SARASOTA COUNTY WATER ATLAS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
NEW COLLEGE OF FLORIDA—FALL 2010

Interviewer: **Puneet Sandhu**
Interviewee: **Allan Horton**
Location: **Allan Horton's house, Blackburn Bay, Nokomis, FL**
Date: **Monday, October 18, 2010**

Sandhu: If you could just introduce yourself …

Horton: Okay, my name is Allan Horton. I'm 72, almost 73, in November. And I was born in Manatee County in Palma Sola, and I'm a third-generation native of Manatee County. My father was born in the area called Fogartyville in 1897. My ancestors moved here; my [paternal] grandfather moved here in Manatee County in 1881, and my [paternal] grandmother moved there in 1851 as a child. I've always been associated with and lived on the water in Manatee and Sarasota counties. And, of course, my wife and I live in our home now in Nokomis on Blackburn Bay. I've always been active in boating in one type or another, and active on the water.

My father was a civil engineer, the first graduate from Manatee County of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was the engineer who designed the Tampa Bay seawall, which was a project that was recorded in engineering textbooks even internationally and renown for its various design features. He also designed the first span of the Sunshine Skyway — or I should say he was engineer of record for the first span of the Sunshine Skyway, which was knocked down in a storm by the *Summit Venture* freighter. My father didn't live to see that, thank goodness. I think that would have done him in, as it was.

And I actually worked on the undersea … or the survey of Tampa Bay for the Sunshine Skyway, and did some of the drafting work in my father's office on the Sunshine Skyway. And I worked as a draftsman for him from the age of 10 or 11 almost until I graduated college. But at that time, he had a 39-foot cabin cruiser, a boat which was our family boat, which I actually had my fourth birthday on the boat, and we converted it into a survey vessel. And I served also with my older brother, who is now deceased, as helmsman during the geodesy project of Tampa Bay, surveying the bottom of Tampa Bay for the bridge right-of-way. And when I was in high school, 15, 16, I delivered - he had a fleet of survey vessels by that time — and I delivered boats from Ft. Myers to Bradenton, an office in Ft. Myers and to his Bradenton office, or vice versa.

And at that time there was no ICW, no Intracoastal Waterway south of Sarasota Bay, and so you had to go outside from Big Pass all the way down to Stump Pass to go back inside and proceed that way. And

there was so little development on the coast — and usually we ran at night because it was calmer weather, generally — and there was so little development on the coast that it was unusual to see a light on land when you were making that traverse.

So I did that for him for, like I say, in high school. And the waterways here then were much, much different than they are today, much less traffic. And Sarasota Bay was so clean, the water was so clear, that we routinely caught grouper and goliath grouper, what we used to call jewfish, in the Bay. And my mother in particular would like to have grouper for Sunday dinner sometimes, and it was almost like going to the market. She would say, 'Well, I'd like to have a grouper for Sunday,' and we would go out and get one. It was that easy.

And of course the fishing was much different then, and set and seine nets were still in use by the commercial fishermen off the beaches and in the bays. And of course they caught enormous quantities of mullet and that sort of thing. I took a job with the Sarasota Herald-Tribune in 1973 following graduation from college and was active in writing the editorial position opposing the use of entanglement nets, which was very controversial and made me largely despised by a lot of the people that I grew up with.

But the commercial fishermen refused to relent. I mean, they followed the mullet until they just about annihilated them. And of course they caught other fish besides mullet in the gill nets—sheepshead and snapper and snook and redfish. And it was only within two or three years of the ban on entanglement nets that all the fish started coming back, and we had large sheepshead and snook and redfish, trout and of course mullet. And it's a shame because many lives and occupations were ruined at that time, and it's always been my contention, and it was in the editorials that we wrote, that if they would accept a recruitment study — where they would withhold from netting the mullet for one year and see how the resource rebounded and then resume commercial netting of mullet with preference given by allotment, preference given to commercial fishermen who earn at least 51% of their income from fishing (not from painting, not from plastering, not from roofing) so that the true commercial fishermen could survive and still continue to take the mullet — I believed, still believe that we could still have commercial netting of mullet and have a viable fishery also. But of course that didn't happen.

When I was 14 in 1951, my father decided it was time for me to have a proper sailboat. I'd had a couple of sailboats already, including a Penguin, a Penguin-class racing boat, but he wanted me to have a boat in which I could really cruise and truly learn to sail, so he bought a 19-foot open Lightning sailboat at the Coconut Grove Yacht Club in Miami, in Dade County. But he wouldn't buy a trailer, and so we sailed that boat from Miami to Sarasota, where we lived at the Powel-Crosley Estate there on Sarasota Bay, opposite the airport. And I learned to sail with that Lightning all over Sarasota Bay and ranged as far on it as Fort Myers and as far north as Tampa.

I also ran my father's boat from the days of the Tampa Bay survey for the Sunshine Skyway and all his subsequent boats. That boat was 39 feet. His next boat was a Chris-Craft Constellation, which was 42 feet. And then his final boat was a Baltzer Seamaster, a 50-footer with twin diesels, and I ran that one all the way down to Shark River and as far north as Tarpon Springs.

So I grew up handling both sail and power boats and learned to canoe in the Boy Scouts, and always had canoes. And actually built a raft one time with giant bamboo and rigged a sail and sailed it all the way to Longboat Key with a friend. But of course it wouldn't go into the wind — and once we got there, we had to call our parents to come and get us and leave the boat behind [laughs] because we couldn't sail it back across the Bay until the wind shifted, and we would have had to wait a week for

that.

Didn't happen with me, but my father, just to show you the ties to the water, was arrested when he was a boy, he was 14, for sailing his mother's buckboard down Manatee Avenue in Bradenton. He figured he could rig a sail, which he did with a bed sheet, and he and his buddies sailed it using a wagon-tongue as their tiller, as it were, and sailed this boat down Manatee Avenue. And at that time a lot of people still used horse and buggy to get around, and all the horses stampeded and they were arrested. So that, just a small jocular note or inside joke, the one time my father was arrested.

