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INTERVIEW WITH LLOYD ROACH

by Carla Ehat & Anne Kent
June 27, 1979

INTERVIEWEE: Lloyd Roach (LR)

INTERVIEWERS: Carla Ehat (CE) and Anne Kent (AK)

DATE OF INTERVIEW: June 27, 1979

CE: Today is Wednesday, June 27, 1979. We are going to have the pleasure this morning of talking with Mr. Lloyd Roach who lives at the Olympic Club in San Francisco. Mrs. Alfred Pinther, very graciously, has arranged a meeting at her home today at 625 College Avenue in Kentfield. Lloyd Roach was born in San Francisco, August 8, 1900 of Irish parents. He has been a man actively involved in the Alpine Club. He climbed Mount Tam for years, he's familiar with the Dipsea Races, he knows Stinson Beach when it was Willow Camp. He's familiar with the whole wonderful area and today he is going to share some of that with us. Good morning, Lloyd.

LR: Good morning.

CE: Now we were speaking a few moments ago with Mrs. Kent about Willow Camp. What are your memories of that area and Seadowns?

LR: Well, going back to when I first started to Willow Camp, which is now Stinson Beach, the folks took my brother, my sister, and myself -- My sister did not go all the way with us. We got the train to West Point.

CE: What are we talking about now?

LR: This is right at the time of the fair, 1915, the Panama Pacific International Exposition. We got off the train and we walked in from West Point to Willow Camp, my brother and I.

CE: Walked?

LR: Well, from West Point, that's only three miles, all down hill. And my sister took the old four horse stage from West Point down to Willow Camp. Then we stayed there about three or four nights, days at the Upton Tent City. I think it was 50

cents a night and dinner and lunch ran about 50 cents also. Well, they went home and we hiked back to West Point, they took the stage back, and then got the train, the Mount Tamalpais and Muir Woods train back to Mill Valley and then we met the train, after we had hiked up to West Point, and then back to Mill Valley and then home. After that my brother and I decided we wanted to see -- There was a great aviator at the Panama Pacific International Exposition by the name of Lincoln Beachey, then came Art Smith who did night flying. So we went up, we hiked up to Lone Tree, and had a blanket, no sleeping bag, just a blanket, to stay there all night to look at the, what they call now, which they call Crissy Field. So he'd take off from Crissy Field and at night it would be, he would fly and the view from in the city was wonderful. But the first night it was foggy. We didn't see anything so we came back the next Saturday, one afternoon and we decided to stay again. Well, that didn't work, too foggy.

CE: Well, where did you go, up to the mountain whereabouts did you stay?

LR: Lone Tree, that's a point on the Dipsea race. Then again we went up and that next Saturday night it was just beautiful, clear as crystal and you could see Art Smith flying and making all these circles and everything else with all of the -- Well, they had something in the plane like a, well, like you'd have at Fourth of July, where it illuminated and then he made all these circles and all that sort of thing and then we were happy, then we came back. Of course, that's all we used to do is to go to the fair. Cut the class at high school and then --

CE: You were a fifteen year old boy then, it was a great adventure.

LR: Yes, it was the greatest thing in my life. That was my first introduction to Willow Camp and to the Dipsea Trail. Then after we got involved, as we got older, we rented a house for weekends for about six months a year.

CE: At Willow Camp?

LR: At Willow Camp.

CE: You mentioned some names earlier to Mrs. Kent, Lansburgh and Van Fleet. Were those families there at that time?

LR: Yes, they were. Van Fleet was there but Lansburgh didn't build his house until about 1916. Van Fleet built that house next to Lansburgh's about 1910, so that was a nice house, but the people who bought it, the Lawrence family, they were Sausalito people and they bought VanFleet's house, they spent a lot of money on it, and made it a very nice home. But when Lansburgh built his home he spared no expenses, well he's a very wealthy man, and his brother was an architect.

CE: Oh, he's brother of the architect?

LR: Yes, Lansburgh.

CE: Isn't that the one who did the present Opera House? The brother?

LR: That's right and he did the Orpheum Theater on O'Farrell Street. Oh, he did quite a few things. And then Lansburgh was the attorney for the Orpheum Theater and the name of that -- He's the Orpheum circuit in New York, he was also their attorney and when he built his place he spared no expenses, I say, it is a beautiful place. He had oak hardwood floors in some rooms, then he had some other imported hardwood, not teak, but some other hardwood floors, they're beautiful. Well, they're both gone now.

CE: Well, as a youngster you'd give those houses sort of a wide berth though, what would you do to amuse yourself?

LR: Oh, go down to the beach and go swimming. Then right near where Anne Kent's place was there was a lake in there, they used to call it Mud Lake but they call it Poison Lake.

CE: Now when you refer to Anne Kent's place you're talking about Seadowns, now?

LR: Yes.

CE: When was that built, Mrs. Kent?

LR: Oh, no that water pool they filled it in.

CE: Seadowns was built in the '20s.

LR: Oh, yeah, it was about '29.

AK: It was something in the '20s, I know.

CE: Do you remember Mud Lake? Was it there, Anne?

AK: Yeah, we never went near it but there was a blackish lake over there.

LR: Yeah, Mud Lake.

CE: Was it north of Seadowns or south of it?

LR: South

CE: Oh, south of it.

AK: It was the later people that filled it in. The people who came after us.

