

# WIP\_Transcript of Oral Interview with Frank Blair\_20221212

Tue, Dec 13, 2022 1:29PM • 1:22:19

Recording duration: 1:19:32

Transcription Notes:

1/9/2022: DBH 6 hour review of an AI generated Transcription. Made corrections to names and spellings as best as possible.

NEXT STEP:

This needs a audit by an outside reader/listener

## **SPEAKERS**

Frank Blair, Christina Felix, Dave Hedberg

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**Christina Felix** 00:00

Some recordings and put them to

**Frank Blair** 00:01

whatever. You can edit that anywhere you want.

**Dave Hedberg** 00:05

I can do that.

**Frank Blair** 00:09

good so you need to test?

**Christina Felix** 00:09

Okay,

**Dave Hedberg** 00:18

That's pretty good. Yeah I can hear everything. Um, so we're in the Momook Tokatee Apartments. How long have you lived here?

**Frank Blair** 00:21

Oh good About going on for five months...

**Dave Hedberg** 00:37

Yeh seems like a new place.

**Frank Blair** 00:39

Yeah, just opened up recently. I don't think they still haven't had it filled up to the brim yet. There's still people coming in and applying

**Christina Felix** 00:51

I applied here to I wanted to get one of the artists lofts. But they got filled up.

**Frank Blair** 00:58

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, they get going on over there. Now they're making ornaments. And they got a class over there.

**Christina Felix** 01:08

Yeh what's that called?

**Frank Blair** 01:10

What's that? art room?

**Christina Felix** 01:12

Art room; They have an art room there.

**Frank Blair** 01:15

That's a community art room.

**Dave Hedberg** 01:16

Nice. Yeah, well, I think we can we can.

**Frank Blair** 01:23

So you want me to give you my name and how I arrived at this point in life?

**Dave Hedberg** 01:29

Sure, that's a great place to start.

**Frank Blair** 01:32

All right. Well, I My name is Franklin V. Blair. I'm a tribal elder from the Assiniboiné tribe in White Earth, Minnesota, from the Mississippi band. I'm 87 years old. I'll be 88 next month. And the reason I'm out here is after the Second World War, there was no work to be had on reservations. So we migrated out here where we had some relation. And we ended up in Vanport, that was our home. That was in 1946. There's three sisters. My younger brother and then my older brother, when he came back from the

service, he moved in with us. So there's my mother, the person she was married to my three sisters and two brothers and myself, all in this one Vanport unit. And then my brother finally found another place and he moved out and my sister got married. She met a gentleman, she got married. And so she just moved, stayed in Vanport moved down on Victory. Victory Circle where they had a circle there with a flag, they'd raise a flag, there called Victory Circle. She lived in that area. And we lived on the furthest southern end of the Vanport where there was a ramp that led up to Denver into Kenton. And we live right below that ramp on Denver Court; Denver Court and Cottonwood. And that's where we lived. And the day of the flood. The engineers send a flyer out with the Sunday paper stating that if there was going to be any kind of a flood would be just a foot or so of water. So knowing that, my parents, my mother and I forget my auntie and whoever went up to Celilo, there's a celebration going up there. Memorial Day celebration up there. And then I had to play a baseball game over in Vancouver that afternoon. So she left me with my kid brother in the apartment. And my older brother, he was gone somewhere my sisters were all going with their boyfriends to celebrate. So it was just the two of us left in the apartment. And earlier that day, we played a baseball game right where the flood broke with the levee broke. Here's the field there, a school and a field. And then theater was right in that area and there was a store. And so we played a baseball game there seven inning ball game. Kind of a warm up to the game that we're gonna play that afternoon over and McLaughlin heights, Washington. And so my kid brother and I are just playing catch, and we heard this boom. And then look down Cottonwood, come to water. So I grabbed him. We run up on the ramp there up on Denver, and we watched it all unfold right in front of us. And it was just mayhem. People were scratching to get out of there. And it was, you know, at a time like that, you wouldn't think that you would remember too much. Because I had a kid brother with me and I was crying as you know, and what I remember these these Black people had grabbed a car and ran it right up the hill and saved their car. There was like three or four guys on each shouted a big Buick. And they just ran it right up the hill, the dike there and it could have been Denver because the the off ramp on ramp was just packed with people trying to get out of there. And then we saw a bus go down the water just went right over a grey bus. I don't know how many people were on it, but it was disappeared quickly. And then people just floating by a screaming and yelling. It was mayhem for hours. And then my mother and she finally arrived. And we spent the rest of that weekend in Salvation Army, found some halls in schools and set up some cots. And that's where we stayed for several days until they found permanent housing for us in a place called Guild's Lake

**Dave Hedberg** 06:48

How did you get out with your with your brother?

**Frank Blair** 06:53

I said we were right there right below the ramp. Well, I just grabbed him by the scruff and just because I saw the water coming and we had plenty of time.

**Dave Hedberg** 07:00

Were there alot of people walking?

**Frank Blair** 07:02

Well, no the like I said no other at that time there was no there was no warning or anything and most of the people were gone that day there and different ways to celebrate so that the city was basically quiet,

really quiet. It was Sunday. And some of them were still sleeping in I imagine they work different shifts back in the days; three shifts. And so there was no people walking nobody hardly ever walked around Vanport, streets were always empty other than kids playing

**Christina Felix** 07:39

Yeh, I heard that people were; as people were finding this out they were coming to see the floods and they were getting in everyone's way.

**Frank Blair** 07:45

yeah the end of the traffic that's yeah, the traffic. Yeah, the traffic just you know that plugged in. People want to see what was going on.

**Christina Felix** 07:59

Coming in and getting in everyone's way that was trying to get out.

**Frank Blair** 08:01

Yeah, that's true there. Yeah, I remember that. That people were coming here and taking pictures and everything. They thought I was just like a tourist site or everybody else that lived there. State of panic. I never seen so many people yelling and screaming in my life.

**Christina Felix** 08:24

Crazy. So what do you remember of any of your neighbors that you lived by?

**Frank Blair** 08:29

Well, I there was one family there was where we live. I don't know if you heard that pamphlet.

**Christina Felix** 08:36

Oh, I should have brought it.

**Frank Blair** 08:36

Yeah, Alexanders. I remember the Alexanders, the Cherries. The Kellers they were all black families that lived there. And we were all, you know, wild you know, because the schools, I think the one school that I went to is called Marshall. I think they named it after General Marshall. And it the school was so crowded that we only had to go half a day. You could choose wick half of the day you wanted to go to school to. We ran the streets all night long so we slept in. Nobody learned anything. Nobody learned anything. Yeh, so that was the one in school I went to then I went to the junior high school so which is further back north and there was a big recreation hall there and the junior high school so we spent a lot of time there at the recreation hall. Oh, I left mine upstairs. Anyway, there's Cottonwood and Denver. And then here's the ramp that led up on to Denver. And there's like three units here. And then the rest of the Vanport was over here. And Madras family lived in one of those units and they had two boys and so we hung out together. Below us there was the Paulson family and the Cox family they had boys my age who used to hang. And down oh, maybe three or four units down was the Coopers there another family that I ran around with. And past them were black families that I hung out with

**Christina Felix** 09:33

a lot of them?

