

ROY WOOD

Edited transcript of a recording of Roy Wood interviewed at his home at Great Glemham, Saxmundham in Suffolk by Chris Eldon Lee on the 25th of January, 2007. BAS archives no. AD6/24/1/25. Transcribed by John Zerfahs on 11th August, 2017.

[Part 1 0:00:00] Lee: This is Roy Wood recorded at his home at Great Glemham, Saxmundham in Suffolk on the 25th of January, 2007 by Chris Eldon Lee. Roy Wood Part 1.

Wood: Roy Wood, born 1931, 11th of November. I spent most of the war years at school, so I didn't leave till 1945, then I got fed up with my first job...

[Part 1 0:00:40] Lee: Which was what?

Wood: Which was a laboratory assistant in a rubber manufacturing company.

[Part 1 0:00:46] Lee: Whereabouts was that?

Wood: That was at Willesden in London.

[Part 1 0:00:52] Lee: Were you born in London, Roy?

Wood: Yes, I was born actually in Forest Gate, West Ham, but just before the war my family moved out to Borehamwood in Hertfordshire, and from there it was a progression through school a local school. Most of the memories of those times all to do with running around fields and playing with horses and cattle and so forth, so that's one of those, and when I started work my uncle had, well was managing director of a rubber company and offered me the job as a lab technician which was most peculiar I was making plaster models for rubber dolls and formers for various models and things. Anyway that lasted for about a year or 15 months and I was getting a bit fed up, I'd been promised work in the Far East rubber company, and also their factories in Malta and I thought 'Well this is for me', I wanted to travel. Nothing transpired so I thought 'This is never going to happen' so I asked my sister if they'd got a job at Huntings - she worked as a telephonist there - and I duly got a job as a trainee photographer which lasted until 1950 when I went into the Air Force. There they wouldn't let me be a photographer unless I signed on as a regular, so I signed on for 3 years, which was a good thing really because you got a full 6 months' course on photography of all aspects and then the next 6 months I, well not quite 6 months because there was also the square bashing beforehand, they sent me overseas to Egypt for two years. I was then a photographer on a night fighter squadron [chuckles], which sounds a bit odd but the only thing we used was little cine cameras.

[Part 1 0:03:42] Lee: And what were you filming, you were filming the results of the bombing were you?

Wood: Well it, night fighters each gun was aligned to a cine camera so that you could actually see on the film the direct hits of the weapon being fired.

[Part 1 0:04:02] Lee: But that was not, there was no war at the time?

Wood: Oh no, no. There was a little bit of hooaha with the locals in 1951, and actually at the time we would have gone to Cyprus on army practice for a couple of months, but we were recalled and had to go back to Egypt to defend the British bases, and then, that lasted till '53 when I returned the year of the coronation, got back home just in time for that, and then back to Huntings of course as a ground photographer, processing. This lasted a while and then I, I'd obviously been trained as a camera operator in the Air Force and I did a bit of that, a bit of oblique flying taking happy snaps around UK. Everything was going well, 'Would you like to go overseas?' almost immediately I said 'Where to?' and they said 'Jordan', and I said 'No thanks, I've just spent two years in Egypt'. So after another couple of months they parked me off to East Africa, there's three territories with Kenya, Uganda, and Tangyanika as it was then, and I was there for 6 months, that was 1955. When I got back FIDS first season was underway, and, didn't bother me too much, I mean I'd just had quite a good time in East Africa. I was asked in the New Year, well actually about March, April, whether I would be prepared to replace Pete Remus [phonetic] as photographer on the second year so I said 'Yeah'. So I couldn't go anywhere that year, and we went, I didn't have a great deal to do with the stores that had been accumulated for this job. I knew that there was a 64 foot garage in the back end of Huntings' property full of gear that had got to be shipped, but that was all done by a removal company, so we had nothing to do with that.

[Part 1 0:07:04] Lee: Were you interviewed by anybody before you went?

Wood: Interviewed as such, no, well it was a bit of an interview with Peter Mott who ran the whole thing. He simply asked me what sort of, my attitude to it was. Would I be able to stand up to a bit of hardship, which is basically what I was replacing Peter for. He strained both his arms lifting weights etc, and Peter knew I was fairly fit being a member of the cricket team, and doing work other than photographic around the photographic department. I was also in the fire squad there which all helped to pass me as number two.

[Part 1 0:08:05] Lee: But there was no psychological analysis of your state of mind or...?

Wood: Oh no, no...

[Part 1 0:08:09] Lee: ...suitability for the ...

Wood: No, I mean we were employed by an air survey company as photographers, pilots or whatever and you just, it was a job. It lasted me 39 years [Lee laughs], and I was very happy with my job, very happy. Prior to going down I was only asked, well obviously had medicals and jabs and all this sort of thing which I, all the medicals I passed A1, so I was fit enough to do anything, and so duly, I got a date here, we went, the 20th of October in 1955, when we left Harwich, after having said goodbye to our loved ones on the dockside, and then began a nice, easy trip down south in a 900 ton coaster which was a Danish coaster on hire. The preceding year that ship had the helicopter tied down on the deck, and in the interim period of it coming down for the second year they made a MacGregor hatch which simply slid forward and then up in sections to allow a lift to bring the chopper up from below.

[Part 1 0:09:55] Lee: This was the *Oluf Sven* was it?

Wood: Yeah, the *Oluf Sven*.

[Part 1 0:09:58] Lee: And what was the advantage of having the chopper below decks?

Wood: Protection.

[Part 1 0:10:03] Lee: Against, icing?

Wood: Against everything because I mean some of the weather we went through was a bit rough, and if you're going to lash a chopper down, a very frail Bell, it wouldn't last too long.

[Part 1 0:10:19] Lee: Before you set off did they outline to you exactly what your job would be, or...?

Wood: My job would be my normal photographic processing, plus any manual work that was required.

[Part 1 0:10:38] Lee: Did you see yourself actually as a photographer taking the pictures, or were you a lab man?

Wood: A lab man, the whole time down there. Once started I never had chance to get up into the aircraft, and that is one thing that I bitterly regret.

[Part 1 0:10:54] Lee: We may come back to that later, Roy, I don't want to disturb your flow [talkover]. Was there talk of this being part of anything bigger? You were going down to develop photographs of aerial surveys but was it part of a bigger campaign, was it...?

Wood: Oh yes, it was, oh, as far as I understood anyway, all part to do with the IGY, International Geophysical Year, linking with Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey which was not mapping survey as such, as far as I could gather. Bear in mind that once started I was stuck in a 60 foot building for most of the day, and I saw very little else going on.

[Part 1 0:11:48] Lee: Were you aware of any political importance?

Wood: Sorry?

[Part 1 0:11:50] Lee: Were you aware of any political importance of the work that was being done?

Wood: No, I don't think I was, don't think I was no not at the time. I know Peter Mott had great difficulty in achieving his ends, both for the aircraft and the chopper side of it in particular, because it was all fairly new ideas then really. Although *Protector* had a chopper it was erm, not a lot of it around at the time.

[Part 1 0:12:29] Lee: You mean not many ships had helicopters on board?

Wood: No, no, no, and of course there were no landing strips in those days. Now there are, places like Port Lockroy etc have got a full town really, including hangars for the aircraft and all sorts of things going on, which is why I would like to go down again.

[Part 1 0:12:51] Lee: Peter Mott talks about the importance of doing the survey then before Argentina or Chile did it.

Wood: Yes.

[Part 1 0:13:00] Lee: Were you aware of that?

Wood: Only because of Peter's urgency to do it.

[Part 1 0:13:07] Lee: Right.

Wood: I wasn't aware other than that. It was Peter's idea that we should do it, England should do it. It was the same as the occupation of the Falklands, we were there first, so therefore we will do it.

[Part 1 0:13:30] Lee: So there was a sense of importance about the work you were doing?

Wood: Oh, yes, tremendous amount of importance, because there was so little – the first year, there was, I believe, about a thousand frames of photography taken, thousand photographs, and during the interim period that two areas of photographs were printed and etc and then mapped to show the difference between the ice which had previously covered large areas and was indicated on the map as land. We proved by aerial photography that it wasn't, it was ice. So you could see more clearly the actual shorelines of a lot of places through the ice.

[Part 1 0:14:32] Lee: So you could, by photographing down you could identify the shoreline?

Wood: You could identify the shoreline, not all the time, not all the time because there was some huge great 'bergs had sort of crashed into the shore and you'll see shots by Ponting and all sorts of people who show these great big icebergs aground and it looks like a bit of rock really, covered with ice. But the first year with the few frames that were taken we were able to show more clearly the benefits of photography.

[Part 1 0:15:14] Lee: Was there a knack in interpreting where the shore line was, or was it obvious?

Wood: Oh there is in reading all aerial photographs, I mean one of the things that sticks foremost in the mind is old burial sites in England which come up so well on aerial photography. You can see in a ploughed area of field the outline of a fort or buildings or whatever, and this same sort of thing applied down there with rock.

[Part 1 0:15:47] Lee: So what were you looking for on the prints to spot the shoreline, depressions, or ...?

Wood: I'm afraid that side of it didn't really concern me, it was only that, with the expertise by then, by which by then I had acquired the ability to study photographs I could see myself where the shoreline was.

[Part 1 0:16:15] Lee: Right.

Wood: The, who Peter, I mean Peter was explaining this to those concerned within the government why it was better to do it this way.

[Part 1 0:16:33] Lee: So what exactly was 'FIDAS' [phonetic] or 'FIDASE' [phonetic], how do you pronounce it?

Wood: Well 'FIDASEE' [phonetic], it's only a bunch of initials really, 'Falkland Island Dependencies Aerial Survey Expedition'.

[Part 1 0:16:48] Lee: Right.

Wood: As is the FIDS is Falkland Island Dependencies Survey.