In 1957, I dropped out of college and joined the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey vessel *USS Hydrographer* in St. Petersburg. Went with her to drydock in Mobile, Alabama for a month, then joined her, went with her for geodesy on the Georges Banks off the Massachusetts coast in the Atlantic. And we were in engaged in surveying the Georges Banks and the banks to the north all the way to Nova Scotia. And I trained as helmsman, and my job was to hold the boat within 3 degrees of a compass course for a 10-mile transect and then make a 180-degree turn and come back on the opposite tack for another 10 miles. And we gridded a complete scan of the ocean in that manner. During that process, they installed a computer on the navigation bridge that was roughly the size of a Volkswagen, and it was of course a card reading computer. They had to cut the steel roof off the bridge to crane it in, and we were not allowed in the navigation room after that. And the point of that computer was to test electronic navigation processes, and they were very, very proud, all the operators were very, very proud when they could get within 100 yards of our beacon buoy, our target buoy. Which of course today, the little GPS unit on my personal boat achieves much greater accuracy even better than that with the WAAS system.

I built two boats, a pram which I traded for my first car, a Hudson sedan. Sailing pram. And later on after I was married, I built a 16-foot strip plank, cedar strip plank canoe which subsequently was stolen and recovered, and I'm in the process of rebuilding it now. But those are the only two boats I ever built.

I volunteered, I have volunteered for years, in the maritime history program at Historic Spanish Point in Osprey, where I'm in charge of building wooden boats of the pioneer period and sailing them and interpreting them to members of the public who tour the museum. And we have trailered our 23-foot sharpie that we launched in 2000, ten years ago. We've taken her to wooden boat shows in Maine; and from Maine to Maryland at the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival; Apalachicola Bay, we've shown her there; and of course different exhibitions and shows in Florida. And that's been a very satisfying experience. And I should give credit to Stan Lowe, the late Stan Lowe, who was our master craftsman who directed that effort. I only helped in that effort. And that's generally a concise water-related biography, but I don't know what else to add to it.

Sandhu: So when did you, or how did you, learn to build boats?

Horton: Well I've always worked, one of my first jobs in high school for my dad was, he would haul his boat. At that time, it was the 39-footer or the 42-foot Chris Craft, and at that time you could work on your own boat in a boatyard. And he generally hauled his boat at what became Great American Boatyard on Whitaker Bayou, at that time it was Lowe's Boat Yard, And he would haul it and he would rent a grinder, a great big grinder, and we would — or I would — scrape and grind off the red lead paint from that wooden boat (all his boats were wood) and then repaint it while the boatyard did whatever repairs were necessary.

I remember one time George Luzier sistered in a new stem on one of his boats, where the stem had split and the water-stop had rotted out. But I ground out the red lead and repainted the boat with fresh red

lead, and of course we launched her. And in those days we didn't pay attention to the safety concerns of today, and ‘course maybe I wore a bandana over my nose when all the red lead dust was flying around, but generally not. And who's to say that maybe that's, you know, I've always said, 'Well someday I'll pay for that,' and maybe I have because I've been a cancer patient for 10 years, and who knows where that came from.

And then that led to, I built things for the boat. I'd build a cabinet or I'd build this or I'd repair; I'd put a dutchman or a piece of railing in or something of that nature. My dad’s boats were never yachts. They were always... not commercial finish, but there was very little brightwork, which means varnish work, on any of his boats. And they were always painted. I remember one time when I was in high school, my mother and I together re-canvassed the entire decks on his 42 footer, stripped off the old canvas and put new canvas and painted and bonded it and put the new deck hardware back in, and that sort of thing. So it was a matter of learning how to do it by doing it.

And before we moved from Palma Sola on the Manatee River to Sarasota in the Crosley Estate, I hung out in a boatyard that was down the road from our house, near our house, a lot. And that was the old Hicock Boat Yard. Lee Hicock built my dad's first boat in 1937. And I learned a lot there in that yard from watching the craftsmen work on boats. And then I learned, of course, when I built my canoe. I did that under Mac MacCarthy's directions and instruction at Feather Canoes in Sarasota. Mac was an instructor, a canoe-building instructor, at Wooden Boat School in Brooklin, Maine. And I learned a lot from Mac there. And I learned a lot building the *Lizzie G* sailboat at Spanish Point under Stan Lowe.

And it’s just a matter of accumulating knowledge, and somebody said one time, I think Stan or George Luzier, that a boat is just a bunch of small parts, and you have to design it properly and put it together right, and you get a boat. It's a long, slow process, but that's how it's done. I've never owned a new boat; I've never purchased a new boat, nor had my dad. We always bought used boats and adapted them to our use or however we wanted to use them, or worked on them ourselves, and so that's just learning by doing.

[Interview and recorder paused. When interview resumed, recorder was not turned on.]

Sandhu: So I'm sorry, but could you start again?

Horton: Where do I need to start?

Sandhu: Where you were born.

Horton: Oh, well I was born in Palma Sola on the Manatee River west of Bradenton, and I was actually born in the house. My mother didn't make it to the hospital in time. And I was a latecomer. My nearest sibling was 12 years older, and my father at the time, before my mother became pregnant, had planned to build a boat, a sailboat to sail wherever he wanted with a wife who couldn't swim a stroke and two small children, my older brother and sister. And then when I was born, he had to give up that plan and instead had a 39-foot power cruiser, the *Almardon*, built by Lee Hicock there on the Manatee River, and that was the boat I grew up with. I had actually had my fourth birthday on the boat, and we used, my father used the boat for geodesy or the bay bottom survey of Tampa Bay for the Sunshine Skyway right-of-way. And we took that boat with us when we moved from Palma Sola to Sarasota, to the Crosley Estate, which he purchased in 1948. And I actually grew up from the age of 10 until I graduated high school there at the Crosley and sailed and motored and fished and did all those things on Sarasota Bay instead of the Manatee River. At that time of course the bay was quite clear and very much less traffic than there is today on the bay.

Sandhu: And the Crosley, that's on Sarasota Bay?

Horton: Mhm. Right across from the airport, just north of New College.

Sandhu: And then you went to high school in Manatee?

Horton: I went to high school in Manatee County and graduated from Manatee County High School in '55, reason being my father kept his office in Bradenton and he commuted from the Crosley estate to Bradenton every day, and I would ride to school with him. And he would drop me off, and then I would walk to the office from school and served as office boy, cleaning up and running blue prints and things like that until it was time, it was quitting time, and we'd go home. And we did that until I had my own car. Well, I didn't have my own car; he loaned me one of the survey jeeps which I was able to use in my last two years of high school, junior and senior in high school. And so then I drove myself to school.

Sandhu: And did your parents also grow up in Florida?

