



Clark County

Dick & Mary Anne Easter

“I’ve always felt that it’s important that there be a root for the family by leaving the legacy.”

“They used to do all the logging in this area with steam donkey engines. You can still see evidence of where they hooked onto trees to pull the donkeys around.” Richard (Dick) and Mary Anne Easter reconstruct the history of their Tie Pond Meadow tree farm from the relics that were left on their land. The tree farm is named the old Tie Pond, which was used for logging in the late 1800s. Dick continues, “Also, the trees that were cut that were too big to yard down into the pond are still on the ground. Just a short ways from where our house sits was a boarding house for the workers at the mill. It was all in shambles when we moved in here.”

Dick graduated from Aberdeen High School in 1950. He joined the Navy for two years then went to a diesel automotive school in Los Angeles. One night in L.A., Dick and another sailor snuck, or as told by Dick, strode into a dance where he met Mary Anne.” It took a bit of wooing, but he won her heart. His plan was to finish college in Washington State and then return to her in L.A. and get married. But, Mary Anne said, no dice, she wouldn’t wait. The couple married in Los Angeles in 1954 then moved to Washington State. In 1958 Dick graduated from the University of Washington in mechanical engineering.

Dick, “I worked for the Boeing as a test engineer doing a lot of rocket-related tests for 13 years. During those years, four of us formed a small company called the Antaeus Corporation.” The venture led to the purchase of 880 acres on Lake Merwin in Amboy, Washington.

A portion of the land was then sold to a camping club and Dick quit Boeing to be the club’s development manager. Eventually, the Antaeus Corporation took over the campers’ club and renamed it Lake Merwin Campers’ Hideaway (LMCH). The Easter family, including five children and three horses, moved on-site with no electricity or running water. It was out in the middle of nowhere, AKA the woods, and it was the year of the big snow. When the development was completed seven years later, Dick and Mary Anne bought 115 acres of the original 880 acres just up the road from the club.

“We moved onto the land in 1974 and have been here ever since. We were able to pay for the old dozer and the cost of planting from proceeds from the alder we took down. At that time we were getting \$9 to \$11 per ton of alder. Now weight logs, which we had, go for \$26 to \$27 a ton. A saw log alder goes for about \$90-96 a ton.

“We started working it in 1979. Clark [their son] and I did most of cutting of the alder. Clark

did most of the cat work, which would be the yarding and the scarification of the property after we logged. Everybody helped with the tree planting. We planted about 55,000 trees over several years. We've been learning ever since."

The Easters were introduced to the Clark County Farm Forestry Association (CCFFA) through Rick Dunning. Since that time, Dick has served on the board of directors, as vice president and for several years as president.

Dick describes the influence of the WFFA, "It has given us a certain amount of enthusiasm to continue. We've been involved in the tree sales every year and that's been a big help. And, we've been involved with the politics of trying to keep regulations out of tree farm – not too successfully, but we have minimized the regulations somewhat.

To help bridge the gap between environmentalist and timber growers, Dick serves on the ESA (Endangered Species Act)* Salmon Recovery Advisory Board," Dick, "I was invited by Commissioner Betty Sue Morris to be a member of the Advisory Board to assist Clark County in coming up with a Salmon Recovery plan. I've been a member for about seven years. I'm also on the Sammy Selection Committee for the Sammy Award which is an award given out to people who go over and above in efforts to save salmon and/or salmon habitat."

As a real estate agent, Dick's recommendation for future tree farmers is to look very carefully at the type of property you are considering. And he believes a person inherently understands the outdoors. Dick, "When you understand the outdoors you take care of it and you know what to do and what not to do. Tree farmers are the true environmentalists."

Dick ends with a core belief that is not usually mentioned, but evident throughout all of the tree farmers' stories, "In my opinion when a husband and wife who are head of the family sell their homes and leave, they destroy the root of the family. So, I've always felt that it's important that there be a root for the family by leaving the legacy."

*In response the listing of the Chinook Salmon by the federal government that Clark County commissioners organized the ESA advisory board to assist the commissioners in updating county ordinances to be in compliance with the 4D rule (rule established by Federal Govt. to oversee the enlisted salmon.

TIE POND MEADOW TREE FARM

Richard (Dick) Easter, born January 18, 1932 (Aberdeen, WA)

Mary Anne Elliott Easter, born January 18, 1935 (Hollywood, CA)

President CCFFA 1996-1999

Vice President CFFA

Board Member CFFA

ESA Advisory Board 1998 to present (2005)

116 acres

5 children