

Interview Log

Interviewee: Dorsey Wooters

Tape #:

Interviewer: Shelly Drummond
Tatiana Irvine

of Tapes: 1

Date: April 30, 2003

of Sides:

Location: Mr. Wooters' Home in Denton, Maryland

Topic: Jousting, lances, rings, Old St. Joseph's Jousting Tournament

Comments:

Documentation:

Audio: DAT to .wav converted for CD player

Video:

Digital Photos: Cybershot

Slides:

BEGIN SIDE A

S.D.: Shelly Drummond and Tatiana Irvine. Shelly's from the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, and Tatiana's with the Delmarva Folklife Project. And we're here with Mr. Dorsey Wooters. Tell us where you're from.

D.W.: Okay. Well I was **raised near Hillsboro**, about 2 miles out of Hillsboro on Flemming Road, and I moved to Denton once I got married in 1968. I was raised on a farm. We always had horses to ride on the farm.

S.D.: How did you **meet your wife**?

D.W.: I met my wife through, her best girlfriend married a good friend of mine here. And he was stationed in New York where she was from. And she came visiting on occasion, and they'd hook us up to date and so forth.

S.D.: Did your **parents joust**?

D.W.: No. My dad was an avid horseback rider, loved fox hunting, even on horseback, but he never jousted. We never got into the jousting until my older **brothers** got into it. My oldest brother, Jim, married Mary Lee Callahan, the Callahans were from Cordova. And she had, I think, 5 brothers, and all of those jousted, and it was a big fun day around Cordova. So there were around 6 tournaments a year back in the late 40's and early 50's, mid-50's, and that sort of got things rolling. I had a brother, Freddy, that jousted with Jim. And later on after me, I had a brother, Billy, that jousted. So we got hooked on it.

S.D.: How did you actually get involved or **practice**?

D.W.: Okay. I was able to set up poles, arches up. Actually they were single poles with like an L, T-shape across it. And then you put them up as soon as the crops were off the field on the farm in the summer so that you could go down in the evening and practice with that. Now prior to that, before I was able to ride, actually, we hung rings alongside of a page-wire fence and ran down there with a sharpened beam pole and caught the rings, and we'd holler 'Charge, Sir Knight Charge'. So that was something we did as kids, and a lot of kids did that.

S.D.: Had you seen jousting **tournaments as kids**?

D.W.: Yes. We were taken to the tournaments where my brothers participated and a lot of their friends. And there were big crowds then, as many as 70 to 80 riders used to ride in those days. And there were only two **classes** then, professional and amateur, only two size rings. So we got to go to the jousting. It was a -- and normally always on a Sunday back in those days. And it really caught on. It was a good thing. And when I started riding, of course, we didn't have any way to hold the horse. And I was only a couple miles from Ridgely, and a couple of miles from Hillsboro. So I was able to ride the first year in 1957 just by riding my horse to the joust, and

friends would let me tie my horse to their truck. Matter of fact, one friend even let me use his lance, older people that encourage you to ride, very good people. And then later on, we had the farm truck, and we'd back the truck up to a bank and load the horse onto it to go further, you know, further distances, and I was always praying that the truck wouldn't be in use the day of a tournament, particularly **Old St. Joseph's**, because if it was, that was trouble. Might not get to go. And I only remember one year that I didn't get to go to St. Joseph's. I've been riding every year since 1958, except one.

S.D.: We talked a little bit about the best time of the year to go jousting. I know it's different now because there's more jousts, but when is the best -- when was, traditionally in the past the **best time of the year** and why?

D.W.: The first joust was always Old St. Joseph's, and that was the first Wednesday in August. And most of the riders back in the 50's were farm people or were raised on the farm, and they still had their horse on the farm. They might've worked a job in town. So that was the time of year that the **work was caught up**, in between crops, you might say. So the first Wednesdays always really were good, and we only had about 6 jousts then, and they'd run each Sunday right on through, and they were finished in September. That was good. Not only that, the grass is shorter that time of year, the horses mellowed out, and they didn't have all the energy they would have in an early spring grass, you might say. But then things changed when other folks started wanting more jousting tournaments. Having a dinner in May, you know, and couldn't you have a jousting tournament with us. Or maybe they had quite a few of our members that belonged to whatever, who was sponsoring it. So then they started having them. Matter of fact, we've got one in a week in Greensboro. And anytime you have one in May, it can be cold, and it can be windy. And like I said, the horses, some of them haven't finished shedding yet. So I'm talking as an old-timer, these young fellows are ready to jump on a horse and go ride. It doesn't make any difference. But I prefer to see us have the best advantage. You wait a little while on it. And my horses are still shedding right now, but about June, the middle of June, they'll be ready to role. And the first batch, like the grass will be finished, and they'll settle down. Get the nerves out of them.

