mirrors on it. Well that mirror was in the turn of that stairway with the bear's paw print right on it. He got upstairs, saw himself in the mirror, and slapped at it, knocked it off of there and down the stairs.

He knocked it off?

Yes. And we had a cot in the living room and the mattress on that little cot, was just little balls of cotton. He must have had a good time in there. He destroyed everything in that house. [laughs]

Did they ever attack people?

No, I never heard anything like that.

During what years did this occur?

About '30 to '34.

There were quite a few bears at Crater Lake, then huh?

There were a lot of them.

So they never did actually attack anyone?

I don't believe they did.

You never heard of an attack?

No I never heard of that.

What else do you remember of those early years?

Well, I remember when Bill Godfrey died.

Chief ranger Godfrey? Tell me about that.

He was out of the park; he came around the south entrance through Fort Klamath to come in, and he knew that the snowplow was supposed to come that way. I guess he contacted by radio. He got so far and he got stuck in the snow. He wasn't too far from the Garden of the Gods, and he thought he'd walk on and he could meet the snowplow, but the snowplow for some reason went west, down the west road. He made it as far as the Garden of the Gods. Then they met him, and he died right there. Then they changed the name after that from Garden of the Gods to Godfrey's Glen. He died from exhaustion.

What was life like in those early years for the park employees? Did you live in the park?

Yes, well, the first three years we lived just summertime. We had a home in Medford. But after Clarence's appointment we lived in the park, winter and summer. It was great, I loved every bit of it.

Didn't you get lonely in the winter with all that snow?

No, I always have to have something to do. I did a lot of knitting and sewing; that's all we had for recreation. It was great; I played in the snow, my husband worked in it. So that made it a little different.

How was his daily round of activities?

Wintertime he was on the snowplow. During a lull in the storm he was in the shop as a mechanic. The operators would get up at 4:00 o'clock, be out by 4:00 o'clock on the snowplow and sometimes it would take them two trips to get back home.

Did you have children while you were there?

No, there was no school there and the mother had to live in town to send kids to school while dads were up there and that wasn't the kind of life we wanted so we waited for our family. We have two daughters now.

When did you have those?

After the war, 1943 and 1949.

Let me back up a minute and ask you some background information on your husband. What was his full name?

Clarence Graden. He was born in California. His folks lived in Gold Hill for years.

Did he go to school here in Oregon?

Yes, my husband went to school in Gold Hill.

Did you go to college?

No, neither one of us had any college, just high school. That year we were at Lost Creek, like I said we had never been on skis before and we came in there and spent three months just skiing. Then one day one of us said, "Let's ski around the rim." So, okay we're ready for that, so we

took off and we skied from Lost Creek around to Wineglass; there was a construction camp there. So we spent that night where the bears had been in that room and the dishes were scattered all over the place and the doors were open and the snow was blowing across the room but we had to stay there; that was the only place. [laughs] Next day we skied around to the north entrance ranger station. We each carried a little food and a blanket on a backpack and the snow over there was so good and the hills so good we decided we'd stay an extra day and just ski, but middle of the afternoon the clouds began to come in so we thought we better get out of here. So we skied on over to park headquarters and stayed there. I tell everybody I skied around the rim all by myself, because my husband and Rudy would get about two miles ahead and then stop and wait for me and as soon as I got there, they'd go on. I could always see them up there. I was always behind. But it was beautiful, I wish so many times that we would have had color film.

You were the first woman to ski around the rim?

That's what they tell me.

Did a lot of people do it after that?

I think there's been some.

What did the early visitors see when they came to the park? Tell me about that.

Well, there used to be little motorways we could drive down, drive off the highway down to Boundary Springs or over to Union Peak or someplace like that. They had horses there that you could take a horseback ride.

But they don't do things like that anymore, you can't get off the highway anymore, the little trails are all blocked off.

People didn't have to stay on the highways back then?

No, but really there's not much for people to do there very long, unless they go fishing or something. There aren't too many that want to take that trail to the water. I sat on the rim one day talking to Judge Steel, William Gladstone Steel, the father of Crater Lake, they call him.

You knew him?

Yes, he died in 1934. But he said, "If I live long enough they're gonna have a tunnel through that mountain," and he pointed to Garfield. The rim road comes around pretty close to the rim but that Garfield, you have to come way around and come back into park headquarters. He said they would also have a tram or something to take people down to the water, but he didn't live that long. That was his dream.

Tell me some more about him. What kind of man was he?

Well he was just a nice old man. We knew him quite well but he was getting up in years so he didn't get out too much there. He loved the park too. He worked with Washington and caused it to become a national park.

Did he spend a lot of time on the rim talking to people?

Oh I think he did, he loved to talk. The trail that went down to the lake took off right in front of the cafeteria. That was by the trail, but now it's by Cleatwood Cove, because it's a shorter trail and it is also on the side that gets afternoon sun and the snow is melted from the trail by the time they have the rim road open so they can get down to the

water much earlier. We used to go fishing down there; oh the fishing used to be fabulous! [laughs] We had a boat down there, my husband and a couple of other guys made that boat, just a wooden boat. We took it down over the Wineglass slide. The Wineglass has a rock ledge this tall. [motions] After you get past that it's easy going and fun. We had that for several years but we had to fight with concessionaires at the lodge; they had the concession for boats and all that down there.

They didn't like you having that down there?

No, they didn't like that. Dave Canfield was superintendent at that time and he fought with Washington; well he didn't fight with Washington, but he communicated with Washington for us. They gave us permission as long as that was our home and we lived there we were allowed to have a boat. So we went fishing. Always on the weekend and I went a couple of times during the week when I had a fishing partner. Then it was a limit of 12 and we would always have our limit by one o'clock, all of us. They were 14 to 16 inches long, beautiful fish. [laughs] Wintertime we'd have to go down and build a rock support for that boat to keep the snow from caving it in. One spring we went down and it was just plain gone so we have a suspicion of what happened to it. We think that they did away with our boat. But anyway we had a lot of fun for a lot of years with that boat.

Did a lot of other visitors fish in those waters?

Not very many. We were down one time fishing and there was a couple and they had their teenage daughter with them. She wanted to go fishing; well they rented fishing tackle from the dock there and when we started

fishing they rented a boat and came right behind us. They just sat right on top of our spinners all the time. But we could still catch fish. We got our limit, there was two of us, and then they wanted to buy my spinner. They had little tiny ones, I had a big flashy one. [laughs]

They liked yours?

Yes, because we caught all the fish! I said, "No, that was the only one I have, and I didn't want to sell it because I live here and I don't want to drive to town for another one." "Well, would I just lend it to them?" I said, "Well maybe I would," so I did. He said, "I will give you five dollars if you'll let me use it today and return it and get my five dollars back." So I did, I let him have my spinner. Well, he got 13 fish and he was so proud of those fish. [laughs] That lake, unless you've been on it times like this you just don't know how beautiful it is! Sometimes it's just smooth as glass and as deep as it is you could almost count the grains of sand down there. I picked many a spinner up off of the bottom. Somebody loses them while fishing and that's more fun than fishing.

Fishing for spinners?

Yes, we did that. [laughs] You'd drop your fishing tackle over there with a worm on it and you wouldn't see a fish and pretty soon they just come from all directions. "Whoops! That one's too little, stay away from that one," you know. So we got our fish there.

What kind of fish did you catch there?

Those silver side salmon they call them. But they used to stock the fish oh, this was before the war, they used to stock them with little

fingerlings, about three inches long.

Did you ever watch them do that?

Oh, I saw them go down with their packs on their backs. They would have some kind of container on their backs like a back pack and they took them down that way. They didn't have helicopters like they do now.

Was there a pretty good survival rate?

