

Ivan Windscheimer Oral History Interview

October 17, 2011

Linda: My name is Linda Nelson. Today is October 17, 2011. I am interviewing for the first time Ivan Windscheimer. This interview is taking place at 437½ Maple Drive, Kalispell, Montana. This interview is sponsored by the North Fork Landowners Association and is part of the North Fork History Project. Ivan, nice to see you again. Tell us about your early background, where and when you were born.

Ivan: I was born in western Nebraska, where good people come from. Ed Neneman came from there. I went to high school there, joined the Navy, spent four years in the Navy, then went to Washington State. Was there until 1964, when I came to Montana.

Linda: So, you came to the North Fork in 1964?

Ivan: That's the first time I visited the North Fork.

Linda: Why did you come to the North Fork?

Ivan: A guy who was working for me on the dairy [in Kalispell], Wally Nolan—a lot of people know him, some don't—but his father-in-law Ted Ross was running the store, and he wanted me to go see the North Fork. So, we drove up there. It was right after the 1964 flood, so it was interesting.

Linda: Did you see a lot of flooding in the area?

Ivan: The flood was over, but just seeing a new part of the country, and it was pretty rural then, moreso than now.

Linda: What are some of those early memories? How rural was it? What did it look like?

Ivan: Well, there wasn't near as many people up here, and it was at a time when you could still buy an acre or two or three, put a little cabin on it and enjoy the summer or year-round if you wanted to, which is all gone now.

Linda: How much would that cost?

Ivan: A few hundred dollars.

Linda: For an acre or two or three?

Ivan: Yes, that's all, at that time.

Linda: What was it like when you say not many people?

Ivan: Well, there weren't as many people north of the store. There were quite a few, but there were more people around the store, I guess, more activity around the store than there is now, especially in the winter. There was a lot of activity around the store year-round. Of course, the post office was there, but the people were all friends and had a lot of parties, celebrated a lot of birthdays, Thanksgiving, Christmas. Any excuse to get together, people had a little party.

Linda: What would you do at the store when everybody came in? Have coffee? Visit?

Ivan: I don't think we had coffee. No, it was just a meeting place, especially on mail day when there were always a lot of people there, and the people at the store were well-known.

Linda: I'm curious, did people shop at the store? Did they buy things at the store?

Ivan: Yes, I think there was a lot more going on then. You know, the roads weren't good. They weren't nearly as good as they are now. People didn't just hop in the car and go to town.

Linda: As you think back to that period, what other North Fork residents made an impression on you? It sounds like the people in the store. Could you tell us what they were like?

Ivan: Ted Ross, one of the pioneers. Let's see, I went up in 1964. Ted got the store in the 1950s [1955], and he sold it in 1966, I think [1967]. He knew a lot of history about it, and he really loved the North Fork. As far as people, Tom Ladenburg was interesting.

Linda: How do you mean interesting?

Ivan: Tom was a little redneck, but he was a good one.

Linda: Any other residents up there that impressed you?

Ivan: Well, there were a lot of people there I don't remember.

Linda: Did you know any of the original homesteaders?

Ivan: Ann Hensen was the closest homesteader, I think. Her father-in-law homesteaded the Hensen Ranch, he and some other people, but most of the homesteaders were gone. I met a few. I don't remember their names anymore.

Linda: Ann probably had a lot of stories to share with you.

Ivan: Yes, Ann had a lot of stories.

Linda: Do you remember any of those stories?

Ivan: I don't repeat them.

Linda: Well, let's go back. What was daily life like and how was it different from life in most parts of the country?

Ivan: Oh, it wasn't any different than anywhere else. It was quiet. People minded their own business, but they did visit.

Linda: And the social life in the North Fork. It sounds like people had parties.

Ivan: That was part of it, that was the biggest part of it. Mary and I used to play cards, and we skied, and the hostel was always busy. We had a lot of parties in the hostel, drives in the park, picking huckleberries.

Linda: Did you can those huckleberries, or do you remember making jam?

Ivan: We didn't can them. We had a little freezer in the refrigerator and froze them, but we ate them by spring. We didn't keep them.