LR: Oh, no, that was always there

AK: No, they filled it in. We didn't filled it in

LR: Oh, I thought the state filled it in, made a parking lot out of it. It was full of frogs and we'd go into the water, we'd come out of the surf, and then to get fresh water we'd swim in that water, it was only six feet deep, and it was just Mud Lake they called it. I think Mason called it Poison Lake. I don't know why.

AK: I don't know.

CE: At that time were the Dipsea Races. Had they started?

LR: They started in 1906.

CE: The Dipsea Races in 1906?

LR: Yes, first race was started by two men in the Olympic Club. They used to hike over there and then -- I gave the information to Mark Reese, the name of the fellow was Cony and another fellow, they got into a discussion about, "I could beat you over the race," so they held the race and I forget who won it but then Judge Fitzpatrick and all the other fellows from the club went over that day and stayed at the Sea Beach Hotel and that Sunday they left Mill Valley and hiked around a little bit. Judge Fitzpatrick decided, he was the director of the Olympic Club, and he decided, "Why not have the club hold an annual Dipsea Race every year?" and that was the beginning.

CE: And just imagine today with all the craze of jogging; it's so in now, isn't it?

LR: Oh, yes. Seventy-three years behind times.

CE: Where did the Dipsea race begin, in Mill Valley?

LR: Mill Valley. Then it went right up the steps in Mill Valley, then it crossed it at the time. There's a picture I should have brought that -- It was the first little shack that the -- After Mr. Kent gave the Muir Woods to the United States Government, a federal park, that little house was the first building the government put in, it's a shack. And we used to pass by that then go up hill to --

CE: Kind of a landmark?

LR: Well, no. Then, of course, after the government got interested and they saw the people were interested, then, of course, it just went to pot, so they moved up into the woods itself and that became the caretaker place.

CE: I mean that was a landmark for the runners?

LR: Well, they just passed it because they built a little bridge over there, I think the State Park. Federal Park built a bridge across Muir Woods stream for the hikers and runners. Then I have a picture of the first house, it's all gone apart and then they finally moved. When they moved they let it stay there for two or three years.

CE: Well, did the members of the Olympic Club initially enter the race?

LR: That's right. It was never a race until they started it.

CE: And was it confined to members of the club?

LR: No, no they opened it up to everybody.

CE: Did the Olympic Club ever get involved in doing the trails or maintaining or marking the trails to your knowledge?

LR: Very little, very little, because the footprints just made the trail, that's about it. They took the shortest distance between two points.

CE: Initially in 1906 how many men do you think entered the race?

LR: I gave Mark a photo static copy of the schedule and the names of the runners and their handicaps, I think there were 110.

CE: And what is it today?

LR: Fifteen hundred last June.

CE: When does it run?

LR: Well, it used to run in the -- August and September, now they moved it up to about June 10th or so, now they're holding it every year in June.

CE: What does the name mean? How did that name come about?

LR: That's the mystery. Nobody knows

CE: No. Is there a tribe of Indians or something by that name?

LR: Well, they were around here but --

CE: Do you know, Anne?

AK: No, I don't know. I want to know, too.

CE: Over the dip down to the sea?

LR: They used to say the Indians would be over around Mill Valley and on the side of Mount Tamalpais and they would go to Stinson to take a swim and they called it a dip in the sea and then it was called the Dipsea Indians, that's what the Dipsea Indians took it. But the interesting thing is the runners, when they started it was a club and it will be in Mark Reese's book, that there was a couple of fellows that didn't want to call themselves the Tamalpais Athletic Club, they spelled it backwards and called it Siaplamat Indians. So just spell Tamalpais backward and you get Siaplamat Indians and that went on, they ran it a couple of years and then the name died, but to me that was a wonderful name.

CE: That was great.

LR: And, of course, the interesting thing of the race is how it didn't really get hot until this jogging thing came into being. Because up to either 19 -- After the war there wasn't much interest in it, that was '46, in '50 there was a little interest, but in the

70's -- It was 1968 or '70, then it got to be - I guess it was President Kennedy on this physical fitness, he hopped it up. And now they're all over.

CE: Well, I assume you have run the Dipsea Race?

LR: Well, I never run it, I never did run it.

CE: Never did?

LR: No. Well, we used to go there every weekend but we'd hike and not do much running. I was a long distance runner. I used to at school - I was running the hundred yards and two hundred yard. I like to run and get it over with but this thing is tough and particularly the trail used to be very tough.

CE: Some of the doctors today think it's not so good, it's sort of self flagellation.

LR: That's right.

CE: You mentioned earlier about the Alpine Club. When was it established? About the same year? Did you say 1906?

LR: I used to go there once in a while. There was two groups. There was a group that used to go to Willow Camp and Stinson, and Al Pinther's group, they started the California Alpine Club. So it was his brain child that really developed the California Alpine Club. They bought that --

CE: That piece of property up there --

LR: Yes, nice building up there and they did a lot of work, all the fellows that belonged.

CE: Well, why do you think there were those two distinctions, was there different lifestyles, different philosophies?

