



Franklyn, De Loach  
*Interviewed by Michael Chiarappa*

**1. Learning to make baskets (00:34)**

**F. De Loach:** I feel that it was, uh, passed on down from my grandfather.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** To my father, and, uh, when I was about five years old, why, my father and....my uncle, e-even my mother used to make'em into....This time of the year is the, uh, rest season, more or less, on the farm, and, uh, they wait until the harvest season, so they make baskets and, uh, could make a few dollars. Back those days it was a dollar was a dollar-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum. Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** And, uh, it was, uh, this was a way they could pick up a few dollars, uh, uh, in the summertime while they couldn't-didn't have any work to do on the farm.

**2. Basket use (00:36)**

**F. De Loach:** We used to call it the ole' corn basket, the bushel corn basket.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum. Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** And uh, I was trying to dig up the dead and tried to find out, uh, from my older brother, uh, what, uh, did my father and all use to get, you know, the equal measurement.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** For making a, uh, bushel basket but-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** They couldn't, they could make'em and he said he really didn't know. They always just made'em and guessed its size and then, then as a general rule they'd come out, you could measure it and they'd come out an equal bushel of corn.

<Both laugh>

**M. Chiarappa:** Oh really? Really?

**F. De Loach:** And we used'em for, uh, loading cotton and, uh, things like that. It was a, it was really handy thing on the farm. It was uh, it was more of a necessity.

### **3. Building Baskets (01:06)**

**F. De Loach:** Building baskets, you have to build'em in, uh, a process, uh, kind of like a home constructor.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** You have to start, to have two or three going at the same time.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um huh. Um huh.

**F. De Loach:** You build a bottom and you come on up-well I just built that one so you could see the stage of the, uh, the process of the building.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** But you, you built it up and you get it, after you get it up in this stage you have to set it out in the sun and let the material cure.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum. Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** A-As it cures it shrinks up, see you could, then you have to, take your, uh, little, uh....hammer of some sort of-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** Of more or less of iron, [little iron stakes] and beat'em up.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** Tighten'em up. And then after you get it in this stage, you get the things drove up, boiling strips drove up into the stage like that. Then you take these here-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** And you take every other one and y-you turnem down and stickem in here. Some people that used to back in the old days, they'd turned each one of them. They'd turned this one in and, uh, t-turn this one in-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** And turn this one out. That holds your top, your weave, from coming out-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** When you put y-your rim around it.

#### **4. Making the wood splits (00:54)**

**F. De Loach:** When you start splitting the things it's, uh, uh....you always half your log....and I call it, when I split one in half and you get the two halves, well I consider, I got two logs then.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** With this business.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum. Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** I put one aside and, I, half one of them, I half that.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** And there's always a, what I always, the term I used is the halving procedure.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** Everything you go at is halving.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** You half what you have and, uh, you, after you get it down to....small sections, you get to, down t-to the quarter of the log and then you halve that.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum. Um hum.

**F. De Loach:** Down to the eighth, uh, then y-you'd cut your heart out.

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** With the grain-

**M. Chiarappa:** Um hum-

**F. De Loach:** Split it out and then....you de-bark it, you take the bark off the thing. And then....you start halving it with the grain.

