



Interviewee: Robert (Bob) H. Hortman
Place of interview: Medway Plantation
Date of interview: June 2, 2021
Interviewer: April Wood, HCF
Videographer: HCF
Transcriber: Allison Drennan (HCF Summer Intern, 2021)
Length of interview: 55:35

BEGIN INTERVIEW

April Wood: This is April Wood, and I'm recording Bob, Hortman at Medway Plantation. This is June 2nd, 2021, and we will start the interview, okay? Just to get started, would you please say and spell your full name?

Bob Hortman: Yeah. It's Robert Hortman, alias Bob, I guess you'd say, but Robert R-O-B-E-R-T and Hortman, H-O-R-T-M-A-N.

AW: Where are you from?

BH: Oh, I don't tell many people, but it's going to be on film, but I am originally from Trenton, New Jersey. I was born there. 1951. Lived in the inner city, and my parents wanted to get us out of the inner city. My father took a job at Charleston Air Force Base in the late 50s and moved us to Summerville. Been there ever since. And I thought I died and gone to Heaven because I'd go fishing in the river and do things on my bicycle and I didn't have to deal with inner-city problems we had in New Jersey. So I actually say I grew up in Summerville, and Summerville's my home.

AW: How long have you worked at Medway?

BH: Be 43 years and three months right now.

AW: Wow. Were you familiar with Medway before you started working here?

BH: Um, not really. We used to duck hunt on the river all the time and fish from the Cooper River, and I always wondered what was behind the closed gates and what was on the other side of the timberline we looked at on the river. And, I killed my first Mallard on the Cooper River

just behind Medway. That was probably in 1973. And I always wondered where-- what was back here. I didn't know anything about Medway... At the moment.

AW: What year was it that you started?

BH: That was 1973, when I shot my first Mallard on the Cooper River.

AW: And then what year did you start working here?

BH: 1978. February the 18th. The day that changed my life.

AW: 43 years is a long time. What is it about the property that's inspired you to stay so long?

BH: That's a good question. I came here in 1978 for an interview. I was working at DuPont Corporation across the river and working on the wastewater treatment facilities and eventually changed to be a power technician for boilers and refrigeration machines. I went to school to get a degree in Biology. And I got that. And I didn't see myself doing boiler operations for a heavy industry in years to come, and I was doing taxidermy work as a hobby. Got to know people that managed properties like this and owned properties like this one. And I got to meet***COREY JOHNSTON*** over at *Bono*** Ferry and did all their work for them over there for years. I told *Coliza Coe* if there's anything that ever comes open doing this type of work I'd like to do that. And bless his heart he kept his promise, he did. He introduced me to Bill Baldwin, who managed this property before I came. And I interviewed with Bill. He liked me well enough to set up an interview with Ms. Legendre. When that interview was set up, he-- the first time I have ever been to a job interview where they asked me to bring my wife with me. I thought that was a little odd, but now that I think back it was a very good thing to do because, as the old saying goes, "If mama's not happy, nobody's happy." So if she wasn't going to be happy here, it wasn't going to work. So she came to the interview, and Ms. Legendre told me she said, "How much is going to give you an opportunity to change your life?" And I did. I accepted the job... within seconds. I trained under Bill Baldwin for about a year with him before he fully retired. It was one of the places where I drove through the gates the first time, I just knew it was the place where I needed to be. I've been here ever since. 43 years. If I could change anything? No, I wouldn't. I'd do it all over again. It's a special place. I think anybody that comes here that met Ms. Legendre and all the houseguests that used to come here over the years, all knew Medway just had a special place and worked through the years doing what we did. Putting easements on the property in 1990, '91, we did. It was the best thing for the property. Ms. Legendre always had a-- I asked her one day she came into my office and I felt like a little kid getting scolded by the teacher. She pointed her finger at me and said, "Bob, don't you ever let anything happen to Medway." I said, "... I'm not going to be here forever, either." She said, "No, I just don't want to see this become another shopping mall, or subdivision, or housing development. I want a place

for the beasts to grow old and die." And I went back to her the next day and asked her how serious she was, and she said, "I'm dead serious about this." Because Audubon was supposed to inherit this property upon her death and when [Hurricane] Hugo came through in 1989, and we lost 6 million dollars' worth of trees that night. We financially could not afford to keep up the main house and buildings that we had out here. It was not their priority. They were more involved in wildlife habitats more so than historic structures, and they backed out of the agreement. So, a year and a half after we discussed that first meeting in the office about conservation easements, we put easements on the property with Historic Charleston Foundation and also with Whitman's America Trust which is a conservation organization for Ducks Unlimited. I look back now and think all this could have been lost if the neighborhoods and the property developers bought it, and all the history here would be gone. It would just be another property with the name "Medway Plantation" on it that nobody would know the history of, so I feel really good about that. Yeah, I do feel good about that. So, Ms. Legendre changed my life. No question. No question.

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AW: Tell me about Bill Baldwin. How long had he been here?