Horton: Yes. My mother moved to Bradenton with her family in 1911 from Sparta, Illinois for her father's health. He had tuberculosis, but unfortunately he succumbed within two years of the move. She graduated Manatee High School and then went to business college in Boston. My father left high school prior to graduation and went to a private academy, the name of which escapes me, in North Carolina at the age of 16, and after one term there transferred to Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard at the same time — he graduated with a degree in civil engineering from MIT in 1918, and at the same time, a degree in business from Harvard University. And he was the first graduate of MIT from Manatee County.

And then he went to work for various engineering companies, Chicago Bridge and Steel was one. He designed various things and then decided that he wanted to come back to Florida, and simultaneously as it were, he and my mother married in 1922, and she used her inheritance from her father to purchase Snead Island, a big portion of Snead Island west of Palmetto, which we owned until 1981. And then we sold that to the state of Florida which owns it. Manatee County managed it as a public park, and of course it's still there as a public park. And when she became pregnant — they lived on Snead Island, they lived in a house on the top of Snead Island — and when she became pregnant with me, they moved across the river, directly across the river, and purchased a house in Palma Sola in which I was born in 1937.

Sandhu: And how do you spell Snead Island?

Horton: S-N-E-A-D.

Sandhu: Snead Island. So then your family owned that for a while before you sold it.

Horton: We owned a good portion of it. We owned about 400 acres of it. We owned everything west of the paved road. There was a road in my lifetime that was paved and they operated that, really my mother operated it, as a tropical fruit and flower farm. And they raised avocados, mangoes, citrus, summer squash, cucumbers, bell peppers and gladiolas.

And she managed that while my father actually lived and worked in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago and Boston. And then after that period when he had enough capital, he moved back to Bradenton and opened his own office as a civil engineer. And designed, well one of his earlier bridges has since been torn down, was a bridge up north of Ellenton, north of Parish on US Highway 301. And in 1925, he

designed the seawall for the Tampa municipal seawall. And then he landed the job, he did quite a bit of work for the Army, and landed the job of converting many existing airports, small-plane airports for Army Air Corps training for World War II. He designed the training airport at Avon Park, Jacksonville, Sebring, Ft. Myers, Sarasota, Bradenton and different other airports around the state.

[Horton's wife, Martha, enters the house.]

Hi Martha, we're doing a little —[Recorder paused].

Sandhu: Okay, and you said that your father returned to Bradenton, so he was here before also as well?

Horton: I'm sorry?

Sandhu: You said your father returned to Bradenton after work, after he graduated college and worked in various other states. So did he live here as a child as well?

Horton: Oh yeah, he was born in Palma Sola. Yeah, his father moved to Manatee County in 1881 from Brattleboro, Vermont and married my grandmother. And he died when my father was two, and so my grandmother was left with three small children, four small children — my father and three step-siblings, two boys and a girl — and a huge expanse of real estate for which she couldn't pay the taxes and lost. At the time of her, let's see, her father's death, her step-father's death, she owned all the bayfront from the Ringling College of Art to the Crosley Estate, or the Sarasota/Bradenton Airport, and west of the [Tamiami] Trail, and she lost all of that for taxes. And she took in wash, she did all kinds of things, worked as a secretary, worked as a bank clerk, did all sorts of odd jobs to keep body and soul together. And she got all three boys through engineering college. Both my father and his two step-brothers were engineers, one of whom was a pit engineer in the phosphate mining industry in Polk County. And the daughter, my father's older step-sister, had a business degree, business education.

Sandhu: So then as a child in Palma Sola — so where is Palma Sola?

Horton: I'm sorry?

Sandhu: Where is Palma Sola?

Horton: Palma Sola? It's five miles west of the downtown Bradenton area on the Manatee River, on the south bank of the Manatee River, and if you keep going that way, then you go to the Island, Anna Maria Island, and that way out there. But it's west of Bradenton on the river.

Sandhu: So then even when you were younger, I guess as a teenager, you were going out with your father's boats?

Horton: Yes, and my own boat. I always had a rowboat, and I always had, I had a Lightning-class sailboat after I was 10 or 11 years old. And, so yeah. And I was, one of my first serious spankings was I had a rowboat when I was, when we lived on the Manatee River, and I was prohibited from rowing across the channel. I could row up and down the coast as long as I didn't cross the channel. But I loved to go to our farm, which I could see right across the river. And one time I took my dog and I rowed the rowboat, which was a 10- or 12-foot rowboat, all the way across the river to the farm. And of course my mother watched me go the whole time, she could see that from that house, and when I got back I got a pretty good spanking [laughs]. So I wasn't always the most obedient child.

Sandhu: So did you — and which river was that that you were crossing?

Horton: Manatee River. It was about a mile wide at that point.

Sandhu: So you mentioned earlier, with the entanglement nets that were used, how it just depleted some of the fish in the water. Could you comment on how you've seen, for example like with fishing, how you've seen that change?

Horton: Well, the biggest change has been a response of the resource, of fish and shellfish, to pollution of the water. When I was little, when I was, before we left Manatee River, when we lived on the river, we used to take a washtub and a rowboat and row out on the flats, on either side of the river, it didn't matter — on the south bank or the north bank — and fill the washtub with scallops. And that was routine, we didn't think anything about it. And the scallops are very sensitive to water quality, to pollution, and that's probably the first shellfish that disappeared from those flats with the development of so many home sites on the waterways, on the river. And fertilization and pesticide use, and perhaps mosquito control, who knows. But the scallops are extremely sensitive to water pollution.

And also when I was little, my father used, we used to go to the beach in August and September and get coquinas, which is a small clam. The genus name is *Donax*. And we would make a stew, coquina broth, put the whole shell in a pot with a little bit of salt or just saltwater and boil them and then strain out the, shake it, break the meats loose, strain out the meats and the broth and keep the shell and the sand behind, 'cause there was always sand. And then cook that with milk and it makes a chowder, coquina chowder. Very, very good, especially if my father was making coquina chowder.

And one thing that seems to have increased in modern times is manatees. I remember we were anchored in my father's boat one night behind Cow and Calf Island — those were two islands in lower Tampa Bay that were obliterated by the Sunshine Skyway construction — and my parents woke me up at four o'clock in the morning or three o'clock in the morning to show me a manatee which was nuzzling around the hull of the boat. Because manatees will do that, they'll come up and I don't know what they're seeking, but they will come up and nuzzle around a boat. I've had them do it cleaning my own boat, while I'm here in my house on the bay, I've had manatees come up while I was cleaning the boat bottom. I guess they hear the scratching on the boat or something. [phone rings] The point of that is— [Answers phone; Recorder turned off.]