Oh yes, there was lots of them. I've got some pictures I want to show you, too. And they all said that they didn't spawn. But I know that they have, because we've been down there on the island. We fished mostly around the island. We saw schools of those little fish about a half, three-quarters of an inch long, like that. Just schools of them.

So they had to have spawned there?

They had to have spawned there, and I wish I had caught some of them and took them up and showed them that they were there, the little ones.

What kind of a lodging did the visitors have?

In the lodge. There are a few cabins behind the cafeteria, but I don't know how many there are, not more than a few.

The cold water cabins?

I think so. I've never been in one. There used to be a campground on the rim, and everybody liked that camp because they could see what they came to see, Crater Lake.

The campgrounds that you remember were at the rim? And over at Lost Creek, there is a camp there?

Lost Creek was the C.C.C. project. And they had a C.C.C. camp also at Annie Springs, right where Mazama campground is now. That was a big



camp. They had the two camps, but Wineglass was a construction camp for the workers on the new rim road.

That was going on all the time you were at the park?

Well, the first few years. They had that finished by . . . what year was it completed? That was quite a project.

What do you remember about that?

Oh, not too much. They had some big machines at Lost Creek, they had trouble with them off of the road, and over the canyon, and I guess they got them back somehow, but that was altogether different; they had a contractor in there so we didn't get involved.

The equipment went off of the road you mean?

One big machine, I don't know what it was, machines don't mean anything to me, they were just something that does some of the work.

Your first trip to Crater Lake then was in 1930?

No, I was up there before that; I was up there in 1928. A year or two before that I never dreamed I would live there but oh, how great that was! It really was. [laughs]

By that time did visitors use automobiles or wagons?

I think they were all automobiles. That was during the thirties, '29, you know, maybe '29.

Even though it was the Depression, people had money to go to Crater Lake?

Yes. When we went there their office building was just a big log house that sat to the right of the administration building right now. And the office was on the first floor, the ranger dorm was upstairs. And they had room up there I suppose for 10, 12 men, but they outgrew that real

quick. And they built the administration building, we were there when they built that, and they built the ranger dormitory.

Do you remember that?

Yes. And I remember little Joe Mancini, he was the man that cut the rocks for those buildings. A little Italian, easier to jump over than to go around, but he was really a neat little man! But he could sure make things out of rock and he made that drinking fountain that is at the head of the stairs there that goes down to the Sinnott Memorial; they don't use that anymore. I went up there last week to see it and it's all deteriorating. Have you seen it?

Yes.

Well, you know what it's like then. It's just sitting there, just a rock sitting there; that was a beautiful fountain. Over here they got another rock with a fountain in it.

This Joe Mancini did all of the rock work then?

He cut the rock; he built all the rock walls around the memorial and the rim parking area.

This was during the Depression?

Yes, 1930-1933.

Did the C.C.C. employ him?

No, he was employed by the park. But he was the one that cut the rocks and he knew what rocks to use. During my trip up there last week I thought that things are so rundown, it was heart-breaking and some of the cabins down in the campground are gone completely, three of them are gone completely.

Is the cabin you lived in still there?

Yes, it's still there, it's the only one on the left side of the road. [Since this interview all the cabins in Sleepy Hollow have been removed.] They had four when we first moved there; and they built maybe that many more and one of them was assigned to us. And we lived in it a couple of years, summertime. Wintertime we had to move back up on the hill so we were back and forth there for a year or two.

How often did you come to town when you lived there?

Oh, wintertime maybe once a month. Maybe a little more often.

That was enough to get groceries?

Well, we shopped at Fort Klamath. That's out on the south entrance road, just outside the park a few miles. And when you were going to town you shopped for everybody else if they needed something.

Anybody going in took everybody else's order?

They did a lot of that.

What kind of a car did you have in those days?

Well, we had that little Chevrolet roadster that my husband bought new in Montana when he was in Yellowstone, the one that the bears went through. Then in '37 we bought a Plymouth sedan and we didn't like that and we traded it off for a Buick. We had that until the war came along.

You never had any trouble getting in and out of the park? Roads were always plowed?

I never did have enough sense to let the weather keep me home. [laughs]  
I only got stuck once and I really wasn't stuck that time. I stopped

coming out of Annie Springs on the hill there, I stopped a little too soon, and I just sat there.

You lost your traction?

Lost my traction. I had to leave the car and walk down to Annie Springs and have the ranger come up and he was busy but he came. I was fine.

You mentioned the Sinnott Memorial earlier. Talk about that a little bit more. Do you remember when they started that?

I remember when they built that. There was a congressman in Washington and they built it and named it after him. They had a program down there, a lot of pictures.

Were they building the lodge when you were there?

No, the lodge was already there, next to the Sinnott Memorial. On Memorial Day weekend there was a young girl who was just 15 years old; she got over the ropes and they picked her body up just almost down to the water.

She fell over?

She fell over. She slid on the snow. People will just not always pay attention to signs.

Do you know of other occurrences where people lost their lives in the park?

Yes, there were. I believe his name was Al Glotz, he was a saw filer, and he had a shop down in the working area. On weekends there if you were going to town, if you had room to take someone else, they would ride to town with you and back. Well, he was ready to go to town in the morning, but whoever he was going with couldn't leave until noon so they were supposed to meet him at noon. Well, he didn't show up, so they

thought, "Well, he's got a ride with somebody else," so they didn't wait. They didn't miss him until Monday morning when he didn't show up for work. So they asked the man with the car, "Did you take him down," and he said, "No, he didn't go with me." So they began hunting, and to this day they don't know what happened to him. He just plain disappeared.

What do they think? Maybe he fell in the lake?

No, he was an old man, and he wouldn't have gone that far. But they hunted for days and days for that man and found absolutely no trace. The C.C.C. boys went hand-in-hand in that area with no trace.

What year was that? Do you recall?

Oh, '34?

Mid-'30s?

Yeah, mid-'30s, but I've always thought, I've always wondered if he could have fallen off of one of the pumice cliffs; he could have sloughed off enough dirt to cover himself up at the bottom.

No one ever found him?

No one's ever found him. He had a grandson who called us a few years ago when my husband was still alive, and wanted to know what he knew about that. That's all we could tell him. That he just plain disappeared and they hunted for him for days.

Were there any instances where people got lost on the trail or back in the woods? Anything like that that you ever heard of?

Well, I remember two kids went up the Garfield trail and they thought they could get down to the water, they didn't make it, so they had to be rescued from there, about half way down, I guess. And I know there was

one man drowned. Our friend was on Watchman Lookout and he watched this boat capsize down there and one man was drowned, but they did rescue the other one. I don't recall others.

June 18, 1987

Central Point, Oregon

Let's talk about the fires that happened in the park while you lived there, if there were any. Do you recall any big fires?

Well, I know there were fires, because when I was working in the mess hall, we had to fix lunches for the fire fighters. But they fought fires outside the park, down toward Fort Klamath, or Chiloquin. I don't know just where it was. And they took all the men they could spare from the park to fight that fire.

So a lot of the C.C.C. boys would go do that?

Yes, yes, whoever . . . .

What about the park employees themselves?

Oh yes, oh yes. Whoever was available, who wasn't absolutely necessary to keep there. They'd take 'em out in truck loads.

So you fed all those boys that came back in at night?

We fixed lunches for 'em.

Do you recall any particularly memorable fires within the park?

No, I don't really. Here a few years ago, there was one on the east side that they just let burn out. The park has changed.

In those days did they always put the fire out?

Absolutely, oh man, in those days, everybody fought fire. [laughing]

But the idea of letting a fire just burn out would have been unacceptable?

Oh I should say it would have. I should say. Still over on the east side where it wasn't accessible to tourists or anybody like that, but still . . . . They would have been all put out.

What about the water quality in the lake? Was there any concern about that when you were there?