Linda: I remember you saying something about everyone celebrating their birthday at the hostel.

Ivan: Well, not always at the hostel, but yes, that was pretty much the case. The bigger celebrations were Christmas, that I remember, and they had a few other things. John Frederick can remember what they were.

Linda: Would you celebrate at the hostel or at the Hall?

Ivan: The hostel.

Linda: So, it sounds like the hostel was the center of the community.

Ivan: It was down there, yes.

Linda: Down in the meadow?

Ivan: Yes.

Linda: Were you a member of any organizations in the North Fork?

Ivan: The North Fork Improvement Association.

Linda: Tell us about that.

Ivan: We went up just to visit people and get to know other people, and by some quirk somebody nominated me to be on the committee, and I was on the committee for three years. Didn't accomplish much, but it was interesting just to talk to people. Used to argue about people coming up there. Even then there were some of the new people didn't want anybody else coming. But, and I remember especially Tom Ladenburg telling a guy, "You know, when you come up nobody shut the gate. Now you want to shut the gate on everybody. What right do you have to do that?" He was a lawyer, but he didn't have an answer. [Chuckles] Everybody knows who he is.

Linda: So, you spent three years on the North Fork Improvement Association. What was the North Fork Road like?

Ivan: Bad.

Linda: How bad?

Ivan: There were parts of it that really had water sitting in it almost all summer from snow runoff and rains. Larry Wilson used to call part of it The Big Ditch, which was true, and it was rough. Sometimes it took a lot longer to get to town. The pavement was there, but from there on it was bad. Then when they finally graded the road from the pavement up to where it goes into the park at Camas, that part was good and the rest of it improved. The other part that was really bad was out in front of Ladenburg's, before they put the oil pavement in there. In the spring you could hardly get through there. Boils, when the water went out, and the frost boils would come up. Without a four-wheel drive, you could hardly get through there. People complained about holes and oil, but I'll tell you it was a lot better than before they did that, a lot, lot better. And the County Commissioner had enough guts—people then didn't want it paved, but he said, "We're going to pave it," and they did.

Linda: How about the winter driving?

Ivan: Well, the winter was like it is now. The road is the smoothest in the winter time. You know, they plowed it. They plowed it more often probably than they do now. They used to have great big trucks plow it, and there were two of them. They would go clear to the border and back in a day. And they didn't use a grader very often until the ice built up to where the trucks couldn't take it off, I guess, but that was in the spring. But they plowed to where we lived, and Mary used to bring out pie and coffee for them.

Linda: I bet they loved that.

Ivan: Yes, they called her the pie lady.

Linda: How did you communicate with other North Forkers?

Ivan: We had a CB that we could reach some of them. Up a little farther north they had...what did they use in the navy [marine band radio]? Otherwise, you just went and saw them.

Linda: Stop in?

Ivan: Yes. We played cards with quite a few people.

Linda: It sounds like you had a lot of fun. What kind of cards?

Ivan: Well, Mary and I played with people who played pinochle mostly, and in the winter time they did have a poker circuit. I don't know if you knew about that.

Linda: Poker?

Ivan: Poker circuit. They would go to different places each week and play poker. The women played. The women and men were separate. The women would go to one place, and the men another, but the women gossiped more than they played, so my wife told me.

Linda: Would the women go to one house and the men would go to a different cabin?

Ivan: Yes.

Linda: Sounds like a good idea. You also talked about skiing. That was fun.

Ivan: Yes, cross country skiing. Well, just back and forth. I used to go up the river when it was frozen. I skied up and down that river for miles. It was just so quiet. There wasn't a sound sometimes.

Linda: Wooden skis, I'll bet. Cross-country skis?

Ivan: I snowshoed some, too. I used to use snowshoes more than I used the skis then.

Linda: Tell us about any of the major fires or floods or ice storms or any other major events.

Ivan: Well, the 1988 [Red Bench] fire was the biggest one for us.

Linda: How did that affect you?

