



Ric and Bill Vann

*Interviewed by Anne Kimzey*

**1. How peach farm started (02:00)**

**BVann:** We were big cotton farmers, soybean, grain, corn. And [someone [?]] suggested that, uh, let's try a few acres of peaches. So my father, [Jim [?]] Vann, Mr. Frank Miller, Mr. [L.E. [?]] Homes, Mr. Charlie Holmes, and Mr. Ernest Boatwright- now Mr. Ernest Boatwright is from Ridge Spring. They decided "Well, we'll try a few acres." So they uh, I think they started off with ten acres and after about three years, uh, after the trees got to bearing, they thought it was going to be- they thought it was going to be a real- real good project. So then they kept increasing. Back in those days everything was done by hand, we didn't have any machinery.

**Kimzey:** Um-hum.

**BVann:** Uh, the lady people would, uh, they would grade them, just by eyeballing them and they would put them in a little cloth bin, and then you would take, uh, take them by hand and place them in a half a bushel tub, And the way we got [the full [?]] we had a paintbrush, so we just brushed the [unintelligible [?]] off the top bunch and put a top on them and <Kimzey laughs> stack them in the corner and leave them till, uh, till you got through. Sometime, we would- twelve, one o'clock at night. We didn't have trucks to haul them, then we'd have to put them on a truck, carry them to the railroad, put them on a refrigerated car, and then they would ship. Now, the only refrigeration they had then was in that freight car, which was blocks of ice to put in the end of the car, and salt poured over them.

**Kimzey:** Um-hum.

**BVann:** But then, uh, we got the- began to get a little more acreage, we thought it was going to be profitable so they just continued to grow.

**Kimzey:** Um-hum.

**BVann:** And, uh, and that's what it's grown to today.

## **2. Hydrocooling (01:08)**

**RVann:** When they're picked now they're brought into a shed and run through the hydrocooler, which drops the temperature of the peach from your field temperature, which is usually 80-85 degrees, down to 38 degrees.

**Kimzey:** Um-hum.

**RVann:** Cause the hydrocooler- the water in the hydrocooler's about 32 to 34 degrees and you run them through very slowly in 20 bushel boxes.

**Kimzey:** What does that do?

**RVann:** That brings the pulp temperature down and it, it uh, stops the growth of the peach.

**Kimzey:** Oh.

**RVann:** And it's like putting a refrigerator, it'll stay fresher longer, for a longer period of time.

**Kimzey:** [Unintelligible [?]] do you pick them when they're all the way ripe or do you- right before they get ripe?

**RVann:** Right before they're ripe. We don't, we don't pick them over-ripe because when they get to the supermarket, or the grocery store, they, they, they'll be over-ripe. Cause usually we'll put them, once we pack them, put them on a truck, [unintelligible [?]] two or three days before they get to their destination and then about another two days before they get on the shelf. So....

**Kimzey:** Um-hum.

**RVann:** We, we try to pick them where they have the color but yet aren't over-ripe.

## **3. Selling at a peach stand (00:33)**

**RVann:** That's another way that we market our peaches. People come by we- they- they see our logo that we have, the peach with the sunglasses; "Sunblush [Davey [?]]," and we advertise it and uh, it's a kinda ace in the hole, it's a calling card because those peaches that are on the stand are much better than what you would get in a supermarket, because they stay on the tree longer.

**Kimzey:** Um-hum.

**RVann:** And they're sweeter, and they're as we call them "orchard run." They're not, they don't run through the hydrocooler.

**BVann:** They haven't been touched but one time.

**RVann:** And that's to pick and put in that basket.

#### **4. Peach varieties (00:27)**

**RVann:** The best [unintelligible [?]], uh, everybody likes the [Loring [?]]. Uh.....

**Kimzey:** The "Loring?"

**RVann:** The "Loring." It's big, I don't like it because it's a yellow peach, it's not a red peach. And, uh, [unintelligible [?]] are red, "Red Haven," "Red Globe," "Coronet," but uh, our first variety is a "Susie Q," which comes off like I say, the middle or- middle to last of May and our last variety is the "Monroe," which comes off the first of August.