BH: Well, Bill was a traveling biologist for the Fish and Wildlife Service. He worked a lot down at--- along with the coastal point of South Carolina and Georgia. He was a water kind biologist, and Ms. Legendre got to know him through the years and offered him a job to take care of Medway. He worked here for her for 42 years and my goal was to at least be here one year longer than he was. So I've achieved my goal-- 43 years-- and I'm still going, but Bill left his mark on Medway, developing a lot of the water kind on the property, and timber work. He accomplished a lot on the property, and he became a very good friend of Ms. Legendre's through the years, and a very good friend of mine. I've been very privileged to know him... and he died way too young. He was a great mentor for me and he did pretty much everything at Medway. He was a major help for me making that transition here. Anytime I had any questions, he was always there to help me, and I hope I can do that for whoever's the next person here. I wonder who it's going to be. I have a fellow working here now who could do that, but we'll see. I like to think, between Bill and myself...85 years on this property. That's pretty amazing. Really pretty amazing.

AW: Was there anybody before Bill?

BH: There was a fellow that lived in town, and back then it was just--- this was--- an agricultural farm property. ***Waring***Blunch***I called him one time on the phone. I had a question about where some buried lines might be, and he might know, and he didn't remember. I never met him. But he was, I guess, the manager prior to Bill. I don't know anything about his history. He was here before my time.

AW: Well, the property's really lucky to have 85 years of just two people.

BH: Well it is pretty amazing that two people stuck around for that long. Having worked for some folks here, Ms. Legendre was just a real treasure to work with. I mean, she had wonderful stories. She always loved to have a party. She entertained constantly. It was a lot of work for the parties we had. Between New Year's parties and Christmas parties, and you name it. Luncheon in the field during hunting season. They were all special events. She'd have anywhere from 60-80 people at the log cabin up for dinner, and it was a major process getting everything set up. Between setting up tents and getting the bands to come in and play, and making sure everybody had a ride in and making sure everything's working, and then making sure everybody's at home. When I look back at those days, I met some fascinating people. Having been here this long. I've been exposed to some really great art. Some of the best things we ever did. Ms. Legendre was always very philanthropic and worked with Historic Charleston and the Charleston City Orchestra. And I remember one day we had a symphony on the yard. And everybody [who] came had to pay for a ticket and had a picnic lunch with baskets and all. On the yard were the Charleston Symphony playing "On the yard," on a beautiful spring day. It didn't get any better than that. It was wonderful. So, I am very fortunate to have been here this long. And I've raised my two sons here. My wife, she passed away, unfortunately, three years ago and both my sons are now working, doing something with wildlife in some form or fashion. They're great people-person people because they grew up around Medway, and it's influenced their futures and I like to think that some of the people that have worked for me over the years have influenced them also. A fellow named Priscilla used to work for me years ago here and went to Clemson. He worked for us during the summer and he's now working for Fish and Wildlife Service as the ace basin coordinator for the Fish and Wildlife Service. So, I like to think that some people who've come here have been exposed to what Medway had to offer, and it has absolutely influenced their life too.

AW: Tell me about Willy.

BH: Willy, wow. That's a story within itself. Willy--- when I first came here, Willy was one of the first people to meet me. I met Willy here. Willy-- his ancestors worked on this property, so Willy had actually been here all of his life, spoke Gullah---

AW: What was his last name?

BH: Washington. And Sam Washington, his son, still works here. Willy used to sign his name with an "X" or a checkmark. Couldn't read, couldn't write, but he was the most honorable and humble man I think I've ever met. He would do anything for you that you'd ask him to do. And he'd help you anytime you needed help. He took care of the wood shed, and around the house, cut

the grass, and just kept Medway up. Those people over the years have eventually made Medway into what it is today.

A little story about Willy is--he was at his woodshed and he had his pipe upside-down, and it was raining and I bought a log-splitter. And I'm thinking, "What is Willy thinking because I'm taking his job with modern technology bringing in a log-splitter." And Willy's standing there, and he has a heavy coat on and his pipe upside-down and had two or three young college students back and I took a huge log, rolled it into the log-splitter and broke it. And he would usually break them with an ax. That'd take him like 30-minutes to get one broke, and they broke it in about two minutes. I looked at Willy, and he went back and got his wheelbarrow and rolled it over there, and he started to put the wood in the wheelbarrow and I said, "Willy, what do you think?" He looked at me, and I wasn't sure what he was going to say. He said, "I like it, boss." So, Willy was all up for technology, especially when it helped him cut firewood. But I've got stories about Willy, just endless stories about Willy. I used to put college kids back there with him. He had stories and ghost stories he used to share with everybody. All the kids would sit back there with him during lunch break, and he'd tell those stories. I wanted to save some of those stories and I tried to get the state to come in and professionally film him just because of who he was and his history with Medway. I couldn't get them interested to do that, so I borrowed my father's big VHS recorder about *that* big and put him up on the front yard and Willy came in, and again he had his favorite pipe with him. We were talking. I started him talking about stories and three hours later my batteries were dead, and I was out of film, and he was still telling the stories. Unfortunately, he had forgotten some of the ones that I tried to get him to tell. But I think he was probably in his late 80s by that point. But I did get him on videotape, so I hope the video is still good, and you can put that on a DVD and be able to use it.

