

Interview Log

Interviewee: Ron Greenley **Tape #:** MAAF/KF/VA/FT 1

Interviewer: Kelly Feltault **# of Tapes:** 1

Date: 1/19/98 **# of Sides:** 1.5

Location: Atlantic VA; in Ron's living room

Topic: hunting, woodsmanship, local history, foodways, deer meat;

Corresponding Photography Log #:

Comments: File name: Vaft600.doc. See Fieldnotes: FNO1.19.98. *Italics* indicate emphasis; [brackets indicate additional information not on the tape or asides by fieldworker]; "quotations indicate direct transcription."

Ron usually hunts with his sons who could not be here today to join the interview. His grandsons played in the living room during the interview and periodically he reminds them to keep their voices down, but they really did not make much noise.

BEGIN SIDE A

RG: Ron Greenley

BRG: Betty Ruth Greenley

Ron urging his wife to join in the interview, she cooks the meat and packs things for the freezer, "and puts up with us when we get up early in the morning before most normal people"

BIO RG: name and date, born in St. Francis Kansas; he moved out here through the military; transferred there; then he "got sand in his shoes and never could find a place to dump it" and couldn't leave;

BRG: born on the shore; declines to get closer

BIO RG: navy, worked for car dealer afterwards; then worked in a salvage yard in New Church; Davis and sons; retired;

BRG: postmaster for 22 years, in Wattsville; retired;

RG: wake up BRG and then take off, hunting; skills involved; family affair, always hunt on land owned by BRG's mother; always went with sons; not stalker type but still type hunting in tree stands; felt it gave the deer a better chance, in it for deer population mgt.;

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how changes in the woods and farming practices exploded the deer population; good spring crop to eat have to forage then started growing grains and deer didn't have to forage; acres of food;

also do it for own benefit; enjoy the meat and the process; keep larder stocked and meat is good healthy meat, no fat;

finding it in more places; Feds endorsing it as healthy food; deer farms in W. VA and wildlife restaurants; Hunters for the Hungry program; meat given to the food bank;

THE PROCESS: curing the meat; used to hang for a day or so; found new way to cure them; now field dress them; wash them immediately; skin out; rough butcher them; cuts of meat; put in garbage bags and into refrigerator, then leave there for a week to 10 days; cure it that way; to use then take out and clean, wash; grind into hamburger, cut into steaks etc; cured and aged in fridge with little waste because in other process of curing there is drying of exterior meat called scar tissue and that is cut off

Bags are left loose with air flowing through; less blood loss and retained in meat; makes it tastier and more tender; no wild taste at all;

Hamburger: mostly deer meat, add very little suet to the ground meat; add only 3-5 suet; stew meat and stir fry meat;

Field dressing; everyone's roles and process; gland in hind legs, preventing it from touching the meat; other hunters cut it out immediately;

How they invented this process of curing; hunting on a warm day, couldn't leave it outside hanging like usual; hung it in a cool box at friend's in Pocomoke; other guy saw it and said this is going to spoil and turned the thermo down to 20 degrees; deer carcass froze; brought it home and had to defrost it then butcher; next year went hunting again and warm again;

How deer on mailing list for opening day of deer season and best days to hunt are the first 2 and the last week of the season;

Again it was warm; didn't want to take it up to the cold box again and have it frozen; decided to wash and cut then instead of waiting to cure it; didn't have time to completely butcher it; only had big garbage bags so put meat in there; quite by accident that they found the process; 6 days before they could get to it; son Mark is a butcher and couldn't get to it for a few days; when finally got to it it didn't smell wild, still looked fresh;

How this process goes against the traditional methods for getting the game taste out and for curing the meat; other traditional processes

Building tree stands; why they hunt that way; safety issues; problems with ground hunting, running deer through the woods with dogs, thought that stupid when he tried it; dangers from ground hunting

Hunting supposed to be pleasurable; supposed to help the environment; but not by running them through the woods, tire them out and shoot en masse when they come out; meat tastes awful because of adrenaline; after seeing a deer run through the woods and shot; sweaty, soaking wet, foam on body, tongue hanging out, panting and still not dead "it's just not appetizing, for one thing and I don't think you're giving the deer a fair shot"

If in a stand "you can sit there all day and never see one or never hear one" give deer some chance but also protecting yourself too; always shooting down not out through the woods; rifle shot can go a mile; helps with winds and smell;

Kevin builds the stands; uses treated wood so won't rot; tracks the deer during the summer and builds at end of summer; can buy stands made from aluminum but prefer to build themselves;

Spotting deer; looking for trails and underbrush; keeping stands concealed from other hunters; finding trails; droppings; pawing ground; well traveled paths; sons good scouts, check deer movements all year;

Intelligence of deer; they know when hunting season opens; smarter than we are; changes in regulations for hunting; shooting from road, bad idea and finally outlawed it;

Deer lures and scents; tried it but didn't work, don't like it; thinking behind this; why this doesn't work on the shore; too close to people here; deer know the smells; often go and just watch them in the woods; story of one of these times;

END SIDE A

BEGIN SIDE B

Cooking deer meat; gender roles;

Locating each other in the woods; safety; guns and abilities;

Not hunting as much because of arthritis; hunting in other regions; sons started when teenagers;

BRG: remembers when Kevin [son] got first deer; didn't know how to clean it; uncle knew a little and helped with the first one; then Kevin did it himself after that;

RG: Mark became meat cutter at New Church market; that really helped them in butchering the deer; now Park's Market on Chincoteague; did it for 15 years; then went with Food Lion; got carpal tunnels; let go; now works on NASA base; but still does it for family

Hunting practices that he finds appalling; mentality of some hunters not geared toward environment or food source, just shooting; leaving animals in the woods or in the water;

Woodsmanship: things you see in the woods; quiet time alone; beauty of woods; story of one day watching squirrels; learning the sounds of the woods; observing animals and learning behavior; funny things you see animals do in the woods; how deer follow squirrels in the woods;

Hunting is enjoying nature; watching the animals in the woods; relaxing to just go in the woods; don't have to hunt with a gun; could take a camera;

END TAPE