[Part 1 0:16:55] Lee: And you had a brief to survey the Peninsula.

Wood: We had a brief to survey the Peninsula and off-lying islands of Grahamland, and as far south as we could possibly go. But of course to go much further south we would have had to have a forward base, which at that time would have been, say, Port Lockroy, but it wasn't suitable for us at that time. Deception was ideal in that a land locked harbour, and in the summer months of course there is hardly any ice in there at all. Each day the aircraft took off they would send the power boat ahead of its course to check there was nothing in the water.

[Part 1 0:17:53] Lee: No bergy bits or ..

Wood: No bergy bits or whatever.

[Part 1 0:17:58] Lee: Ok. In your party how many people were there on the project would you say?

Wood: Well I worked it out to be 31, excluding the crew of the '*Olly Seven*', oh sorry, *Oluf Sven*.

[Part 1 0:18:16] Lee: [Laughs] *Olly Seven* was the nickname was it?

Wood: *Olly Seven* was its nickname. [Laughter]

[Part 1 0:18:23] Lee: I'm glad we got that down – it's quite useful. So you're on the journey south, what was life like on the boat, Mr. Mott paints a rather dark picture of the 'village' I think it was called?

Wood: The village was an area of the aft hold, and it was the top half of the hold, top half of the aft hold, and down, across the ship were rows of bunks, individual, so that you got a little cubicle each either side of a long table which ran abeam. So, and at the outer edges which there was couches on either side of the boat, which proved very useful on one occasion.

[Part 1 0:19:25] Lee: Elaborate on that

Wood: Oh well that didn't come till we were coming home.

[Part 1 0:19:30] Lee: Go on, it doesn't matter. We'll forget if we leave the story now.

Wood: We were in this horrific storm, it was really frightening.

[Part 1 0:19:41] Lee: On the return journey.

Wood: On the return journey, and we had to turn first of all into the waves because we'd been pooped several times, water coming over the stern, and being a sailor, because I did a lot of sailing in Egypt, I was aware of what was going on. The boat was pounding about like mad and the only safe place was to tie yourself in the bunk.

[Part 1 0:20:14] Lee: Right.

Wood: We got some boards either side to hold you in. So the most part we weren't allowed on deck. The erm (what was I going to say?)

[Part 1 0:20:37] Lee: You tied yourself into your bunk.

Wood: Oh yeah. All of the crews did this. The photographer, Bill Freeman, was allowed to go up on top, to the bridge, and he also went up on to the fly bridge at the top, not fly, but an upper bridge to take cine photographs, him and the cine photographer (can't remember his name now), anyway he took some marvellous shots of this storm, of the waves crashing into the side, they were crashing into the side and make a 'BOOM!' as it hit the metal..

[Part 1 0:21:27] Lee: It was all a bit worrying was it?

Wood: Yes it was in a way. I had every faith in the skipper, I thought 'Well he's as good a seaman as I've seen anywhere', and so were the crew, all Danish. The only one of them I didn't like and that was the steward, that was another story. We eventually got caught by a tremendous cross-wave and the whole boat went over on its side, and we thought 'Oh my Gawd, it shouldn't go this far' [chuckles]. At that time lunch had been served, [laughter], by this steward, and I'll never forgive him for the food, who had served up in huge great bowls this red mess with bits of spaghetti and macaroni floating in it an' some other indescribable objects, not at all the sort of food you want to eat, and particularly in those conditions, and this whole lot, bearing in mind we got the fiddles out on the table, they stood no chance whatsoever, we went over like that – Peter Mott always sat down at one end [chuckles], and the cook, who'd suffered a broken leg, the ship's cook had suffered a broken leg, he was sitting down at that end too, and everything went down there [laughs]. You can imagine the mess on that side, it was awful, took us hours to clear up the mess, oh it really was awful, but...

[Part 1 0:23:31] Lee: So Mott and the cook were completely smothered were they?

Wood: Oh they were, and some of the others were, I mean we all just crashed down there. I hung on to the table, I had the foresight to hold on tight [chuckles], so I didn't end up with them but could easily have done, because it went right over, I never thought she'd recover, and after that I lost all fear, because I thought myself 'Well if she's going to go that far we're ok, we've got a lifeboat here. We don't need to worry about it'.

[Part 1 0:24:07] Lee: So she was ok in bad weather but was she comfortable in this village of yours?

Wood: Well as comfortable as you can get, I mean we didn't really have anywhere comfortable to sit, I mean the chairs were suitable, they were screwed to the floor, they were suitable to sit in, but not for a great length of time. Every evening we played Scrabble or chess and whatever, and of course after a while you start getting corns because so hard the chairs. The bunks were alright, they were quite comfortable, and while I think of it, regarding that steward, he had plenty of stores, plenty of stores, he just wasn't a cook, and didn't know what to do to feed all these guys. Anyway the surveyors whilst we were down there, while they were doing their bit sailing from point to point to get the ground survey, they discovered a way in to the stores which was underneath the village, so they went round underneath the village, hauled out food, and cooked it in the village, because they got all the cooking gear as they were ground surveyors.

[Talkover]

[Part 1 0:25:35] Lee: The village is on board the boat in fact, isn't it?

Wood: Yes, yeah. Yes, that is a, all it is really a section of hold which just simply crossed the whole boat, it went left to right, and you were, we would just use that as a centre.

[Part 1 0:26:01] Lee: Were you aware of any mechanical problems with the boat, it did it ever break down, or...?

Wood: Sorry?

[Part 1 0:26:05] Lee: Did the boat ever break down, or have difficulties?

Wood: Oh yes, yeah. I mean two or three times on the way down there it broke down, for some reason or other. The worst bit was when the freezers broke down and they had to chuck all the frozen food and fresh veg away. So, for a few days, before we got to Montevideo we were without fresh food we were living on tinned stuff. But, once or twice, well I say once or twice probably half a dozen times, the engines stopped for some reason or other. But it's only a little 900 ton coaster going through the big oceans, it was ok while the sun was shining, but once it had to power through something it suffered a little [chuckle].

[Part 1 0:27:02] Lee: You mentioned you had respect for the ship's captain, what was your feelings towards Peter Mott?

Wood: Well Peter I had great admiration for because he'd got such dedication to the job, and I knew that anyway from other jobs that I'd been doing, I mean he was director of mapping so therefore all the work that was done, and as I said the only overseas job I'd done prior to that was to East Africa, I knew that all that stuff was going down through the mapping channel, and he was always amongst the first to sort of say how good or bad the job was. So he was a very dedicated manager all round both as mapping manager and as expedition manager.

[Part 1 0:28:06] Lee: Is there a good story about him, is there an example of his...?

Wood: Well he nearly ruined the film. [Laughter]. Because Arthur and I, the other photographer and I...

[Part 1 0:28:21] Lee: Arthur Arkinsaw [Phonetic].

Wood: Yeah. Because we, obviously we were doing the actual processing of the film we didn't have time to dry them, so, I showed you earlier a photograph of the driers, and what would happen would you load the film in bearing in mind it's 9½ inches wide, load the film in at the front end and it would travel round a set of rollers all the way round the drum, come out the other end of the gap which is about 6 inches, and then you'd loop it over a spool and it would automatically wind itself up. Whilst it was doing this you had a chamois leather to take off the surface moisture, which of course was really necessary because there is no heat, oh there was a bit of heat but not a great deal of heat on this drum, so we had to get rid of the surplus moisture. So I went out there with a film I'd just put through the chemicals and washed it and said to Peter 'Oh, there'll be people waiting outside to dry the films'. And Peter was there on this occasion I said 'Oh, are you drying Peter?', he said 'Oh yes,' he said, 'I'll dry it', and I said 'Oh, ok', and I thought no more of it, as you do, when your boss says 'I'll do it', 'I'll do it!' [Laughs]. I went back in the dark room, finished another film and I went outside again and I said 'Have you finished?', he said 'Oh no I'm still drying it', I said 'But you haven't connected it to the roller at the top'. And what had happened was that, oh it was so lucky I tell you, it had gone through, the film had gone through to about three quarters of the way, and then it had gone in between two rollers and started piling up, curling up at the back in big loops. [Chuckles]. Of course I said 'Well, let's get this, whoa, stop what you're doing a minute', and I got it all out, and as it went through I was feeling the surface of the thing and it was *dry*! And that was the thing that really made me breathe a sigh of relief because if it had been wet it would've been absolutely ruined, and you can't ruin films in that sort of situation. There's no chance for a re-flight, well there is but, I mean you want to cover more area, and anyway it turned out alright there was one or two little scratches on it but the rest of the film was ok, and it was the first time I ever had my boss apologise to me [laughter].

[Part 1 0:31:38] Lee: Let's talk about this processing because you were in your own hut weren't you, you weren't in Hunting Lodge, or were you?

Wood: I was in Hunting Lodge, I wasn't in Biscoe House.

[Part 1 0:31:48] Lee: Right. So Hunting Lodge was a work building not a sleeping building?

Wood: That's right. Hunting Lodge comprised half photographic lab, and half cook-house and dining room, and whilst at the start we all slept on the boat whilst we were unloading, and then Peter suggested that to make things easier, at Biscoe House where everybody was going to sleep in their roof space, would it be alright if Arthur and I, and the two cooks, slept in Hunting Lodge, to which we readily agreed. You got a half a mile to walk for food the other people, we just walked through a door, and everything was laid on, I mean we had a

permanent kettle on for tea and whatever, so it was a very comfortable situation. We just simply put our sleeping bags underneath the big work bench in the light room and that was where we lived. I put up a few more shelves to take our personal goods because, it seemed I was forever putting up shelves for something or other .