AW: That was great. What's a day in your life like as a plantation manager? Has it changed over years?

BH: Life in a day?

AW: Yeah

BH: There are no set day(s). From day-to-day, I come here, I have no idea. To give you a general idea of what's going to happen. But my phone rings. I start the morning, my dog and I come to work in the morning and I meet with everybody and they all fuss and we talk about what their problems are and what has to be done. We start our day and from that point on my day can change daily. And it can change from minute to minute. I mean, when I first came here, I was much more involved doing hands-on work doing agricultural stuff and forestry work and burning and as I've gotten older, we've got a younger group of people in here now, and I find myself spending more time. I used to have a secretary by the name of Doris Walters when I first came here, Doris retired. She was not replaced and cell phones came along, iPhones came along.

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Technology advanced, and I named my cellphone Doris. Because Doris, my phone, does everything our Doris, the secretary did: answer the phone, I can open the gate from the cellphone, I can do emails, I can do anything on my cell phone, so technology has changed a little for Medway. You know when we restored the house and when the present owner bought it in 19--2011, and we completely restored the house. It's got heating and air-conditioning throughout the house, and it's been completely upgraded and technology has moved into the house and it's all Wi-Fi-connections and I don't think they ever planned on that in the 1686 when that house was built, but we have wifi connections in the house. Four central heating and air conditioners. Anyway, I think the contractors that redid this house then, we had a luncheon for them in the log cabin and I just thanked them because they put the house in good order for the next fifty years and if anything happens to the house I didn't want it to happen during my watch. So far so good. I do worry about fires for these old buildings and they're all built from arc pine and we still have active fire places in the house and I had a fire department call me one night and we had a smoke alarm go off in the house and I told them to come on because I don't know it was 2 o'clock in the morning, I don't know what's going on. Smoke alarms usually don't trip. I met the fire chief at the front door and I told him I've already been through the house-- there's no fire. He said, "Well, I knew there wasn't a fire." I said, "How'd you know that?" He said, "I didn't see the glow from the highway." So that was an eye-opener. If anything ever happened in that house they would see it glow from the highway at three and a half miles away. So, I am very fortunate that we've got smoke alarms throughout the house now. I've told everybody that works for me that if there's ever a fire in that house try your best to get it out. Call me if you can, but try to get it out, because if we don't get it out in the first fifteen minutes, we won't get it out. Fire extinguishers and things throughout the house now so we're good. We're good.

AW: That's scary. Tell me about the maintenance of the historic structures.

BH: Well, if you think about it, that's why Audubon backed out of it because they didn't think they could afford it after losing 6 million dollars' worth of timber with Hugo. There's always ongoing problems in the house. It's an old house and Historic Charleston knows very well about old houses in town. I can tell you one story that happened in the house years ago. Ms. Legendre called me one morning "Bob there's a door sticking between the kitchen and the pantry." I said, "I'll look at it." So I went over there and sure enough it was sticking right in the top corner of the door frame and I had a carpenter here then we went back over and took the plan and we planned the door down and it swung fine that night. And she called me in the next morning and she asked me about the door that was sticking and I said "Well we fixed it yesterday." She said, "Well it's still sticking." That's not a good sign. We went back over and planned the door down. This time I gave it plenty of clearance and anyway I went over the next morning before she got up and looked at it again. It was sticking again. What was happening was that the door was holding the door frame open and I knew there was a problem behind it so we took the doorframe apart and looked and it was the original 1686 floor of the house and the header above the door dry-rotten

termites had destroyed it through generations of time and the bricks above it were all 1686 bricks made here for the most part, were coming down on top of the doorframe and wedging the door. So the door was literally holding the building up. Or holding that wall up. I started the day before she left, photographing every wall, every measuring, every door, and every window, to make sure when it went back I had a photographic record of where everything went. The contractors came in and we dismantled the wall from the third floor of the house all the way to the basement. You could stand in the basement and see the roof of the house in the interior of the 1686 wall. Ms. Legendre was very nervous before she left about me taking the panes off the wall and how it was going to look. Anyway we put it all back together and I finished the day before she came home, hung the pictures on the wall, it looked identical to how it was when she left. Back then, this was in 1981 or 1982, \$110,000 later, the door worked. I had photographed it all the way through just to make sure she knew I didn't take a long vacation somewhere. But it was a major deal. When we took that wall apart though, we found the bricks with the Edward Herd's family name stamped in the brick. We found four of them on either side. Two on one side, two on the other side of the main entrance door to the house, so when the house burned when he was the owner or tenant of the property at the time, he rebuilt it and put his family stamp on the brick, probably thinking no one would ever see it. And that was probably now 300 years ago. So I saved some of the bricks. Agnes Baldwin, who was a wonderful archivist and researched a lot of history on these properties-- she actually found that family crest in the Parton Archives in England. How she was able to identify it. I still have the brick in my office-- one of them, with the family crest on it. So, we always find things.

