

**JOE RUBY**

**Interview 136b**

**September 13, 2012, at The History Center, Diboll, Texas**

**Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer**

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**ABSTRACT:** In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, former forester Joe Ruby reminisces about his life in forestry and data processing for the Temple Companies, primarily in Pineland. He talks about his early life, finishing college as a forester, and going to work for Southern Line Lumber Company. He talks about life in Pineland in the 1950's through the 1970's, some of the responsibilities of his job managing the forests, and the differences in practices through his career. Mr. Ruby talks about different forest management philosophies and how they have changed over the years, particularly with regards to selective harvesting and clearcutting.

**Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG):** Today's date is September 13, 2012. My name is Jonathan Gerland. I'm here at the History Center in Diboll with Mr. Joe Ruby and we are going to do an oral history today. Mr. Ruby if you would just begin by telling us when and where you were born.

**Joe Ruby (hereafter JR):** I was born in Lufkin July 18, 1933.

**JG:** Okay, who were your parents?

**JR:** My dad was Joe Byron Ruby and my mother was Helen Marie Thompson Ruby.

**JG:** Okay, what did your father do for a living?

**JR:** He worked for the railroad, Southern Pacific.

**JG:** Oh okay. What did he do?

**JR:** He worked in the, I guess you would call the freight area where the material that was unloaded, not the bulk stuff that actually went out to the plants or things like that but, the stuff that came out that was warehoused and people would come in and pick up what portion was theirs and so on.

**JG:** Oh okay, like less than carload lots.

**JR:** Yes, less than cargo lots. He worked in that area just warehousing it and so on.

**JG:** Did he do that his whole life?

**JR:** I really couldn't tell you. He died when I was about three and a half.

**JG:** Oh okay, so you don't have any memories of going down to the station or anything seeing him working or anything like that?

**JR:** No, not that. I can just vaguely remember a couple of instances with him but, I'm really not sure if those are things that I remember or I've heard them told so many times that they are fixed in my mind almost as if it's part of my memory.

**JG:** Right. Did you have brothers and sisters?

**JR:** I had one brother Robert.

**JG:** Is he older?

**JR:** He is younger.

**JG:** Younger okay. Did your mom remarry?

**JR:** Not until 1949.

**JG:** Okay, so what did y'all do as a family what did ya'll do after your father passed away?

**JR:** After my father died...

**JG:** Did he die on the job?

**JR:** No, he had pneumonia, of course, back in those days that was almost a fatal disease. He had recovered from it and had a relapse and during that part that he died so, maybe if he had not had the relapse he would have been one of the lucky ones that made it through. But, anyway after he died we lived with my mother's parents, Foxy and Rosie Thompson, and he was at that time worked for the Martin Wagon Company. He was one of their supervisors.

**JG:** Did you ever visit the Martin Wagon Company as a child?

**JR:** I can vaguely remember going in there. Of course, I don't remember what year they closed, sometime in '39 or '40 somewhere in there. I can vaguely remember going in there a few times. Then they, like a lot of other companies, they were primarily wagon manufactures and people started into trucks and trailers. Not much call for wagons but, they made one of the best logging wagons in the country.

**JG:** Right eight wheeled logging wagons.

**JR:** Yes, and in fact I remember, and I still have it, my granddaddy made a model of one of those things for me and my brother and we used that as our wagon and it still hangs in my garage today.

**JG:** So, it's a little pull wagon that you just pulled around?

**JR:** Right.

**JG:** Okay.

**JR:** We played with that until we were too big for it and then it was retired and it's still in my garage.

**JG:** Now, what school did you go to?

**JR:** I started out in Kurth School in Lufkin and then over to junior high and high school where the...is it Pinewood's Academy is at now?

**JG:** Yes sir I think so.

**JR:** That was the high school when I graduated.

**JG:** And what year did you graduate from Lufkin High?

**JR:** In 1950.

**JG:** In 1950 okay, I know we are covering a lot of ground here and I don't want to miss over anything so if there is something important that needs to be said feel free to jump in or something you want to remind me of, but how did you wind up in Pineland? I understand you were a forester. Did you go to college?

**JR:** Yes, I went to school at Nacogdoches at Stephen F. Austin and graduated in 1954 with a bachelor of forestry degree.

**JG:** Now, had anybody in your family been to college before or was your mother and maybe your grandparents, did they encourage you in that direction?

**JR:** Actually I was the first one to finish high school. They were very insistent that I go onto college and so that is what I did I went to college.

**JG:** And majored in forestry?

**JR:** I majored in forestry.

**JG:** How common of a major was that at that time?

**JR:** It was not very common. It was new at SFA it had only been in existence three or four years prior to the year that I started.

**JG:** So, you would have been one of the first graduates then right?

**JR:** Yes, they had just a handful of graduates up to that point.

**JG:** Okay, who were some of the professors that you remember?

**JR:** The head of the department was Robert Owens and the man that I learned most from was Nelson Sampson. He was a graduate, had a PhD in Forestry from Syracuse. He was a wonderful teacher.

**JG:** Now did y'all go out in the field a good bit as part of your schooling?

**JR:** We did.

**JG:** Who owned the forest stands that y'all worked on?

**JR:** Some of it was Southern Pine Lumber Company. We made several trips down that we would look at some of their timber lands and look at their logging operations, went through the mill, both Diboll and Pineland, which of course during that time it was still Temple Lumber Company at Pineland, but we went through the mills there and here. Of course, we toured a lot of other lands to see what people were doing with their lands, how they were managing it, how their logging operations were being conducted and so on. And, it was quite a few field trips like that and then in between our junior and senior year we had to go to summer school. The first half of summer school was surveying and it was really a little combination of surveying, timber cruises, principles and so on. Then the second part of the summer we developed management plans for some of the land that we looked at during that time. We actually surveyed some timber tracts and so on and got our hands on the job training basically that summer was what we were getting.

**JG:** Okay, so how did you get the job working for Temple Lumber Company?

**JR:** After I got out of the army in '56...

**JG:** So, you graduated from college in '54 and then went straight into the army?

**JR:** Straight into the army, spent the bulk of that time in Korea and went to work...well I came home and I remember looking for jobs elsewhere but I ended up coming down and interviewing here.

**JG:** In Diboll?

**JR:** In Diboll, I decided to go here.

**JG:** Who did you interview with do you remember?

**JR:** Kenneth Nelson.

**JG:** Okay.

**JR:** I had known him, not real well, but I was at least acquainted with him for quite a number of years and so he wasn't a total stranger to me but he was not a personal friend or a family friend even though he was known to my mother and my grandparents. I was not married but was planning on getting married. They had just merged Southern Pine Lumber Company and Temple Lumber Company. They were still trying to determine how they were going to change their management up and everything at that time. So, when I went to work in May it was with the understanding that I would either go to Rusk, to work up there, or go to Pineland.

**JG:** This is in May of '56.

**JR:** May of '56 and then in July I moved over to Pineland.

**JG:** Was that by choice or did they just decide for you?

**JR:** They decided for me.

**JG:** Okay. Who were some of the other foresters? You had a college degree. Like you said that was kind of rare even for the School of Forestry at SFA which was relatively new, but as far as the company here both Temple and Southern Pine how many graduate foresters were there at the time you were hired?

**JR:** I think maybe there were four graduate foresters. Kenneth Nelson was head of the forestry department but he was not a graduate forester. (JG: Right.) There was a man in Rusk, Richard...excuse me...I can't think of his first name.

**JG:** He is trying to remember.

**JR:** Townsend.

**JG:** Townsend, okay.

**JR:** But I can't think of his first name right now.

**JG:** Okay.

**JR:** There were two foresters in Diboll, Bill Nichols and Dennis Maynard. Now Townsend was a graduate of Oklahoma State University. Nichols and Maynard were graduates from SFA and then over at Pineland Bill Fulmer was a forester over there and he was a graduate of Syracuse.

**JG:** So when you went to Pineland did you work a lot with Mr. Bill Fulmer or did y'all have separate duties?

**JR:** No, when I moved to Pineland they moved Bill Nichols over there as the head forester in that area and Bill Fulmer came over here to Diboll. So, Bill Nichols and I were in Pineland and Bill...

**JG:** Now all these guys, these graduate foresters had just been hired just a few years before right or just a short time before that?

**JR:** They would not have been here too long with Maynard and Nichols both coming from SFA. I don't know just how long they had been there when I went to work, but you know, they couldn't have been there very long and how long Townsend had been at Rusk I am not sure, but I don't think he had been there over a year at that point. Bill Fulmer had been in Pineland for a few years but I have no idea how long he had been there.