S.D.: Was it purely recreation, or were there **community functions** that happened around the joust as well?

D.W.: Well the joust at Ridgely was hosted originally by the **Lions Club** in 1953, and then a few years later, the St. Benedictine Church, the **Catholic Church** took it over, and I think it was because the Lions meet September through June, and their tournament was always in August, so it was harder for them to get the people together in August to do it. Since then, they've shown an interest that they'd like to have it back, but the main thing is, we have kept it going. I think I personally kept it going probably for the last 20 years myself. We sell a program book, and it's just enough to cover the cost of the trophies and the prize money, and we get it advertised over there, and we get a nice turnout of spectators to come over to Ridgely. But, again, they were using this program book as a **fund-raiser**, and so did the Lions Club. And basically, that was the backbone of all of them. The one at Queen Anne, there were so many more businesses in the 50's. All these small businesses, whether they were connected with farming or whatever, and

you could get an ad book real quick even though the ads weren't very expensive. Even the one, the VFW in Easton would be the last one in September. Again, you had your ad book. Chestertown had their ad book. So it was a fund-raiser for the sponsors. And then they, some of them got involved putting meals on with it to get the best out of it.

S.D.: Why do you think jousting is **popular in Caroline County**?

D.W.: It's a unique sport. We've managed to keep it the **state sport** for several years even though it's been challenged in Annapolis a couple of times by either duckpin bowling or even the lacrosse folks, it has a lot of history with it in that supposedly this sport originated over in England, and came over. Former jousts were held in St. Mary's County, and we've got other jousts dating back in the middle 1800's in the Baltimore area. And we've managed to keep that going. It was a gentleman's sport. It was normally around a picnic. The older jousts, you saw them, dressed pretty good. And it was a family situation. And for it to continue on was, for me, I don't know if I would still have horses, as much as I love them, if it wasn't for the jousting, another reason to keep them. They get expensive over the years now that I've left the farm. And yet, you still love it, but it's also good to clean the horses up and have them shot, you get your shots and everything, and get to travel around the state with these different jousting tournaments and meet your friends all over. There are beautiful parks and places all over the State of Maryland to visit. We really like that. A lot of young people have jousted. And, of course, when they do well, it's similar to the University of Maryland who's got a line waiting to get on their basketball and football teams. You know, when you're on a roll, they all want to come to you. And we had quite a few young people that did real well at the state level and national level. So their peers start paying attention to them.

S.D.: You talked a little bit about jousting as the state sport. Can you tell us a little more about Fowler?

D.W.: Mr. **Henry Fowler** is a past delegate and member of the Senate. He had a wonderful farm in St. Mary's County down near Mechanicsville, and he was one of the earlier jousters. And he and a group of people involved in the Maryland Jousting Tournament Association got the idea that we should have a **state sport**. And he sponsored the bill, and as you probably heard earlier on, a video. There wasn't a whole lot of scuttlebutt about it, and it passed. And he succeeded, been successful ever since. Henry would put on a jousting tournament, invite members of the House and Senate. He had an elaborate place, nice farm. And he would have the fire company come in and put the joust on. And for them to benefit from any proceeds that we paid to get in the gate or a program book that they sold, and some food, vendors were there. He would have some big Percherons there that do the pulling, about three different teams of those. He had a little schoolhouse on the farm that he went to school with as a young boy, and had it full of different artifacts in there that was on tour. Then afterwards, he invited all the riders and their families up to the farm. Right behind the house, he had this nice, wouldn't call it a club house, but it was magnificent, big enough for him to host any of his state parties that he had, and a pool. And he'd invite us up there for dinner afterwards, and it was really neat. But that's how it got to become the state sport, and I think it sort of helped the sport stay alive. And then, of course, as time goes on, you have some challenges of why there are a lot more people doing something else

than there are jousting. But I think we've gone to Annapolis a couple of times with our costumes, and we lined up on the steps one year with our, had our lance in our hand going to testify. And I think they find it's a unique sport and it's worth having.

