

## First Interview Session (September 13, 2008)

Narrator: Carlton A. Holmes

Interviewer: N/A

Date: 13 September 2008

Location: N/A

Subject: Forest Products Laboratory

Transcriptionist: Lauren Benditt (10/22/08)

Auditor: Lauren Benditt

Transcriptionist's Note: Mr. Holmes was unable to speak with us, but he did answer some of our questions in this letter, typed by his daughter.

### **Pre-FPL**

*Keywords: introduction, education, background, previous employment, patents, preservatives, impressions*

In his early years, he was always interested in trees and forests. In fact, he learned to identify trees probably in early high school. He attended the Forestry course at the University of Minnesota and got his bachelors degree in Forestry. Early on, he knew about the Forest Product Lab and his early impressions were that this must be a wonderful place to learn more about his interests.

He started at the Forest Products Lab in 1966 after working at Halvorson Trees Inc. in Duluth, Minnesota, where he has patents on tree stands with preservatives for small, decorative, real Christmas trees.

### **Forest Products Laboratory**

*Keywords: Forest Products Laboratory, typical day, wood testing, fire retardants, test methods, public demonstrations, ASTM, equipment, fire exposure*

(During) a typical day at the Forest Products Lab he supervised a laboratory for developing and conducting tests on wood products. One of the developments was fire retardant colored coatings. He also conducted tests on wood products such as doors and walls and paneling to determine fire exposure properties. For example, he developed test methods for determining exposure ratings of doors, walls, and paneling that was used by the forest products industry. He gave demonstrations to the public on the developing and testing activities in the Lab. The Forest Products Lab was also open to the public to demonstrate methods and equipment used. He also made frequent trips and (associated) with the federal government testing laboratory of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). The major laboratory for ASTM was in Chicago. His work also had him make frequent (visits) to other laboratories that use these test methods.

One of his primary goals was to develop test methods and equipment for developing tests that would give proper construction and treatments for walls or doors with different ratings of fire exposure. The challenge was to design test methods and equipment that could be used by different laboratories.

### **Colleagues, Relationships**

*Keywords: colleagues, relationships; Knispel, Ronald; Schaffer, Irwin*

Colleagues that come to mind are Irwin Schaffer, engineer, and Ronald Knispel, lab staff. (They) had a close relationship because of the challenges and difficulties in the testing methods and procedures.

### **USDA/Forest Service**

*Keywords: projects, career, satisfaction, Forest Service, international travel, colleagues, collaboration*

He has a deep personal satisfaction in the work that was developed at the Lab and these methods were used in forest products laboratories around the world. One of the forest products lab's he visited was in Japan and he developed a strong friendship with a colleague there. He also visited a German forest products lab to discuss testing procedures. He things there were other labs he visited, but doesn't seem to remember them clearly enough to discuss.

He believes that the work of the Forest Products Laboratory was well received by other wood laboratories around the world.

### **Post-FPL**

*Keywords: retirement, family, travel, Peace Corps*

After retirement from the Forest Products Lab at age 62, (he and his wife) joined the Peace Corps and spent time in the mountains of Ecuador.

Knowing that many wood working laboratories around the world are currently using procedures developed at the Forest Products Lab, he feels that their work was definitely worthwhile.