LR: No, it was just one liked to go to the beach every -- Do the same thing every weekend, you hit the beach, you run over, then you go down, swim in the beach, bum around the sand, and then later on you'd run down to the end of the sand spit, which the Kent family owned right down to the -- Well, we use to watch the tide, if you'd get the tide right we'd just swim across to Bolinas, see it was only about 25 yards. Otherwise if the tide was ebbed you'd go a little down the sand spit and then you'd swim around because you couldn't buck that tide either coming in or going out, it's too tough. So then there was a time - if the girls used to walk down with us, we'd swim across then there was a fellow by the name of "Holy Joe" and they'd yell for him, scream for him, he'd come over in the rowboat and get them. I think he charged 20 cents, 10 cents each.

CE: We've talked to a lot of people, as you know, about the area, the Dibblee family, and Dolly Cushing Jenkins and Mabel Dodge Bullis and who were we talking to recently that mentioned "Holy Joe"? I asked how did he get that name and this man said -- Oh, it was Edwin Cadogan, he said because he rang that bell in that church. I notice, Lloyd, that you have some photographs that you're sharing with us one of the Summit House and another one with Mr. Constantine. What can you tell us about that place?

LR: I only remember the old building, there was nobody in it when I passed by it but you'd look at it. I forget the year. In the '20s, he left the Summit House and it just went to pot.

CE: Was Constantine running it? Was he the caretaker?

LR: No, he was the original --

CE: You said it was built in 1890, the Summit House, it says here, later known as The Lodge, then later as Conti's --

LT: Conti's, they called him Constantine or something.

CE: Went out of business in 1930. Could you place it for us? Where would it be today? Where would the site be?

LR: If you drive to Alpine Lake, you ascend the hill to the Ridge Road and when you hit the Ridge Road you come to a fork, the one on the left will go to the Mount Tamalpais and the Mountain Theater and if you took the right road then you hit Bolinas and that was right at the top there where the fork came in. I think Anne knows that.

CE: Well, getting back to The Willows and Seadowns, do you remember that other - - Was it called The Dipsea Inn, Mrs. Kent, on the sand spit itself? Did you ever see that?

LR: No- just the wreck. Well, it was just going to pot then, they only lasted three years. I think the Kent family built it in preparation for the railroad - - Cushing was going to bring down the -- bring it to Willow Camp and then you could get a ferry boat from McKenna's across the Bolinas Lagoon.

CE: Was that the plan as you remember, Anne?

AK: Well, I doubt it. I think that he had great hopes of the stage - - We have pictures, you know, of four-horse carriages in front and all that kind of thing, I think that he thought many people would come, the way they went up to Napa County and all the rest of that. It must have been very, very nice. I, too, saw it when it was in its last stages, but Dolly Jenkins told us about some lovely parties they had and my husband was in on that, too. I know they had one wonderful house party, Christmas vacation time, I guess, and it was thrilling to the young people. It must have been an awful headache to the grownups who were running it, because the waves, the tides, the storms are pretty terrible, but they only remember it as something wonderful. Dolly also has shown us pictures where there were cabins that went with it which I had not known before and they all went over -- You know those pictures?

CE: Yes, I have seen them. I'll get them out of my car later. You might like to see them, Lloyd.

AK: They had a lovely time; they used to go over for a week at a time, things like that.

CE: Very simple, very simple little beach cottages, very simple.

AK: I think he was very disappointed that it was a failure. Roads were bad and not too many people could afford to go over the hill in a stage like that you know.

CE: Were you there at the time of the *Owl*? Was the *Owl* still running when you were a boy?

LR: Yes, that's right. In fact in about 1921 or '22, we didn't bother to take that. We wanted to get that workout and run back to Mill Valley but some of the fellows took it and they said it was -- They used to bring -- They'd separate the part of the back of the boat for hogs. Funny odor going back from Bolinas. There's a lot of pictures of that. I think Mason got pictures.

CE: Oh, yes, Mason has a lot of those, too. Well, as the years move along here, did you go to Seadowns after it was built for a vacation?

LR: Oh, yes. Well, after the original Dipsea Inn just went to pot, then Fitzhenry bought all the --

CE: Who's Fitzhenry?

LR: Well, he was -- He married into that -- I forget their name.

AK: It must be Stinson family.

LR: That's it. He married one of the Stinson girls, there were three of them, and then of course Mason tells the story of Fitzhenry going to college back east and then he came back, then married, then looked out after their estate. That's all you got to say, up to a point he looked after the estate and maybe --

CE: Up to a point he what?

LR: Maybe pulled something out and then committed suicide.

CE: He did?

LR: Yes. He went down, right on your property, in your property he got in the car and put a hose to the exhaust and that's when we found him.

CE: Describe Seadowns for me, would you?

LR: Well, before Seadowns was the Dipsea Inn, Dipsea Lodge. The original Dipsea Inn went to pot. Fitzhenry, very reasonably bought the lumber that was in the original Dipsea Inn and he brought that down to the beach, right to Stinson Beach and Willow Camp, and then he constructed his little place. They had dancing and they had a little dinning room and he called it the Dipsea Lodge. That lasted so long, it lasted until maybe 1927, then he gave it up.

CE: Is the building still there?

LR: Oh, no. Then Anne's family built, they built then Seadowns and that was a lovely place but, my heavens, with the wind and they were perpetually getting the sand away, otherwise if you didn't, it would cover up the front of the house.

AK: That's right.

CE: And another problem was piping water to the house. Tell us about that a little bit. You mentioned it before we went on tape. You mentioned this big pipe that ran for a mile?

LR: Oh, yeah, after they built Seadowns, then the -- Anne's family decided to put in some cottages.