(Tape failure)

D.W.: Okay. Another challenge came in that we, different groups of us, are asked to **speak about jousting** in the high schools, and we go there with our rings, and our lances and show them about it, and even have a ring hanging or we'll have a child try to catch one. We basically let them in on the history. The more people that know about jousting, the more helpful it is to the sport. There was a little scare a couple years ago, a thing in Baltimore County where the **school considered our lances as weapons**. And that caused another little hurrah, you know. So to get past that deal, the last time we were challenged, I went with a contingent to the House of Delegates where they had this bill heard, and I carried my lance in with me. But, of course, it folds up, it folds in half and everything, and I carried it right into the room with me and set it down. And I did it on purpose because I was told you couldn't carry it in, by somebody else, not anybody there that day, and walked in and set it on the table. So when it was my turn to speak, I got up and spoke, and then I put it together and I showed them my lance. But I wrapped it up by simply saying well it must not be much of a weapon. Nobody really thought anything about me having it here today. I was sort of trying to use that thunder, you know. And next thing you know, they found it was not a weapon. It was part of the display of showing children how to joust, and showing them the equipment.

S.D.: Tell us a little bit about the **lances**. I know they're **handmade**.

D.W.: Yeah. They're normally handmade, and each person has their own design. And it's sort of from what they ever started or what they think looks nice. Our family started out with a cylinder that was ground down by a blacksmith who lived in Hillsboro, Mr. Ed Davis. Was a car cylinder. They ground it down to a point, and the handle was a pool cue, and I have it here to show you today. And, of course, there are only two size rings in those days, so the spear that he made on there was fine enough and worked well up until the early 60's when they changed the classes and lowered the size of the rings. Some people like heavy lances, and if they do, they normally cup the lance from underneath, on the palm of their hand and balance it under their arm. The lighter lances, like with a pool cue, you can ride overhand that way. And the lengths, at one time they had a rule the point couldn't be more than 14 inches from your hand. And that's got dropped over the years. They've kept jousting very honest. They didn't want any kind of cheating on that, and I'll get into that later for you.

T.I.: If you want to show us some, feel free. I'll step out of you way.

D.W.: Okay. This is the lance that this Mr. Ed Davis made for us. And as you can see, there's a pool cue. And, unfortunately, that is not the original stick in there, but that's probably been in there 25 or 30 years. The sticks would dry out during the wintertime, and before a joust, we'd put it in the horse trough and let it swell up so it would tighten up. Didn't do much good for the rust on the outside, but it tightened the lance up. My oldest brother, Jim, and my next brother,

Fred, had their names carved on the lance right where they put their finger, the balancing point, to catch the rings. And there were only **two sized rings**, like I said. The big one was an inch and three quarter, and that's the reason for this thing here. Without that, the ring would smash you finger. And even -- and that is the smaller ring. Now having said that, when we started out jousting, they used harness rings. And as the -- when they changed from the two class to the four and started getting down to the littler rings, they said oh, we want that ring to be a half inch after it's wrapped. So that meant we had to be creative and have new rings made, and we couldn't use harness rings anymore, which were heavy, and they would tear your finger up if you didn't have something to catch it. So we have our own made now that they measure the size after they're wrapped with a white cord.

