

MAINE SOUND AND STORY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FIRST COAST

AN INTERVIEW WITH SANFORD KELLEY FOR THE FIRST COAST JONESPORT/BEALS
COLLECTION

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY GALEN KOCH

JONESPORT, MAINE NOVEMBER 2, 2018

TRANSCRIPT BY JOHNNY ROBINSON & ELLE GILCHRIST

Interviewee Name: Sanford Kelley

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Interviewer(s) Name(s) and Affiliation: Galen Koch (The First Coast)

Interview Location: Jonesport, ME

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Interview Description: In this interview of Sanford Kelly, by Galen Koch, he recalls his early youth in the Jonesport area during the Depression and World Wars. He shares memorable events of his life through his time in the army (in Italy) and a few years in college in Maine afterward. Kelley worked in California and Connecticut as an engineer and such before returning to Maine later in his life to work in the peat bog and blueberry business. He describes the changes in the blueberry industry throughout his life.

Key Words: Peat bog, The Great Depression, Passamaquoddy, Colby college, World War II, Blueberries, Engineering

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Transcribed By: Johnny Robinson & Elle Gilchrist

GK: Galen Koch
SK: Sanford Kelley

[1:41:32.0]

START OF SANFORDKELLEY_JONESPORT_AUDIO_01

[00:00:00.0]

SK: Well, What do you want?

GK: You can say your name and tell me where we are and then tell me about it a little bit.

SK: Oh. (coughs) Awesome. You all set?

GK: Yep!

SK: Yeah, my name is Sanford A. Kelley, Junior. We are right now at the farm in which I grew up in and I currently own.

GK: And you were saying it was built in 1860?

SK: The house, I believe it was built in the 1860s. My grandmother bought it in the early 1900s. In fact, I have the deed to the (laughs) right there. Anyway, the reason that I grew up here is in 1932, my father and his family lived in my grandmother's house in Jonesport. It's the house just as you go beyond Kelley's Point Road. Of course somebody else owns it now. But my grandfather built that, in the 1860s and he went down to [inaudible] Bay in his horse and wagon, and got his wife. Which is my grandmother, Elva Kelley. And he brought her, he said, "this is your new home." (chuckles) And so, she brought up her family there and he was a sea captain. And he had an agreement with his father, who was Thomas Jefferson Kelley, that he would take care of his mother, and the rest of her natural life, but he would also inherit Thomas Jefferson's land.

[00:02:02.3]

SK: It is some of that land which I now have blueberries in, et cetera, and I bought it. Well, I bought it off my grandmother's heirs. It was 1968 I think it was. I'm not so sure. It was about that date. But anyway, I bought it from her heirs. Then, I'm gonna start back a little earlier than that. I'm gonna start back and tell you about my earliest memories.

GK: Perfect. Here, wait! I think this is so good, I might need to-I get a lot of feedback from the fridge. (cross-talk, GK chuckles) It's a loud old fridge, huh ?

SK: (inaudible) I'll pull the plug on the fridge.

GK: Okay (walking/machine sounds) I think that'll help us out.

SK: Got it?

GK: Yep. That's better. That's much better. Alright, your earliest memories. Now, when were you born?

SK: I was born in 1925. On the 14th day of April in a snowstorm. So told me by my mother. But one of my earliest memories was, when I was in the first grade. This would be 1930, et cetera. And it was a rainstorm, like we have here today. So the neighbor came in to pick up his children, and as well as me. In the back of this little truck he had, and it was kind of a covered truck.

[00:04:02.6]

SK: Well anyway, I didn't make it fully into the truck and he started off. And so, I was hanging onto the tailgate. (chuckles) And my sister, and someone was still hanging onto me so I wouldn't fall off on the ground. (chuckles)

GK: And you were what six? Six years old, probably?

SK: Yes.

GK: Oh my god. (chuckles)

SK: Five or six years old. And I remember running home because he didn't live right close to-right next door, and I remember running home telling my mother what had happened. (chuckles)

GK: Oh my gosh.

SK: And I then have one of my next memories is a birthday party that my mother gave for me, and again, I think it was still about when I was in the first grade, or second grade. Well anyway, one of the girls in the class was a young girl named Ruth [Talbot?]. And her mother made her a nice party dress. People made things in those days, and she made her a party dress. After the party was over, it just so happened that they were tarring the road in Jonesport. Ruthie ran behind the tar truck—(chuckles)—all the way home. And so there wasn't much left of the party dress by the time she got home! She has told me about that in our later life here.

GK: (chuckles)

SK: One of my next memories is my father was a mechanic, and he was repairing an engine for a lobster boat. Right there in the Sawyer's Cove and my mother told me—

[00:06:00.0]

—again, five or six—and she says, "Now I don't want you to go out there. Because there's mud. There's potholes in that mud and you'll sink in!" Well, I did. (chuckles) I went out and I sunk in! Well, that scared me to no end, I tell you, I didn't go out there again!

GK: How far did you sink in?

SK: Well, quite a ways, if I recall. Yeah.

GK: (chuckles)

SK: (laughs) And then, I remember Captain Charles Donovan. Captain Charles Donovan was our neighbor. I mean, he had a boat, and it had a make and break engine, and he and my father and I think it was somebody else who went out fishing one Sunday. The engine quit! So, they are out there in the ocean. (chuckles) But, they got the boat ashore, and it was getting late and so my father said to Captain Charles Donovan, he said, "I'm gonna set you ashore. And you

take the boy down," and walk down, which was say, about a mile from home." And I remember walking down there with Captain Charles Donovan. (chuckles) One of my next memories was, one of my next memories is when they had the fire, which started up on Ames Hill. It was in the spring of the year. [Stevens man] started to burn his blueberry land. He got away from it and it burned all the way to the ocean and it burned the schoolhouse down. It burned Bagley's house down.

[00:08:01.3]

It caught a vessel afire, that was in the harbor. And, we could see the fire from our upstairs windows, and my father was afraid, because there were all kinds of cinders in the air, et cetera, and he was afraid it was gonna go in the barn. Because he had hay in the barn, but it didn't. I remember, that we went up in the attic and watched this fire come out. Right out by my father's—my grandmother's house, actually, and then, we couldn't find my little sister. Wanda. And everybody is "Where is Wanda?" Well, come to find out, she had attempted to climb up, into the attic. And she was only, oh, three years old or something like that. (chuckles) Well, anyway (clears throat). A gentleman that was helpful to our family, a fellow named Gus Donovan. He had an old vehicle that he had fixed up and he lived up here on the farm with my grandmother and grandfather, et cetera. And when he came down, to Jonesport to get us because he thought, you know, there was a potential that our house was gonna burn down. And so they put us in the back of the truck and we come up here and we slept on daybeds I think in this room that night.

[0:09:39.2] GK: Wow.

SK: (chuckles) The next morning my father took us in his car and we went down to Jonesport and it was kind of a foggy day. The odor of the fire was in the air. We went down, to the wharf there and a fella whose name was [Manelli]. He had a pistol and he was trying to sink his vessel that was on fire in the bay. And he was standing there shooting his vessel with it. I remember that.

GK: It was still on fire at that time?