CE: South of the main house --

LR: South of the main Seadowns. They had to run a cast iron pipe about a mile and a half up to the spring to bring the water in. I guess it was easier and cheaper than getting the water from where Stinson Beach and Willow Camp, they had a spring northeast that they brought their water in, but Seadowns brought their own water from a mile and a half south of Willow Camp and Stinson Beach. And whatever happened to all that pipe, whether the government just left it or forgot it, I don't know.

AK: I don't think they even know where it is.

LR: I guess not.

CE: Well, is Seadowns on state property now, do you think, Mrs. Kent?

LR: Oh, yes they bought it all.

CE: Bought it all. And the original inn is there and the cottages I know, I stayed in one of those myself

LR: They're all gone.

CE: Those are gone? The cottages?
LR: Oh, yes, everything's gone. Seadowns was torn down by the state, by the federal government. And the cottages in back, that was bad, there was kind of a level spot in there and in winter it was just soaking wet. In fact, the house we rented, we had to get some boards, eight-by-eights and then we -- to lead us to the house. But those houses -- When the new houses were built, the four cottages south of Seadowns, they were lovely little places. Sad.

CE: You mean they've taken those down?
LR: Oh, yes everything.
CE: Well, they were so artistic and beautiful
LR: And they had a nice fireplace. I'm trying to get -- to tell Ruth Miller and Hattie Green over there, they've been there since 1922.

CE: And who are those ladies again?
LR: Ruth Miller and Harriet Green and they're sisters, they're both retired now. Ruth Miller was the realtor and she retired here two or three years ago. She's living in the same house they bought in 1920, of course they did quite a bit of work on it, and they're interesting folks.

CE: We ought to talk to them sometime.
LR: Oh, yeah. If you're ever over that way.
AK: Where are they exactly?
LR: Stinson Beach
CE: Whereabouts?
LR: Well, after you get to Stinson Beach you come to a stop sign and then it's one block to your right and a half block down. When you get there you can stop at the realtors or we can make an appointment date with you and they can meet you at their realtors and then drive up to their house. They've got a cute little place.

CE: Well, we've interviewed one descendent of the Stinson family - haven't we?
AK: I think so.
CE: Mrs. Rhinehardt, I believe.
LR: Oh, yes that's right she's one that -- I forget her maiden name now.
AK: She's a Stinson
LR: Oh, that's right.
CE: Your house is on Stinson at Seadrift, Mrs. Kent, 212. Wasn't that where the Dipsea was? You did some research on that.

AK: I think it was. Yes. I think, sort of pacing if off as some people have done from the old roadway that used to lead to it, you remember across the bay, they used to have a little roadway that led across when the hotel was there, and I think there's about two ownerships, two lots, whatever you call it, up from ours. I like to think that anyway. There's nothing to knock it, it's all the same.

CE: We haven't found any evidences in any or our archeological digging out there?
AK: No, no never found any, no.
CE: Well, you go over there, I gather, every summer?
LR: Oh, winter and summer. We rented a house for about six years right after the war, 1919, rented a house for about five years and then the group thinned out. They got married and some transferred, their business, to other places and it ended up with only four of us. Then we went down and we stayed at the Sea Beach Hotel run by

the Airey family and we stayed there until they sold it, until 1964 or '5. Mrs. Airey sold it once to somebody and she had to recapture it, deficiency in payment, and the second time the same thing and the third time some group bought it and she sold it for \$30,000, a four story big old hotel. One bath and a toilet on the top floor and one bath on the second floor and on the first floor was just the two toilets. She had a big dining room. Mr. Airey built it around 1916, then the people that did buy it -- Well, she sold it for \$30,000, ridiculous at that price. In fact, the county said, "If you are going to run it any longer as a going hotel --" But she didn't run it as a hotel in the last ten years. Her husband and herself ran it because his folks, the Aireys, ran it, the old folks ran it for forty years and then when they died --

CE: Where is this?

LR: Well, it's just a vacant lot there, it's right near the --

CE: You mean this is gone also, this building is gone, too?

LR: They -- Well, some say they had an accidental fire on purpose to get the insurance. They found that those two fellows -- I don't know they were gay or what they were, but they started barbecuing up on the top floor or something and they say it was amazing the whole town didn't go. Four stories, all wood building, and it went up in flames. The litigation lasted two or three years on the insurance. So they got their money I understand, they said they got about \$60,000 for just the building, the property is still there. I heard they sold it to somebody but - - Now you get anything near the beach, it's difficult to get the city fathers or the Golden Gate National Park to let you build. You have to be so far back from the beach, so I don't know what they're going to do with that property.

CE Well, the whole thing has changed, hasn't it, in your lifetime?

LR: Yes.

CE: How do you feel about all this conservation actions, like the Golden Gate Recreational Area?

LR: Oh, I think it's wonderful. It's a godsend. Because you take the --

CE: And the Point Reyes National Seashore?

LR: Oh, yes, gee, that's great. We used to go up there even before it was a national park, walk through the ranches and get out over in that part of the country - This side of Inverness we used to hike over. But that's a gorgeous park; it's a godsend that they got that.

End Side A

CE: When you'd go over there for hikes, Lloyd, was there any property you remember?

LR: Oh, yes there was, Dr. Ottinger had a ranch there, we'd walk through that.

CE: Ottinger?

