TAPE 95. 1. 15

MICKEY CLARK INTERVIEW NO. 5

NOVEMBER 15, 1995

Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve

INDEX

SUBJECT: Coupeville, Prairie Center

INTERVIEWEE: Mickey Clark

INTERVIEW No. 5

NUMBER OF TAPES: 2

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 11-15-95

LOCATION: Clark Home, 105 NE 3rd, Coupeville, WA

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY:

Theresa Trebon, Rob Harbour

TAPE INDEXED BY:

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Tape indexed on: Marantz Recorder, PMD 220

95. 1. 15: SIDE A

INDEX# SUMMARY

000-010 We continue viewing the videotape shot by Rob Harbour of the Coupeville area. As this tape begins, we are viewing across Penns Cove toward Monroe's Landing.

Conversation continues about *Ed Kennedy*. Mickey says he was a great guy and a great baseball player who played center field. *Thomas Clark* said that when *Ed Kennedy* was playing the other outfielders could sit down because *Ed* could cover all three fields. *Ed* lived out by the Clark family on the lower Ft. Casey Rd. He went to Los Angeles and worked as a conductor on an inter-urban trolley. When he retired he came back to Whidbey Island and lived at Monroe's Landing after Tony Monroe died.

011-059 Potlatch comes into view; it was located about ¼ mile west of Monroe's Landing. Indians lived here and had a longhouse and there was also a longhouse

at Monroe's Landing. *Johnny Blatman* [SP?] lived right near Potlatch and he had many artifacts. *Wilbur Sherman* also had a collection of agate arrowheads. Videotape scans *Arnold* Farm where *Chuck Arnold* lives. The **San de Fuca Store** is viewed. The **Benson Hotel**, a three story building, would have been east of the store. The grey house near the beach where the road forks near the store was *Judge Still's* cabin. **Grasser's Hill** is next: Mickey used to do threshing work towards the bottom of the hill.

060-121 San de Fuca Schoolhouse. The San de Fuca schoolhouse consolidated with the Coupeville School about the same time as the Smith Prairie and Greenbank Schools did, in the early 1930s. *Ellen Baker* used to be in charge at San de Fuca and she transferred to Coupeville where she taught with *Margaret Clark*.

The smaller country schools were begun because of their distance from the town school in Coupeville and the lack of transportation. Mickey thought *Lillian Huffstettler* went to San de Fuca.

Mickey confirms ID of several photos obtained at the last interview.

1. Greenbank School.

[See photo in Appendix for tape 95. 1. 11B, p. 19.]

2. Home of Jake Beach at Smith Prairie.

Right to left: *Bertha Chapman*, mother of *Annie Hesselgrave*, Bertha's sister, *Grace Morrill*, *Dorothy Sherman* [possibly]. Mickey was not 100% sure on the ID of all these people. *Dorothy Sherman* was raised by *Mrs. Morill* as her mother died when she was young.

[See this photo in EBLA Information Binder No. 1: <u>People, Beach, Jake.</u>]

3. Oak Harbor School-1902

[See photo in Appendix for tape 95. 1. 12B, p. 13.]

This school located near site of present Post Office. Mrs. Chuck Arnold went to school there. Erkes Hill is also pictured on this page. Mickey's son was born at the Navy Hospital on this spot.

122-204 We continue viewing videotape. Grassers Hill, Grassers Corner. Mickey recalls story about *Les Chaffee* [SP?] with whom he played a lot of sports. They were returning from a basketball game in Oak Harbor and *Chaffee* took Grassers Corner on two wheels at about 65 mph. *Chaffee* ended up going to South America, possibly on some type of missionary work, where he contracted an illness and died. His family now lives in Lynwood.

Revised Sheet

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Right to left: Bertha Chapman, mother of Annie Hesselgrave, Bertha's sister, Grace Morrill, Dorothy Sherman [possibly]. Mickey was not 100% sure on the ID of all these people. Dorothy Sherman was raised by Mrs. Morill as her mother died when she was young.