SK: Well, it was smoldering anyway, I don't recall seeing any flame, but it was. He was trying to sink it, anyway. And then one of my next memories is that my little sister Gloria was born. And, my grandmother decided that she would kind of like to live down in Jonesport where it would be a little more accessible for her. And so she wanted to exchange places with my father. Well, he had a garage that he had built. I don't think he wanted right then to come to Mason's Bay. So we rented a place right close to where we lived for a while. But then we moved back up the bay. The first thing I remember, while being up here, is our neighbors lived in a [sad paper clam] camp over here, and they were Indians. I remember the two young girls came over. We were all picking flowers in the field. (chuckles)

[0:11:35.6]

GK: Were they Passamoquody? Do you think?

SK: I think down in Pleasant River- Pleasant Point, down in there, yeah. The grandmother's name was Sarah Mitchell. The grandfather was Peter Mitchell. Well, Sarah Mitchell, smoked a pipe. And they made baskets out of sweetgrass, et cetera. So that was our growing up and our playmates, if you will. These two little Indian girls. A couple of years went by and my mother got

a call from her sister and says, "You've got to come to Massachusetts, cause our mother is quite ill. And I can't take care of her alone, I need some help." So, we decided that my mother would go up there. And this was in the winter. And I'm gonna tell you it was probably 1933, or 34. And so it fell a lot to stay with my father here and my sisters were farmed out down to Jonesport, if you will. Every night, it was cold. It was cold that winter. Every night my father would go over and play cards over there [inaudible] and he'd take along. I'd always fall asleep. (laughs) This camp, it was a camp. He was—it had a stove in it, they were burning alders and it was really warm. I'd been out playing in the real cold all day, and I'd fall asleep. He'd bring me home. Then we had a relative of ours that moved in with us, a fellow named Harry Kelley, and so there was my father, me, and Harry Kelley. Then one night my father was making biscuits in the pantry and we had a lantern in there, lightin' the place up. It was cold, very cold. A knock came on the door. The storm door. And this storm door— (noise)

[0:14:03.0] GK: (gasps- something falls)

SK: ...was solid. Solid door, and so my father says, "Go see who's at the door." So I went to open the door, and here is a black woman, standing up, with very flimsy clothes on, and she had a suitcase with her. No traffic, ya know? and father said, "Who is it?" and I said "Well, I don't know—" and he said "Well, have them come in." So he comes over to the pantry and she comes in with her suitcase. And he says, "What can I do for you?" Well, and she says, "I'm answering this ad that was in the Boston paper." And my father said "Oh yes, I did put an ad in looking for a housekeeper. Cause I'm tired of doing the cooking (laughs) around here." And she said "I saw that ad, and I was working in the tavern down in Back Bay, and business got kinda slow, and I thought I'd like to see what Maine was like. So I got on the train and I come down, and I got a ride down by the mailman down to Jonesport, then I walked up here from Jonesport." That's four miles and she was very flimsily dressed. "Well," he said, "I really do need a housekeeper." She says, "Well, that's what I'm here for," and she says, "What kinda pay can you give me?" et cetera and he said, "Well, not very much. We don't have much money." And well, she says "Can I have Saturday night off? Because maybe I can make a little money out in Machias." (laughs) He says "Well, that's fine." In the meantime, while this was going on, George Reid came in.

[00:16:03.1]

My neighbor there, and I'm sittin' in a chair. She's standing up by the stove, it wasn't that stove there, but she's by the stove, trying to get warm. She had a heavy-brimmed, wide-brimmed hat on. I was kind of—I had never seen a black woman before. I mean it was kind of interesting, I was looking under my—had my head down and she says, "Well, what kind of accommodations you got for me?" She says, "Where am I gonna sleep?" Well, my father said, "I- you know, you can't sleep with me or Harry, I guess you'll have to sleep with the boy."

GK: (laughing) There wasn't another bed?

SK: So, oh jeez, and I says, "When George Reid goes home tonight, I'm going home with him." (laughs)

GK: (laughs)

SK: And so anyway, my father said, "Well, take your clothes off, and make yourself at home." And so she reached up, and took her hat off, and she was white from there on up." (laughs)

GK: Wow!

SK: She was. George Reid's brother had come to visit him and they had dressed him up, with a lotta hair from—I think his wife had something and a big dress, and breasts and the whole nine yards you know. And when I saw that, I—(laughs) And everybody started to laugh and I started to catch on that was all for me. And that was all over the town of Jonesport the next morning! (laughs)

[00:18:02.8]

GK: (laughs) That is a prank.

SK: Huh?

GK: That's a prank and a half.

SK: It was.

GK: Oh my gosh.

SK: It was, yep.

GK: Oh my gosh.

SK: Well.

GK: And so those years, that was the Depression. Did your family—

SK: That was the Depression.

GK: Did your family feel it? Were they-

SK: We felt it very badly. The only income that my father had, and my mother was that we had a cow. So we sold two quarts of milk, everyday to Bill Fenton's family down in Sand River Beach. And so I used to carry it down there. That was a while down there on the old road. And so that was the only sustenance. We had a dollar forty-four cents a week. My mother- we had a garden. She put up all kind of vegetables and things, and potatoes, we ate fine and good, we really had no problem that way, because they were very resourceful. Then after several years—no, I don't remember the year now, it might've been '34, '35. We were all going to school, me, my sister Lucille, and my little sister Wanda, was getting on the bus. The bus was driven by a fellow by the name of Bart Tucker. One night, we got off the bus. My little sister Wanda was run over. A car come and ran over and killed her.

GK: (gasps)

[00:20:00.0]

SK: Right here. Well, of course, that was very traumatic to the family. Very, very. In order for us to heal up, my mother used to read us the Bible every night. That took a long time. For us to get over that. In fact, my sister's daughter is named Wanda after her. As I said, we were very—we had no income. And, so, my little sister was buried in my grandmother's and grandfather's lot. Well, two years ago I had her stone removed and put it on my mother's and father's lot, for my little sister, so. I kind of felt good about that. Something I needed to do and it was done. Well, anyway my father, as I say, had (inaudible) in the Depression. No one paid him. So he went bankrupt, you know. And he couldn't do it anymore. So anyway. In 1933/34, I was down my grandmother's house and a car drove into the yard. It had Massachusetts plates on it. It was a, I think, a DeSoto, which was not very popular. Out of it, step these two gentlemen, dressed in blue suede suits.

[00:22:02.2]

And they said to me, and I was [in the yard?], he says, "Is Erik Kelley with you?" . "Yeah," I says, "He's in the house." And he says, "Well, have him come out, if you would." So I did. And, Erik came out, and these fellows said, "Erik, we've come to look over this peat bog that you've told us about." And, to start that story, Erik had told me, he was freshman at the University of Maine in Agriculture. He came down to go hunting, and he went across a great heath, and he stepped in a soft spot and got it in his boot. And he reached down and scraped it out, and he looked at it. He wrapped it up in his handkerchief. He took it back to the University and he asked, Professor [Stottlemeyer?], "What's this?" And he says, "Well, Erik, that's peat moss, you got it out the greenhouse." So he says, "Well, where'd the greenhouse get it?" He says, "They imported it from Germany." And he says, "Well, how do they get it?" and he says "Well, they get it off a broker in New York." So Erik takes off for New York. And he finds this broker. And he tells him, he goes, "I understand you get peat moss from Germany, what do you do that for? We got a lot of peat moss right here in, in the United States, in Maine." And the guy said, "Well, we'd be interested. We'll come down and look at it." And so, they did. So-

GK: Was—Sanford, was Erik your brother?