Anytime we do anything we find things whether we're digging outside, walking down the rows. One of the coolest things I ever found--I don't look at my feet. Some people do. I don't look at my feet. I'm looking for things flying around and running around. I don't look at my feet. I had a fellow here who always finds arrowheads and different artifacts and I don't find things. I have plowed up a field-- what we'd call a tension field. And it's on the north side of Medway, on the blue house swamp-side. It was a beautiful spot. High bluff overlooking the swamp, knowing the Native Americans must have used that for a campsite at some point because it is a high bluff. And I plowed it and I let it rain twice. I went back over there and I looked and looked and looked and now I'm looking on the ground trying to find something and if we find a stone on Medway somebody brought it here. And I saw a stone and I walked over and I picked it up and I had no idea what it was. It looked like a sharp thing and was about probably three inches long, but it had a hole bored through it. There was a broken reed at the hole. It looks like a shark's tooth and I'm assuming there's another part to it. I put it on my mantel piece and I had an archeologist here doing some work with us and I said, "I have something that I need to show you." I pulled it out and showed it to him and he said "Wow. You know what that is?" I said, "I have no idea." He said, "That's an atlatl." He said, "You found half of it." So, I plowed the field back up again and I went looking for the other half which I have not found. I have a thing, I said--Carl Stein was the archeologist here at the time- I said, "Carl, how old do you think it is?" He said, "Somewhere

between 10,000 and 30,000 years old." It's the coolest piece I've ever found. I've got it on my mantel piece and I've never found an arrowhead out here, but I did find an atlatl. And I've looked for the other half of it and I guess the other thing that was interesting was, "who touched it? Where'd it come from?" And the man that lost it was hunting with it and we're doing the same thing; we're hunting the same game that he hunted here, you know, 300, 400, 1,000 years ago. And that part of history just really intrigues me. So I've kept that atlatl in a very special place. My sons will eventually inherit that, but right now it's still on my mantel piece right now. I do find things. I do find things.

AW: Describe the landscape at Medway. What encounters have you had with wildlife here? I know I've heard some alligator stories and some snakes.

BH: Yeah, we always have stories. Medway landscape [is] a typical low country habitat. Bottomland, Flatwoods, pine Flatwoods, bottomland hardwood forest, bottomland cypress-tupelo swamps, Pine Hills with long leaf pine growing on them. We do have 15 clusters of endangered, red cockaded woodpeckers on the property that are doing wonderfully on the property. We find new den trees every year. The only reason that birds are endangered today is that people rotate their timber stance so fast, it doesn't have time to get a red heart in them. A lot of woodpeckers build their cavities in them. We have old timber. Old timber even survived there in Hurricane Hugo. Long-leaf pine, indigenous to this part of the world, survives Hurricane Hugo with 130-140 mph winds. It's just a very slow growing tree and when you talk about economics with pine timber, people want to plant the fastest growing trees they can get to rotate their timber and make money off of it. Loblolly grows so fast it's not very strong and every bit of it sheared off during the hurricane, 25-30 feet above ground. It broke it off. We probably lost 83 percent, 84 percent of our loblolly forest. And we lost 20 percent of our long-leaf habitat because it is stronger and denser. The woodpeckers love them. We have our thirteen different impoundments on the property. Some are used and made three hundred years ago in the rice culture days as the rice reserves for the rice culture. When I came in 1978, I came and finished the last two of them Bill started. That pretty much describes the habitat. That pretty much describes the low country land. Heavy, plate soil, not really conducive for growing row crops because it doesn't perk very well but it does grow really wonderful plant timber.

Wildlife? We have a little of everything. When I first came here we had no coyotes. We have coyotes now. We had no armadillos-- we have armadillos. We had no hogs. We have hogs now. Maybe as global warming sort of changed things a little bit and the habit slightly changed, and the temperatures of the year and the water. I don't know. I know things have changed slightly here. Our burning seasons are a little different than they used to be when I first came here 40 years ago, plus. But my life is changing constantly on the property. We've managed the deer herd for-- as I call it a deer magic program-- for the last, probably 40 years now. I've got all kinds of deer stories, all kinds of stories that we've done through the years. But I guess one of the most