Sandhu: So you were saying that point of that was that—

Horton: Well the point of that whole discourse was that manatees today, I mean, they thought that was such an event to show me a manatee, and manatees are so common today that I see them while I'm cleaning my own boat bottom. Not but about two years ago, I was diving on my boat here at my own dock, and when I surfaced something snorted, and I turned around and there was a manatee within touching distance, which probably had been attracted by the noise I made scraping the moss and barnacles off the bottom of the boat with my putty knife. And I see them commonly when I'm out on the boat, I see them commonly at the museum when I'm sailing one of the museum boats.

To me, I think, it's like a cow in a sense. I think the manatees are more common then I've ever known them to be, and they probably, I don't know the truth of the matter, but they probably are pretty close to their maximum population if you consider the grazing pressure that they must put on sea grass, because of course they're vegetarian. And just as you have to rotate cows on and off pasture to prevent them from grazing it too close, I'm sure that manatees migrate primarily when they've exhausted the resources in the bay, they move on down the coast to another bay to do their grazing, wherever it's

grass. And so I'm not at all convinced that we haven't come close to reaching possibly, *possibly*, the maximum population of manatees as the grass flats on the west coast of Florida can sustain for the grazing pressure. But I don't think too many biologists take that into serious consideration, that's just my own observation as a cattleman.

Sandhu: And do you also fish?

Horton: I used to fish all the time, I don't fish anymore, I don't know quite why. I just, I don't know, I got tired of fishing, I got tired of hunting. I used to hunt all the time, I used to fish all the time, and I just got tired of it. And this boat that I have now is a fishing-type boat from the Chesapeake, but it's never fished. It was built as a yacht, and I maintain it as a yacht, and I really don't want fish slime and scales and everything on the boat, so I don't fish. But that wouldn't prevent me from fishing, because I could easily fish out of my dingy, or I could wade, or I could whatever. I just don't seem to have much interest in it anymore.

Sandhu: Other than the manatees, so do you see populations of other fish then declining or increasing?

Horton: Yeah, but I don't know that anything particularly that can be attributed to any particular influence other than the grouper that used to be in Sarasota Bay there around the Ringling Mansion and museum and the Crosley estate out there. There used to be a lot of grouper out there, and I think that again is a response to water clarity, cleanliness and that sort of thing. But I don't know that, I don't know much about grouper. Of course you see them in the coral reefs offshore and in the Keys, and that is generally clear, clean water with a lot of circulation, a lot of oxygen in the water.

There's a lot of snook around, there's all the other fish populations seem to be thriving pretty well. There's a lot of mullet right now, of course there would be without the gill net being used to take them. Only way they can legally catch mullet today is with small nets and or cast nets, and that's really, really hard work.

But there are a lot of fish, of just about all species. I don't see as many snapper as we used to see. Snapper used to be very, very common, mangrove snapper. I don't see many of those anymore, but I don't know if that means anything. And since I don't fish any more, I'm probably not the right person to make that call.

Sandhu: So after school, did you go immediately into college, or did you first join the army?

Horton: No, I went straight to college out of high school. And college at that time, I went to the University of Florida in Gainesville, and at that time it was not such a selective school, and basically they would take a warm body, which was basically what I was. And my father wanted me to study engineering which I did not want to do. He had made my brother study engineering, and I did not want to be an engineer, and I took architecture. I did all right, I had passing grades, and when I came home after my first year at college, my father took me back to college and enrolled me in summer school and enrolled me in the courses that I needed to change my major to civil engineering in the fall. And that didn't work out.

And that next fall, fall of '56, I flunked out of college and took work as a cowboy in central Florida. And then from that, that job only lasted two weeks, and it was during the calving period, and we were riding the herd every morning to doctor for screw worm, doctor the newborn calves for screw worm.

And after that period ended, I left and joined the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey as a merchant seaman

and shipped out on the *USS Hydrographer* for nine months. In fact I was going to stay longer, and I was actually signed on as a deckhand on a German freighter, when I got a Telex that my father was dying, had been hospitalized. And I signed, or resigned, my position and came home, and he didn't die, he was two years in recuperation. And I took a job in his office as a survey crew member, or rod man, a line man.

And I worked that job until I was due to be drafted in the army, and because I did not want to go to Korea, I didn't want to be drafted, I enlisted in the Army. At that time your options were to enlist for your military occupational specialty or your duty assignment, and I wanted to go to Europe, I had never been to Europe. So I enlisted to go to Europe and the army trained me as a tank gunner and driver and sent me to Europe, where I joined the 68th Armored Battalion, 8th Infantry Division in Germany, where I stayed for three years. And I took my discharge in Germany and stayed in Germany another nine months before I came home.

Sandhu: So then after you came home, then what did you do?

Horton: [Laughs] Well I came home two days before Christmas and left two days after Christmas to go to Guatemala as a field assistant for a scientific survey. And I was in Guatemala in the Peten jungle for six weeks, and then I came back from Guatemala and did one thing and the other. But in the meantime, my father had purchased a third of three large properties that he had purchased, and I had purchased a herd of cattle with my savings from the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

And so I started taking care of those cattle, taking care of the ranch and driving a bulldozer at the ranch to bulldoze roads and clear pasture and build fence line and things of that nature. And bought a horse and started working as a ranch manager for my father, and finally decided I needed to go back to college and finish my degree, and went back to college in 1965, I guess.

Met my wife, got married in '67, dropped out of college, worked for two semesters and then went back and graduated college and went into graduate school. And then dropped out of that and came home and took a job with the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* in 1973. Worked for the *Herald-Tribune* for 10 years, left the *Herald-Tribune* when the *New York Times* purchased it, worked for five years for weekly newspapers and for Mote Marine Laboratory doing their publications, and one year as a legislative aide in the Florida legislature, and then went back to the *Herald-Tribune* for 14 years before I retired.

Sandhu: So what was your beat at the Herald-Tribune?

Horton: Primarily it was environmental and science. I had had so much science and environmental science, various sciences and math in college, I basically had a minor in environmental engineering. And I replaced Fred MacCormack, who was their environmental news reporter in '73, and took over his beat for 10 years. And the largest body of work in that effort was reporting on the phosphate mining industry in Polk County, which at the time was expanding westward into Hillsborough and Manatee Counties and had intentions of expanding to eastern Sarasota County.