T.I.: **Who wraps the rings?**

D.W.: I've been wrapping them for several years. And this belongs to the Eastern Shore Jousting Association. And there are seven sizes of rings, and we try to keep 40 of each size. And there's three ring hangers. So each ring hanger can have at least 10. That keeps the thing rolling as far as the tournament and catching the rings. And time to get them back to the ring hanger, you know so that he's not looking for rings. I have another lance here that I use. I ride as the **Knight of Dudley's Acres**, and my son, Buddy, rides as the **Knight of Caroline County**. And this is more of a professionally-made lance. And it took some getting used to, and now it's a little heavier than I want it to be. Easily stored by taking it apart, and also the point would come out too, or if you bend the point, you can replace it. And, again, you find the balancing point on the lance. That's where you hold your hand to balance it. And you sort of aim forward, but you don't extend your arm all the way out, and a lot of them do go ahead and put it up in there in the arch of their -- the pocket of their arm to balance it. And then you sort of look at it just like you would a gun. And you stay steady. And as my son says, you aim at the first one and let the other two come at you. So once you are to that point of catching those small rings, you don't flop all around. You get in position, and it's more like an arc. And some of them are really steady as you've seen through the videos. Now the quarter inch ring is the smallest ring. As you can see, it's the size of a lifesaver. As you can see, it will come down on that point. Not many of them have come down on my lance. (Laughter). But they don't have any problem going out on my son's lance. And let me show you what the old lance, with this one, you can see that the old lance would not work, unless you only wanted one, and then it might pop back off. So we had to change the lance sizes in order to continue.

S.D.: **Why did the rings get smaller?**

D.W.: Once they changed into four classes, they were able to sort of distinguish one class from the next. The novice from the beginner, that was the biggest ring, inch and three quarters. And then the tie-offs, you'd lower the rings a quarter inch at a time. And then the amateur would be an inch and a half starting off with, and the semi-pro would be an inch and a quarter to start, and the pros start with an inch. And it just, that's the **distinction between the different classes** of riders and what size ring that you catch. My younger brother, Bill, this lance, and my cousin Sammy made it for him. Apparently, he didn't think the old lance looked pretty enough to use, to use jousting. Sammy did real well and had a riding horse himself. And my brother wrote him

the dimensions of a lance, and he made it for him and brought it down there to him. So that was pretty neat. This completely, it's as handmade as you can get. So he didn't -- he rode the **Knight of Flemming's Lane**. They wouldn't go on there very far either as you can see. He was an excellent rider. He died young unexpectedly. He had a -- he rode a buckskin quarter horse, and he was beautiful. I rode him a couple of years, the last couple of years that we still had him, and he worked real well. My older brother, Jim, rode a warm blood, sort of a jumper show horse. My brother, Fred, rode a -- his mother was more of a draft horse, and he was a gray horse, and I don't know anything else about him. He was a solid, good-size horse, a gray one, so I really didn't know what his breed was. And I started out with a Pinto. It's funny how you go back to what your roots were. A Pinto seemed to be gentle and steady. And at one time, my **first horse's** name was Lady. As a matter of fact, she was born 43 years ago today. I was telling the girls how happy I was when I went down to the barn that morning and had my colt come along. Dad bought me a mare, and I got to ride the mare for a year, and then we had her bred, and then this colt came along. The story being, the father of this colt, Ranger, who was raised by Hubert Jackson, must have had 50 colts to 100 colts in the Talbot-Queen Anne area. And my mare even had another one almost identical to her, which is pretty unique because she was white with a brown head with white legs. And those horses made good tournament horses. So at one time, I bet you half the tournament horses out there on St. Joseph were by ranger. So that was pretty neat. And then, but we wanted to dress up the Pinto a little bit. So the last horse we got, we started him out with a small Morgan, because I had a Morgan and we're just lucky enough to get him to start out with. He outgrew her, she was only about 13 hands. So we went to a Pinto who was half Arab. His dad was a Black Arab. So that's how we came up with Fire that he rides. And the Arab dressed up the Pinto, give him the pretty head where a regular Pinto could just be plain, you know. But Arab comes out of them if there's any Arab in them. And we've just ordered another horse being trained right now, matter of fact, is Arab saddle bred. So we're anxious, and hopefully, it's good and quiet, it will be settled down too.

T.I.: It's amazing that you never know what you're really getting with a horse, right, until you start to really train?

D.W.: That's right, that's right.

S.D.: What makes a **good horse for riding** the tournament?