LR: Ottinger. Then there --

AK: But that's way down at Olema.

LR: Yes. Well, it's more towards the Bear Valley Ranch, over from that. North of where Shafter and those people had it originally. There's a good book on that, I'll have to get that for you. You'd like that for your book. But Taylor bought that very reasonably. I think there was 4,000 acres; I think he paid about \$300 or \$400,000. And the government, the Point Reyes National Park, the government

paid him, I think it was four million, which is cheap, today it would be worth 50 million. But it's amazing.

CE: You know it's wonderful, isn't it, that this county has so much open space

LR: Oh, it's a godsend.

CE: And when people come here and live I often wonder, if they're new to the area, if they ever think about how it came about. It just didn't happen, did it?

LR: Oh, no.

CE: And look at what Mrs. Kent's family have done, William Kent and --

LR: Oh, yes. What he did -- Muir Woods --

CE: Did you hike through there often?

LR: Oh, we'd have to hike through the Muir Woods stream to get up to the Lone Tree and then we had to drop down to Willow Camp. Then another peculiar thing happened there one year, a terrific storm, a tremendous amount of rain and a southwest wind, and it just raised havoc up to Seadrift, which is before Seadrift became, because when the Kent family built that they took a lot of sand and built it up about 20 feet. But before that there was only about four feet above sea level and we used to go up there and they had a lot of damage there. Of course, there was only a few houses but it wasn't up on Seadrift, it was just south of Seadrift and it did a lot of damage. But when the Kent family - They just took the dirt and shoved it up there and got it about 20 feet high and even now once in a while it gets right up to the, almost to their house.

CE: They built a real finger of land spit out there.

LR: That's right.

CE: When you came over, going back a little, you'd take the ferry, I presume?

LR: Yes.

CE: And take the train?

LR: To Mill Valley

CE: To Mill Valley and then start walking from there or did you ever cheat and take the train, the crooked railroad up there?

LR: Oh, no, no. You wanted to get that work-out so that you'd be nice and sweaty to go in the ocean.

CE: How long did it take you to go over the hill?

LR: Oh, about an hour and a half - fifteen minutes. Unless you were walking fast. But to run in the race you had to make it within about 65 minutes because all the runners run it from 45 minutes to -- Well, not now, but in the early days if you didn't make it under 55 minutes, what's the use of running you'd be bringing up the rear. But today they run now the little kids run it, the old people run it, and they're running from -- The winner generally makes it in 46 minutes and it runs for an hour, an hour and a half, two hours, they're just taking a walk. But it's 1,500; they call them runners but a lot of them are just taking a hike.

CE: When you start out at Mill Valley of course then you have the puff, puff up the hill.

LR: Steps, by the old mill.

CE: Is the majority of the run down hill would you say?

LR: No. When you're first out of Mill Valley you hike up the steps, then you hit the ranch, then you'll hit the highest spot there that we call "Windy Gap" and then

from there you drop down to Muir Woods, so above Mill Valley is only an elevation of about 650 feet, then you drop down to Muir Woods at sea level, then you pull from Muir Woods stream you hike up to Lone Tree which is the highest point in the Dipsea Trail it would be about 1,400 feet.

CE: Oh, so it is an up and down, isn't it?

LR: Just twice. Mill Valley to Muir Woods Stream up to Lone Tree, down to Stinson. Once you hit Lone Tree it's all down hill.

CE: How long a run is it in miles?

LR: Seven miles. Six and nine tenths but everybody says seven miles.

CE: This Mark Reese who is writing this book, he's so enthused about the whole subject.

LR: Oh, he's fabulous.

CE: And I think he's coming out this year.

LR: I think so.

CE: Is he interested mainly in the people have run it or is he interested in the history of the race?

LR: The history of the Dipsea Race. Not so much of Marin County, but the race and everything involved in it, of the men and that sort of thing.

CE: Tell me, Lloyd, you spent a lot of your free time in Marin County growing up-

LR: All my free time.

CE: What other activities absorbed you over here?

LR: Just Stinson Beach, Willow Camp. Now Al Pinther's group, they --

CE: Tell us a little bit about Al because he is gone.

LR: Al was really the instigator of -- Really made the Mountain Theater go and that was one of his big interests. He did run the Dipsea Race but his first love was the Mountain Play and the club. My heavens the work they did on it!

CE: And what is the Alpine Club, what is it mainly? Is it a hiking club?

LR: That's all.

CE: Where is it?

LR: Well, you know where the Mountain Home Restaurant is? Well it's about 200 yards south.

CE: And here is the photograph of Al Pinther.

LR: He and Mrs. Easton were great friends.

AK: Yes, I used to know Al.

CE: Has he been gone very long?

LR: About five or six years. He bought the first lot from the Kent family, this is it. He bought this in '35 or '37 and he built this or had it built, rather.

CE: Well, his interest then was the mountain theater and the Alpine Club and you were over at --

LR: That's right. We had another group. See the California Alpine Club group was a wonderful group and the way they worked on that property. They built the beautiful pavilion, dancing; they built a house below that -- for the club to stay over the weekends there. They did all that work and of course most of that group they'd take a vacation, quite a few, Al too. They'd all head for the Sierras. They liked to hike in the Sierras. Of course, we did, too.