**Frank Blair** 09:48

What were the places that you visited or hung out at in Vanport? Well the theater was like the big draw. So like every weekend we were down here watching movies and and then the grocery store is like one of Fred Meyers first stores I think...

**Christina Felix** 11:03

Oh really?

**Frank Blair** 11:04

And it was there and it was just you know, mostly just running around wild, nobody because everybody all the parents are always work and so the kids is like my age or just yeah, like a wild bunch of Indians. So you know, we just get in fistfights and you're on one side would be against the other side always. And so we'd have little dust ups every now and then wanting territory. Tell me about the Bicycles. Oh yeah. And then there's a slough where the racetrack is now you know the PIR. There's a slew right back there. And they had found one body in the other part of this slough and they were dragging the slough looking for another body. And all of a sudden upcoming one bike upcoming another bike, and they pulled over 100 bikes out of there. That over the years, if you didn't want to walk home, you just see you bike, jump on it, ride it home, and then the next day either paint it or throw it in the slough.

**Christina Felix** 12:30

Well besides the movies...

**Frank Blair** 12:38

Well, then we used to make rafts. Yeah, we'd make rafts and we took these M 90, firecrackers and roll them up, light'em, light'em, and go in and pull over behind. There was a rendering plant there. And so we'd get behind there in the slough and then we toss the firecrackers lit, light it up, toss it in the water and sit there...BOOM. Sit there little more about 30 seconds. Up come carp. We had gunny sacks and gather them up. And then we get one of the older guys to drive us to Chinatown.

**Christina Felix** 13:23

Oh, yeah?

**Frank Blair** 13:24

We sold those carps. Sold a carton to the restaurants down in Chinatown. That's how we made some and that's how we made some bucks.

**Christina Felix** 13:36

Did you go to any of the restaurants that were at Vanport?

**Frank Blair** 13:41

Well, you know, there was like, like, what do you call them? They weren't like restaurants. They were like cafeteria or something like that. You know, you go in and eat. Yeah, we went in and out of them. Like I said, most of the times and thoughts are always planning or getting into mischief. And the older guys are always chasing us and they were down there. But it was like the United Nations. There was there was Chinese there was Japanese, there was German. We're all thrown in there together. The internment camps turn the Japanese loose, and that's where they ended up. Also with the Germans and the German camp so people don't already mentioned that. They had locked up Germans and they were down in there too.

**Christina Felix** 14:38

So were there different little sections for each different...

**Frank Blair** 14:41

No they just all threw all the... breeds? The whiter people were over North but then the blacks and

**Christina Felix** 14:52

so there were little neighborhoods?

**Dave Hedberg** 14:53

How did you connect with people there?

**Frank Blair** 14:53

Yeah, little pockets like everybody. The most notorious street was Cottonwood. It was like Portland's Harlem, mostly densely black people will see on that street. And then there was Filipinos, I ran around Filipinos. I think I met maybe one Indian family that I remember. But we were separated too much. We always went to Celillo for gatherings up there. Because we're new to this area at the time. So we didn't know hardly any natives other than our own relations. So we connected with people up in Celilo and that's where we hung out. Well, you know, people working in a boat yards. There's a lot of natives that work there. And, and so my uncles and they already went up there and then and everybody told us how they fished up there. So we had to find out. Stand on these built racks out over the river with a big old net.

**Christina Felix** 16:14

They still do that.

**Frank Blair** 16:15

Yeah, my oldest boy that I raised. He's a traditional fisherman. Yeah, he fishes out of, where is that place... its just this side of Hood River?

**Christina Felix** 16:32

Cascade Locks?

**Frank Blair** 16:33

Cascade Yeah. It lives out that way with his mother and the three boys that I raised they bought a Boston Whaler. That's what they fish out of there on the Columbia.

**Christina Felix** 16:50

Oh neat!

**Dave Hedberg** 16:50

So you had family that would go into Celilo quite a bit then?

**Frank Blair** 16:53

Back then, in the day, Yeah, it was like way of eating fish all the time. You wanted fish that's where you went, you didn't go to the store. And then then we got turned on to a fish called smelt. And the Sandy River and then there was another River in Washington that had had them and so a bunch of us would all pile in Reagan and go there and take these number 10 tin cans pull holes in them and tie a string to them a line and then just throw them out in a river the and the cans would fill with these smelt. Dump'em out there, build a fire, start eating them right away and then and then had a gunny sack that we used to throw the rest that we couldn't eat in there and then take it around to the relations to feed, and feed them the smelt.

**Dave Hedberg** 17:54

Was that the first time you'd ever had smelt before?

**Frank Blair** 17:56

Yeah back home it was it's walleye

**Christina Felix** 18:01

Oh yeah, I've never had it.

**Frank Blair** 18:04

Walleye, and so yeah, it was like just a big sardine. Man, smelt. Man is really tasty too.

**Christina Felix** 18:13

Did you just eat them raw?

**Frank Blair** 18:14

Yeah, we just right there just yeah,

**Christina Felix** 18:17

Eat them raw?

**Frank Blair** 18:18

Just, no, just we had a fire going and some lard and just throwing the big ol pan there and, and fry him up right on the spot and eat him right there just is the best that way. Right there water into your tummy.

**Christina Felix** 18:35

So have you been back to the site?

**Frank Blair** 18:38

Well, you know, I haven't seen or heard of any smelt come up this way. I don't know how long. Yeah, yeah. It's it's, you know, they're they're migratory I guess, and they found a better place to go rather than appear because of the waters. And then the sea otters and it's not not to many I was reading a book recently. called We Are in the Middle of Forever. And tribe up in Washington. Fish for this certain Sockeye. They call it blues. Have you ever read the best Sockeye ever? Yeah. Anyway, they a few years back, they harvested 50,000.

**Christina Felix** 19:28

Wow.

**Frank Blair** 19:30

Two years ago, it was less than a dozen. Because they have these ships out at sea. Now. They're like factories, canning factories. They catch'em; every fish in the ocean flash freeze'em and ship them to all parts of the world. And so they never get here where they're supposed to be. Because the people in this area they're called salmon people.

**Christina Felix** 19:56

Yeah.

**Frank Blair** 19:57

And so you're taking their lives away from them by shipping it all around. I was up in Seattle a couple of years back. And there's a Copper River salmon. Every one of them.