interesting stories I had was a rattlesnake that we have-- eastern diamondback rattlesnakes we have on the property-- which is not a really common species, but we do have them. I've seen some really big ones. Now, I mean really big ones... [That] we let go. But this one particular snake, I was coming back from my house and I was calling the coyotes with a predator call and the predator was a squealing rabbit. I was sitting not too far behind the house, lakeside. The last thing I was doing, I just stayed there a little longer than I normally stay and I had a predator call sitting on the roof of the truck and I had a little rifle for me with the coyotes. I had this squealing rabbit playing and I usually played it for a few minutes. If I didn't see anything in fifteen minutes, I normally leave. I have nowhere else to go. So I stayed there longer than I normally would stay. I played this predator call over and over and over again and I looked in my rearview mirror and I couldn't believe what I saw. When you see a snake in the room, what is he doing? He's crossing the road. He's not crawling down the road. He crosses the road. He wants to get back to cover and this snake came out and was about 30 yards behind me and he's crawling straight to my pickup truck and I'm watching him in the rearview mirror of my pickup truck and I could not believe what he was doing. He went right to my truck and I stepped out and-- this is a little over 6-foot, 6 and a half foot-- eastern diamondback rattlesnake. One of the bigger ones that I've ever seen. And he's right behind my house and I caught a lot of flak from my conservation buddies about killing that rattlesnake. I said, "Well, you don't have him right behind your house. He really did give me the willies that day. And he said, "Well how did you kill the snake?" I said, "Well, I killed him with a pair of jumper cables and there was no stick around long enough to kill the snake with and I had a pair of heavy, really heavy jumper cables in my truck that are about seven feet long and I hit him with the jumper cables twice and I killed the snake. I actually gave him to a taxidermist friend of mine and told him, "I don't want this snake back, but if the owners of Medway want this back, it's a really trophy-creature. If you ever mount it, I might buy it back from you. The present owners had no interest in it whatsoever. I don't know if he ever mounted the snake or not, but I looked up with my smartphone, "Can snakes hear?" And the new technology and the new research shows that they can hear. They have all the inner ear bones we have. They just don't have the ear opening we have. So, he heard that predator call and he came to it. He heard a squealing rabbit. That snake probably was. ---- After I talked to the biologist about it he said he probably was about 30 to 40 years old. I raised that snake here and I have raised several other snakes I've let go out here, but that was a pretty remarkable site and I have photographs of it. And it was a massive, massive snake, so they are to here. We have alligator stories and some of the things I get to see out here are pretty amazing. Riding down the road one day, coming back from a deer hunt one morning and I saw a bobcat walk across the road, a big cat. And she had three cubs with her. The cubs went down the road and she went further down the road and I wished I had a camera with me every time I went out because three cubs went up a pine sapling and mama cat was down the road about 30 yards and she was making some really strange noises and I'm sitting in the pickup truck looking at her and the cubs went up the tree. One went up around this way. One went up this way. One went up and both were on the other side. And they were stacked in a slot about that big with one head, one head, and one head

around the tree all looking at me. And mama's down the road. If I had a camera-- it was an awesome picture I wish I would have gotten. She was making some really strange noises, trying to call her cubs back down the road to her.

Other things I've seen, the same way, I was sitting in a deer stand one afternoon and a cat came by me with three cubs with her. I saw her come about a hundred yards by me and she's coming and she stops and sits there and looks around. She eventually got me and I saw the three cubs coming and as they were walking down the road to her they were all getting to her and she was making a purring sound and growling as she trained them to follow her. They were just little fellows. Probably just, maybe a week old maybe. Then I saw you know any number of eagles, I saw one golden eagle. I had it on broad wick, one day over at one of our lakes and we saw the bird coming and I looked at it and Drew?? looked at it and he said, "What do you think it is?" I said, "What do you think it is?" because I knew what I thought it was. I said, I think it's a golden eagle. and he said, "I do too. And they usually don't venture through here but those of us that identified that bird as a golden eagle. Eagles nest on the property. We had the first one on the property found about 15 years ago. [The] eagle came down in the horse pasture and picked up a big pile of cut grass and flew off with it. The nests are huge, but they build them in massive pine tree tops and they are really hard to find. I followed this bird every time she'd come. I'd see her and I'd follow her a little bit further and further and further into the woods and I finally found her nest. She didn't like me walking through there. With my white hair. She was really fussing at me on the crown. I don't know if she thought I was a competitive eagle or what I was but she did not like me walking by. And she's still there today. She seems to nest about every two years. She tends to nest from here and go over to the new weapons station-- they have a nest there--- and I think every two years she cycles back and forth. We see eagles on the property all the time. I had one fly over the office about a week ago. I didn't have my phone and didn't get pictures of it. So all the things you get to see--you know? Can you put a price tag on that? I can't put a price tag on that. Would I change it? I could've made more money doing a lot of other things in life, but I can't put a price tag on all the things I've done here. It's special. Yeah.

AW: Tell me about Gertie Legendre.

