

*Dewey Livingston:* Because we haven't necessarily covered your entire career, so to speak, with the Cordell dives I wonder if you could each just briefly summarize that, "Well I started in such and such, and my last dive, or experience there was such and such," giving a sense of maybe how many dives you might have done at Cordell Bank. And then we'll go on.

*Elaine Dvorak:* I first met Bob and the Cordell Expeditions in the fall of '85, so there was just one more dive on the Cordell Bank after that. And that was at the end of '86 because we went down to Monterey that year. And then we came back for one last five-day session up on the Cordell Bank. So I was out there just that one time, then later we've been up there since then but that was all.

*Dewey Livingston:* Were you aware that was the last dive?

*Elaine Dvorak:* Yeah, because Bob said when Cordell Bank became a sanctuary he was going to call the expeditions over. And I don't think it actually became a sanctuary until '89, but '86 they had already turned in all the paperwork and that sort of thing, had the public hearings. Or maybe the public hearings were in '88. But anyway, it was in the bag.

*Don Dvorak:* Well, I feel that I'm extremely lucky that I was at the right place at the right time when Bob sent out a call for divers. I came on board in 1977, right from the beginning, and

[1:15:00]

went through all these strategy meetings. And I feel that in some way I contributed to help steer the expeditions in the right direction, whether it was photography, what we wanted to do. And despite missing the first dive in '78 and missing the dive in '79, I managed to get in 17 dives on the Bank in the following years. So that by far made up for the two first years that I missed diving.

I'd like to characterize the expedition as a bunch of people finding a window that looked at Cordell Bank, and our job was to open that window. The first two years that window opened very slowly and a very little bit. But it opened enough, enough information came out that it just piqued our curiosity. We wanted to do more. We wanted to improve our techniques because we didn't get enough the first two years. So we did, we improved our techniques. We got there easier, we'd find a place and that window opened a little bit more. And the next few years more information, more data came out.

By the mid-Eighties and '85 that window was almost all the way open. We know we can go there, we can bring back specimens by the bucketful. We can bring back pictures by the hundreds and

thousands. And the window was open now, that now the public has an opportunity to see it. And we have enough information where we could go out and have presentations to the public, help bring Cordell Bank to public awareness. Besides the diving it was a real joy putting together presentations. One of our biggest presentations was at the Cal Academy of Science, what did we use, 12 projectors?

*Sue Estey:* I was going to say eight but it could have been 12.

*Don Dvorak:* All synchronized with the film camera projecting there. Paul Hara was very good at multimedia production, so we were up all night trying to get this production together. And we got it together and we took it to the Cal Academy. Those were all really quite rewarding to our efforts.

Now that window is really open – I think it's going to stay open, especially since Cordell Bank became a National Marine Sanctuary and people like yourself, Jennifer, and Dan Howard are still keeping Cordell Bank in the public eye. And you have your program for you to bring your students in and you bring teachers in, this is all going to help in keeping that window open. I'm glad that in some way I was a participant in opening that window.

*Jennifer Stock:* That's well put. Thank you

*Dewey Livingston:* Sue, would you like to summarize your career, so to speak, and if you have anything else on your notes to bring up.

*Sue Estey:* When I look at my diving experience, I got certified in 1975 and I got hooked up with Cordell Expeditions in 1979, so those expeditions really happened kind of early in my diving career and in many ways I was innocent when I had a wetsuit that had, like it had a bottom and a jacket. It was not even a Farmer John. It's amazing. But fortunately the dives were really short so I couldn't get too cold. But during those expeditions I moved to a dry suit, during those expeditions I got a strobe that would actually flash on demand.

But later, after Cordell Bank I went on to Point Sur, I did Rocas Alijos, I did Easter Island. But I also got additional training, I got trained as a rescue diver,

[1:20:00]

scientific diver, cave diver. It probably would have been better if I'd been a cave diver before I ever went to Cordell Bank because I

would have learned a lot about equipment that would have been a safer way to go. But I didn't know, it was really the beginning.

Sometimes, once in a very rare while someone contacts me about diving at Cordell Bank and could they go do it, and I always say we had a lot of advantages that they probably don't have. We were really lucky to have Bob, as organized as he was. We had a lot of divers with way more experience than I had at the time. And we had a team that worked together.

And when I think about a diver going out to Cordell Bank and how maybe it was, say six people went out on a boat or something. You need to find the place, you need to find the ridge. They're very sharp pinnacles; it's not like a plateau at 120 feet, it's like a high point at 120 feet and then it drops off real fast. So I think that organization that Bob developed really made it possible and I think it would be really tough for Joe Diver to go out there and jump in and hit a spot that they can actually get to and live. So I think we were really lucky to do it this way.