**JG:** Now at Rusk, since you mentioned that time, I didn't even know they had a forester stationed at Rusk but I know they were hauling a lot of timber on the Texas State Railroad at that time, so I guess Townsend was managing those operations maybe, the Anderson and Cherokee County lands.

**JR:** I don't know, the logging operations themselves would have been under the logging department.

**JG:** Was that Clyde Thompson?

**JR:** Clyde Thompson.

**JG:** Okay.

**JR:** The land and timber and logging department were pretty distinct entities at that time and I do know that there was a train still shuttling back and forth. You can verify that I'm sure on the records.

**JG:** Yes, we've got records of Clyde Thompson and some of his papers.

**JR:** I'm almost positive that they had a siding somewhere around Weches in there, seems like. I never did actually work in that area up there in it. Dennis Maynard would have been in the office doing office work here in Diboll during that time and Bill Fulmer would have been the outside forester. Wayne up at Rusk and Bill in Pineland and I was helping him. There was a lot of shuffling going on in personnel during that time moving people from Pineland to Diboll and Diboll to Pineland.

**JG:** Part of that consolidating effort.

**JR:** Part of consolidating and cutting here and increasing there and so on.

**JG:** I think they shifted in the focus of each plant too. Didn't Pineland become hardwood for awhile and Diboll was Pine?

**JR:** We did for a time.

**JG:** So Pineland was a misnomer for a little while there.

**JR:** I guess it would be, of course they were still pretty much a mixture of pine and hardwood when I first started. I don't remember just when we switched over to all hardwood but I would say probably within 18 months after that. So, the pine that was cut over there was shipped to Pineland. The hardwood that was cut over here was shipped to Pineland.

**JG:** Oh you mean the pine was shipped to Diboll?

**JR:** Yes, or trucked over here.

**JG:** Yes, the pine was shipped to Diboll and the hardwoods all went to Pineland.

**JR:** Yes, because Pineland had a furniture plant over there. They didn't actually make the furniture they made the dimension stock for the furniture.

**JG:** They had floors too, flooring plant.

**JR:** And flooring yes, flooring was a big portion of it.

**JG:** So, you were managing hardwood forest then is that what you were doing? Not necessarily?

**JR:** Not necessarily. We had all of it really because we were still logging pine.

**JG:** It's just that pine was going to Diboll.

**JR:** It was just coming all over here. Most of the hardwood actually came out of Jasper and Newton County. Along about February of '57 another forester was hired at Pineland named Garland Bridges and we divided that up into two districts there. I took the northern district which was Sabine, San Augustine, Shelby and Panola and Garland took the south district which primarily was Jasper and Newton County but had a little bit over in Hardin County and Orange County and of course all the Neches River bottom land was in that southern region and then some over on the Sabine River. That is where the bulk of the hardwood was coming from.

**JG:** Now you were in Pineland and you mentioned a couple of other foresters that were in and out of there and y'all all had college degrees. How many other employees at Pineland would have had college degrees that you knew of or could remember? You don't have to give an exact number but was it rare?

**JR:** I do not remember there being another Temple employee that had a college degree other than John Booker when he came over as plant manager about...goodness it's hard to remember when he came over.

**JG:** We have got his interview too.

**JR:** Maybe '58, '59 somewhere in there he came over, but other than a doctor and a druggist that would have had degrees the only other degrees were school teachers. If there were any others that had degrees I was not aware of them but there could have been.

**JG:** How much, obviously it was some point of an effort since you were hired and some of these other guys were hired, but the trend had changed and now they were trying to get graduate foresters, college trained people, I know in the sales department at the same time they were kind of doing the same thing and with some of the sales guys I know they often talked about Mr. Temple, Arthur Temple Jr., being a little more closely connected maybe in that process, was Mr. Temple ever, did he really interact with y'all a whole lot?

**JR:** He was.

**JG:** He was, okay can you talk a little bit about that?

**JR:** Okay.

**JG:** The first time you met him.

**JR:** Well when you were talking about degrees somewhere early on Harold Maxwell came over to Pineland as a salesman, worked for that furniture dimension primarily and he had a degree. But, Arthur was a great guy to work for. He was a hands on person. He knew everybody by name. He knew your wife's name, your kids names, sometimes he might need a little help on recalling that but he didn't mind "what is his wife's name?" before he would talk to them you know. But, anyway he recognized that his employees were his bread and butter and they were not just numbers on a payroll roster or something to him. It was not uncommon at all for him to pull a pair of overalls, coveralls, out of the trunk of his car and get in on something that was going on. He was just that type of a person. He knew the business from the ground up and he didn't mind getting his hands dirty.

**JG:** Did he ever go out...I'm kind of jumping around here, but you mentioned timber cruising and things like that in college, did y'all do a lot of that in Pineland?

**JR:** We did a lot of timber cruising because in that stage we bought a lot of outside timber and we bought timberland itself when we could, when it was at a price we could afford we bought what we could.

**JG:** Was the tendency, you know, if timber prices were low I guess the advantageous thing to do would be to not cut your trees but buy the other guys trees while the prices



were low and only cut your timber when the market went up that way you didn't have to pay the high cost.

**JR:** That had a bearing on it yes, but.

**JG:** I know in what little bit of research I've done in the records there were trends for two or three years most of the timber that they cut in the mills was purchased and then there were trends where for three or four years nearly all of it was their own trees, back and forth so, I'm just assuming that had to do with the market.

**JR:** That would be when timber prices were low we were buying more on the outside.

**JG:** Now did your job making those decisions or was that done by people like Kenneth Nelson or?

**JR:** Well actually whether we bought or not was made primarily by Kenneth Nelson but we did the timber cruising and we would make recommendations of whether to buy the tract or not and of course then if there were some negotiations or we felt like it wasn't worth quite what they were asking or something like that then the negotiations were left up to Kenneth Nelson primarily.

**JG:** Was Dave Kenley still around at this time?

**JR:** I did not have much contact with him, but I think that he was still working, but he may not have been but I do know that I knew him when I saw him, but he may have been totally retired. I just don't recall.

**JG:** Okay, sounds like Kenneth had kind of taken over most of his duties by the time you came along.

**JR:** Yes, Kenneth was head of the Land and Timber Department at that time.

**JG:** Okay. I had a good question awhile ago and now I forgot it. This is not the question I was trying to remember but back tracking a little bit, you know, like when you would do the timber cruising just explain to a layman what is meant by timber cruising.

**JR:** Well you are just cruising the land. What it is you just systematically go through a tract of timber and determine how much timber is on it. Some of the old timers, back when timber was cheaper too could just walk through and say okay we will give you x number of dollars an acre for it, but by the time I started it was a little risky doing that. So we had methods of taking plots at certain intervals determining how much was on each plot and then based on the percentage of the entire tract that we had covered we could project what was actually on the full tract.

**JG:** So, would you try to get a solid acre or two acres or three acres and then just proportionally average it out?

**JR:** No, we covered the whole tract.

**JG:** The whole tract okay. You didn't do any averages then?

**JR:** Well it would be an average thing when you finished up.

**JG:** When you finished okay.

**JR:** Like we might say we were going to do a ten percent cruise, you would actually see ten percent of acreage and record the timber that was on those. Normally we made a grid that would have been ten chains parallel to each other...

**JG:** Now how long was a chain?

**JR:** ...a chain was 66 feet so, 660 feet, there were 80 chains to a mile which would mean you would have 8 of those strips through a mile. Then you would just take a plot, depending on what size coverage you wanted to get out of it, at certain intervals along there and use a certain radius and based on the number of plots and the radius of those plots you would actually cover x number of acres. So, you didn't just randomly walk through it and say well based on what I saw it's got to be so much, you saw the whole tract. You didn't just skip over any of it so you knew this northeast corner had the bulk of the timber and the west side was real sparse, you knew that so you didn't make the mistake of seeing the best part and then basing your price on that so you had covered all of it.

**JG:** Okay, when y'all bought timber was there a certain seller that you bought from often? Was there a regular like Kirby, did y'all buy a lot of stuff from Kirby or just individuals?

