

Interview with Paul Hanneman

Conducted by Nestucca Valley Middle School Students
Sometime in 2001

Paul: My name is Paul Hanneman, and I came here in 1945, and Bill Sears, who is right here, and just came in the room... his family came here before I did. And I'm talking about dory fishing... what are you talking, Bill?

Bill: I don't know.

(Everyone laughs)...

Paul: They asked me to speak about dory fishing, so I'm gonna' do a little bit of history here. I'll mention your family along the way.

Okay... well, I came to Tillamook County when I was nine years old, and lived where we still live now... down on the Nestucca River... a long way down river from where most of you live... and I built my first dory... this one here, when I was about a year out of high school... two years out of high school... and it's first year on the ocean was 1957, and that's when that picture was taken... and that's me on the back oars, and an older brother of mine, who was in the Marine Corps, is rowing the front oars...

We used to boat, mainly, for commercial fishing, but in that picture... which was part of a magazine story... my brother had brought along two passengers and occasionally we took people out... I didn't care much for passengers, but sometime we did it as a special favor... but I had to make part of our living at commercial fishing back in those days, and we used double-enders... there weren't any squirsterns back in 1957... most of have been around the cape, haven't you, or your folks have a boat and you fish Cape Kiwanda now and then, or at least you go there and look at tide pools or watch the boats go in and out... so I fished that boat... about nine hundred trips, up to 1962, and then built squirsterns after that.

And we had a boat building shop where we live now, and we built about forty boats... most of them about twenty to twenty-two foot dories... so we did that over the years, and then two years ago decided to do something that no one had done since, probably, 1932... that's even before your folks were born, I'll bet... yeah, it is... your folks were born later than that...

Voices: That's right... Yeah...

Paul: Oh, my gosh... your folks... some of 'em 'til the sixties, maybe... or seventies... I don't know... uh... we decided to do what no one had done for seventy years, and this is a boat that I built much later... twenty years after that one, as a rowing boat that was intended to be the fastest boat in our Dory Derbies that we used to have from 1959 to 1993, and since then we haven't had any boat events... but we used it for rowing and it's a very light boat.

In the... at the turn of the century, in 1900, a few people went out from Cape Kiwanda or off the beach near Tierra Del Mar, but not very many because river fishing was going good until 1926, but the river was closed to commercial fishing, and the big cannery closed, then at the mouth of the river... that canned thousands and thousands of cases of salmon... but the cannery was closed and then people started to go to the ocean more in the 1920's and the 1930's... but outboard motors weren't here, and in very dependable form until 1935. So people rowed a lot... that's about all they could do when they

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went fishing from the Cape... and sometimes they went clear to Cape Lookout... and it's about fifteen... it's about eight miles to Lookout or sixteen miles round trip, and we started out at eight o'clock in the morning... made it to Lookout in about two hours of rowing, and then rowed back and got back to the Cape about three o'clock and the Headlight Herald wrote that little story about Jerry and about me. So, I'll leave those with you as part of your class program, and you can do whatever you want with 'em... roll 'em up and store 'em or whatever you want as part of the program.

And last August, the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. wanted to do what was called a Local Legacies Project, and include everything from making quilts to dory boat fishing in celebrations... like the Portland Rose Festival and other special events, and our U.S. Senators and U.S. Congressmen were each supposed to invite two people from their congressional districts to submit something that was of historical importance to their community. The Library Club in Pacific City and our Doryman's Association decided to do a submission to the National Library of Congress on dory fishing. So I got stuck with the writing of that... it seems like I get stuck with most every project that comes along like this, but originally I started out in my spare time, mostly late at night, doing the history of dory fishing that went much further back than my recollection, because I wanted to start with the old cannery and the old boats and river fishing in 1885.

So I used the pioneers recollections and their writings... some that went back to 1890... to help with the background of dory fishing. When I was half finished with it, I decided that it was going to be used on the internet after we submitted to the Library of Congress, and I thought that if I did a more brief version, called Celebrations of the dories, and talked about our Dory Derbies that we used to have at Pacific City, that would be better than doing the long version. So I did one that was fifteen hundred words long instead of the five thousand word one that I had started on. It's still half finished, and I haven't worked on it for three months now. It's going to be the only history of dory fishing in South Tillamook County. But the short version is one that uh... is one of the three originals... one of five... two went to Washington D.C., one's in the Tillamook library and one's in the Pacific City Library... and I didn't have time to make a copy this morning for you, so you got one of the originals, but I still have one original left and can make copies.

