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INTERVIEW OF JOHN HENRY ELMER
BY PAUL LLOYD-DAVIES
JUNE 23, 1992
(TALKS OF CROSSING THE LAVAS WITH BOB LIMBERT AT AGE 8)

CEMO2262

WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?
JOHN H. ELMER

AND WHEN YOU WERE 8 YEARS OLD...
8 YEARS OLD.

...YOU CAME OUT HERE WITH BOB LIMBERT?
YES. AND MY FATHER WHICH WAS CHARLES JOHN. THEY WERE GOOD FRIENDS TOGETHER.

HOW DID YOUR FATHER KNOW BOB LIMBERT?
WELL, HE KNEW HIM IN BOISE. HE USED TO WORK FOR HIM. HE FIXED UP AN OFFICE FOR HIM. HE WAS A TAXIDERMIST; AND HE ALSO DID SHOWS, PISTOL SHOWS WHICH HE COULD SHOOT WITH LOOKING AT A MIRROR HERE AND SHOOT AT A TARGET THERE.

SO IT WAS WHAT, 1922?
1922 WHEN I CAME IN HERE, IT WAS THE EARLY PART OF JUNE.

AND WHERE DID YOU GO?
WELL, WE STARTED OUT AT SENATOR FLAT OVER HERE WHERE THOSE FLOWERS ARE, THAT'S WHERE WE CAMPED THERE, AND WE HEADED TOWARDS THAT BIG BUTTE, AND WE WENT THREE DAYS OUT THERE AND THREE DAYS COMING BACK. WE DIDN'T QUITE GET TO THE BUTTE EITHER.

DO YOU KNOW HOW CLOSE TO THE BUTTE YOU GOT?
WELL, I WOULD SAY WITHIN A HALF A MILE OF IT. BUT WE HAD ONLY SUPPLIES, WATER FOR SO LONG.

AND SO YOU CARRIED ALL YOUR FOOD WITH YOU?
YES, PACK SACK.

AND WHAT DID YOU DO FOR WATER?
WE HAD THESE BIG CLOTH CANTEENS, THEY HAD CLOTH COVERS ON THEM, THE METAL CANTEENS. WE EACH HAD TWO APIECE SO WE RATIONED FOR WATER BUT WE DID FIND A LITTLE BIT OF WATER IN SEVERAL HOLES; AND IT WAS ICE-COLD TOO.

SO THE CANTEENS WOULD CARRY ABOUT HOW MUCH WATER?
WELL I WOULD SAY THEY WOULD CARRY PRETTY CLOSE TO A GALLON OF WATER, THOSE BIG ONES, THE SMALL ONES CARRIED ABOUT A QUART.

SO EACH OF YOU HAD ABOUT HOW MUCH WATER?
WELL I WOULD SAY WE HAD AT LEAST 6 GALLONS, THERE WAS THREE OF US. DAD CARRIED ONE OF MINE, SO DAD HAD THREE, AND BOB HAD 2 AND I HAD ONE SO THERE WERE 6.

AND THIS WAS EARLY JUNE OF 1922?
YES EARLY IN JUNE, IN FACT THERE WAS STILL A FEW PATCHES OF SNOW ON THE HILLS AROUND HERE.

UP IN THE PIONEERS?
YES.

DID YOU JUST GO STRAIGHT ACROSS THE LAVA?
NO I WOULD SAY NOT, WE KIND OF JAGGED IT, COURSE IT'S SOME PRETTY ROUGH GOING OUT THERE. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT THAT COUNTRY'S LIKE AND SOME PLACES IT WOULD BE WHERE IT HAD COOLED OFF ON TOP AND IT WAS FAIRLY FLAT LIKE SOME OUT HERE. WE WENT ACROSS THE BLUE DRAGON FLOW.

AND WHAT DID YOU DO ON YOUR WAY OUT THERE? WERE YOU JUST HEADED FOR...?
OH WE WERE LOOKING FOR JUST MORE OR LESS THE COUNTRY AND HE WAS INTERESTED TO GET THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TO COME OUT, THAT WAS ONE THING, HE WAS TAKING NOTES. WE USED COMPASSES, BY THE WAY.