**JR:** I don't recall us buying from Kirby, we could have, but I just don't recall.

**JG:** Okay. The Kurth's, did y'all do anything with?

**JR:** Bruce Flooring, we sometimes would work with them.

**JG:** What is that name?

**JR:** Bruce Flooring.

**JG:** How do you spell that?

**JR:** B-r-u-c-e Flooring, they made flooring.

**JG:** Flooring, okay.

**JR:** They were interested primarily in hardwoods which made us a little bit of a competitor during that hardwood period time, but when we ceased the hardwood and went back into more or less pine and hardwood mixture, Bruce had no use for pine so if they had a tract that had a good bit of pine on it we would sometimes get with them and we would buy the pine and they would buy the hardwood.

**JG:** Where were they stationed? Where was their headquarters?

**JR:** I know they had a plant in Center at that time but I think their main headquarters was down around Beaumont.

**JG:** Center, okay.

**JR:** Sometimes if the tract was primarily pine we would buy the tract and then sometimes we would actually log the hardwood and just carry it to them. They would pay us for it delivered and other times they would cut the hardwood themselves. We would just sell it to them in bulk and they would cut it and then the same way if they bought a tract that had a lot of pine they would either bring the pine to us or we would log it ourselves and just pay them for the pine and it was a mutual thing. Then of course before the merger with Southwestern we bought a lot of saw timber from Southwestern where their pulpwood of course went to their mill at Evadale and we sold them pulpwood. In fact that was where, for the Pineland area, most of our pulpwood went to them down at Evadale.

**JG:** That was a new mill I think built about '55 wasn't it or '54?

**JR:** Somewhere along in there. It was early to mid fifties. I know it had been in operation a few years when I went to work.

**JG:** Of course Kirby had a big sawmill at Silsbee I guess about that time which I think began in '55.

**JR:** Yes, they had a lot of land up in that Pineland area and San Augustine and Jasper so, we joined their lands.

**JG:** I know a lot of stuff I read in the 1950's the term timber stand improvement was used a lot. What was timber stand improvement?

**JR:** Basically what it was, improve your timber stand. I know when we first went to Pineland the way we determined what to cut out of a tract was based on what we often called just sanitation. We got rid of diseased trees, trees that had been damaged and therefore had lost, were not growing well because of damage. We thinned them where we could see where that was helpful and needful. We were not looking to cut just the prime timber out of it which up until that time that is basically what they had done, they just cut the good timber and the rest of it stayed there so you can imagine what it looked like. We went through leaving the best of the timber and taking out...

**JG:** Kind of an opposite approach then.

**JR:** ...right, we took out so that we could improve the stand.

**JG:** What about the hardwoods, did y'all do much deadening of the hardwoods?

**JR:** We did and that was part of your timber stand improvement because a lot of the hardwood that grows out in the woods will never be commercial and that had to go especially in the pine areas. So, we did an awful lot of that from '56 until...I don't remember when we finally cut most of that out but it would have been sometime in the mid sixties or later before it was totally dropped, but we took out lots of sand jack, post oak, and weed trees like that because they took up space that was needed for pine seedlings. Since your hardwood will shade your pine seedlings out and suppress them if you are trying to primarily grow pines you need those hardwoods out. But, we did leave, we did not girdle or remove any dogwood for aesthetic purposes. Sweet gum because it could make good timber and was not...it competed with pine but in a little different way and we had a few others that we left and would not take those out.

**JG:** I know nowadays you see cleared timber all over the highway right of ways and stuff and boy the sweet gums are the first thing to come back, or it seems to me anyways. Sweet gums are all over the place.

**JR:** They can. Hardwood in general will come back first, they like the sunlight so they get up in a hurry with the sunlight. They, but your hardwoods other than your good hardwoods that you can make good furniture out of basically is not quite as valuable as your pine. That is the reason we push primarily for pine.

**JG:** You've sort of alluded to this in what you've been talking about but maybe talk a little more detailed about it. What did the forest look like in the late 1950's? And, I guess answer that in the context of someone such as myself who has only really been paying attention to the way the woods look maybe the last twenty years or so. So, compare the way the forest looked back then and also I'm understanding that there wasn't a whole lot of reforestation, planting trees going on until even the thirties and probably or certainly not like they are doing today so, describe for today's generation and even future generations maybe what the forest looked like, the species. You've talked about species of trees and things can you try to do that?

**JR:** Of course different topography, depending on their closeness to major waterways and so on different combinations of trees grow together. The higher up the hill you get the more pine you will have and the less hardwood generally.

**JG:** So, it's still mostly natural regeneration?

**JR:** It was mostly natural. Back during the Depression days, the C.C.C. [Civilian Conservation Corps] days and what not there was a lot of land planted with pine but most of that was...

**JG:** National Forest?

**JR:** Well it was National Forest but it was a lot of other areas too, private land owners, but most of it was land that had been farmed over. The farmers were gone and had quit raising their cotton and so on and they were planting those areas into pine. They went back into a lot of the areas that had just been basically stripped of timber by those mills that came in with the “cut out and get out” policy and just left bare land. A lot of that land was replanted and a lot of that land was bought by the forest service during the Depression and it was not until, as you mentioned, I think late fifties that we began to under plant in areas that were not getting sufficient reproduction in them.

**JG:** Now what do you mean by under plant?

**JR:** We would just plant seedlings right underneath the big trees.

**JG:** Underneath the big trees.

**JR:** But, even then the bulk of what was being planted was open land and some of that area that we reclaimed by taking the scrubby hardwood stuff out, that was planted. But, basically we were trained during that time to just clean up the forest so that we would have high quality timber left and therefore give us a high quality seed source rather than where they had been just taking out the better trees for timber because it made better lumber but, we were leaving the sickly trees which gave us a seed source that matched their crooked and twisted and gnarled timber, so we got rid of those trees.

**JG:** So, a complete different approach then.

**JR:** So that we could get good timber back then.

**JG:** What role did the lakes going in, Toledo Bend and Sam Rayburn, how did all that affect what y’all were doing?

**JR:** It kept us busy because we had to work with the Corps of Engineers and the Sabine River Authority people on that. Of course they just told us what they were taking, that is about what it amounted too. We didn’t have a lot of say-so. We could argue with them over price to a certain extent but they still had the upper hand on that I think. It always hurt to go into those tracks that would really have some good timber in it and just cut it down to the ground and the little trees that were not commercial size or had no commercial value, they may be big trees but had no commercial value we didn’t even try to keep from tearing them up or skinning them up because we knew they were going to go underwater anyway. So, it gave you a little strange feeling to log under that circumstance.

**JG:** Just kind of went against some principles you had.

**JR:** Right but we did it anyway and we did lose a lot of land. A few years ago I could have told you how many acres we lost in each county but I can't do that now. I couldn't tell you.

**JG:** So, you did...I know Toledo Bend especially has lots of standing timber still. You've got to know where the boat lanes are.

**JR:** That lake came up a little quicker than they had expected once they closed it, it filled up, well both of them really filled quicker than they had thought, but I know part of it was due to the market conditions at that time but there was just not enough demand for the timber right then so a lot of it was just left.

**JG:** Okay, yes that is what I was going to ask you, especially Toledo Bend, it's stump filled, I mean there is stumps now in some cases but they were left as standing trees.

**JR:** You mentioned about what affect did that have I know on Toledo Bend, in Sabine County not too far north where the dam is at is one of the prettiest places in East Texas. There was a community, Jonathan I can't remember now what it was called. It was some bend but I cannot remember the name, it was right on the river, beautiful place. It was a black community, had the old rail fences, clapboard houses, wasn't a one of them painted.

**JG:** On the Texas side?

**JR:** On the Texas side. They were up on a high steep bank and just a beautiful area. The whole thing is under water but, it's...I remember the first time I ever saw it. I said "this has got to be the most beautiful place in East Texas." It's completely under the water.

**JG:** Gone now. Yes, that is a big lake isn't it.

**JR:** I think that was called Hamilton Bend. I'm not sure. I know there were a bunch of people named Hamilton that lived there and I think it was called Hamilton Bend.

**JG:** Okay.

**JR:** Robertson Bend, Robertson Bend is what it was called.

**JG:** Okay.

**JR:** Not Hamilton, but it was mostly Hamilton's that I knew that lived in there.

**JG:** Did the company own any lands that had cemeteries that might have had to been relocated or anything? Do you remember anything about that?

**JR:** I know that there were cemeteries moved. I don't recall any that were on Temple lands. I just couldn't say whether there were any actually on Temple lands but I do know that on Sam Rayburn there were cemeteries all up and down in there that had to be moved out to higher ground.