But it's called Celebrations of the Dories, and I'll give it to you as a gift and it can be part of your portfolio or your project, and you can read it later. And you can copy it too, if you want. This one isn't copywrited... it says that I don't want it copied... uh... but I can tell you that you can copy it, but not for commercial purposes. That is, don't sell it or offer it for sale, even at rummage sales or bake sales or something... uh, so kinda' keep it with you and it's dedicated to everyone who helped keep our dory tradition alive for one hundred years, and to the many contributions... uh, to the many contributors to the Library of Congress presentation. And it's prepared for the Library of Congress Local Legacies Project by the South Tillamook County Library Club and our Doryman's Association from Pacific City. And I wrote a note... "To the students and faculty of Nestucca Middle School".... and signed it today. The first couple of paragraphs have to start out somewhere back in those old days, so I started out by saying, "On the seacoast of Oregon there's a place called Home of the Dory Fleet.

That's because dory boats and dory fishing started here a hundred years ago, and unlike other parts of the world, going to sea through the surf never faded away here. To the contrary, the dory fleet increased to five hundred boats in 1980. These are the boats they call... that call the nearby town of Pacific City their home port, and most of them were built here. Yet Pacific City is the only section of the entire Oregon coast that's not even in a port district. In fact, there's no harbor, no jetty, no docks

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and no piers, and for all practical purposes there's no assistance from the Coast Guard, just a buoy off shore that is sometimes misplaced. Obviously the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has never been called upon to deepen a channel, 'cause there isn't any, and the fleet of mainly twenty-two foot wooden boats launching through the surf doesn't need any of these expensive government programs."

That's the way it starts out, and so, I'll give it to you to keep with your files.

Student: *Thank you.*

Paul: I think questions would be fine, if you'd like to do that, and then I'll know what you're most interested in.

Voices: *Okay, we just have some basic questions... Would you like to sit down? If you'd like to stand...*

Paul: I'll sit down for that... maybe you'd rather have started out with questions instead...

Student: *Well, I'll ask a question now, and we'll just see what happens after that.*

Paul: Okay.

Student: *Okay. Yeah, make yourself comfortable.*

Paul: Okay, I am.

Student: *So, where do you live?*

Paul: I live on Resort Drive, just a half mile from Woods.

Student: *Okay. And have you lived here all your life?*

Paul: Yeah... since I was nine.

Student: *Where'd you live before that?*

Paul: In Portland. That's where, unfortunately, I was born.

Student: *Why did your family move to Tillamook County?*

Paul: Uh... that's a long story. Uh... my father was nearly... was almost 55 years old when we came here, and he was an ice cream maker, and a doctor said that he shouldn't be in the cold sharp rooms where ice cream was kept, and so at that age Mom and Dad and a little kid... I have three older brothers that were in World War II... so I was only nine... so we moved here to retire... Actually, that's when the work started.

Student: *What did this area look like then?*

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Paul: Much different. There were about ten houses in Pacific City... now there are over a thousand water and sewer connects... many people are vacation home owners, you know, but it's very, very different... many fishing...

Student: *Where did you go to school? Once you moved here?*

Paul: The old grade school in Cloverdale, and probably none of you have ever seen pictures of it. This is the story of my life... just as I got to the eighth grade in the old gray building across from the U.S. Bank in Cloverdale, up on the hill, they built the new grade school and was ready to move into it right when I went into high school. Then I went to... four years at Nestucca High School, and then almost one at Portland State, and Dad died.

Student: *Can you describe one significant event that occurred during your childhood?*

Paul: Yeah... the most significant thing was the older kids took my lunch away from me on the bus all the time! (everyone laughs)... Uh... gosh... high school was not a very exciting place for me... I know that it's different with you now in the broad curriculum that you have. I was the newspaper editor... of the Nestuccian, I ran track and did the beginning of my commercial art work, but I didn't know what that was then... I had only slightly above average grades... I liked history, commercial law, and typing. (laughing)... It wasn't a very glamorous high school four years for me.

Student: *Okay. Ever since you've lived here, how has South Tillamook County changed?*

Paul: Um... different and not as radically as Pacific City, which was just a corner with a store and a service station and that old hotel and a post office... a couple buildings... I mentioned how much it's grown... there's a vacation community... especially at the Cape with its new hotel, and another sixty units of that hotel going in shortly... but Beaver, Cloverdale and Hebo never changed that much.

And the reason, I think, is because our farm community and our farm income and the land use laws that we have have kept the valley upstream from Pacific City in farmland, and so vacation home owners didn't settle in the other parts of our valley here in Beaver and Blaine, like they did along the coast. So it's not changed a whole lot.

Student: *Okay, um... do you have a favorite story about South Tillamook County?*

Paul: You mean one that I can tell in the school building? (Laughing... others laughing, too.)