TO NAVIGATE YOUR WAY ACROSS THE LAVAS?
YES.

SO WHAT KIND OF FEATURES DID YOU ENCOUNTER?
WELL, MOSTLY LAVA. BUT THERE WAS SOME SCRUB TREES AND NOT VERY MANY BUSHES THE SMALL BUSHES NOW, LIKE YOUR SYRINGA BUSH AND SOME OTHERS, THERE WASN'T TOO MUCH OF IT.

BUT YOU ENCOUNTERED LIMBER PINE?
YES A FEW LIMBER PINE. THERE WEREN'T TOO MANY. WE WERE MORE OR LESS LOOKING FOR INDIAN TRAILS WHICH WE CAME ACROSS; INDIAN TRAILS OUT THERE.

WERE YOU LOOKING FOR THE INDIAN TRAILS BECAUSE THEY WERE THE ONLY ROUTE ACROSS THERE?

MORE OR LESS YES. BECAUSE BOB SAID THAT THE INDIANS HAD BEEN. HE HAD BEEN THE YEAR BEFORE WITH THE COLES AND EVIDENTLY THEY HAD DISCOVERED SOME. COURSE MY DAD WAS VERY INTERESTED IN INDIAN LORE AND TRAILS AND HE PICKED UP TRAILS, IN FACT HE HAD ME SCARED STIFF.

WHY'S THAT?
BECAUSE HE SAID HE HAD INDIAN ANCESTORS BUT HE CAME FROM ENGLAND. BOB HAD STUDIED THEM FOR YEARS.

DID YOU RUN INTO ANY PROBLEMS OUT THERE?
THE BIGGEST TROUBLE WAS WE HAD ONE DOG AND BOB HAD ONE AND THEY GOT SORE FEET. BUT HE HAD MADE SOME LITTLE SHOES AND USED THEM ON OUR DOG, WE HAD A TERRIER, A BLACK AND WHITE TERRIER. I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT KIND OF DOG HE HAD.

WHAT DID HE MAKE THE SHOES OUT OF?
WELL, HE MADE THEM OUT OF PIECES OF LEATHER FROM OLD SHOES AND THEY USE RAWHIDE THONGS TO MAKE THEM, HOLD 'EM TOGETHER. SHOESTRINGS IS WHAT THEY ARE.

AND THEY STAYED ON THE DOG?
YEA, THEY DID PRETTY GOOD IF YOU PUT THEM ON TIGHT. THE DOG DIDN'T CARE FOR THEM VERY MUCH, I CAN TELL YOU THAT. WE HAD THEM SO WE FIXED THEM OVER HIS NECK HERE, ON HIS HEAD HERE, ON TWO OF THE FRONT; BUT THE REAR-END WAS THE WORST TO TRY TO KEEP THEM ON. AS WE WENT OUT THERE THE DOG, GOT TO...HIS FEET JUST GOT SORE, JUST RAW.

EVEN WITH THE SHOES ON?
NO, BEFORE.

OH, BEFORE THE SHOES.
BUT THAT HELPED A LOT. THAT'S WHAT SLOWED OUR PROGRESS DOWN, BECAUSE WE HAD TROUBLE WITH THE DOGS.

SO WHEN YOU STARTED OUT THE DOGS DIDN'T HAVE THE SHOES?
NO. BUT THE YEAR BEFORE COLE HAD HAD A DOG AND HAD SO MUCH PROBLEM THAT BOB HAD KIND OF GOT PREPARED AND HE HAD MADE SOME AND IN FACT HE MADE, BETWEEN HIM AND DAD, HAD MADE A COUPLE OF THEM IN BOISE BEFORE THEY WENT. SO THAT EACH DOG WOULD HAVE SOME.