[Part 1 0:33:16] Lee: The lab looked quite roomy in the photographs and you had two [talkover]

Wood: Oh you needed it, you needed it. I mean it's a lot of film to move around. You got 250 exposures on a 9½ inch roll, and you had to have long titling benches where as you had to stamp each frame with its number, mark up the flight lines on it, where it was and, oh, identification really. So I mean it wasn't just a question of storing stuff round the room, it was a ..

[Part 1 0:34:01] Lee: Library.

Wood: .. it was a library, it was a film drying room, it was everything to do with photography, everything, well ground for us, that is.

[Part 1 0:34:16] Lee: So take me through the process then, there would be undeveloped films which would go onto the planes ...

Wood: Yup.

[Part 1 0:34:25] Lee: ... the Cansoes and then the next you knew they would return, and you'd get the magazines back, which were fairly chunky things weren't they?

Wood: Yeah, I suppose if you can imagine an object about 15 inches square, probably 7 or 8 inches in depth, probably 9 inches in depth, which is solid metal casing, a feed and a receive spool inside these, Canadian film they would link up to the camera which is left on the aircraft, and it's a normal cassette, just big size, and they would take off, do whatever work they could, return, and at the start, the very first sortie, we went down to meet them. Whilst waiting for them to return we'd mix up the chemicals. There was no sort of packet chemicals we had to make our own up from the various parts of developers and whatever.

[Part 1 0:35:44] Lee: All of which arrived, went south in a liquid state not powder state?

Wood: Powder state.

[Part 1 0:35:49] Lee: Powder state.

Wood: Yeah. This is way back, we're talking 50 years ago. There were very few packet developers for aerial survey at that time. I mean in the latter stages you would buy a packet of developer and make it up like soup, it was easy, whereas then it was weighing out this and weighing out that, and we ..

[Part 1 0:36:21] Lee: Sorry, just to push the point a little bit further, Roy, the development tank would, you'd have packets of various chemicals, can you remember what they were?

Wood: Offhand, no.

[Part 1 0:36:34] Lee: Ok. And you would have to mix the right quantities in water ...

Wood: That's right.

[Part 1 0:36:38] Lee: ... into a developing tray...

Wood: Yes.

[Part 1 0:36:40] Lee: ... in the darkroom.

Wood: No, well all done in the darkroom you would mix up your tank which stood, what's that?

[Part 1 0:36:50] Lee: 18 inches?

Wood: 15 inches high, and it would be that wide.

[Part 1 0:36:56] Lee: Couple of feet.

Wood: Yeah. That would be filled, oh half full, of warm water mix your chemicals so that it's all dissolved, then you would add clean water, fill it up to required level, drop the temperature to whatever, and in some cases you had to raise the temperature being down there, and then the film in the dark would be loaded onto these large spool units, which again are shown in that photograph, in the dark of course, and then wound through in a, hold up the framework and you feed the bottom roller into the water or into the developer and then wind it in. Well it's actually wound into water first to get a pre-soak. Then it's backwards and forwards by hand, 250 foot of it, quite tiring. There were machines to do it but you couldn't use the machines whilst you were actually developing it, because you had to lift it out every now and then and check by panchromatic light what your exposure was coming up to, so you had to have the least weight as possible to lift this thing up. When you decided it had enough development, soak through to wash off most of the developer then into the fix as normal, washing afterwards. Whole process would take about three hours I s'pose, to do one film.

[Part 1 0:38:54] Lee: For one magazine?

Wood: For one magazine. That includes drying of course.

[Part 1 0:38:59] Lee: Yeah.

Wood: So, I mean the first couple of hours you're actually working on the mag, or on the film, and then after that it's a question of it being washed in the outer room, 'cause you could wash it in daylight, and it would be taken from there to the dryer and put round the dryer. It was quite an effort really.

[Part 1 0:39:30] Lee: So you had, effectively you had one long continuous piece of negative 250 feet long. And just going back slightly, the magazine would be loaded into the plane, but the plane wouldn't be a darkroom, would it?

Wood: Oh no, because the magazines were light tight.

[Part 1 0:39:50] Lee: Right.

Wood: When it clamped on to the camera, you pulled a shutter out, and then, obviously the normal..

[Part 1 0:40:02] Lee: Exposure.

Wood: ..exposure through a lens.

[Part 1 0:40:05] Lee: And was that mechanically timed exposures, or by human...

Wood: Oh yes.

[Part 1 0:40:12] Lee: So there was a timer that took a set, it took an exposure every few seconds.

Wood: It took an exposure dependent on the distance travelled, because each photograph should proceed by 60% the previous photograph.

[Part 1 0:40:33] Lee: 60%, yeah.

Wood: So you got a 60% overlap on each frame, all the way along the line.

[Part 1 0:40:39] Lee: And they're flying about 1400 feet.

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 1 0:40:43] Lee: So how frequently would the shutter go?

Wood: I s'pose of that you're talking something like - hmmm - gosh - I've been doing this all my life. About every 20 seconds or half a minute or something like that, it's not all that quick it's not a very fast aircraft. Latterday it was, they had faster aircraft.

[Part 1 0:41:14] Lee: Then when they got back they put the seal back on the magazine.

Wood: Put the shutter back in, the cover back in, then un-clipped it, took it off, and you've got a light-tight magazine.

[Part 1 0:41:26] Lee: And did you produce prints in your laboratory as well?

Wood: Oh yes we had to print, each run that was flown had to have a check set made, which we used every other print, because if you got 60% overlap on every other print, on every print, on every other print you get 30%, or should do, if the terrain hasn't changed too much. But you could still see identification on the ground, very rarely were you putting frames together which were pure snow, because there was always something in that 30% you could link on. There's always some little tiny spot, and so you would lace them together simply by making prints every other one, and then as they were finished you would staple them all together, on 30% so you ended up with a long strip of photography on paper, and this was our

flight lines. The first object whilst down there was to fly what we termed navigation lines, and then they would go for some, well, depending on the weather, as far as they possibly could go, down one section say you was flying south, do a recognised turn to the east or west, fly a certain distance, recognised turn again to go north, and fly in a northerly direction for the same length of time. Then they would do a timed flight across, east-west, one at each end, and depending on how long the runs were, the original nav runs were, several in the middle. So that you had a link all the way down, and so then you were left with a framework and the idea being that through the navigation sight on the aircraft you could look down and follow the preceding run, say your nav line, you could follow that down at 30% difference all the way down, by the graticule in the sight. Got down the bottom because each time you pass one of the crosslines, tie-lines, you would make a note, bla, bla, and that's how it went all the time. Obviously you hadn't anything to go on other than dead reckoning really, not like today, when you can do all this on satnav.

[Part 1 0:44:58] Lee: So in effect you sort of produce a frame on the first few runs and then filled in the gaps between the bits of frame...

Wood: That's right, yeah. Yes just building up a network really.

[Part 1 0:45:12] Lee: What was the water source like for the work you were doing because that was unreliable, wasn't it?

Wood: The water source was a well, a freshwater well which had been installed by the old whalers, 'cos Deception had had this huge whaling station, and it was very good water but you had to pump it up. The well, most peculiar, it was a hole in the ground covered by big boards, and there was a ladder leading down about 10 foot to a platform where you plonked your pump, and then just dropped a tube over the side and pumped it up to wherever you wanted it.

[Part 1 0:46:02] Lee: By diesel pump or electric pump?

Wood: Well it was electric in the end, we used electric, because we had the necessary gennies to provide it, the power. When they built the Hunting Lodge the first season, in the roof, the whole length of the roof was fitted with aircraft petrol tanks which had been obviously been cleaned out, and that was used for water storage. Those were insulated to great depth really, but of course at night it's, although the sun is shining it's still very cold outside and the whole system would freeze up in the pipe. For an example when we got there there was thick ice underneath the hut, which we're talking about three foot of ice underneath the hut, absolutely solid. I mean you'd need a road drill to get through it. We had drains from the darkroom we just couldn't get them clear for the first two or three weeks, and we were pouring boiling water and sea water on it and, oh eventually we did it, but it's very difficult to clear it and to keep it clear. So in the end I decided that enough was enough and I got a, it being an old whaling station there were all sorts of little huts around so I took one of these old huts to pieces and re-built it over the pump in the well, which did a great job we were then able to have, by insulating the pipe, we were then able to have running water at night. It's little jobs like that you see which, oh, made a hell of a difference.

[Part 1 0:48:21] Lee: And the running water at night was important because you'd be working round the clock.

Wood: Well you'd be working round the clock. If the aircraft came back with say seven mags we'd be working on and on and on and on. I mean sometimes we ran out of water. In one of these photographs I could show you to save using the tank water I said 'Well why don't we wash the prints in the melt stream outside?' Now, in the mornings, sun's shining, but you're out there in bright daylight, and the melt stream starts running, and so I would go up the top end of where the melt stream was which ran past the hut, chuck the prints in the melt stream, and Arthur'd pick them out fully washed, down by the tanks [laughter].

[Part 1 0:49:24] Lee: Downstream?

Wood: Yeah! It was only inches deep I mean it wasn't a great force of current, but just enough running over smooth ice so it didn't damage the prints, and it worked out perfectly.

[Part 1 0:49:42] Lee: Did you and Arthur Arginstall [phonetic] just simply work together as equals, or..

Wood: Oh yeah, yeah.

[Part 1 0:49:49] Lee: So you both did everything?

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 1 0:49:51] Lee: In harmony?

Wood: Oh yeah, yes.

[Part 1 0:49:54] Lee: And were you able to make copies of the negatives, or was that not feasible?

Wood: Not of the negatives, no. No we didn't, not down there. The ones we had to do were printing mainly, after processing the film which the check set.

[Part 1 0:50:16] Lee: Again?

Wood: The check set,

[Part 1 0:50:17] Lee: Check set, yeah.

Wood: Then once we'd titled the films and stapled and, stamped rather, we had to make fair copies. I think we did two or three of each, can't remember why we did two or three of each but whatever it was, we probably left a set at Port Stanley and others were distributed elsewhere.