And we worked very hard to force the industry to adopt standards, for the county to adopt environmental protection sufficiently stringent that phosphate mining could not be carried out in the traditional manner it was practiced in Polk County, where it used 10,000 gallons of water for every ton of phosphate ore mined. And we were successful in that effort. 'Course we were not successful in stopping the industry, that would be unrealistic. But we were successful in getting the county commission to erect standards sufficiently stringent that mining would have to adhere to environmental precautions for it to take place in Sarasota County.

And then when I went back to the *Herald-Tribune*, I was specializing in those areas as an editorial writer. I was on the editorial staff for 14 years and did a lot of writing of editorials about natural resources, the environment, science, medicine, things of that nature, things of a technical nature. I primarily wrote the editorials that had a technical bent to them, technical slant. And the advantage to my profession, in that sense, was I had enough grasp of the technical language to ask the proper questions of people, of authority in technical positions, that they would, I was able to get past the PR flacks and talk to the scientists who conducted the research or conducted the experiment or whatever it was. Because they were, of course, the right source to talk to rather than have some PR flack like me interpret it.

Sandhu: So when you were working for the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, I guess during that work, did you … get any opinions, an idea, on how environmentally friendly Sarasota County is and how well they adopt certain policies in order —

Horton: Well the policies that they adopted were pretty good policies. We were leading, we were— [phone rings]

Sandhu: Okay. Back on.

Horton: [Laughs] Where were we? I forgot.

Sandhu: About policies Sarasota adopted.

Horton: Yeah, the policies and the ordinances that Sarasota County put into effect were very, very well done. Well considered, well debated, well supported technically. The implementation has not always been as well supported as the underlying ordinances and rules. Oh, well, it's by and large been a very responsible county. An example, I think is a stellar example, is Sarasota County's Environmentally Endangered Lands Preservation Program, where the voters at every election, no fewer than 69% of the electorate has approved bonds used, repeatedly, to purchase land to preserve in perpetuity for its conservation, open space, environmental stewardship values.

In Manatee County they tried, the government tried twice to get a one-cent or half-cent of bond issue, taxable bond issue, passed for the same purpose, and they were defeated by the rural area realtors who flat out lied and commonly told people, voters, that when a landowner sold a conservation easement, or essentially sold his development rights, he no longer had to pay ad valorem taxation on that property, which was not true. You still pay your taxes, you still own title to the land; unless you're operating it as a farm with a green belt exemption, you pay taxes at the commercial rate. You don't even pay at the agricultural rate unless it meets a test under Florida Law of bona fide agricultural production, that's the key words.

And Manatee County, as a consequence, has lost hundreds and thousands of acres of good watershed land, and that's what's most important to preserve are the watersheds, the recharge areas where Sarasota County has preserved by and large those properties. And we have what's known as Myakka Island, which is a large part of that conservation acquisition, lands acquisition, and it's a tremendous, tremendous resource, and I think roughly 30% or more of the county is actually preserved public land, either through fee-simple public purchase or the purchase of the conservation easement, stripping the development rights off of the property. We kept those— [interrupted; recorder turned off]

Horton: ... always been taxed as a productive, producing, cattle ranch. And we produced beef calves for the market. That's my other job, I was out there yesterday."

Sandhu: And so are there any areas that you think that Sarasota County has failed to act as they should?

Horton: No, no I wouldn't say that. I would just say that the development pressure is such and the desire for community growth is such that in some cases, the laws on the books have been compromised by their interpretation by the county in some regard. The law is tougher on the books than it often has been applied. But I think the County's done, certainly the County's done an admirable job, much better than any, probably, than any other county in the state of Florida. And much of the environmental ethic in Florida Law came from Manatee, from Sarasota County. The Bulkhead Act of 1951 was a direct outgrowth of public resistance to the development of Bird Key.

Warren Henderson, who was senator, Republican senator from Sarasota County, was the author of the legislation which established Conservation 70**,** which established the Land and Water Management Act, Chapter 380 of Florida Statutes, the Clean Air Act in Florida law, the water management districts that grew out of those kinds of Conservation 70's movements which established the concept of basins being managed for surface and ground water throughout Florida on a basin watershed type system. Southwest Florida Management District, South Florida Water Management District, Central Florida Water Management District, Northwest Florida Water Management District, Suwanee River and St. John's River Water Management District, all were formed out of that legislation which had its genesis in Sarasota County.

Sandhu: And so then you also worked for the *Pelican,* correct?

Horton: Right, I wrote a column called "Waterlines" for the *Pelican* for two years. And we had a basic misunderstanding about what that was going to be. And I understood that it was to be … when I purchased the boat I own now, I bought it when I retired from the *New York Times* and the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune.* I bought this boat in the Chesapeake Bay area at St. Michaels, Maryland and drove it down here on its own bottom down the Intracoastal Waterway and wrote a series of nine articles for the *Herald-Tribune*. While I was doing that, they paid for the gas, and after I got down here of course I was no longer employed at the *Herald-Tribune,* and the *Pelican* approached me and said would you be interested, would I be interested in writing a column about the environment, *et cetera, et cetera, et cetera*. "And oh, by the way, could you work some phosphate mining issues into that?" And I said "Yeah, I guess so," and I didn't think too seriously about the phosphate mining issues, because quite frankly, I thought well, that had been pretty well exhausted. I'd written, you know, for 10 years about that, or well for 20 years about that and really was kind of burned out on phosphate mining.

And I wrote instead primarily about boating and my boat and using my boat and cruising from Tarpon Springs to the Everglades and all the different things you encounter on the waterway and particularly the estuary, where the salt and fresh water meet. And about dredge and fill, and sea walling, and grass flats, and scallops, and all those things. And after two years they came to me and said, well, they were tired about reading about my boat and my travels on my boat, and they wanted me to write strictly about environmental issues and primarily phosphate mining. And I said, well … and they offered me 20% of what we had agreed to. And I said, "Well it's not worth it to me to do that." So we parted ways. And so I haven't written for them since.

Sandhu: So then, do you still design boats now?

Horton: I don't, no I don't design boats. I never did, I work on my own boat. We build boats at Historic Spanish Point in the program there, but like all not-for-profits we're suffering right now, and we're selling our boats that we built, except for the three original boats that we built. We're keeping those

three to interpret for historical purposes because they represent the kind of boats that the pioneer homesteaders used from that site in the late 1800's. And so we keep those boats and we use and maintain them, exhibit them and talk about them, interpret how they were used, for members of the public. But I'm getting ready to build another boat. But it's going to be a small sailboat for fun, teach my grandkids how to sail, that's all.