**Christina Felix** 20:10

Maybe?

**Frank Blair** 20:11

Yeah, sockeye is at best in the world; Copper River. So I asked a friend up there. I said, "they got any Copper River?" He goes, you don't even want to talk about them. I said, Why is that he says \$79 a pound. Because tourists come from all over the world and they'll pay anything. And so you know, the people that live in this area, you know, they're being starved out from the fish.

**Christina Felix** 20:43

Yeh that's really Sad.

**Frank Blair** 20:46

My oldest boy. He just has enough to pay for the gas and his equipment. Hardly makes a living out there.

**Christina Felix** 20:59



So have you gone back to Vanport?

**Frank Blair** 21:04

Yeah, I went there and watched a guy play golf. Oh watched the guys play golf there? And then I went there and watched him race right over the my house. That track is right there. Yeah.

**Christina Felix** 21:18

Oh that's pretty funny.

**Frank Blair** 21:20

I told the kids, you know, they're racing right over my old house right now. So yeah, it's a speedway now. Back then there was when I lived here, there was the racetrack was across Portland Meadows is across the what you call, Vancouver over by Vancouver Boulevard. And then there was the amphitheater, Portland amphitheater, which on the weekends, they would have race cars, go around that amphitheater there. And what else? Oh, and then this guy came back from his service and start buying up all kinds of military gear and there was a GI Joes.

**Christina Felix** 22:11

Oh, yeah GI Joes

**Frank Blair** 22:11

And It was a tent. Yeah, it was a tent. And they start peddling stuff there. So we used to go cross, you know, and hot walk the horses for a buck an hour where it was in the morning and it go back in the afternoon when the races started on the weekend and to get people to make bets for us. Oh really? You were too young? We'd listen, you know, to them jockeys and trainers who and I think this horse is about ready to pay the feed bill. You know, that meant they mess with that horse. So we go back there and bet on that horse so we should do that go over there. Fool around a racetrack all the time. So you lived there until you were...How old? How old were you? Well, I was 13 when the flood came. So I was like 12. 11 12 years old. I was old enough to get in trouble. In fact. In fact, we stay out past the curfew and the police down in Vanport, they were county police. And they drove green Buicks. And they wore green uniforms. And we should call them the green Hornets. Oh, my God becomes a Green Hornet. We'd run your own. And every now and then they round us all up and go down. "I know you get to home. I know you you get home" and they'd see me and they go, what's this little guy doing here? Who's a little brother is now as old as the rest of em. But my size. I'd always get sent home. That never bothered me. Did your mom find out? Oh, she didn't care. My mother was alcoholic.

**Christina Felix** 24:04

Oh yeah, I'm sorry.

**Frank Blair** 24:08

Yeah, in fact, one of the policemen down there, his name was Matt Dishman.

**Christina Felix** 24:14

Oh, wow.

**Frank Blair** 24:15

And that's the place over on Knott Street Matt Dishman.

**Dave Hedberg** 24:21

Yeah, Community Center.

**Frank Blair** 24:22

Yeah, he was one of the policemen down there. So when I came, I used to fight down there. They had a boxing team. Knott box, came over here. And to Knott Street didn't call it Matt Dishman. Just Knott Street then because I knew all the black guys from Davenport and so went over there and sparred all the time at the recreation.

**Christina Felix** 24:49

So you didn't go to school there, though. Did you at Vanport or did you go to another?

**Frank Blair** 24:57

Yeah, I went there to sixth grade. Like I said, there was only there are so many of us that we only went to half a day. And then they pushed us forward to I went to sixth and seventh grade there. And then I graduated. And then they pushed us like to Guild's Lake and then they rounded us all up and gave us bus tickets and sent us to Linton and a bunch of us refugees ended up in Linton

**Christina Felix** 25:32

To live there, not school?

**Frank Blair** 25:33

No, just went to school there and come back on the buses go there in the morning, come back in the afternoon on the buses. They give us a little bus tickets. Were the first students that need ever got bused anywhere. Long before they was in vogue. Yeah, so they didn't want... they put us in a school to begin with it over the Willamette River, a school called Failing. But when they found out where we were from; all refugees from the flood, you know, they didn't want anything to do with us. And so they shipped us to Linton, because those people didn't know any better.

**Christina Felix** 26:15

So you were treated a little bit differently then? They want you to leave?

**Frank Blair** 26:18

Yeah. Oh, yeah. We're looked down upon in from the project, you were looked down upon, you know, that meant you're really poor. When you're in the projects, you're poor. You know, and, and you live with black people you live with? You live with oriental people. And you're Indian, you know, and all this, you know, because it was... Portland, it always has been really white. And so, then, after we got settled in, then we found out what they call Williams Avenue. And Vancouver they call that the Ave. Williams Ave. That's what's called the Ave it was most of the people that grew up with Vanport all ended up in

that area. So then I hung out over there. Because you couldn't go downtown. If you weren't white you're not welcomed downtown. In Portland back then. They didn't want anybody but white people

**Christina Felix** 27:19

Oh no, that's sad. So what were like the evenings like?

**Frank Blair** 27:26

In Vanport? Well, you know, we used to play games, you know, just street games. kick the can was one of them.

**Christina Felix** 27:39

Yeah, kick the can.

**Frank Blair** 27:40

Yeah. And when there was several other games, "any any I over" That's when one team would be on one side of the unit and another team on the other side, you have a softball and you throw it over the unit and the guy caught it he could come running around the thing and throw it and whoever hit that end up on their team now.

**Christina Felix** 28:04

Oh I've heard of that game, have you?

**Dave Hedberg** 28:06

No, I haven't.

**Frank Blair** 28:06

Yeah. "Any any i over" you yell at before you go any any i over? Yeah. And then they'd yell back we'll come over come over and the ball would fly over the the unit and if you caught it in the air within that you could run around the other side of the unit and hit him with the ball.

**Christina Felix** 28:32

Kind of like dodgeball with out the the house in the middle.

**Frank Blair** 28:35

Yeah, it was like done except you had a ball that you could throw. Not not a big balloon ball. It was it was like a softball. So if you got to hit you knew you got a you couldn't hit him above the waist that was below. So we played like that for hours until the green Hornets would chase us home.

**Christina Felix** 29:00

Chase you home. Those green Hornets did they know you called them green Hornets?

**Frank Blair** 29:05

Oh, everybody called them The Green Hornets. It comes the Hornets the green uniforms on and that was like one of the big radio programs that Green Hornet and Kato you know. And then there was a

down by a Victory Circle there was an entertainment place. I don't know if they drank in or not. But young people couldn't go into the building. And they would play music at night. And so we, you know the places that are, you know, paper thin, so we just sat there with our ears to the wall and listening to music until they ran us off.