DID YOU PUT THEM ON THE DOGS THE FIRST DAY?
YES. ABOUT THE FIRST DAY. IT WAS PROBABLY THE AFTERNOON BECAUSE WE WENT ACROSS SOME PRETTY ROUGH, JAGGED STUFF OUT THERE.

ANY OTHER PROBLEMS THAT YOU RAN ACROSS AS YOU CROSSED THE LAVAS?
IT WAS COOL AT NIGHT, IN FACT IT WAS QUITE WINDY BUT WE'D TRY AND FIND A PLACE WITH A KIND OF BREAK FROM THE WIND IN THE CRATER PART OF IT. THERE WAS SOME CAVES WHERE WE DIDN'T TRY AND GO IN. A LOT OF PLACES THERE WAS THESE SPLITS AND WE HAD TO WATCH FOR THOSE.

CRACKS?

YES CRACKS, SOME OF 'EM WERE REAL DEEP BECAUSE WE'D TOSS A ROCK DOWN AND SOME OF 'EM WENT QUITE A WAY.

SO YOU SLEPT UP ON TOP OF THE LAVAS INSTEAD OF DOWN IN THE CAVES?

NO, WE DIDN'T SLEEP IN THE CAVES AT ALL. WE SLEPT UP ON THE LAVA IN A KIND OF SHELTERED PLACE...ON THE SPLUNDER CONE WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE.

DID YOU HAVE A TENT WITH YOU?

WE HAD A SMALL SHELTER VERY MUCH LIKE AN ARMY TENT, LIKE THE ARMY HAS. IT HAS 2 PIECES AND YOU PUT THEM TOGETHER AND HOOK UP A LITTLE TENT DOME. WE CARRIED ABOUT; WELL DAD AND BOB WERE CARRYING AROUND ABOUT 80 POUNDS OF WEIGHT. I WAS ONLY 8 YEARS OLD AND I CARRIED ABOUT 40 OR SOMEWHERE AROUND THERE, AND THAT WAS ENOUGH FOR ME.

THAT'S STILL QUITE A BIT.

YEA, I LEARNED TO...IN THE ARMY I CARRIED A LOT.

SO WHAT DID YOU HAVE WITH YOU IN THE WAY OF EQUIPMENT OTHER THAN THE CANTEEN AND THIS SMALL SHELTER?

WELL, WE HAD THE FRYING PANS AND TIN PANS AND WE HAD THESE PORCELAIN COFFEE POTS, WE WAS TRYING TO KEEP THE WEIGHT DOWN JUST AS MUCH AS WE COULD. AND A KNIFE, FORK AND A SPOON. IN FACT, I LOST MY FORK ON THE WAY IN, SO THERE'S A FORK SOMEWHERE.

SO WHAT DID YOU DO FOR THE REST OF THE TRIP AS FAR AS (THE FORK)...?

WELL (UNINTELLIGIBLE) THERE'S PLACES WE'D STOP AND THEN THERE WAS CRACKS OR CAVES AND WE DIDN'T GO INTO THEM. BUT WE SAW QUITE A FEW DEER.

MULE DEER?

YEA. AND WE SAW AT LEAST ONE BEAR. IT WAS NOT TOO BIG OF BEAR. CAUSE AS I SAY WE'D HIT THESE INDIAN TRAILS AND THEN BOB AND DAD WOULD FOLLER'

'EM, SOME OF 'EM WITH THE SAGEBRUSH CUT AND OTHERS WITH A (UNINTELLIGIBLE) AND THEN THERE'S ONE PLACE OUT THERE WITH FOOTPRINTS. EVIDENTLY THEY'D GONE ACROSS WITH MOCCASINS BECAUSE SOME FOOTPRINTS WAS THERE, MOCCASIN PRINT.

IN THE TOP OF THE LAVA?