Not a bit. Not a bit.

Did the Park Service do any testing in those days?

Not that I know of.

Did people throw a lot of things into the lake?

I don't think so. No, I'm sure they didn't

I remember reading that William Gladstone Steel used to enjoy rolling big rocks into the lake.

Well they might have done that, but I was thinking of pollution. I don't think they did that.

The Park Service policed that pretty carefully?

I think so.

You said that you met William Gladstone Steel, didn't you?

Yes I did.

Can you remember anything in particular about that?

Oh, he was quite a guy. I can just remember what he looked like. He was a little man. But he was all on fire for the Park Service. It was through his effort that Crater Lake became a national park.

Did he go up there a lot?

He lived there, but not in the wintertime. He had one daughter, Jean, and after he was gone, she was park commissioner.

How long was she the park commissioner?

I don't really know.

Was the park commissioner the same as the park superintendent?



No, no.

What was the park commissioner?

The park commissioner was Judge Steel. He acted as judge, he settled disputes, if there were any.

He was in charge of the park?

Well, I wouldn't say that. I think he was more like a judge.

A political appointee?

But I know if there was ever any friction any place, he was the man that cleared it up.

He was the law and order in the park?

That's right. That's what I've been trying to say.

Do you remember many episodes where there were problems between visitors or park personnel?

No, no I don't. I wasn't in that group, that knew what was going on.

Remind me again of the years you were living in the park. 1930?

Well, I moved there in 1930, after we were married, and I stayed there until 1942. I lived there in '42, but I had to go back in '43 to remove and store the post office records.

You became the postmaster of Crater Lake post office? Is that what it was called?

Yes. In 1939. And now they don't have a postmaster. That post office is a branch of the Klamath Falls office; it is let out on bids.

So they decommissioned that post office probably as World War II got underway?

Yes they did. They closed that office for the duration in 1942. And I don't know when it opened again after the war. And after the war, I

was out on contract. I talked to the lady in the office there last year. I know that when I was there, there was a bill in the House to put 4th class postmasters on a salary, instead of commission.

That's how it was when you were there?

Yes.

You got paid by how many letters you mailed?

Yes.

Or something along those lines?

We had to cancel our own stamps, and then over Labor Day weekend one day I cancelled 2,000 postcards, and I don't know how many letters and parcel post. They told me that I did a 2nd class office business. All the money that the Park Service took in through the gates and the service station there went out through the post office. So it was a 2nd class money order business. It was busy! It was busy!

In those 13 years, what major changes did you see in the park? Does anything stand out in your mind?

No.

What about the level of visitation? Did the number of people coming increase or decline?

Well I'm sure that it did, although like I say I was not in the know there.

You were mostly in the kitchen? Is that what you told me?

Well quite a few years I was in the kitchen. But the last few I spent in the office administration, but still the post office was separate, so

what they were doing over there, I had nothing to do with that, and didn't know about it.

You don't know much about that?

That suited us both just fine. [chuckling] But I know that the travel increased year after year.

Did you ever notice the difference in camping styles between then and now?

How did the visitors camp?

Well campers used to camp in tents. An then, I remember a lot of these little trailers that had a bed in it. It was almost like the back of your car. You lift up the lid and there's your bed. And I saw a lot of those. And the first thing you know, here come the trailer houses.

The roads were good enough for cars to get in there in the '30s then?

Oh yes.

They were all paved by then?

Yes. Yes. The roads weren't very wide, but they were paved.

What did the average visitor do once he got to the park?

Stand there and look at Crater Lake, that's about all there was to do. But, [during our] first years, you could rent a horse, take a horseback trip, but they kind of frowned on that after a few years. They don't have horses anymore, and they don't have these little motorways where you get off the highway to see something, but I understand that now they have ranger led trips, maybe not pack trips, but trips out to different spots.

What about the lodge? Was it a big source of attraction for the visitors?

Didn't a lot of them stay there?

Yes. It was full, I think it was booked full before it ever opened. You know, reservations made for the summer. I think that's true even yet. It's filled up before the season opens. What are they gonna do with that old lodge?

I think the Park Service has decided they're going to refurbish it haven't they?

Oh, I don't know. I keep hearing this you know. Oh I hope so because that's a neat old . . . .

It's on the National Register of Historic Places. They can't just tear it down without documenting what they're doing.

Oh good!

But I know that structurally, it's got some real problems. From what I understand it's about to slide off into the lake.

Have you seen that? Where they say it's sliding off?

Oh no. On the front step you can see where the ground is kind of sloughing off.

I was up there last summer and I saw that, because I'd heard that. So I had to go down and see. And there's the porch, sidewalk, and then out there, some more before it slides off. Of course I don't know anything about that kind of stuff, but I wouldn't be afraid to stay there, I know that! [laughs]

It didn't look dangerous?

It didn't look dangerous to me!

Did many of the visitors like to boat on the lake? Did they go down there?

Well, not very many. That was too hard of a trip, down there and back.

That was one of Judge Steel's dreams, to have a tram or something so that people could go down, but there weren't very many.

Was there a concession there when you were there? A boating concession?

Yes, yes. And they had regular boat trips around the lake. The boat was filled to capacity.

And the people had to walk down?

They had to walk down that trail.

Is it the same trail that's used today?

No. The trail they use today is over on Cleatwood Cove. And it's around on the north side, which means it gets the afternoon sun, and the snow is all gone so they can clear that trail by the time the rim road is open, which makes sense to me.

But in those days most visitors didn't go down?

No they didn't.

But you said you went on a regular basis?

Yes, I went down once or twice every week. [chuckles]

Mostly to fish?

Mostly to fish. That's the only reason to go down there. I went swimming down there once, and I got out faster than I got in because, oh that water's cold!

Very cold?

Very cold.

Weren't there some famous swimmers that came there and swam the lake?

I think, vaguely I remember that. But that must a been before my time.

But that's cold!

Did anybody famous come in the 13 years that you were there?

Yes, my dad and my mother. [laughs] Oh there was always somebody from Washington out there, but I don't remember who they were, because I wasn't concerned.

No names in particular come to your mind?

No, no.

What about the stocking of the lake? You used to see them do that.

Well, I know that they had packs like a big canteen that they carried on their backs. And they'd fill those with fish and carry those down, and I never watched them put fish in the lake but I know that that's what they said was in those containers when they were stocking fish at the lake.

They used to do that every year. For several years. I guess . . . .

That's pretty good fishing there then?

Oh yes. It was great!

It seems like there'd be very little for the fish to eat.

Well, that's what they said. The water's too clear, too pure, there wasn't enough food, but they stocked it every year and we had good fishing down there.

They were eating something?

Something!

What about other resources in the park? Did the visitors create much of an impact on the park? Did they cut trees down for firewood, or . . . .

Well, I don't think so. I know one year, I believe that was after we left there, we went around the rim road going toward the north entrance, and in one of those little wide spots in the road there was somebody with a little fire--they were fixin' their lunch, [chuckles] and I thought man, if a ranger came around and saw that there'd be trouble, but nothing happened of course. But they just didn't allow things like that and most people know that.

So most visitors in the period you were there, were pretty well-behaved?

I'm sure they were.

There wasn't a lot of drinking or much crime that you remember? Did anybody get robbed?

Not that I remember.

What about illegal cutting of wood in the park itself? Do you ever remember hearing any stories about theft of timber? Maybe on the fringes of the park?

No. I don't recall any.

No problems there?

No, no problems.

What about pests, like mountain pine beetle? Or other infestations?

Oh yes! They had pine beetle our first years up there. They took like the fire crew, everybody that was available, out to cut trees. You know, they have to cut trees to get rid of those beetles. And my husband was on that crew for a while. I think every man in the park that they could let loose was out there for a while. But I think, about one year's all I remember of that. Maybe they got rid of 'em.

