

Robert Mowbray Oral History Interview
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
Administrative Information

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Date of Interview: August 28, 2018
Location of Interview: Washington, D.C.
Length: 49 pages

Biographical Note

Robert Mowbray served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ecuador from 1963 to 1996 in an agriculture and forestry program. He also served as an associate Peace Corps director in Paraguay from 1973 to 1978.

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Suggested Citation

Robert Mowbray, recorded interview by Evelyn Ganzglass, August 28, 2018, page #, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

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Oral History Interview

with

Robert Mowbray

August 28, 2018
Washington, D.C.

By Evelyn Ganzglass

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

GANZGLASS: [00:00:02] This is Evelyn Ganzglass. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Somalia from 1966 to 1968. Today is August 28th, 2018. I'm interviewing Robert Mowbray, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ecuador from 1963 to 1966, and then was associate Peace Corps director in Paraguay from 1973 to 1978, both in agriculture and environment. Bob, why did you join the Peace Corps?

MOWBRAY: [00:00:43] Well, partly it was the Marine Corps, which I think might surprise a lot of people, but I was in the Marine Corps before the Peace Corps, and that made me sort of aware of what a lot of the rest of the world was like. I was stationed in Okinawa for my last year and a half and seeing Okinawa itself. But I guess the thing that really impressed me was we had a big exercise and landing exercise in Formosa or Taiwan or whatever name you want to go about. And I was just amazed at the poverty that I saw there. Now I had grown up in a pretty poor section of Baltimore and we weren't rich, but that was a

whole other, whole other thing. So it was that, I think seeing what some of the rest of the world was like, and then a girl that I was dating was going to somewhere in Africa, not with Peace Corps, with some other volunteer thing. And she sort of convinced me, why don't you go ahead and apply to Peace Corps. So I did and I got in and went to training.

GANZGLASS: [00:01:47] OK, so what did your family? Well, I guess how long had you been in the Marines?

MOWBRAY: [00:01:52] Well, I was in Marine Corps for three years.

GANZGLASS: [00:01:54] Three years. So you were out.

MOWBRAY: [00:01:56] Three years plus three months of training.

GANZGLASS: [00:01:58] So this was all post-college? Had you gone to college?

MOWBRAY: [00:02:01] I had graduated from Dartmouth with a bachelor's degree in English and a minor in biology. And then went in the Marine Corps, came back, and went to graduate school at Yale, where I got a master's in forestry. And then after that I joined Peace Corps.

GANZGLASS: [00:02:22] So by that time, your parents knew you were a world traveler. How did they react to your idea of going into the Peace Corps?

MOWBRAY: [00:02:32] Well, my mother, I think. It was only really my father, he was generally happy with whatever I did. But my mother had seen some ads about Peace Corps paying \$75 a day to recruiters, and she wrote a letter to Kennedy complaining that her son was worth a lot more than these guys. And so I was, in a way I was sort of surprised I ever heard from Peace Corps after that. I mean, she was not happy about it. I think once I went and so forth and I think she was happy. But she didn't like the fact that I'd worked hard to get all this education and was wasting my time doing something else.

GANZGLASS: [00:03:13] And clearly your girlfriend thought it was a good idea. What did your other friends say about that?

MOWBRAY: [00:03:21] Um, I can't remember anybody saying much of anything about it.

GANZGLASS: [00:03:27] This was early in the Peace Corps.

MOWBRAY: [00:03:29] Yeah, it was, you know, I mean, we were the second agricultural group in Ecuador. The first one was a year before that and they were, I think they were either the first group in Ecuador or very close to it.

GANZGLASS: [00:03:46] So you applied for the Peace Corps and did you hear very soon from them or did you have to wait a long time?

MOWBRAY: [00:03:53] Well, I don't remember now how long the wait was. It was, I guess, in a way longer than I had expected. And I don't even remember now for sure exactly when I heard from them. But I guess I was surprised that it was Ecuador. They had been advertising that they needed foresters in Nepal, and I was pretty sure that's where I was going and I was really looking forward to going to Nepal.

GANZGLASS: [00:04:16] Climbing mountains, right?

MOWBRAY: [00:04:18] Yeah. Well, I had written a big English paper on mountaineering in the Himalayas, so I was, you know, this was.

GANZGLASS: [00:04:27] You were ready.

MOWBRAY: [00:04:28] I was ready to go. But anyway. And then when I applied there was a thing on the application, is there anywhere you don't want to go, as well as where you want to go. And I decided I wasn't going to say I didn't want to go to Latin America because I just thought that might not be a very good idea if I wanted to get into Peace Corps. I didn't really, I didn't want to go to Latin America, and I was pretty sure I would not go to Latin America because I didn't speak Spanish. I didn't

speak Nepalese either, but I figured they weren't going to find very many people who did. But I was sure they would never send me Latin America cause I didn't speak Spanish. Well, sure enough, that's where I ended up, and I'd always been very happy that I did. My wife is Ecuadorian. I didn't meet her as a Peace Corps volunteer, but I met her later on.

GANZGLASS: [00:05:11] OK, that's another story. So Ecuador. And I guess there are mountains in Ecuador.

MOWBRAY: [00:05:17] Oh yeah. Snow covered mountains.

GANZGLASS: [00:05:20] You got to go, um, did you get to go climbing?

MOWBRAY: [00:05:22] Well, I didn't really. I guess. A buddy of mine. Well, my third year in Ecuador, I was living in Quito and I lived up on the side of Pichincha. And I had kept saying, I want to climb this one day. And our Heifer Project person who was sort of responsible for overseeing me or visiting me or whatever, he climbed mountains. He was, I mean, he was a rescuer in all kinds of and he was Ecuadorian. Anyway, I asked him, what's the best route up Mount Pichincha? He said, just start at the bottom and walk up. So I started at my house and we walked up. And that was not the best route because we got up to what I thought was going to be close to the top and it was going to go on and on and on forever. So we turned, we sort of looped around the big chasm and went out and looked around and stuff. But we didn't, we never got to the top of it. But that's all the climbing I really did. I lived in the mountains.

GANZGLASS: [00:06:26] Well, let's back up a little bit. We're jumping ahead. You got selected. Where was your training?

MOWBRAY: [00:06:34] OK, our training was at Montana State College, in those days. It's now Montana State University. And I think the group, the agricultural group the year before us had also trained there. And I don't know what else to say about it. I mean, it was very good training.

GANZGLASS: [00:06:52] Was it good training? Talk about the language training.

MOWBRAY: [00:06:55] The language training was especially good, I think. They had the head of the language department, the Spanish department, from the University of Arizona was there to lead it. And let's see, my first teacher, I'm not sure where he was from. But in all the classes, we had a teacher and an assistant, and that teacher's assistant was a Cuban, um, you know, what, ran away from Cuba?

GANZGLASS: [00:07:22] Refugee, yeah.

MOWBRAY: [00:07:23] Refugee. He'd been a pharmacist there, and his wife had been a, I think an English teacher or something. You know, she'd been a teacher, so he was there as an assistant. His wife was in charge of a group. And I started out in his group, which was the bottom end of the language ability, Group H I think it was. After about a month, I moved to into Group B or C.

GANZGLASS: [00:07:49] Hey, that's moving up.

MOWBRAY: [00:07:50] Which was his wife's group.

GANZGLASS: [00:07:54] Excellent.

MOWBRAY: [00:07:55] Yeah. Well, I was happy. I thought I didn't, I mean. Well, pronunciation was my biggest, biggest problem was just learning to pronounce what was it, N? I remember that I couldn't say el, I always said L. And once the head of the language program knew about that, any time he'd see me, he'd say, say el. And I'd say, L.

GANZGLASS: [00:08:20] So you've learned how to say el?

MOWBRAY: [00:08:22] Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:08:23] We'll talk about your many years in Latin America.

MOWBRAY: [00:08:26] But anyway, so the language training was very good. Our technical training, I mean, there were about seven foresters in the group. The rest were mostly all AB generalists who had grown up on farms and they were training for agriculture. And we got the same training the aggies did. I learned how to vaccinate chickens for Newcastle. And I think that's the only thing I think I ever used once I became a volunteer. I did help some of the other volunteers vaccinating chickens. But we learned a lot of other things about animals and plants and stuff.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:05] But no forestry?

MOWBRAY: [00:09:07] But no forestry. There was nobody there that knew anything about forestry in Ecuador, so we didn't have any.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:13] Well, you had a master's degree in forestry.

MOWBRAY: [00:09:15] Right. Well, there were a couple of us that did. But that's, you know, what we needed to learn was what's going on in Ecuador and the way they made their new.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:25] OK. And did you get cultural orientation?

MOWBRAY: [00:09:27] Oh, we had, yeah. And let's see. Well, we had a lot of ex, well, they were Latin Americans studying in the United States that were there for helping us with the cultural training. And I remember, particularly as one girl from Peru whose parents owned big haciendas and we got talking about land reform and stuff. And she was in tears because we were talking about her family and what horrible people they were, essentially, that they owned all this land and they had all these native people working for them as slaves, essentially.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:09] Yeah, she didn't like that.

MOWBRAY: [00:10:11] No, no. And I can understand that. She hadn't looked at her country through those eyes before.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:18] So it was a big cultural shift for her as well.

MOWBRAY: [00:10:21] Yeah, for her, right.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:23] Maybe more than for you.

MOWBRAY: [00:10:24] More for her than for us, I think.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:26] Which is interesting. So you were in Montana. Did you, I guess you, did you have any work experience there? Or at that point in '63, there weren't, were there, it was all academic or was there?