Ivan: It burned everything but our cabin. We had two nice sheds and a garage and a lot of lumber that I planned to use for different things. It burned all that. We had a lot of things stored, things from Christmas and pictures and a lot of things we had collected through the years. Of course, that all burned, but they saved our house. A county fire truck came up. He had a 5,000-gallon tank, and he parked down there and sprayed our cabin with water. Without that it would have been done. The tree in front of the house was burned on one side, and it wasn't 10 feet from the house. All around the house within 15 to 20 feet it was black.

Linda: Were you there during the fire?

Ivan: Part of the time, yes.

Linda: You stayed there and watched the fire approaching?

Ivan: Yes, we did. Well, at first it went around. It went where the store was, through that way, and then it came back along the river. That's when it burned our place, and it stopped right there. That's when they put some retardant and stopped the fire there.

Linda: How about floods?

Ivan: The big flood was in 1964. That was before we came, about the first year we went out there, but there wasn't any big water then until 1995. There was water, but never very high. It never got in our cabin until 1995, when they had they had that big flood up there. That's when it got in the cabin, but I wasn't there anymore.

Linda: Ice storms.

Ivan: I don't remember any ice storms. We had a lot of snow at times, had as much as four feet in the yard.

Linda: I remember you telling me a story once about how you and Mary would go and sit out on the porch in the winter.

Ivan: We did. We used to go out there and bundle up. When the snow came straight down, it didn't blow much there. She used to go out and feed the birds at least twice a day, and we didn't walk it three times or four. I could just see her. I had paths to the birdfeeder and to where we parked our cars out by the road, but I could just see her head bobbing through. [Laughs] And the deer cleaned up under the birdfeeders for us. They were around all year. The mule deer were there in the winter time and the whitetail in the summer. There are a lot of mule deer, and we would see a hawk every now and then. There were quite a few elk that used to go through toward the river. I don't know where they went, but we would hear them more than we could see them.

Linda: Are there any other important events that you remember from those days up at the North Fork? Any special event or special Christmas or special birthday?

Ivan: We spent our anniversary at the Northern Lights [Saloon]. Karen Feather always cooked us a nice steak and brought it to us.

Linda: Would that be every anniversary?

Ivan: No, only a few of them.

Linda: Nice. Leadership?

Ivan: The people that I knew that I liked, Lee Downes and Tom Ladenburg and Bob Olson, Ted Ross, Ann Hensen, people that I knew.

Linda: Were they considered leaders of the community?

Ivan: To some extent.

Linda: In any particular way? How would they be a leader?

Ivan: Lee Downes had some connections with the police force in town. Still does, I guess.

Linda: We all know there have been a number of characters up the North Fork. Can you tell us and give your recollection of some of the North Fork characters that have either passed through or lived there? I remember you telling me sometime about one in particular that lived down in the meadow.

Ivan: He [Bo Tanner] married a doctor's daughter [Debbie, daughter of Wallace Donaldson] that owned the land. The first time I met him I walked over there because they were just a young couple, and we decided we would see if we could be friends with him. He was not civil at all, but we became pretty good friends afterward, and they came over and we played cards with them quite often. We had told them the first year they were there they were living in the old cabin [Hoolie Stine homestead cabin]. They hadn't built their house [yet], and we told them they ought to plug the cracks in the cabin because it was going to get cold. And she said, "Well, dad doesn't want us to do anything to it." I said, put cardboard in the inside at least. I don't know, they might

have covered it up some. But that winter was the winter it got down to 40 below zero for four days in a row. After the first night they came over and wondered if they could stay with us because it got cold there, and she said about midnight the first she could hear all the jars, the canned fruit starting to crack and break. But anyway, they stayed with us a couple of nights and went to the hostel one night.

He decided to be a minister. He went to some convention and come back, put up a tent, and there used to be a few people there. We went once or twice. Karen Feather went. I know I saw her there. Anyway, one night it burned. The wind took the tent down and it burned, and all the hymnals were scattered everywhere. He said he didn't do it, but we all knew that he did.