So it wasn't a continuing problem?

No.

Were there any other negative environmental impacts there that you saw while you were there? [pauses] Like maybe the watershed? Did the water stay pure, or did it possibly get polluted with all of the visitors?

No, I don't think so. I think that water, I still think it's pure, too. I know I wouldn't be afraid to drink it. No, I can't recall anything like that.

You don't remember the human impact on the park as being that important? It didn't seem to affect the resources?

No, I wouldn't say so. Well, people know that parks are special. And Crater Lake is special, special. [chuckles]

So you think they understood the whole idea of a national park and respected that?

I'm sure they did.

What about the other wildlife? I've read in several places that some people reported that they had seen a timber wolf once in the park. Did you ever hear any stories about that?

Never a timber wolf, but we've seen fox. In fact they've been on a snow bank just looking down in our house and [pauses] mink. I have a picture on my wall in here, our winter house, and I think it has a fox [in it].

Was that pretty common then?

No, not really. We didn't see 'em very often.

But mink were common as well?

Yes, our house was covered with snow, but it would melt back, like this you know. You could open your windows, because they all opened out in



our house, and you had plenty of room there. Well, those mink used to come around that house so we could watch them through our windows at night time, and one time my husband took a slip of bacon and was going to feed him. Well, he opened the window held this thing out there. Instead of grabbin' here, they grabbed here. [motions toward hand]

He actually grabbed his hand?

Yes, because they wanted all of it, I guess. But we used to feed 'em like that. And they were quite common.

I wonder if there's still mink in the park now? Do you hear anyone talk about seeing mink?

I haven't talked to anybody that's lived there lately, so I imagine there are.

What about bald eagles? Do you remember those at all? Were there any bald eagles at that time?

I don't remember any.

Peregrine falcons?

No.

Anything else? How about coyotes? Were they common?

Well, in the summertime. Of course they don't come around very much, but I know that they were in the park in the summer. Of course nothing like that in the winter.

Are there any other animals that you recall seeing in the park? Like maybe elk? Did you ever see any elk?

No. I didn't, but I know they do now, because we have friends that hunt right up to the boundary. But there're deer all over the place.

A lot of deer? What are they, mule deer?

Mule deer.

Would you say that was the most common wildlife when you lived there?

Well, the bear was the most commonly seen.

So there were a lot of bear stories?

A lot of bear [stories].

Were those black bear?

Yes.

You described [earlier] your house or cabin being robbed by the bears, and tearing up your car's cloth top?

Oh yes. You know, the door handles on your car were different then than they are now. Now you have to press a little button for it to open your door. Well you didn't then. Those car doors would just pull down and you're open. Our car was sittin' out in front of the house, I'd been to town that day and had groceries, but the groceries were in the house.

They could still smell the groceries from the car and so they messed with that handle till they got that door open. And we heard a noise out there, and my husband went out to look and that bear was in the car.

Oh my gosh!

And they just go out any place. He did go out through the door, thank goodness. [laughs] We've had 'em go out through the top of the [car].

Did he tear up the inside of the car?

Well, not that particular time he didn't. But, I wonder what would have happened if we'd shut that door on him? [laughs] Would have been worth it to find out.

Were there ever any injuries to people from the bears?

Not that I recall.

The bears always retreated when people came up?

Yes, yes. We gave 'em room. They were a nuisance though. But the garbage dump was just across the highway from the mess hall, so there's bound to be bears, around the mess hall. But now they have moved the garbage dump. Fact is, I think they even haul their garbage clear out of the park. And you don't see bears like you used to.

Did people go down to the dump to watch bears?

Oh yes. There was as many people down there as there were bears.

[laughs] Most of the time. They always come in the evening. There was always a lot in the evening.

In Yellowstone, they actually set up bleachers, where you could sit and watch them. Did they ever do that in Crater Lake?

Really. No, not that I recall.

But for all the 13 years that you were there there was a dump?

Yes, yes. We had two little twin bears, and when they'd stand on their hind feet, they were just about so high. They could reach the door knob.

About three feet high?

Oh, they weren't that high. And anyway, at the mess hall, the kitchen had a store room right behind it, and an outside door. And those little bears would wiggle that door knob till they could get that door open.

And they would come in, and reach whatever was close. And you didn't get anything from 'em either!

Pretty aggressive, huh?

Oh yes. And they're little like that! What would they be like when they get older? Makes you wonder. So we had to learn to keep that door locked.

Did the bears raid the campers' tents?

Oh yeah.

The food box and everything?

Everything.

In the time you were there, what was the biggest management problem? The biggest problem that the Park Service had? Do you recall?

[pauses] No I don't.

The side of it that you saw was either the kitchen or the post office?

I worked four or five years in the same building as the office, but we both liked it that way. I had my own office [the post office].

Your husband, all these years, was maintaining the roads? He was a big equipment operator?

Yes, he was an equipment operator, but he worked the snowplow in the wintertime, and summer he mostly did mechanical work. But he was also a heavy equipment operator, he drove the supply truck to Medford a lot or whatever. He could do and did anything that needed to be done.

Were there any disasters? Any deaths besides this ranger Godfrey, that you recall?

Well, I remember two young ladies in the fall, started to Crater Lake and I don't know who reported them missing but they didn't make Crater Lake, so we begin to wonder what happened to 'em. They found their tracks in the gravel, I think that was spring though by the time the snow had

melted off the road, and they found them in the canyon. They had run off from that viewpoint in the fall, so they spent all winter in that canyon.

Do you mean in their car?

No, they were just scattered all over. The car and their clothes and their suitcases, and the two girls. I saw the pictures that they took of that.

This happened while you were there?

Yes.

Were there any episodes where people fell into the lake while you were there?

There was one young lady, she was 15, on Memorial Day. She was up there and there's a lot of snow there Memorial Day; well, they have ropes along there for a safety zone, but she didn't heed the signs. She got to playing on the slope, and she lost her balance, and they picked her up, well almost down to the water's edge.

She was dead?

Oh yes. My husband was in on that rescue deal and they said it was just like pickin' up a sack of manure or something. Every bone in her body was broken. Just because she disobeyed signs. Then now every time I see somebody do that, I want to go over and yank 'em back! [chuckles]

Were there any other episodes like that that you recall?

Well this Rudy Lueck friend was on the Watchman. He saw a boat on the lake capsize; one man was drowned. I can't remember anything else.

During your time there, was there ever any problem with airplanes flying over, the noise? Was it a common practice for airplanes to fly over and look at the crater?

Well, very seldom, very seldom. I know when we got into war, we had to watch up there. We had to take our turn watching for aircraft, and there were very few even then. I believe the air currents were not safe for planes to fly too close to the water.

Did you do that?

Yes.

Tell me about that. What was that like?

Well you just sat up there, you'd take a four-hour shift. If airplanes came across within sight, you were supposed to identify them if you could. And call in but I never had to do that, because I never did see one.

Did you have a little card with the profiles of different kinds of airplanes?

How would you know how to identify them?

I don't believe we did. I think they expected us to know, and they sure had a bummer when they got me up there [laughs] because I sure didn't know! We all took a turn.

In those days, let's see that was about the in the middle of the war in 1941, was there a lot of concern that the Japanese might attack?

Well, 1943, I wasn't there. But at least I wasn't worried. I don't think that there was much concern, to a certain point. We didn't always know what was going on. What was close to us, you know.

Were you pretty cut off up there? Let's see, did you have telephones there?

Oh yes. No, I wouldn't say we were cut off. We were able to get out any time we wanted.

The roads were never too bad to get out?

No never too bad. You might have to wait an hour for that snowplow to get through there, but you could always make it.

How long did it take you to come out, say to Medford?

Oh, a couple of hours.