BH: Wow. That's a...She changed my life. No question. She gave me that opportunity to change my life. You know, I was 28 years old when I came here and I think back to when I was just a kid. What did I know? Then having worked with Bill Baldwin, They saw that I wasn't a trained forester. I didn't go to the forestry school. I wasn't trained in forestry. I was moldable. Bill trained me in his ideas about long-leaf pine management which is not the standard, you know, clear-cut mentality. Clear cut plant mentality that foresters have. High production volume of timber. That was not what this was all about. The Medway world. It's about managing a really fine aesthetic Timberland of longleaf pines. He didn't believe in planning the nursery stop material. It was all naturally regenerated timber. Longleaf does not regenerate itself around every

seven years. You make sure you catch that seed fall. So, I managed it until 1989, September 25, 9:30 pm. When Hugo came through and changed everything for me. I wasn't only trying to maintain but also trying to put it back together. Three years' worth of logging and cleaning up and I had my parents sitting at the entrance because there was no way of knowing who was coming and going out. we had a crew from British Columbia and crew of trucks and in order to keep a tally on them I had asked my parents to sit at the gate w their camper and they came in after the storm to make sure were ok and they sat there for the next 9 months at the timber crate and they counted 3657 trucks going out the gate that I knew of and prior to them coming I know how many we missed, but there were probably about 4,000 trucks going out of the gate loaded w timber. We recovered most of the salvageable timber, but they were only giving us twenty cents on the dollar for it because at that point when it went through the salt mill if that tree had what they called a ring shake in it and rocked back and forth and twisted, it breaks the rings in a tree. When you try to cut 2 x 8 or 2 x 12, it falls apart. So they gave you pulpwood prices for small timber. Everybody was trying to get the same wood at the same time. I turned down the first three offers at 23 cents on the dollar because I thought we did better than that and I realized that those loggers were getting picked up and that we might not get a logger and we picked up the next five crews. We had five crews working, and we had the helicopter crew working here too. I had one tragic accident after Hugo. A logger was killed. About four months after the hurricane, there were so many massive pine trees that were hung up and would break off twenty feet of the ground and it was a dangerous place to go and this fellow has come in the night before I didn't meet him and they worked in team and they had one fellow lifting and the other fellow cutting--very professional crew of people. And while the other fellow was lifting he read on his tally sheet on his helmet on what he just cut and how big it was and he started his follow up and his thing was the other guy was doing it and they're probably a hundred yards apart from each other. I saw they kept up with who was doing what and a fellow told me and he heard the saw running and he heard the tree come down and he cranked his saw up and was cutting and when he shut his machine off he could hear a saw idling, but it never picked up again and the best we could put together. The trees were getting very stringy at that point and the trees were starting to dry out. It was hung up probably with stringy material holding that thing together and it just collapsed. It just hit and killed him. So that's the most tragic day, short of Ms. Legendre passing away in the house. She was a few weeks away from her 99th birthday. Then my wife passed away here too. So I have had some of the best years of my life here and some of the most emotional points of my life here, but I think that's true with anybody and where they call home. This has been home. It's been home. So I'm still here.

AW: What was your relationship with Ms. Legendre? Was she friendly, funny, scary?

BH: I think she was over time. Hugo allowed her to trust me. Because I had a monumental job to clean up, and she was she had a fascinating personality. I remember one time coming up from the log cabin, and she had her best friend, Leslie Barkus, down at the cabin, and she said "Gertie

I'm so sorry about how bad Medway looks." But Ms. Legendre always kept her glass half full. Always. I was walking back up, and I heard the conversation as I'm walking by the tennis court and the tennis courts were just a disaster. They had trees laying everywhere and Ms. Legendre told her not to worry, "Bob will clean it up." Her glass was always half full ready for another party. She was interesting, she shared stories with me and she shared personal things with me that I'll never tell anybody. I think I became a friend of hers and I also knew I held a working relationship and that I was her employee. But over time after working for her 22 years before she passed away, somewhat of a working relationship/friendship develops and she shares stories with me and about things when she was hunting in Africa and they were just fabulous stories and I was very privileged to have gotten to know her. We were at the airport one day coming back from a meeting we had in Montana-- a conservationist meeting-- and a fellow came up and said "Gertie how are you? I haven't seen you in forever and she carried on a conversation like they were best friends. After she left she said, "Do you know who he was?" I said I have no idea who he was, but she's met people all over the world. I mean she had friends from every country you could even imagine. Ivan Solosky was here for a meeting we had down in the log cabin for him. Lady Delilah used to come here quail hunting with her years ago. Here, Lady Delilah got on the back of a horse with a full-length coat. I'm thinking hmmm this is not what I'm used to. But she could travel through any network of people whether they were king and queens or Willie Washington working at the woodshed in the back. And she always had an adventurous streak. She always wanted an adventure. Got her in trouble in Germany during the war when she was captured and yeah that's why she went on all the trips in the late twenties when she was hunting big game in Africa and South America and British Columbia, Alaska, French West Indies, Persia, and all the photographs of all these trips she went on were pretty remarkable. To do that just as an individual, alone a woman, who was at that point in her early twenties? She had the opportunity to go out to Jackson, WY. When she was 16 years old her uncle asked her to go on an elk hunt. She chomped at the bit to go out, it was a train ride out of Jackson, WY back in 1917. That was a trip. And that was the first time she ever shot a big game animal, and she just fell in love with hunting which in turned had her buy Medway and created everything else she did in life, but she always had an adventurous streak. She could have gone to New York for her coming out part when she was 16, but she said, "I can always have another party." So she went to Jackson, WY. And that's the type of person she was.