**JG:** Including some on Temple's lands or Southern Pine Lumber?

**JR:** They could have been but I just don't recall any specifically and probably some of those cemeteries back then were actually still on Temple land but a lot of them at some point maybe before Temple acquired the land the family had just deeded two acres or five acres to some cemetery association or a church because a lot of them were connected with a church. Most of them were probably and so, there would just be a little acre to five acre tract, you know, and really it wouldn't be Temple ownership but we would own all the way around it. But, I just can't recall if any of those cemeteries were actually on Temple land or completely surrounded by Temple but I do know that there were a number of them that had to be moved out.

**JG:** Do you remember much of the time, maybe just the general public, any opposition to the lake or the lakes or either one of them? Being a forester out in the woods and stuff did you come in contact with a lot of the residents of the area?

**JR:** You know Jonathan I can't recall. I know there was some opposition but, I can't think who it was or just really why they objected.

**JG:** I think Kurth's as a business as a company opposed certainly Rayburn because that took a lot of their timberlands.

**JR:** We probably, deep seeded were probably against it because it was taking so much timberland, but seemed to me like I think the general consensus was it was good for the area to have the water. But, we hated to see the timber go away and the people because there were hundreds of people that had to give up homes that had been in their family for generations.

**JG:** I know if you just look at the Lufkin newspapers the newspapers seemed to have something everyday where the Kurth's, the Kurth family and the Kurth companies were very much outspoken against the lake and it may, I always kind of thought part of it was because the Kurth's were so much against it you don't see anything from Mr. Temple about it. (laughter) He just kind of kept quiet about it, but I think it hurt the Kurth's, as far as just a pure business deal, I think it hurt the Kurth's more than the Temple's for sure.

**JR:** I just don't know how much land they had involved.

**JG:** Of course by that time too they had pretty much sold out and Owens Illinois kind of got out of everything.

**JR:** I don't remember when they closed that mill at Kelty's but if it wasn't already closed it may have closed during that time.

**JG:** It was kind of all during that time, yes.

**JR:** That may have been the monkey that broke their back or something maybe. I just don't know.

**JG:** Yes, I think so.

**JR:** That may have been why they were so verbally opposed to it, but I just can't remember if the Temple family or Temple Industries...

**JG:** Being for or against it.

**JR:** ...I just can't remember if they had an official policy against it. I know we were reluctant to give up the land because I'm sure we could look up somewhere and find out how many acres went but it was a big hunk of Temple land that went, in both dams.

**JG:** I know Arthur Sr. was against all the lakes. We have a letter where he wrote when Dam B, Steinhagen was pretty much a done deal there is a letter he wrote and pretty much to the affect maybe now this will satisfy all the dam builders and we can go back to growing timber, but little did he know.

**JR:** He didn't know there were two bigger ones coming along.

**JG:** Well, I think he knew. They had been on the books forever but I think that is what he was addressing was that he hoped that would satisfy, the littlest one of the bunch but he didn't live long enough to see it.

**JR:** You will always have opposition, just like the Neches River. No one wants this dam that Rockland built that they have been talking about. I don't know it may have been in the talking stages before Sam Rayburn. I don't know.

**JG:** Yes it goes back to the twenties and the thirties it was getting lots of attention.

**JR:** It's been around as long as I can remember. I think it would at least be a little surplus water I think in there and it may...the loss of the forest economy and agriculture use and so on and the scenic value I think would way outweigh anything they would gain from the water in it.

**JG:** Right, like I said, Rayburn and all of them now have silted in so much over the years you know and there is a lot of water lost to evaporation too.

**JR:** Well I guess that is the problem with any pond you built whether it's a lake or thousands of acres you are going to lose a certain percentage of that water every day.



**JG:** I know you said already that the logging was pretty much, you know a completely different department but how much did y'all work with managing the forest side, the timber growing and acquiring land? Was there any cooperative effort with the logging department and the foresters?

**JR:** Oh yes.

**JG:** Just talk about that.

**JR:** In a way it would be hard to separate us.

**JG:** Right, right.

**JR:** And, I don't remember just at what point that they were brought together. They were still even then a little bit of rivalry among us. I know I did not see it but I've heard of it, in the Pineland operation when they first hired a forester over there, which was Bill Fulmer, he had all kinds of opposition from the logging people because he would try to keep them from cutting this or that and they would just go ahead and cut what they wanted to. I know they had rounds and rounds with that.

**JG:** Was most of the logging contract then or was the company still having their own loggers?

**JR:** There were some contracting but when I first went to work it was primarily company logging.

**JG:** You think that would have been easier to control but not necessarily huh? Or maybe contracting would have been easier to control.

**JR:** Contracting I think you did have a little more control over it but by the time I went to work they pretty well had an understanding between the forest department, or the land and timber we called it then and the logging department, that the logging department would cut what the land and timber said you can cut and we didn't have too big of a discrepancy on that. We had to watch them about damage; that was one of our big things. For them to cut trees that we had specifically wanted left or vice versa, not cutting trees that we specifically wanted to come out we really didn't have a lot of problem with that. Our biggest thing was to make sure that they didn't do excessive damage to it.

**JG:** So it sounds like, if not using that in a term but, in effect in practice y'all were doing selective harvesting still. Would that be correct?

**JR:** We were. Once we finished the bulk of what we called "sanitation harvesting" and then the areas where we could do it, it was strictly selective.

**JG:** Were you doing any clear cutting anywhere?

**JR:** We didn't talk about clear cutting then. It was not until the...

**JG:** Now we are talking the fifties right?

**JR:** The seventies when that began to come into play.

**JG:** I know it actually appears in some of the company records in the early seventies before the Time deal, the Time acquisition, the merger with Southwestern. I know it really picked up after that but I think the company was certainly doing a little bit of it by the early seventies. But, that just wasn't even a term y'all used in the fifties and sixties then?

**JR:** Not clear cutting no.

**JG:** Now as a professional forester were you aware of that practice? Did y'all study it in SFA [Stephen F. Austin]?

**JR:** Yes, we were aware of it.

**JG:** Because I guess they had been doing it elsewhere for awhile.

**JR:** It was a big tool in many places and...but it had just never been practiced here and there are advantages and disadvantages to it. By having clear cuts then once you get a stand established there everything is about the same age and it makes it easier to log and more economical to log from then on when you get on to that basis. If you have a failure with reforestation you've got a problem for awhile until you get it going. If you go into one of these long lasting droughts, eight or ten years of bad droughts you can have almost a total wipeout on reforestation.

**JG:** There was one in the fifties too wasn't there?

**JR:** There was a long drought in the fifties. And, so things like that had to be geared for and you just had to be geared up for it.

**JG:** Right.

**JR:** Once you can get established it does have its advantages. It's definitely more economical to log that way and to handle your woods. You have a better...you can project your harvest over a longer term that way. You don't have quite the scenic value or the aesthetic value you had under the selective where you always had mature trees with younger trees coming in. It was a delicate situation because if you didn't open it up enough the younger trees would be stunted. They couldn't grow well so you weren't getting maximum growth from them, you would have to wait eighty years to get a big tree out of it rather than forty-five or fifty years and so on. So, it was a balancing act to get your prime production out of it.

**JG:** I don't want to totally leave the forest just yet, we will come back to it but before we get too far into the seventies and things like that I wanted to ask you a little bit about some of the more social or the civic side of Pineland. What was it like to live in Pineland? And I guess you came there in about '57 or '58 and Pineland Day started in '58 so, just talk a little bit about Pineland and how you got involved with the service club.

**JR:** Well Pineland was unique.

**JG:** Now had Eck Prudhomme already left by that time when you came?

**JR:** Prudhomme of course was the manager for Temple Lumber Company. He stayed over there...I know he was probably still there all through '57 and maybe left in '58. I just don't remember when but no more than two years after I went over there Jack Sweeny came over as the manager.

**JG:** Jack W. Sweeny.

**JR:** Yes, and I think Jack came over, moved to Pineland about the same time I went over in '58 maybe that summer but, Eck Prudhomme was still the manager until he left.

**JG:** Now were you around Mr. Prudhomme very much?

**JR:** Some yes.

**JG:** What do you remember about him?

**JR:** He enjoyed talking. He was tall. He had a way of making people like him but his business capabilities and what I really couldn't tell you about him because I just didn't...

**JG:** Wasn't around him much I guess.

**JR:** ...wasn't around him that much because he was primarily concerned with the plant itself was his part where we were out in the woods.