MOWBRAY: [00:10:39] Well, I had worked the summer for the U.S. Forest Service in Pennsylvania and Maryland and, I guess, New Jersey, doing forest survey.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:50] But part of the training, there was no work experience, no forestry.

MOWBRAY: [00:10:54] Oh, no. The closest thing there was, I would say, an experience for foresters was we had weekend camp outs up in the mountains and we were the only. Well, not the only ones, but the foresters always looked forward to the weekend because we got away from Spanish class and we could go out in the woods. Some of the rest of these of the AB generalists were not happy about going out in the woods.

GANZGLASS: [00:11:19] But that was, I guess, the nod towards forestry.

MOWBRAY: [00:11:22] Yeah. Well, I mean, it wasn't done for forestry. It was just done for something to do on the weekend that was different from what we did the rest of the week.

GANZGLASS: [00:11:29] OK. So you.

MOWBRAY: [00:11:32] One thing I forgot to mention on language training was that then we had to speak Spanish at lunchtime. And so we would always

get over there, and it was usually our assistant person was standing at the table with us and we would get over there and eat as fast as we could and get up and go. So we didn't have to speak much Spanish. One day for some reason I had to go late. And so by the time I got there, everybody else was gone. I learned, I think, more Spanish in that 15 minutes than I did in any other 15 minutes in the language program. I learned the names for all the seafoods just about. He found out I was from Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay was there. And so I learned, you know, crabs and shrimp and fish and all kinds of things.

GANZGLASS: [00:12:24] Sometimes the informal training is the best, right?

MOWBRAY: [00:12:28] Oh, yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:12:30] Definitely. So how long was the training?

MOWBRAY: [00:12:33] Well, see, we had two months in Montana State University and then we were the first volunteers to ever train in Mexico. And we went to Pátzcuaro, Mexico. We had to tell everybody we were students from the Montana State University. We couldn't tell them we were Peace Corps trainees because Mexico didn't want have anything to do Peace Corps in those days, supposedly. But we got there and we would say we were students from Montana State University. And they're like, oh, you're the Peace Corps people. So everybody in the area knew. And I don't know why, but I mean, we were all assigned. Pátzcuaro was a sort of training center for community development people from, not just Mexico, from all over the place in Latin America. And we all had, some of them volunteered to stick around during their time off and help us with our training.

GANZGLASS: [00:13:31] So what happened there, was it language training basically?

MOWBRAY: [00:13:35] No, it was, like it was. Well, it was mostly language, but we also we did spend a week or two in a small village with our volunteer person. And I always remember that we, there were three of us foresters were all sent the same small village, which was in a almost a swamp. And I think the people in the town felt sorry for us because

there weren't any trees anywhere. So one day, and the men would usually go off somewhere to work, and they came back that day with a bunch of trees that they had pulled up for us to plant. And we did plant them, not having much hope that they were ever going to survive in that water laden soil. And then so we mixed straw and stuff with the soil thinking that might help the drainage. And then the next, I think it was a couple of days later, we watched them make adobe. It was almost the same thing we had done.

GANZGLASS: [00:14:42] Do you know whether the trees made it?

MOWBRAY: [00:14:44] I'm sure they didn't. There was no way the trees were going to survive in that I think. The adobe might have made it worse, but it wasn't going to make any difference. They were, you know, they weren't trees for swamps.

GANZGLASS: [00:14:58] So you spent, how long were you in Mexico?

MOWBRAY: [00:15:01] We were there a month.

GANZGLASS: [00:15:03] A month.

MOWBRAY: [00:15:03] And I don't remember now all. I know it was a week or two we were out there in the village. I can't recall what we did the rest of the time.

GANZGLASS: [00:15:13] How did you react to, well, I guess you had been to Taiwan, but how did you react to Mexico? A kid from Baltimore.

MOWBRAY: [00:15:28] I don't know. I liked it. I liked the food, and I think that's one of the things, before I went, my mother said, you're not going to like it, you know, you're so picky about your food. I said, oh, I love Mexican food. And she says, well, how do you know? I had some in the Philippines. Well, Spanish food I had in the Philippines, but it wasn't Mexican. And Mexican's very different. But anyway, I mean, I really did. I liked the food. I liked the people. I wasn't thinking that much

about the poverty at that time, but it was nothing anywhere near as bad as what I saw and what I'd seen in Taiwan.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:06] So that was really, the culture shock was in Taiwan.

MOWBRAY: [00:16:11] Yeah, partly because I wasn't prepared for it. And part of it was, you know, we're running our tanks over people's rice fields.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:19] And other issues like that. That's another whole interview we won't get into.

MOWBRAY: [00:16:24] But I was sort of surprised the Marine Corps didn't seem to. Well, the government had said, you know, come in and do what you need to do. So we did. They gave us the southern end of the island, which is where the real Formosans lived. Not the mainland Chinese.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:37] Oh, I see. OK. So after Mexico, did you then go home or did you go directly to Ecuador?

MOWBRAY: [00:16:44] No, we flew into Dallas. In fact, the one thing I forgot, well.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:51] No, no, go ahead. We can go back.

MOWBRAY: [00:16:53] Well, we flew into Dallas, where there were three lines, well, there were people there waiting with papers for us or something to tell us whether we had been selected in or out or were in between. So there were three people, three people there. But I was also, I had written to my uncle who lived in Dallas. And so he and my aunt were both there to meet me at the airport and I was going to spend the night there with them. And so I was busy greeting them and didn't pay much attention to where all where everybody was going. And when that was all done, I went over to find somebody, which I thought was the line that had to accept the people who were accepted. And they said, well, no, we don't have anything for you.

GANZGLASS: [00:17:43] So that was the deselected group, the people who are not selected?

MOWBRAY: [00:17:50] Right. Well, I mean, in the end, I had gone to the right group, or right line, but I had. So they sent me to the other ones in and I wasn't in any of them.

GANZGLASS: [00:18:02] Oh, so they just had forgotten your name completely?

MOWBRAY: [00:18:05] Well, I don't know what had happened. But one thing I wanted to mention there was also was during training, there were two times when we had these selection days, which I don't think they ever did much of that afterwards, but they would have a bunch of psychiatrists and psychologists up there and training. They would go on the weekend hikes with us and they were some more people you tried to shy away from. You didn't want to let them get to know you. And then there was the day that was selection and it was the head of the training program, Dr. Dunbar, who had to run around and give everybody their slips of paper. And so again, we were watching for him and you'd cross the street to stay away from him. But they always caught up with you. And people were, during training, I mean, during the training program at those two times before the end, given slips and they were gone by the next day.

GANZGLASS: [00:19:05] There were many people deselected?

MOWBRAY: [00:19:08] About a third of the group.

GANZGLASS: [00:19:10] Wow. Do you have any idea why?

MOWBRAY: [00:19:17] Um, well, most of them I didn't know why. There was one guy from Georgia, and we had, I think, one black guy in the group from Oklahoma. And a guy from Georgia was just always after him. And for most of us, the guy that we really loved, we really loved this guy from Oklahoma. We would go, when we were in Mexico, we went out beer drinking with him and so forth. But anyway, that guy from Georgia, I wasn't surprised when he was taken out. He just, you know, he'd grown up in the wrong culture. But others I can remember, OK, at the end, there was a girl that I guess they, well, they asked her. Do you

think you would like, you're going to like living in Ecuador for two years? And they were going to let her go, I think, if she said yes, but in the end, she said no.

GANZGLASS: [00:20:20] So she basically selected herself out.

MOWBRAY: [00:20:24] Yeah. Now I'd met her. She was the first one on our training group that I met. I met her on the airplane on the way out there.

GANZGLASS: [00:20:32] Maybe she ended up somewhere else.

MOWBRAY: [00:20:35] I don't think she ever got Peace Corps, but she did write to a lot of us.

GANZGLASS: [00:20:39] Oh.

MOWBRAY: [00:20:41] So she was interested in how we were doing and things, but I guess she decided that she just didn't want to do that.

GANZGLASS: [00:20:49] To do that. All right. So you got selected and you were in Dallas and then you just headed off to Ecuador or what happened?

MOWBRAY: [00:20:57] No, no. Then we went home for, oh, I think it was one week or two weeks. And then all met at Kennedy Airport in New York and got on our Pan Am flight to Quito.

GANZGLASS: [00:21:21] OK. And do you remember how many were in your group by that time?

MOWBRAY: [00:21:25] I think about 30 of us. But I don't remember for sure.

GANZGLASS: [00:21:30] OK, so then you get to, you don't have to tell me about the flight, you get to Quito.

MOWBRAY: [00:21:34] Well, there was one interesting thing about the flight. One of the stewardesses said she played chess and so one of the guys

wanted to play chess with her. Well, it turned out to her rules for chess were no rules that any of us had ever seen before.

GANZGLASS: [00:21:52] But they had a good time anyway.

MOWBRAY: [00:21:53] Oh yeah, yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:21:55] So you get to go to Quito and then what happened?

MOWBRAY: [00:21:57] Well, we got to Quito, and I think they kept us in Quito for a couple of days, and the foresters all met with people from the Forest Service and some of them from FAO. There were two Spaniards, Spanish foresters, who didn't speak Spanish anywhere near like what we had learned. They all had these. They pronounce some letters differently than what we had learned.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:23] They were Ecuadorian?

MOWBRAY: [00:22:24] No, these were Spaniards.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:26] Oh, Spaniards. So you met with the FAO and who else did you say?

