

PHILIP G VANDYCK

Well this is W. T. Olds with the Southeast Region of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta. I am here today with Philip G. Vandyke who is retired from the Fish and Wildlife Service now but spent many years in the refugee system. So Philip on the spelling of your last name VanDyck is there a space in between the Van and the Dyck?

Philip I personally prefer it without the space but either one is as correct as the other one, but I like it better without the space but most people put a space in it.

Olds well if you prefer it with no space that's the way it is.

Philip There most people spell VanDyke sometimes with a capital D and sometimes without it the Dyke is English and the Dyck is Dutch. Low Dutch

Olds Low Dutch. Well why don't we start out by like where we did before and you tell me you know like where you were born and when and about growing up in Tennessee.

Philip I was born in Paris Tennessee February 2, 1919. I lived there for a while and then my Dad and Family moved to Dresden Tennessee he was a road supervisor down there.

Olds A road supervisor. With the State?

Philip No it was sort of with the county I am sure it has been so long Ago I am not really sure but I almost know it was the county and then in 1929 when the crash came it crashed him as well as everybody else and then we moved back to our farms. Where I was born, we lived in Dresden for 5 years and then we moved back to the farm and then we farmed we had about 200 acres a little more than 200 acres had a tenant and did a lot of things grew cotton, potatoes, and hay and corn and then as time went on we sort of changed that into primarily livestock.

Olds Primarily cattle?

Philip Primarily beef cattle, however we did have some dairy cattle to. I used to milk my hand and sell the cream. That was the price for living but everything was all right and I went to school in Henry Tennessee that is in Henry county that is a little town.

Olds That is where you went to highschool for?

Philip I went to highschool for a couple of years there and then I.

Olds What years were that you were in highschool?

Philip That was in 1936 and 1937 I think plus or minus one but I think it was 36 or 37 and then my Father died in 1937 and my brother and I farmed in partnership the family farm and did alright it was not exactly what I wanted but we did alright we converted primarily to growing hogs, beef cattle, hay, and corn and it was not a bad life at all. I kinda liked it then in 1941 I was drafted in the Army.

Olds You were there in Henry or in Paris?

Philip In Paris Tennessee and was drafted from the draft board in Paris Tennessee and they sent me over here to Fort Oglethorpe Georgia and I went from their well I was there about a week that was sort of a classification type station and they sent me to Camp Wheeler for 13 weeks of basic training?

Olds Now where was Camp Wheeler?

Philip It was at Macon Georgia just out of Macon. I think that I got one furlough theirs my family met me in Chattanooga the way I remember it. But anyhow I was there for 13 weeks and

then I think they call it the debarkation which was in Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania I was there for about a week and got on a train went through parts of Canada and New York and everywhere else to get to San Francisco you know the army trains then they did not just send them the straightest way it was a safety sort of thing they just routed the trains every which way. We got there and I was probably in San Francisco for a couple of 3 weeks and then left for overseas that was in 1942. My memory if it serves me right, we went from there to the Fiji Islands and did more training mostly in the Fiji Islands then we went to Guadalcanal and I was a little bit fortunate there I was in the 37th division.

Olds 37th infantry?

Philip The 37th infantry division that was Ohio National Guard Division that they were filing up with draftees and it was 140 145th 147th and 148th infantry regiment and I was in the 147th and we were the ones that had the most recruits so we were a little lucky we did not get the Guadalcanal quite as early as I think it was the 145, 148 I think that they got there a little before so they took a lot of it but it was sort of a nasty place when I was there. I was there for a very good while and I got my first look at the real natives and they were just about as native as you can get. We were there for mabe 6 months or something like that and then they sent us to a wonderful place. British Samoa and I was there for a while also the American Samoa it was not near so developed as the British Samoa but it was a nice place. I don't remember the exact sequence I was on Ima Jima that was another very rough spot and I was on a little island called Emoru and I cannot even find that on a map. At that time and that was before I went to Ima Jima I think and it was supposed to be about the closet island to Japan that we had troops on but nothing much happened there except for rain. It rained every day.

Olds What was the name of that Island again now?