AW: What year did she pass away?

BH: She was, I think she was two weeks away from 99th birthday. I think it was --I need to double-check on that one. But it was 1999 I believe when she passed away.

AW: That must've been a hard time.

BH: Yeah that was a difficult time. You know she'd been struggling and she had a stroke at MUSC, the hospital, she had a stroke and she flew back here and I said Ms. Legendre, she couldn't talk, she couldn't move her head or her arm. And she said "We'll get you back to Medway" and she grunted to me. I don't know if it was a grunt of approval or disgruntled. I'm not sure what the grunt meant, but she wanted to get back here and we brought her back and she came home. Over time she got 100% better, and she lived her life and that was for the next 7 or 8 years and carried on like she always had. I think one of the times for me was my tribute to her over the years, we used to go down to the brick bridge and fish in the heavy rain and the water would be coming down the bridge and she could watch me catch fish there and she just loved it there. I'd take her anytime we had the opportunity to go fishing and it was the greatest.

I was asked to pick her up at the funeral home. I've never picked up anybody's ashes before. I had no idea what to bring. She wasn't a very big person so I took a sterling silver racing urn that she had in the house. A horse racing urn that they'd won and it was a big urn and I put it on the front seat of the truck when I went to the funeral home. When I got there, the funeral director brought the ashes out me and he asks if they're going to have a service in the yard and scatter her ashes and I said they are and he said there's a name plate identification inside with a number on it he said "you might want to get that out before they do the service because they don't want to be putting out ashes out and all of a sudden have a metal tag jump out on the ground. So I brought her home and didn't know what else to do. I put a seatbelt on her and put the urn in the car, and we drove home. I talked to her on the way home. I said like we always talked and I never did that before. My parents were still alive. I had never been through that part of my life and I brought her back and I stopped at the brick bridge out front, and now it's time for me to do this. I took the bag and I took the ashes and I put the ashes in the urn, and I was sifting through it and I came across a metal tag. Well, my tribute to her was, I took that metal tag and I skipped it across the lake at the bridge. So that tag's out in the lake right now, somewhere and then her ashes were scattered around Medway's yard. In the gardens. She's always here. It feels like she's always watching over Medway because she loved it from the bottom of her heart. From the time she put on the conservation easements to what she did. So she was... I mean, did people ever really own these places? I mean, we're stewards of them. We're temporary. We take care of them. They're in our lifetime, but she protected them for future generations. Because so many people look at land as something to be discarded and used and put aside, I wanted to have a place that was natural and I think I came along the time in her life and the time in my life that worked. Twenty years before that might not have worked, but Hugo and the coincidences that happened. I mean if someone had bought the property at that time it was not protected through an easement. It's protected through Audubon, but who's to say what happens to Audubon a hundred years from now. It is protected, and that is the best thing we could do at that moment in time and I think she went to her grave knowing that Medway was okay. I hope so.

AW: So the property changed hands through her daughter. So the current owner as the manager here, what kind of feeling do you go through when the properties are for sale, and you don't know what's going to happen.

BH: There's a feeling of uncertainty and I've told people that work for me that I've worked for me, that I've done some real estate work on some properties over the years and. I've watched properties change ownership and I've tried to reassure everybody that has worked here that nothing's going to happen, Medway's going to continually go on, somebody's going to have to keep up the roads, somebody's got to do the burning, somebody's got to do the forestry work, somebody's got to maintain the house. All this stuff has to continue so, I knew in my mind that it's going to be ok but there is that grave uncertainty about the evolution that I've been through with three different owners has been a really interesting journey. Ms. Legendre was actively quail hunting back when I first came here in 1978. We had 25 bird dogs, all English setters. 1989 we stopped bird hunting and we became more of an education property and we started doing more education programs on the property with different colleges and institutions. When Ms. Legendre's daughter got the property we started doing writer and rider retreats. Writer's conferences and art conferences here. We had writers come here and artists come here and spend 6 weeks with us. Which I think it was about 3 weeks too long, but they came and they just immersed themselves in Medway and the atmosphere of Medway, and they were very inspirational. So I met some really interesting people during that phase of time. Then when the current owners bought this property in 2011, we made a full circle. Now we're back to quail hunting again and now we have 33 bird dogs and at last count 9 horses. Maybe it's time that I look back and think where Medway's been. We are just stewards of this property during our lifetime and maybe the next generation might go back to an environmental program again. We don't know. But it is an interesting change watching their properties going through different ownership and what they want to do with the property and I guess I'm flexible enough to adapt with that and I have to be. I told my good friend who came here. My good friend Jonathan told me when I first came he said "you got two things to remember:" I said what he said: this is a way of life and not a job. I can deal with it. I said what's the other one, he said this will be hardest in years to come he said you don't own it. And I've told everybody who comes to work for me the same thing: we don't own it. We're here for the owners and I guess being as I've adopted that thoroughly that that's the reason I'm still here. Because I take care of it like whatever lies on the property, my goal in life as the manager of the property is to try to convince the owners of the direction I think it needs to go in and if it doesn't go in that direction I didn't do my job. With the conversation easement on Medway. I brought it to Ms. Legendre's attention. We nurtured it and she went through many different lawyers to go through that process and it happened. It's kind of all I do.