D.W.: A good solid horse. You don't want them too tall for jousting because you'd have to cringe down and cringe down in order to get to the rings. Fifteen to fifteen-two is plenty big enough. A lot of them are smaller. Anything from fourteen-two on up is good. A sensible horse. One that doesn't get spooked easily. A lot of the thoroughbreds and registered horses, they're too hot, so to speak. They won't want to settle down if you run them. Once you get to run them, they sort of go a little bit crazy. You want to be able to get around people, and you sort of train them that way, and you start -- it takes two or three years to really get your horse sensible and get used to everything. We'd ridden one a couple of years, and all of a sudden, somebody opened their umbrella at one of the jousting tournaments, and the click caused the horse to go, just like, you know, sort of jumped right under the ring. Went right under the ring. We've been riding you a couple of years, now why did you do that? But we knew what had happened, and

the person knew that they'd done it too once -- later. I mean they didn't do it intentionally. So those are the kind of things. We're talking about being quiet when the horse goes down the path. Those are the kind of things you try to watch out for. And you hold onto any dogs. You don't let any dogs run out, and people watch their children. But you've got several people. You've got the ring hangers, and you've got the announcer and everybody watching out for those type of things. We only have to worry about spectators who haven't seen a joust before. But we normally put up a nice rope with poles up and down both sides for just liability protection. And that's a good guide.

S.D.: Do you have any stories about **learning to joust** or **teaching Buddy** how to joust?

D.W.: Bud watched and was pretty well self-taught. And that's what we all did. We watched the people, you watch the good ones, and you see what they're doing and how are they catching them. What's their angle? And a lot of them had different angles. And they weren't always great when I was younger. They had their points bent over almost like a pitch fork that would, it seemed to me, might give them a little edge.

S.D.: How about a **particularly good joust**?

D.W.: Okay. I had missed a large ring on occasion and had it come back and smack my glasses and bust the lens. So that has happened. Or in practicing prior to the joust, had my head too high and had an iron hit me on the head. Matter of fact, that happened to Buddy one day, and we had to rush him somewhere and get some stitches. As you know, the head bleeds real easy. It wasn't bad at all, and I actually came back and rode in the joust before it was over. But those kind of little things can happen. I had a horse stumble with me one time, and apparently, she was going to go down. And she just, it seemed like forever, and she wasn't, her head wasn't coming back up after the third arch. And it was a practice ride, and I didn't have my joust. So about the time I thought, I didn't have my lance, about the time I thought she was going to go down, I hopped off of her, and I hopped off of her and crunched my right ankle when we did it. And she was just far enough away from me that I couldn't grab the rein of her to hold her because we were real near a highway. And knowing that, she took off and went down Route 50 and had a couple riders go after her and go get her. Nothing bad happened, except to me. So that happened. And your last question? I was referring to the earlier question, I think. What was the last question you said?

S.D.: The last question was a particularly good joust.

D.W.: Oh, yeah. The good joust. Yeah, well any of them I won were always good jousts, you know. One year, I won a tournament over to Ridgely. It was during the Bicentennial, and it started raining. Well then it quit, but it left our jousting path right full of water. And some of the horses did not like running in water. And they're messing all around, they were hopping and so forth. My horse came to a complete stop in between the first and second arch, and I kicked her in the ribs, and she went again, and I actually won that tournament that day. I was the only one with nine rings. But they didn't **clock us**, which we haven't discussed yet either. You had to be down this path in a certain amount of time. And because of the rain and the mud, the time limit wasn't used that day. In fact, thank goodness. It's an 80-yard course that we have to ride in 8 seconds