So that's where everybody came to buy groceries?

Lots of people went the Klamath Falls way. There was a little store in Fort Klamath, and we did a lot of trading there, but mostly when we came to town, we always came to Medford. That was always town.

About how many people lived there in that little community when you were there?

Oh [pauses] let me think a minute now. [pauses] I would say there was less than 20 maybe. That's in the wintertime. There was three, four families there; no children. And there was about four at the mess hall and a few rangers, and the wives. I'd say 20, give or take a few.

That must have been a real small community?

Yes it was.

Did you all get along pretty well? Do you get cabin fever being shut in up there?

I didn't, at least. [chuckles]

What were some typical recreation activities in which that little community would engage?

Well, we used to gather down at the mess hall because they had big tables down there. And oh, we played cards; we didn't really have too many things.

Did you listen to radio programs? That used to be big in the '30s didn't it?

Yes, we had radio. It didn't take much to entertain us, I guess. I used to knit a lot.

What was the typical tour of duty for the Park Service personnel in those days? Did they have a certain number of years they worked there, and then moved on, or did most people come and stay?

The superintendent moved out often but the office help and other laborers were there year after year. A lot of the seasonal rangers were there for one summer. There was a certain amount that moved on. I mean, the superintendent for instance. My husband, when he first worked there, I think it was Col. Thomson was superintendent. Then there came Al Solinsky and Dave Canfield, and then Leavitt, and all those four in the years that we were there. So I say they move on quite rapidly.

So there were four superintendents in that period?

Yes.

Of those superintendents that you just mentioned, do any of them stand out in your mind as unusual in any way?

Well, I don't know as they stand out, but they were all just pretty neat! Ernest Leavitt was special to me. It was through his effort I became postmaster. Al Solinsky was superintendent when I first went there, and I don't know what happened to him. There was trouble.

There were problems?

Yes.

And that caused him to have to move on?

I think so. And Dave Canfield was chief ranger, and he moved up to superintendent. And he moved on after a while, and Ernest Leavitt became



our superintendent. He was there when I left. So they've had lots of them since then. [chuckles] Those are the only ones I knew.

I meant to ask you a while ago about these California tortoise shell butterflies. Did you know anything about those? Or have you ever heard about those?

No.

There used to be a special butterfly [present in the park] in the summer. How about mining in the park. Was there ever any evidence of mining going on there?

Well, not that I knew of. That was a "no no!" No I didn't ever hear they . . . .

No illegal entry?

No.

Have you ever heard of the Yawkey tract?

Oh vaguely I remember something about it.

What was it? Do you know?

No, I don't.

That's one of the questions that the Park Service is interested in.

No, I don't know.

Did I ask you if there was any livestock that came into the park? Did you ever have any cattle grazing in there, which would have been illegal?

[pauses] I was curious if any ranchers ever let their cattle get in there?

Well, I wouldn't doubt that because I know that's open range outside the park down toward Prospect, and I wouldn't doubt but there would have been

cattle in there. Of course I never heard of it, but then it could have been very easily.

No one talked about it, during that period?

No.

What about the cultural resources in the park. When you were there, did you ever see or hear of anyone finding any artifacts? Arrowheads? Anything Indian?

No. No, I never have.

Did you ever see anything anyone ever found?

No.

And you didn't ever find anything?

No.

Was there ever any conflicts with the Native Americans in the area about the park, or the boundaries?

No, because they don't like that. They're superstitious, and I don't think I've ever seen an Indian up there!

They were sort of afraid of the lake?

Yes! They have some sort of story about Llao Rock. I don't remember what it was, but they don't come up there.

They thought the mountain itself was kind of a, what, evil or something?

Well . . . . [pauses]

Anyway, they were afraid to go up there?

Yes. Something about Llao Rock that they're superstitious about.

Was there ever any kind of a museum in the park at all when you were there?

[pauses] Exhibit cases or anything?

Well, there were a few things in the community hall, but very few. They had a little show case with a few mounted animals and flowers native to the park.

What was in it?

Oh a few rocks, and they had a piece of the first boat that was on Crater Lake, and a few animals mounted.

The Cleatwood?

Yes. And then what's that little building there? It's at the top of the stairs, steps that go down to the Sinnott Memorial.

Oh, that's now the visitors center?

Yeah, that little visitors center. I wouldn't call that a museum though; they just had . . . I don't know what they had in there! [laughs]

What was that building used for when you were there?

Well, about the time that I came there, it was used for a photo shop. A studio, it was Kaiser Studio, a concessionaire. He sold his pictures.

Do you mean that you could actually go in there and have your picture taken?

No, I know it was all lined with pictures of Crater Lake.

What about interpretation in general? Did they have any interpretive programs when you were there?

Well I'm sure they did, but that's the ranger's . . . .

You didn't pay much attention to it?

No I didn't pay much attention.

You never did go to an evening presentation?

Oh very few.

You didn't like them?

Yes I did. [laughs] I should tell you one off the record. [laughs] I went to one of those evening programs. Naturalists usually conducted those programs, and after he was through, [laughs] he opened it for questions, to see if anybody had a question. And one man in the back says, "Yes, when are you gonna put toilet tissue in the men's restroom?" [laughter] That about ended that.

Everybody laughed at that! Let's see, most of the buildings that are there now, were there in the '30s then, weren't they?

Yes.

The Sinnott Memorial--was it being built then?

Yes. That was built while we were there.

Did you see its completion?

Yes.

I read one story about one of the workmen standing on top of it and driving golf balls off into the lake from there. Did you ever hear that story?

Oh, I don't think I heard that story. Well, they had a deal that set on the rim that carried their rocks and their equipment down to the work area. One of these cables; I rode down that thing one time. [chuckles]

That was probably against the rules too?

Yeah. I'm afraid it was, I'm afraid it was. All buildings that are there now, well, except the one that is built back of the lodge, and I think it's for the help at the lodge, for their dormitory. That was not there. All the rest of them I believe were there.

What do you remember about the C.C.C. camps--Wineglass and Annie Creek? Those were the two C.C.C. camps? Were there only two?

Only two.

How many men were there?

Oh man, I don't know. There was a lot of them.

They were big permanent camps weren't they?

Yes, they were permanent camps.

They had tents on wood frames? The standard kind of C.C.C. construction?

Well they might have had some of those, but they had more buildings than they had tents I'm afraid. Because that was Clarence's job to keep the snow off of those buildings over at Lost Creek. Of course the one at Lost Creek wasn't as large as the one at Annie Springs. But those kids came from, oh Alabama, Georgia and Florida, those states down south.

Mostly southern boys?

Yes. Real neat bunch of kids! [laughs] We had a lot of fun with them. One of them was on a lookout on a Mt. Scott, and another was a telephone operator. And, oh they filled a few jobs like that, for the Park Service. And they cleaned the trails and made new trails. They were all busy! They had no trouble with those kids either; they were just a real neat bunch.

What years were they there? Do you recall? Did they come while you were there?

Yes, they came while we were there. I think it was '33, wasn't it? When the C.C.C.s [came]? And golly I don't know how long they stayed there. They were there several years until we were in war.

They weren't there though when you left or were they?

No. As soon as we were in the war they were moved out.

With the outbreak of World War II they were probably moved out?

No, they were there when we got into the war in '41. They were there in '41, because I thought now all those kids are in the Army. A bunch of them came through the park, and they camped at Lost Creek, and one of them called back to headquarters and said they were there, so we went over to meet them. We knew quite a few of them. So most of the people, or a lot of the people at headquarters went over to spend the evening with those kids. Golly they'd all grown up. They'd seemed like kids before.

Do you mean they'd come back?

Well after they got in the Army, the Army came through and they stopped overnight there.

So do you mean that that whole group of C.C.C. boys went into the Army together?