AW: We work with a lot of students. What qualifications and interests would someone need to have to be successful in working a property like this? Like have to be like you?

BH: I think...you're the purveyor, the jack of all trades and the master of none. I know a little bit about a lot of stuff and I don't know a lot about little stuff. So I mean I have to learn everything from gardening, horticultural work to timber work to equipment maintenance and how to operate equipment. I'd never thought I'd be running a cutting machine cutting timber down, but we have our own cutting machine so in order to manicure things the way we want I run those. I do book work and office materials and paying bills and iPhones technology is just crazy. I get telephone calls that the television doesn't work in the house. I have to go see what's going on with the television. The internet is not working. The toilets don't flush. Whatever. I have learned a little about plumbing, electrical. You're sort of the jack of all trades. If you don't know how to do it, at least you have connections. On finding people that can do it and I've told all our contractors I'm not trying to take your job from you that's not what I'm trying to do, but I want to know on a Sunday night on Christmas Eve that if I've got a problem I can fix it. So far I've gotten by with that. With everything I told my wife years ago, I think that why God put me on earth is to fix things. So I do fix things. Whether I do it in person or have somebody do it. But I think one of the worst days we had here, Ms. Legendre had a group of people here and we had a house full of people and possibly 6 or 7 people staying in the main house, a couple people in the log cabin. On Christmas weekend, nobody was around and our well went out. No water, not good. I had no way of getting water to the main house and we carried water to everything in the house for the entire weekend so I could get it fixed on Monday and relax so that this wasn't going to happen again. At that point we had a well down the road that took care of my house and another house. I dug a truck from that house to the Medway house and tied all the systems together. So now I have two wells that can serve the main house or, if my well goes down, I can go down and I can get water. And it's worked out wonderfully. I've never had a problem with it since, but I got two wells that I've got tied together that I can move together, and it's just things like that you just have to think well that'll work. So yeah that's what I do.

AW: Is there anything else that you wanted to share in this interview that we may not have thought to ask? Or that you want to record? For posterity?

BH: No I think back in all history on Medway and all the people that come and gone here through the years and the great hunting stories and you know the great parties, you know Bing Crosby has been here and there's been a lot of well-known people have ventured through here that I've never met Bing Crosby but he was before my time. We met some terribly interesting people. And I think back on all the things that have happened at Medway, and about if this property was ever developed and another hundred years from now people wouldn't know what Medway was, oh that's the place down the road. They wouldn't know that so thanks to a lot of circumstances it all fell in place. Hugo was a monumental change in my life. But if it wasn't for Hugo, Medway would've been given to the autobahns/ society, and I guess I realized that things happen for a reason and the day I came here through the gate and I didn't know how much that

changed my life, but it also changed Medway's life because I don't know if my connections at the time and working with conservation easement on other properties working w ducks unlimited and having known the other people I've met at that point in time all the thing just kind lined up that's how it supposed to be. And I feel very will prove to be a part of that. I was asked me one day sitting on a house over at pine grove, I was over there one day and we were talking and he just thanked me for j taking care of Medway and I told him, "I consider it a privilege to take care of Medway" it is a way of life so I hope the next person, whoever that person may be, has the same feeling sand sentiment that I had and that Bill Baldwin had, and he instilled that in me. It was a matter of fact I saw on Facebook yesterday, Facebook of all things, I don't do Facebook. But bill Baldwin daughter posted yesterday, I think that was probe the first of June, was Bill's birthday, so I wrote a little segment back there, and she wrote me back told me that he felt when he left here that he left Medway in good hands and I want to feel the same way when I leave here. I didn't think I'd be here my entire working life, but would I change it? No. I wouldn't change it. It's been a great story. I only have one regret, that I didn't keep a day-to-day diary of Medway. I started writing things down. Everybody said you have to write a book. I know the time of my book, the title of my book is going to be the long dirt road to the mailbox, and the mailbox is three miles down to this road. I drive it at least 3 times a day. That three miles down three miles back that's six miles, 12 miles, 18 miles, and a day. Multiple 18 times 7 and multiply that times 43 years. Its 300,000+ miles to the mailbox. I've worn out pickup trucks going to the mailbox so that I'll be my title to my book. I've started stories, but I wish I had a day-to-day diary, that is the only regret I've got in life. Only one.

AW: Wow, that's pretty good. Well, thank you.

BH: That's good?

AW: Wonderful and inspiring, so thank you for sharing.

BH: You're welcome. And you still have a camera left? I didn't beat Willie, Willie was still talking.

END OF RECORDING