Then when they started another church up, there was a building right at the end of Skyline Drive. He started one in there, and it wasn't long until it burned down. It was about 4:00 o'clock in the morning, and Bob Schepe came around to alert everybody. They lived right near there. We looked at each other and I says, "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" And Rick Upton says, "Yes," and we all felt that he did it. [Chuckles] He did a bunch of crazy things and killed a bunch of pigs that he was raising for John Frederick. He said the bears killed them, but he was the culprit. I don't know if John ever got anything out of that or not. He made life interesting for a while, two or three years anyway.

Linda: Was he there long?

Ivan: Not too many years. After he left, he went down to Texas. He left his wife high and dry. He took the money out of bank and went to Texas, back where he was from. And a year or two later I was at the store and a guy from Texas came in and asked Chrys [Landrigan, the Merc owner at the time], he wanted to know where this fellow was. She said, "He's gone." He asked a few questions, but she didn't really want to give him much information, I guess. He went outside, so I says, "Did you know this guy?" He says, "Yeah. I worked at a Dupont plant with him in Texas." I said that's interesting, and he said, "I heard he was kind of a firebug." I says, "Well I guess he was. I know before he got here he burned a trailer down in Washington State." He said, "I believe it. When he was working at the Dupont plant we had a high conveyer and it had a net underneath, but we told everybody don't touch that and be real careful when you're up there." He says, "One morning here was this guy down there laying on the floor. His back was hurting and hurting, so they sent him to the doctor and this doctor says, "Well you know, you really can't always tell how bad a man's back is hurt, but I can't find one single thing wrong with this one." So, they kind of confronted him with it. "Well it's getting better." So, he went back to work, then little fires began to creep up here and there and everywhere, and he was always the first one there to put them out. Pretty soon, they finally caught him. He was setting fires to get attention, I guess.

He told a story about a wife and two daughters that being burned up on a boat in a river in Texas. They found out that was all bogus; it never happened, but he was telling everybody the story. Then he used to tell a story about he had a broken pelvis that never healed and her dad, his wife's dad, was a doctor, but he would never let him examine him. When his father-in-law wasn't there he could walk pretty darn good, but when he was there he had quite a limp. [Laughs]

Then he was working at a meat facility, a packing facility in Washington, and he told everybody a cow stepped on his foot and he tried to get insurance. He almost got in real trouble. The name he was using, and it escapes me now, the FBI came to see him one day and he was using a guy's name that was in trouble with the IRS. [Laughs] So, he had quite a time explaining himself out of that. He had picked the wrong name. I guess Lee Downes can tell you a story how he did a lot of funny things around the new cabin. But yes, it was interesting. He was probably pretty famous for a while.

Linda: Any other characters come through?

Ivan: Oh, I don't know. Some people thought Tom Ladenburg was, but I liked Tom. My wife and his wife were real good friends, and we visited quite a bit. She used to go down and see her. But Tom was really good when I sold my place and had to move out of there. Didn't have any place to put a lot of the things I had. He told me bring them out and put them in the barn, and he wouldn't take a nickel for it. And he gave me support when my wife died. He and Karen Feather and Robin Cox. Nobody would have thought they would be the people that would support you, but I got more support from them than anybody else.

Linda: How many years did you and Mary live in the North Fork? You came in 1964?

Ivan: That's when we moved up here. We had been building the cabin for years. We were here until 1991, I guess.

Linda: When did Mary die?

Ivan: In 1993, but we moved. We spent a year there and went to Washington for a year and came back, spent another year in our cabin and then moved out, sold it and moved down to the valley in order for her to get better treatment. She had cancer.

Linda: It sounds like you had some good friends who were there to be with you.

Ivan: Ed Neneman and Lee Downes and Tom Sluiter, Robin Cox, they were people that would come around any time. They knew I was alone, so even in the winter time somebody would show up every now and then. There were a few other people, but they were the ones that kept track of me. As far as that goes, Fowler Cary did, too. He used to come up a lot. I ate a good many meals at his place, many many.

Linda: Whose place was this?

Ivan: Fowler Cary.

Linda: Oh yes.