Philip Immure I think I cannot find it on a map and I am not even sure if I can spell it, but if I could have some of my old letters that I wrote home but they have probably been tossed long ago. I think we went from there to Ima Jima and after that mabe what is the name of the plane that dropped the bomb.

Olds Inula gay

Philip Inula gay I was on Ima Jima when it landed and refueled on Ima Jima and then went on to drop the bomb in Japan so and when they did I had my bags packed to go to Okalnnala that was somewhat the rough feds that is where the Japanese did al their suicide bombings and everything I was on Saipan which was another I think that I got I am not sure my memory don't serve me right in all of that I received 3 bronze stars for doing duty in combat zones and then I think from Saipan they put me on a boat and sent me to Camp Chaffee Arkansas to turn me loose.

Olds When you all sailed back to the U.S. did you come back in through San Francisco and then into Fort Chaffee Arkansas?

Philip Yes we sure did.

Olds When did you get discharged?

Philip I got discharged in early November of 1945 so I was overseas for about 3 and ½ years just slightly less than 4 years. I needed about 2 months more to get 4 years.

Olds So from there at Fort Chaffee Arkansas you went back home to Paris Tennessee?

Philip I went back home to Paris Tennessee and it was a good feeling and then I got married in December the following when I was discharged.

Olds And that was December of?

Philip December of 1945.

Olds What was your wife's name?

Philip Virginia Ann Frandsen

Olds Virginia Ann Frandsen?

Philip Frandsen F-r-a-n-d-s-e-n

Olds You had actually met her?

Philip I met her back early during the prewar times when some of my ken folks who lived in Nebraska a Dentist and Virginia's Father was a Doctor and some way the had an office together or in the same building and his my Uncle's daughter and Gen were the same age and they was good friends' and she used to come to Tennessee with them that is how we met.

Olds So you met in Tennessee before you went into the army?

Philip We met in Tennessee before I went into the army and corresponded during the time I was there in the Service and I got married very soon after.

Olds Now did you get married in Tennessee or?

Philip Got married in Tennessee in fact when I got out of the Service I drove to Omaha and talked her parents into letting her come home with me to Tennessee. She had good friends in Tennessee and she stayed with my people there many times before so it was a lagidament sort of a request but, she had been down there about a week and she had got a call from her folks and they said that we better make up our minds what were doing, or their Daughter is coming home. She did and then we got married in Tennessee and her folks came down.

Olds This is at the end of 1946?

Philip That was the end of 1945.

Olds Did you give the date?

Philip It was December 9, 1945 and then I started to school in January of 1946 started the University of Tennessee actually it was the University of Tennessee Martin at that time it was a Junior College and I did 2 years at U T M and then went to Knoxville and finished my bachelor's degree in Science at Knoxville. I got a degree in Agriculture or majored in Agriculture Education.

Olds What year was that you finished up college?

Philip That was in 1949. My that time I had 3 children and probably another one the way, but anyhow I think I graduated in January and my job I was gonna get a job teaching it did not start until the following July. I did a little work on my masters and I taught Veterans on the Farm Training at a little school in not to far from Cottage Grove. I think it was Karn highschool. I also did my practice teaching there to and I think that was the name of the little high school. It was close enough anyhow. That was about half way out between Knoxville and Oak Ridge. We did a little work out at Oak Ridge right after I was in my Agriculture courses and, after the bomb in Japan. A lot of cattle had burns on them from the bomb and their hair came off and a lot of other things happened, I don't remember much about it . We had some classes out at Oak Ridge they brought the cattle back from Japan to Oak Ridge.

Olds My goodness

Philip I guess part of the research that was going one at the University of Tennessee they kept all out. You know Oak Ridge has tremendous pastures & farm land that was included in the facility

there and I did get a chance to see those I don't remember much about it but I know that I can still see those cows hair all off on one side. I think they had some calves that were deformed that is what you would expect from that.

Olds From the radiation?

Philip From the radiation, yes but I just happened to think about it as we were kinda going through there and I thought I would mention it.

Olds Well then where was your 1st real teaching job then?

Philip Cottage Grove, Tennessee

Olds Cottage Grove?