[Part 1 0:50:47] Lee: And you would do the copying work when the Cansoes weren't flying presumably?

Wood: Well when we weren't actually processing film and had finished the work on the film we had the actual work required to complete the film, we did stamping etc, then we would start printing fair copies, and as we see in the photographs is boxes and boxes and boxes of fair copies, actually full of fair copies, now 50 sheets a box. And this went on and on and on I mean it seemed we'd never ever get to the end of the printing. It got to the st(age), I wrote in my diary for the first, well up until January, the beginning part of January, and after that I just had no time whatsoever to do it, I was either doing work on the printing or actually packing up the gear to bring it back home again, because that was going to be last season.

[Part 1 0:50:02] Lee: You never really got out of the hut much.

Wood: I did, well you had to or you'd go mad sitting in there all day. I was into archery at the time, I'd bought a set of bows and arrows in Port Stanley. Arthur also had taken his set down with him so we went out shooting and tried to hit the skuas, and never hit them [laughter].

[Part 1 0:52:35] Lee: Was there any tie-in with the hydrographic surveys that were being done elsewhere?

Wood: I do know they did soundings wherever they went, and whether that went into the general hydrographic survey I don't know.

[Part 1 0:52:49] Lee: Were you able to go on any sorties at all?

Wood: The only time that I personally had anything to do outside, or at least I went ashore outside of Deception was when on the way back when the ground surveyors wanted to finish off King George V Island I think it was, and we were allowed to go ashore because we'd never been anywhere other than Deception. So all the crew that were not actually flying or ground surveyors, i.e. International Aeradio engineers and crew members. The choppers obviously went elsewhere but people like the boatmen who looked after the boats, the doctor, odd people like that were absolutely thrilled to go ashore somewhere else. And somewhere in this house there is a little piece of rock I picked up off the beach with fool's gold in it. Never did have it assayed. [laughter].

[Part 1 0:54:13] Lee: So you never went up in a Canso?

Wood: No unfortunately not, no. There's shots in the case there of the Canso taking off and when I could, when I could, I would go and watch the take-off because beautiful, absolutely beautiful.

[Part 1 0:54:32] Lee: They would just rise, these are flying boats aren't they?

Wood: Yeah, yes. Oh you would see this great big wake, spray, and it was absolutely astounding seeing take off one after the other, and they gradually rise up above Mount Kirkwood, which is 2,000 foot, and it gradually you'd think, 'Will it make it, will it make it' [chuckle], always did.

[Part 1 0:55:04] Lee: Although you didn't go did you hear about what conditions were like on those planes.

Wood: Very cramped, bearing in mind that each crew member was wearing a full survival suit.

[Part 1 0:55:14] Lee: Immersion suit.

Wood: Immersion suit, and there's not a lot of room anyway, so in your actual working space they had very little room to move around. The one that had probably the most was the camera operator who had the biggest area because he got several mags there, they were all loaded all ready for the go, so if they could do 10 mags they would want 10 mags. But most they got back in any one time was eight or something like that.

[Part 1 0:55:58] Lee: If they were flying along and a magazine was working every 20 seconds or 30 seconds of an exposure, what happened when the magazine was completely exposed and you were still flying along. Were there two magazines side by side, was there a changeover?

Wood: Yeah. Then the procedure would be intercom 'I'm coming to the end, X number of frames to go', 'Ok we'll mark that "blah", we'll turn here', put a cross trip run in there, a tie run in there, whilst they were doing the tie, or turning for the tie run you put on a fresh mag, and then put the tie run in and then go back and hopefully pick up where you left off.

[Part 1 0:56:51] Lee: Left off, yeah, a bit like knitting.

Wood: Yeah. [Laughter]

[Part 1 0:56:55] Lee: And did it work all the time?

Wood: Mostly, mostly. They were very good at it I've got to say that, they taught me a lot about flying.

[Part 1 0:57:05] Lee: So at the end, you were there for, how long were you there for, Roy?

Wood: We got there about a month after we left home so it, 20 - 6th I think, I've got a note somewhere. Yeah we got to Deception on 26th of November, and we were there through to the end of February/March I think we came home, I got that..

[Part 1 0:57:38] Lee: February/March, yeah.

Wood: So, all that time it was..

[Part 1 0:57:44] Lee: Four months.

Wood: .. yeah, about four months.

[Part 1 0:57:46] Lee: And what would you say you had achieved in those four months?

Wood: A greater part of the photography of Grahamland, plus some offshore islands, King George, oh too many to mention. But they did a marvellous job I thought. Latterly in my career I went on a survey, a navigation survey course for Huntings and became a navigator, and I appreciated then just what sort of job they'd done of it, because it is quite an art, quite an art.

[Part 1 0:58:31] Lee: Is it real pioneering work?

Wood: Oh yes. Oh yes, I mean nowadays you, I mean the last trips and now bear in mind that Huntings packed up in '85, my last trip was in Nepal over the Christmas period prior to that and we were flying on sat-nav, and you simply dialled in the start and end of run, with a few check points along the line, and the aircraft took you along that line. If we'd have had that sort of thing down there it would have made a hell of a lot of difference. It's like radio, International Aeradio provided an operator for the ship, and a crew of three including an engineer to staff a radio station on Deception, put up a big mast. They were the only ones who could receive the *Goon Show* from England, and on *Goon Show* night everybody would crowd into the hut, and nobody dare do anything more than breathe, and that quietly, whilst we listened to the *Goon Show*. Bearing in mind that last year I spoke to Rod Downie via internet, oh no I didn't speak to him but I e-mailed him from the Antarctic, immediate, no problem at all. I mean I can't remember how many letters I received from my wife, or she was my fiancée then, but very few because there was only *Shackleton* and one or two others that came through, who would have any mail on. So I mean I was really cut off for most part of the time.

[Part 1 1:00:56] Lee: Describe a bit more this *Goon Show* business, I'm fascinated, were you listening to it on the World Service or..?

Wood: Yeah, it's World Service, yeah, but the radio mast down there was the only one that could pick it up we had no radios that would reach it other than that, and that poor quality stuff compared to what you get now.

[Part 1 1:01:23] Lee: How did it feel because you were there as a group all laughing at the same thing and that thing [talkover]

Wood: You choke! You absolutely choke because you know that if you so much as breathe out heavily you've missed the next joke, it's infuriating but afterwards you'd have a bloody good laugh and think, and you'd all remember the different bits that stuck in your mind.

[Part 1 1:01:48] Lee: Did the catch phrases come up again later?

Wood: Oh yes, yes.

[Part 1 1:01:51] Lee: 'He's fallen in the water!'

Wood: Ha, yeah! 'I'll get you, Eccles.' [laughter]

[Part 1 1:01:59] Lee: Were you homesick?

Wood: I don't think I had time to be homesick. I wanted to be back home with my girlfriend, but I was thoroughly enthralled with the whole thing. Shipboard life I thought was marvellous. All the way down there as you can read in the diary, my day would start, we'd share duties for clearing up and washing up and cooking teas and things like that in the village. Main meals of course were provided by the ship's cook. You would have that honour every few days, other than that what are you going to do during a 24 hour period when the ship's just cruising along, nothing else to do, I mean we had no cinema we had, anything we did was our own creation so in the evenings you played these board games of one sort or another, in the day if the weather was warm enough you'd be strolling around in shorts, if it wasn't you'd be wrapped up. If it was good weather you'd help the ship's crew paint the boat. I mean I've been up the mast in a bosun's chair painting the mast and things like this. I was having a very good time. We built a pool on the deck, two or three times, because the first one leaked, the second one was in the wrong place for the Crossing the Line ceremony, so we got a third one, and then we had to build them again on the way back, but we'd got the idea we went to the last station, so we only built one on the way back. But, I mean Crossing the Line ceremony, hilarious, absolutely hilarious.

[Part 1 1:04:26] Lee: This is Neptune, and..

Wood: Yes. Neptune and there was all – we got a certificate to say we'd crossed the Line. Oh, I thoroughly enjoyed life on a boat, and Mike Caine the ground engineer, he and I were both fencers so we used to spend days, well not days, but at least once a day we'd have a bit of fencing practise on the fore deck. There's a photograph somewhere of it.

[Part 1 1:05:04] Lee: Well I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll take a break shall we?

Wood: Yeah, let's do that and have a cup of tea.

[Part 1 1:05:07] Lee: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:05:10] Lee: This is Roy Wood, recorded at his home at Great Glemham, Saxmundham in Suffolk on the 25th of January, 2007 by Chris Eldon Lee. Roy Wood, part 2.

[Part 2 1:05:24] Lee: Would you say that you had a passion for photography, and if so do you know where it came from?

Wood: It's been acquired over the years from air survey not necessarily commercial photography. I did do a bit of wedding and party and such of, when I first came out of the Air Force, but it was too hectic a life for me. I seemed to spend most of the time out partying and never getting the jobs done. So it didn't really suit me, I loved this idea of travelling as much as anything, and in my latter years at Huntings I travelled quite extensively over the Middle and Far East and Africa, saw quite a lot of places, and some of which I would even go

back to. So it was travel as well as the job. The job I found fascinating for the many aspects of it. Basically taking photographs of weddings et cetera, the art working in the processing lab becomes rather mundane after a while because they're all, all the jobs or most of the jobs are the same and you get, well I don't, much fun out of it. Whereas air survey, each job is different, I mean we're in Antarctic now. All over Africa I've been situated in little townships out in the wild, Nepal, it was so extensive you covered the world and I thoroughly enjoyed doing it for that reason.

[Part 2 1:07:34] Lee: But you took some photographs yourself in the Antarctic, was that just personal?