Ivan: But they were up there every month for years, and I saw them all.

Linda: When you mention some of these people I think about you caretaking. I know you spent a lot of time caretaking in the North Fork after you sold your cabin.

Ivan: Well, in the wintertime I stayed at the one that Robin Chopus owned and at John O'Hara's cabin. And Ann Hensen's place in the summertime. Ann Hensen's place, of course, was quite remote, but I really liked it there, and Tom came by quite often. They all did to see me. I had some real bear encounters there. But it was so peaceful and so quiet, I used to stay about five or six months. One year I was going to stay until Thanksgiving time, and a day or two before it started to snow. I thought, well, I'll go out tomorrow, but the next day the snow was too deep to get out. Ed Neneman and [Dennis] Moris came down, with chains on all four wheels. They got in there and made a good track, and I followed them out. I would have been in there a long while without someone coming to get me, but they knew I was there, so they helped me out.

Linda: You mentioned animals, and you had some close encounters at the Hensen place with bears?

Ivan: Yes, about as many encounters with animals as with humans. One of them was at the cabin where we lived. One night we heard a noise outside. We always heard some noises but didn't pay any attention, but it became more consistent. Finally, I told my wife I'd better go out and see what that is. It was dark. I took a 3-cell flashlight with me and opened the kitchen door. We had an enclosed porch that was screened in. A black bear had his head through the door, the screen door. So, I hit it over the nose with my flashlight. He backed off, and we had a little deck out there. He sat on the deck, and I thought, "Well, what am I going to do with him now?" But I had a little pellet gun there that I was shooting gophers with, so I pumped it up and he just sat there. I hit him in the belly, and all he did was grunt, but he walked off. Mary says, "Well what happened?" I said, "He's gone, I think." I told her what I did, and she looked out of the kitchen window. The lights in the kitchen window went to our birdfeeder, and here he was eating birdfeed off my birdfeeder. So, I got my .22 and she says, "You aren't going to shoot it are you?" I said, "No, but I'm going to scare it." So, I just cracked the kitchen door open and I shot across his head as close as I could. That bear took off. We were several hundred yards from the river, but we could hear it clear through the brush and when it hit the water in the river. [Laughs] It made a lot of noise. I don't know, I might have skimmed it, but I know that bear never came back. Anyway, I hit him in the nose with the flashlight.

Then another black bear encounter we had one night, we could hear screaming. It was just like some children screaming really loud, just a little ways from the cabin. We went out, and it took us a long time, but here were two black bear cubs up in the tree, and they wouldn't come down. We told Fish & Game the next day, and they came and got them, but they sounded just like some kids screaming.

I had a mountain lion encounter. Mary and I were walking down through and there were some deer. You know how they will snort and dig with their feet when they are excited. A couple of does were really raising Cain, and the rest of them ran off. We decided we would go down and see what was happening. We figured there was a bear in the woods. We went down to see the bear, I guess. We were on the old North Fork Road. There was a trail there that we were on, and there was a tree right at the end of it. I went around one side, and the mountain lion met me on the other. We were probably not more than six or seven feet apart.

Linda: Gee.

Ivan: I don't know how big he was. He looked really big. [Laughs] I looked at him. I said, "Well, you'd better get the heck out of here," so he just trotted down that other road. I thought, "Oh, Mary is coming down there. Now what am I going to do?" But she was right behind me, and she gave me the dickens for not keeping him there so she could take a picture. I guess she expected me to rope him. Anyway, then we had another mountain lion that was around one winter. We only saw her once or twice, but we saw the cub quite often. But the tracks were there every time there was new snow. She had been around, but she didn't bother anything, didn't break into anything. I don't know where she was denned up, but we saw her tracks a lot.

Then another time my son and his wife were there, and their kids were probably two or three or four years old. We were sitting on the porch in the evening. They had just gotten there. It was just dusk. At the end of the driveway there was a mountain lion ran across, and it was a big one. It was pretty—we talked about it. The next morning Sam says, "All right, we're going home," and my wife says, "You just got here. You've got to stay a few days." He says, "We're not going to stay with animals like that around," so they left.