Oh, I think they were all in the Army. I think they did.

And then some of them came back with the military and they happened to camp there?

Yes, yes. I think they were all in the Army soon as we got into the war. So they'd changed a lot when you saw them in their uniforms?

Yes they sure had; they'd grown up. [chuckles] So nice looking.

What did they do for recreation?

I really don't know.

You didn't have much to do with them socially?

No not much. A few of 'em, kind of. We'd take some of them skiing, and we had a lot of fun with those kids. [chuckles] They were a nice bunch.

Did they try to get off the mountain and come to town? It seems like young men would have.

Well . . . if they had a chance to, they would. They'd like to come in with you. And then when you went to town, you always had somebody that needed to come in, so . . . .

So you often hauled them back and forth?

We did.

Did you ever have any problems with drunkenness when they'd come to town, and party too much?

No. They were just good kids.

Pretty clean-livers, huh?

They were. Well that's one thing they didn't have trouble with, in the park, was alcohol.

They just didn't allow it?

They just didn't allow it at all. It was illegal in 1930.

It was after Prohibition?

After Prohibition, but it still was illegal in the park.

So campers, nobody used it?

Nobody!

Boy, that's changed!

Oh man, I'll say it has. I should say. I know, like I say, those first years, it was just "no, no." You didn't have it, you didn't use it, drink it. But man, by the time we left there, everybody had some in their refrigerator. Just everybody.

So it became a lot more common? So your own recreation then, as far as the outdoors, was mostly skiing? You described your trip around the rim.

Well wintertime, we went skiing. That's all there was to do!

Summertime, we went fishing or hiking. That's all there was to do then.

But you had a lot of time during the day, didn't you?

I did.

You didn't have your girls by then?

Oh no. We didn't have our girls until after we left the Park Service.

And that was a conscious decision to not try to raise children up there?

That's no place for kids. Mom has to stay down in town and send the kids to school, and dad stays up there and works.

Is that what some families did?

Yes! There were no school age children there year round, only a few in the summer.

The kids went to school in Medford?

Or maybe Fort Klamath. That's a little closer.

So there was never a school up there?

Well, there has been a school since then, but I don't know how many years they had school, but I don't think they have it any more. Because they bus their kids down to Prospect to school. They have been doing that for the last three or four years, maybe longer than that.

What about the headquarters building? Were they building on that while you were there?

Yes. Do you mean the administration building? It was built in 1934.

Yes.



They built that one, and they built the ranger dormitory, while we were there. And they built cabins in the, well, we called it Sleepy Hollow. It's where the summer help lived. They built six or seven houses down there. And they built the superintendent's house. And the assistant superintendent's. They were busy! They got all of those rocks from back of the Watchman.

This was mostly C.C.C. boys that were working?

Oh no, no, they had some, but most of it was just hired help.

And they got the rock from behind the Watchman?

Back of the Watchman. And they never missed what they took out of there. [laughs] That's good rock I guess.

So those buildings were pretty much finished by the time you left?

Yes, yes. Last summer I was up there, they were doing something to the ranger dormitory. And the mess hall, and I'm just not quite clear what they were doing. The rangers are gonna use it. What for, I'm not sure. And this summer they're supposed to re-do the administration building. So they're gonna tear out all the inside of that and do that over.

What about the Watchman Lookout construction? Was that going on when you were there?

They built that while we were there. They have just abandoned that anymore, and it's just going to rot.

What about some entrance arches to the park? Were those there when you were there?

Yes. Mostly they were logs.

Just logs?

Yes, and they had at the west entrance a house, a ranger station, and also down at the south entrance. Well they had them at all four entrances. But they have only one at the north entrance now, and that's the only one any more. The others come in through Annie Springs. The east entrance road has been abandoned.

What about the superintendent's residence?

Yes. The superintendent when we went there had a building at Annie Springs. It was just a big old square house, made of lumber. But what they built after we moved there was rock. Beautiful.

Rustic construction? Logs and rock?

Yes. And it's a beautiful house. It's up at the upper end of the canyon. So in the years you were there, there was a pretty major building program going on?

Yes they did! There was a lot of it.

You said the ranger dorm was built then. And was there a naturalist's residence, somewhere in the area?

Yes. There's a superintendent, assistant superintendent, and the naturalist coming down the hill, and chief ranger, the master mechanic and then just rangers on down, till Judge Steel's house.

The Steel Circle residential area, was it there then?

No.

So there's really not much new up there since you left, is there?

Not very much! No.

These cold water cabins, what exactly were they?

Well, those were cabins that the park company [Crater Lake Lodge Co.] had, the lodge rented those cabins. I've never been in one. I don't know what they're like. But they're just little cabins, sleeping cabins is all. They're down behind the cafeteria.

These were operated by the Crater Lake Lodge Company?

Yes.

How do you feel about the concessions up there? I guess it's Crater Lake Company that's always been the one that's had the concession in recent years. Did they do a good job over the years when you were there?

I'm sure they did.

Did they sell all kinds of curios and souvenirs?

All kinds, yes, all kinds.

People have always been interested in that kind of thing?

Oh yes. They always have to buy something when they go to Crater Lake. Decals and patches . . . .

Whether they need it or not. [laughs] You know!

So when you go up there today, things are not that different as far as the physical structures that are there. Is that correct?

That's right. Not that much different. An addition to the cafeteria has been made.

What about the roads into the park? Which ones were the most used in the days you were there?

Well, I'd say probably the west and the south, and I imagine they still are.

Those were paved in the '30s?

Yes. Oh yes.

You see some of those early pictures of the cars going in there on logs over Annie Creek, over mud and gravel . . . . You never did see that?

That was before my time. No, no. I never saw anything like that.

Crater Lake became a park in, it was 1902?

I believe it was 1902.

But we didn't go there till '30, so that's a few years.

What's your single best memory of living at Crater Lake?

Oh dear! [laughs] I don't know. I guess our stay over at Lost Creek probably.

How long were you there?

We were there about three months.

Tell me a little bit about that.

Well, we went in the fall; took groceries in. Then the road snowed up and we had to ski in. And we'd never been on skis before, neither one of us. They took us around on [Highway] 97 to the park's east entrance which wasn't kept open in the wintertime. So we skied from there up to Lost Creek Ranger Station, where we were to stay. And that's about eight miles, and it's uphill just enough that you had to work at it all the time. And oh man, the next day I was so sore that if you'd look at me, I'd hurt. And the ranger that was with us said, "The best way to get over that," he says, "is to go out and do the same thing tomorrow!" So tomorrow, we went out skiing! And he was a pretty good skier, so he taught us a little about skiing.

Did you have wax? I guess your skis would have needed to be waxed in those days.

Oh yes. Everybody had to learn to wax and take care of his own. Then our trip around the rim; that was neat too.

That's one of the more memorable?

Yes.

You must have been a pretty liberated woman for your day. Did women do the kinds of things you did in the '30s?

Oh not very many of 'em. [laughs] I've always been an outside gal, I liked anything outside. And my husband never objected to me going along with him, doing things with him, which was great. So we did all these things together. We had a good life.

When did your husband die?

The second of February, 1984.

How old was he?

Seventy-nine. After 53 years together.

So you had a long life together? Is that a picture of him over there with the elk?

Yes.

Are there other primary memories that you have of Crater Lake?

All 13 years. Oh, just our fishing down there.

You really enjoyed the fishing?

Oh enjoyed that!

You caught your limit every time?

I, I would say yes. I don't think I ever came out of there without a limit!

Did you like to eat fish?

Well, I got awful tired of them after a while. But we had friends there that we shared our fish with. Those that were not able to go down and fish themselves. But we'd loan our boat to anybody that wanted to go down. It was just fine, you know.

You kept a boat down on the lake?