CE: Well, that's what I started to say earlier, you spent some of your time, free time in Marin, like during the working year and as you grew up and but there were other trips --

LR: Oh, yes, during vacation, but weekends, when you had to work, you came, you ended up by coming to Marin County, that was our first love.

CE: Did your mother enjoy it?

LR: She never came over.

CE: She never came over? Just your --

LR: Just little ole me. My brother didn't bother with it.

CE: You mean when you were as a youngster -- I had an idea the whole family came over here.

LR: Oh, yes, but just for a few years. After that they didn't care for that.

CE: But you'd come over?

LR: Oh, yeah. Then we came over with some fellows in high school and then when I went to Drew's Finishing School on California Street, different friends you meet and then they would get interested in it. Like Mark Reese -- I gave him certain names I couldn't even find and he bird dogged them down, I told him who they were and where they were supposed to be, but I haven't seen them in years. So, by golly, that Mark Reese, he's -- he's, as you say, you met him at the library. Then he said he went down to Mill Valley and then I went to the museum up there, the old home that the lady gave to the county is a museum up there in San Rafael, so he bird dogged everything, he's amazing.

CE: Yes, Marin County Historical Society.

LR: I haven't seen him now for two weeks, but all --

CE: He had a lot of photographs, too. Didn't you give him some or help him?

LR: Oh, yeah. Gave him all -- I had to laugh, I said, "When do you work and when do you sleep?" He said, "I generally get home. I get to work or maybe have to go to court at ten o'clock and then I'll get home then I'll take the pictures of your pictures and then I develop them and then I'll enlarge them and then I'll write." Gee, he's a worker. And he's a thin fellow.

CE: Did you get the name and address, Anne?

AK: No, I didn't.

CE: Somebody did up there at the library.

LR: I didn't get over to the race. We were going over to the race this year and this friend of mine was picking me up and he and his daughter. So we started out and the motor conked out on Lombard Street so I missed the race. The generator just went out, that stopped that. But, Mark's sister, she's going out to Cal State, she drove over and took all the pictures at the beginning of Mill Valley, a lot of pictures. She must have taken a hundred of the group. He's going to get some of those in the book. And then he ran, of course.

CE: Yes, he looks like a runner.

LR: He is thin, yeah. And his father's 62 and he runs, too. He made it in good time; I think he made it in 75 minutes.

CE: Well, let's get back to you a minute, Lloyd. You went to school, went to Drew, and when did you start with Wells Fargo?

LR: In '18, just at the war.

CE: How did you get interested in that?
LR: Well, because my uncle was a vice president and he said --
CE: "I'll get you a job down the bank."
LR: So I finished at Drew's and then went out to that night school and then the bank, they brought in a professor from the University of California to teach us and the bank paid for it. To teach us banking and finance. On Post Street, they had a school for the kids that wanted it, and the bank really spent some money on it. Ira Cross, he was a brilliant man, and we learned more in one year in banking and finance than you learn in twenty years in any college. Wonderful man.

CE: Where was the headquarters then, on California Street? Wells Fargo?
LR: Well, the Hellman family owned the bank and they owned the Union Trust Company. Wells Fargo originally, well, even for years, was only a commercial bank and the Union Trust was a savings end of the Hellman Banking. Of course, it was owned by the same family. And then, of course, they sold it. They expanded they got about 15 or 20 branches and the Hellman family, the old fellows, they just died, Marco died, and then the other one he finally sold it to American Trust Company and they used that name. It's worth 50 million dollars to me, that name of Wells Fargo. Wells Fargo, you identify that as the '49ers in 1850. So when the American Trust bought it they just changed the name of all of their branches. They were next to Bank of America, Bank of Italy in those days and they just got a gold mine in that name, I think.

CE: Well, who thought of the name, do you know?
LR: Well, when Hellmans -- It was first Wells Fargo when it was horse drawn rigs across the country then they, Wells Fargo, started that bank and there was a Nevada National Bank, another company. So the Hellman family bought the Nevada then they called it the Wells Fargo Nevada National Bank. Then after that they dropped the name of Nevada and just called it the Wells Fargo Bank.

CE: Was the Hellman family to your knowledge in the beginning when Wells Fargo was a freight and passenger stage coach?
LR: No.
CE: They got into that later?
LR: They bought out --
CE: I think that came out of Sacramento.
LR: Yeah. No, they bought that out
AK: Who really was the first?
CE: I wonder -- Well, that's a story in itself, Wells Fargo.
LR: Yes, they've got a booklet on that. I have it, if I can find it I'll send it to you.
CEL: How long were you with the bank?
LR: Ten years
CE: And then you got into this sugar refinery business?
LR: Well, it was just in sales work.
CE: Did you have to travel?
LR: No, I was lucky; we just had to run from here to San Jose and up to Sebastopol where the apple cannery was, the apple juice.
CE: Was that Western Sugar Refinery, was that the name of the company?

LR: Then it changed, it just became, after the American Sugar Refinery -- See that was the -- The Spreckels family started the sugar plant in San Francisco, cane sugar, then he got involved --

CE: When did he get involved in beet sugar?

LR: Oh, about 1904, I think.

CE: Where were those plants?

LR: The first plant he built was down at Spreckels, California, right outside of Salinas, then the next plant he built was at Manteca and then the next plant they built at Woodland and after that they built one down in Arizona. But its three best plants - - Oh, then we built another one outside of Fresno, another one out there. Of course, the Spreckels family which she was originally a -- And then she sold, they finally sold out. There was only two girls and one boy. The boy died and --

CE: What do they call the company now, C&H?