One of the encounters when I was staying at Ann Hensen's, I had just come home from town one evening and there's a little road that runs between the house and a grove of aspen. I had parked across the far side on the road. I carried one sack of groceries into the house and came out for another sack and Robin Cox drove up. We were standing not far from my car talking, and we heard a sound in the brush and looked over and Robin says, "There's three cubs climbing a tree there." The trees were aspen, they were pretty big. He says, "They're grizzlies." I said, "Well I don't think they're grizzly climbing a tree." He said, "They can until they're two years old." We watched them a minute and then the old sow stood up. I took one look at her and thought, "I can't make it to the house if she wants me, but I think I can make it to the car." She woofed, and the cubs came down. She took off, and they followed her. I looked over at Robin and said, "What was you thinking?" He said, "I sure hoped your car wasn't locked." [Laughs] We weren't three car lengths from her. She was close, not more than 25 or 30 feet, and she was a good size. She lost all those cubs by fall. Fish & Game says one of them was run over, somebody shot one, and I don't recall what happened to the other one, but they said she had lost them all by fall. Not too often they have triplets, once in a while. But they had her collared, so they knew who she was.

And then another grizzly one evening came up to the cabin and my wife told me, "There's a grizzly walking up here." We'll watch and we'll see. That's when we had all the flowers out front. I went to get my .22 and said, "I don't care what he does, but if he touches those flowers he's minced meat." [Laughs] Mary went out on the porch. She wasn't 10 feet from him and took a couple of pictures, but when he heard the film advance, the little noise, he took off and went to the road out in front, not very fast. As it turned out, she didn't have film in the camera, and boy was she mad. It would have been a picture. But he just sniffed the flowers and left.

Oh, this is quite a story. Karin [Craver] the mail lady, I don't know what her last name is anymore, but the gal that delivers the mail.

Linda: Yes.

Ivan: She's got a place up there not far, where Kent [Johnson] used to live. She didn't have it then, but it was that place. The only thing there then was a travel trailer somebody had up there,

and it had dog food in it. A grizzly had broken in there a couple of times and ate the food and wouldn't leave the trailer alone anymore. So, they called the people that monitor the bears, and they decided they would tranquilize the bear. A couple of them got up on top of the trailer and tranquilized the bear, but the bear went out in the woods at least 100 yards or more before it dropped, and it was a pretty good size. They couldn't do nothing with it, and they didn't want to leave it there. Tom Sluiter and I were having supper with Fowler Cary that night, and he was doing the cooking. He was just getting ready to put the food on and the three guys with Fish & Game came in and said, "We need some help to get that grizzly out of there." They told us what happened, so we all left; there were six of us. Went up there and had a tarp and we rolled this grizzly, he was still tranquilized, onto the tarp, and if you think grizzlies don't stink, this one did. Boy, it was loud. We couldn't quite carry it, but there was six of us, so we drug it. We got to this little trailer and Fowler says, "Well, go get your pick-up now." But there was a gate, and they said, "We don't care to come in here with that gate shut." So, we had to drag it another 50-100 yards down to the pickup.

We finally got it into the pick-up. They had some old pulls, and we got it in there. Then they had a bear trap setting down on Ann Hensen's place. He says, "You guys go down there, and we're going to put this bear in the bear trap." So, we got down there and the darned thing started to come to. [Laughs] So, they had to tranquilize it again. We got it loaded into the bear trap finally. We had supper at 11 or 12 o'clock at night at Fowler's, all six of us. We really had a good time.

Linda: What a story. Ivan, can you share a little bit about the hostel? I know you had some stories about how it started or how it got there.

Ivan: Well, Wally Nolan was getting buildings from the old McFarland Ranch, and part of it was what he built the hostel with. Wally moved at least four different buildings from there. At the time I was building my cabin, that's when John Frederick came up and bought the hostel from Wally. But Wally built it. The main part was there first, then he moved another building and made the kitchen part and added onto it.

Linda: Wally had a family, correct?