Wood: I took a few, most of them were transparencies because I was into transparencies at that time, I did take a couple of rolls of black and white with the two and a quarter square but I wasn't really interested, nor did I have a great deal of time much to start with. But having a darkroom setup we became the downtown photo lab where everybody bought their happy snaps to us for developing and printing, and if I liked a particular shot I kept a copy of it, which you've seen.

[Part 2 1:08:22] Lee: I have, thank you. You've talked a bit about what FIDASE [exchange about pronunciation], how did that group of people work with the Fids, was there any crossover?

Wood: Yes, because during the time they worked with us in this business of drying the films for example we trained them how to dry films [laughter]. When the whalecatcher went aground at the entrance to the Bellows we went on board it, it was stuck on this rock at low tide the, at high tide the water was more or less up to the deck level and at low tide you could get below, so we went aboard and stripped out the bunks etc for the use of the inhabitants of Biscoe House, and they had luxury bunks complete with drawers underneath and all sorts of things which came out of the whalecatcher.

[Part 2 1:09:34] Lee: The whalecatcher was a wreck was it?

Wood: The whalecatcher was a write off it just went aground on rocks. Three of them came in at Christmas, just for shelter, very foggy and one went aground on this rock and just split its bottom open, it just sat there on the rock. And the other two came in and we learnt about it and being Christmas Eve we got in a couple of our boats and went round giving them carol singing! [laughter]. We were invited aboard and wined and dined, well we had a few nibbles but certainly wined.

[Part 2 1:10:19] Lee: Did you have instruments to play, or was it just purely *a cappella*?

Wood: Sorry?

[Part 2 1:10:13] Lee: Did you have instruments to play or [talkover]?

Wood: I think there was a mouth organ or two probably, yes.

[Part 2 1:10:29] Lee: Whose idea was that?

Wood: Well it was a cumulation really, we were sitting in what was known as the magistrate's hut where the ground engineers were, and we said 'Go on and get a boat out and give 'em a call – might get a beer', 'cos the beer was a premium down there. I mean you were on a ration of four cans a week, and a bottle of spirits a month, so it wasn't very much so every boat that came in we raided them for drinks, and we said 'Ok, well we'll get there', and as we were going down there we came across Peter Mott and a few others who were also going to do the same thing. So they got in the motor launch and we all went, well all went round there's just two boats left, and went on from there. Good evening was had by all.

[Part 2 1:11:32] Lee: What nationality were the people on board the whale[catchers]?

Wood: Norwegian.

[Part 2 1:11:35] Lee: They were Norwegian? Did you have anything to do with the Argentinians or the Chileans at all?

Wood: Only on one occasion when the Argentinian tug dropped anchor and asked for permission to water our well, not the particular one we used 'cos there's a another one further along the beach, but obviously put there by the whalers in their day.

[Part 2 1:12:06] Lee: So let's go back to the Fids then, were you in daily contact with them, did you work together, eat together?

Wood: Oh yes. Biscoe House, all the ground floor was theirs, and the loft was sleeping accommodation for all Hunting personnel, whether they were Huntings or I.A.L. [International Aeradio Limited] or whoever, those who went down on FIDASE, so that we didn't interfere with their work, they didn't have a great deal of work to do although they had a dog team there, which was interesting. I had photographs of them cutting up seal meat for the dogs using a big axe, and just dropping the meat in front of the dogs, so that any work that needed to be done either way was shared. As I say they dried films and washed prints and all sorts of things just to help, and they were probably very glad of the diversion.

[Part 2 1:13:27] Lee: The variety.

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:13:29] Lee: Yeah. Did any Fids go on any of the expeditions, particularly the ground control expeditions?

Wood: Well they did have a Hackle [phonetic] with them who was their liaison officer, and he sailed with the boat the whole time, stayed with the boat, though he himself was also drying films [laughter]. There was no side when it came to drying films, anybody handy. And really, I mean it was just a question of two teams working side by side, one doing their own job if any help was needed then they give a hand, I mean the little 'calfdozer' one journey from one to t'other suddenly disappeared in a big deep ditch as it were, and it was down in this ditch so it was completely covered. So that had to be dug out, they all turned to

and helped dig it out. Things like that, they didn't do a specific job together but if there was anything we could do to help either side then, boom, it was there.

[Part 2 1:15:02] Lee: Like good neighbours.

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:15:05] Lee: And when you got there the second year you extended the steel bracing for the Cansoes did you?

Wood: Yes, that was a necessity because the first year they first of all didn't have an 'ut, so more of us came down for the second season. Most of the fuel was taken down the first year, which is the reason they didn't have this MacGregor hatch, as far as I can gather.

[Part 2 1:15:31] Lee: For the helicopter, because the hold was full of aviation fuel'

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:15:35] Lee: Which [talkover] dicey I would have thought?

Wood: I would have thought so, but nobody seemed to be over worried about it, from what I heard because it's all in retrospect when I heard about it. But of course when we went down the second year it was very swish affair of a hatch which lifted up in sections and slid forward on rails and stacked up against the foremast, and then allowing a lift platform to rise with the helicopter on it, and then at the end of the day down again it went, protected. The first year the chopper was lashed to the deck, and they suffered greatly with that, apparently a lot of damage, flying ice and whatever.

[Part 2 1:16:35] Lee: Tell me about the helicopter.

Wood: Helicopter – we'd just started, or about to start work. We'd arrived at Deception and unloaded, and it awful lot to unload, each case of photographic gear, I know I counted every one, had 56 three inch screws in the lid [laughter]. I'm going to do that by hand, no motor screwdrivers.

[Part 2 1:17:08] Lee: Is this where the Fids came in handy?

Wood: Pardon?

[Part 2 1:17:10] Lee: Is this where the Fids came in handy?

Wood: Yes, oh they helped on that as well. And then, I suppose it must have been some two days before, the aircraft had come in and the ship was going to go out on its first ground survey voyage, and they went out on the, they went out onto survey on the 9th...

[Part 2 1:17:46] Lee: Of December.

Wood: ...of December, and on the 10th, flying over Tower Island the chopper was caught in a downdraught with two on board, or two surveyors on board, and it just simply threw it down on the deck and made a bit of a mess of it.

[Part 2 1:18:08] Lee: On the island itself?

Wood: On the island itself.

[Part 2 1:18:10] Lee: Yeah. How did you hear about that?

Wood: The ship returned the next day [Laughter]. They were feeling rather down about that because, I mean this was Peter's doing, and to have suffered a disaster like that on the first day of flying virtually, it really, they'd used the chopper a couple of times on Deception to, for example put the beacon up on Cathedral Rock for the aircraft, and one or two mountain hopping jobs to do on the island but that's the only flying it had done, and then on the first serious survey where they dropping a couple of surveyors off at the Tower Island, 'Boom!', down goes the chopper, and Peter was sick.

[Part 2 1:19:07] Lee: Nobody's fault really, nobody injured.

Wood: No, it was just one of those unfortunate downdraughts that affect the choppers.

[Part 2 1:19:18] Lee: So that was a huge risk to the whole operation, wasn't it, unless you could find another helicopter?

Wood: Well it is, and if we hadn't have got a replacement I don't know how they would have got all the ground control done, because they did a hell of a lot of ground control, for the whole of the area, I mean that is quite a feat in itself.

[Part 2 1:19:44] Lee: Was the replacement helicopter automatic or did you have to argue for it?

Wood: I think he had to argue for it, and he must have argued very well because they said 'Ok you can have one', so they dispatched the ship back to Montevideo, and one was airfreighted out to Montevideo, and it duly returned with a new chopper and it all raring to go.

[Part 2 1:20:17] Lee: But it arrived broken in fact in Montevideo.

Wood: Pardon?

[Part 2 1:20:21] Lee: It arrived broken in Montevideo.

Wood: Yes, oh yes.

[Part 2 1:20:23] Lee: We know that the glass bubble was smashed, and there [overtalk]..

Wood: Yeah, yes, yes, that's right. Oh everything went against them. One has to feel extremely sorry for the man, I really felt sorry for Peter that day.

[Part 2 1:20:39] Lee: Can you explain to me how this ground control business was conducted, because you're all of you doing the aerial surveys anyway, so how was the ground, the Cansoes were doing the aerial photography.

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:20:53] Lee: The helicopter's job was to do a ground survey.

Wood: No. Helicopter's job was simply transporting ground surveyors out to do the ground survey. Ground surveyors would go out fix points in certain areas to link to the photography, so that you knew exactly on a photograph that that is point A, and that one is Port Lockroy, point B shall we say, and a line, of course, in between.

[Part 2 1:21:30] Lee: A measured line.

Wood: A measured line, on the ground. And that's what they did all the time, just taking measurements over the whole area of photography.

[Part 2 1:21:41] Lee: And they put up beacon points by using oil drums lashed together.

Wood: That's right, yes.

[Part 2 1:21:46] Lee: And those oil drums are visible from the air..

Wood: Yes they were.

[Part 2 1:21:49] Lee: ..and were they on the photographs?

Wood: They're on the photographs, some of them. Sometimes they got snowed under but most times they ??? [inaudible]

[Part 2 1:21:57] Lee: So basically, the ground survey work enabled you to relate the aerial photographs back to the ground.

Wood: Back to the ground, otherwise you're going to be having a large area of photograph with beautiful control, but where is it? Timbuktu?

[Part 2 1:22:20] Lee: But I got the impression from Mott's ???[incomprehensible] a lot of the groundwork was done after the air [overtalk] was finished.

Wood: Oh yes, yeah.

[Part 2 1:22:26] Lee: How does that work?

Wood: Well it still carried on, you see you can, once you get a baseline out you work from your baseline, and then each one, forgive me I'm not a ground surveyor, I'm not entirely *au fait* with ground surveying but, as I understand it each one of them is linked to that line, so that you'd know that you'd got a correct position for each line, and photograph for that matter.

[Part 2 1:23:03] Lee: So, the crucial thing was that there was some kind of baseline in place before [overtalk] Cansoes worked.