IN THE LAVA. SO WHOEVER WENT ACROSS IT, IT WAS STILL A LITTLE BIT WARM ENOUGH FOR THEM. BUT THEY DIDN'T GO VERY FAR BECAUSE THEY GOT ON THIS PLACE WHERE EVIDENTLY LAVA HAD BEEN FLOWING AND HADN'T QUITE COOLED ALL YET. AND THEN WE'D HIT A SPOT WHERE IT RAISED UP AND IT HAD GONE IN THE LOWER PART.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE INDIAN TRAILS WERE COMING FROM OR GOING TO?

WE DO NOT KNOW, WE DON'T KNOW, WE HIT ONE AND IT WAS GOING OFF THIS WAY AND ONE WENT TOWARDS THE BIG BUTTE WHERE WE WERE HEADED FOR. AND THERE WAS ONE PLACE THAT WAS A TRAIL, WOULD CUT OFF, WOULD CUT OFF IN THIS DIRECTION AND THERE WAS ONE WENT OFF LIKE MORE LIKELY A BRANCH IN A TREE, IT'D HEAD OFF THAT WAY. WE DID NOT HIT TOO MUCH DEAD WOOD. IT WAS JUST A FEW LIKE YOU SEE OUT HERE, AND NOT TOO MUCH. BUT WE SLOWED DOWN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY BECAUSE WE WOULD GET FAIRLY HOT AND THEN WE'D START ABOUT 5 OR 6 AND TRAVEL TILL IT GOT ABOUT DARK AND IT GOT TOO DARK AND IT WAS GETTING DANGEROUS TO SEE.

SO DURING THE DAY WERE YOU ABLE TO FIND SHADE TO STOP IN?

WELL, UNDER THE SPLUTTER CONE OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...OVERHANGING LAVA; SOME OF 'EM WERE WHERE A BURST HAD COME UP AND FLIPPED OVER.

SO WERE THERE ANY MISHAPS ALONG THE WAY?

NO, OUTSIDE THE DOGS, AND I WORE OUT 3 PAIR OF SHOES. IF EVER ANYBODY TREKS OUT ACROSS THERE YOU'D BETTER HAVE MORE THAN ONE PAIR OF SHOES.

WERE YOU CROSSING BOTH PAHOEHOE AND AA?

YES. WE CROSSED A LOT OF THAT BLUE DRAGON FLOW, IN FACT. WE MADE KIND OF A CIRCLE AND THEN WALKED LIKE THIS AND THEN WE CAME BACK A DIFFERENT WAY. WE CAME FARTHER OVER WHEN WE CAME BACK.

OH SO YOU WENT SORT OF A SOUTH ROUTE OUT TO THE BUTTE AND THEN KIND OF CIRCLED BACK TO THE NORTH AND BACK WEST?

YES. WE CAME BACK IN TO HERE THOUGH.

RIGHT BY NEAR WHERE THE CAMPGROUND IS TODAY?

NO, NO BEYOND. YOU KNOW WHEN YOU COME OUT TO THE DEVIL'S GARDEN? ON THE LEFT THERE, IT'S FLOWERS IN THERE NOW, THAT SANDY GROUND? THAT'S WHERE WE CAMPED, RIGHT IN THERE.

RIGHT ABOUT WHERE THE JUNCTION IS FOR THE DEVIL'S ORCHARD AND THE LOOP DRIVE? YES.

NOW. HOW DID YOU GET OUT TO THE MONUMENT?

WE CAME ALONG THIS ROAD HERE. THERE'S A ROAD THAT WENT THROUGH, CLEAR THROUGH TO ARCO.

THE OLD STAGE LINE?

THE OLD STAGE LINE. IN FACT, SOME OF THE TIME IS THE PIONEERS CAME ACROSS PART OF THAT, BUT THEY SKIRTED AROUND THE EDGE AS MUCH AS THEY COULD. IN FACT, WHEN THEY GOT TO THIS ONE SPOT DOWN THERE WHERE THEY CROSS WHERE IT GOES BACK OFF UP HERE THE LAVA, THEY SKIRTED UP AND AROUND. BUT THE ROAD, YOU HAD TO BE PRETTY CAREFUL WITH THAT ROAD BECAUSE THERE WAS PLACES WHERE IT WOULD WASH OUT AND IT WOULD GET PRETTY NARROW. AND OF COURSE IT WAS JUST ALL A DIRT ROAD AT THAT TIME.