MOWBRAY: [00:22:31] And the Ecuadorian Forest Service. And we met with people from the Ministry of Agriculture because that's what most of us were going to be doing. We, of course, met a lot of Peace Corps staff and we met with the people from Heifer Project who were in charge of our, were in charge of the unit that had a contract with Peace Corps to run the agriculture program.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:57] So what did you? Were you involved in the Heifer Project then?

MOWBRAY: [00:23:03] Well, not in a lot. I mean, they were giving away animals and I wasn't involved in giving away animals. But they did get us some tree seeds that we wanted to use for trying some species that, you know, weren't being grown in Ecuador and probably shouldn't have

been either. But they got us, they did get. They looking for things they could do to help support us I think. So then they did find a bunch of us were looking for some trees seeds so they got us that.

GANZGLASS: [00:23:39] So the forestry people were still overseen by Heifer, although Heifer had nothing to do with forestry.

MOWBRAY: [00:23:46] Yeah, well, except they did have one forester on the staff. But they also had the staff divided up into different regions. So the guy doing my region was not the forester. I would meet with him occasionally, but I'm glad I had the guy I did have, though, in my region. He was a really good. I mean, he was Ecuadorian, but he was just very supportive and he knew people everywhere and he could help make you. He could help you make connections.

GANZGLASS: [00:24:21] And where were you assigned?

MOWBRAY: [00:24:22] OK, well, first, before that.

GANZGLASS: [00:24:25] Before assignment.

MOWBRAY: [00:24:26] After we had done this, whatever it was we did in Quito for, I don't know, three or four days. Then they sent us off to different, to live or to stay with other volunteers from the from, I think they were all from that first ag group that had arrived a year earlier. And to spend I don't know, it was a week or two with them. And so I was sent up to Ibarra, which was a town up north of Quito. And, uh, what was his name? Moe Pardy. And then there were a bunch of other volunteers there, though I particularly remember one that was a, he'd been a, he'd been in training to be a priest before he joined Peace Corps, and he was working for a Catholic institute that worked with farmers and stuff, and he always teased the bishop because the bishop wanted him to give them some chickens, and so any time he'd see the bishop, he'd go around cluck cluck cluck cluck, but he wouldn't give him any chickens.

MOWBRAY: [00:25:30] But so anyway, we spent two weeks there and part of that, the guy that was in charge. There were two of us. Yeah, there were

two of us. Oh, I remember, that's when I learned to say popcorn in Spanish. The volunteers who were there, there were quite a few in that town, were going to have a party and they asked us to go get the popcorn. And I think that's one word that changes from one country to another. It's different.

GANZGLASS: [00:26:04] So how do you say it in Ecuador?

MOWBRAY: [00:26:05] In Ecuador, it's *canguil*. In Paraguay, it's *pororó*. In Mexico, it was *palomitas de maíz*. So anyway, it was.

GANZGLASS: [00:26:19] Different words.

MOWBRAY: [00:26:19] But anyway, so we didn't have any idea how you said it in Spanish then. And the volunteers just said, go get some popcorn. So we went over to the store to get it, and we said, we want *maíz* that goes boom, boom, boom. Oh, *pororó*. We don't have any. Across the street, I said, OK, how do you say it again? *Pororó*. And we kept saying *pororó* until we got halfway across the street. By the time we got to the other side, we'd forgotten the word and had to go through that whole thing of corn that goes boom, boom, boom. And we got some.

MOWBRAY: [00:26:51] Anyway, one of the things that forester did was he took us, the two of us, on a train trip. They had these busses that would run on train tracks with no tires on them, but they were called *autocarrils*, and that went all the way from Ibarra that would go all the way down to the coast to a town. It was the only way you could get there. It was either by water or by this *autocarril* thing. And it was almost always, I found out later, and in that time there was, there was a landslide somewhere, so you had to walk around the landslide. There was another *autocarril* on the other side so you go the rest of the way down. And I learned later on, I took that trip many times, and I don't know that I ever made it all the way without having to walk around a landslide somewhere because it was going down the Andes. Anyway. Yeah.

MOWBRAY: [00:27:57] So we spent two weeks there and then we went back to Quito, and that's when we were given our assignments. Well, before that though we had been interviewed by the Forest Service people and so forth, and been told that they wanted people to go different places. And where did we want to go? And when we got back, they had ignored anything about where we wanted to go and just had assigned us to different places. And in fact, I was assigned to work with this Catholic church institution in Ibarra, which was, so it wasn't the Forest Service. And we had all, for some reason in our training, we had been just convinced that we were supposed to work with government institutions. And so anyway, I was.

GANZGLASS: [00:28:46] So it was the Catholic church organization, a forestry organization?

MOWBRAY: [00:28:49] No, it was called the Instituto Campesino, farmers institute. And they worked, they mostly worked with agriculture and stuff. But they, this forester that I'd been with up there, that's where he worked, was with them, although he didn't. He sort of really did what he wanted to do. I did want to work with somebody. I said, you know, I didn't come down here just to run around and do whatever I can do. But anyway, so I worked with them for a while. In fact, they even gave me a place to live in there up above their offices. But then, I don't know, for some reason. OK, well the Forest Service was doing a thing where they were organizing farmers to form cooperatives and plant trees on haciendas. But they would sign an agreement where, you know, they got, I don't know, 80 percent of the profits from the trees and the landowner got 10 percent or something. And then the Forest Service got whatever was left.

MOWBRAY: [00:29:55] And so anyway, one of the things that I did do, I started doing it while I was with the Catholic organization, was run around talking to farmers about forming a cooperative, and I showed them slides of tree planting in the United States, like that was supposed to be something interesting. But anyway, so that was what I was doing. And somehow, oh OK, I guess that. When I thought I had a couple of groups ready to do it, I wrote a letter to the Forest Service and said,

hey, we've got these two groups ready to form cooperatives. What's next? Can you send someone up here to do it? And they always thought it was the greatest thing. They never had a letter from a volunteer before, and especially in the kind of Spanish that volunteers had.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:46] I was going to ask how good your Spanish was?

MOWBRAY: [00:30:48] Well, it wasn't all that good, but it was good enough so they knew they had a letter from a volunteer.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:54] Yeah, right.

MOWBRAY: [00:30:56] And years later, when I went back, there were cooperatives formed in both of those towns. Now, I don't know whether I had anything to do with it or not because it was.

GANZGLASS: [00:31:06] Did the Forest Service follow up?

MOWBRAY: [00:31:08] Well, not that I knew of, but you know, they could have, and I didn't, and I wouldn't have known about it because I wasn't really assigned to them at the time. Sometime, I guess, I'd been in my first site, which was Ibarra, for about six months, and I decided I really needed to be where the Forest Service was. And they did have an office in Ibarra, but their nursery was in Otavalo, which is a famous Indian town, has probably the best, well, one of the most famous Indian markets in Latin America. But they also, a reason I went there or finally went there, was because they did have the nursery over there. So I went over there to work in the nursery and I could work, and then I could work with the workers working in the nursery and do a variety of things. And you know, and work with a counterpart.

GANZGLASS: [00:32:00] So you asked Peace Corps to be transferred. Is that how it worked?

MOWBRAY: [00:32:06] Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:32:07] So you were transferred to this other town?

MOWBRAY: [00:32:09] Yeah, which was, I don't know, half an hour away.

GANZGLASS: [00:32:12] Oh, so not that far.

MOWBRAY: [00:32:13] It wasn't very far, no. But then, well even initially I guess I'd been told that I was assigned to two provinces, Imbarbura and Carchi, which were the two northernmost provinces in Ecuador. They went all the way up to the border with Colombia. So I was traveling a lot between, well, throughout both of them by bus. And living, I mean, that was the closest I think I ever came to living in the way you hear about. I lived comfortably in when I was in my base. But when I was traveling around, sometimes you got to places where there really wasn't a place to stay and often you were in a room with no windows or anything. Maybe some hay to sleep on even.

GANZGLASS: [00:33:04] Well, how did you find these places to stay?

MOWBRAY: [00:33:08] I guess, and I think in all cases, I was, my initial contact in all these towns was the priest. I'm not a Catholic but that was inside. I'd go tell a priest I wanted to do this and could you, you know, get people together to do it? And where can I stay? And they always helped me find something.

GANZGLASS: [00:33:31] What were your living arrangements when you were in your post?

MOWBRAY: [00:33:36] Well, when I was in Ibarra, I was in this, I think it was a two-room sort of apartment up above the office.

GANZGLASS: [00:33:44] Oh, above the office.

MOWBRAY: [00:33:45] And then when I moved to Otavalo, I got a volunteer who was already there to help me find the house. But it wasn't a house, I mean, it was the upstairs. They had an upstairs, I guess, two rooms that they weren't using. And it was actually a storefront place and a

couple of, it was an older woman and her two daughters. And then they also had a couple of indigenous people that worked for them. They'd all live downstairs. And but I had the upstairs and I had a balcony that looked down over the patio where they were.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:21] Sounds nice. Were you always living alone or were you with another volunteer?

MOWBRAY: [00:34:28] No, I, yeah, I think I was always living alone.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:32] OK, good.

MOWBRAY: [00:34:34] Later on moved to Quito for my third year, but even then I lived alone.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:37] OK, so you spent six months in the first place and then you moved and you worked in the nursery in Otavalo.

MOWBRAY: [00:34:46] Otavalo.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:50] And what did you do in the nursery? Was that a successful project?