[0:23:44.6]

SK: He was my cousin.

GK: Oh, okay.

SK: They handed Erik a cigar, and said "We'd like to see this," and he said, "Well, you come with me." So they went out through my grandmother's pasture, now these guys have got blue suede suits on, you know, they're all dolled up. (laughs) They finally get out there, and they looked at this bog, which is a good 700-acre bog of peat moss. They said, "Erik this place is not developed. We couldn't give you more than \$100,000 for this." Well, Erik swallowed part of the cigar—

GK: (chuckles)

SK: —and that night, he come up, and sat at the kitchen table with my father. Erik was very nervous, he was tapping his foot. And he says, "Sanford, we got to go into the peat moss

business.” And he says “I’m gonna go tomorrow and see if we can borrow some money,” and he went up and saw his father, and he’s got money, \$25,000 I think, to open up a peat bog, and my father built a piece of equipment, supposedly, to cut the peat bogs, and so that , summer, you know, they was workin’ on it, and now, I at that time was probably 14 or 15. So I worked there and I worked for - and I really worked. 75 cents a day. Now men got a dollar a day. (laughs) The hardest kind of work. (GK: Wow) And, anyway, the war came on. And all the men that worked there, left because they got into the army. My father went to sea. And in the meantime, in the years that I’ve missed out, here we got more than one cow, and so my mother started a milk route. She used to deliver milk in the morning in Jonesport. She’d get up at 2 or 3 o’clock. Wash the milk bottles out.

[00:26:00.8]

I would get up at 4 o’clock, because I had a number of cows I had to milk before I went to school. Also milk them after I got home at night. That’s—all those things happen for a reason I guess. But we had no playmates or anything, so my father had a typewriter and I learned to type one finger at a time on that, but I became really quite interested in the English language and I had plenty of time, and so that served me unbelievably well, in the rest of my life. Being able to write and cetera.

GK: Was that unusual? In some ways?

SK: Yeah. Well, yeah, you know, most kids don’t wanna go to school. They say they don’t, anyway. But I found that to be good. I actually graduated as the valedictorian of my class. Now, classes weren’t very big—

GK: (chuckles)

SK: I think we had—(laughs)—our graduating class was 19. But, I had taken the hardest courses I could find. I took Latin and there were only two in our class. (laughs)

[0:27:28.0] GK: Wow.

SK: So we had pretty good attention. But again, that helped me in my life, a great deal. That helped me in my life. But anyway, we graduated and we still were doing the milk. I was still milking the cows and things, and my father had gone to sea. My father had gone to sea, and I think it was 1947 or ’48 that he came back. Of course he came back in the meantime. That was all through for that. A fellow named Sullivan had bought the peat business because Erik had lost it, because he couldn’t pay back this loan, and so Sullivan had bought it. And he got a hold of my father, and restarted that peat business, so. He worked on that. And...

GK: So that sort of lay—did it lay a little dormant during the war years?

SK: Yeah, it did. Yeah, yeah. I skipped a point there which was important to make, too. After Erik borrowed the money and they started to build up Maine Peat Moss, he learned there was a peat bog up in Centerville. And he went up, and he bought it. Not very much [in town,] you know. Then he got in touch with the governor. Governor Horace Hildreth. State of Maine. And he became a partner with the governor to build a peat bog up in Centerville. And so my father was employed to build that. I was up there with him and this was in the early spring, I think, in my head, some frame building up et cetera. My father said, “We need a trailer.” And they had the telephone line put in. And so he called someone, and he says, “I need to rent a trailer.” And he

hung up. The telephone rang and it was one of the women right next door, she says “We got—” (laughs) “We got a trailer we could rent ya!” (laughs) [party line?]

[00:30:10.5]

GK: Oh my gosh, that’s so funny! (laughs)

SK: Well, they do—that’s how things work around here. Well he, my father got ill. Got pneumonia. Because it was a cold, spring year. And he was ill. He came within the very edge of dying. And he was where the bathroom is now, that was a bedroom then. And my mother nursed him back to health. See, he couldn’t—didn’t even have the strength enough to draw anything up through a straw, he was that ill, but she saved him. He recovered from that.

GK: That was before or after the war? That he was ill?

SK: That was after the war.

GK: Okay. Yep.

SK: No, I’m gonna say I’m not sure about that. I think it might’ve been before the war.

GK: Okay.

SK: Yeah. ‘Cause that, Erik had—yeah.

GK: Erik was still—

SK: Yeah, that was before the war got on.

[0:31:22.8]

GK: Yep.

SK: But anyway, he recovered from that, and then as I said, during the war my sister Lucille and she had some friends, and they used to come down, and they used to play, and et cetera. And my sister got a boyfriend. Ken Whitney from Jonesboro and he was in the army then. We used to sit around this table and play the ouija board, you know what that is?

[00:32:00.0]

GK: Yeah!

SK: (laughs) Can you imagine this table (inaudible)?

GK: Scary! Did anything ever happen?

SK: Well, I don’t know, just those memories, I guess.

GK: (laughs) Did you talk to ghosts?

SK: Say what, dear?

GK: Did you talk to ghosts?

SK: Ghosts? Oh, all those things, yeah. Oh my goodness, yes. Yeah. And then I, yeah, we [sure let the cows in]. My father had bought an old car. A Buick and he was away. This was back during the war, really. I decided to make it over into a truck that I could use on the farm, you know. And I did, I cut the body off. So my sister Lucille had some of her girl friends up here, one night. And, just after I got that truck all fixed up. And I said, "I'll give you girls a ride around the farm here." So we all got in and I saw an alder bush and I thought I'd be smart and run over that alder bush. There was a rock in the middle of it.

[0:33:24.0]

GK: (laughs)

SK: That was the end of the Buick. (chuckles) That was the end of the Buick, yeah. One of the memorable things was her friend, Kenny Whitney, his cousin, was a very good-looking girl from Jonesboro, and we used to square dance over there on Friday, Saturday night. I asked Ken, I said, "Look, would you ask Helen if I could take her to the movies? On Sunday night." And he come back and he says yes, she'd go with us. Well, I was making the car at that time. And I remember that I missed—I had cut a bolt off the (inaudible). And I miss it, and stuck it back on my hand. And I did that three times before I hit bone, and that swelled up and did that ever ache. And it ached all that night, but anyway. When Kenny and Lucille took me to go pick Helen up and she lived upstairs and they had great big long stairs to get up there, and I remember how weak my knees was (laughs) trying to climb up all those stairs!

GK: (chuckles) You were nervous!

SK: Oh, I was, I was really yeah, I remember it for 75 years! (chuckles) But that was really, like well, anyway we finally we sold the cows, and-

GK: Was Helen someone special in your life?

SK: Only, well, only to the extent that I used to square dance with her and she was a very pretty young girl. But nothing more than that. No. Well, yeah, I graduated from high school and then a couple years went by, []. I went in to take a test to go into the army. And, they said I had a heart murmur and so I wasn't eligible to go in.