**Dave Hedberg** 29:44

What kind of music were they playing?

**Frank Blair** 29:45

I was jazz. Yeah, it was they were big on jazz. And then we also hike out of Vanport and go to Jensen beach. We did a amusement park there and There's a roller coaster, a big wooden roller coaster and a swimming pool and Olympic swimming pool. They're diving boards, high dive and all that. So we used to go out of Vanport a bunch of us would hike over there. Hang out.

**Christina Felix** 30:19

I've seen pictures and some videos about it.

**Frank Blair** 30:21

Yeah. And there was a racetrack also back there also, where they raised midget autos.

**Christina Felix** 30:28

oh, fun.

**Frank Blair** 30:29

Yeah. And so that was some of the entertainment that we do, you know, always ran with the older crowd. Because that was real athletic and they'd like that, that can handle itself that way. And so they were always three or four years older than me. And so we always head over like there. And then hiking to Kenton. There was a bar in Kenton called Tinies. Right there on the main street there, and they had a ring set up down below. And so for five bucks. Yeah, I used to fight there all the time. Box for five bucks. For entertainment, you know, for the tavern people. The drinkers. Yeah, they go down here and watch us beat on eachother.

**Christina Felix** 31:21

You guys just boxing?

**Frank Blair** 31:22

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, so that was another way to earn a couple of bucks. Yeah. And then there was a theater right there also Kenton theater. You go there also.

**Christina Felix** 31:45

So you when you left Vanport you guys, your your family was placed at Geil's. Lake?

**Frank Blair** 31:52

Giles Lake. Yeah. And then after I think a year there. They, my mother, she was real strong native woman. She didn't like to back down from nobody. And she always make whoever's in charge feel guilty. "Oh you just doing it because I'm Indian?" She put that on him all the time. And they go Oh, no, no, no, no, Mrs. What do you want? What do you want just to get her out of their hair. So she talked us into a duplex on North Washburn just out of University Homes, and Columbia Villa. And there was a University Homes Recreation Hall there. And so we had a duplex. We lived in a duplex by then my sisters are all married. And it was just my younger brother and me. And my mother and her person that she was married to. And I went from there to the service. I turned 17 Yes. 17 Well, I have a tradition and my family.

**Christina Felix** 31:56

to join the service?

**Frank Blair** 33:08

You had to go to go to service when it was your time to go.

**Christina Felix** 33:14

Seams to me it's still young?

**Frank Blair** 33:17

Well, I had when I was still living back on a res and the war broke out. One day, I had all my uncles and cousins and the next day, they're all gone. They are all in the Navy and Army. And there were just aunties left a few older cousins that you know, that weren't old enough to fight Yeah. Now it was all of us that was left. So all during the war, there was just women and children and men are all fighting wars. I had six uncles, four cousins. My older brother, there's I think there's almost 13 of them left. You know, and so that's like a big hole in your life. You don't have that, you know, around you anymore, just like they're gone. And then when they did come back, they're all...

**Christina Felix** 34:15

kinda messed up?

**Frank Blair** 34:16

Messed up. And they didn't want to stick around that place anymore. Where we're at on the rez, there's nothing there and their sails started going in different directions. Because you know, when we lived back there, and we had, you could there was a railroad tracks that went through a place called Detroit Lakes. So when we come off the rez with our allotment money we had to stay north of the tracks you couldn't go over the tracks into town had to stay north side. There's a couple of stores there and bars. Yeah, So let's roll the government money went.

**Christina Felix** 34:58

Thyed just kinda give it to you and then it'd come right back.

**Frank Blair** 35:02

Well, they'd shot. There was this big flatbed truck, I remember that as long as I remember. That's how you went in and out of White Earth; in the back of this flatbed truck. I told everybody I said, if I write my life story, I'm gonna say it's hard to look cool on the back of a flatbed truck.

**Christina Felix** 35:21

oh i like that

**Frank Blair** 35:22

is gonna be my title for my book.

**Christina Felix** 35:25

Yeh, you'd better get busy Frank!

**Frank Blair** 35:27

Because we'd sit there all bundled up, you know, and it was snowing, you know, and just drive into town that way. I got to shop for groceries or commodities or whatever. Yeah.

**Christina Felix** 35:44

Well, do we have any more questions?

**Dave Hedberg** 35:46

I was just curious, like, how, how it felt as a Native person living in Portland? You found, did you develop a Native community here?

**Frank Blair** 36:00

Well, back then, you know, like I said, I only knew when I went to school, they put me in Roosevelt High School. And there was only one other Indian family there the Maupins and they're from K Falls. So that was the only ones that I mingled with. And other than that, not there, it hadn't, they hadn't, they hadn't migrated into the cities, the Natives. And years later, when they did, they were mostly the ones that got kicked off the rez. And ended up in his cities because he raised too much hell on rez. And we used to go down to a place just to watch it every week and called Valhalla is, it's where Dante's is now, that building was called Valhalla back then. 49-50s. And we'd go there on the weekends, because in the parking lot they'd come out of that, that all the Indian was a Indian bar, and he'd come out of there punching one another, and the cops knew at the head of the paddy wagon sitting right there. And they'd watch him fight for a while and then they'd throw them on the wagon.

**Christina Felix** 37:17

The Wagon rig?

**Frank Blair** 37:19

Every weekend because it was the same thing every weekend. And you're like, like a Warm Springs Indian didn't like a Modoc Indian and things like yeah, because they go way back bad. Bad medicine between the Warm Springs and the Modocs. I don't know if you know the history of between them...

**Christina Felix** 37:35

I don't.

**Frank Blair** 37:36

well, you ever heard of Captain Jack?

**Christina Felix** 37:39

Oh, yeah.

**Frank Blair** 37:40

Yeah, that was one of the most expensive wars ever. Them trying to capture Captain Jack. And the only reason they got him was the Warm Springs Indians used. They use them for scouts to track him down. And so there's always bad blood, there's bad blood between the Modocs and the Klamath. So there was always friction. If you're not from this rez or that rez, you're at odds most of the time back in them days. Most of them are all drunk up. Yeah. Booze.

**Christina Felix** 38:24

It's a little different now.

**Frank Blair** 38:25

Oh, quite a bit different. Yeah. You know, because we have, you know, a community in the cities now where there was never anything like that. And

**Dave Hedberg** 38:37

When do you think, when did you feel like that community in the city developed?

**Frank Blair** 38:41

Well, over the years, over the years, people start understanding one another a little better, you know, and you realize that it was us against them. That's when we started coming together a little better.

**Dave Hedberg** 39:00

Like 60s 50s?