[Note: this building was originally a school on Smith Prairie. It later served as the home of *John* and *Alma LeSourd* after their home, the old Kellogg house, burned on Smith Prairie. After *John* and *Alma* lived in it, *Jake Beach* lived in it. See this photo in EBLA Information Binder No. 1: People-Beach, Jake, and Schools-Smith Prairie.]

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Libbey Rd. used to go from Morris's Corner, through the woods to Kennedy's Lagoon and then it turned very sharp and met Madrona Way. There were plans at one time to put Libbey Rd. straight through to Madrona Way at Grassers Corner. The route was slashed out and cut through but it was never completed. Morris's Corner was at the intersection of Libbey Rd. and West Beach Rd.

Rob tells story about *Johnny Youngsman* a painter from Oak Harbor whose son now runs the bowling alley. When Rob was younger *Youngsman* yelled at him for playing near the cedar tree stumps at Ft. Nugent Rd. and West Beach Rd. because the stumps were rotten.

Mickey delivered mail to all the roads around Libbey and West Beach Rd. He tells story about when gas was rationed and the speed limit was lowered. He told the sheriff that he'd never make all his deliveries if he went that speed. The sheriff, *Gil Kennedy*, replied that he should go as fast as he needed to in order to get out the mail. *Kennedy* was sheriff before *Tom Clark*, Mickey's brother.

205-259 <u>Downtown Coupeville</u>. There were several meat markets on Front St. over the years. Jim Gillespie's was one, Gabon and Parker was another.

Mickey comments that the Museum should have put in a cistern to collect rainwater when the new building was built.

The "autobarn" west of the SW corner of Coveland and Alexander was the old *Al Sorgenfrei's* garage. This was not part of E & E Oil but the old shed near the corner was.

Mickey's "Honeymoon House" on the SE corner of Alexander and Coveland. *Mickey* and *Margaret Clark* lived there when they were first married. Mickey recounts the cistern in this house that was out back, but is now covered over by a patio.

260-304 We clarify an earlier interview point about *Charlie Cushing*, owner of the Central Hotel. [See also: 95. 1. 9A, stop 164.]

Cushing built the "Honeymoon House" that Mickey lived in after his marriage. When Mickey was a child, he lived across the street from this house, on the lot where the Recreation Hall now sits. At that time, Cushing lived in his house and he had the only running water in town. The water pipes ran from his hotel, under the road, under the site of the current Penn Cove Restaurant to the east of the house, and into the house. When Mr. Janroe [SP?] was building Penn Cove Restaurant, they dug up these pipes and Janroe asked Mickey what they were.

Cushing had a tank and windmill for the Central Hotel located behind the Barber Shop on Front St. just east of Grace St.

We clarify the name lineage of the **State Hotel**. It was also named the **Blockhouse Inn**, and later the **Starwanna** for the *Starks* and *Wanamakers*.

- 306-348 Recreation Hall. Mickey lived on this site as a child. They lived in a brown house that was a bit east of the current Rec Hall. West of that house, where the Red Hall now stands, there was a grey house where *Charlie Aleck* lived and beyond that was the **Power Plant**. The Fire Hall was not there at that time nor was the well that weeps salt. The Power Plant had transformers 5 or 6' high. Mickey did not recall it making much noise.
- 349-456 Mickey recollects the **cistern** at his childhood house on Coveland St. It was a cement tank in back of the house which collected rainwater from the roof. There was a cement cover over the top of the cistern. The cistern operated by means of a crank. When the crank was turned, it turned a chain with a series of small cups on it. The cups would pass down through the water and then come back up to the top where they would spill into a chute. At the end of the chute there was a faucet where a bucket was placed to be filled. There was no filtering system for the water that came from the roof; it came out of the cistern bugs and all at times.

[For drawing of cistern see Appendix, p. 2.]

There was an outhouse behind the house. Everyone had an outhouse when Mickey was a child. Mickey recounts story of bringing sewage service to Prairie Center when he was on the Town Council with *Kenny Brooks*, *Jim Cook*, and *G. W. Hesselgrave*. The whole town is now on a sewer system.