Sandhu: And how many boats do you think you've built?

Horton: I'm not a builder. I've built two boats. Two boats, the pram and the canoe, that's the only two boats I've ever built. I *help* build boats, but I'm not truly a boat builder. My boats look like they were put together with a hoe, but they float and they work. But other than the boat I have now, which I did not build, that's a very fine boat, but I didn't build it. Unfortunately it's not here. It's at the yard right now being repainted.

Sandhu: But you still go out on the boat, correct?

Horton: Oh yeah, I still cruise.

Sandhu: How long have you been doing that for?

Horton: Going out? Since I was age four! [Laughs] That's 68 years.

Sandhu: So you've always had an interest in —

Horton: I've always had a boat. I've always had boats. I had my first boat, it was the hurricane of 1944, a boat washed up on our beach on Manatee River, and I asked my father if I could keep it. And it was filled with sand and had sunk, and I cleaned it out and everything and got it floating. And he said, "Well, we have to advertise because it's not our boat." And those were the longest two weeks of my life, because he ran an ad in the local newspaper for two weeks that this boat had washed up on our beach. And it was a net boat, it was a commercial fishing net boat, had been, and probably broke loose from St. Pete or Tampa or somewhere where they didn't read the newspaper. And when the two weeks elapsed, he said, "Okay, you can have the boat." And we turned it upside-down on logs on the beach, on sleepers, and re-planked it and re-caulked it and repainted it and launched it. And that was my first boat.

And I rowed that boat, like I said, up and down the river, as long as I didn't cross the river, that was okay. Then of course I got in trouble for crossing the river. But I rowed, that's the only method of propulsion I had.

I remember, about 19 … I guess we had moved to Sarasota by then … no, we had not. So it must have been about 1945 or '46, he bought me a 3 horsepower Evinrude outboard motor that I put on that boat. And then I didn't have to row. And I had that motor until, and used it, until it was stolen off my boat in 1972. I had it a long time, I took good care of the motor, but it was stolen off one of my boats in 1972 when we lived at the, in Sarasota on Red Rock Lane. I was married at the time. I remember I was writing an article in my office there and the dog kept barking, and barking, barking. And I told him to shut up and lay down, go to sleep, and next morning that motor was gone. He knew somebody was on my boat messing around, and I didn't know it.

Sandhu: So can you talk a little bit more about the Tampa Bay Seawall and your father's part in that?

Horton: Yeah …

Sandhu: It was 1925, correct?

Horton: Yeah, let me get a picture that I have because it will help spark my memory. [Looks for photo] It's the seawall you see in all of the Channel 8 ads when they're doing, talking something about the Tampa Bay area, they always show a picture of that seawall. And he took the job because, well, he took the job because it was profitable, lucrative. But there had been, they had attempted … this is the wrong book [looking] where is it? My sister put all this [photo album] together. She is the family historian. Must be the wrong … I'm pretty sure it was here. I don't see it.

I remember it was 1925, well of course I don't remember, but that's, I believe, the correct date. I had pictures … well maybe it's in the other book. [Looks for album] It must be in the other book. It had a proper name. I can't remember. I think it's called Bayshore Drive Seawall, I believe, I'm not sure of that. Hopefully that will be in the picture if I can find it. There's that old rowboat that washed up on our beach [shows me photography].

They, the problem of the seawall in Tampa was that they had attempted to build a seawall across a mangrove shoreline. And the foundation, the supports for the seawall, kept sinking out of sight in the mud. They had no way to get firm ground to make the seawall stand up, and my dad came upon the solution of building what are known as gabions. Gabions are boxes made of wire, a large-mesh wire, that are filled with boulders, stone. And they then wove together, I don't know exactly what they used to put … they wove mats out of reeds or bamboo and floated these gabions out over the mangrove marshes and sank this structure — the wire boxes filled with gravel, with boulders, on these big mats, these vegetative mats — in the mud until they wouldn't sink any further. And then they built the foundation for the seawall on that platform with steel ties back into the upland, far back into the upland, 40, 50 feet back with huge steel rods. And those — and the nuts, and they threaded nuts on the end of those steel rods against washers that still can be seen in the face of the seawall that hold that whole structure in place across the Tampa Bay waterfront and carries four lanes of traffic on top of it. I mean, and it has been that way since 1930, 1928, something of that nature, when it was finished, when it was completed.

And all around Davis Island and the whole Tampa waterfront was constructed that way out of the mangrove swamp. And that solution I have been told, but I have never seen — and matter of fact I had correspondence this year with several engineers at Leiden University in Holland — that that whole solution, as I understand it, is contained in an engineering textbook at the University in Holland, in the Netherlands. But I've never seen it, I've only been told that. But supposedly that's a, that really, kind of really put him on the map as an expert in hydraulics civil engineering.

He did a lot of that in his profession, professional life. Bridges, seawalls all over. He did the USS Forrestal dock at Jacksonville, he did the Mayport Naval Station and the Mayport Naval Air Station. He did submarine pens in Washington state, I can't remember the name, it seems like it's Belhaven or something of that nature, in Washington state. He had 13 miles of the Florida East Coast Turnpike design his office produced. He designed, but was never paid for, the design of the tunnel from the Havana, Cuba waterfront under the harbor to El Morro Castle on the other side. But Fulgencio Batista was driven out of office by Fidel Castro before my father received all his compensation for that. When he died, somebody in Cuba [laughs] owed him 80,000 dollars, which we never collected from that design. And he often took me along on those design trips, survey trips, one thing and the other, and my mother of course. And I spent many mosquito-bitten hours waiting in the car, different jobs of that nature.

Sandhu: Okay, and what about the Sunshine Skyway? When did your father start work on that?

Horton: The skyway, his part in the skyway, was a very interesting thing. He was the engineer of record for the design of the initial skyway under Governor Fuller Warren. And when Fuller Warren went out of office, his successor was elected, and when my dad made his winning bid for the design of the skyway, he had Parsons Brinkerhof engineering firm from Jacksonville as his consultants. When the governor's office changed hands, a new regime came in, and the state in the meantime had decided it could not afford the 10 million dollar bond that was required to build the bridge at that time.

And the new governor made that part of his platform, that the bridge would be built, 'cause there was tremendous political pressure from Pinellas County for a direct connection across the Bay to US41 headed south, they didn't want to go around the Bay any more. And of course that was a big bone of political contention between Pinellas and Hillsborough counties, St. Pete and Tampa. And when the new bid, when the job was rebid, when the design was rebid, Parsons Brinkerhof became the engineering firm of record for the design of the new bridge with my father in the reverse role as consultant.