**Frank Blair** 39:02

Well, I was gone most of the 50s in the service. And then I traveled around. I didn't come back here until mid 70s. And then stayed around for one and I took off again. And then I went to Seattle, and there's a community up there and I hung out up there. And then one lady, she she she says, You ought to go to the Sundance. I say "where in the hell is that at?" So she told me where it was at: Mount Hood. Have you heard of that one?

**Christina Felix** 39:40

Yeah,

**Frank Blair** 39:40

so I went there for quite a while. And

**Christina Felix** 39:46

a couple of different ones nowadays I think.

**Frank Blair** 39:48

Yeah, that was that was the beginning of the Sundance. It was right after they passed Freedom of religion. You know, because up until then, everything was hidden. The ceremonies. You couldn't even have a sweat lodge.

**Christina Felix** 40:05

Yeh, it was very restricted.

**Frank Blair** 40:06

Yeah. Because they had a fear

**Christina Felix** 40:10

Afraid of the medicine

**Frank Blair** 40:12

That we'd start raising war again. You know, they didn't want to hear that drum. Drum scared em. So anyway, I went there, you know, and then, you know, start connecting with other people like that.

**Christina Felix** 40:34

I don't know when NARA started?

**Frank Blair** 40:35

Well NARA started, I think in the 70s or the early 80s. I remember when it was, first it was over in Burnside. And then over and Morris. And now it's on...really up. There's one way out on 122nd and Burnside. And then and then that the one that just opened up on the Hancock. Yeah, so that's the last rebirth. There last rebirth of. And yeah, the lady that had been looking after me for 30 some years. She is not running the place. Ruth Ann McGovern, you know, you know her? I probably do, I'm just bad with names. Yeah, she's a tiny Irish. Ya know, She's feisty as hell. Yeah. She's been like my mother forever. She said that I'm an enigma. Yeah, because I won't take white man's medicine. And yet I'm never sick. She can't figure out what's going on with me. Yeah.

**Christina Felix** 41:52

Yeh, you're special.

**Frank Blair** 41:56

They run all these tests. I mean, they just can't figure it out.

**Christina Felix** 42:00

Don't you attribute that to your Chinese Medicine?



**Frank Blair** 42:04

the in the in the medicine and Chinese medicine. I take acupuncture, cupping all that.

**Christina Felix** 42:11

How did you learn start doing that?

**Frank Blair** 42:14

Well, you know, I saw a movie one time. And here's this young man moving real slow. Like this and that. Yeah. And the guy said, That's Tai Chi. And I said, "Well, what's it supposed to do?" You know, you can't fight like that. So. And there's no extra health, your health, but it can be used as a weapon. So I get interested in that. And I got a teacher in Seattle. His name is John Neil. He's a grandmaster now. So I've studied with him for six years. And he was the first one that imported the Shaolin Monks to the states. So we had a gathering up in Seattle. And, and I got to meet the monks up there. There's amazing people. There were some of them, like 38th generation. And they're just amazing feats of strength and everything. And so after that, there was another gathering, called Five Willow. And they gathered all these different masters from different forms. And they're, we're sitting at this table and this little Chinese guy from Portland came out. And he just blew me away. And where'd this guy come from? His name is Gregory Fong. And so I. Other people that are other students who were sitting with me at the table. I said, I'm leaving. He said, "where are you going?" "Moving to Portland." He said, "What are you talking about?" I said "I'm gonna go study with that other guy." And he said, "well you can't leave your master to go. He won't like it." You know? I said, "I don't care." I can't stay here anymore. I gotta go study with that man. And so I came down here and I connected with Gregory and 20 Some years later, you know, he passed and but I was I was with him that long study and different martial arts from him. amazing person. And he was younger than me also. It was like 10 years younger. So all my teachers were younger than me and that Chinese way. And he showed me you know, different teas and everything and it was all about breathing. And a thing called soong, how to be relaxed but still be at attention. And like there's only two ways to move either muscular or skeletal. But if you go beyond muscular and skeletal, then you realize there's a thing called soong, which is deals with your tendons and stuff. So that now you see these old masters just because they're not skeletal or muscular. They're just moving with the tendons and sinew. so it's, it's, it's like a dance. But it's very strong dance. It looks really weak, but it's full, really full.

**Christina Felix** 45:50

Wow.

**Frank Blair** 45:51

So I studied with him and then taught for him. In fact, I just met a lady that lives next door to me upstairs. And we're talking and she goes, I know you, Frank. I go, how do you know me? She says, Your cedars teacher arn't you? And I say, Yeah, I raised that boy. Oh well that's really cool then that somebody moved in and remembered you. Yeah, his brother both Yeah. And three brothers. They come along really good. They are from a broken up family. And they're all over the place. I said, No, come here. And yeah, they turned out really well. Cedar now he manages a berry farm. out in

Wilsonville. And is also very prominent in American Church, near you sings and drums. His younger brother is, works with, well he worked for NAYA. Working with disenfranchised youth. Youth at risk.

**Christina Felix** 47:03

So he's still doing that now? Okay

**Frank Blair** 47:04

Yeah, yeah, Gary's still doing that. And then the older brother is a traditional fisherman. So all three of them turned out really good. They know their own way on the red road.

**Christina Felix** 47:16

Well that's great.

**Frank Blair** 47:22

so it's been a long funny journey from Vanport to where I'm at sitting here.

**Christina Felix** 47:26

Yeah, I was talking to another lady and she was telling me that they moved to Vanport with a bunch of siblings too. They are Cherokee. So we might get to interview her and her family next, just waiting on big brother's approval. not "Big Brother," but their big brother.

**Frank Blair** 48:02

Back in them days, it was not good to be in a Native I tell you, a hard hard road to go. Because there were so few of us that we didn't have a strong block of people. Like you take the Spanish people now that come here. They usually send the educated ones over and then they start forming coalitions, and then the workers they migrate. And we said they're like, ants, you see one, you turn around, and it's 100.

**Christina Felix** 48:37

There's a 100 of them

**Frank Blair** 48:39

All over the place. But they're smart that way to send educated ones here to form you know, whatever they needed to get ahead. And, and always tell the boys as you know what's wrong? I says, there's every kind of ethnic food going, but we don't have not one Native restaurant. Yeah. I can't understand that. To this day.

**Christina Felix** 49:06

There is one now but it's like a food stand.

**Frank Blair** 49:08

Yeah, we'll see. That's not a restaurant. It's there's a guy up in Seattle has been selling tacos up there forever. You know, either one of those trucks. Yeah. But I'm talking about a restaurant. You know,

there's every kind of restaurant ethnic restaurant you can think of. Except we don't not have one Native restaurants.

**Christina Felix** 49:30

Well I think here is one in Portland?