MOWBRAY: [00:34:54] Well, I mean, that's where I was planting the seeds that I had that we had gotten from Heifer Project. So we could. And I had written around to different places to some experts on species trials and found out about experimental designs that we could plant the trees out and get some results from it. So I had that and I was working with my counterpart to try to find places to plant them. And then I was also just helping the nursery workers with taking care of the trees. I thought that was interesting. I've had a lot of different kinds of pines. They had one pine species that they were, that they've been growing for years in Ecuador, from some time back in the 30s. But at some time or another, these.

MOWBRAY: [00:35:51] Oh, that's right, there were some Australian foresters there with FAO also. They came up and looked at what we were doing, and

some of my pine trees weren't doing too well. And pine trees usually need a fungus growing on their roots, and it's a special specific fungus. So anyway, these Australians came and said we need a lorry load of litter up here. Next thing I knew they had a truckload of pine straw and stuff that they brought up from one of the pine forest down near Quito, and they didn't put it on their pine trees. They put it on mine, and that made me feel like, OK, somebody thinks that this is something special. Because, you know, they've got thousands of these other pine trees that aren't doing all that well, either, because they don't have the mycorrhiza that they need.

GANZGLASS: [00:36:42] But you got that.

MOWBRAY: [00:36:44] But they put the stuff, spread it around on my seed beds. And then the other thing I would do working out of that nursery, the forester for the region was, he'd line up places to plant trees. And I would go up with them when we went up to plant trees up in the, I mean, it's usually somewhere much higher. We were already at, what, 6000 feet at least, and we'd go up another couple thousand to plant the trees. And we'd usually leave, I remember, about 6:00 or 7:00 in the morning. Ecuadorians don't, for breakfast they eat, they have a café con leche and a piece of bread usually. So that's what I had. When I was eating on my own, I fixed up something more. But when I was getting up to go with these guys, I had breakfast with them and. But I also learned, one of my favorite foods was an Ecuadorian chocolate bar with *maní* in it, or peanuts, like a Mr. Goodbar. But it was called a Manicho. And I stuffed my pockets with Manichos when I went up in the mountains to plant trees so I have something to eat the rest of the day.

GANZGLASS: [00:38:02] Very nourishing food, chocolate. Well, the peanuts were good for you.

MOWBRAY: [00:38:05] The peanuts too. And now, well, any time my wife goes back to Ecuador, she brings me back a box of Manichos.

GANZGLASS: [00:38:14] So you like these.

MOWBRAY: [00:38:17] Oh yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:38:17] Why was there a need for all of this tree planting? Had there been deforestation?

MOWBRAY: [00:38:22] Yeah, well, the country is essentially up all the mountains anyway, the higher altitudes where the Incas had lived. I don't know why they, you know, they cleared it, probably for firewood, which is the main reason that a lot of that. And for, I think, probably built something out of trees.

GANZGLASS: [00:38:47] So there a lot of trees had been cut.

MOWBRAY: [00:38:49] There weren't very many trees left. There were some little spots where you could find some examples of the native species, but mostly there were. And some of the area when they were planting these trees really were not suited for planting trees, except that eucalyptus. They were planning basically two species, eucalyptus and pine, this Monterey pine. The Monterey pine was good for getting up at high altitudes in areas that were wet, but they planted eucalyptus almost anywhere. And they were planted in some very dry arid sites and they grew.

GANZGLASS: [00:39:28] So you did this for two years? For a year and a half, you continued working out of this nursery?

MOWBRAY: [00:39:38] Well, essentially out of the nursery, but you know, I'm.

GANZGLASS: [00:39:40] In lots of different places.

MOWBRAY: [00:39:41] Yeah, and traveling around trying to organize these co-ops.

GANZGLASS: [00:39:46] So did you become friends with the Ecuadorian foresters with whom you were working?

MOWBRAY: [00:39:51] Well, it was two, there were two essentially. And I can't remember. Anyway, the second one was I got along with better, I think, than the first one. And I always remember. But he moved his office from Otavalo to Ibarra, but the nursing was still in Otavalo. So I ended up staying there, although I'll never forget, I went over to interview with him shortly after he arrived. And it was Carnival time. In Ecuador for Carnival, they fill water balloons and they'll ride around in towns with pickup trucks full of water balloons.

GANZGLASS: [00:40:38] And throw them at each other?

MOWBRAY: [00:40:40] No, at any unsuspecting person who walked by. And I was dressed up in my suit to go meet my new counterpart and trying to avoid these trucks full of water balloons. I did. I made it. But that actually, some people have been blinded by having those things thrown at busses and breaking the windows and things. And it goes on for not just the week of Carnival, you know, it'll start about the beginning of January and goes on for a couple of months. It does stop on Ash Wednesday, but.

GANZGLASS: [00:41:20] I guess there aren't many other things to do up there.

MOWBRAY: [00:41:24] Well, there weren't then. Quito at least has now gotten much livelier. Quito when we first got there, I mean by 8:00 at night, there was nobody on the streets except when the movie let out. Then there'd be suddenly this crowd of people getting busses and cabs or whatever to go home.

GANZGLASS: [00:41:44] So this in the sixties, was there electricity, indoor plumbing, all of that, in the places you lived?

MOWBRAY: [00:41:51] There was electricity, I think, everywhere I was. Now some of the little towns I went to, they had electricity that was with a local generator. And so it didn't, it wasn't going all the time. And we did have, in an apartment that I had, there was a big sort of washing tub down in the patio that had water, and that's where I got my water from that I would boil up upstairs. But so I mean, there was water, but to get

a shower you went once a week usually over to this place that had hot water because they heated it up with charcoal or firewood or whatever and then ran water.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:32] So it's kind of a bathhouse.

MOWBRAY: [00:42:34] Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:35] Did you have other friends or were you basically on your own? Lots of people talk about loneliness. Doesn't sound like you were lonely at all.

MOWBRAY: [00:42:44] No. Well, partly because I don't think I get lonely that easy, but I did have. There was another volunteer from my group. He was one of the aggies in Otavalo, so he helped me find my place to stay and we would usually have lunch together. Well, I shouldn't say usually, well, often had lunch together. And dinner, I think, because we ate at this hotel where you could buy a meal plan and we had good meals.

GANZGLASS: [00:43:14] So you had somebody in town that was a peer.

MOWBRAY: [00:43:17] Yeah, somebody in town. And then later on, there was a woman volunteer who came and lived in the same house I was living and she lived downstairs in another room. I didn't have all that much to do with her, but she was somebody else I could speak English with. And being in Otavalo, at least on Saturdays, there was always somebody around who spoke English because people would come, tourists would come up to the fair, to the, uh.

GANZGLASS: [00:43:46] So how big a town is this?

MOWBRAY: [00:43:50] Twenty thousand people. Yeah, it was a pretty big town.

GANZGLASS: [00:43:53] That's a pretty big place. And there was a fair there?

MOWBRAY: [00:43:56] A fair that sold, well, mostly woven goods. And that's what the Otavalans were famous for was for weaving ponchos and array of other kinds of things. In fact, one of the volunteers introduced a tapestry that was some other group of volunteers down south was making. And they showed Otavalans these things. Oh, we can make them and we can make them better. And sure enough, within a month, they were making them and making them better.

GANZGLASS: [00:44:22] And the women did that. Did men also do weaving or it's mostly women?

MOWBRAY: [00:44:29] You know, I don't think I ever saw. I think it probably was mostly women, but I'm not, I'm not absolutely sure because I didn't usually visit them when they were weaving.

GANZGLASS: [00:44:41] Yeah, yeah. OK, so you spent a year and a half doing this work, traveling around. Did you travel to other regions as well on vacation?

MOWBRAY: [00:44:53] Well, one of my best friends in our group was another forester who was stationed in Quito and teaching at the only forestry school in the country that taught a two year forestry school for, I forget, they weren't full foresters when they came out of there, but they were probably had better forestry training than the ones that went to the university. But anyway, so he was teaching there, and then he was a forest entomologist, he had a master's degree. And the two of us took our vacations together and we went all over Ecuador. Most of the other volunteers were going to Chile and Colombia and Venezuela and so forth. We traveled throughout the country just about, except there was one little corner of the country that I never did get to. But otherwise.

MOWBRAY: [00:45:50] We took a canoe down the Napo river, which is a major, well, Ecuador's major tributary to the Amazon. And when we took that, it was a mail boat. Actually, it would go down the river, would take, I guess, two or three days for it to get from one end to the other. And our trip was a day and a half. And when we got down, and when we got there, we didn't know when it was going to leave. So we got to this

town. Oh, we won't be going for another two or three days. So we ran around other little towns around there and then came back. And when we got the mail boat and were going down the river, I guess we did know that we needed to have something to eat because I think we had, we did buy some sardines, which I don't really like. But it was about the only thing you could get that you can carry.

GANZGLASS: [00:46:42] Canned sardines, right.

MOWBRAY: [00:46:43] So anyway. Oh, and then there was, that's right. One part of that trip, we had to get out and walk because it was a whirlpool. And the mailman would not take passengers through that part. So you had to, it was sort of like this and we walked across this while he went that way.

GANZGLASS: [00:47:03] You had to get off the boat and walk.

MOWBRAY: [00:47:04] Yeah. And so anyway, so we did that and we got somewhere and spent the night in a, well, some of the indigenous people who were living out there, in their house, which had a bamboo floor or something like that. Pom pom thatch roof. But as you went down the river, though, on the south side there was all forest. On the north side, there were little villages. On the south side was this tribe called the Aucas. In those days it was called the Aucas, and now they're called the Huaorani, I think. *Awqa* is "savage" in Quechua, and Quechua was the major language spoken by indigenous people. But anyway, so they called the Aucas Aucas or the Huaorani Aucas in their language. But anyway, they ran around with spear guns and poison stuff and they had been, they were famous for killing a bunch of missionaries that had come in to try to work with them. They landed their plane and the Aucas or Huaorani killed them. One of 'em, last name was Saint, and then later on I met Rachel Saint, who was his sister, and who was working with that same tribe.