LR: No, American Sugar Refinery.

CE: I beg your pardon.

LR: No, C&H is a competitor But the competition there was, Spreckels dominated the sugar market bringing in the raw cane and refining it in San Francisco. Then there was some argument between the growers in Hawaii so they got a group and they built a big sugar plant up at Crockett. It lasted about two or three years, there was evidently a little financial war there, competitive war, so they closed down for two or three years then they got all that Hawaiian group. There was the Hackfells, the Germans, that was another interesting story. The Hackfells owned a lot of sugar refineries, plantation in Hawaii so in the War of 1918 they just ran around them instead of buying at some normal price, this group, with the pressure from the government when they condemned it all, the war. It was all the German families. Whatever angle they worked, I never did know, they just practically robbed the Hackfells, the Hackfell family, and then the government just sold it to these other people, broke it up quite considerably, and then the Hackfells they just --

CE: Withered away.

LR: Withered away.

CE: Isn't there some story, Mrs. Kent, about getting water to that mill, refinery at Crockett?

LR: Used to bring it from Marin County.

AK: They made a deal with Marin Water District and they said they would build the dock out there at San Quentin Point and I believe would help to raise Alpine Dam if they would guarantee to sell them the water they needed for Crockett.

CE: You mean to run the mill?

AK: Well, that's -- Yes, to run the mill, to purify the sugar. You see, they brought the raw sugar from Hawaii and they took the water from San Quentin Point, both going up to Crockett, to the mill, and that's where the refinery was. I guess it didn't last very long. I don't know why, but anyway, that's what happened. I never heard of the Hackfells though.

CE: How long have you been at the Olympic Club?

LR: You mean living?

CE: Yeah.

LR: Right after the war, 1946 I moved in there and I've been there ever since.

CE: What do you like about the Olympic Club; I gather you've been a member all your life.

LR: Practically.

CE: Do they do good works?

LR: Well, you do your own work. You swim -- a beautiful tank. It was built in 1911 and they have five handball courts, two squash courts, a big gymnasium and a swimming pool. So you get all the exercise you want there. Then later on, after 1911, it was about 1920, they bought the golf club from two Englishmen that had it out there which is now Lakeside. They got that, as I understand it, for about \$200,000. I understand some Japanese corporation offered them 50 million here about two or three years ago. But, of course, when they bought the property which is now Lakeside Country Club, they spent a lot of money in - let alone the golf course, but all the gardening and planting trees. When they bought it was practically naked. I have a picture of that, too. If you wish to see it I'll have to bring that over to you. So then that became - When they opened that up as a golf course the club bought it. Judge Fitzpatrick and all of those old timers, they were all fifteen years older than we were -- We were the last to get into the old Dipsea Inn, what they call the Dipsea Indians. So this fellow named -- He's still alive, the past potentate of the Shrine, Harold Stelling. I sent Mark Reese to see him. He used to go over to the beach, too, He was in another faction, too. There was the Stelling group, there was the Roach O'Brien. Sounds like the Irish Mafia.

CE: Sons of Erin.

LR: And they, all those fellows, didn't want to bother to do all that legging it over to Stinson anymore so they joined the golf club and played golf. So then by that time it was ready to die, so they gave it up in about 1925. Then we couldn't carry it on, there wasn't enough interest in it. There was only a Stelling, another fellow --

CE: Carry what on?

LR: Well, the spirit of the Dipsea Indians. So the spirit of the Dipsea Indians we couldn't run it, just the three of us, not alone financially but to have all of the details of it and all that. Of course, there was only a hundred running. So the South of the Market, they called it the South of the Market Boys, they ran it for about three or four years and they got tired. Then I think the next group was Jim Imperiale, he lives in Mill Valley, his group called the Marin Athletic Club, they ran it. Then they got tired of it after fifteen years.

CE: Well, who's running it now?

LR: The Mill Valley Junior Chamber of Commerce.

CE: So it's no longer an Olympic Club function, it hasn't been for years?

LR: Oh, no. We lost that in 1925.

CE: Do you play golf?

LR: Oh, I did but I never cared much for it. If you want to work on it -- And now it's prevalent, you rent the golf cart. They don't even bother to walk or pack the clubs.

CE: Well, you're in such fine physical shape, how do you keep it? Gardening?

LR: Swimming. Oh, I'm not much -- I just get the leaves and do a little work around here.