AND THEN YOU FOLLOWED A TRAIL FROM THE ROAD OUT TO WHERE YOU CAMPED AT DEVIL'S ORCHARD?

NO, THERE WAS A SMALL ROAD.

OH.

TO THAT SPOT, THAT'S AS FAR AS IT WENT. I DON'T KNOW WHO HAD PUT IT IN, BUT THERE USED TO BE A LITTLE LOG CABIN RIGHT THERE. JUST ABOUT THERE ON THE RIGHT SIDE THERE. IT WAS PRETTY WELL TUMBLED DOWN WHEN WE WERE THERE.

OUT BY THE DEVIL'S ORCHARD, THE CABIN?

YEA. JUST BEYOND THERE, IN THAT BEND THERE. BUT IT WAS GONE LONG AGO. CAUSE THE NEXT TIME I CAME IN IT WAS GONE. IT WAS PRETTY WELL HALF TUMBLED DOWN.

WHEN WAS THE NEXT TIME YOU CAME IN?

THAT WAS IN ABOUT A YEAR AFTER THEY MADE IT A PARK.

SO 1925?

ABOUT THAT. LET'S SEE IT WAS '24 WHEN THEY AND WE MADE A SMALL TRIP OUT AND WE WENT OUT AND AROUND THE SPLUNDER CONES HERE AND ACROSS TO THE BIG CRATER AND THERE'S A BOTTOMLESS PIT OUT THERE, WHICH IS KIND OF A SPLUNDER CONE BUT YOU GO INSIDE IT, INTO IT, VERY MUCH LIKE THE PATHS WHICH THEY HAVE INTO THERE RIGHT NOW; AND WE TOSSED SOME ROCKS DOWN. YOU COULD HEAR THEM ROLLING DOWN. NOT ROCKS BUT LAVA.

OK. AND THE BOTTOMLESS PIT WAS BETWEEN THE SPATTER CONES AND BIG CINDER.

YES AS FAR AS I REMEMBER. AND I'M NOT SURPRISED LOOKING AT YOU FOR SURE NOW YOU EVEN MENTIONED IT AT ALL AND THAT'S WHY I MENTIONED IT THIS MORNING.

AND HOW MUCH TIME, ON YOUR 1925 TRIP, HOW MUCH TIME DID YOU SPEND HERE?

WE SPENT ABOUT A WEEK IN HERE. LET'S SEE. I AND MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER AND THE TWO GIRLS WOULD STAY AT GOODING. WE HAD A FRIEND THERE.

IT WAS THE MINISTER AT THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT GOODING. WE'D STAY THERE, AND THEN DAD AND I WOULD COME OUT HERE. AND WE WOULD GO OUT AWAY AND BACK AND FORTH (UNINTELLIGIBLE) TRIP OUT THERE AND TAKE A LUNCH OUT THERE AND BACK IN. WE MADE ONE TRIP ON THE OTHER SIDE AS YOU COME OVER THIS RIDGE ON THE ROAD, TO THE RIGHT, COMING IN. WE MADE A TRIP WAY OUT IN THERE ONE DAY. THERE WAS A LOT OF CRACKS ALL ACROSS AND THROUGH THERE. THEY WERE DEEP TOO SOME OF THEM, AND OTHERS WERE NOT VERY DEEP.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT BOB LIMBERT?

WELL, I THOUGHT HE WAS THE "TOPS" MAN. HE WAS GOOD AT A LOT OF THINGS. OF COURSE, I WENT TO SCHOOL WITH HIS SON, ENLOWE.

IN BOISE?

YES. WE WENT TO GRADE SCHOOL, IN FACT, AND INTO 8TH GRADE. AND HE BECAME AN OPERATOR AND HE WENT TO KODIAK, ALASKA AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, WHETHER HE'S STILL THERE OR NOT. A FEW YEARS BACK I SAW THAT HE HAD PAID A VISIT IN BOISE TO SEE HIS SISTER.

