

# *Maurie Dooly Clark*

**1914-2001**

Maurie Dooly Clark was born on May 14, 1914 in the lumber town of Linnton, Oregon above the banks of the Willamette River. The second of three children, he was the only son of Elizabeth Augusta Dooley Clark and Wilson Warner Clark. The site of his birth overlooked the family's Clark and Wilson sawmill, founded by Maurie's grandfather, Orange Marcus Clark, and two great uncles, John and Charles Wilson.

In 1915 the Clark family moved from Linnton to a residence on Lovejoy Street in Northwest Portland where Maurie attended Chapman Grade School and later Lincoln High School. He enrolled at St. Martin's College in Lacey, Washington but transferred to the University of Arizona at Tucson after only two years.

Early in his childhood, Maurie developed a respect for timber and all those who worked in the industry. He often visited the Clark and Wilson logging operations in the remote forests east of St Helens, working odd jobs along with trimming huckleberry bushes at the feet of the great firs.

Maurie's interest in logging escalated as he grew into a young man. In 1931 he spent the summer at Camp 8, which later became the company's logging headquarters following a merger with Henry Turrish. The new company, Clark and Wilson Lumber Company of Delaware, acquired a large block of timber from Turrish in the Vernonia area along with the Portland and Southwestern Railroad Company trackage extending from Scappoose into the Nehalem Valley.

During his 1935 summer vacation, Maurie found work on the forest survey crew at Black Rock with Willamette Valley Lumber, a company which was 50% owned by the Clark family. The following summers, Maurie worked as a "whistle punk" on Willamette's logging crews. It was the call of the whistle punk that determined when logs were hauled from the woods to the landing. This was a position of considerable responsibility because the

logging rigging only moved or stopped when his signal was heard. One mistake could mean serious injury to choker setters or others on the rigging crew.

Maurie's last summer working on a logging crew was in 1937 when he returned to Black Rock. During that summer he lived in a bunkhouse and set chokers on a Lidgerwood Steel Spar Skidder. He filled the billet of a second loader whose job entailed unhooking shaking tongs from the logs after they were placed on a rail car. Maurie transferred that fall to full time employment with Willamette Valley Lumber at the Corvallis Lumber Company mill, working the night shift in the planning mill.

Soon after, Maurie was offered a position in Sales with Willamette Valley Lumber. He was one of the few employees with a car that enabled him to make weekly trips to the company's customers in Dallas, Independence and Monmouth, Oregon. At the same time, he worked for Willamette's Snow Peak logging operation east of Lebanon, Oregon.

By 1940, the logging industry was changing. Machinery was the major force of change. Maurie decided to capitalize on his relationships with friends and acquaintances in the logging industry by joining his cousin, Richard M. Cole, to form the Cole and Clark Insurance Agency. After two years working to build a successful industrial insurance business, he was drafted into the army in February 1942.

Maurie's military service sent him to Camp Blanding, California for basic training, then to the Army's 75th Field Artillery in the Aleutian Islands off the Alaskan coast and finally to a role in the invasion of Italy and the ultimate surrender of the German army in May, 1945. He was in Bologna, Italy at the end of the war and arrived back in Portland in September 1945.

Maurie's return to Oregon found the family lumber business faced with a limited supply of timber, aging mills and investors demanding a greater return on their investment. His choices were to go to work for Willamette Valley Lumber Company or return to the insurance agency with his partner Dick Cole. He elected to stay with the insurance agency. In 1947, Clark and Wilson Lumber Company sold its timberland and trackage to Crown Zellerbach, liquidated sawmills and auctioned obsolete steam equipment.

Even though Maurie had left the timber business, he found ways to serve his love of timber through his insurance agency. The firm utilized Maurie's knowledge and contacts in the forest products industry and specialized in providing insurance to wood products companies throughout the Northwest. With increased federal timber sales following the war, Cole and Clark's business boomed by providing insurance bonding to purchasers of public timber. Over time, the agency expanded its services to include engineering consulting to clients for installation of sprinkler systems and safety devices.