Then, they took my father's design, amended it, changed the alignment so that the alignment moved further north to Piney Point and landed on property that was owned by a Florida state senator. That's where the politics came into play. And that is the alignment that the skyway follows to this day, where it lands in Terra Ceia. It initially came ashore on land that was owned by a state senator at the time, and of course he sold it for the right-of-way, made tremendous profit. And that's how the skyway ended up where it is today.

Now, the initial skyway was of course one single span. It was later doubled as traffic required, to a double span, a duplicate span next to it. The *Summit Venture* knocked down the original span under the guidance of harbor pilot John Lerro, who got caught in a storm, and they collided with the skyway. They would never have collided had the state not failed to replace what had been provided in the original design and constructed, which were wood fenders — huge, enormous wood, what they call dolphins and fenders, that stood out in front of the Skyway and bracketed the channel so that if a freighter went out of control, it would hit the fenders, it would not hit the bridge. And when they rotted away, the state never replaced them, they pulled them out of the bottom and didn't replace them. So they, the boat hit the bridge. It knocked it down and that bridge had a plaque on it that credited my father as the engineer of record and Parsons Brinkerhof as the engineering firm of record. And anyhow, that's all been lost.

And then the new skyway of course, the Bob Graham Bridge, was built to a totally different design. The suspension bridge that we have today was a totally different design. And of course it has permanent concrete boulders and fenders protecting its structure.

Sandhu: So do you know what the year was when the freighter collided with the bridge?

Horton: Did I know what?

Sandhu: The year for the collision with the bridge?

Horton: I don't remember exactly. I think it was 19 … I think it was about — wait a minute my father had died, he died in '78. My mother died in '74, he died in '78 … I think it was around 1980 or '81. [NOTE: 1980 is correct.] I was working for the *Herald-Tribune*, and I got a call from Ed Pierce, my managing editor, at about six o'clock in the morning. And he said, "Get your camera and go to the

skyway." And I said, "Why?"And he said, I said, "What's this all about?" It's a stormy morning, it was raining and windy and nasty. And he said, "Well freighters knocked it down and we need pictures and need interviews, and we need etc. etc., and we need a story by 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock," or something.

So I jumped in the car and drove up there. And highway patrolmen picked me up and drove me to the span, to the lip of the span, where it was just, you know, it was gone. And I walked out to the edge and looked down, and there was a Trailways bus with all the people in it. And on the other side was the leaf of the span that had been knocked down, and there was a car parked within 18 inches of the edge of the lip of that leaf that had had four men commuting to Manatee County from Pinellas to go to work. And for some reason, they didn't know quite why, they felt something give, and the guy slammed on the brakes and shut the car off and set the emergency brake. And the car was so close to the edge, that when they got out, they couldn't walk around between the car and the edge, they had to walk [laughs] straight up the bridge, and it was uncanny.

I took pictures, none of which were ever used, because of course, they had dispatched photographers anyhow. In fact they had hired a helicopter and a boat, so they had pictures from all over. They never used any of mine, didn't need them. But I did write an article about it, and I think it was 1981, but I really can't remember exactly. I worked for them from '73 to '83, and my Dad died in '78, and I know he had passed, and I was very grateful for that fact.

Sandhu: I'm just gonna pause this for a moment. [Recorder off]

[Recorder back on]

Sandhu: Could you tell me more about your childhood in Palma Sola, Sarasota, the places you grew up?

Horton: Palma Sola means "lone palm". And there was a jelly factory company there, guava jelly primarily, that was called Lone Palm Jelly Company. And we lived about a mile from the jelly factory. And when they were picking and processing guavas for guava jelly, the aroma of the cooking guavas just permeated everything in that neighborhood, your house and everything. And it can be kind of a sickening smell, very sweet. And it wasn't until the 1950's, I think it was 50's, that at one point the jelly factory broke down, I don't know what happened, but they were no longer cooking guava jelly.

And the aroma changed.

And the sheriff conducted a raid, Sheriff Roy Baden, conducted a raid and discovered that for years, the jelly factory had been the biggest whiskey still in the county. And while they were producing jelly and producing that aroma, under the floor of the factory was an entire factory producing whiskey. White lightning. And there were hundreds of gallons of white lightning stored there, and so the jelly factory was shut down at that point, never operated again.

But growing up there was almost idyllic, because it was, there was no traffic. There was a single two-lane paved road in front of our house, and I learned to roller skate on that road and rode my bicycle down to the corner store, Sike's store, to get a loaf of bread or quart of milk or whatever my mother needed. I raised chickens and turkeys at that place and sold the eggs during the wartime when eggs and chicken was hard to come by. Sold the eggs and sold the chickens and raised enough money to buy my own instrument when I was in the band in Manatee High School. And more, bought my camera also and more things, bought a BB gun, but …

And I also ran a trap-line in the winter months in the woods across from our home and sold furs to a buyer from Tampa who came by and bought my furs. And I guess I ran that trap-line for two years, from the time I was about eight ‘til I was 10, until we moved. I didn't run the trap-line down in Sarasota, but I ran it up there. It was very productive. I used to catch a lot of fox, and rabbit, and primarily fox and raccoons. And of course killed them and skinned them and cured the hides and sold them to this guy, stretched them and sold them to this fellow. I think I got, I think it was two dollars for the coon skin, four dollars for a fox, it was good money. And one dollar, one-and-a-half dollars for rabbit. It was decent money.

In high school, I sold rattlesnakes and had a high school classmate who milked rattlesnakes at the Reptile Farm in Palmetto. His father was Ed Winter, and Fella (Ed) Winter Jr. used to milk the snakes for his dad at the snake farm, and I used to catch the snakes. And I used to make 70 dollars a week selling rattlesnakes in high school, either to Texas Jim Mitchell, who had a wild animal farm on Fruitville Road and Tuttle, big intersection of Tuttle and Fruitville Road, or to Ed Winter in Palmetto or Ross Allen. Some larger snakes I sold to Ross Allen in Ocala. But that was problematic because I had to find someone to take them up there, and of course I had to pay them to take them up there, so it was much simpler to just sell them to local people.

And one of my worst days was my father found out I was doing it and killed all my snakes. He killed about 200 dollars worth of snakes, ‘cause he was worried of course that I'd get bitten. I never did get bitten. I got bitten by a water moccasin, but I never got bitten by a rattlesnake.