SO, YOU SAW THE LIMBERTS IN BOISE?

YES I DID. I SAW SEVERAL EXHIBITS HE GAVE, SHOOTING EXHIBITS. IT WAS VERY MUCH ON SAFETY OF FIREARMS. AND BOY, I DIDN'T EVER WANT TO BE HIS TARGET, HE HAD REALLY HIT IT. BY THE WAY, WE CARRIED A SIDE ARM IN HERE TOO.

WHEN YOU WENT ON YOUR TRIPS?

YES, WE DID TOO.

WHAT KIND OF A SIDE ARM? DO YOU REMEMBER?

WELL, IT WAS A PISTOL, I HAD HAD AN OLD FASHIONED REMINGTON PISTOL, 6 SHOT. AND I CARRIED A BIG HUNTING KNIFE AND BOB CARRIED ONE TOO. WE EACH HAD A COMPASS SO IF WE GOT LOST....THAT'S ONE THING, FOR WE STARTED, WE WENT OVER HOW TO USE A COMPASS; WHICH LATER IN WW2, I USED A LOT BECAUSE I WAS ON CORRECTION OF GUNS IN THE ARTILLERY, WHICH YOU USE THAT VERY MUCH.

NOW, I'VE HEARD STORIES THAT A COMPASS OUT ON THE LAVAS DOESN'T DO MUCH GOOD BECAUSE THE NEEDLE WOULD WAVE. WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE?

YES. WELL IT WAS CERTAIN THAT IT WOULDN'T BE QUITE ACCURATE YOU KNOW. BUT IT WAS ENOUGH AND IF YOU PICKED, AS YOU WENT ALONG, WE MADE SEVERAL PLACES A CANE OF ROCKS, AND PUT STICKS OR SOMETHING ON IT SO WE'D KNOW IT WAS OURS.

AND THAT WAY IF YOU GOT LOST OR SEPARATED OUT THERE...?

IF I REMEMBER IT WOULD BE, MOST OF THE TIME THE COMPASS WOULD BE AT LEAST 5 DEGREES OFF, SOMETIMES MORE, THERE WAS A FEW PLACES IT HIT 10. NOW I'VE SAID THAT IN HERE, WE HAD ONE LIGHTNING, STORM WHEN WE WERE OUT THERE ONE NIGHT, LIGHTNING AND THAT. LIGHTNING JUST DANCED ACROSS, COURSE THAT WAS THE IRON.

THAT WAS IN THE 1922 TRIP?

YEA. THAT ONE NIGHT IT RAINED IT REALLY POURED.

DID YOU GET ALL SOAKED THEN?

YEA. WE HAD A (UNINTELLIGIBLE) ONE OF THESE PONCHO DEALS. I BLESSED THAT DARN THING. AND THEN WHEN I GOT IN THE SERVICE IF I DIDN'T HAVE ANOTHER ONE. HA HA HA HA. (JOVIAL LAUGHTER)

(SLOW JOVIAL LAUGHTER) HOW MANY OTHER TIMES HAVE YOU COME OUT TO CRATERS THEN SINCE...?

WELL, IN 1940 I WAS IN THE SERVICE AND DIDN'T GET OUT TILL 1946.

SO, YOU WERE OUT HERE IN 1940 BEFORE YOU WERE IN THE SERVICE?

I WAS OUT HERE, NO NOT 1940, ABOUT 1938 WAS THE LAST TIME BECAUSE I WENT

INTO THE NATIONAL GUARD WAS IN '39 THEY CALLED US IN, TO FORT LEWIS, FROM BOISE. I WAS IN ARTILLERY, AND I DIDN'T GET BACK HERE TILL, I GOT HOME JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS OF '46, AND IN THE SPRING OF '47 I (UNINTELLIGIBLE) I GOT MARRIED IN THE LATER PART OF (UNINTELLIGIBLE) DECEMBER AND WE CAME OUT THE NEXT SPRING, WHICH WAS '47. AND I'VE BEEN THROUGH HERE, OH 2 YEARS WAS THE LAST TIME I WAS THROUGH HERE, COMING FROM YELLOWSTONE AND UP IN THERE.