[00:36:02.0]

So I didn't. But a year or so went by, and so I went up to my aunt's in Boston to get a job up there. And I did, but I went in and I tried to get in the army again. The guy says, "You've got a heart murmur, but you know, it'll probably go away, as you mature." And he says, "If you wanna go in the army, you can go." So, I enlisted in the army, and I went down to Fort McClellan, Alabama. Basic training. While I was there, the war ended. Although, the Japanese war was still

going, but the war in Europe ended. And it became my lot, to go to Europe, to go to Italy, to the army occupation. 1946. And that's where my Latin came in because I was able to really understand these folks as they were talking (chuckles) Italian. I became more or less the guy who interpreted everything for our company. For the various things. I remember that I'd never taken a drink or anything. I was 21, but I took some beer and then we used to go every night (chuckles) up to a club there. And, when we did, there'd always be a group of Italian girls with their mother with them. Because we had a club where they could have music and their thing, and cetera. So you could go and select a girl and her mother, to spend the evening, you know? And that was great fun, and we were dancing, and at 10 o'clock, then they brought out sandwiches.

[00:38:04.0]

And the Italian women would put the sandwiches in their little case they brought with them, to feed their family. That's how they'd feed their family, which I thought that was very good. I thought that was very good. I had never had any more than a dance relationship, but I did have this girl Maria DeLania, I used to dance with every night, and we had all kinds of fun. We really did, and I was 21. (chuckles)

GK: In Italy, after the war.

[0:38:40.6]

SK: Full of vim and vigor, yeah. And I remember that, I was a major sergeant. Then I was able to get a Jeep. One weekend we got a jeep and we went up into the hills. I was stationed next to Pisa [Lasagna??] and we went up I saw the shepherds with their flocks of sheep et cetera [inaudible] I went down to Rome and I visited all those places I learned about in Latin. That was quite a year for me. I came back in '46. Before I came back, well, the job I had was-we were the occupation. We were trying to get rid of some of the war material that [I used to put up with] by sending the stuff that was valuable back to the US. A lot of it went in the Mediterranean. Tanks and things of that nature. They just wanted to get rid of them.

GK: Wow

SK: We had, I don't know, maybe 20 or 30 of the people we were trying to make records of what was going on. Anyway, when I got ready to come home, the captain wrote me out a nice recommendation. He did and I don't know where it is now, but I remember that. I came home in '46. I decided- GI bill. I went and I said, "I had been out of high school now six years and I can't go and compete with these guys that have just come out of these big schools [Around palmer? Brown, Palmer] et cetera". So I went to prep school for a year. Colby Classical Institute in Waterville, Maine. Best thing I ever did. Oh yea. I became valedictorian of that group and I spoke on the same stage as Margret Chase Smith.

[0:40:59.4]

GK: Wow!

SK: Yea. I spoke on the Passamaquoddy tidal power project, which she had endorsed in Congress. Anyway, I thought that was quite memorable. Anyway.

GW: Did you go there so that you could get a job or did just go to college?

SK: Just go to college. No. No. Anyway, we got through that year. So graduation was coming up and I had to give a little talk with Margret Chase Smith who was at the podium. The night before some of the guys, many of the guys in that class now just came back from the army. They are 21 years old et cetera. They were having a carnival in town so we decided to go to the town hall. Mr. Smith, Hugh Smith, he was headmaster. He says, "Everybody is in here at 9 o'clock. Alright?" I just spent 2 or 3 years in the army. (laughs) 'Be in at nine o'clock'. Well, we didn't get in at 9 o'clock and all the doors were locked. One of the guys said, "Look, my brother is in that room there, we'll knock on the window and he'll let us in." So we did, but when we come in, Mr. Smith is waiting for us. Now with graduation is two days away. He said, "I am expelling every one of you. You have broken our rules." The next day, the French teacher went to him and said, "Mr. Smith if you expel any of those boys, I am resigning." Well, he said, "I can't lose you" so he rescinded that order. (laughs)

[0:43:06.0]

GK: Wow! What a teacher!

SK: Yea yea. (laughs)

GK: What a good teacher!

SK: Oh yea. She was. She was wonderful. That was quite a year but it was a great year for me. Then the next year I went to the University of Maine and I decided I wanted to take the hardest course they got. I didn't know anything. So I took chemical engineering.

GW: Wow

SK: I had to work hard, but I graduated cum laude out of that school. And then!

GW: Where was that?

SK: Well, the first year we went down to Brunswick because they were submitting up at Orono that there wasn't room for us. So we went down there for a year. (clears throat) Then I graduated. Just before I graduated, February of that year, 1952, I was up on the Mopang with friends of ours. We were ice fishing and it was really cold. A friend of mine said, "Where are you going to go when you graduate?" I said, "Well, I haven't got a job yet." He said, "Why don't we go to California? My cousin is out there and he says there's a lot of good jobs out there." So I didn't think anything of it. I says, "Great idea. Richard. It's warm." (laughs) So I came home to this house and my mother said after a couple days, "Oh, I hear you are going to California." He told his mother and his mother told my mother. I hadn't plan on going to California, but I went back to school and there was a sign that said there was a guy coming in from [Quickset Locks] from Anaheim, California.

[0:45:09.6]

Looking for chemical engineers. Oh, that's what I was looking for so I signed up. He was coming in May. Believe it or not, I over slept that morning and I have never done that before since. So no interview, but it was almost graduation time. I was prepared to go to California and I said

we'd go anyway. So we went, Richard and I had bought a []. We got out to California and I went out to Anaheim, Quickset Locks and I went in and saw the receptionist. I said, "I am here to see Mr. Reuben." Vice President of Quickset Locks. She says, "Have you got an appointment?" (laugh). I says, "No". She says, "Where are you from?" (laugh) I says, "I am from Maine." She says, "That explains it. You don't just walk in and get an appointment with the Vice President."

[0:46:32.7]

GK: (Laugh) That's so funny. Oh my gosh.

SK: And so, she says, "I'll go upstairs and see if Mr. Reuben has got time to see you." She comes back and she says, "He'll see you". So I climbed these stairs and waited in this office with a mahogany desk. He is sitting behind the desk smoking his pipe. I said, "I am Sanford Kelley and I am sorry about that meeting that we had at the University of Maine." "Oh" he says, "I couldn't make it that day" (laughs) But he says, "You come out here to get a job?" I says, "Yes." He says, "You got one. You are going to be my assistant."

[0:47:24.0]

GK: Wow! Sorry I got to fix this because I am...

SK: (laugh)

GK: Before you go on, I got tangled up here. There we go.

SK: So, he says, "What do you expect for pay?" I says, "It said about \$100 a week back in Orono". "Ok" he says, "Well, I am going to start you at \$125"

GK: That was probably a lot of money then.

SK: It was!

GK: Yea.

SK: 1952, see.

GK: Wow.

SK: He says, "When do you want to go to work?" I says, "Tomorrow". He says, "Well, tomorrow is the Fourth of July," (laughs) "You come on out here on the fifth and I'll take you out to San Bernardino and show you what your new job is and get you established out there." So I did. I went to work out there. We were building the plant and my job was to just keep him informed about what was going on everyday. We were building pyrotechnic flares for the Korean War.

[0:48:38.3]

GK: Woah

SK: They went and bought shells and they had a parachute. We'd shoot them up and they'd come down and the candle would light and would light the field. Anyway we had to press this magnesium material in there that would ignite. After, we got established and we had a sample, Mr. Reuben called me up. He says, "Look, I want you to go down with me. We are going to [],

Arizona. We got to test and see whether we can get an army contract to build these things.” I think he had developed the formula for this. []. So we went down and we went into this establishment and there was a great big long list of doors with names over top of them. Then you go down, this guy here, there. We went down and on the top of the door was the name of this Captain and I went in and it was my company Commander from Italy.