here on the Eastern Shore. And but that's just a good gallop. It's not really a fast pace. What you do when the horse -- get his most comfortable gait. And that might be six seconds, or it might be 7.9 or 8 on 8 seconds. But each horse is different. So you get the gait that he's comfortable with, that he's still not pulling you real hard, that he's sort of leveled out. I guess that's when they level out when they're galloping. And so you sort of get your own speed. But you have to be down there in eight seconds, or you have to re-ride for the rings that you caught on that ride, the ones you missed are gone. But if you -- you caught two rings, they'll make you re-ride and catch those two rings over again. And you must make time that time or you'll get a zero, you know, for a score. Now that doesn't mean you can't ride your other two rides when they come around. Every rider gets three rides in a jousting tournament, except for the championships when there are so many riders that time won't allow it to happen. So the time gets them honest. I remember years ago where the guys would just barely get down there in time, and this is the days when we used a stopwatch. The announcer we used on the judge's stand, and of course, that's always tricky too. But he used a stopwatch. Now today, we use everything electronic when you're on the path. So there were questions about stopwatch and how legitimate they were. But they kept them honest. The re-rides, you could only **lower your lance** one time on your own volition. And that means, that doesn't mean that you can't lower it if your horse stumbles or if your tack breaks, your stirrup, saddle strips or something like that breaks. But it means if you've got a bug in your eye, or your horse started on the wrong lead, the horse has left lead and right lead and one's real smooth and the other one isn't, and for some reason the last minute you've kicked him the wrong lead, and I've had that happen to me, it's rough, very rough. And if you're really competing, you don't want that ride. So that's your own volition that you lowered your lance. You can only do that one time. Because, again, when we had 50, 60, 70 riders, it took forever to get a tournament over. And you didn't want these guys dragging the tournament over and over again. And once you get psyched up to ride too, that's your attention getter, and you don't want to be sitting there going to sleep on your horse waiting for your time to come around. You're geared up and so is the horse. So they've done a few things over the years to make sure people kept things rolling. And you either catch the ring or you don't catch the ring. If a ring is caught by the string, and it's on the inside of the ring, you take that to the judge's stand. You can lower your lance, and that's not considered a lowered, you take that to the judge's stand and have someone look at it to make sure it's speared on the inside of the ring. If it's on the outside of the ring, it's a zero. And, again, a lot of times it'll hang there so that you can try for you second and third ring. So you've got, you know, go on and take you ride and come to the judge's stand. And, again, they decide, it's on the outside of the ring, you only caught two that time, you didn't catch three. So that's sort of how they worked that. You either catch the rings or you don't. You either make the time or you don't. Kept it simple.

S.D.: Tell me something about some of the **families in the jousting sport**.

D.W.: Golly, they're weeding out and whole new ones are coming on now. Of course, the Shortals were big into it, the Callahans, Willa Snow's family and all his children jousted, all three of them. Of course, the Wooters, of course. The Connely's were the backbone of the jousting tournaments back in the 50's. Mrs. Connely was more in charge of putting the meal on. And they had country ham and fried chicken, and not barbecued chicken like they have today. They don't have the workers they had, but all the farm wives, the farm women would put those

big dinners on at St. Joseph's. And dinners they were. Salisbury biscuits, and like I said, the other food to accompany, the other things. It was really a big feast. And pretty much the families raised their children into jousting, grandchildren. Most any of them that are jousting up until recently had some kind of heritage with it. But we've managed to reach out to other people with horses, you know, there's horses every couple of miles down the road now. Caroline County is full of horses, and these people have ventured into it, which is great. That keeps the sport alive. And we really love to see the young riders come along. We know those are our future jousters.

S.D.: How about the **women jousters**?

D.W.: They're very unique, very good, and they love jousting. Again, they love horseback riding and got into it either probably some member of the family or some man who wanted to joust. But they make it interesting. (Laughter).

S.D.: How about the **pageant**? Let's talk a little bit about the parade and the pageantry that goes on.

D.W.: Okay. Well there's normally a king and a queen in the pageantry prior to a jousting tournament, and we have costumes for them. And they wear those as long as it's not too hot. With the hot summer last year, we probably averaged 90 degrees at every tournament. So we didn't see a lot of costumes. And we'll have the poor man and the beggar, which is another skit that they put on mid-way through the joust of Robinhood handing out candy to the children along the ropes. They'll have the maids in waiting who can have a gown on with the pointed hats and the tassels. And, of course, they'll have a little scarf, and it'll all be in matching colors. And all the riders will ride in whatever garb that they have. A lot of them made their own costumes. There are some nice knight costumes out there. And they'll carry the flags representing the state that they're from, whether it's a county or even a state flag. And you have the children involved with all the knighthood type of thing. And once they're organized and a fellow gives the charge to the knights, which is a traditional thing, it can be a legislator, it can be anybody that knows jousting, and urge the riders to ride fair and charge them, then they can have a medieval joust and skit, or they'll have a couple of riders ride each other, most probably with a cardboard lance, a long one, and they'll go to each end. But prior to that, they'll pick their maid of honor with the sashes and so forth. It might be one with a blue dress and a blue sash, and she'll tie it around the arm of one of the knights, and the other one may be a red dress, and she'll tie it around the arm of her knight. They'll go to opposite ends of the field, and they'll charge at each other. And normally, they'll make three to four passes before -- normally it's pre-determined who's going to go off. And then they battle with fake swords until one of them's down.

S.D.: So they knock them off the horse?