And, but Palma Sola was very rural. I never went to Palma Sola Elementary School. I always went in town to Ballard Elementary and to Bradenton Jr. High School, which is now the school board headquarters in East Bradenton, Manatee. And of course I graduated Manatee County High School.

And I worked in Michaelson's citrus grove, I worked in the packing house when I was a kid, washing fruit. And I mowed lawns in Palma Sola Park, which was a subdivision about four miles west of our home. And I worked on boats, cleaning mostly, at the boatyard. And sometimes I traveled with the net boats.

The Davis family were commercial fishermen in Palma Sola. And Ernest Davis is a commercial fisherman still in Cortez. And I traveled sometimes on their boats and helped pull nets and things like that, you did whatever, and during the war you did whatever. I mean you know, we all had our victory gardens and we crushed tin cans for recycling and all that sort of thing. We had a cow, we had our own milk, and like I say had chickens.

And I had a horse. I guess I had my horse when I was seven or eight, and when we moved, my dad wanted to sell the horse. He wouldn't buy a trailer to move it, and I said no, I wanted to keep the horse. And so my mother packed a lunch, and I rode the horse from Palma Sola to the Crosley estate, opposite Sarasota/Bradenton airport. And that took all day. Left early in the morning and I guess it's about 20 miles.

And when I got to Bowlees Creek in Whitfield Estates, my horse wouldn't cross the bridge because it was a wooden deck on the bridge, and when the cars went over it, the boards would rattle, and he wouldn't do it. So I had to swim, not Philippi, Bowlees Creek. I had to swim Bowlees Creek with the horse. And when he was coming out of Bowlees Creek, he slipped and, well, he cut his hoof on an oyster, he cut the frog of his hoof on an oyster shell or something. And so I couldn't ride him anymore, so I had to lead him the rest of the way which was about three miles, four miles.

So I was very late getting home. My parents were very worried about me. In fact, I met my mother coming out of the driveway as I was coming down leading the horse, and we had to call a veterinarian and have him come out that night and doctor the horse. And the horse recovered and everything. Had this nasty purple stuff to put on the hoof. Like when my dad bought my first large sailboat, he wouldn't buy a trailer. We had to sail it back home, same thing with the horse, wouldn't buy a trailer, so I rode the horse home.

Sandhu: And I believe you said you were the third generation to live in either Florida or Manatee?

Horton: Yeah. It's sort of, one person says, well I'm really fourth generation, but that's not true because my grandmother was a child of four when she was adopted by her sisters, with her sisters, by a Doctor Dunham from St. Louis who wintered in Bradenton. So she came to Bradenton as early as 1851, and she was four. But my grandfather actually moved to Bradenton from Brattleboro, Vermont in 19 … 1881, and she was 1851, he was 1881, when he was 18. And he later married my grandmother who of course by that time was … wow, this isn't working out right.

But at any rate, he did move in 1881, and so my father was born in Bradenton in 1897. And so I was born in of course 1937, and he was 40 years old when I was born. So if you count back to my grandfather, who wasn't a native, but who moved to Bradenton in the 1800's, I'm third generation. If you consider being born there as a first generation, then I'm second generation. But some people say, "Well you really need to count it back to your grandmother, and because Dr. Dunham lived in Bradenton, you're really fourth generation," but I'm not related to Dr. Dunham at all, my grandmother was his step-daughter, so I'm not really related to him at all.

Sandhu: And so currently, so you're no longer working for either of those papers. Are you currently retired?

Horton: Yup, been retired seven years, since 2003.

Sandhu: What do you like to do nowadays?

Horton: Boat, build boats, cruise on my boat. And go to the ranch and that sort of thing.

Sandhu: Where is the ranch at?

Horton: The ranch is south of Myakka City in Manatee County. It adjoins the Myakka River State Park, it's on the north side of the state park. And like I say, it's a commercial cow-calf ranch. We raise cattle, we raise calves to sell at the livestock auction in Arcadia and Wauchula.

Sandhu: How long have you had the ranch for?

Horton: 52 years.

Sandhu: Was it, was that the same ranch that your parents had originally?

Horton: No, their first ranch was in Parrish in northeastern Manatee County, and it was not a productive place. It was ball-bearing sand, sand live oak, *et cetera, et cetera,* and not fertile soil, and so my dad sold that ranch and bought a ranch in south Sarasota County. Those ranches were about the same acreage. They were both 1,700 acres, and my senior year in high school and my first year in summer after college, I actually managed that ranch in terms of building a fence around it. It didn't

have a fence. And selling the pulpwood pine trees off the ranch to clear the land for pasture. We sold the pulpwood to a pulpwood contractor, but that ranch flooded, it had too much water, and we didn't have our, we leased the grazing rights to other people who had, who owned the cattle, other cattlemen.

And so two years before I went in the army, 1958, my dad took an option to sell the ranch in Venice and took the money and put it down on the ranch we now own. And closed that deal in 1958. And that ranch was 3,000 acres, but it had no road frontage, and we gained access to the highway by an easement across our neighbor's property. And our neighbor didn't like it, and he put a lot of pressure on my father. And in fact the neighbor to our east was killed on his ranch, on his tractor, Hampton Moore. And so by this time I was in the army.

While I was in the army, my father purchased Hampton Moore's 200 acres, and that gave us our own access to the hard road because it directly adjoined our property. And we still own that. That's the way we gain access now to our property out there. I had, when my father and mother died, back to back within four years of each other, my mother died in '74, my dad in '78, before her estate had cleared, and so I had to sell half of the ranch to pay the estate taxes due on both the estates. So we don't own the 3,000 acres anymore, we own 1,400 and I think it's 1,437 acres or something like that. So that's how that came about.

Sandhu: Okay, and so how many children do you have?

Horton: Two. I have a son who's 37. He's a computer graphics specialist working for the Department of Neurology at the College of Medicine at Washington University at St. Louis. And a daughter who's 34 who is the photo editor for SRQ Magazine here in Sarasota. And two grandchildren. My son has a daughter who's nine and a little boy who's two.

Sandhu: So just your daughter lives in the area?

Horton: She lives in Sarasota.

Sandhu: Okay, well, I think that's it. Thanks again for meeting with me for the interview, I really appreciate it, I know it took a while.

Horton: Oh that's all right, it was a lot of fun for me, I enjoyed it.

[Recorder off]