Philip Yes I got a job up at Dale Indiana and I was gonna take it and in the mean time this job at Cottage Grove came open and it was right next door almost to my home so I decided to come back to Henry County, Tennessee to teach. I resigned from the job at Dale Indiana but I did go for interviews up there and I remember that when I went for my interview for the school, I remember that we did not talk agriculture, the shop or the classroom or anything where I was gonna teach. Their athletic trophy room and they had more trophies in that school than any place that I have ever seen in my life and you know Indiana they had about the best highschool, college and basketball teams in the country. So as a token of that job though about the time that I got back to Cottage Grove my second Daughter was born and we named her Dayle it was spelled a little different we spelled it D-a-y-l-e and I think Dale Ander's was Dale but anyway I don't know how that happened but we did it.

Olds But you did it.

Philip Yes but we did it. I taught vocational agriculture in highschool there. I remember when I was talking to the principal and he was telling me that I was gonna teach and we were kinda working on it I felt very good about everything. He said well I want you to teach 8th grade Science to. I said you know I don't know if I am qualified to teach 8th grade Science or not. He said well don't worry about it we let our teachers teach one class that they are not qualified to teach. So I taught general Science because I had done a lot of Science and I probably had enough as the Science teacher. But see I thought I was gonna get out of that cause I really did not want to teach anything besides Agriculture. Those were good years for me I taught high school, it sort of required vocational agriculture, you taught night classes to the local farmers and I also taught the G. I. Bill on the Farm Training for farmers in the make of veterans in the neighborhood there I think I had 20 or something like that and we would meet at the highschool. I can't remember so many nights a week and they had to do a certain level of farming in order to qualify for the G I. Bill and I supervised it that it was good.

Olds That was an interesting program.

Philip Yes it was a very interesting program and I did that for 3 years and then I even took a slight cut in pay and went to work for the Soil Conservation Service because the future looked better.

Olds Right I bet it did

Philip I have never regretted it either going to work for the federal government. The federal government has treated me really well. I am real happy with my career.

Olds When did you start with the Soil Conservation Service?

Philip It was I think in July of 1953. I taught in 48 and 49 year and 50 and 51 year. If might

have been 52 I cannot remember for sure. Either 51 or 52. I worked for them for about 9 months.

Olds Now where was that in Cottage Grove?

Philip Well I lived in Cottage Grove and drove to Dresden Tennessee that was about 20 miles it is in a different county but it is about 20 miles from there and because that was a trainee position and I knew that I would not be staying there so I decided to stay there and make my move before I found out where I was going to go after I did my basic training. I was fortunate enough to find an opening with The Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge which is located in the headquarters in Paris which was really my hometown or is my hometown. I went for an interview under who was the supervisor? The one that transferred to the.

Olds Howard Miller?

Philip Howard Miller. Went to the forest service soon after I went to work and Larry Gibbons came in but, I went to work on the refuge as a Soil Conservationist there they had about 8,000 acres of agriculture land and mabey 15 or 20 acres or forest and we did corruptive farming for waterfall in Tennessee. I helped the manager out a lot and taking care of all of the corruptive farming agreements and supervised the farming operations and the harvests and the farmers would farm and harvest either the 3 or 4 depending on certain conditions of the contract and the 3rd or 4th in the field for waterfall and there was a tremendous amount of food left just unbelievable amount of food left and you would think that it would be difficult for that much food to be consumed but it was. By the spring time it was just about all gone. I think sometimes that the migration of waterfall may have been governed just a little bit by how long that corn lasts on the field, but I am not sure about that.

Olds Now who was the manager there at the Tennessee Refuge at the time you were there?

Philip Chet Martley was the manager when I first went to Tennessee. Then soon after that mabey a year V. L. Childs came in and he had been a manager down in Louisiana I think at the Sabine refuge and came and transferred up to the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge in Paris and I worked with him and never regretted it I worked with him and he was a great supervisor and a good refuge manager.

Olds Yes I have heard a lot about him I would like to get a chance to interview him on of these days.