Wood: No, not necessarily, not necessarily, no because the Cansoes, as I said earlier, would fly a line. Now you can't put a ground surveyor down on the ground and say 'I'm going to fly over you', 'cos you might not find him [laughter], and so it's a question of doing the photographs first, and then you link the photograph to the ground, with a point on that particular point you've linked, and then you measure off to another object in the distance and you can pick that up on other photographs.

[Part 2 1:23:57] Lee: So they were placing the beacons and taking measurements from landmarks that they could then find on the photographs, back in the hut?

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:24:04] Lee: Right, thank you. How do they cope with areas where there was steep terrain, because presumably the plane was flying at a steady 1400..

Wood: Quite right, yes.

[Part 2 1:24:14] Lee: ...14,000 feet, and because the mountains rose steeply wouldn't the focus go or the ...?

Wood: No, the focus is set and so you could have quite steep mountains in one frame measuring something like a couple of miles across, and a difference in scale of three, four, five, or even more thousand feet. If there was a gap between covers, you were running your 30% overlap down and in the air it looks very good because you're tracking your graticule down that 30% line, but flying over it with the difference in scale you'll find there's a gap between the two runs. So, once they're all been laid out you think 'Ah, right. We'll put one, two or even three infills in that area'.

[Part 2 1:25:26] Lee: Extra runs.

Wood: Extra runs.

[Part 2 1:25:28] Lee: Right.

Wood: Where possible. 'Course not always possible in a place like that where you don't know if you're going to get that little area clear of cloud or whatever.

[Part 2 1:25:40] Lee: So the steep slopes didn't matter too much. The book talks about they used trial and error to find a suitable compromise, was that to do with ..?

Wood: That is it. That's the way to do it, it's the way it was always done in the old days. Now, everything is satellite isn't it? [laughter] We wouldn't have needed this. I wouldn't have had my trip.

[Part 2 1:26:03] Lee: And the Cansoes were excellent for the job?

Wood: Were excellent for the job in the simple reason that being able to land on water, and climb up on land, they could literally go anywhere and be safe providing the weather is good, and the sea is not covered with bergy bits and whatever. So, yes, I mean nowadays with the

advent of virtually an airfield down there, complete with hangars etc it's not so important, because they can land anytime, anywhere.

[Part 2 1:26:57] Lee: But they were very dependent on good conditions, weren't they?

Wood: Oh, extremely, extremely. I mean she's a slow old bird the Canso, it is part Catalina I think is the term to them, PBY the Americans call them.

[Part 2 1:27:20] Lee: They leaked as well, I gather.

Wood: Yes, but you can't have a complete waterproof belly, particularly when you've got a camera hole in it.

[Part 2 1:27:33] Lee: Oh, so there was no glass below the camera?

Wood: Yes, there is.

[Part 2 1:27:35] Lee: Oh right.

Wood: Oh yes. But it's still got to be sealed, and no matter how good a seal and join there is on two pieces of metal, when the boat is surging through the water at a great rate of knots it's bound to find a crack or a hole. And so you get quite a bit of water in there and of course the spray entering odd little cracks, no doors, windows whatever – water will find a way anywhere, and then as the aircraft takes off – to start off with there's a great big spray of spray behind it, and then as it rises in the air you'll see a great spray issuing from the underside of it.

[Part 2 1:28:30] Lee: As all the water ran out of it.

Wood: Well all water run out, I mean the one, a good place it enters is the wheel bays, because the wheels drop down outside the hull, and that's not waterproof, water finds its way in there.

[Part 2 1:28:51] Lee: So were they left floating in Whaler's Bay or do they always come back on shore?

Wood: They put them on shore whenever possible, because they're safer, you can tie 'em down there.

[Part 2 1:29:03] Lee: But they wouldn't sink if they were left for several days?

Wood: Oh no, no. Oh, 'sume they had to do a little baling out or whatever.

[Part 2 1:29:13] Lee: And Deception Island at the time, looking at your photographs there seems to be very little snow on Deception Island.

Wood: Ah, well. When we arrived there was, it was all covered in snow. And it wasn't all that long before that snow had disappeared, there was still permafrost, I mean you couldn't dig down through the ground, you had to pick any holes you wanted to dig, had to be done with a pick. But the snow off the lower slopes disappeared fairly quickly, particularly those

around the Bellows, the Bellows and Cathedral Rock were clear of snow, but when we arrived it was all covered in snow.

[Part 2 1:30:04] Lee: And how many huts would there be on the British base?

Wood: Well there was just the one major hut.

[Part 2 1:30:10] Lee: Biscoe House.

Wood: Biscoe House. There were several huts belonging to or that had belonged to the whaling company which were used for various things, engineers had one, the doctor had one, but only because they cleaned the snow and ice out from inside and then weatherproofed them and made them comfortable, and lived in them thereafter.

[Part 2 1:30:41] Lee: Didn't they all smell of dead seals?

Wood: Not always, not always, no. The seals were mainly left out on a bench – there's a photograph there of it actually, under a couple of bits of corrugated iron with a couple of rocks on top to hold it down, and that's the only dead seals you saw. I should imagine that during the whaling season, while it was in operation as a whaling base, which as I understand it was probably pre-war, it must have been a horrendous smell, because even when I was there they'd had oil tanks which were filled with whale oil. The blubber was boiled down in great big vats and then through steam, or via steam pipes transported in these big tanks and there'd be these half a dozen tanks full of oil which was shipped out by tankers, obviously, and when the whaling packed up everything was just left there and it gradually disintegrated. But the metalwork, all the metalwork was incredibly, well I won't say rust free but only just a coating of rust.

[Part 2 1:32:26] Lee: The big oil tanks on the shore you made use of, didn't you?

Wood: Oh yeah, they're the ones I'm talking about. We cut a hole in one to house the little 'calfdozer', 'cos that was essential to keep that nice and warm, and then - this was done the first year - they cut a hole in the biggest one up by the hut which was used for storage, and just by simply cutting a square hole in it and then covering it up for the winter season, but inside it was a maze of pipes across the floor and these were heated by the boilers which kept the oil fluid, but when I was there, we're talking thirty years after it was last used, it was just a thick, hard, yellow mass which if it got too warm began to smell quite a lot. But it was a very useful storage place I must say. In the end the two cooks, to get away from the dining room, where they had their beds, and in the evening the crews would gather a few beers and keep these two cooks up and they didn't like that so they scrounged all sorts of things and out of the remaining Dexion that I didn't use they built a villa, which was just a wooden box and they cut a couple of holes in it for windows and put plastic sheets over that and quite comfortable in the end, with a couple of camp beds. They got a power supply in there from the gennie, a kettle, and radiograms and all sorts of things in there.

[Part 2 1:34:49] Lee: Inside the oil tank?

Wood: In actually, inside the oil tank.

[Part 2 1:34:52] Lee: Did you sleep in a tent before that?

Wood: No I didn't, Peter did [chuckles]. When Peter asked us if we'd mind moving out, we said 'Yeah, alright, we'll sleep in the hut. At the time of the ship going back to Montevideo for the new chopper, Peter stayed on the island, and so as to still leave them, not take any more room in the Biscoe House loft he elected to pitch a bell tent behind the photographic station, the section, and there he stayed until the ship came back. When he parked his tent there was all snow and ice all over the place, and when he struck his tent there was a block of ice two foot thick – and that was how long he was there, not all that long really.

[Part 2 1:36:03] Lee: He would normally stay on board the Oluf Sven?

Wood: Yes, he directed the ground survey side of it. On our side we had a flying manager, John Saffery who, ex-RAF Spitfire pilot, very with it. He got the whole thing organised getting these aircraft down there from Canada, down through the States, and South America. He did all the organisation for that and did a fabulous job. There wasn't one holdup all the way there or back.

[Part 2 1:36:46] Lee: And would it be he that would decide where you were going to go, where the planes were going to go each day?

Wood: No, it was merely a question of weather.

[Part 2 1:36:55] Lee: Right. So...

Wood: Weather decided everything.

[Part 2 1:36:57] Lee: And you were dependent upon reports and...?

Wood: Mmm. There were no reports. We had a met officer from FIDS with us, Brian somebody, and he had the odd report from the odd station, but there wasn't the coverage there is now, so that it was a question of getting up there and then seeing if there was any weather to be seen.

[Part 2 1:37:36] Lee: But the first Canso to go would only go with half a tank of fuel, is that right?

Wood: Er, I don't know about that one, I'm not too sure on that, no.

[Part 2 1:37:46] Lee: Right. So who determined exactly where the planes would go, who determined the flight lines or the navigation paths each day?

Wood: The chief navigator would do that, 'Soupy' Symington. Called 'Soupy' because there used to be a company called Symingtons.

[Part 2 1:38:05] Lee: 'Soupy' you say?

Wood: 'Soupy'.

[Part 2 1:38:07] Lee: 'Soupy'. And how would he decide?

Wood: Well, by, well 'We're going to start here'. They've got a map of the area of sorts...

[Part 2 1:38:19] Lee: A rough map?

Wood: A rough map, and 'That's where we want to...', I mean this would all be sorted out with Peter Mott beforehand. 'That's where we want to go, that's what we want to fly', and then it would be a daily basis of, 'See if we can get up there today, or down there'.

[Part 2 1:38:41] Lee: Which area was clear [overtalk]

Wood: Yeah. I mean sometimes they, once they took off, came back with 15 frames of, I mean I've got to process film after spending all day getting everything ready, and then I've got 15 frames to develop [chuckles], frustrating.

[Part 2 1:39:01] Lee: Wasn't there a moment when you nearly lost a lot of photographic equipment, there was a potential fire?

Wood: Well it was a potential fire but it wasn't all that serious really. A couple of jugs of cold water does marvels on a bit of coal.

[Part 2 1:39:17] Lee: This was an anthracite..