GK: Woah. What are the odds of that! What are the odds!

[0:49:56.6]

SK: I know. I know. Yea. He and I said ‘Oh’ and we talked about the people who were there and he said, “What did you come for?” “Well we got to test these cells,” He said, “I’ll get someone right on it.” He tested them and they passed. They are a great shape. “Can you measure that?” I am 26 at that time. Next, Reuben said to me on the way home, “You got any thoughts on how we could make it more efficient?” I said, “[No/Oh]”. I said, “We are pressing these cells twice but I think we could do it once and get away with it.” He said. “I tell you what, you try pressing some once and then you get readings on the canon power and the time of burn. Tell me whether they meet the spec[ifications] or not” They did. They met the specs and I called him up and he says, “Start immediately on pressing once”. A day went by or so and I had a call come in from the person of Anaheim [Quickset Locks] and he said I am the President. I understand that you made a suggestion that is going to save us a lot of money. “Well, yes it sounds that way.” He said, “Well, anything you want, you got my number.” Can you imagine that? The president! (laugh)

GK: Amazing.

SK: (laughs)

GK: What was the name? How do you spell the name of that company?

SK: Quickset.

GK:Ok

SK: Q-U-I

GK: C-K-S-E-T

SK: They make the door locks.

GK: Oh right! That’s what I thought you were saying.

SK: Quickset Locks.

GK: And that they also did make door locks but also did these army contracts and stuff.

SK: Yea, that was a little speciality thing. The name of the company was West Coast Loading.

[0:52:00.2]

GK: Ok, and these flares were used to alert people of locations or what?

SK: In the battlefield, they wanted to find out if you had any enemy around you could fire one of these things out of a mortar and then they'd come down. They'd light up the whole field. It was really bright. It was used during the Korean War. Of course the war got over and that business collapsed if you will. I had a secretary but I got along extremely well with the people who worked there. I did. So they decided they had to have a new CEO. I know I was considered but I was 26 years old. Here's a major company so I wasn't given that job, but I had a good job there. I had a good job. I stayed about a year. There's a section there that I am going to skip.

GK: (laugh) When you were doing confidential work?

SK: Doing confidential work. Yea.

[0:53:25.6]

GK: Yea.

SK: Anyway I finally came back because, one reason that I come back, not the primary reason. I got thinking about it. Here I am out in California. My mother and father are getting along in their years, what I am doing out here? I am the assistant et cetera. So I came back and my father was running that peat bog at that time. So I spent a summer working out there with him et cetera. Here's come the fall, I decided I got to go get a job. So I wound up at [Pratt & Whitney] Aircraft in Connecticut. Of course I had a degree in chemical engineering. I wondered, 'what am I doing here?' but I said, "I need a job and so I'll stay awhile until I get my feet on the ground and then we'll see". I stayed 26 years.

GK: Wow. (laugh) That was your career.

SK: Long time to get my feet on the ground (laugh). I did well there. I did well there. I kind of followed a guy who was down here from downeast. He was a University of Maine graduate. Anytime he got promoted, they put me in his job. So I went down to Southington, I worked down there for 4 years. He got transferred so then I moved back to East Hartford, subcontract. That job was to be a liaison between the design department and the shop.

[0:55:28.0]

Anything the shop wanted, then you had to go present that to the design department and see if they could do it. Well, my boss came to me one day and he says, "I am moving up to the engineering office because the army-the government has complained about the proposals we have been sending in. We need somebody that can write."

GK: It all serves you.

SK: Right there! (laughs) Ok? So I got this incredible job. I was moved right up to be a full engineer and I had an assignment that I had to be the engineer on the compressor portion of the engine. I was responsible for making sure that if we had any problems, they got fixed. Tremendous job. I traveled across the country and Europe. You couldn't ask for much better. Anyway, of course, the peat moss building burned down and my father then was out of a job. I

said, "I can't have him work for anybody else" so I bought a peat bog and went into business with him.

[0:57:09.4]

GK: Where did you buy that peat bog?

SK: In Jonesport. You passed it today. You know that 300 Mason's Bay Road.

GK: Oh yea!

SK: That's it.

GK: Oh wow!

SK: There was nothing there then. (sound) excuse me. We built the buildings and I bought that little peat bog. That's about 20 acres.

GK: Are these peat bogs still- is there still peat? I mean or did the market just fall. Maybe we will get to that.

SK: Oh no. What's happened is he died in 1971. I says, "Look, I got this really good job up here and I can't leave that." It's not going to be very receptive so we closed it down. We formed the Downeast Peat Company and I was the president of that and my father was vice president and my mother was the secretary. We were doing okay and then that burned down. That caught fire and burned.

[0:58:21.9]

GK: Wow

SK: Again, that was quite disturbing. We built it back up and did quite a lot of work just before he died and then after he died we had to close it down. Nothing was done to that until 1981, ten years, I came down one summer. It's starting to grow up with trees and I don't want that to happen. So I bought a little tractor and a bush hog and I mowed all the trees. It had all come up in blueberries. (laughs).

GK: Once was a peat bog was now a blueberry barren.

SK: That's right. Yea.

GK: Wow.

SK: Absolutely. Absolutely. I am going to show you a picture of it. (shuffling sound) It come up in blueberries. In the meantime, my grandmother had died and I bought her land. There were some blueberries in there as well. (papers moving) I think I got something in here. uhh. Maybe I-(papers shuffling) Here's some pictures. That's the building we built later on. We built that

when we were in the blueberry business. That's peat bog there. That's where the peat was and that's where it turned into blue berries.

[1:00:03.9]

GK: Wow, so do you think there is still peat under there?

SK: Oh yes. Oh yes. Well, yea because we never disturbed the area where the blueberries were and there three feet deep of nothing but peat moss.

GK: Wow.

SK: This was my house in Connecticut.

GK: Oh. So nice.

SK: Yup. I built this edition on here. That was something I did. That was the only year I didn't come back to Maine. I saved up and built that. There's the blueberry plant. Here's another picture of the blueberry plants. They grew up on that bog now. (GK: Wow). Those are blueberries in blossom.

GK: Beautiful!

SK: There's the blueberries. (papers shuffling) These are the plants in the winter time peeking up through the snow. This is a picture of the blueberry plants in the fall.

GK: Oh my goodness. Is this blueberry field still there behind the rock, behind the 300 Mason Bay Road?

SK: Yea. Yea. yea.

GK: So when my friend who is taking photographs for these stories, when she comes can we go back and take some photographs?

SK: Sure, yea yea yea. Of course. yea. yea.

GK: And it's all purple right now. Or red.

SK: Yea. Yea. Yea. Well hand me those there and I'll put them back.

GK: Those are beautiful.

SK: Well, that was kind of a unique thing. But my father and I had bought some land down at Kelley's point, because there's a peat bog down there that had never been disturbed at all. We thought we might want that. So we bought it. A guy died and his relative had inherited his land and he was building a house and he wanted money and so he sold us that whole area there. There was thirty acres of a lot of Cromwell field, 30 acres, 130 peat bog. There was a one acre lot right on the shore. I bought that whole thing for \$1,000.

[1:02:40.1]

GK: My gosh.