**Frank Blair** 49:31

No, there isn't. Hasn't been. Yeah, I'm waiting for somebody to go, Hey, all our traditional meals. There's people from all over the world would pay big bucks to sit down and have a Native traditional meal because there was a place on the island outside of Seattle. That they have fish banquets up there for tourists. They had this big pit with all the; how to dry, they cook the fish that way. And they're a big tourist attraction. In fact, we took the monks over there, and they just couldn't believe those monks, Shaolin monks, God, they're funny. We took a we took them up to the Seattle tower.

**Dave Hedberg** 50:25

Space Needle?

**Frank Blair** 50:26

Space Needle. Yeah, we're up there doing your poses and taking, we gave them these little cameras, throw away cameras and they're up their posing because they've been, you know, locked up in the mountains all their lives. They're like children, you know.

**Christina Felix** 50:41

All these new experiences in the city, huh?

**Frank Blair** 50:44

The first time they've ever been in an elevator, you know, going up to the top of that needle. It was just hilarious,

**Christina Felix** 50:52

Yeh I can imagine. I was at Multnomah Falls and there was a group of the monks. Oh, yeah. Well, of course, they these. They were orange,

**Frank Blair** 51:05

you know? Oh, that. Yeah. The orange and saffron. Yeah.

**Christina Felix** 51:09

And I think there was maybe 15 or so. Right? So I was up to taking pictures and I waited and I waited and there was one straggler. And he stayed behind. And I waited for him for like, a half an hour to get in the middle of waterfall so I can take his picture. I don't have to show you that picture. It's really cool. And then he took off before I could talk to him. Meanwhile, I look up and then on the falls, the bridge, there's all the monks right there. Yeah, it was really there was like children.

**Frank Blair** 51:45

yeah. Oh yeh they are. I was in Hong Kong, with my teacher were visiting other martial artists and, and so then I got wind of this place called the Temple of 1000. Buddhas. So I says "I gotta go there." So they had to take a train. And say, I rode this train to there, get out and there was this temple and there is little Buddhists. 1000 of them all lined the walls down, or 10,000 I think it was. And so they said, All right, no, if you go in you kneel. You know, you say you pray in your own way. And, and then come back out. And kneel down on this pad they gave me and, and and I looked this way, and there's a monk next to me, and on another pad and he looked back at me. I swear I was looking in a mirror. He jumped, and I jumped. I swear it was my doppelganger. And then he got this big grin. And then we both came out and he goes, come with me, you know. And he took me to their little temple behind the temple where they live their quarters, and I spent the rest of the afternoon and everybody's jumping to every time they'd see him. They look at me, like twins.

**Christina Felix** 53:16

You found your twin!

**Frank Blair** 53:18

Because back then I had my hair shaved and everything because in the martial arts, you can't stand taller than your teacher and you can't have hair.

**Christina Felix** 53:26

Oh interesting.

**Frank Blair** 53:28

If you're really into it, yeah. And so had my head shaved and everything. And so I spent the afternoon with them and they fed me and everything and then told me this other place and then they gave me this big jar of Queen Bee jelly. That was one of the things that they and then when a guy says if you need more, you know he gave me his name. And you call me and I'll come to the hotel where you're at if you need more.

**Christina Felix** 53:57

Is that also like Royal V Jelly?

**Frank Blair** 54:00

Yeah, Queen Bee jelly. Yeah, royal jelly and it was pure. It was the finest that you could get just a couple of drops on the tongue and you'd feel it right away. I spent like a month there in Hong Kong. Training with other teachers there.

**Christina Felix** 54:17

Well, Frank, you got to write your memoirs. You gotta write your book.

**Frank Blair** 54:20

Oh, no, no, no. No, you had to be there.

**Christina Felix** 54:28

Do you have any pictures of that?

**Frank Blair** 54:30

I gave all the pictures away. I got one picture of my teacher and he said I have a little altar up in my room and he sits there next to; I have a praying Buddha and him and then a gong and a bell. And so my morning salutations are fed into that area. I think Cedar, the older middle boy, I think he's got most of the photos from. Yeah, because it's just extra baggage and you shouldn't carry extra baggage. It weighs you down

**Christina Felix** 55:10

Yeh, I know, still trying to get rid of my baggage. I moved three times in a year. lightening my load...

**Dave Hedberg** 55:24

So much of the places that you went to... when you lived; when you first moved to Portland; changed. Do you ever see a spot or see anything that reminds you of that time in Vanport? Or has it all just changed?

**Frank Blair** 55:36

It's all changed. Yeah. Yeah. Well, one of the things that we did when we finally start growing up around town here was they had streetcars back then. Yeah. And we would hop on them behind and get a free ride. You're hanging on there; then. And then when they go around the curb and we just jump off. You get as close and you could to 'em.

**Christina Felix** 56:06

Frank and his gang of hooligans.

**Frank Blair** 56:08

But there was the ballpark on Vaughn Street. We used to go there because I always loved baseball. It was on 25th and Vaughn and Montgomery Ward's which is not just what is it Montgomery Park or something. That was very big. That was the biggest store in town.

**Christina Felix** 56:27

Isn't that that building has all that beautiful marble in it now.

**Frank Blair** 56:31

I don't know. It's way out there and...

**Dave Hedberg** 56:34

Its got the big sign?

**Frank Blair** 56:36

Sign Yeah, big Yeah, it's got Montgomery Park. Yeah, that was Montgomery. Ward's is a big department store it probably was the place that hired most of the people here in town you know, retail wise. And because we live right below the hill in Guild's Lake. So we used to come up out of there and

jump on those streetcars right and then they had a big log cabin up in that area also it was for the Lewis and Clark Exhibition. They had it in there until it caught on fire. I remember that place. And then of course they tore the old ballpark down. But then when we found out where all the best this was, that was you know, like, there was a place called Besaws, it had the best ham sandwich in town and this guy, and he really knew how to cook ham and so we'd always go there loved ham. And that was right in that area also.

**Dave Hedberg** 57:51

What about Williams and the Avenue? did you hangout there a lot?

**Frank Blair** 57:53

Oh, Williams Oh, well, now? Oh, yeah. Yeah, almost grew up there. You know, there was that was where all the nightlife, the best nightlife in town. There is a place called McClendon. Little Sandy's, Benny's Frat House.

**Christina Felix** 58:12

Wow.

**Frank Blair** 58:13

Let me see, there's two that I'm missing. They're really important. I can't think of them right now. But that's where all the live music was every night there's live music in those places. And then right behind McClendon there was a barbecue place I can't recall that one either but it was right behind McClendon which is right on the corner and then it was in there was a pool hall and then a Little Sandy's and up the street was Benny's Frat House and then on Russell there was at a place that right on Russell but I can't recall the name of that place but it was a really big time. And then there was a place called I think it was the gray stone it was a kind of a hotel for all the black guys they were going in and out and there was a restaurant there. Yeh. So we'd go there and and since they couldn't go anywhere in town, they would just go down Vancouver and up Williams on and just all these you know in their pimp looking cars. Nightlife and they'd just go round and round all night long and they couldn't go anywhere else. And we're just standing around the corners watching them waving at some of the guys we knew.