Philip I really hope that you do. He still lives in Paris and I still have a lot of kin folks in Paris and once in a while I get down there and when I can I drop over and see V. L. his wife Nitta they are just great people.

Olds You say her name is Nitta?

Philip I am sure that is short for something.

Olds Mabey Wynitta.

Philip Probably Whynitta but I have never heard her called anything besides Nitta.

Olds I am trying to think what year was that you went to Tennessee refuge?

Philip I think that was in 1953. I was a Soil conservationist in Tennessee for 3 or 4 years and then I had my job expanded a little bit to include refuge operations on about 9 other refuges included Kentucky Woodlands, Cross Creeks, Reelfoot Lake, Wapanocca, White River and Yazoo none of the marsh refuges these were all refuges that did at least some farming for waterfall. I did that until 1958 so it was from 53 to 58 that I was stationed at Tennessee and part

of the time my duties just included Tennessee and part of the time it included all of those other ones. In 1958 I was transferred to Atlanta to the regional office again as a Soil Conservationist and I think it was also Assistant Regional Supervisor, my duties really had 99% to do with habitat management.

Olds Lets see now who was the Regional Supervisor of the refugees at the time you moved in
Philip Howard Miller just for a short time I can't remember just how long then Larry Gibbons took over and Fermanich was Assistant supervisor there at that time to.

Olds that was Carl Fermanich.

Philip Yes and he was there for mabey a couple of years or mabey longer. Not to long before he transferred from Atlanta to Washington with refugees up there. Then they brought Dick Kay in. Do you remember Dick Kay?

Olds Sure Yeah

Philip Dick may have been in there then. Somehow he became and took over Carl's job and I cannot remember whether he came in doing that it seemed to me mabey he was a biologist before that I cannot remember for sure but I know he sort of took over as a assistant Regional Supervisor under Larry Gibbons. I think he was a replacement for Carl. Then we went along with agriculture for a few years and it did pretty good and then it began to loose some of it's fame. I became the Regional Master planner.

Olds Master Planning Refugees

Philip Master Planning Refugees. We thought we were doing a bag up job and mabey we did but you know to start with we made two documents one you were supposed to follow and it had in details what all was supposed to take place and the other one was like a selling document it was for the public and we dressed it up and put a lot of pictures in it and wrote it in the best kind of words that you knew how to express things. I think region 4 did a real bang up job on putting out some of those good looking master planning then I don't know how long I did master planning but it must have been 2 or 3 or 4 years, I don't know how long I was in there that was a pretty good duty I kind of enjoyed that. Then marsh began to slow down and we did other things and there was a little short term in there that I cannot remember. Then we were doing the reorganization and I think that the next real title I had was Senior Staff Specialist for the Public Use and that was a good job to I enjoyed that I really was when I took that job I was sort of at loose ends there and I think that sort of loose ends is what to do with me, for that matter put this job came open at the reorganization and I convinced them that they did not really need a Public Use Specialist what they needed was a managerial type individual that mabey not so good in public use but good in formal and objectives of just what we ought to do is put our public views on National Wildlife Refugees. So how I think that I convinced them that I was right I am not sure why but I think I convinced them to. So I did that for the rest of my career.

Olds Well we certainly do and have had a awful lot of public use here on the refugee systems.

Philip Well we have had and during some of that time I really did not want refugees to become a National Parks you know I wanted refugees to have a little more be a little more natural I certainly I wanted it to be more wildlife oriented and even although well at that time my chief job was sort of getting money for these and having to program the money more than it was to sell things that went into there but, I really did not want our visitors centers to look like it was something that you could just. Well never mind I want it to be more field oriented and less like

you might yet what is over at Emory the?

Olds The Fern Bank.

Philip The Fern Bank. Some of our exhibits you could almost take them off the refugee and set them on the Fern bank or vice versa and they would look well in place. I think it would work well and I probably was wrong but I really did not want a Fern Bank exhibit on Piedmont refugee. I wanted it to be much more oriented towards just what was there and I think our visitors centers are well received in this country. They was probably wright and I was probably wrong but I did have a real strong opinion towards that. I wanted more driving trails and walking trails and that sort of thing. I probably had a little bit of impact on that but not to much. I enjoyed public use I enjoyed working with it is a very interesting film.