CE: Just to be outdoors.
LR: Just to be outdoors.
CE: But you do swim?
LR: Oh, yeah, that's my -- I love to swim. Hiking and swimming. You'd hike to get the exercise to get over there and you'd swim there to get the exercise there and to be swimming.
CE: You never mentioned how you fellows would go over, say, where would you stay when you were just youngsters?
LR: Oh, we stayed down at Upton's in the tents. Then in 19 --
CE: Would you pack a lunch for a weekend or what would you do?
LR: There was a little restaurant there. Lawrence's where that grocery store is, they used to run a little coffee shop there, and we'd eat there.
CE: What did young fellows in those days wear? Now they're all into jeans. What would you wear?
LR: Oh, generally corduroys. Or then we'd cut half the legs off and then walk over with that and take our shirts off, so that was our jogging or running deal.
CE: Well, now you know with jogging you have to have the right kind of socks, you have to have the right kind of shoes.
LR: Forty dollar tennis shoe.
CE: A \$40 sneakers and all that. You would just go in whatever, wouldn't you?
LR: That's right. Of course, what we did when we got to Mill Valley, we went to what they called the Hiker's Retreat. These two English people ran - because in those days the people would go there on a Sunday and they'd have their coats and all that stuff so they checked them at what they called the Hiker's Retreat, and they had showers downstairs, girls and boys. So then we'd check our clothes and put on these old clothes and then run over to the beach, then come back we'd be all sweaty.
CE: Because you had to come back in a public conveyance.
LR: It wouldn't make any difference. But we'd run back to the Hikers Retreat, they'd charge you 35 cents for the towel and the use of the shower and the use of the locker. So when we'd come back all sweaty and dirty, you'd take a nice shower, put our clothes on and off to the train and off to the ferry. So that constituted our weekend.
CE: Sunday night, you'd get home late?
LR: We'd generally get home by sunset. We'd run by the clock, in the summer - - Of course we didn't have daylight savings in those days, they didn't start until 1918, they had it during the war there, then they reactivated it I think in 19-- I guess after Pearl Harbor they reactivated that daylight saving again.
CE: Well, it seems to me that you found a perfect combination in the land and the sea. Really you have. What other place so close to a large city in the world has this? And you've traveled, Lloyd.
LR: Oh, yeah. Of course, on our vacation you'd make a big trip so you went up to the Sierras. Sometimes you'd hit -- It was luck when you hit good weather. Sometimes you'd go up there and you'd hit nothing but hail, rain and you'd get so -- Aw gee, here I've been waiting all year and here I come up and I'm under this tarp. We'd sit under a tree or something and just -- You couldn't do anything,

you'd be so soaking. Of course, now they get all this new rain gear they have and all that.

AK: Did you ever go all the way to Tahoe?

LR: Oh, sure.

AK: What was it like then?

LR: Oh, there was nothing -- Well, when we went on vacation and when my mother and father took us kids, we'd take the train to Truckee -- Well, the train would disconnect right before you get to Truckee and then you'd go out to the old hotel there and then we'd get the boat and go down to McKenny's. McKenny's now is Chambers. I don't even recall ever seeing a road there that went down all the way on the west side. But we did take the boat and then we'd get off at McKenny's and that boat stopped at about three different places. I think they went further south to --

AK: Went straight around.

LR: And then turn around and come back. But McKenny's is now, they sold out to Chambers and he sub-divided and this fellow -- That's all houses now, up on the hill and everything else.

AK: He's from Marin County, too, I forget his name, somebody from Marin.

LR: Yes, he has a house and I think his daughter has a house. Margaret knows his name, I forget, he lives right up here in San Rafael. He belonged to the California Alpine Club too, with Al. He's one of the last of the original - -

CE: Do you still go over to Stinson once in a while?

LR: Oh, yeah, not hiking, I just --

CE: No. When you ever get a ride, you drive don't you?

LR: No, no more since my cataract operation.

CE: No peripheral vision much?

LR: Well, with the one eye, it's got the contact lens, that eye is all right. But this eye is folding up, I should have it done. So I said, well, at my age I have to go through all of that again, so I'm postponing it. So one of these days I'll get the cataract taken out of the right eye and then I can drive. Now, with the left eye I've got good vision, all the way, this way straight. But this eye is so marked I can just about make Anne's face out and your face, it's a blur but one of these days I'll get it done or I won't I don't know.

AK: Go on the bus.

LR: Yes, go on the bus.

CE: Is there anybody we should talk to, you've mentioned the two sisters that are in the realty business in Stinson.

LR: Yeah, Ruth Miller never married, and Harriet Miller married a fellow named Green and he didn't live long.

CE: Ruth Miller and Harriet?

LR: Green.

CE: Anybody you can direct us to that might have some photographs on this area other than Barfield and --

LR: No, I think we've got all the pictures that I can resurrect to get to Mark Reese. He's got them all now, the pictures of the Dipsea. He's just interested in the Dipsea.

CE: Yes, he is zeroing on that, well, that's good.

LR: But as far as the old days of the Alpine Dam, Bon Tempe Dam and all that, I've never seen any pictures of the early days when they were building the dam or anything like that, so I guess the library must have all of those old pictures.

CE: We're still uncovering things.

LR: Bon Tempe, Alpine, Lake Lagunitas.

AK: Did you know Libertys? Did you know where Libertys was? It's somewhere, must be under the Alpine Dam now, I think.

LR: I guess so. We never got much farther than - - There was quite a few used to go to -- They'd hike over to Stinson. I did a couple of times. Hike over from Willow Camp, down by the Summit House, drop down to Alpine. They'd shoot out to Fairfax. See that was about '20, '22.

CE: Lloyd, I want to thank you so much for sharing these wonderful reminiscences with us. Maybe we can get together again.

LR: That would be fine. It's fun just talking about the old days.

CE: It's always fun

LR: This was just following cow trails, like. Of course the other great personality in Stinson was -- In Willow Camp was Thad Welch, the greatest artist.

CE: Was he there when you were a young man?

LR: No, the only thing we saw was -- They went up after he gave it up, he was only there about three years, right in Steep Ravine, and he gave it up. I think the people down at the beach, they went up and took all the lumber that was left and then all that -- [Tape ends]