Ivan: Yes. He had four or five kids, I guess.

Linda: You knew him at the time?

Ivan: Wally was a real good friend of mine. We were close friends. He worked for me on the dairy.

Linda: Tell us about the dairy a little bit. You had a dairy?

Ivan: I managed what they called the [Grosswilers] Dairy for 14 years, and Wally was one of the people that worked for me for a long time. We had at that time the largest dairy in Montana. We had up to 750 dairy cows. I started a milking time that other people had never tried before. We milked at noon and midnight, and I had a good reason. If I started in the morning, if anybody had gone out on the town they didn't come to work, and I had to round somebody else up to get the cows milked or do it myself or help them do it. So, I decided it would be a lot easier if I had them come at midnight and at noon, and it worked out real well. We did that for quite a few

years. The last few years I had five girls working for me milking the cows, and they did pretty good. They weren't probably the best milkers I had, but they were the most reliable. They were there every time. I didn't have to worry about them.

Linda: Where was the dairy?

Ivan: In the West Valley, about seven miles or eight miles out of town [Kalispell].

Linda: Ivan, can you tell us a little bit about huckleberry picking?

Ivan: Yes, a couple of things. Babe Neneman [Ed's father] and I went picking a few times. We were up there one time, and we had gone up to the notch where the lookout was, and we started to pick. We had gone down this old logging road first, and we had gone up on the side picking and crossed a few draws. Finally, we had our buckets about full and we decided it was time to go home. Babe says, "You know, we're in the right place, this is the road." We didn't go very far, and I says, "Babe this isn't the road we came up on." "Oh, yes it is." I said, "Well, I did not climb these big logs." He looked at them and he says, "Well you're right, we didn't," and he stood out there and we looked around a minute. He says, "Well, I know where we are, this is where I got lost yesterday." "What?" He says, "Well I did." He says, "This is where I got lost. I know where we are. We cross over this knob, we come down to that road and it will lead us up to where we left the car." It was quite a walk, but we made it. [Laughs] Mary and I went up there about the same vicinity huckleberry picking one fall, and we each had a little whistle we could alert each other if we needed to. Once this whistle went off, and I could hear her yelling. Oh man, she must have run into a bear or something. So, I got over there, and she had stepped on a rotten log. Her bucket was clear full of berries, but she had stepped on this rotten log and spilled the berries and she was mad. And I'll tell you, she picked up those berries, and I'll bet there wasn't one or two she didn't find. She found them all. She says, "I picked them; I'm going to take them home." [Laughs]

Linda: Ivan, I'm not sure if you want to share anything about your Navy days?

Ivan: Not particularly.

Linda: I'm sure you've seen a lot of changes in the North Fork over time. Is there anything you want to share about those changes?

Ivan: Well, the roads got better.

Linda: Yes.

Ivan: A lot better. Not always smooth, but a lot better. I'm one of the people that wanted that road paved. Some people thought too many people would come over, but they come up anyway. I don't think it would have made any difference, but it sure would have been a lot easier on the cars and going back and forth. And the people that came up in later years were people that were able to build nice houses most of the time, and a lot of them brought up all the conveniences they had in town—washers and dryers and dishwashers. The only thing that was any different they didn't have people going in front of the house, I guess. But that was their right to come. I've met some really nice people, too. A lot of them I knew, and some of them I didn't. But the big change

is you can't buy an acre or two of ground anymore. Maybe that's good. I don't know. And the one thing I did not like after we sold our place, they wouldn't let us vote in the association anymore. I didn't particularly like that, because there were quite a few people up there that lived there who didn't own any land, but that's all right. It's a different environment now. The people that are around the store don't seem to visit with the people up north. A lot of the old-timers are gone now—Ann Hensen, Tom Ladenburg, the McFarlands.

Linda: Well, Ivan, I want to thank you for sharing your North Fork memories with us. I truly and honestly appreciate the time you've given us. The stories will be remembered by all of us, all the new folks that are there. I think we treasure your memories more than you'll ever know, and we appreciate that. Thank you again.

[End of recording]