GANZGLASS: [00:48:35] Wow. So did you ever meet any of these people?

MOWBRAY: [00:48:40] Yeah. When I went, when I got down to that village. Well, there was a. One of the places that we visited, oh in fact where we were going on that trip was to Limoncocha, which is a missionary base, Bible translators, with Bible translators were in charge of that. And they had set up this base out there where they could fly around to different indigenous villages. There must have been seven or eight different indigenous groups out in the east, out in eastern Ecuador, and a lot more down on the coast also, that all spoke different languages. So these folks were all had their own group, that they were working with, learning their language and then translating the Bible into their language. And they would have what they called the Summer Institute of Linguistics, where they would bring in people from each of these tribes and train them as teachers, so they could go back and teach the people in the village to read. What they wanted to do was read the Bible, but they had to get them to read.

GANZGLASS: [00:49:52] Yeah. And where are the missionaries from?

MOWBRAY: [00:49:57] The U.S. I think they all were. I don't think they have to be. But all of them there in Ecuador were. I know there was another base like that in Peru, but anyway, so there were. Now I've sort of lost track of where I was.

GANZGLASS: [00:50:13] Well, you were going down the river.

MOWBRAY: [00:50:15] And we eventually got to. Oh, that was kind of interesting too, because when we finally, well, we got to where we were, well, close to where we were going. We got to this little town called Pompeya, which must have been 200 people. And there were, but there was a Catholic missionary there or Catholic priest. And we asked him how to get to Limoncocha. Well to get there, you still had to cross a little branch of the river. So he got some people there and took us through the swamp. And then they had some little dugout canoes, and they took us across a sort of branch of the river. And then we had to walk for about a mile and a half up what looked like a road almost, because the Wycliffe Bible translator people had had cleared it so that they could take their wagon down there to get supplies that came down

the river. So once we got there, it was easy enough to, you just kept on that road and you finally got to the runway, which was the biggest part of the village there or their settlement was a runway where they had a DC-3 that was specially outfitted so it could fly over the Andes, where most DC-3s couldn't fly.

GANZGLASS: [00:51:39] Was it just too high for a DC-3?

MOWBRAY: [00:51:41] Yeah, but they had.

GANZGLASS: [00:51:43] So you got way into the backwater.

MOWBRAY: [00:51:46] Oh yeah, that was, in those days it was way in the backwater. Now the oil companies have built roads and stuff all through that area.

GANZGLASS: [00:51:55] And the indigenous people, do they now have money and have they gotten education?

MOWBRAY: [00:52:01] Well. You know, I.

GANZGLASS: [00:52:05] Maybe or maybe not.

MOWBRAY: [00:52:07] Yeah, well, I mean, well, they've certainly gotten more education and Huaoranis now are more, uh, civilized and more mixed into the culture than they used to be. And I learned a lot more about them when I was back there later with AID.

GANZGLASS: [00:52:29] OK, so you did traveling and you said you stayed for a third year and did you move to Quito in the third year?

MOWBRAY: [00:52:38] I moved to Quito in the third year because we had, well, some time there toward close to the end of our, well, it must have been about halfway. You know, I don't know what it must have been. We had about a year to go I think. The foresters had decided that, well, Peace Corps had not ordered any more foresters for the next group. And we got concerned about that and found out, well they didn't

because the Forest Service had said they didn't want any. And the reason they didn't want any is because the whole first group ended up not working with them. And we hadn't been there long enough for them to realize that, hey, these guys are different. So we got concerned that there weren't any more foresters coming and we, among other things, anyway, for a bunch of reasons, a bunch of. We got permission from Peace Corps to have a meeting in Guayaquil and we got all the foresters together and discussed a bunch of things.

MOWBRAY: [00:53:34] But one of them was how do we get some volunteers into the next group? And I guess, and that's where we decided that, among other things, we needed to have somebody in Quito that worked directly with the Forest Service and would help coordinate the whole thing. So everybody else was going home. I said, well, I'll stay. And I was, I wanted to stay two years. But the Peace Corps director said nobody stays for two more years. You know, that's changed a lot since then, but that director said nobody's staying for an additional two years. So I had to, could only stay for one year. And I said, you know, I've got a problem then because I've got to pay my way back. And Eduardo Sotomayor, the Ecuadorian that I told you was the coordinator for us, said, Bob, I'll pay for your ticket back.

GANZGLASS: [00:54:32] Why did you have to pay for your ticket back?

MOWBRAY: [00:54:34] Because if you were only extending for one year.

GANZGLASS: [00:54:37] You couldn't go home?

MOWBRAY: [00:54:38] Well, you could go home, but you couldn't, but you had to pay your own way to come back. But anyway, Eduardo was going to pay it, and I said, No, Eduardo, I'll take care of it somehow. And so I did come back.

GANZGLASS: [00:54:52] So you went, you did go back to the States?

MOWBRAY: [00:54:55] Yeah, I came back. Came back to the States. I think that's the time. I got off the airplane in Baltimore airport with my poncho on and a blowgun and a spear.

GANZGLASS: [00:55:13] You must have been a sight.

MOWBRAY: [00:55:15] Well, my mother thought I was.

GANZGLASS: [00:55:19] So then you went back to Quito and you coordinated with the Forestry Service. And did more volunteers then come?

MOWBRAY: [00:55:27] Oh yeah. We had, well, I think actually before I got. Yeah, before I went home and came back, we had worked with the Forest Service to prepare a request for more foresters. And I don't think before that the Forest Service had ever prepared the request. They didn't even know they had to ask for them. But anyway, so we worked with them and they didn't prepare this either, really. But we, you know, we talked with them and got them convinced that they wanted some more. And so they wrote a letter to Peace Corps asking for more. And then the deputy director, Caleb Roehrig, came over and went, hey, how did you get this to happen? And was very happy with it. But anyway, so we did get a request for more volunteers. And one of the guys in my group went up to Montana and worked on their training so that they did get some more specific, some training that was more related to what they were going to be doing.

GANZGLASS: [00:56:35] And then you were a coordinator for that whole group?

MOWBRAY: [00:56:37] Then when they came back, you know, I worked with the Forest Service to select where they were going to be sent. And then would run around visiting them and so forth, trying to usually do it with one of the local foresters from the Forest Service. They would, the Forest Service got some. One day they were saying, hey, we're going somewhere next week. And I said, Oh, you are? They said, no, we are.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:11] That meant you.

MOWBRAY: [00:57:13] Yeah. And it really made me feel good.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:16] Yeah, that's great. So you really worked closely with them and then supervised?

MOWBRAY: [00:57:20] Yeah, they gave me a desk right there in their office.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:23] Excellent. Great. And what happened after you left, where you were replaced with another volunteer?

MOWBRAY: [00:57:30] Yes, I was.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:33] As coordinator?

MOWBRAY: [00:57:35] Yeah. I had known, I had met him that summer I worked for the Forest Service and he was down here. He was down in the southern end of the country, his wife. He was married. His wife didn't want to move, but I prevailed upon him.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:51] So an American came down who, did he become a volunteer or no? He just came to work with the Forestry Service? The person you met.

MOWBRAY: [00:58:00] No, he was a volunteer.

GANZGLASS: [00:58:02] He was a volunteer.

MOWBRAY: [00:58:03] From that group.

GANZGLASS: [00:58:04] Oh, I see. Yeah.

MOWBRAY: [00:58:04] And he was, you know, he was only in his second year. But so he moved into Quito. And I, at the end of my third year, went up to Montana State and did the forestry training. For yet another group. I don't know, and I don't remember. I don't know how long they kept having foresters after that, but. And we weren't always, always successful as we would have liked to have been getting volunteers to

work with the Forest Service when they got there. And I particularly remember one that was came in that group that when I had moved into Quito to be the coordinator, that we sent him down to a town where there was a Peace Corps staff person living there, and he immediately took him and introduced him to someplace else, somebody else. And he hadn't, you know, we hadn't realized you had to convince the Peace Corps staff as well that we needed to have these volunteers working with the Forest Service.

GANZGLASS: [00:59:05] Were they working with non-profits? Was that the conflict, working for government versus non-profits?

MOWBRAY: [00:59:11] That may have been. I'm not sure what happened with that. When we were up north where I was, it was a nonprofit church organization that a lot of the volunteers were working with.

GANZGLASS: [00:59:27] So what happened then? So you did that and I see that you ended in 1966 and then you became associate Peace Corps director in Paraguay in '73. So what happened in those intervening years?

MOWBRAY: [00:59:44] Well, first, maybe I should mention that the first thing I did when I when I left there was I went to the Peace Corps training thing and my friend Eduardo Sotomayor was there. And Jack Vaughn, who was the Peace Corps director, came to the final graduation ceremony for the volunteers and Eduardo. Well, and you know, and Heifer Project was looking for another staff member. And Eduardo was really pushing me to get the job, so he made it. He was pushing me in front of Jack Vaughn any chance he got. And then later on, I did an interview with Jack Vaughn and he just decided he didn't want to have Heifer Project have any more people.

GANZGLASS: [01:00:25] So he hired you?