YELLOWSTONE HEADED BACK TO BOISE?

YES. I WAS HEADED BACK TO BOISE, STAYED ONE NIGHT HERE. THEY STILL HAD A DEAL OUT HERE, WHERE THEY HAD A KIND OF CANOPY AND YOU REGISTERED IN. I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER THE RANGER CAME OUT, I HAD A PICKUP CAMPER AND HE SAID "KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY! I DON'T WANT THE TOP OF THE OVERHANG HIT." EVIDENTLY SOMEONE HAD HIT IT BECAUSE YOU COULD SEE WHERE IT HIT.

AND THIS WAS WHEN?

THAT WAS IN '47. CAUSE I HAD A VISTA LANDER THAT I HAD BOUGHT IN THE EARLY SPRING OF '47, IT WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TRIPS I MADE OUT. AND THE LAST TIME WAS TWO YEARS AGO I WAS THROUGH HERE, I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE FOR 2 YEARS. TILL NOW AND WE DECIDED TO STAY THREE DAYS. WE'RE GOING TO BLACKFOOT FOR THIS GOOD SAM SAMBORIE. SO WITH 2 COUPLES DECIDED TO STAY HERE AND THIS IS THE 3RD ONE THAT JUST CAME IN. WE'LL GO ON TO BLACKFOOT TOMORROW, IT STARTS TOMORROW AFTERNOON.

SO DID YOU LIVE NEAR THE LIMBERTS IN BOISE?

THEY LIVED IN THE NORTH END OF TOWN AND I LIVED IN SOUTH BOISE. BUT WE WENT BACK AND FORTH. WE USED TO HAVE DINNERS TOGETHER AND PLAY CARDS, THE FOLKS DID. AND OF COURSE BOB LIMBERTS', I NEVER HAD TOO MUCH CONTACT WITH THE DAUGHTER, I KNEW HER, AND THEN AS I SAY, NOW, I CAN'T KNOW HER MARRIED NAME I CAN'T THINK OF WHAT IT IS. BUT ANYWAY, SHE OWNS THE HOLLYWOOD GROCERY AND SHE'S VERY ENGROSSED IN THIS H-TREE DEAL. THEY WANT TO MAKE A FOUR LANE BOULEVARD. SEE HULL'S GULL'S LAYS UP IN THE TOP END IN THE FOOTING OF IT, AND THEY WANT TO OPEN UP AND BUILD THEM ABOUT EIGHT, NO NINE HUNDRED HOMES IN THERE. AND RIGHT NOW IT'S MORE OF A WILDERNESS AREA AND THE PEOPLE OF IN THE NORTH END GO THERE TO WALK AND HIKE IN THERE AND THERE'S A LOT OF BIRDS IN THERE AND THERE'S STILL SOME ANIMAL. IN FACT, THERE'S SOME DEER THAT COME DOWN IN THERE SPEND THE WINTER IN THERE. I LIVE IN THE EAST END RIGHT UNDER THE TABLEROCK.

SO THE ONE TIME YOU CAME OUT HERE WITH BOB LIMBERT WAS THAT TRIP IN '22?
IN '22. YES.

DID YOU AND YOUR DAD GO ON ANY OTHER TRIPS WITH LIMBERT AROUND IDAHO?

YES. BUT I DIDN'T GO. I CAN'T REMEMBER, THEY WENT DOWN IN THE SILVER CITY COUNTRY, DOWN THERE, DELAMARE AND AROUND WARRIOR MOUNTAIN WHICH IS THE HIGHEST MOUNTAINS IN THE OWYEEES. HE DID A LITTLE...DAD WAS KIND OF INTERESTED IN MINING TOO AND BOB HAD A LITTLE BIT IN THAT BLOOD, IT GETS IN YOUR BLOOD.

