



ED SCOTT
In the District 1 lab

**CALTRANS ORAL HISTORY - EDITED SUMMARY
BASED ON MY JUNE 1, 2011 INTERVIEW WITH ED SCOTT
BY GUY LUTHER INTERVIEW**

Ed's father was in the Coast Guard, and the family moved up and down California, but Ed spent most of his grade school years in Woodland, and his high school years in Eureka. In the early 1950's, Ed's father worked a few months for the Division of Highways, doing traffic counts and surveys on the Burns Highway. He suggested that Ed apply for a similar position, so he did, and received a limited term appointment in September, 1954.

Ed went to work cutting brush for Howard Fellman's Survey party stationed at Camp 36, at Burnt Ranch. Johnny Devine was their supervisor, but they seldom saw him in the field. The survey party included Von Hoen, Red Anderson, and a couple of convicts from San Quentin. Prisoners with good records were often assigned to Burnt Ranch just before they were to be released.

After a month or so at Burnt Ranch, Ed was assigned to a survey party at Garberville. Ed didn't get much of a reaction to poison oak, only a slight itch, but Ray Thompson did. Ray got poison oak so bad he had to be hospitalized. After that, Ray didn't get any more field work. Later, when Ed worked on a survey party at Bridgeville, he stayed at the Highway Maintenance Foreman's house (Mr. Paulise).

Ed worked on surveys for about nine-months before his limited term appointment expired. Fifteen months later, after passing the Aid I test, Ed was hired as a permanent employee, and assigned to construction in Lake County. Eugene Talman was the Resident Engineer on the project, and Eddie Conway also worked on that project.

Ed also worked with Eddie Conway and John Toren on a survey party just north of Ukiah. Later, he, Elmer Cornchuk and Gary Alkire worked on the survey party for the Scotia Job.

In June of 1958, Ed enlisted in the Army Reserve, and went into the Army for six-months of basic training. When Ed returned from basic training, he continued to work on construction projects, including weighing trucks for Howard Fellman at Essex, and as an inspector for Al Braga who was the resident engineer on the Gualala project. They were placing a fill protected by rip-rap on the north side of the Gualala River, just inside the District 1 boundary.

While Ed was in basic training, they decided that the Gualala project hadn't been designed properly, and they had to use powder charges to blow test holes and break up the subsurface rock. Jim Keggler and a fellow by the name of Peltanon were surveying

in the area when they set off the charges. Peltanon said it picked both Jim and the level right up off the ground. They had to put Jim Kegglar into the hospital for a day or two. Ed wasn't sure whether the contractor's men accidentally overloaded the test holes, or if they just didn't like Jim Kegglar, who was an inspector on the project.

While Ed was on this project, he and Mr. Peltanon were taking a compaction test on a fill that was partially obscured by a berm. A scraper came over the berm and they scattered, and narrowly missed being run over.

In late 1961, the National Guard called Ed up for active duty at the time of the Berlin Wall crisis. He was on active duty for ten-months, until August 6 of 1962. When Ed got back from active duty, he was assigned to the Lab, with Jim Kegglar as his immediate supervisor.

Ed didn't feel that he was "cut out" for surveying or construction work, but he loved working in the Lab. He quickly mastered all of the basic Lab tests, including: sand equivalent, R-value, durability values, gradings, and asphalt extraction. Ed promoted to a Highway Engineering Technician I in November of 1973.

Ed worked in the Lab for a total of 33-years. He was impressed by the hard work and dedication of the people he worked with in the lab, and has nothing but kind words to say about them. He specifically noted Julian Barbash, Ron Johnson, Slater Smith and Russ Allen.

Ed feels that his career with the Division of Highways/Caltrans was the "...best thing that ever happened to me", and he is very grateful for it. He enjoyed the stability of not having to look for a job every couple of years.

Ed planned on retiring on December 30, 1995, but retired six months earlier to leave a position open so one less employee would need to transfer to another District. He would have considered working longer, but he was concerned that people were being re-assigned to positions and places they were not comfortable with, and he would prefer to retire rather than being transferred.

Ed has been retired for 15 years, and says he believes in it. He is concerned that people won't be able to look forward to that in the future, or that retirement will be greatly delayed.