MOWBRAY: [01:00:27] No, he didn't. So I went to graduate school, which I had already, you know, I'd already been admitted to do graduate school to study forest ecology.

GANZGLASS: [01:00:40] Did you get a PhD then?

MOWBRAY: [01:00:43] Not.

GANZGLASS: [01:00:45] Not.

MOWBRAY: [01:00:45] No, I'm an ABD.

GANZGLASS: [01:00:48] But you were in a PhD program?

MOWBRAY: [01:00:50] I was in a PhD program. I did my dissertation research in Ecuador, and I had my Forest Service people helped me find sites to do it in. And then they would send visitors out there. Well, in fact, I ended up out of Limoncocha because I needed to be in some kind of native forest and they had lots of forest there and also a nice. They built a house for me right beside the runway. And you know, it wasn't a fancy house, but it was a house. And so anyway, and money and food and all that stuff was taken care of. So I could.

GANZGLASS: [01:01:32] And you were then working, who were you? Who was doing that, the Forest Service did all of that for you or who did that?

MOWBRAY: [01:01:39] Oh, no, no. I had a grant from, well I had a grant from Duke University and had a grant from who was it? There was some kind of, Ford Foundation. Oh. No, that's what the Duke thing was, from Ford Foundation, and I got a grant from National Science Foundation, that's right. I wrote the proposal and sent it in.

GANZGLASS: [01:02:00] National Science.

MOWBRAY: [01:02:03] Sent it in to them. So I was down there doing a study on soil changes and forest succession associated with shifting agriculture. And I don't know, that probably doesn't mean anything to you.

GANZGLASS: [01:02:17] No, but I'm impressed by, after so many interviews where people have one kind of training, they were sent to do something totally different that here was a forester who was sent to do forestry

and knew what he was doing, which is very impressive. That's part of Peace Corps. That's great.

MOWBRAY: [01:02:38] Yeah. Well, I thought it was anyway.

GANZGLASS: [01:02:40] Yeah, that's great. So just to move it, so then you got your, you went to grad school and then you went back to Ecuador for your dissertation.

MOWBRAY: [01:02:52] And that's when I met my wife.

GANZGLASS: [01:02:54] Oh, OK.

MOWBRAY: [01:02:56] And that was, I was, oh yeah, I had a bunch of old friends from the Forest Service. And none of them had actually completed their degrees because they all had to do a thesis to get a bachelor's degree. And the Minister of Agriculture said if you guys want to continue to receive the pay of a forest engineer, then you're going to have to get your degrees. So a bunch of them came and they asked for help on their statistical analysis of the research they'd done, the model. A couple of them had to translate chapter of a book from English into Spanish. Anyway, a variety of different things a lot of them needed help on to finish that. And a lot of them came to me and asked for help anyway. So when they graduated, and they were, not all guys at the same time, they graduated whenever they finished all their stuff, and they invited me to their big graduation party and they had some big parties for graduations. And that's, I met my wife at one of those parties. She was a secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, but some other part of the ministry that I don't even know where she worked. But anyway, I met her one of those parties.

GANZGLASS: [01:04:13] And then you stayed or?

MOWBRAY: [01:04:14] Oh no, we got married. And let's see, just about the time I was finished collecting all my soil samples and stuff, our daughter was born. In the hospital that belonged to the same, belonged to all the missionaries in Ecuador, essentially, but the ones who are out there in

the Oriente were also. Oh, I haven't call it Oriente before, but it's the place where Limoncocha was. Anyway, they were members of the, I don't know, some kind of alliance of the, I guess it was called Alliance Academy. Well, they had a school also called Alliance Academy. But anyway, that's where my oldest daughter was born in Quito. And then about a month after she was born, we came to the States. It was my wife's first time out of the country. On the way, we stopped and visited one of my Peace Corps friends, a forester, who had left and had come back to the States and gotten his PhD. And he was working in Panama, so we stopped and spent a couple of days with them. And his wife had just had a baby the day before we got there.

GANZGLASS: [01:05:33] So they didn't actually need guests.

MOWBRAY: [01:05:35] No, no. But they had agreed and when they agreed they must have known that there was possibly going to be a problem. Anyway so we ended up in Baltimore for a little, for about a couple of weeks. And then we went down to Knoxville, Tennessee, where my major professor had left Duke and moved over to Knoxville to the University of Tennessee. And that was one of the reasons I never got my PhD anyway. I thought I was going to finish it up there and I thought, this is going to be much better because I had a lot of soils to analyze and at the University of Tennessee, they had actually a really good soils lab for agriculture. Whereas at Duke, they don't have, they had this little one in the forestry school. So I thought, well, I thought, this is going to be better. But it wasn't because the forestry school didn't have access to the labs. Well, there were a whole bunch of reasons why I didn't finish.

GANZGLASS: [01:06:36] Did you teach at University of Tennessee or what did you?

MOWBRAY: [01:06:39] I taught, well, I sort of halfway taught one course and it was about, what was it about? Living overseas, working overseas or something like that? And I taught one day and we had everybody read Living Poor and discussed that. There were a bunch of Peace Corps volunteers, plus people who were interested in it.

GANZGLASS: [01:07:00] Yeah.

MOWBRAY: [01:07:00] And my professor from Duke had not really done much in the tropics before. He had one thing he was doing in Panama, one research project and one student down there doing it. But I think I really got him interested in the tropics. He came down and visited me a couple times. Ecuador used some of my grant money to do that and then made a lot of friends down there. Oh yeah, that's right. While I was at Duke, I took a course with the Organization of Tropical Studies, which this other friend who lived in Panama later on had taken the year before or a couple of years before. Duke was not a member of the Organization of Tropical Studies at the time, but a couple of their professors were really active in it. And in fact, my Peace Corps friend had really gotten to be good friends with one of the zoology professors at Duke. While I was there anyway, I got my professor to meet with the zoology guy and then there were a couple of botanists. And two years later, Duke was a member of the Organization of Tropical Studies. And you know, I have no idea. Did I have anything to do with it or not?

GANZGLASS: [01:08:22] Sounds like it.

MOWBRAY: [01:08:22] But I always pat myself on the back and say that I did.

GANZGLASS: [01:08:26] So how did you end up being associate director for agriculture in Paraguay?

MOWBRAY: [01:08:33] OK, see. While I was, yeah, while I was over at Tennessee, my grant ran out. My professor got me a job at Oak Ridge at the, you know, with the Oak Ridge.

GANZGLASS: [01:08:49] Atomic energy?

MOWBRAY: [01:08:50] Atomic energy place, but they were doing all kinds of ecological research. And so they had me doing some analysis of some work they had done trying to revegetate power lines. And so I spent a summer, I guess, setting up plots and taking data from those. And what was I going to get at?

GANZGLASS: [01:09:14] I was asking how you got to Paraguay.

MOWBRAY: [01:09:16] Yeah, yeah. Oh, OK. And then that ran out and I worked for a forestry consulting firm for a while. One of the main things we were doing was revegetating strip mines, which was a big waste of money. Because we would plant, spray plant grass seeds on the strip mines and then rains would come and it would all wash down the mountain. But the TVA said, you've got to do this. We did it. And so I was doing that and looking for a job and had sent an application in the Peace Corps, I don't know, January or something of whatever year it was. What was it?

GANZGLASS: [01:10:06] Probably '72. You went to Paraguay in '73.

MOWBRAY: [01:10:10] Well, it was either '72 or '73 because I didn't go to Paraguay until late '73. But I didn't hear anything for months and months and months from them. And I was about, I thought I had a job in Panama. And then that fell through because I didn't have my PhD. And then I got a call from Peace Corps. Would you be interested in going to Paraguay? And I found out that they had been, the director told me he'd been, his aggie had left and he'd been looking for, trying to get somebody for eight months. And they didn't have anybody. And then finally somebody found my application in a desk drawer and gave it to him. And he said, well, this guy is not an aggie, I need an aggie, but that's OK.

GANZGLASS: [01:10:57] Close enough.

MOWBRAY: [01:10:59] Yeah. And then by then, Peace Corps programing had changed a lot. They, for the ags, they were still using AB generalists because that's what there was. But they were defining the job much more exactly. In Paraguay they had selected I think it was five crops they were going to have volunteers work with as extensionists doing demonstration plots and so forth. But just those, I don't know whether it was three or five. But anyway. And they had contracted a company called Bosico to do the training, and they were located in Costa Rica,

and they were the ones actually that came up. John Guy Smith came up with the idea of doing the programming for AB generalists so that you could actually train them to do something useful. And then so they would help each country that was going to do, get into ag training, help them define their program. And then they trained them in Costa Rica.

GANZGLASS: [01:12:07] So it was a much more specific training?

MOWBRAY: [01:12:09] Much more specific. They grew the crop. And they would have already at the training center started some of the crops. But they would, but the volunteers would plant or the trainees would plant it. But they would also have it in later stages because they had to have them all growing there at the training center.

GANZGLASS: [01:12:30] So they were better prepared.

MOWBRAY: [01:12:31] Oh yeah, much better prepared.

MOWBRAY: [01:12:34] Now, of course, what it did mean was you didn't have volunteers running around finding their own thing. And I'm never, I mean, some of that was good. And so this took away a lot of that self-initiative kind of stuff because you had a job that was pretty well defined, more like.

GANZGLASS: [01:12:55] So do you think that was a good thing or a bad thing?