**Christina Felix** 59:38

They ever go like cruising into Vanport,

**Frank Blair** 59:40

but well, they were all from Vanport Yeah, they were all mostly from Vanport. But now they've moved into this area here.

**Dave Hedberg** 59:50

Did you ever run into other boys from your old crew in Vnaport?

**Frank Blair** 59:55

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, they. We hung out, hung out. And then until they all start dying in different ways or going to jail and things like that right where the Coliseum is that used to be Madrona Hill. Madrona.

and there's a record shop there was famous all the jazz people were always in their record store. In fact there was a musician His name is Tom Grant his father ran their record store and Medrona Record shop and they had little booths you can take like two or three albums in there and sit in the booth and listen to them before you bought them make sure that you liked it.

**Christina Felix** 1:00:49

that's pretty cool; listen to it.

**Frank Blair** 1:00:54

and then there was; let's see

**Christina Felix** 1:01:02

you have a great memory

**Frank Blair** 1:01:04

I can think of that... Paul Knowles. See he ran the place I can think of the the famous black nightclub and all the hot musicians, black musicians, that go there. I saw Louis Armstrong I saw Stan Gets I saw all the all the hot jazz musicians went buy, you know that's where they ended up because nobody in downtown understood jazz they're into Benny Goodman and things like that but swing swing music but they didn't know you know, like Charlie Parker did or Dizz or any of them there there's a little bit above their pay grade when it comes to music Cotton Club that was that was that was it that was Paul Knowles. A friend of mine was the bouncer there that I grew up in Vanport with, he was a bouncer so when I go there he was the one my savior in case they got in any trouble.

**Dave Hedberg** 1:02:22

Yeh, so he was working the door?

**Christina Felix** 1:02:32

great memories

**Dave Hedberg** 1:02:34

thank you so much for sharing your memories

**Frank Blair** 1:02:37

well you know when you're young, that was the first exposure to life on your own, so it is really a big imprint on you. And to see all the guys that you grew up with in Vanport down grown man and have families, and everything like that, still living in that area. And they'd still be living in that area if they had killed it. Just to put the that Colosseum there, kill the whole vibe over there. And then that hospital got the rest of it and then they didn't even develop it. They ran all those people out there and in develop it. It was funny. years later here was on Morris there, NARA, I'm going God I remember when this place was just jump'n. And now it's a Indian Health.

**Christina Felix** 1:03:35

Yeh Indian health building. Wow. I wanted to ask you Do you remember a family named Nelson?

**Frank Blair** 1:03:45

I knew some Nelson's,

**Christina Felix** 1:03:46

Culbertson?

**Frank Blair** 1:03:48

I know Culbertson, Yeah,

**Christina Felix** 1:03:50

so I just watched a video; I've been watching her videos for a while. her name is Joyce Nelson...

**Frank Blair** 1:03:59

Probably a Joyce sounds familiar and then Nelsons. I knew Nelsons. Yeh, I knew more than one Nelson family.

**Christina Felix** 1:04:06

Yeah. His name is Buzz. He has a nickname buzz.

**Frank Blair** 1:04:11

Buzz. I knew some Buzz Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. One of the Nelsons was a fighter also. I can't remember his first name but he was a boxer also.

**Christina Felix** 1:04:25

I want to say his name was Robert or something like that.

**Frank Blair** 1:04:29

Might have been cousin are some to the other Nelson. Because if I remember the Nelson if I hear his name, I know that was the one thing to know.

**Christina Felix** 1:04:40

But I wanted to also ask you the names of the other families that you; the native families lived at Vanport?

**Frank Blair** 1:04:51

Well, like I said, I only met one other family that was there. Because I think a lot of times in back in them days you didn't want to be known as a native.

**Christina Felix** 1:05:02

right

**Frank Blair** 1:05:03



Because like, I remember this old boxing coach, he asked me, "Well, what the hell are you?" I said I'm Indian. He said shit, that's just a fancy word for nigger.

**Christina Felix** 1:05:16

Oh No!

**Frank Blair** 1:05:18

So that's what they thought of the Indians are right there. That's just a fancy word for nigger, who said that? This black coach that I had.

**Christina Felix** 1:05:25

Oh No!

**Frank Blair** 1:05:25

Yeah. Yeah. So you didn't want to be known, as you know, because a lot of those people, you know, get called, I remember being called blanket ass was one of the names used to call me, Chief, blacky. War hoop, "Hay war hoop," you know, shit like that all the time. So it was kind of he kind of shied away from being what you were just because, you know, they were always picking on you for being that they talk about nowadays, being what do you call it racist? Well, I that's all we've ever known. Racism. You know, they came over here. They came over here. If people don't know that, you know, like, they say that there's been two world wars, because they write the history, but actually been three world wars. The First World War was when those three brothers came over here. They were like the spearhead has Columbus brothers. There was three of them. Anyway, when they were like the spearhead the minute word got out over in Europe with what was over here. Here they come, first first the bandits you know, the pirates. And they make fun of them, you know, like all jolly good old fellow pirates, you know, but no, they called us savages while they savaged us, ya know, and so that was the first World War, it come over here and destroyed our people. Southern part is the land of the Condor. We are in the land of the eagle. So when those two were separated, then they conquered us. At one time, the warriors were together and you could travel anywhere you want. Because the Condor and Eagle were related, except when it was in the southern part of the this area. Were in a northern one. Oh, and then they separated us. And then the prophecy says if we ever get back together, the Condor and the eagle, then that'll be the end of the invaders, power. And you can see it I've been all over South America. Yeah, I've been up the Amazon live with the Kichwas. And then the Manchu Picchu.

**Christina Felix** 1:08:10

Oh you've been there? Yeah. Oh, I want to go there.