457-545 <u>Prairie Center</u>. Video now shifts to the Prairie Center area. Squash Barn which Mickey thought might be owned by *Gus Reubel*. **Dean Chevrolet** used to be on the corner lot next to the Tyee. Lot is owned by *Roy Edenholm* [SP?] and *George Decee* [SP?] and is now for sale.

Mickey mentions controversy over where the sign was on top of Pat's Place, now Tyee's. Mr. and Mrs. Pat [Robert and Florence Partridge] lived upstairs above their business. When Pat died Mrs. Pat moved across the street to a house she purchased that is just north of Prairie Center Store and is now the veterinary. She left the house to her niece, Roberta Lee.

Terry Rd. used to be more crooked to go around Engle Pond.

We look at the Tyee again. Mickey mentions a controversy about where the original signs might have been on this building. Confusion about this could have been caused by the signs that once stood on both sides of Pat's Place. Signs were on both sides because the building had false fronts on two sides to attract business from both the Coupeville side and the Ft. Casey side.

Carl Dean located his garage on the corner south of Pat's Place because he felt he had to have a corner location to pump gas and Sam Hancock owned the other corner location where the store was.

546-625 Pat's Place. It had a barber shop, a restaurant, and a butcher shop which was on the south side of the building, where the tavern now is in the building. Pat added on to the north side of the building. As one faces the building now, the barber shop was in the left corner, the restaurant was in the middle, and the butcher shop on the far right side. The Pats bought the building from Willard and Race. Race was a brother of Puget Race, druggist in Coupeville.

Video looks at *Pickard's* old house, a white one in the middle of ball park. The black one on south side of Engle Rd. and north of the Tyee is *Willie Castleton's* [SP?] old house. Prior to *Castleton* living there, it was occupied by the *Newberry's*, the principal of the school and *Max Newberry* lived there. Mickey does not recall the house ever being painted. *Newberry* used to farm the land all the way down to the corner where *Dean's* car lot and Pat's Place later stood.

The *Pickards* lived in the white house for a long time. It used to stand on the other side of the road and then it was moved. *Sam Gelb* had a house where Prairie Center store now is and it was moved too. Prairie Center store is 4 to 5 times bigger now than when it started.

Prairie Center store was started by Oscar Hull and Henry Fair. Hull's sister was married to Henry Fair. They were two soldiers who got Sam Hancock to build the store for them and they leased it from him. Oscar Hull was not related to Ira Hull at the Fort. [See also: see 95.1.12A, stops 86, 178, 231.].

626-701 We look at the Sgt. Clark House. This was Mickey's grandfather's home and is located on the south side of Engle Rd. and north of Tyee about 4 or 5 lots. Mickey's father and uncles helped their father build the balcony/porch on the second floor of the house. Mickey's grandfather, Thomas Clark, married a second time to Margaret Hughes who had several daughters. After Thomas died, his widow and her daughters "took them to the cleaners." This included Thomas' bank account, house, new car. Fred Burshall had the house and a strawberry patch for a time, and then the Engle's purchased the lot and home. Mickey recalls the types of fruits his grandfather had planted in his orchard: quinces, apples,

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Prairie Center store was started by Oscar Hull and Henry Fair. Hull's sister was married to Henry Fair. [Note: Hull's wife was Bessie, Fair's wife was Eva. In a later session with Mickey, which was not taped, he stated that Eva Fair was a "Nice old lady." Prior to being married she had a candy and ice cream store on the north or water side of First St., across from the vacant lot where the Central Hotel used to be at 1st and Grace.] Fair and Hull were two ex-soldiers who got Sam E. Hancock to build the store for them and they leased it from him. Oscar Hull was not related to Ira Hull at the Fort. [See also: see 95. 1. 12A, stops 86, 178, 231.].