MOWBRAY: [01:12:57] I think it was good. We had volunteers that were much more useful to the country, you know, than we did with the kind of training I went through. So that's the way we were doing it, but somewhere along the way, oh that's right, because Peace Corps bid out the training and at some point Bosico lost the contract. And another company got it. And we, at least in part, were wondering, you know, is this going to really mess things up now? And also, I also realized, hey, we've got these trainees that are up in Costa Rica growing these crops on volcanic soils, and then they're coming down here to Paraguay and growing them in other kinds of things. So we need to do in-country training. And that's when we moved to in-country training.

GANZGLASS: [01:13:53] And so the training before was in Costa Rica?

MOWBRAY: [01:13:56] Was in Costa Rica, right. But we moved it to in-country training.

GANZGLASS: [01:14:03] Doing the same kind of thing, though.

MOWBRAY: [01:14:05] Yeah. Yeah. Let's see, what was I going to say though? Oh, what they did with me when I was while I was getting ready to go, first they had some Bosico people come talk to me, to tell them about what they were, tell me about what they were doing. And then they sent me to programs that they had been working with in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. Oh, and Nicaragua, that's right. And I spent about a week in each of those countries visiting the volunteers that were working on the programs that Bosico had helped design. And ran around with, you know, ran around with the Peace Corps representatives. So let's see, in Costa Rica, it was a Costa Rican, but I think all the others were Americans.

GANZGLASS: [01:14:59] So Costa Rica, El Salvador. You said Honduras and?

MOWBRAY: [01:15:02] And Guatemala. But they all had programs that were of this type where they had designed them specifically for non-aggies.

GANZGLASS: [01:15:11] And what was it like to be director versus?

MOWBRAY: [01:15:16] Well, I wasn't.

GANZGLASS: [01:15:16] Associate director as compared to a volunteer or a third-year volunteer? How does your perspective change as a director, as a staff person?

MOWBRAY: [01:15:29] Well, I think I was more likely to lose my patience with volunteers who were not doing what they what we had expected them to do, than I would have ever been as a volunteer, even as the volunteer leader or whatever it was. Particularly a volunteer, I didn't,

the fellow volunteers weren't doing things that. Except there was one volunteer that the Forest Service had gotten him a vehicle. He was the only volunteer in the country that had a vehicle from the host government. And then he stopped working for them and they had this vehicle there. Anyway, that was one, that was the only thing I could remember that really got me mad about volunteers when I was a volunteer. But as staff, I probably lost my patience maybe a little bit more often than I should have even.

GANZGLASS: [01:16:33] But you knew the country well by that time when you came. Oh no, Paraguay. Paraguay you didn't know at all?

MOWBRAY: [01:16:40] In fact, one of the things that amazed me though there was we had a bunch of home extension volunteers. I was also responsible for the home extension program. We had a bunch of them who were in their fifth year. And as I mentioned before, when I was in Ecuador, the director at the time wouldn't allow us to spend a fourth year. But anyway, we had a bunch that were in the fifth year and I kept thinking, how was it? Ecuador was a beautiful country and Paraguay is interesting, but it's not, it doesn't have anything to compare to Ecuador's mountains and so forth. The people were so friendly with the volunteers. Just loved it there. And we had lots and, well while I was there, we had lots and lots of volunteers who extended for at least a third year and many several of them up to five.

GANZGLASS: [01:17:35] And did you and your family like living there?

MOWBRAY: [01:17:38] I liked it. I guess, well my wife, my wife liked it. She had a maid.

GANZGLASS: [01:17:46] And that was nice. By that time, did you have another child as well?

MOWBRAY: [01:17:50] Yeah. Well, our other child was born in Knoxville. And in fact, one of the interesting things, I mean, she was born in Knoxville. She graduated from high school in Ecuador, at the school right next to

the hospital where her sister was born, were run by the same people. Oh, not the same, they weren't the same individuals.

GANZGLASS: [01:18:10] So how did she end up in Ecuador?

MOWBRAY: [01:18:13] Well, that's AID.

GANZGLASS: [01:18:16] Oh, that's, OK. So you did five years as Peace Corps associate director in Paraguay.

MOWBRAY: [01:18:24] Yeah. And couple of things while I was there. One, when I got there, we had the crop extension program and we had the home extension program. And that was it. And we had a group of trainees that was supposed to enter training that summer. And my boss was really concerned because he didn't know how, he didn't think the first group was working out very well because they hadn't had any supervision and any help. And we got the Bosico people in and they said, no, hey, you shouldn't have any more volunteers coming in this soon. We canceled the program. The Paraguayans were very upset because Stroessner loved volunteers and he was always asking, where's the volunteer? And when he heard it that one of his agencies was not going to get any volunteers, he was upset. And they were worried about this happening, which was, in a way it was good for us because they did want volunteers. They didn't care what they did.

GANZGLASS: [01:19:32] They just wanted volunteers.

MOWBRAY: [01:19:33] They just wanted volunteers so they could show them off to the president. So anyway, after some work with Bosico and so forth, we decided what we needed to do was have a getaway or a retreat with our volunteers and the Paraguayans who were working with them. And we went down to this, what was an old German Nazi place, I think. I mean, there were lots of Nazis all over Latin America. I mean, there were Germans there that had come before the war and Germans that came after the war. And the ones in Paraguay I think were most of the ones that came after the war. But anyway, there was this, they had a really nice hotel out in the middle of nowhere. The roads to get there

were not very good. They were, I mean, they were mud roads. But it was a nice hotel and it was a good place to just, you know, get away.

GANZGLASS: [01:20:29] To have a meeting, yeah.

MOWBRAY: [01:20:29] To get away from things. So we had this meeting there. We invited the Paraguayans to come and for three or four days we discussed the program, what we wanted to do, and what kind of help we needed from the Paraguayan agencies. And you know, they all agreed, yes, they'd do it. I'm not sure that they did it as well as we would have liked, but they did. So we got another. We got a group of volunteers the following year that were trained and their spots were, their sites were chosen by their counterpart agency. And then I guess, and then as time went on, we got a few volunteers to work with research people. We didn't get very many because we were trying to get, there we wanted real specialists who could do some research. I would write requests for a dozen different kinds of people, just hoping to get one or two. Now, people up in Washington got mad because that hurts their recruiting, if they can't fill all the requests.

GANZGLASS: [01:21:36] But it's hard getting all the people with technical skills, I guess?

MOWBRAY: [01:21:40] Right. Oh yeah. And I mean, I knew they weren't going to get them, but they did, we did get a soil scientist who'd retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He'd been a researcher there. And we got another guy who was fresh out of college. But he had a PhD in plant pathology.

GANZGLASS: [01:21:56] Wow.

MOWBRAY: [01:21:57] And I think that was probably all. And we had an agricultural economist who had, I don't know, I think a master's degree or something.

GANZGLASS: [01:22:08] Was this unusual? I mean, all of these technical people? Or was this happening throughout Latin America?

MOWBRAY: [01:22:17] As far as I know, it wasn't happening everywhere, but I just was looking at what I had learned about research in extension and education in agriculture and decided, OK, we've got the extension people, but we probably could be helping a little bit research. And that one might give the volunteers a bit more of an in into the research people because one of the things that they were supposed to be doing was, the volunteers were supposed to be doing, was putting in research plots out in the field. And I thought it was going to help if they had some volunteers on that end. I don't know whether it did or not, but we got them. And then we also got a few of them that could work in education. We had a couple of people working at the state, some other ones working at small colleges. We got a librarian to work at one of the ag schools.

GANZGLASS: [01:23:09] So you did a lot.

MOWBRAY: [01:23:11] Yeah. And then Peace Corps had a deal with Smithsonian to work on environmental stuff, and so they sent down, I think, without us requesting it, a guy who I can't remember his name anymore but was working on that program. And he came down and said, hey, you guys could use some foresters and some park rangers and stuff. And I said, yeah, we could, if the Paraguayans want them. And so we did. We started a program to work with parks and with forestry. When I got there, there were 30 volunteers in the two extension programs. OK, we also had credit unions, credit co-ops, that had already started when I got there but there were only one or two volunteers. And then one of the things that was interesting there was a guy who I'd known in Ecuador working with credit unions on a Peace Corps program was the head of the program in Paraguay. So we were able to work together pretty well.

GANZGLASS: [01:24:16] It sounds like you did a lot. You stayed there five years.

MOWBRAY: [01:24:20] Yeah, and we went from 30 volunteers to 100. And I can't remember now how many more staff people we had to get.

GANZGLASS: [01:24:29] And so why did you stop working there after five years?

MOWBRAY: [01:24:35] Because that was the limit.

GANZGLASS: [01:24:36] Five-year limit.

MOWBRAY: [01:24:37] They told me I had to go. So I left. I would have stayed, I loved that work.

GANZGLASS: [01:24:45] Five-year limit. And then you came back and?

MOWBRAY: [01:24:47] Came back and looked for work. And this guy who had been the, I guess the deputy Peace Corps director in Ecuador when we had developed that proposal for new volunteers, Caleb Roehrig, he'd been a vice president at, was it Xerox? I don't know, one of those big companies anyway, before he came down here and he was. So anyway, but when he left, he went into the job of helping returning Peace Corps staff find jobs. And so when I got back, I contacted him and I was sending resumes and stuff all over the place anyway. But then I was in California because that's where my mother was living then. So we were we were staying with her and CARE I guess wanted to interview me for something in an arid forestry program. And so they had me fly to New York.