Olds So you remember so of the particular visitors centers that you had to work on a great bit during that period of time?

Philip Well of course wheeler and Piedmont it has been so long. Certainly Sabadell and in fact I was down to Sabadell not to long ago and had a chance to go into the Visitors Center and it is very nice and I have been in the one at Wheeler since I have retired there has been several others.

Olds Now the visitors center of at Wheeler did they name that for Larry Gibbons didn't they?

Philip You know if they did that's is probably in the last 10 years or so I do not recall that while I was working but it might have been that by time, but I do not recall it. I got a feeling that is what happened after I retired.

Olds It may have been even after Larry passed away.

Philip I bet it was after Larry passed away. Incidentally I see his wife quite often we go to the same church. I got to a early service and she goes to Sunday school that later service. As I leave sometimes she is coming in, and she is getting along fine and I enjoy talking with her every time I see her we recognize each other. We certainly talk for a few minutes.

Olds Well that is great.

Philip She has kind of had some bad health problems over the years, but she seemed to be doing just fine now.

Olds Well that is great. Well one thing that we have not talked much about you mentioned that your children were born back when you were in college, but you have not mentioned much about them. Do you want to talk about the children any?

Philip Well I am accused of doing to much of that so, I don't know. Well I have a wonderful family and I have 3 boys and 3 girls. The girls are all in the Atlanta metro area. My oldest daughter has her own business in Atlanta called Pathfinder.

Olds Pathfinder?

Philip Yes, it is a personnel counseling she does do very well. She is married and has 2 children. I have another Daughter than is a Social Worker at Kennestone Hospital in Marietta.

Olds What is her name?

Philip Dayle Marie D-a-y-l-e- and then I have my youngest Daughter. She has her masters in Nursing and just recently gone back to school and she has 5 children still going back to school and she wants to be a and will be a Nurse Practitioner now I am not just real sure what that is but it's is something level above a Nurse and below a Doctor it is soft of like a doctor assistant I think somewhere in there and they tell me that in the new Health Reform that position may be an important link in there to cut costs and that soft of thing. I never had any idea schooling costs so

much as it does now. I have never hear of babysitting costing as much as it does now. She is gonna get her degree sometime in December. I think she is done all of her academic studies, I came in the other day and the answering machine was blinking and it was Becky she said Dad said all you better call and congratulate me so I did that made me fell real good.

Olds Where was she getting her schooling at?

Philip At Henry and My oldest Son is a Radiologist. He graduated from A Medical School and he works in Athens Georgia. My second Son is a Sales Executive for Pyramid Computers.

Olds Oh yeah

Philip Chuck touched the real world. He made me feel good to see Chuck do so well. He did not get married until he was in his early 40's. Married a wonderful person and she was in her early 40's neither one of them had ever been married before. That was about 3 years ago they have 1 child now that is about a year and ½ and another one that is a bout 6 months. That was about 3 months before the next ne was born. Then I have another Son that is a Physician Pete is a Endocrinologist and he also practices out of Athens Georgia.

Olds So you got your 2 Doctors in Athens?

Philip Yes and my kids are very good to me they all look out for me and I appreciate it and I get around and see them when I can.

Olds Well it is good that they are all relatively close.

Philip They are all relatively close. Chuck lives in Alexandra Virginia but he travels a lot and he in fact I see him as much as I see the rest of them. Because if you live in Atlanta and if you find where you go everybody going that way you have to stop in Atalanta. He gets down quite often and I do have 18 grandchildren one on the way.

Olds That is a pretty good score.

Philip Yes Pretty good score. No one tries to compete with me on that one. I retired in the last day of 1982. Really enjoy retirement it just is something that everybody should try, no doubt about it.

Olds Well mabey in a couple of years I am gonna try it myself.

Philip Don't wait to long. I lost my wife about 2 years ago and we had about 8 years of retirement that we did all of those things that we wanted to do.

Olds That is good.

Philip It was just absolutely a great life.

Olds You get to do a little traveling is that what?

Philip Yeah did some traveling and