A

[Note: In a later session which was not taped in 10-96, Mickey stated that the store was begun in 1916 when he started school. He said that prior to the store being built, a baseball diamond was on that corner. The store was a long building that faced Main Street. A room was built on behind for Hull to live in and a garage and feed room was built on the north side and then a house. This is where the Pickards eventually lived.]

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[Note: This house was located east of Prairie Center on the S. W. corner of Ft. Casey Rd. and Terry Rd. The Engle's later obtained it and moved the house into Prairie Center on Engle Rd.]

702-761 <u>Big Rock</u>. Mickey and members of the Lion's Club cleaned the ivy off of the "Rock of Ages" two years ago, in 1993. They were stopped by the man who owned it because he wanted it left alone. We refer to a photo of this operation and *John Hunt* is on top of the rock. Mickey recalls him as being a "nice guy" and his hat and overalls are in the museum. Everyone liked him and after his death someone asked *Mrs. Hunt* if they could have these for the museum and she gave them his shoes too.

<u>Coupeville School</u>. Built in 1942. Margaret Clark taught most of her career in that school. Mickey points out old gym and says he put a lot of time in there. Mickey said they moved the **Smith Prairie School** in behind the gym. Annie Hesselgrave said she thought they tore the Smith building down.

Kohne

Conn House [SP?] discussed briefly before tape shuts off.

End of Side A, Tape 95.1.15

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END OF SIDE A, TAPE 95.1.15

SIDE B: TAPE 95.1.15

Index# Summary

000-056 Various houses viewed: Jenne house, Barret house, Crawford house. Spangler house. Spangler was in the Navy and he died, and then Mrs. Spangler moved away. Lem and Pearl Anderson Wanamaker house. She was a state superintendent of schools.

057-117 We look at a blue two-story house with an addition on the left side on Engle Rd. which was *Vern Coats* house where the *Fisher's* later lived.

Mickey talks about housing sprawl. How the issue of water can't be used to stop people from moving into an area and building.

The sewer was put in during the 1950s by making a LID designation-local improvement district funds. The state of Washington was threatening to shut down the Coupeville school because of the unsanitary conditions. There was opposition by some because of the cost but the "first ones to pay it were the ones that hollered the loudest." *Frank Coats, Ivar Powell, Mr. Pat.*

Engle [sister of G. W. Hesselgrave] and her husband Bill owned it. They took their share of the money after Carl Engle died and put it into the bowling alley. They plugged up the ditch to hold water back for their farm's alfalfa in the spring so the water couldn't get down to Ebey's Landing. Al Sherman told Mickey about this. The ditch used to be about 5' lower and when water ran high it would make a pond over Engle Road near his place. People wanting to go to Ft. Casey had to go around by Ft. Casey Rd. Tommy Clark worked on the county road crew and told Ann and her husband not to do hold back the water. She in turn got mad at Mickey when he would come into bowl so he decided not to bowl there anymore. Ann Hesselgrave used to take tickets at the showhouse on Front St. in Coupeville. They had a policy that if kids went to the movie the night before, they could get in the next night free. Ann would give each kid a hard time about whether or not they had been there the night before.

170-246 Engle's Pond. It used to come right up to the edge of the road but they drained it and then grass and reeds grew up in the pond. Mickey recalled being able to ice skate right up to the road and back to the fences. Mickey said he used to get really cold and the pond would freeze as did the bay. He recalled the bay freezing twice sometime during the 1920s when his father ran the store on Front St. *Thomas Clark* told all the kids to stay off the ice in the bay and he would "kick them off no matter whose kids they were." It froze over to Monroe's Landing. No boat traffic for several days. A bus ran from Oak Harbor and down to Langley to get people down island. Boats would try and come into Penn Cove but they couldn't get past Snakelum Pt. The Skagit River water would mix with salt water and freeze.