Yes.

The Park Service allowed you to do that?

Yes. We had to. We didn't fight with him, but the superintendent did, Dave Canfield. They, the park company, the lodge for instance, they had the concession for the boats, and they didn't want that boat down there. But Dave finally had to take it to Washington and they said that as long as that was our residence, permanent resident, we lived there, we were allowed to have a boat. So the next year or so, it was pretty easy, they didn't give us any trouble, but the men used to go down there and they'd build rocks up to cover that boat, you know.

For the weather?

Yes, to keep the snow from breaking it down. We went down one spring and it was just plain gone. So we kind of suspected foul play there, but

. . . .

You think the company may have taken it?

Yes, we think they did.

Were you the only employees that had a boat down there?

Yes.

No one else was interested?

They used ours. [laughs] When they wanted to.

So it was kind of a community boat then?

Yes it was. But my husband and two other guys built that boat, and they took it down over Wineglass slide, and Wineglass has a rock ledge around the top, and then the rest of it is just "pummy slide." Well they got it over that rock ledge, and then the rest of it was easy sailing down over that, that "pummy slide."

He just slid it, played out a rope and let it slide?

Then when they got down, of course there was more rocks, but two or three men could carry that across the rocks down to the water. We had a lot of fun with that boat. We had a lot of fun with that boat.

How many years did you have it on the lake?

Oh, I'd say four or five, at least that long! I don't . . . we had it that long I'm sure.

Did you ever see the lake freeze over?

No. I never did, but I understand that it has. I've seen it frozen from the back of Wizard Island. You know, that little narrow spot in there. I've seen that frozen over. But not the whole lake.

Did you ever go out on Wizard Island for much of anything?

No, I was too busy fishing. I've never been to the top of that island. [chuckles] That was one thing I was always going to do.

Just never got around to it?

I never got around to it. Too busy fishing. There's a crater you know, in the top of that, and I never got up there.

The superintendent told us that several years ago, somebody went in there and put some rubber tires on fire, and made smoke and everybody thought that it was erupting.

That it was gonna explode? [laughs] A year ago last April the 1st, I was in Klamath Falls reading their paper, and down on the front page, in a little corner they had about three columns about Wizard Island. They were gonna build a security prison on that, and I thought, "They can't do that!" But I read that, and you know it explained how it was gonna be, and if they'd escape from that they'd never get out of the lake, and then I was all upset until I read the little fine print at the bottom. And that was somebody's April Fool's joke. [laughs] I got that piece of paper out, I was gonna send it to somebody. [chuckles]

Did you ever go snowshoeing around the lake?

No.

People didn't use snow shoes then?

No. I never had any of those on.

Are there any other memories you've got of the park?

Oh I've just got lots, lots. Our skiing trips, and people that used to come from Klamath Falls. Wintertimes we had 1500 people up there on the weekends skiing. And a lot of them would stay over night. They were allowed to stay in any place they could find a place to throw their sleeping bag. But we've had 1500 people there, and that's a lot of



people for that little parking area. They skied a lot on Garfield, and well, just all over. Yeah, we've had a lot of fun up there.

Maybe that's a good place to stop.

APPENDIX A:

\*MABEL HEDGPETH STATEMENT

I fell in love -- twice.

My first love was Clarence G. Hedgpeth. We were married Aug. 7, 1930. We moved to Crater Lake National Park where he was employed as a heavy equipment operator. Crater Lake National Park was my second love. Our first home was a 10' x 12' tent stretched over a frame. It was great except for the bears. It was easy for them to smell food inside and with one swipe with their big paws they could tear a hole big enough to reach in for anything they could get, or even come in. At night, when all was quiet, we could hear them sniffing around outside; if you gave a big yell, they usually left. Clarence yelled at them one night and we heard a really big noise as they went out through the canvas top of our new Chevy roadster. He was inside it.

After a few weeks there, I was asked if I could help out in the mess hall. One lady cut her hand and couldn't work anymore. I was glad for the chance since it was a seasonal job and our nation was in the midst of a depression. We fed 25 men to 200 at the peak of the summer (that is where I got my education). I worked there two or three years.

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\*Mrs. Hedgpeth prepared this summary after the first interview and subsequently provided a copy to the interviewer.

Fall of 1934, Clarence and a ranger friend, Rudy Lueck were assigned the job as caretakers at the Lost Creek Ranger Station and also a C.C.C. camp there. Lost Creek was on the east entrance to the park. The road was never kept open in the winter. Their job was to keep snow off of all the buildings. Before the snow came we took in a truck load of groceries (\$250.00). When the snows came, we were transported to Highway 97 and Lost Creek Road. About four feet of snow and I was sure any place that had that much snow just had to be cold. We started the trip from there dressed in long underwear and an all wool ski suit, needless to say the long underwear was good as new--come spring. It was a long eight miles all uphill and never having been on skis before, we had a rather rough trip. Our ranger friend taught us some of the techniques of skiing and one day says, "Let's ski around the rim of Crater Lake." We left early one March morning and as we were both novice skiers; we went only as far as the Wineglass camp, another eight miles all uphill. [We] spent the night there. The bears had beat us to it but were gone to bed for the winter by then. We each carried our own pack sack, which contained a blanket and some food. Next morning, we skied to the north entrance ranger station. It was a beautiful day and the lake was beyond description it was so beautiful. We had hoped to spend an extra day there to get some skiing on the neat slopes there. The best in the park, but clouds came up and being cautious, we decided we better move on to park headquarters. We followed the road as best we could until we got to the Watchman Peak. The road on the northside of the peak was filled with snow. The drifts were 30 to 40 feet deep and were straight up and down. Our first really dangerous spot. We had to ski above the drifts nearly to the top of

the mountain. Skiing was super. No wonder we loved Crater Lake; it was so beautiful and we saw it from angles few others have. A night spent at park headquarters then on to Lost Creek and home. On this section of our trip was our second dangerous spot back of Dutten Ridge. When you can look up to the one skiing above you and see the bottom of his skis, you know its steep. I tell everyone I skied around the rim all by myself. Clarence and Rudy would get a couple miles ahead of me then when I caught up they would go on. So don't you agree? Our skiing time was 13 hours. A grand trip I'll never forget. I was the first woman to make that trip on skis.

About the last of April, we moved to park headquarters and into one of the winter homes. I was again available to help out at the mess hall and was asked if I would cook for a few days until they replaced their cook who had to leave. Now, I'd have never been a cook, but thought I would be better than no cook. I agreed. We had to sleep there so we could light the stove at 4 a.m. so it would be hot enough by 6:00 a.m. to cook breakfast. I asked Clarence to go to our house before breakfast for something I needed. He came back in a few minutes and said bears had been in the house. The house had windows with small panes and one was broken out with just a cardboard nailed over it. The bear was probably sniffing around and broke out the cardboard so it was easy to knock out the whole window and go in. Clarence and a helper nailed boards over the window and came to the mess hall for breakfast, when they returned to the house the bear was inside again. He had ripped the cabinets off the kitchen walls and things he couldn't break like canned goods he punctured with his teeth or claws. The stairway in that house went up one side of the room about six steps then turned and went up the other wall. It opened in to the

bedroom; at the top of the stairs was an old style dresser with swinging mirror. The mirror was found at the curve of the stairway with a big bear paw print right in the middle which tells us he was upstairs. To keep him out, the men put electric wires across the window. Guess it did the job, they were hot.

Baby bears are so cute, as all baby things are. These were a set of twins that hung around the mess hall and when they stood on their hind legs they could just reach the outside door to the store room just behind the kitchen. They could open that door, grab a slab of bacon and be off. Once they got it, you didn't get it back or even try, Mama Bear wasn't far away.