AND YOUR DAD WAS IN CONSTRUCTION?

YES. HE WAS A BUILDING CONTRACTOR. WHEN I CAME BACK FROM THE SERVICE MY DAD DIED ABOUT TWO WEEKS BEFORE I GOT HOME FROM THE SERVICE. SO I TOOK FOR IT AND THAT'S WHAT I DO, COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL BUILDING. AND I RETIRED IN 1969 AT THE AGE OF 62.

AND WERE YOU BORN IN BOISE?

YES. I'M A NATIVE SUN. ST. LUKES HOSPITAL, THE OLD ST. LUKES.

AND WHAT WAS THE DATE OF YOUR BIRTH?

1914. AUGUST THE 30TH, 1914.

WELL, THAT'S FASCINATING THAT YOU GOT TO GO WITH BOB LIMBERT.

I THOUGHT, IN RESPONSE TO THE LADY, I SAID THEY MIGHT WANT TO KNOW

BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THERE'S TOO MANY PEOPLE THAT KNEW ABOUT LIMBERT OR NOT.

YOU KNOW, OCCASIONALLY LAST SUMMER I CAN REMEMBER SOMEONE COMING OUT FROM ARCO AND SAYING.....

YEA, WELL HE WAS KNOWN AROUND ARCO AND OTHER DIFFERENT PLACES, BUT YOU KNOW THAT'S A LONG TIME AGO WHEN YOU COME DOWN TO IT.

....AND THEY SAID THEY COULD REMEMBER BOB COMING TO, THEY WERE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME AND BOB CAME AND TALKED AND GAVE A DEMONSTRATION.

YES. THAT'S WHAT HE USED TO DO IN BOISE, HE USED TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE SCOUTS. I BELONGED TO THE BOY SCOUTS AND HE GAVE A DEMONSTRATION AND IN FACT I WENT TO SEVERAL AND I BELONGED TO A FEW CLUBS IN BOISE AND WE HAD HIM COME AND SPEAK AT ORGANIZATIONS AND HE'D GIVE A DEMONSTRATION.

WHERE DID HE USUALLY DEMONSTRATE?

WELL, HE DEMONSTRATED IN JULIE DAVIS PARK.

AND WHAT KIND OF THINGS DID HE DO?

WELL, HE SHOWED ABOUT SAFETY OF THE GUN AND SOME OF THE, HE HAD A FEW TROPHIES, HE HAD ONE OR TWO RATTLESNAKES ALONG. HE ALWAYS, HE USED TO CARRY THEM IN A GUNNYSACK. I TELL YOU HE PUT THEM IN THE OFFICE ONE DAY AND HE SAID TO DAD HE SAID, "CHARLIE," HE SAID, "I'M GOING TO CLEAR THIS OFFICE, THERE'S GETTING TO BE TOO MANY PEOPLE IN HERE." HE JUST WENT OVER AND DROPPED IT ON THE FLOOR. IT WAS A COUPLE RATTLESNAKES! BOY, I'LL TELL YOU THEY WENT EVERYWHERE BUT OUT THE WINDOW. THEY WOULD'VE HAD ABOUT A THREE STORY DROP TO GET OUT OF THE WINDOW BUT THEY SURE CLEARED OUT. DAD, OF COURSE HE DIDN'T PAY MUCH ATTENTION. BUT THEY WERE ACTUALLY HARMLESS (UNINTELLIGIBLE) WILD RATTLESNAKES.

[....THE REST OF THE INTERVIEW IS IRRELEVANT TO THE HISTORY OF CRATERS OF THE MOON, IT WILL NOT BE DOCUMENTED HERE. IT IS AVAILABLE ON THE ORIGINAL TAPE OF THE INTERVIEW, IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE PARK.]

***INTERVIEW OF JOHN HENRY ELMER CONDUCTED BY PAUL LLOYD-DAVIES.
(JUNE 23, 1992)

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