Student: *That'd be okay, I guess.*

Paul: No, I'm just kidding there. A doryman has many stories to tell, and some of 'em aren't fit for anyone to hear. Well, most of my life revolved around the years I was in the legislature out here, after I ran for that.

I suppose most of the stories that are about dory fishing are the most exciting ones for you, and the tremendous years of.... in the 1970's... before you were born, by a long ways... some of our boats were loaded halfway to the gunnels... halfway to the rails... with salmon for the most years in the '60's and '70's... we've hauled a hundred salmon, which in dory terms was a hump, and when we got to a

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hundred on the radio... we'd come on the radio and say they'd passed that mark, and catches of two hundred were not a whole lot uncommon...

Those were the big years and the exciting years and the fleet went from eleven boats like that one, to nearly five hundred. And there were seven of us building boats and everyone wanted to start a half-hour before daylight in the morning, so the engines were lowering on the beaches in the dark, and getting ready for another day's fishing. Probably the most exciting thing for me, not the most exciting thing for other people who were not dory fisherman, but I think that's probably the greatest change... radical change in the years that ever happened to our valley.

Student: *Okay... um... would you like to tell us a little bit about this picture?*

Paul: Oh... well, lots of people wanted to go sport fishing here, too, and I told you I was kinda' retarded when I was younger... well, we didn't have a television set, either... and there was an old black and white... yeah, we did... we had one in the later fifties, I guess... but we couldn't afford the newer sets... couldn't even afford a good antenna... so, as I remember all we got was channel 2... well, there was a lot of snow on it, you know... and it turned out that it was Michael Landon's first...

Student: *Little House on the Prairie?*

Paul: Little House on the Prairie? Was that his first series?

Voices: *Bonanza...*

Paul: Bonanza! Yes. Little Joe and... who were some of the others?

Student: *Hoss.*

Paul: Hoss. Oh, yes. He passed away a number of years ago. Well, Michael Landon had married for about a year at a fairly young age in 1963 or '64, and when a call came from Los Angeles... because we'd had maybe twenty magazine stories and newspaper stories written... people heard about us all over the world... the world famous dory building... have your boat crashing through the surf and the salmon were all over the place... well, I got a call from Los Angeles one day from a guy by the name of John Noll, and like some folks from Los Angeles, I excuse myself if any of you are from there... but he only started out by saying that he was a very influential industrialist from Los Angeles and he wanted to go dory fishing...

Student: (chuckling)...

Paul: ... instead of asking me if he could go, he thought I was his native guide-to-be... and he informed me that Michael Landon would be coming with him... and I said, "Who's that?" (laughter)...

Well, that didn't impress him very much, and when they got here in their limousine they'd rented at Portland International Airport, I guess... Landon was somewhere around twenty-two years old, and John Noll introduced me to Landon, and I said, "Hello." And he said, "I'm Michael Landon from Bonanza." And I said, "Hi." So we went up to where they were working on some outdoor advertising signs and my friend Victor Learned, who passed away a couple years ago, lived next door and

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worked with me... he's a longer-time dory fisherman than I was... but he was working there that day, and Landon decided to try him out. So he walked by to our little cabins we used to have... we had five cabins there and they would stay overnight for three nights and go dory fishing... walked past Victor, and Landon walked up to Victor, who was working in the shop, and said, "Hello. I'm Michael Landon from Bonanza." And Victor said, "Hello, I'm Victor Learned from Cloverdale."

Students: (Laughing)

Paul: And Landon was not impressed and neither was Mr. Noll... but he bought his fishing license at the Woods Food Market for \$1.00... that was the cost of a daily salmon license... no tag needed then... and it was an old fella' up on the hill used to come every year from Eugene, and they built a little cabin up on the hill, and he got better television reception than we did, and he said, "My gosh! You know who he is? He's the star of Bonanza!"

And he wanted to have his picture taken with Michael Landon, so he and his wife... very aged folks... they lived to be ninety-eight years old, both of 'em... had their picture taken... had Bob's... Bob Offman's picture taken with Michael Landon, standing by our house... by the shop, and that's Victor Learned working on something there in the background... and so we got a number of pictures of Landon and so we went dory fishing the next morning, and Landon caught some fish, but he got seasick. And that wasn't much fun... the second day it rained and he complained that his rear was cold and wet sitting on my cushion... wasn't even a waterproof cushion...

Students: (laughing)...

Paul: ... and it sopped up water something terrible, and I'd get water over the bow going out, then it rained besides... and then that afternoon he went down to the dock to fish and he got caught in the brush on the backside when he was casting, trying to get it loose, he fell in the river...