MOWBRAY: [01:25:50] And then Caleb said, I'll line you up with some interviews here in Washington. And I went down there and he had an interview for me with AID. AID had never hired a forester. They had turned me down before saying, we don't need foresters. Caleb got me in to talk to somebody. Bill Sigler was his name. And Bill said, but you've been working with agriculture and, you know, packages of practices and all these. I said, yes, I do. And he said, yeah, we can use you. And then he pulled the strings that he needed to in the personnel section to get me hired. And so I went to AID. When I was in Washington for interviews, the country director from Costa Rica. They were going to send me to, or was it Barbados? But the country director from Costa Rica was in town and looking for somebody to help them develop a new forestry program.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:01] And so off to Costa Rica you went?

MOWBRAY: [01:27:06] Well, it wasn't quite that easy, but yes. To work on the design of their first forestry program.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:13] So you then spent the rest of your career at U.S. AID?

MOWBRAY: [01:27:18] Well, U.S. AID and contractors after I left AID. I guess, you know.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:32] So I can ask you this question, how did Peace Corps change your life?

MOWBRAY: [01:27:38] I have no idea what.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:40] What your life would have been otherwise.

MOWBRAY: [01:27:41] What I had expected to end up doing was to end up working either for the U.S. Forest Service or a U.S. timber company like Weyerhaeuser or somebody like that. That's when I went to forestry school, that's really what I saw as my future.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:57] Did you spend most of your career in South America?

MOWBRAY: [01:28:00] Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [01:28:02] So your Spanish is superb at this point.

MOWBRAY: [01:28:05] Well, I don't know whether it's superb, but, well, one of the problems. I did work in Jamaica also, so my Spanish didn't get any help there. But my wife's English isn't very good, so I was always trying. I would come home from work and try to speak to her in English and she would keep answering in Spanish. And within ten minutes, I was speaking Spanish without even realizing I was doing it.

GANZGLASS: [01:28:32] Yeah.

MOWBRAY: [01:28:32] And it didn't help her English, but it sure helped my Spanish. I got lots and lots of practice. No matter where we were working.

GANZGLASS: [01:28:40] So are there lots of former Peace Corps volunteers at USAID?

MOWBRAY: [01:28:46] Yeah, in fact, what was it, we had a conference, some of the Latin American aggies and somebody said, how many of you graduated from agricultural school? And a bunch of people raised their hands. And then somebody got up and said, you know, what we should ask is how many are ex Peace Corps volunteers? And practically everybody raised their hands. The Latin American aggies, well, people working in ag for AID, were almost all Peace Corps volunteers, ex Peace Corps volunteers, at that time I mean. That I think has changed. They're recruiting differently now.

GANZGLASS: [01:29:29] Do you think the Peace Corps experience made a difference in the AID projects that were, the AID work that was being done?

MOWBRAY: [01:29:42] Um. Yeah, I think volunteers were more aware of the social side of things. Not, you know, it wasn't purely just a technical thing. Oh, that was a constant problem I think, I thought, within AID. You'd have to, especially, you know, AID has Foreign Service personnel who work overseas, and then they had, what were they called? Civil service personnel who worked, whose base was in Washington and who would travel overseas. And that was just a constant battle to me was, you'd get these people who had really no overseas experience and would go overseas and sometimes really make a mess of things because they didn't know what they were doing. They were only there for a couple of weeks, fortunately, so they couldn't do, couldn't usually do too much harm.

GANZGLASS: [01:30:46] When you worked at U.S. AID, did you continue to work with the Peace Corps volunteers?

MOWBRAY: [01:30:54] Let's see. I wanted to when, I can't remember now. I know in Costa Rica we didn't, even though I had working with me on our staff when we were developing our natural resource management program, what I called a forestry program earlier, but it was really much broader than just forestry, was the wife of the Peace Corps director. But it didn't.

GANZGLASS: [01:31:23] Didn't translate into, yeah.

MOWBRAY: [01:31:24] Didn't translate into anything, I guess, and I kept meaning to do it, and I mean, I knew the volunteers were there. Was that where I? But I was never able to really get anything done. I'm trying to remember. And in Ecuador, basically the same thing. I knew the Peace Corps people but. Well, I got involved occasionally in helping to approve a grant from AID for Peace Corps programming. But not the kind of thing that I would have liked to have done, which was, well, like what we did with the credit unions in Paraguay. There it was we were working, we had lots of volunteers working in that AID program and it was because we were working with AID. And that ag economist I talked about, that was because AID had an ag economist who wanted some help. And so we got him a Peace Corps volunteer to work with.

GANZGLASS: [01:32:30] So what did you learn in Peace Corps? Yeah, I mean, you clearly, you met your wife and it changed your whole career trajectory. But when you think back at it, what do you think the benefit of your Peace Corps experience has been?

MOWBRAY: [01:32:44] Well, I learned agriculture enough so that AID would hire me as an agriculturist.

GANZGLASS: [01:32:49] That's interesting.

MOWBRAY: [01:32:50] And later said, we need a forester here in this country and we don't have one. And I was there and I was doing forestry. But because I was not on the AID rolls as a forester, they thought, well, we don't have one. Because the personnel office said we don't have one.

GANZGLASS: [01:33:19] Have you remained active in Peace Corps activities?

MOWBRAY: [01:33:23] Moderately. You know, I have. I went out and picked up trash a few times. Let's see, I, there was a.

GANZGLASS: [01:33:32] And that was with the Northern Virginia group?

MOWBRAY: [01:33:36] That was in Northern Virginia. And then there was, I can't remember now how they got hold of me. But there was a school in Alexandria or somewhere around there that the teacher had requested help. She had a student who was from Ecuador and who didn't seem to fit in. And she thought if she could get some help from Peace Corps, from an Ecuadorian volunteer, it might do some good. So I went over there and gave them a talk, an hour about Ecuador and showed some, I guess I didn't have any slides because my all my slides had gotten ruined in moving from Paraguay to the U.S. The Peace Corps moving people had packed them and then didn't tell me they were there when I was in California and they sat out in the rain for I don't know how many months. And so I lost all my slides, so I didn't have slides I could have shown. But anyway, I don't know whether that did any good or not because I never heard anything more from them. But I can't, I guess that's probably about all I've done.

GANZGLASS: [01:34:48] Well, you stayed in touch with Ecuador all of these years and do travel back to Ecuador.

MOWBRAY: [01:34:54] Well, I don't anymore because I'm not allowed to go to ten thousand feet. I've had heart problems.

GANZGLASS: [01:35:02] So it's too high.

MOWBRAY: [01:35:03] It's too high for me, yeah.

GANZGLASS: [01:35:05] But your wife goes back.

MOWBRAY: [01:35:06] My wife goes back and brings me some Manichos.

GANZGLASS: [01:35:09] Manichos. That's great. Anything else you want to talk about? Should we wind down the interview?

MOWBRAY: [01:35:17] There was something I was thinking of that I wanted to. I guess not. I can't think of. I mean, I have maintained, well for a while, I maintained contact with some of my ex Peace Corps friends, like the one that was in Panama. He came and visited us when we were living in Knoxville. And there was another one, the one I traveled all over Ecuador with, who married a woman who was really, I would say, really weird, but he ended up in a commune. And they did come and visit me once and then after then I think they went to the commune and I've heard back from them ever again.

GANZGLASS: [01:36:06] Separate lives.

MOWBRAY: [01:36:07] Yeah, oh yeah. And I guess that's. You know, I keep wondering what some of them are doing, but.

GANZGLASS: [01:36:17] Well, is there a group of Ecuador returned volunteers?

MOWBRAY: [01:36:22] Yeah, there is. But you know, all I ever see there is the newsletter. Just like Paraguay. I also get the newsletters from there. But there's not. It's all too recent that's in there for me. And I don't think I've ever seen anything, just like I've never contributed anything.

GANZGLASS: [01:36:42] I was going to say, if you wrote something and asked for your vintage people, then you'd hear from them.

MOWBRAY: [01:36:53] Maybe I would hear.

GANZGLASS: [01:36:53] Something that you can take away from this interview.

MOWBRAY: [01:36:55] Yeah, yeah.

GANZGLASS: [01:36:57] Reach out to them. Well, thank you. This has been a really interesting interview. Thank you very much.

MOWBRAY: [01:37:03] Thank you.

MOWBRAY: [01:37:05] OK, I do have one more, one more thing I ought to mention. I was, I'd been in Ecuador for about two months I think when Kennedy was assassinated. And a friend of mine and I were out at the market, buying goods for a party we were going to have that night. And so people came up to us and said in Spanish, told us your president has been assassinated. And our Spanish wasn't very good, so we asked to repeat it a couple of times. And then we went up to some other volunteers who had a shortwave radio and got them to turn the radio on. And sure enough, Kennedy had been assassinated. The volunteers in Ibarra, which is the town I was in at the time, sent a telegram to Jackie expressing our condolences. And the next day I went to the place where you could buy newspapers and there was a long line of people waiting. And it was a line, which was unusual in Ecuador as they usually don't form lines. But I got in line and people said, you're a gringo, get up to the front of the line. And they let me buy my paper first. Which again, it was.

GANZGLASS: [01:38:16] Which is a sign of respect, I guess.

MOWBRAY: [01:38:19] Yeah, it was a variety of things like that that happened while I was in Ecuador, where they. There was another time when, who was it? Some, was it Nixon? Or somebody some Republican anyway came to Quito when I was working in Quito and there were big demonstrations at the university against this. And I wandered over there. And not that I should, I mean, I should have known better than to go anywhere near that. But a bunch of them came after me and then they said, no, he's not a gringo. He's a Peace Corps volunteer.

GANZGLASS: [01:38:55] Great. Good way to end it. OK, thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]