SK: Then, at that time, the guy, Ellis, had attempted to grow blueberries there but he couldn't do it because the gulls used to eat them up. It has started to grow up in alders and cranberries. I wasn't really concerned too much about that because I was still in the peat moss business. My father said, "I am going to raise some blueberries" so he hired someone to come here and cut the alders down and this had to be about 1970 because he died in '71. Anyway, that turned out to be a tremendous blueberry field. Tremendous. After he died, I got interested in the blueberry business. I know one year, what year was that? Seventy something that I had a tremendous crop down there and I think I yielded that year such that I got a check for \$50,000 for the blueberries.

[1:04:07.1]

GK: Wow.

SK: Which I gave half of it to my mother, which was helpful to her. She and I partnered the [Newengland Peat]. That's what I have been struggling with ever since. Then in 1981 came along I was 55. I had worked with a company. It was the [Servitel] company and they had a coating and I helped them develop it. We found out it saved fuel (computer sounds) in engines. Every engine in the world uses this coating so this company became quite famous and rich. (laugh)

[1:05:05.2]

GK: And you were part of it? (laugh)

SK: Yea. I retired in '81.

GK: And that was different from Pratt & Whitney? Had you left Pratt & Whitney?

SK: No, I hadn't left at that time. I did that while I was at Pratt & Whitney. (GK: Oh Wow). For development of engines. I told you I had charge of the [portion of] the engine itself. The compressor section, so anyway, so come '81 the guys says, "I know you, we don't want you to leave but you have that option if you want." I thought that over quite well. I said, "Look, if I am ever going to do anything in the blueberry business, if I am ever going to do anything in peat moss, then I better take this opportunity." That was a tough decision to make. I did take it though in '81. I attempted to see what was going on in '81 as far as the peat moss was concerned and I didn't get any responses from anybody. That doesn't sound very good.

[1:06:11.2]

GK: Why do you think that was?

SK: Well, I don't know. I really don't know. February came along and the guy that I worked with from the [] company came up and he said, "Look, We'd like to hire you as a consultant and go and visit all the military bases. part time job." I said, "Oh Jesus, that sounds good" and I took it and it turned out to be 60 hours a week.

GK: That's not a part time job! (laugh)

SK: But I worked for them for eight years as a consultant and then I said, after eight years, "Now, I got to go." So moved back in '89. Moving back to 1971, when my father died, we still had the peat moss business and I had my summer vacation. I was trying to do some stuff there and had a cottage I'd rented on the beach there for two weeks. That's all I could get but I had three weeks vacation. I said, I can't leave because I have all this stuff to do. Then I said, "Gee, where am I going to stay." My father was ill with cancer. very ill. I didn't want to stay with Bertha's folks up in Columbia falls because I had stuff to do here in Jonesport. So I said, "I know what I'll do. I'll build a place." My father had given me a lot on the shore. On a Thursday afternoon, I went up to [Summerville] and I saw [Pitio's] lumber company. I says, I need- this is what I need to build a place here. He says, "Look, we got everything you need except the sills. We'll go in the woods and cut the trees down and saw out sills. We'll have them for you Saturday." Can you imagine that?

[1:08:32.3]

GK: (laugh) I cannot. I truly cannot. yea.

SK: And, we slept in it Sunday night!

GK: Oh my gosh!

SK: We slept in it Sunday night. We didn't have any roof, but I put a piece of tarp over the ridge pole and we slept on the floor. That was the closest my family ever was to me. [inaudible]. Those sprinkles on the trees would fall down on that thing. You would hear those and the cat got under the floor there.

[1:09:09.3]

GK: You had a wife and kids at this point.

SK: Oh yea. yea. yea. I had a wife and kids at that time. Four kids. So anyway we are back up to '89. I came back and immediately got appointed to the blueberry commission. [W.A.B.A.N.A?] That was the promotion name of the commission and I got appointed. We had a committee for recommending the priorities for building the roads. Building up the roads with the department of transportation. That turned out to be a tremendous committee. We formed some great friendships on that committee. I was in the Soil and Water on the library in Jonesport. [an appointed board in Jonesport]. I can't imagine [the night?] paperwork gallor. We worked pretty good. I formed the co-op because I was president of the Pleasant River Canning Company and I recommended to them that we do fresh packs. That wasn't a good fit for them because they all wanted to optimize quantities and fresh pack is labor intensive and things like that. They didn't have access to that. We formed a co-op and I left Pleasant River and we went into the co-op. We did pretty well. Actually, our income from that was greater than Pleasant River after a year

or so. We got involved with Jimmy [Prout?] over here in Jonesport. He had a freezer and so that went quite well.

[1:11:19.3]

GK: Were a lot of people fresh pack at the time or was that unique?

SK: There was. I think it was the Maine fresh pack over in Machias that [Delmont Evers?] was involved with. They had difficulty with the quality so they folded up and the Wyman's company went into fresh pack. They couldn't get enough fresh blueberries harvested to make it work so they folded up. We came in at a great time and we flourished. Then I decided-they moved out, more or less, into the frozen product. They didn't want to do it fresh. I really wanted to do fresh. I really liked the looks of the quality and that type of thing so I formed my own. I bought line and we did it in the garage out here. We had a good group and we did well. Eventually, we expanded out and went down to Jonesport there. I built a new building. My son Micheal does wreaths, so that building becomes a place for him to do his wreaths. I do blueberries there in August, that type of thing.

[1:12:52.0]

GK: And you are still doing that now?

SK: Yea yea. Well we sell out. In fact, I have expanded out into trying to build a market for blueberry wine by selling out blueberries to winemakers and that looks quite good. That's coming along good. My daughter tells me that up in Connecticut wine is a big thing everybody is having wine now. That might prosper somewhat.

GK: Wow.

SK: Yea.

GK: So when you were on some of that planning board, when you came back-

SK: Jonesport planning board. Yea.

GK: What was the kind of stuff you were talking about in the late '80s? What were you trying to do? What was the vision for the town?

[1:13:44.2]

SK: Well, that's interesting you brought up that because my vision was not to have skyscrapers built up along the shore. I wanted everybody to be able to take advantage of seeing the beauty we have so I got [an audit?] through to limit the height of the buildings to thirty feet not thirty-five feet. I got the town to vote for that and we changed it. Just as soon as I got off the planning board, they moved it back to thirty-five feet. The reason was the planning board was made up of these carpenters and salespeople. They wanted to take advantage of that for their personal thing. I didn't want anything personal. I just wanted to talk with the town because we have a beautiful sandy river beach and if you look at camden and all those places you can't even see

the water when you drive through. I didn't want that to happen to Jonesport so that's why I- of course I got a lot up the Bay here that's open. About the only place you can see the water now when you drive around. I plan on keeping that open for a long long time.

[1:15:13.3]

SK: It's in my trust. It will always stay open anyway.

GK: And that matters. The natural beauty matters to you.

SK: Yea.

GK: And then there's also, I've noticed in Jonesport, that is different from other places on the coastline is that there are a lot of working wharfs.

SK: Yes, yes, a working fishing town.

GK: It didn't really get overrun with tourists it seems.

SK: No. No.

GK: Was that part of the plan?

SK: Well, yes. The town didn't want tourism. They voted against it. We are a working town. Working waterfront and we want to just stay that way. Of course, I was trying to push tourist business too because I was with the Machias economic counsel there. We were trying to get more businesses to make more money for Washington county, but that didn't work in Jonesport. They wanted no part of that. We had meeting after meeting but no. Working waterfront and that's the way it's going to stay.