Student: (much laughter)...

Paul: And I thought, well, surely the guy can swim... he even wore cowboy boots all around our place... even wore them out on the dory... and something that isn't very appropriate... because you can't stand up very good, well, he didn't stand up on the dock, either. And he slipped off there and fell in... I didn't know whether to go down and try to rescue him... with those boots on, he might drown... but if I did go down and try to pull him out, he'd be so embarrassed, because by then I knew who he was... so I just watched through the brush from the roadway, to make sure that he was climbing back out again and he was okay... that's the story of Michael Landon.

Student: *Not very many people have embarrassing stories of famous people.*

Paul: (chuckling)... Well, it was pretty embarrassing for him, but... but he passed away, you know, a few years ago after he did... his last one was Stairway to Heaven? I think.

Student: *Was it Highway to Heaven?*

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Paul: Highway to Heaven maybe was the name of it... all good pictures, and good, good stories, I think, for older people and young people, too. So there have been stories of him since, kind of... what do you call 'em? Tabloid types? The problems with his married life and all that... I didn't appreciate those... I thought you ought to let the guy be.

Student: *Was he a nice guy?*

Paul: Yeah, he was nice... a little aloof... I got to know him pretty well, but... the word got around Pacific City that he was there, because they went to the local restaurant to eat, and when they drove out... uh, let's see... that second year they came to fish... when they drove out, Landon was slumped down in the back of the limousine between his mother and his wife so no one would see him, because seven or eight girls had walked all the way from Pacific City and were sitting on our front doorstep right by the driveway to try to get a glimpse of him as he drove out... he didn't want anybody to know that he was there...

Student: *You said you were a member of the house... legislature?*

Paul: Oregon House of Representatives...

Student: *Can you tell us a little bit about earlier politics and...*

Paul: Well, of interest to you, probably, is because the idea started in South County, and that is that we were the first state in the nation to have a return on pop and beer cans and bottles. It was called the Oregon Bottle Bill, and it started in 1968 on the street corner in Pacific City, when we noticed all the empties that everyone had thrown away. Then we looked at the beaches and they were covered with beer and pop cans and bottles... lots of 'em were broken, and so we introduced a bill in 1969 and it did not pass... I lost it on the House floor on a close vote... 32 to 27... we introduced it again in the 1971 session and it passed... it was called House Bill 1036... the governor finally supported it... Tom McCall... and it passed easily in 1971.

Student: *So you were kinda' the head of that bill?*

Paul: Well, yes. I... uhhh... Oregon Historical Society says that I'm the author of it, and that's true...

Student: *So people...*

Paul: ... and really was, but lots of people take credit for things... and there were lots of other supporters in the final passage of it... many, many people came on board... Do you want to pass any of these around? Some of these are single copies, so...

Student: *The ones that you find... think that people would find most interesting, you might tell us about...*

Paul: Oh, you could just send them all around and you people could look at 'em...

Student: *Okay... this is the National Fisherman? Is there something on you in here, or on dorys?*

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Paul: Not about me... there's some quotes on when I think the salmon will return, otherwise it's a story mainly of other people... except that that's my boat and that's me...

Student: *Is this a...*

Paul: With... kinda' out of shape around the middle especially...

Student: *Oh, that's changed! (laughter)... So, uh... you and your friends were considered quite the dorymen of the time... you and people...*

Paul: I was about the youngest one for ten years... most... the other ten or twelve boats that fished... they were all old people... some of 'em were over thirty... (laughing)...

Student: *Oh! Okay... um....*

Paul: ... and I was only twenty! (laughing)...

Other voice: *Was one of those older people then, Jim Cook?*

Paul: Oh, yeah...

Other voice: *That's my grandpa.*

Paul: Yeah! I'm sorry... I recognize you now... yeah... and part of the Dory film that we produced, called Home of the Dory Fleet, never edited, never professionally done, has some of your families pictures on... oh, yeah! I borrowed your original eight millimeter, before super eights... some of those were that the family had taken... and some beautiful shots...

Other voice: *Yeah...*

Paul: And we had permission from the family to create video... oh, yeah... Jim and Bertha...

Student: *Did you ever race in the Dory Festival?*

Paul: Oh, yeah... every year... starting in '59... it was all rowing... I was... I never used my power boats in the races... we always had lots of entries in the power races, but occasionally we had rowing races that went clear around Haystack Rock...

Student: *Did your boat ever...*

Other voice: *How long does it take to row around Haystack Rock.*

Paul: Did you?

Other voice: *How long does it take?*

Paul: Oh, how long...

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(tape ends)...

Transcribed by
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