D.W.: Yes. Yes and no. As I said, it's pre-determined. We have a couple of brothers, the Enfield boys, on the Western Shore that get into it pretty involved. And particularly when it comes to the sword fight afterwards where they're holding their hands afterwards where they banged each other pretty good through the shields. But it's all in fun, and it's all just to show

what the jousting was about then. Of course, the other Knights, River Falls, they'll come get him and drag him off of the field, and the other one gets to go to his lady in waiting there.

S.D.: Now this might be a strange question, but what do you think is the relationship between the **jousting** as a **fighting competition** and now the jousting as a **competition of skill**?

D.W.: Well it certainly was -- fighting was a skill as well, and it's something that goes back to Ivanhoe, but they actually outlawed that after a while, you know. They went to the Quintane (phonetic). It was still a form of amusement and entertainment to have people come to the castles and everything to put that on. Hundreds of people. And they'd have their feasts go along with it. But normally, a lot of times, one person died from it, you know. And the winner would get the horse and everything that belonged to that knight, his saddle, the horse, whatever he had, and his lady. Everything started with a man and his woman, right? (Laughter). And they would check in each one of the countries, would put somebody up to fight against somebody else. It was pretty spectacular in that it got to the point that it was outlawed, like I said. And then as the sport continued, they still wanted to do something like that on the horseback, they had the Quintane where they rided a hanging dummy, Quintane, try to charge it, and depending on where he hit, the Quintane, there were so many points. And, actually, I don't know where the ring tournament came from. I'm glad it came down to catching rings, that's bad enough sometimes.

S.D.: Does the **competition** ever seem to be **between families**, because it's such a family event, or areas?

D.W.: Well there are five jousting clubs in Maryland, and they're all pretty competitive. And there are points awarded at the end of the year for each club, matter of fact, to see how they did, and particularly at our state championship for a winner. So it means a lot for our jousters to get in there and do their best. It's more of a team type thing. And there are families. As I mentioned, the Enfield family, Mr. Leon Enfield, I believe, is not going to ride this year. He had an accident last year on a new horse. But he's also a fellow that's won the state and national championships for years and years, and is probably close to 70, he's a retired farmer. And he and his two boys are excellent riders. And boys, I'm talking about boys who are mid-30's. Okay. And his daughter also rode and is an excellent rider, and he has two grandsons that ride, and they're excellent riders. So you've got to get by the Enfields if you want to win these jousts whenever they're around. So had a lot of rooting to do on Buddy. I would say when one of them missed a ring, one of them down. They'd look at me and sort of frown. I don't think they liked that. I sort of meant it in jest, but in another way, I was serious. You got to go through all this whole crowd if you're going to win today. And every ride, you know, when one of them would miss a ring, it would eliminate somebody when you just hook it -- us. I caught a lot of rings. In the 50's and 60's, I did not catch a lot of rings. I won a tournament in 1978, and I hadn't won a tournament since. I've placed a few times. So I've sort of left the ring catching, serious ring catching to my son. And he'll be 30 this year. So I'm pushing on him to keep this sport rolling, but I haven't seen any prospects of any grandchildren yet. He has a girlfriend though. (Laughter).

S.D.: What club are you head of?

D.W.: I'm not head of a club. I belong to the **Eastern Shore Jousting Association**. It was formed in 1969, incorporated.

S.D.: Does that include like a -- mainly a territory? Like Caroline County to most people or --

D.W.: Yeah. Basically the whole Eastern Shore belongs to the Eastern Shore Club. Chester, Kent County, right now, there's only Kent, Queen Anne, Talbot and Caroline basically are the riders here on the shore right now. And then there was an amateur jousting club that was Cecil, and Harford and Baltimore County. They were basically from there to the Western Maryland Club that is clear out to Hagerstown and takes in Knoxville and Frederick and that area, and then there's a Central Maryland Club, so besides the Maryland Jousting Tournament Association, which is another club. So it was territorial more than anything else.

(END SIDE A.)

(BEGIN SIDE B)

S.D.: Tell me a little more about the **suppers**.