Hastie Lake. Ralph Smith and his son both drowned in Hastie Lake by falling through the ice. His son went under and Ralph went in to get him and couldn't get back out even though he was a good swimmer. Mickey has seen Hastie Lake freeze to the bottom. Long ago it was not drained but now they drain it over by the cedar trees and into the bay by San de Fuca. When they drained it the reeds grew in there. Hastie Lake used to be full of water in the winter, right up to the road. When it froze over people would skate there and the lake was a social meeting place. Mickey recalled Brian Zylstra setting up a tent and cooking hamburgers for the kids. It was cold! Les Miller and someone else cut up the back of a car and put chains on the back wheels. The kids sat on it and they pulled

them around on this. There was lots of fun there. Theresa asks Mickey if he recalled the television commercial for a local bank that featured the "Log Roller of Hastie Lake." Mickey had seen it but didn't know who the man was.

247-344 Logging. Mickey remembered seeing the bay in front of Coupeville full of cut logs. Mickey worked on an operation like this. A truck would haul the logs down to the water and dump them in off the dock, or over by the sewage treatment tank. Several guys would dump it and loggers would put their brand on the logs. Anderson Tug and Barge used to haul most of them and would take them through the locks to Seattle. After cutting the logs a donkey would pull them onto a truck. They would take them to the water and the truck would run up onto a block of wood so it tipped the truck toward the water. Then a toggle would be loosened and the logs would roll into the water.

There were two or three logging operations doing this when Mickey worked logging. Mickey ran a donkey and did high climbing which he hated. He would go up about 125 feet and cut the top of the tree off and it would sway back and forth for 10 or 15 minutes with him on it. He would put a wedge between him and the tree so he wouldn't be slapped against the tree.

Mickey then learned how to dynamite off the top of the tree. He would cut the bark around the tree sap and put an inner tube full of dynamite on it with a fuse about 10-15'. He'd lower himself down to the end of the fuse, light it, and then go down as fast as he could in a sling. The guys at the bottom would grab the sling he was sitting in, Mickey would get out of it, and they'd run up to the top of the road and watch. The top of the tree would blow off and it would be as slick as if it was cut. Mickey said after that he never cut anymore. Mickey had no fear of this.

Mickey would climb up the tree with the spikes on his boots and take the sling up with him. After doing his work, he would sit on the sling, let himself down to the bottom of the fuse, light it, and then slack the line. He went down pretty fast and when he hit bottom he would take off up the road. The other guys would hook the sling and then they'd all go off up the road.

This was a different operation than when Mickey cut wood by Admiral's Cove.... [See also: 95. 1. 9B, stop 030.] That was smaller trees about 4-5' high. He did this for employment as well as working at thrashing and in the gravel bunkers where he greased the rollers on the conveyor belt at the gravel bunkers.

345-488 Back to the videotape. *Al Sherman's* house. *Bob Hancock's* house. *Ed Jenne's* house. *Jenne* had a son who had a world record in pole vaulting.

Carl Engle's farm. Rob asks about two large trees planted in front of their place near the bowling alley and he wondered if there was a house there once. Mickey said no, the trees had always just been there like that. Mickey went to school with Carl Engle's kids.

The Firehall. It once was against the fence and they wanted to put on an extension. They didn't have enough room and moved down to where it is now. This was the sight of the Puget Sound Academy.

Muncaster lived in the minister's house. We clarify a point on the Franzens. Charlie and Beth Franzen lived in the academy as her mother owned the Academy and eventually gave it to Beth. Charlie and Beth were both deaf and went to school at the deaf academy in Vancouver. They had 3 or 4 children but they aren't deaf. They owned it for quite a while and after it closed down they moved out near Edwin Sherman on the prairie. Mickey used to play baseball with Charlie.

[See also: 95. 1. 9A, stop 280.]

489-538 Where the telephone office and doctor's office are now, across from the Catholic Church, was all cow pasture at one time. You can have farm animals in the city limits of Coupeville.

Clarification on spelling of *Paul Debrian's* name from tape 95. 2. 1A, stop 099.

END OF SIDE B, TAPE 95.1.15

THIS CONCLUDES INTERVIEW NO. 5

@ THERESA L. TREBON, 12-95