We didn't have much choice of recreation--wintertimes we skied; summertime we fished. Clarence and friends Harry Reed and Lee Carbin built a boat, launched it at the Wineglass slide. We did have fun with that boat; I used it at least once a week and both of us on weekends. Our limit of fish was 12. There were 12" to 16" in length, silver sides. We always had our limit in about three hours. On days when the lake was so smooth you could see the fumaroles where the lava had exploded, always around Wizard Island.

By this time Clarence had gotten his permanent rating. The next few years were uneventful except that I won a silver slalom and a cross country ski race also, in September 1939. I was appointed postmaster at Crater Lake; I loved every bit of it.

Then came Pearl Harbor and our nation was at war. Clarence was too old for the draft but thought he could do more for the war effort than stay up there and plow snow so he asked for a leave of absence for the duration. It

was denied so he resigned since he felt very strongly about this. He spent five years in the ship yard welding on ships.

The post office department closed the Crater Lake office for the duration. Since it was a seasonal office that let me out. At the close of that season I joined my husband in Portland and worked in the post office there.

This ends the chapter of our lives at Crater Lake, 13 wonderful years. Since all good things must end so even better things may begin. We had two precious daughters and we all four have accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour. What more could anyone possibly want?

Mabel Hedgpeth

May 12, 1987

APPENDIX B  
ORAL HISTORY FORMAT

I. INFORMANT BACKGROUND

1. When and where were you born?
2. Where were you raised?
3. When and where were you married? Your maiden name?
4. How did you meet your husband?
5. When and where was he born?
6. Where was he raised?
7. When did he come to Oregon? Why?
8. When did he start working for the N.P.S.? Why?
9. What other work experiences did he have before?
10. Did he like the outdoors?
11. What was his job for the Park Service?
12. How did it change over time?
13. What were the greatest challenges he faced?
14. How did the Park Service change during those years?
15. What was it like living and working at Crater Lake?
16. When did you first see the park?
17. What are your earliest recollections of the park?
18. How many years did you live at the park?
19. What was it like during the winters?
20. Did you have children?
21. How was it to raise them in such a remote place?

22. What about schools?
23. Where did you do grocery shopping?
24. What about medical and dental services?
25. What were social relationships like?
26. Were there close friendships? Any disputes?
27. What recreational activities did you/others do?
28. Did the winters seem long? Any "cabin fever"?

## II. HUMAN USE OF THE PARK

1. What do you remember about early visitors?
2. How did they travel to the park?
3. What did they do when they arrived?
4. How did this change over the years you were there?
5. Where did they stay?
6. Tell me about their camping styles.
7. Where were they lodged if not camping?
8. Where did they get groceries?
9. Where did they get hay, feed for animals, gas for autos?
10. What about emergency medical services?
11. What was the winter use of the park? Skiing? Snowshoeing?  
Sightseeing? Hiking?
12. What about fishing? Boating in the lake?
13. Were you the first woman to ski around the lake?
14. Were there some unusual occurrences in the park?  
14-A Chief ranger Godfrey's death?



- 14-B Mafia murders?
- 14-C Rescues, deaths--drownings, falls, lost people?
- 14-D Other occurrences?
- 15. Do you remember any famous visitors? Presidents, congressmen, artists, philosophers, business tycoons, inventors, military figures, etc?
- 16. Did a director of the N.P.S. come to the park while you were there?
- 17. What about organized groups--Mazamas, Sierra Club, Boy Scouts, others?
- 18. What was the most memorable event in your years there?

### III. DEVELOPMENT IN THE PARK

- 1. What buildings were in the park during your years there?
- 2. What was built while you were there?
- 3. Do you remember anything about the following:
  - 3-A Lodge
  - 3-B Sinnott Memorial
  - 3-C C.C.C. camps: Wineglass, Annie Creek
  - 3-D Headquarters building construction
  - 3-E Watchman Lookout construction
  - 3-F Entrance arches
  - 3-G Superintendent's residence
  - 3-H Naturalist's residence
  - 3-I Ranger dormitory
  - 3-J Concession building

- 3-K Steel Circle residential area
- 3-L Cold water cabins
- 3-M Others
- 4. Roads to the Park?
  - 4-A Which were most used in your time?
  - 4-B Which were under construction?
  - 4-C General conditions?
  - 4-D What about the rim drive?
  - 4-E Did you see the transition from horse-drawn to autos?
  - 4-F What about accidents, breakdowns, theft of vehicles?
  - 4-G What about winter plowing of roads?
- 5. Trails in the Park?
  - 5-A Which were in existence?
  - 5-B Which were most often used?
  - 5-C Did you personally use trails?
  - 5-D Were there any unusual episodes?
- 6. Campgrounds in the Park?
  - 6-A Which ones were there when you lived in the park?
  - 6-B Rim, Annie Springs, Lost Creek, White Horse, Cold Spring--campgrounds today?
  - 6-C Extent of services/development in the campgrounds?
  - 6-D Role of C.C.C. in park? Overall impressions.
  - 6-E Major changes in park developments in your time?
- 7. Bridges in the park?
- 8. What was the effect of World War I? World War II?

#### IV. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

1. What was the general management philosophy?
2. Do you recall fires? How were they handled? What was the most memorable fire?
3. What about the lake water quality? Were there any concerns expressed?
4. Was there any concern over boating, fishing, using the lake?
5. What about visitor impacts on vegetation? Any changes?
6. What about the timber resource? Any illegal cutting?
7. Pests in woods--mountain pine beetle? Other infestations?
8. Were there livestock in the park? Were there any problems?
9. What about the watershed quality of streams in the park?
10. Are there any other negative environmental impacts that you can think of?
11. Wildlife in the Park:
  - 11-A Stocking of the lake? When, how?
  - 11-B What about wolves?
  - 11-C What about bears? Were they fed at the dump?
  - 11-D What about bald eagles?
  - 11-E What about peregrine falcons?
  - 11-F What about coyotes?
  - 11-G What about rodents--ground squirrels, chipmunks, others?
  - 11-H Was there any poaching of wildlife?
  - 11-I Were there human encounters with animals--injuries, etc?

- 11-J Were there elk in the park?
- 11-K What about California tortoise shell butterflies?
- 12. Was there any mining activity in the park?
- 13. Do you know anything about the Yawkey tract?
- 14. What were the biggest management problems in your day?
- 15. Were there many overflights of the park? What about aircraft noise?
- 16. Managing the cultural resources:
  - 16-A What about Indian interpretations of the park?
  - 16-B Do you remember any Indian visitors?
  - 16-C Were there any conflicts with Native-Americans in the area?
  - 16-D What about Native-American uses of the park? Any vision quest sites?
  - 16-E Were there any artifact finds--arrowheads, other material?
  - 16-F Were there artifact collections among employees, others?
  - 16-G Do you recall a museum at the park? Did it contain artifacts?
  - 16-H Have any oral histories been done that you know of?
- 17. Do you recall any particular individuals--superintendents, rangers, management personnel, others?
- 18. What was the impact of concessionaires on management of the park?

V. GENERAL CATEGORY

- 1. What have we not discussed that you would like to bring up?
- 2. Do you want to elaborate on any of the topics we've mentioned?

APPENDIX C  
RELEASE FORM



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Crater Lake National Park

Post Office Box 7

Crater Lake, Oregon 97604-0007

IN REPLY REFER TO:

I hereby give and grant to the National Park Service, as a donation for such scholarly and educational purposes as it shall determine, the following tape recordings and the typescripts which will result. This gift does not preclude any use which I may want to make of the information in the recordings.

Mabel Hedgpeth  
MABEL HEDGPETH

Nov 10, 1987  
Date

Royal G. Jackson

Interviewer

August 23, 1986; June 18, 1987

Dates of Interviews

Central Point, Oregon

Place of Interviews