Wood: Yeah. Because we had an anthracite stove you see, both in the cookhouse and in, they paid that bit more than it was worth, I think.

[Part 2 1:39:32] Lee: Except that it was lucky you spotted it I guess?

Wood: One always did, I was, at that time I had been, as I said before, working at Huntings I was in their fire squad, and I was trained to spot these things I suppose.

[Part 2 1:39:54] Lee: There was a thing called the 'circus', or the folding boat equipment which got you [talkover]

Wood: That's an army thing which they used, I think mainly for river crossings, canvas folding boats with a framework over the top, and with the addition of runways you can load fore and aft to be two boats. I mean it looks extremely flimsy, and considering it's canvas you think 'Well can it hold up any sort of weight?' But a photograph with all cases on, in the actual, well its greatest weight was when it took the 'calfdozer' ashore and back again.

[Part 2 1:40:47] Lee: The 'calfdozer'?

Wood: Yes, it's a ...

[Part 2 1:40:50] Lee: Miniature bulldozer.

Wood: Miniature bulldozer, which was used for all sorts of towing steel sledges of goods up the beach and whatever, 'cos it's all volcanic ash. So it was relatively easy to transport over it provided you had a sledge – and a 'calfdozer'.

[Part 2 1:41:17] Lee: So the photograph you are showing me here of Sherril's [phonetic] circus is that what you're talking about, is that the folding [talkover]

Wood: Yes that's the one, that's Bim Jaques on there.

[Part 2 1:41:23] Lee: Oh is it? One of the pilots. So basically it's two small rowing boats lashed together but between them are four grooves or gullies where the wheels of the tractor can go.

Wood: Yes that's right, yeah. I mean because the whole thing where Bim's standing is a platform, so you can load up, I mean the boxes are piled there so that you can balance them out. But those are the boxes with 56 screws in each lid.

[Part 2 1:42:00] Lee: It was a fairly primitive car ferry.

Wood: Well, very.

[Part 2 1:42:02] Lee: I gather it didn't always float.

Wood: No, no, we had a couple of mishaps with it. Thankfully I didn't get too involved because it was very cold in that water.

[Part 2 1:42:11] Lee: But they would ferry back up again from below?

Wood: Sorry?

[Part 2 1:42:14] Lee: They had to drag it back up again having sunk.

Wood: Yeah, yes. They were very lucky because it was so little damage done to it, because without it I don't know how we would have reloaded the ship.

[Part 2 1:42:25] Lee: At the end of the second year?

Wood: Mmm.

[Part 2 1:42:27] Lee: Did you experience any volcanic activity?

Wood: None at all. I s'pose the nearest to it was when we set off a couple of cases of explosives in an ice cave. On the beach was a couple of old barges, I suppose they must have been 20, 30 foot long, wooden, and they were, all the planking was weeping and so that you couldn't have floated them. The navy refused to tow 'em out to sea and sink 'em, so, i.e. *Protector*, and they were packed with boxes of black pellets which had been used for the whalers' harpoons, and 'course we got the curious ones in our crew [chuckles], Pete Davy the Canadian camera operator said 'I wonder if it would explode!?' [Laughter]. So the next thing you know he's stacked a couple of these cases in an ice cave, got a Verey light, one of these hand held ones about the size of a large cigar, a long piece of string attached to the ring and looped over stakes etc leading outside, whereupon we all gathered outside, Mike bulldozed up a barrier with the 'calfdozer' and he pulled the string and a great big explosion occurred [laughter].

[Part 2 1:44:19] Lee: It looks like an atomic bomb! Wow, yeah.

Wood: That's all ice.

[Part 2 1:44:25] Lee: Oh is it?

Wood: The one I took's better, it's in colour [laughter].

[Part 2 1:44:32] Lee: What was your scariest moment? Was it the journey back?

Wood: The journey back I suppose, but that only briefly. I was enthralled. The whole aspect of the whole thing, everything was new, because anything out there done prior to that trip had been in hot climates, or moderate climates, so it's totally new to me. The first time I'd ever skied, and they were old wooden skis, and lace-up boots took you for ages to put them on, and the worst part about it was that once you skied downhill you had to walk back up, which was very, very tiring.

[Part 2 1:45:26] Lee: And professionally what would you say was your biggest challenge, technically, or ..?

Wood: Well keeping the photographic section going, because there was so much to do and things had not really with you all the time with the water business. You'd never believe how much trouble that cost us, trying to get water running in and waste water running out.

[Part 2 1:45:54] Lee: I was going to ask you what you did with the chemicals after they were finished. I don't suppose they were disposed of ecologically were they?

Wood: No, no. They filtered through the ash.

[Part 2 1:46:07] Lee: So they just ran out on the ground outside, and soaked away.

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 1:46:10] Lee: Yeah. Still there? So the water supply was the biggest challenge.

Wood: That was the biggest challenge I think, and then of course the total, the next job, you just once it started there was no stopping it.

[Part 2 1:46:33] Lee: Relentless.

Wood: Absolutely relentless work, work, work, with an occasional break, i.e. Christmas, when the *Britannia* visited us, or another ship came in. But for the most part, I'd sometimes take a walk out with my bow and arrow just to make my legs work.

[Part 2 1:46:58] Lee: So even when there might have been several days of bad weather and the Cansoes couldn't fly you were still fully occupied.

Wood: I was still at it, still at it.

[Part 2 1:47:06] Lee: Was it boring?

Wood: Didn't have time to be bored, didn't have time to be bored.

[Part 2 1:47:11] Lee: 'Cos you're creating the world's biggest jigsaw puzzle, aren't you really?

Wood: Yes. It was, at the same time as it was fascinating, I don't know, it's hard to explain. The environment and what you were achieving, nobody had been before. All the stuff I'd done prior to that in the Middle East or East Africa and UK, I mean they'd been there before, the RAF had flown survey over Kenya and Uganda etc, so I wasn't the first. And there, it's the first time it had been done.

[Part 2 1:47:57] Lee: You were surveying virgin territory.

Wood: Exactly, mm.

[Part 2 1:48:01] Lee: Very exciting.

Wood: Oh I thought so.

[Part 2 1:48:03] Lee: And responsible? Getting it right?

Wood: Yeah. I mean, I suppose I could call it dedication because I stayed with the jobs for so long, but I didn't think of it as a dedication, and it was so, I thought that I needed to do the best I could, and, it's hard to explain really, 'cos I think it's really because of the environment, because it was so different. Well I've had many different places since but none as different as that.

[Part 2 1:48:46] Lee: Not as challenging?

Wood: Not as challenging. I mean I've developed film in a tiny little loo on top of a toilet in Libya with heat of about 115, and trying to keep the chemicals cool, but that's nothing compared with this, and while I was there I was developing in me Y-fronts, I mean you couldn't do it in Y-fronts in Deception.

[Part 2 1:49:26] Lee: Did it ever go wrong, or were you always in control of the job?

Wood: Fairly well. It was really those who, like Peter ...

[Part 2 1:49:38] Lee: The helpers.

Wood: The helpers, were liable to go wrong. Arthur and I, Arthur was more experienced than I was, being older. I mean at the time I was 24, I think Arthur must have been in his 30's. So we were fairly with it as regards our trade, and we ought to be at that age, I mean three years in the air force, and all the training I'd received I should be somewhere near being a ground photographer.

[Part 2 1:50:17] Lee: There was a tape recorder in the workshop, in the lab, wasn't there?

Wood: Yes, but ..

[Overtalk]

Wood: No it didn't affect us at all, that was really one of Peter's ideas, when he'd got a spare minute he would talk into it, no, part of it was to do with his book I suppose.

[Part 2 1:50:33] Lee: I see, right. He was recording his memoirs?

Wood: Mmm, which is a better way of doing it than my diary because I've got a book there, I suppose it's got a couple of hundred pages, and that's it, that's the total there.

[Part 2 1:50:51] Lee: So that this tape recorder wasn't playing music to, *Music While You Work* or...?

Wood: Oh no, no.

[Part 2 1:50:57] Lee: Tell me about the Royal Yacht *Britannia* 'cos she made [overtalk]

Wood: Oh that was wonderful. That was another thing, I mean did that ever happen again? No.

[Part 2 1:51:07] Lee: Tell me the story.

Wood: Well, the Duke of Edinburgh had been to the Melbourne Games, and, whoever decided it, I don't know, that we would, they would call at Deception on the way back and we were informed that they were going to arrive, so, 'Ooh yeah, please do!' Then the due date they were due in, there was a heavy fog, sea fog, and so the *Protector* stayed outside –

the HMS *Protector* was a fisheries ship, that stayed outside with *Britannia* - and Duke of Edinburgh came in one of the boats, launches, totally taking us by surprise. We had been told that 'No, they're not coming in yet, they want to be able to see their way through the Bellows', and with a big ship like that you got to be careful [laughter], not very wide. So Peter said 'Right, we'll have lunch now, before they arrive', we were going to have lunch afterwards. So hurriedly Jeff and Don got the lunch out, and we're tucking in and then somebody comes running up the beach 'Oh!! The Duke's here! The Duke's here!' [Laughter]. I think it was Guyver, one of the FIDS guys, and he said 'Oh in that case we'll have to vacate', so we all started getting up and out of the cook's side of the hut, the restaurant area, and as we were all crowding out through the door so the Duke is walking up, and we all introduced in a line as it were, and, very with it sort of guy, he wanted to know all about what happened with this film and, oh, he's very switched on guy.

[Part 2 1:53:34] Lee: He was well briefed was he?