GK: Do you think that is going to serve the town in the long run or what do you think?

[1:16:31.6]

SK: Well, it certainly has in this regard. The lobster business has come on in the last twenty years and some of the fishermen out there that have done very very well. I think Jonesport is not going to change very much as long as the lobster business stays healthy. There was quite a lot of blueberry business in Jonesport throughout the years. Up in the bay, you see a lot of blueberries there. That isn't recognized really by the town. The town is a lobster town, a fishing town. They don't recognize the blueberry input, but quite a lot of taxes come in from the blueberry land. There's quite a lot of people that became quite affluent in the blueberry business.

GK: And blueberries and the tipping and the wreaths, those are both seasonal jobs.

SK: Yea. yea. very seasonal jobs. yea. yea. Well now I am making a trust.

GK: Yea, so tell me about that. So you are putting every- you've got a lot of land scattered all over the place it seems. Do you still?

[1:17:46.5]

SK: Yes. My trust is number one is this house and the land around it, the lawn land, is going to go to my daughter Cynthia and her daughter. In the trust, my passing, that will go to them. The place I built there from Thursday through Saturday, that is going to go to my other daughter and then all the woodland I got is going to be made available to my son that's in the wreath business for his use et cetera. My house in Connecticut, that I showed you a picture of, that is going to go to him as well. My other son, Buzzy, I don't know. He lives there now. He's got a place there. He's living there. I don't know. I haven't thought that he would be interested enough to carry on the blueberry business but I may have to viewpoints because I need someone to do that. I tried to make it so that to understand I don't want this land to be lost. I have to tell you another tidbit because I always figured that the blueberry industry now should pay for itself. To keep the land in my name, the country name, Kelley property. It dates back to the original land owner in Jonesport. When I was at Pratt & Whitney, when I went there in 1954, I told a friend of mine I said, "Look, I am not going to buy a new car. I am going to put my money into stocks." Well, I did buy a new car and I didn't put my money into stocks.

[1:20:14.8]

SK: For a number of years and then after a number of years, I said, "Now, wait a minute, that's what you wanted to do, you better do that." So I started and I bought some stock. That stock right now is hovering around a million dollars.

GK: What did you buy stock in!? (laughs) Can you tell me? (laughs and a computer sound)

SK: I got quite a few things.

GK: You made good decisions.

[1:20:53.5]

SK: Well I've got 4,448 shares of United technology, which is selling as we speak at \$127 a share. That's over \$600,000 in itself. When I worked for [Summertel] I bought 100 shares of their stock and that was split three for one. So that was 300 shares and I paid, when I figured the split, it cost me like \$9 a share. Today, that stock is selling at \$260 a share. (laugh) and so!

GW: Wow. Wow.

SK: Certain things happen.

GK: I know.

SK: Yea.

GK: So you got a million dollars of stocks.

SK: Which is paying dividends so that I really don't have to worry about paying the taxes on the blueberries.

GK: Oh that's great!

SK: See, that's where the trust comes in. All that land will be in the trust so hopefully I'll get some legend. something to stand by the Kelley family for a while.

[1:22:03.9]

GK: And the blueberries, the growing of the blueberries did they sort of take care of themselves or is... (SK: Course it-)? You don't need to reveal your trade secret.

SK: Well, there's no trade secrets. You got to work real hard. It's a very labor intensive job, what I do in the blueberries. From the time that I bought my grandma's land, that was like six acres, a few blueberries grew there but it was all rocks and weeds et cetera. When I came back in '89, I moved those rocks. I muscled them out. I had a backhoe, I got them in a bucket and moved them out so that I could use equipment to move it et cetera. I got about 50 acres now that is all good clean blueberry land. I raise more blueberries now, then I can do fresh pack so that's why I am hoping that I can expand the wine issue out because that becomes a matter of just harvesting them and cleaning them and they are ready to go for wine. You don't have to baby them quite as much I am hoping that could be our salvation in the blueberry industry. The blueberry industry in itself has changed very much. It used to be that the processors was buying all the blueberries that you could raise and the reason they did that is because they all owned land up on the barrens and the barrens because in the early days, they used to burn it every other year, it burned up the rhizomes. All of sudden they couldn't raise up enough blueberries on the barrens. They had to depend on buying off of the fields that had been established to feed the oxen and the horses when this area was being developed back in the early 1800's et cetera.

[1:24:17.0]

SK: That land now was started to get lean and they turned it into blueberry bushes. They bought it off of these small growers. It was all kinds of blueberries, little offices, plants started up everywhere. Jonesport had a couple. Columbia falls had five or six. That's all changed. That's all changed.

GK: Why? What changed?

SK: The change took place because of the use of the chemical, Velpar. That cleared the land of weeds and you didn't have to burn anymore. You could mow the bushes down by [flare mowing]. The barrens up there flourished. These guys up there owned 10-15,000 acres of land all of a sudden had all kinds of blueberries.

[1:25:22.5]

GK: So the barrens are different then your fields?

SK: No, it's just the same thing. Its barrens. It's nothing but blueberry land and it's expansive. I mean several thousand acres. Whereas, we got 20 acres or 30 acres. They've got thousands of acres. Back in 1950, Maine was producing 50 million pounds. Canada was producing 20 million pounds. We were very much intune with Canada. We worked together. We formed a marketing company that was a joint effort between Canada and Maine because we didn't have enough to supply the market, even together. That was 1950. In 2016, Maine grew 100 million pounds. Canada grew 300 million pounds.

[1:26:37.8]

GK: 300 million pounds!

SK: We went from 20 million to 300 million pounds (GK: Wow) in that sixty year period if you will. Not only that but the dollar value between Canada and such gives them a distinct advantage on selling blueberries. Many of our people, that are in the business, saw great potential. Wyman's went down and bought a plant in PEI. They spent all kinds of money there fixing the plant up. Brag is Canadian. He bought out [A.L. Stewarts] but then he's maybe the richest man in Canada. Brag.

GK: The blueberry king.

SK: Oh yea. He built a wonderful set of buildings, brick, for blueberries et cetera. In reality, they've taken away the blueberry business from Maine. They are on the board of directors because they are not going to do anything to change the relationship between the Canadian blueberries and the cultivated blueberries have become very big.

[1:28:13.4]

GK: Cultivated?

SK: Cultivated. They plant them. They made a cross down in New Jersey and they were able to get plants to grow six- seven feet tall. They raise a lot of blueberries of the bigger type and they are just one species. Unlike ours, ours is made up of many different species. Ours are different.

GK: Ours are better (laugh).

SK: Yea.

GK: I like them more.

[1:28:47.5]

SK: Two years ago, I think two years ago maybe three years ago. I was still on the board of directors for the commission and I said, "You know, we got to think about how we are going to compete. We need to say these are Maine blueberries." they said, "No, we aren't going to do that" because they got so many holdings in Canada and they could buy blueberries of Canadian growers for 20 cents a pound where they pay Maine 35 cents. Where are they going to buy them? So I wasn't terribly successful in getting them to do that. In the last two or three years we

have started to move into the school lunch program, through the government. They want Maine blueberries. They are putting government money in it. That's why they are using Maine blueberries on that particular market. That's two three million pounds but when you raise 100 million that isn't a big thing. It's coming around. This year I understand they said, "We are going to use Maine when we can" we are going to continue to use Maine. I want them to say "Maine's wild blueberries" not "Maine wild blueberries" but "Maine's wild blueberries". I want them to recognize that Maine's wild blueberries are grown on very special Downeast land that is the result of the glaciers and the weather patterns we have. That gives us- its the only place they grow on that type of soil and in that type of weather. So we should prompt that like with wine as people do in Europe. Special wine comes from certain areas.