**JG:** Who was your immediate supervisor?

**JR:** Bill Nichols.

**JG:** Bill Nichols. Who did he report to?

**JR:** To Kenneth Nelson.

**JG:** Kenneth Nelson, okay. So it wasn't really directly to Pineland at all it was Kenneth and I guess Kenneth reported to Arthur.

**JR:** Right.

**JG:** Okay, that helps my understanding a little bit.

**JR:** Yes, he was...Bill Nichols was over the two of us, Garland Bridges and myself, and he reported to Kenneth over here at Diboll.

**JG:** Now did Mr. Nelson, Kenneth, go over to Pineland quite a bit?

**JR:** Yes, we saw a good bit of him over there.

**JG:** Was he a lot of hands on? I know he was under Mr. Kenley. He was out in the woods a lot surveying and things. Was he still that when you knew him?

**JR:** Yes, he was pretty much hands on. He kept, he knew what we were doing on a day to day basis anyway.

**JG:** What about the Pineland service club? I know I'm really jumping up to about the mid-seventies and I think you were president there for awhile of the service club, but you care to share anything about that? This is a picture of you here. I think that was '76 when the Pineland swimming pool came in. [Showing Mr. Ruby a photograph]

**JR:** There I am over there.

**JG:** Just tell a little bit about Pineland Day.

**JR:** Pineland Day started off. I think these...well that may be right up there. I moved over there in '56. I do not recall whether it was '57 or '58 that was the first one.

**JG:** I think it was '58.

**JR:** I don't really even know how it got started. It had something to do with they were already observing it in Diboll for a long time.

**JG:** Diboll Day started in '53.

**JR:** I remember that first one was really just sort of an open house. There were a lot of improvements going on in the plant. I'm not sure if that was about the time that the new sawmill started up because I know...I don't really believe that new sawmill was going by then. I believe it must have been a year later, but it was just an open house and I remember it was...

**JG:** Had plant tours and things like that?

**JR:** Primarily plant tours – opened it up, but the people see what was going on in the plants and just a get together. Everything was...all the activity was actually down in one of the lumber sheds.

**JG:** Yes, we've got some photographs of that.

**JR:** I can't remember just how it was set up but it was inside the plant area where all the gathering was. I think that was probably the only year it was done that way. Afterwards it started on a regular basis it was down in the park area primarily, but they still had the tours through the plants. And, I remember this trip.

**JG:** We are looking at a photograph from the 1959 Angelina County Free Press and he and Garland Bridges are with I guess Governor Price Daniel.

**JR:** Right. This is Garland and this man here John Lindsey, he was retired when I moved over there. He had been a sawyer in the mill for years and he was a highly respected man. I know when we moved over there, I know he was, he was the first person that came to see us after we got moved in or maybe while we were moving in.

**JG:** Is this you and your wife?

**JR:** Yes, we hadn't been married but a couple of weeks when we moved over there. (laughter) In fact, I know when I was hired and told that I would either go to Rusk or Pineland, Kenneth said, "Well aren't you getting married soon?" I said, "yes, in June." He said, "We are going to leave you here until you get married and then we will move you over." I said, "Okay." Or when he decided that was where he was going to move me he said he would wait 'till we got married. Anyway, Mr. Lindsey was the first guy that came by to see us and he may have been there that evening, just passed by and saw somebody moving in and stopped, I think. I found out that he was the daddy to a man that I had worked for during one summer when I was in school. He was Stanley Lindsey, his son, was a forester for I.P. [International Paper] and I worked for them a couple of summers and I worked for Stanley one of those summers. He was highly respected throughout the town and he had a couple of other sons that lived there in Pineland. And we went out to Austin that year, the three of us, and the Governor signed that proclamation and I think there was one, a proclamation, made every time we had Pineland Day after then. But, that was the first one anyway. I had even forgotten about that being in the paper. I know somewhere I've got a copy of that print.

**JG:** Then in '76 here you are cutting the ribbon on the new Pineland swimming pool so I think you were president then.

**JR:** Yes, but I find it hard to believe that is me. I recognize these other folks, John Booker, Frank Sloan, Arthur, I can't tell who that is behind him, this is Bill Whittington, Sherrel Fears, I have no idea who that is.

**JG:** You recognize nearly everybody but yourself huh?

**JR:** Rodney Miller from the First Baptist Church, I can't place him, then Ross Parker, there is not enough to recognize him there, but Ross was a...when I first went to Pineland Ross was in the payroll. I know he handed out paychecks anyway. I don't know if that

was his primary responsibility but a little later on he was the purchasing agent for Pineland. Those guys are all good friends. What did we call them leisure suits?

**JG:** Leisure suits, yes, polyester suits.

**JR:** Yes, that is what that is. That big old wide tie.

**JG:** Got that big collar on the shirt.

**JR:** And those plaid pants that John has on and those checked ones that Frank and Arthur have on that was the style back then. That was weird clothing. It was a stretchy material and it would snag on anything and everything. What did they call that double knit or something another? But I had lots of them too and I had some that were just like this that were.

**JG:** Now where did your wife grow up?

**JR:** She is from Lufkin.

**JG:** From Lufkin too, okay.

**JR:** She was actually born in Trinity County at Trevat and...but they moved to Lufkin when she was fairly young. Her dad was an automotive mechanic. He worked for the Ford place in Lufkin for a long time and he later went into business for himself.

**JG:** Now, how did she like living in Pineland?

**JR:** I almost hate to say that. (laughter) Both of us when we found out we were going to Pineland I had hoped we would go to Rusk, both of us felt like we had moved to the end of the world. But, once we were there...

**JG:** It wasn't the end of the world but you could see it from there. (laughter)

**JR:** ...we found the people to be warm and it was just one big family. Eighty percent of the people that lived inside the city limits worked for Temple. The others either taught school or worked in the grocery store or drug store, something like that.

**JG:** How accepting was the community to someone such as yourself and your wife, somebody quote unquote from the outside moving in?

**JR:** I don't think they...

**JG:** I asked that because...

**JR:** It wasn't...they didn't reject us or not associate with us or anything like that. During that initial move when so many people were coming in from Diboll there was a little bit of resentment because they were also losing friends that were being moved out.

**JG:** I guess what you are referring to is the consolidation of Temple and Southern Pine. I know Jack Cook Sweeny talked about it, you know, he expressed as a child he felt some of that opposition you might say in the schools even. He had to go back to Diboll he said to finish out a school year and it was all in that same time period.

**JR:** It could have. I know when we moved over there Jack, the Sweeny family lived just around the corner from us. Jack Cook was maybe nine years old, wasn't much older than that anyway. You would have to check with him and find out how old he was in '56 but somewhere in that age area anyway. I remember he had a little Shetland horse that he rode all the time and we became good friends with his momma and daddy. Like I said, everything in Pineland was owned by Temple and then Southern Pine Lumber Company so most likely unless you had one or two of the odd ball houses in town you lived in a Temple house. We were in one of those houses and the water heater, it was supposed to have one but for some reason it wasn't working when we moved in and we were having to heat water to bathe with. We couldn't get them to put one in and I remember that Lucille Sweeny found out. I think she came down to the house one day to visit with Nelda and she found out we didn't have a water heater and we had one either that afternoon or the next morning, one or the other, we had a water heater. So, we always remember how good she was to us.

**JG:** Got you a hot water heater.

**JR:** I don't know how much that hurt Southern Pine's budget that year to put that water heater in that house because I know they didn't make a whole lot from those houses. I think we paid \$24 a month rent for that house.

**JG:** Not even a dollar a day.

**JR:** But anyway we went for I guess two months, we didn't have a water heater. We sure thought Lucille was the best person around when she got that water heater in. We just hadn't mentioned it to the right person.

**JG:** There you go.

**JR:** But it was...we did not feel excluded or anything. Of course when we first moved over there we came back to Lufkin nearly every Sunday so we weren't there on Sunday a lot but we met with the Church of Christ there in Pineland on Wednesday nights and then those Sunday's that we were still there on Sunday we met with them and they accepted us there ,so we had our little church family anyway. It wasn't long until we were accepted as Pinelandites. But I do know that in those first few months there was some resentment by some of the people about it but it was not a severe thing and certainly was no problem to us. They pretty well took us in because like I mentioned they were just one big family

because they all worked for the same company and they knew that what you did helped them with their job, so it worked good that way. And the service club was a very important thing to the town of Pineland. A big portion of them were Temple employees, well it would be Southern Pine in the beginning. I don't remember when they started calling it Temple Industries.