**Frank Blair** 1:08:16

Because I'm from the Mississippi band. So you travel that River all the way from the north all the way to the south. So you have that wanderlust in you never set roots until you're ready to pass. I've been I've been in New Orleans and I look at people need and they look just like me and I go whooo? Because they come from that part of the world. Yeah, even all those people that dress up like Indians down there it's because of us. The Wild Tchoupitoulas the Big Mamou who all them Indian tribe zona. They are just copying us. Yeah, black people, they were Chumuckla; what they call Chumuckla Indians,

black and Indian. So we've contributed more to this country then we get credit for. So what we are is a shadow nation. And I prefer that

**Christina Felix** 1:09:22  
shadow nation?

**Frank Blair** 1:09:23  
in the shadow nation that way I'm not involved in any other shenanigans. Like they. They said, We are the United States of America. But now we have blue states, red states, purple states. There's nothing United about them. You know, so you can see their way is starting to chip away; getting weaker and weaker not getting stronger, getting weaker, you know. So we always have to depend on seventh generation which are now off going running around the earth; the seventh generation. These little kids here, my granddaughter, she's a seventh generation. And she don't look down at the ground like we did when we were walking around. She's standing there right toe to toe with you. Now they have their own way. And they're very smart, too. It's like

**Christina Felix** 1:10:22  
the old they're born with it. You could see.

**Frank Blair** 1:10:25  
Well see, the land we walk on. That's our ancestors bones. And that's us. What separates us from any people on the world, as we've never left our land. Everybody else comes here. We could have went and start, you know, getting debts decimated by the invaders. We could have ran to the queen or the King of France and said take us in man. They're beating us up. No, we stood here and took everything there was. And we're still here getting stronger by the minute. At one time there's only 800,000 of us. My cousin was the one that started reopening my eyes was you ever heard of Clyde Bellecourt? There were my cousin's from Minnesota. St. Paul. They started... Well did you know the Robideaus from Portland? Oh my god. Yeah, yeah. So they, they're the ones that open our eyes. No. And they come out of prisons. That is most people who come from a very hard way that become leaders.

**Christina Felix** 1:11:45  
One of his grandchildren, great grandchildren. Really great artist now. You don't do social media. So your your hardcopy kind of person and we will have to mail you some pictures of her work. It's just beautiful. Yeah, I am in the AIM. I'm a member here. We have a chapter. And we're trying to Oh, that's awesome. That's and AIM Tattoo. Yeah.

**Frank Blair** 1:12:25  
You're what? Yeah.

**Christina Felix** 1:12:28  
What are you showing me? so you knew Robert?

**Frank Blair** 1:12:33

I, you know, was always always in the background. I never, I never wanted to be out front with anything. Because any kind of movement needs workers with there's too many leaders. You know, and so I'd rather just do what little bit I did. Well, my contribution was was taking youth and keeping them from ending up in a bad way. And so I taught martial arts for 30 years now. And those kids that I taught now are all clean. They have families, respectable. Had one, one nephew, he graduated with a master's just a while back. And the middle boy, he's finishing college, he'll be a have his master's a while back. His woman is going back to school. Cedar, he ended up with a BA and then now he is into farming, Berry farming anything like that. So it's like, a raindrop doesn't know the part it plays in the flood. And that's the way they like to be a raindrop. Yeah, I don't need any more recognition and just watching those. The one becomes two to two becomes three. And so where it starts, who knows?

**Christina Felix** 1:14:15

One time the presence was larger here for AIM.

**Frank Blair** 1:14:19

Oh, yeah. Well, you know where the Sundance up on Mount Hood. It was really strong. You know, Lone Wolf. He was like my, my mentor. And he's the one that told mem you don't have to pierce.

**Christina Felix** 1:14:37

You don't have to what?

**Frank Blair** 1:14:38

you don't have to pierce

**Christina Felix** 1:14:39

Oh, yeah.

**Frank Blair** 1:14:40

Let the ones that want to pierce pierce. Yeah. All you have to do is learn how to pray in your own way.

**Christina Felix** 1:14:48

Right. You're familiar with the Sundance? Have you head of that? (Asking DBH who nodded yes).

**Frank Blair** 1:14:51

So I spent 20 years up there. Watch his little kids now are grown men, piercing.

**Christina Felix** 1:14:59

I don't know if they have that Sundance anymore do they?

**Frank Blair** 1:15:00

No, since the epidemic hit, you know, it was it was kind of working its way out. Because people had started dying off. And then people that at one time allowed white people come up there. And you are taking the knowledge and going starting up their own. You know,

**Christina Felix** 1:15:06

yeah, that's what I heard.

**Frank Blair** 1:15:16

And so it just kind of the down in, in Nevada. There's a big one down here. I can't, I can't remember the place only went through a couple times. It's still it's a strong one still. But they took the pipe back South Dakota and I think broke it up. And the Chinoku went back to South Dakota. Where it started. Yeah,

**Christina Felix** 1:15:57

I knew one of the pipe holders.

**Frank Blair** 1:16:02

Yeah, it was a road man with a pipe holder. I was a fireman. And we used to go help elders out and like, down in Nevada. There, we used to go down there once a year, there was a gathering of all these people that were involved in new Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs, there in Yucca Flats. They would go there and protest once a year. And so we'd go down there and help Corbin he was a Shoshone elder. He was the one who started it, and then go down there and build sweat lodges and tend fires. And then he always tell the natives that were involved. Don't get involved. But these other people do. You just stay back in tend the fires and watch out and let everybody else do their thing. Because they would build like a cage across the highway leading into the Yucca Flats where they deposit all that nuclear waste. And these people would charge him like he's Japanese people. You know, it's just one guy. Every time we went down, he was the first one to go. Dress up like a sumo wrestler or whatever. and he'd run across Yelin bonzai and it just sit there and wait until he got there in a gathering. He was the first one in the cage....

**Christina Felix** 1:17:34

They got used to him after a while?

**Frank Blair** 1:17:40

Yeah, they just say, you know, it was like a funny act. You know, here he comes. Bonzai, Bonzai, and then the rest of the people start, you know, lighting fires and everything. We all we did was feed him and and sweat him up. That's all we did.

**Christina Felix** 1:18:02

Wow, such interesting stories you have

**Frank Blair** 1:18:05

Well, you know, things you know, if you don't seek it will find you. You know, and that's why lawyers look, I never seek out anything. It was always follow me. Yeah. And then and then it's how you act upon that. So I just tried to do everything in a good way. Now I'm now I'm approaching 88 next month. Nice. And I know now I can reflect.

**Christina Felix** 1:18:36

Yeah. You don't want a party here at Mamook?

**Frank Blair** 1:18:40

No, no, no. I know. And then, like my brother when he passed away at a gathering at NAYA for him Memorial and it's the first thing they asked me. Well, you want your memorial there too? And I go, I don't want no memorial. I don't want nothing. I just want to pass away. And that's it. I don't want anybody standing over me. I don't need that.

**Christina Felix** 1:19:07

Yeah, I don't know how I feel about that. Not myself either. Yeah. Well, do we have any more questions for him?

**Dave Hedberg** 1:19:17

Well I do have a permission form

**Christina Felix** 1:19:22

Oh, we need your permission.

**Frank Blair** 1:19:23

Oh, yeah. Good. All right, I'll forge a signature on there.

**Christina Felix** 1:19:32

But thank you so much for spending time with us.