D.W.: Okay. Well, of course, St. Joseph's is the one that started with the big dinners that they had. And also, they'd have a barn dance the night afterwards. I don't think it was the same night. Again, that was from our older brothers and I wasn't involved in it. A barn dance, and that would just -- just look forward to, there wasn't a whole lot of other things to do then. There wasn't a lot of bowling or, you know, other kinds of sports. People didn't take off and go to the beach. That was too far. They probably didn't have very good vehicles. So something like this really came on and hit the spot, you know, for the country folks. Other dinners, St. Margaret's has a dinner that they provide, which is just on the other side of the Bay Bridge. They've been holding tournaments for many, many years. And our favorite one on the Western Shore is the one at Broom's Island, Port Republic. Christ Church, I believe, is the name of it. You have a big crowd. They've been having the tournament for many years. The riders have free meals, and you buy your family's tickets. But there's normally a wonderful crowd all day long out there. And unlike St. Joseph, which is very, very nice and shady, they have an air conditioned hall for you to go into. It's -- choices of two meats, crab imperial, fried chicken and it must be beef. But at any rate, that's the type of meal that you're talking about with all the complementary things that go along with it. Needless to say, everybody has the crab imperial. But it's really nice. And a lot of people go down to support their families, and they go down for the meal.

S.D.: Did you ever go **fox hunting** with your father?

D.W.: Not on horseback. I rode in the pick-up. When we graduated from the horse to the pick-up truck, there must've been a dozen of them in our area in Tuckahoe Neck that had the pick-up trucks with the dog boxes on the back where they'd go in on Sundays. And then they got to go in on Saturdays, and then they got to go in during the middle of the week, and my dad said enough's enough. I'm going to get out of the fox hunting business, because he just liked it as a Sunday sport during the winter months, of course. So he eventually got out of it.

S.D.: But did he ever ride horses?

D.W.: Yes, yes.

S.D.: After fox hunting?

D.W.: He worked horses, and he **rode horses**. Got pictures of him courting my mother on a horse. He lived probably five or six miles from her, and he would ride his horse and lead another one over to her house, and take her for a ride like on a Sunday and so forth. My mother is 90, so that tells you it's going back a long way. Some nice pictures, good pictures.

S.D.: Do you have something that you would like to talk about that you think I haven't asked you about or something I'm missing?

D.W.: I wish my memory was as keen as it used to be. As I was talking earlier, different thoughts, things hit me, and I just sort of forget some of it. We just have enjoyed jousting an awful lot. We've got to be dedicated to it, and forget about the beach on a Sunday if you're jousting. Again, I love the horses, and I enjoy as much taking care of them as I do riding them anymore. And I don't catch many rings anymore, but I enjoy doing it. It's a **family event**. You can either pick your -- take your own basket or whatever, food and whatever, or different times we'll all have crabs or something afterwards. Just get the children started. It's good sportsmanship. And like I said, it's clean. You either catch the rings or you don't. You either make the time or you don't. You take care of the animals, and it's a good sharing, family event with your horses.

S.D.: How about **good luck charms** to help you get down the course?

D.W.: I know of different people that wear a certain shirt. I was one of them many, many years ago. Even I lost that shirt, and I think my son's got a favorite shirt as well. Don't know much else. They won't tell you much. I can't tell you much. I can't let out those secrets, but I'm sure they all have something that they do to try to concentrate when they're getting ready to ride. You'll see some riders go to themselves and just sort of be real quiet. And they're just complete -- you know, they just want to be -- others of them are just talking, talking, yabbing, yabbing. I can't help but say that I don't appreciate it myself when I'm watching the ride, and you've got your mind on the ring. It really gets serious when you get into those little rings where the larger rings and so forth or the younger children jousting. It's not that serious. But the older ones, and I think they learn to respect you that way.

T.I.: Well as far as my questions go, I'm going to, if you don't mind, hold them because I'm so interested in what you're saying, I can already sense it's going to work out really well. And some of my questions, since they might be part of a tape for broadcast, I just want to be positive that I don't have any interference with the traffic and that kind of noise, so I'll see if I can't, since I live right here in Denton, you know, find a super duper quiet place --

D.W.: Quiet place.

T.I.: And get back with you.

D.W.: Okay.

T.I.: But I just have, you know, many of my questions are answered right now.

D.W.: Well I'll try to think of another spot too.

T.I.: You know, it's like the most difficult thing on earth. It's the bane of my existence trying to find a quiet place.

(END OF INTERVIEW.)