**JG:** '63, '64 was when they went to...

**JR:** Yes, early to mid sixties I would say somewhere in there.

**JG:** So everybody in Pineland had always worked for Temple Lumber Company and then in '56 they changed it to Southern Pine Lumber and then in '63 they went back to Temple.

**JR:** To Temple. I know there was a lot of talk about the letter heads "we haven't used up all the Temple Lumber Company letter heads yet and now we are changing to Temple again, maybe we can adjust those old papers to reflect" because there still were some that had been left over.

**JG:** That was like seven or eight years later. (laughter)

**JR:** And there were a few people, not just in Pineland but the whole area over there that were use to Temple Lumber Company and they couldn't get used to calling it Southern Pine. They still wanted to call it Temple Lumber Company so they felt a little better about it when we changed back to Temple Industries or changed to Temple Industries. They felt like well it is Temple again.

**JG:** But it really wasn't. (laughter)

**JR:** But I guess that goes with anything that you change names on. The service club was an activity for a good many of the men. There were people from the plant that were supervisors, there were some that were just plain laborers, we had teachers in the service club. There were people that owned some of the businesses, grocery stores, service stations and what-not, those people were involved in it. Some of it was just the social contact but mainly it was that we usually worked together with a purpose especially when the Pineland Day came along. That gave us a central point and working together to decide what needed to be done next and where we needed to focus attention on improving something or starting something new and what-not. So, it was a pretty neat organization. We didn't have a Lions Club, Rotary Club, so, it sort of served in that capacity. Everything we did was basically right there in Pineland or the working area around Pineland anyway. We didn't have to pay any fees to a national organization or anything to put off some of the proceeds, that way everything stayed right in Pineland. The service club always, like the one here in Diboll, determined where all of the monies would go whether it went to the little league or to a ballpark or maybe to a band or to the library once it got started and so on.



**JG:** Did you and your wife Nelda have children?

**JR:** We had two children, both, well they were actually born in Lufkin at Memorial Hospital, but of course we were living there so.

**JG:** Living in Pineland?

**JR:** Yes.

**JG:** Did they go to school in Pineland?

**JR:** Yes they went to school there.

**JG:** Graduated from there?

**JR:** Our oldest girl graduated at Pineland and we transferred over here in '78 and our youngest daughter graduated in '79 so, she came over here with us and she went to Central for her senior year.

**JG:** Central okay. So how were the Pineland schools, did y'all get involved with the schools much?

**JR:** Oh yes.

**JG:** Were you on the school board or anything?

**JR:** I was never on the school board – didn't have any aspirations to do that, but I was involved in a lot of school activities. I think once they began to play football, I don't remember at what point even though I'm not a strong football fan somehow I let the coaches talk me into filming the football games, so from whenever I started that until we moved I was always up on top of the press box taking pictures of the ballgame. We a couple of years after they started playing football some people began to talk about having a band and I helped with that. I was actually the first president of the band boosters for West Sabine and enjoyed that a great deal in getting that started.

**JG:** How many people were in the band approximately that first year? I mean it was a new program and just getting started.

**JR:** Jonathan I don't really remember. That happened and I don't even remember what year that was and they didn't even offer it to the juniors and seniors that year because it was primarily a junior high thing. Sort of the same way the football program was it basically started out with junior high.

**JG:** Started with junior high and progressed up.

**JR:** Started with junior high and progressed upward as they picked up a little bit. Our oldest daughter, I think she was already in high school, she really wasn't interested but our youngest daughter was and she started that first year in band.

**JG:** What did she play what instrument?

**JR:** The flute and piccolo.

**JG:** So the school provided all the instruments or did the students have to do that or was it mutual?

**JR:** Like a lot of schools, the less expensive instruments, clarinets, trumpets and things like that were student bought. There could have been, I just don't recall, some help with some of them help them out buying them but the more expensive instruments, you know, like baritone saxophone which is what I had played most of the time in high school and college, bass horns, things of that nature were bought by the school.

**JG:** Bought by the school.

**JR:** Arthur's mother was a big help.

**JG:** Katherine Sage Temple. She helped out a lot?

**JR:** I don't know if...I know she was instrumental in getting a lot of money together. I don't recall if it came from her personally or through the Temple Foundation at her urging but I know that she was highly involved with getting it started.

**JG:** I think she had a lot to do with the swimming pools too?

**JR:** She did.

**JG:** Especially in Diboll, even for the black community.

**JR:** I can remember her. It was not uncommon to get up in the morning and walk outside and see her walking down the street.

**JG:** In Pineland?

**JR:** Yes.

**JG:** Where did she stay when she would spend the night?

**JR:** She would be in the lodge after Arthur had it remodeled and everything. But, if I remember right Pineland was what she called her honeymoon home. There was a house right close to the office, the old office there, that had been there and was her and Mr. Temple's first home if I'm not mistaken. So, she had a strong connection to Pineland and

I know when she was in town it was not uncommon to see her walking the street just looking and checking the town over. I can even actually remember one morning or maybe it was an afternoon, anyway it was during the day, she was out on one of those little strolls and I offered to pick her up because it was threatening rain or maybe it was drizzling a little bit but she wouldn't. She said, "I'm enjoying it and I've got my umbrella." She waved it up at me and she was happy. She was just looking over her old home place, you know, because she did love Pineland.

**JG:** You were in Pineland during school integration, the racial integration of the schools. Can you share anything about that? We did a little bit of an effort to try to interview a lot of people that were connected with Diboll's school integration but we haven't really done anything on Pineland. Since you were there, like I said, you weren't on the school board or anything but you would have been a resident of the town and certainly a parent of a child during that time so, what do you remember of integration in Pineland?

**JR:** I think probably like any place in the South there was some resentment, but it went smooth because the blacks and whites were used to working together, we knew everybody, you had good friends on both sides of the color line. I don't think there was any real problem. I know I heard, I believe it was K. D. Franks, who was superintendent there for a long time and may have been a superintendent during that initial integration too, but I heard him say that they had no more fights than they would normally expect and they were not, in other words whites would fight over here and blacks would fight over here, for them to fight together it was probably not a racial thing, you know. He didn't like the cap he had on or some little something but it was never anything out of a racial problem. I don't think we really had one.

**JG:** Were there any issues with the sizes of the campus, classroom size, let me back up did the black students come over to the white schools or did any white students go to the black school or how did that transition?

**JR:** I think all the blacks came to the white school. I'm trying to think if they even used...Jonathan I don't think they even used the old black school after they decided to integrate. I think it was all...they used the main elementary and high school campus all together.

**JG:** Was there any construction of a new building shortly after integration or anything like that you can think of?

**JR:** There was a new high school built, but I just don't recall if it was built because of integration or if it was just as it enlarged because we merged with Bronson. They brought the Bronson system in with Pineland. That is when it became West Sabine. It wasn't long after that the population was up enough that it demanded more facilities than what we had. I just can't remember how that related to integration. I think the new building came in after the integration a little bit but it wasn't too far back.

**JG:** Do you remember any of the integrated sports teams they might have had? What I'm thinking with that too is say, you know, schools that competed against one another in athletics and you mentioned your daughter was in the band but did y'all see any other...where was Pineland in integrating its schools compared to other schools that would have been in the same league with Pineland? For instance were there any teams that Pineland played that weren't integrated? What was the integration status of the other schools that you can remember?

**JR:** Like I said I don't remember Pineland having any problem with integration. There wasn't any with the athletics that I'm aware of. The kids all got together and did fine.

**JG:** Did Pineland integrate before a lot of the other schools or the same time or later?

**JR:** Well, they probably all, I wouldn't say exactly the same year that it happened but within three or four or five year period it did. I don't remember any racial disturbance or anything anywhere in that area because of integration. There could have been some but I don't remember anywhere over there that it was a real problem.

**JG:** Diboll was about a three year process before they were fully integrated. They started with freedom of choice and then, you know, I guess the class of '67, graduating high school class of '67 so, the fall of '66 that would have been, that is when a lot of the football boys from the black school here in town integrated over to the Diboll team and I think it was among the best that the football program had done up to that point. The integration gave them winning teams and that kind of thing. So, anyway that is what I was meaning just in comparison did y'all see schools that weren't integrated.

**JR:** I know when we first moved there they didn't have any football team. That didn't start until...I just don't remember. It would have been in the sixties anyway, but if I remember correctly they did not start a football program until integration had started. I can't remember about basketball and baseball, which they did have.