GK: What is it called the ['terruoir'] or something?

SK: Well, anyways.

GK: The terra, the earth. Yea. I mean it's true though you've got a different flavor and timing for every place.

[1:31:06.2]

SK: Yea yea. I haven't been able to convince anyone to do that yet but I am still working on it (laugh).

GK: So does the commission, is that like a co-operative organization for all blueberry growers?

SK: Yes, it is supposed to be something established by the state at the request of the blueberry people. It's a voluntary tax that we tax ourselves. We tax ourselves a cent and a half a pound in order to promote and develop our blueberries. I was helpful in getting that to move from a cent a pound to a cent and a half. That was good because all of a sudden we had money that we could promote a little bit. We've reached that point now where I don't know with the Canadian situation as it is that it needs to be looked at. They aren't looking at it very wisely at the present time. They say, "Our job is to sell all wild blueberries." Our job is to sell Maine wild blueberries. If you read the enabling laws, its hard to say that we could be promoting all wild blueberries, but that is the way the commission interprets and that is the way it is going now.

[1:32:32.8]

GK: Is that because- I could be putting words in your mouth- but is that because a lot of the Maine companies, like Wyman's, are growing in Canada?

SK: Yes.

GK: So they are all mixed.

SK: That's right. That's right.

GK: The small growers are the people who-

SK: They are hurting. Yea. You see a lot of plants now that are being folded up and I hated to see that, but that's happening and I don't see it changing. Unless, I can't see it changing, but I would like to see them using the words "Maine's wild blueberries" making Maine as being grown in the soils of Downeast.

GK: It's funny. Have you noticed a change, like I live a lot of the year in Portland, Maine, but down there we have Whole Foods Markets and all these fancy markets and that if you go in all the blueberries say "Maine", "Maine Blueberries". I don't know if they are really (SK: yea) but that's an interesting movement now, local food. (SK: Yes, it is. Yes.) Do you think that is going to have an effect on it?

[1:33:57.5]

SK: Well, the fact the fresh pack is growing every year now. [] Which we are doing. We are part of that. So yes that is helpful and we are promoting the word "Maine's" and it's getting around. (laugh). It'll be a long way to go though.

GK: Did you use the, what did you call the chemical?

SK: Velpar. Yea. I use Velpar on the land after its been moved. There's no plants there and the ground is bare. I don't use any chemicals on my blueberries. Once the blossoms come out I don't use anything. I don't -

GK: Velpar is just to kill the weeds in between.

SK: Yea and it's one the land two years ahead of time and it's not on the plant itself. I don't know. I can't tell you that there isn't some that gets into the plant itself but I haven't heard any results on that. I don't. A lot of people spray right up until the time they pick for the blueberry fly.

GK: I have seen the plane. My step-dad has a little tiny blueberry plot, not much, in Milbridge.

SK: Oh, is that right.

GK: And a little house. Yea. He harvests, I don't even know how many pounds, not much. Our family we get a bunch of blueberries from it and it's right next to maybe a Wymans. You'll be out there and you'll see them with those little dusting planes go by.

SK: Yea. yea. yea.

GK: I think my step-dad can't have organic blueberries because it is too close to the Wyman.

SK: Oh, is that right.

GK: It's too close. Yea. Yea.

[1:35:54.8]

SK: Well, that's the other unique thing we have going for us. My land down there at Kelley's point. That's a ten acre field down there now. That's isolated. There isn't any other blueberry

land within a mile or more of that lot. Consequently, the fly comes out of the ground. After five days, they are looking for a place to lay eggs. It takes five days for the ovaries to develop and they are looking for a blueberry to lay their egg in. Well, there aren't any because our lands have been mowed and there's no blossoms or blueberries that year so the flies just die out. They are just gone. You go down there and check and you'll find one in the whole season.

GK: And those are the flies that eat, that are the pests? Is that what you are talking about>

SK: Yes, the blueberry fly.

GK: The blueberry fly.

SK: Yea, they lay eggs in the blueberries and that turns into maggots and then you're out of control. If you have too many maggots in your blueberries you can't pick them. We don't have that problem and we don't have to put any chemicals on them. We are just blessed that way. All my lands are separated that way so that they don't do well raising maggots.

[1:37:31.2]

GK: What's the name of your blueberry company?

SK: New England Diversified Industries. We were doing the peat industries and we changed it. The reason we changed it was because Buzzy is a really good draftsman and he got a job designing some equipment for a company. I paid him out of the New England Peat actually so then we decided to change the name to be more inclusive. We did so, New England Diversified. This is Rockdale farm and so we are part of New England Diversified.

GK: So your label would be Rockdale Farm Fresh Packed?

SK: Well, actually, some of them do. The pints we do, which is one of the major ones for us, we do those for [Lynn Thurston]. She is Sky Blue Produce and we use her label. On the five pound boxes, I got my own box. On the wine, I got my own box and that's Rockdale farm.

GK: I was going to say, we'll stop soon because this has been awhile. This has been really great. Thank you so much. I really enjoyed it.

[1:39:06.8]

SK: Well, I don't know if that's what you were looking for.

GK: Yea. That was perfect and I love thinking about, though, I guess I never knew there was peat underneath blueberry barrens.

SK: Yea, well it's not under the blueberry barrens. They only place it is (GK: inaudible) is under mine. It's the only one.

GK: These layers of time and like you were talking about. How much time it has taken for this landscape to look like this.

SK: Of course, that's like 14,000 years since the glacier came down and that filled up full of peat moss. Can you imagine once I cut those trees down how that filled in? You saw that picture.

GK: I know I can't believe it. It's amazing.

SK: (laugh) Well you [Morel Worchester], reads across America?

GK: Oh, I don't know him but I know Reads across America.

SK: Well, Morel, he owns that big bog down there that my father ran at one time. I wanted to have a little fun with him. I said, "You got to come and look at my bog down there." and so he came down and they was loaded with blueberries and he got [700 acres/ some hundred acres] right next door. (laugh)

GK: Oh my gosh

SK: So he said to his son, "We got any blueberry plants on our bog?" and I am not sure they do because they have since took the top soil off. I never did. So they may not have.

GK: So what did you do? You were digging under? A tunnel?

SK: Well, we made ditches in between.

GK: Ok

SK: Every 75 feet we'd cut out a ditch 3 feet wide, 3 feet deep.

GK: I've seen that before. What is it Scotland that has the peat? Did you ever find anything preserved in it? You know how it can preserve things?

SK: I know. I don't think so. I don't recall anything that we every found.

GK: Yea

SK: The guys that cut the peat out they were always looking for signs or see if they could find artefacts of some type, but they never came up with anything.

GK: Well, Sanford is there anything else you wanted to say before I turn this off today.

SK: No, I think I have talked enough.

GK: That was great.

SK: I think I have talked enough. Yea.

(laughs)

[1:41:32.0]

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