The agency took on a third partner, Bill Cunningham in 1948. Over the next thirty years, Cole, Clark and Cunningham grew into the largest industrial insurance broker in Oregon with 130 employees.

Maurie's family life began in 1948 when he married Fern Alta Miller, a Midwest farm girl, working at the Cole, Clark and Cunningham offices. During the next few years, Fern and Maurie had two children, Candace Christine Clark and Richard Maurice "Mike" Clark. Fern died in September 1975. Maurie married Mary Healy in December 1982.

In 1967, firms associated with Willamette Valley Lumber Company merged into a corporate structure that became Willamette Industries, Inc. Wilson Clark, Maurie's father, was named Chairman of the Board of Directors Emeritus. Coleman Wheeler, from Santiam Lumber Company, was named Chairman of the Board. William Swindells of Willamette Valley Lumber Company became company President. Maurie was appointed to the Board of Directors. He

would remain a director of Willamette Valley Lumber and Willamette Industries for the next 40 years. During that time, Willamette grew into one of the largest wood products companies in America.

With the death of Wilson Clark on May 30, 1968, and the merger of Cole, Clark and Cunningham with Rollins, Burdick, Hunter in 1972, Maurie took over more of the family affairs including an increased interest in the community and local charities. One of those interests was Cannon Beach, Oregon, the community he grew to love as a child. The warmth of people and the pace of life in Cannon Beach captured his imagination and his heart. Together with his friends Ray Watkins and Bill Campbell, Maurie began to buy depressed main street property. Watkins would design new buildings with classic storefronts and Campbell would build them. Maurie helped change Cannon Beach from a Memorial Day to Labor Day beach town to a year round community by offering low rents to artists and other tenants in exchange for the promise to stay open all year round.

Over the years, Maurie built the Mariner Market, Sandpiper Square, Sea Lark Apartments, the Post Office, the US Bank Building, the Coaster Theater, the Coaster Building, Coaster Properties Shop and the City Library. At the same time he donated time and materials to establish St. Peter the Fisherman Catholic Mission in Arch Cape, a few miles from Cannon Beach. Maurie's impact on the redevelopment of Cannon Beach is a testament to a man with the idea to transform a town and the quiet determination to bring his vision to life.

Maurie worked hard not only to make his dreams come true, but helped others realize their dreams. In the early 1970s, Maurie became friends with Gordon Smith, an Elsie, Oregon logger and collector of old logging machinery and equipment. Maurie used his connections with the timber industry and personal resources to make possible the construction of a log restaurant and expansion of the collection of logging memorabilia at milepost 18 on the Sunset Highway. Today, Camp 18 is a favorite spot for tourists and logging families who stop to reminisce about the golden days of whistle punks and steam logging.

Maurie served in numerous volunteer leadership positions on boards, committees and fundraising campaigns. He was known for his efforts to preserve the natural beauty of Oregon through leadership positions with the Keep Oregon Green Association, a fitting role given his love of timber and the outdoors.

Maurie had a profound impact on the state of Oregon as a business, civic and philanthropic leader. He lived his childhood dream of becoming a logger and timber man. He helped build a small insurance business into an international company. He was the driving force behind the restoration of one of Oregon's most beautiful coastal communities. He was passionate about preserving the history of timber and logging in Oregon. And yet, his greatest legacy is in the lives he touched through the philanthropic activity of the Clark Foundation that contributes to education, the arts, children's programs and economic development

across Oregon. Some of the notable institutions and causes benefiting from the Clark Foundation include: University of Portland, Portland State University, Oregon Graduate Institute, Oregon State University, Oregon Health & Sciences University, World Forestry Center, Oregon Symphony, Portland Art Museum, Christie School, Boy Scouts, Marylhurst University, Saint Mary's Academy, Jesuit High School, and the Oregon Historical Society as well as numerous other nonprofit agencies.

Maurie Clark earned a special place in Oregon history as a logger, historian, entrepreneur, respected businessman, community leader and a man of philanthropic pursuits whose vision and determination made the State of Oregon a better place. He lived his dream and we are all the better for it.