**JG:** Now the band did the band start up after the football program had started?

**JR:** Yes, it was a couple of years behind the football program.

**JG:** So, I guess the band was integrated then when your daughter was in?

**JR:** Yes, it was integrated from the very beginning. I know that and I feel like the football team was. I'm not sure about it but they would have happened about the same time. I know they were fully integrated by the time the band was started.

**JG:** If we could let's get back to more of the forestry related stuff and jumping into the 1970's I guess. Of course in 1973 Time acquired Temple Industries and merged Temple with Eastex Pulp & Paper and that is when you got the influx of the Southwest Settlement guys. What was that like when you got new management opportunities maybe and new people coming in from outside Southwestern Settlement? Just describe that.

**JR:** Well it was a new thing. There was not much difference to the plant because they weren't there but it was for the forest department because Southwestern Settlement had their own foresters, we had ours.

**JG:** They brought more land to the table than Temple had, a little bit more.

**JR:** A little bit more. I've forgotten now just what it was.

**JG:** I think it was 400 and something thousand and 580 thousand, something like that.

**JR:** Yes, I just don't remember but I think they were a little bigger. Then the Papermill had their own procurement staff separate from Southwestern Settlement which basically had the land and that was handled okay. I know that somewhere two or three years before we merged one of their foresters left them and we hired him as a procurement forester. I know he joked about it after the merger that the only reason they consented to the merger was that they wanted him back that bad and they had to merge to get him.

**JG:** Do you remember his name?

**JR:** Joe Aiken.

**JG:** Joe Aiken, okay. (laughter)

**JR:** He lived at San Augustine and he lived up there when he was working for Southwestern, had that northern area up that way. But, I heard him make that statement two or three times that they consented to that merger just to get him back.

**JG:** Was there any kind of a clash or anything and I truthfully do not remember the person's name but somebody that came from Southwestern kind of said it was a little eye opening coming and seeing how Temple had ran their forest and I don't want to put words into his mouth but that maybe Temple was a little behind the times you might say, of course that might have been coming from a clear cut mentality to the selective forest. I don't know what he was specifically talking about but any...does that ring a bell with anything or prompt any comments?

**JR:** There was a little bit of that. Most of it was a good natured ribbing of each other you know because we did have different...

**JG:** Philosophies.

**JR:** ...we had different purposes. They were primarily raising it just big enough to make pulpwood out of it and so they wanted short rotation and where we were looking for long term primarily to get plywood logs and saw timber logs. Pulpwood was just a sideline to us, where it was their primary thing.

**JG:** I think y'all were already selling Evadale chips and things well before the merger.

**JR:** Oh yes, way before we had nearly all of our pulpwood production went to them, at least on the Pineland side. A lot of it over here went to Southland.

**JG:** Lufkin, yes.

**JR:** But over on our side it went down to Evadale but the saw timber they produced we got it, so we were constantly...we didn't swap money so much as we just swapped timber and say you gave us x number of board feet and we owe you x number of cords or something like that. It was just basically a bookkeeping deal on who owed what. I don't know just how it was handled but it was handled more like that. There was money exchanged every once in awhile to get it back to zero you know.

**JG:** Right, so the accountants took care of all that.

**JR:** Right, like I mentioned they were pulpwood and we were saw timber and plywood and that made it a little different. They were heavier into planting of pine trees than we were. They depended on their planting more because they would cut those smaller trees so you didn't have a seed source anyway standing up here to drop more down, so they were more accustomed to heavy planting every year.

**JG:** Just guessing the history of the forest if you look at it from the Temple side pretty much had Dave Kenley and Kenneth Nelson, then after Kenneth was now Glenn Chancellor. So I guess Glen would have been the first college trained forester then to head up forest operations. Would that be correct?

**JR:** He would have been yes.

**JG:** So it's interesting that in that history the first professionally trained forester didn't come from Temple side, it came from the other side.

**JR:** To actually head it?

**JG:** Yes.

**JR:** That would be correct.

**JG:** Kind of interesting, I thought. Now how much did Glen take that different philosophy and apply it to the whole forest?

**JR:** Well by that time, by the time Glen came in...

**JG:** Late '70's I guess? I don't remember.

**JR:** It would have been the early eighties. That was a...

**JG:** Just before Temple-Inland came then.

**JR:** I moved into data processing just shortly after Glen became head of it. Kenneth retired maybe two years, year and a half before I went into the data processing side. But we saw probably the major changes made during that consolidation when things were coming together. There was more change made there than when we switched from Nelson to Chancellor.

**JG:** Oh okay so, the changes in the 1950's then were greater than the changes than in the late seventies and eighties. Is that what you are saying or the changes in '73?

**JR:** The changes from the time that we merged with Time and all of those in '73...

**JG:** Seventy three to seventy five. Time bought Temple in '73 and then all the changes took place through '75.

**JR:** You really didn't see any of that consolidation for a couple of years and then it began to just gradually fall in.

**JG:** I think the Boggy Slough area was clear cut for the first time in '75, I'm not positive on that but I think that is what I've generally heard.

**JR:** I just don't know. I know that was about when the clear cutting started during that consolidation process. But, those changes were taking place then even under Kenneth's guidance so, (JG: Right) it was already well underway and so it was not just an abrupt change when it changed from Nelson to Chancellor. Of course, I don't even remember what year but in the mid sixties I quit working in the woods full time. I still did some work in the woods but I started doing most of my work in the office somewhere in the mid sixties anyway, working on the budget, the growth projections, working out long term harvest budgets and so on, things like that and keeping up with who was logging what and making sure everybody got paid correctly because by that time had gone entirely to contract logging. I worked with a lot of developing the weight scaling process that we switched over to, did a lot of progression analysis to come up with those formulas and everything that we used.

**JG:** Before we get you out of the forestry department all together I'm going to back up way back because I forgot to ask you this. Since you were the first to graduate from high school and your family and went onto college and got a degree why did you choose forestry as your major? What drew you to forestry?

**JR:** I don't know, I had always played in the woods, it was home to me. That was a major industry, but I think and I don't even remember what class it was but somewhere in high school, my senior year, I wrote a report on conservation, primarily forest conservation and it sort of opened my eyes. But, in high school and I'm almost ashamed to say it I couldn't add two and two, two times in a row and come up with the same answer and I thought forestry would be totally free of mathematics.

**JG:** (laughter) And you went into computation.

**JR:** Just learn how to grow trees, cut them down and plant more trees and what not and I figured that would be it and I thought that would be safe enough with no mathematics. It took me maybe the first semester, second semester anyway I found out there was much more to it because we did probably ended up with more mathematics than most math majors.

**JG:** That is what I was about to say, all that surveying.

**JR:** They were the only guys that had more than we did anyway.

**JG:** Yes, you were talking about all those chains and doing all that calculations of timber cruising and stuff.

**JR:** Yes, all those statistics you have to go through the surveying.

**JG:** Little did you know.

**JR:** I had to learn it.

**JG:** You jumped out of the frying pan into the fire huh?

**JR:** But, I enjoyed it.

**JG:** Just a natural love of the environment.

**JR:** Of the woods, yes. I don't know, none of my ancestors or kinfolks that I'm aware of actually worked in the woods that I'm aware of. My granddaddy, my mother's daddy did tell me a long time after I went to work for Southern Pine Lumber Company, we were just talking one day and he mentioned it, he worked for Southern Pine Lumber Company one day back when he was just a good size boy. He said when he got back into town that afternoon he told them he wouldn't be back.

**JG:** He didn't wind up in Dred Devereaux's crew did he? (laughter)

**JR:** No, he had gotten a job as a fireman on one of the engines and he said the engineer was the most foul mouth man he had ever run into and he said he wasn't going to put up with that anymore and he said that one day until they got back into town. He said if they had come back into town at noon it would have been over with.

**JG:** That would have been the end of it.

**JR:** He said when they got back into town he told them he said "I won't be back." He said he never did even go down and pick up whatever pay he was due. He was still living down at Wakefield at that time.

**JG:** Oh okay, one of those old log train engineers then.



**JR:** After he moved to Lufkin which must have been just shortly after he worked for the Long Bell Lumber Company for awhile before he went to Martin Wagon Company.

**JG:** Okay, well I'm sorry to jump around but let's jump all the way up more to the present. You switched over and got into data processing and that is how I first met you and knew you was when I came to work here and knew you through my dad. So, why and how did you make that move?