Wood: Oh he must have been, yeah, must have been. Anyway, there were various lords with him, Lord Kilkinon I think was one of them, and Sir something, an author, can't remember his name now ??? [incomprehensible] or something. They said, we were told that we were

invited aboard the *Britannia* that evening for a film show and a buffet. Cor, lovely! I mean – I’ve told you before you must gather that I like boats, and this was the cream, this is the icing on the cake. *Britannia*, when you get up to it you can practically shave in the side it’s got such a gloss on the paint, absolutely gorgeous, and we were taken by their wonderfully proportioned launches, all mahogany and brass, out to the boat and up the steps on this white deck, everything was spotless and it was out of this world, absolutely, considering the boat had been out from UK for some time, all the way to Australia, and then back to us, it must have been months, and there was, it was like it had come in out of the factory, or boatyard. So, that’s the first thing that I noticed, absolutely immaculate everything, everything. Wherever you looked, every little nut was polished and, oh, ‘t’s lovely. So we went into the bar, or one of the bars, where we were drinking beer out of pewter tankards, and silver tankards off of the old *Prince Albert*, which is an earlier Royal Yacht, and other Royal Yachts all memorabilia all round. The Duke was going round chatting to this one and that one, and odd comments like ‘Oh your sweater’s nice’, I said ‘Oh well, wife knitted, girlfriend knitted it’ [talkover]

[Part 2 1:56:09] Lee: You dressed up as best you could I guess?

Wood: Well some of us did [laughter]. Now that is a good point actually. Peter, Bob Petters [phonetic] the pilot, a Canadian pilot, and one other said ‘No we’ll go as we are’, and Peter being the old Antarctic cum Greenland explorer...

[Part 2 1:56:38] Lee: Peter Mott.

Wood: ...Peter Mott, their attitude was ‘If you don’t wash too often it will keep you warm’. And so he’d got the same old boots on and all that sort of thing, whereas I’d got my cleanest pair of slacks, my best white sweater and so on, and, but anyway that’s how we were there. Duke he went round he talked to everybody, and I thought ‘Well, what a good guy’, and I’ve admired him ever since. I mean he called a belt a belt, I can’t fault the man. After this, after a few drinks we were – I can’t remember where we went first, I think we must have gone into the buffet first – might not. But wherever it was we went into the State Room for the showing of *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and I was in the second row sitting next to one of his secretaries, very charming girl called Ann, first woman I’d seen for a couple of months [laughter]. And, we saw the film, thoroughly enjoyed the film, first time I ever seen it, I’ve seen it about 30 times since. Then we went for the buffet and this was spread out and you never seen a buffet like it in your life, it was just about everything you could think of on this buffet. And we were talking about, I was talking to one of the chefs who was serving out the dishes, and I said ‘Cor, that bone’d go just right for our dog’, so he said ‘What dog?’, and I said ‘Well, we got an adopted dog from the Fids.’ They had half a dozen huskies and this cross-breed who we called Lilo, and Lilo would hang around our hut because he was always being fed titbits. So I said to this chef, I said ‘The bone when you finish off, I’ll take it for the dog’, and I got a photograph of him with the bone in his mouth, and so that was great fun, that, it was great fun. And then we all came ashore, I’d have stayed there forever, and I’m sure I could have explored that ship top to bottom in a couple or three months, that would have suited me down to the gr[ound], it was absolutely gorgeous.

[Part 2 1:59:36] Lee: That visit was almost exactly 50 years ago wasn't it?

Wood: Mmm.

[Part 2 1:59:39] Lee: And your memory is crystal clear.

Wood: Mmm. Since then a very old friend of mine who actually had been a ground surveyor at Huntings and started up his own business, he actually had a contract to do the ground survey for the new airbase at Port Stanley. So he had a party of his surveyors out there doing that, and of course they went down by civil airlines etc. Ron has always been a keen Antarctic man, and he's very with it as far as Shackleton and Scott and so forth, and he said that he was going to go down there and have a look. So I said ' Oh I wish I could come with you', and sure enough he got on one of these trips, but far too expensive for me unfortunately.

[Part 2 2:00:47] Lee: There was a photographic survey done by the Cansoes on the 14th of October, '56.

Wood: Yes. That was done on the way down.

[Part 2 2:00:56] Lee: Was that you?

Wood: Ooh yes, same crew.

[Part 2 2:00:59] Lee: You did that, did you?

Wood: I didn't actually process the films. They had two photographers in the aircraft who were also camera operators, and they processed the film, I did the printing when I got down with Arthur, and then we laid out the whole lot on the floor of the town hall, great big sprung floor, lovely town hall it was, of the whole of the islands of, Falklands, and I wouldn't mind betting that that was used to great effect during the Falklands War.

[Part 2 2:01:43] Lee: When you – one question I'd forgotten earlier I remember it now – there obviously were maps of the Antarctic Peninsula before you started work, then you produced your work, were you surprised at how much discrepancy there was between the two...[overtalk]

Wood: Oh yes. I mean that was, it was so enormous.

[Part 2 2:02:02] Lee: Really?

Wood: Yeah. So enormous, I too was surprised. Last year I visited B-A-S for the first time, and I was agog when I went round there and I was handed a map of Deception, not done by us I hasten to say, it was Argentinian I believe, and it's magnificent.

[Part 2 2:02:35] Lee: A new map?

Wood: A new map.

[Part 2 2:02:37] Lee: So when you were producing your maps in the '50s and comparing them with the earlier sketches.

Wood: Oh yes.

[Part 2 2:02:43] Lee: The difference was enormous was it?

Wood: Oh absolutely, absolutely.

[Part 2 2:02:46] Lee: So you're saying your work was absolutely essential.

Wood: Yes, yeah. It virtually, we discovered the whole of the shore of Grahamland. I suppose both sides to the top, but all down the west side and the off-lying islands of the South Shetlands, that had never been done before. The islands had, say, King George Island, they'd never surveyed that before, and yet we put in the full whack, the whole ground control, photographed the lot. So that was completely covered and done tiny little islands that never been done before, and that was, by the time we done the second year there was any number of coastlines that had never been done before. You'd get a map and 'Not known data', or whatever. That was one of the things I was saying earlier that you felt you were achieving something that nobody had done before.

[Part 2 2:04:17] Lee: Breaking , yes, this is ground breaking literally.

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 2:04:20] Lee: Yes. So were you frustrated then when having got back it then took 16 years before anybody to actually publish these maps? How do you feel about that?

Wood: Well, be quite honest with you, I didn't feel too much about it, or think too much about it, because in those 16 years I went to, amongst others, several places all over the world. I could start making a list but there are so many I gave up. There we are: Libya, Las Palmas, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Ghana, Camaroon, Borneo, Yemen, Saudi, Zambia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Dubai, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi many times for navigation, Nepal, UK, and others, so I didn't really have the time to..

[Part 2 2:05:23] Lee: Contemplate.

Wood: Think about past work, I was always looking for pastures new.

[Part 2 2:05:32] Lee: The job was not quite completed and Mott wanted to go back for a third year.

Wood: That's right, yes.

[Part 2 2:05:36] Lee: Would you have gone?

Wood: Oh, without a doubt, without the shadow of a doubt. I'd have swum down there I would, well I like...

[Part 2 2:05:47] Lee: Why!?

Wood: I don't know! I really don't know, and I'm not alone in this, 'cos there's many people that have been down there say the same thing, they'd go at the drop of a hat. Others like Pete, he couldn't hack it but I'm sure that if he had been given an opportunity to go down he would. Now, a case in point those who had, John Craven the guy I was telling you about who was a ground surveyor, he went down there because he's an Antarctic fan, and you talk to him about it and it's hard to get a word in edgeways because he knows such a lot about it. The director who, he's younger than I am I think, who went down at the beginning part of this year, early January, he had never been down there, but I'd worked with him in Saudi and several other places, but he got it into his head to go down there. At the time that Huntings did do some mapping on the Antarctic, he was mapping manager, not director but mapping manager, I believe, I'm not certain of it, John Leatherdale [phonetic] his name is.

[Part 2 2:07:22] Lee: Leatherdale [phonetic]. And he's been and he loved it.

Wood: Yes, he knows Adrian Fox at B-A-S, and one or two others there, so he's still keeping in touch I believe.

[Part 2 2:07:43] Lee: You stayed at Huntings for the rest of your professional life?

Wood: Well, until 1985 when Huntings folded up unfortunately. We achieved a situation where in places like Saudi you would do jobs that were not being paid for, and not getting returning that we should, as I understand it, I may be proved wrong, but that is the way I saw it and Huntings which are part of the larger Hunting and Sons corporation, a very big concern, or was, it still is for that matter, decided to hive off the survey side of it as it had done Hunting Clan which had been owned by them and one or two other companies, and we had to go by the board unfortunately, so I'm stuck at the age of about 55, 'What am I going to do for the rest of my life, I only know aerial photography, except for serving a pint of beer in a pub', which I used to do with a friend of mine, or for a friend of mine, and so I became a publican after that.

[Part 2 2:09:10] Lee: You owned a pub?

Wood: Yeah.

[Part 2 2:09:12] Lee: Where?

Wood: Just down the road.

[Part 2 2:09:14] Lee: The Crown? [Laughs]

Wood: Mmm.

[Part 2 2:09:17] Lee: That's why you knew where it was when I said 'I'm standing outside of it'.

Wood: I know it backwards. I've even got aerial photographs of that! [laughter].

Possible extracts:

- Life aboard the *Oluf Sven*, and sailing into a severe storm. [Part 1 0:18:23]
- Processing the aerial survey films. [Part 1 0:35:16]
- The mechanics of aerial photography. [Part 1 0:39:30]
- Sourcing water for processing the films. [Part 1 0:45:12]
- Conditions on board the *Cansoes*. [Part 1 0:55:04]
- Wreck of a whalecatcher at Deception Island. [Part2 1:08:22]
- Loss of a helicopter. [Part 2 1:16:35]
- Man-made volcanic activity! [Part 2 1:42:27]
- The visit of Royal Yacht *Britannia*. [Part 2 1:50:57]