**JR:** Well as I mentioned I was working in the office and a lot of record keeping and a lot of trying to project what needs to happen and planning budgets and what not. We had a lot of things that we wanted to computerize and we were getting nowhere and.

**JG:** Was there a data processing like later would be I.T. or I.S. was there a computer department?

**JR:** There was.

**JG:** But they left y'all alone.

**JR:** It was an accounting sideline.

**JG:** Okay, it came up through the accounting department.

**JR:** It was almost just a subset of the accounting and so that is where their main focus was at. We were able to obtain a few programs from Forest Service that we were able to get them to run for us and then there were some that we wanted to develop ourselves and really couldn't get them interested in it or they would start it but when we checked back with them well they hadn't gotten anywhere. They didn't really know what to do with it and what not. As I mentioned they did the scaling and what-not and then analyzed all that to help develop our scales and we changed over to starting to use the scales to weigh logs rather than hand scaling everything and got involved in that. When they put in the plywood plant in Pineland they put in the IBM System Seven I believe it was to monitor it and create production through computer program that would read what the machines were cutting and be able to predict what should be coming out and so on. When they first began to put that together they had one major flaw. It was all wrong. The answers were wrong and it came from the fact that somebody in the plywood mill when the IBM programmers had asked them how much is a board foot they told them it's 12 inches by 12 inches by 1 inch. Okay, simple enough. They took the cubit volume of the log by measuring the diameter and the length and converted that to square feet just based on that 12x12x1 inch deal and that is not the way it is done. And, so I got involved with helping them to correct their formulas and everything in there to come up with the footage and everything that it would be. How many board feet were being utilized in getting x number of plywood feet out of it based on the thickness of the plywood.

**JG:** So just the basic calculation was wrong.

**JR:** And, I sort of enjoyed tinkering with it and in the process I learned a little bit ...

**JG:** Somebody who didn't do well in math huh, now you like it.

**JR:** ...so in doing a lot of the other math, you know, I did surveying. I did not survey but I worked with the surveyors real close on calculating acreages and maybe determining the correct course and distance on a line that they had to break up into several pieces and offset and what not and then I would help with correcting the line and all. But anyway, putting all that together and we started having difficulties getting our computer programs that we needed done for the forestry department and they knowing that I was interested in that little bit of work that I had done with the plywood plant on that, they asked me if I wanted to learn to program.

**JG:** Now who is they that asked you?

**JR:** I don't remember. It may have been Glen Chancellor or Kenneth but somewhere up at the top.

**JG:** The forestry, okay, someone in forest.

**JR:** They suggested that I be the one and so the next thing I knew I was learning computer programming and in spare time I started tinkering with those things.

**JG:** Kind of rediscovering math huh?

**JR:** As I started working harder on that it seemed like other work was increasing so there wasn't enough time since that was a sideline and at some point they just moved me into the data processing but to work only on forest stuff. But, they got me out of the forest office where I wouldn't be involved with all the other and that got my foot in the door at the data processing.

**JG:** Data processing again was more with accounting at that time right?

**JR:** That is right. It was primarily that was their role was accounting.

**JG:** When did it grow and I don't need an exact year but I mean how long did it take to get to be its own thing, its own department? Break away from accounting.

**JR:** Well I think from the time that I went into it it was a separate department but it was still 98% of what was done was accounting.

**JG:** Ultimately you got involved in everything right?

**JR:** Well probably not that heavy. They did have a sales order entry for the salesmen, took the order and those orders were entered in and then they sort of tracked them through an IBM system or programs they had set up there. They still did not have their

product inventories and all of that in there but they were tracking their orders and then of course they were feeding into the accounting system, into the receivables you know.

**JG:** Who was over data processing when you came in?

**JR:** By the time I actually moved into it it was Kenneth Carter but there had been a man Eddie Emmonds just prior to Kenneth.

**JG:** So how do you fit in now with these? Now you're a college trained forester. I guess these are college trained computer people or?

**JR:** Yes, most of them were. I'm trying to think if most of them were.

**JG:** Of course my father never got a college degree. He went through the Navy, but...

**JR:** I really don't think most of them were college. They had just migrated there from different places. In fact I would think most of them had been involved in accounting at some point and migrated into it.

**JG:** So kind of in the big picture it's kind of interesting to consider a company like Temple merged with Time and now you got the big picture of managing the forest and making your money from the forest but now they are seeing a need to better do that job and now how computing can benefit that.

**JR:** It speeds up the process of tracking what is going on and projecting where you need to go.

**JG:** That is interesting that you were right there in the pivotal stage. Any comments you want to make on that?

**JR:** Not really. I know that I enjoyed it but...because computer work is either black or it's white.

**JG:** Ones or zeros huh?

**JR:** You go in the middle you are going to get the wrong answer. Everything has to be done in order so you have to put a lot of planning into what you have and what you want to make it flow through and come out right. It's just that you have to be very particular and very careful. You can't just guess and get the answer, that won't work.

**JG:** So, you liked that structure then.

**JR:** It's a structured detail and I guess basically I am a detailed type person.

**JG:** So, forestry sent you over, with their blessings, they said you go over to data processing. Did most of your job relate directly to forest and if not when did you start doing lots of other things?

**JR:** Jonathan that would be one of those things that you just one day you wake up and say hey I'm doing this. It just gradually moved to where I was just strictly information service and whatever the task was today that was where I worked.

**JG:** So you weren't tied to forest anymore?

**JR:** No I wasn't tied to it.

**JG:** Did you get to work with the forest department a lot?

**JR:** Yes, those first few years in there it was still...

**JG:** You were the forestry guy.

**JR:** It was primarily.

**JG:** You were the forestry guy in the computer side of it.

**JR:** On those programs. And, I got some of those things that we wanted working. Of course, they were short lived because we came up with better things once you got your foot in the door. As data processing changed different systems came in, capabilities were expanded and that all changed but it was interesting going through that process. For quite some time that was all I worked on was forest programs.

**JG:** Then you eventually got to where, like you said, you did whatever was needed or involved with Information Systems.

**JR:** I think those early years in data processing you really couldn't separate anything around just projects started up it was just whoever had the time available was on to them except that I was given all the forest stuff at first and then eventually it got to where we started making teams where this person or this group would work primarily on maybe receivables even, narrow it down in your accounting to that. And then at some point and I don't remember when that happened the forest department did set up their own data processing. It started out with their mapping process primarily in that area and but rather than going back in there I stayed with the regular I. S. [Information Systems] group. I know at the time that I retired my responsibility primarily was with the freight grading system and the stores inventory.

**JG:** Well Mr. Ruby I think we've gone a little over 2 hours and I usually don't like to go that long, but I know I've missed a lot of good questions to ask you on the computer side and after we had time to reflect if there is anything that we need to come back and cover again maybe we can look at that at some point but for now I'll just give you the

opportunity to kind of close this out if there is any final thoughts or statements you would like to make. You mentioned, you alluded to your retirement I think that was in late 2002 wasn't it?

**JR:** No it was early 2002. If I remember right it was the last day of January 2002.

**JG:** So how many years did you work for the company then?

**JR:** From '56 to '02.

**JG:** About 46 years.

**JR:** Yes, I think after I just...

**JG:** Not many people that worked that long for one company any more.

**JR:** I believe it was 47 but that wouldn't be right. Six and two wouldn't come out that way would it? I guess maybe it was 46, like just a few months.

**JG:** So it was the only company you ever worked for then pretty much huh?

**JR:** Basically, yes.

**JG:** With all the changes.

**JR:** Yes, it started out as Southern Pine, changed to Temple Industries, and then when they had the merger it was Temple Eastex but the forest was Temple Eastex Forest and I don't know exactly when that sort of faded away but, anyway now it's International Paper.

**JG:** Temple Inland and now International Paper. Well, anyway any other closing thought before we conclude.

**JR:** I can't think of it. I wish I had written some of that stuff down so I could remember it later.

**JG:** That is alright.

**JR:** But after 50 years it's easy to lose details on things.

**JG:** I'm sure tonight you will think of a lot of things.

**JR:** Probably will.

**JG:** But there will be the opportunity if you're interested that we can come back and look at some of this in more detail if we want to. I just want to thank you again for doing

this and I know that as everybody's time is important so I appreciate you coming down and spending time with us.

**JR:** Okay, I've enjoyed it.

**JG:** And if you have a few more moments I'd like to give you a tour of the center and with that I'll go ahead and stop the recording.

**END OF INTERVIEW**