

# Fourteenth in a Series: Insight From SRM's Charter Members

**T**he SRM History Committee has conducted interviews with many of the Society's charter members to capture their perspective of events leading to and subsequent to the formation of the American Society of Range Management in 1947–1948. Interviews from several of these individuals will be shared for today's SRM members to enjoy and learn from.

## **SRM Charter Member – Rudy J. Pederson**

*Editor's Note: Rudy Pederson lives at 2702 Rio Grande, San Angelo, TX 76901. Rudy submitted his written responses to the interview questions to History Committee member Henry Pearson. Committee member Tom Bedell edited them and trusts they accurately reflect Rudy's perspectives.*

Rudy was born in December 1917 on a farm in Teton County, Montana. He was valedictorian at Virginia City High School in May 1935 and went on to the University of Montana at Missoula, graduating there with a BS in Forestry and Range Management in June 1939. He spent summers working on national forests. Rudy became interested in rangeland in 1935 when working on a ranch in the Ruby River valley in Montana. He participated in a cattle roundup on a national forest. He worked for 50 cents a day plus board and room. The local sheriff advised him that if he wanted to make money he should study business. He knew he didn't need much money so he decided to study range management and forestry, which he liked. Rudy says that the sheriff was right; he didn't make a lot of money but he enjoyed his work.

Rudy worked for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS, US Department of Agriculture) from June 1939 to 1974 with the exception of 3 years in the US Navy, 1943–1946, with service both in the Atlantic and Pacific. His work was primarily as a range specialist with the SCS developing technical guides, assisting ranchers, and training people. All of his SCS ser-

vice was in Texas with the exception of his first 4 months in 1939 on a land utilization project in Montana. Rudy was State Range Conservationist for Texas from 1957 to 1974 and retired from civil service then.

He worked for the Texas A&M international program from 1976 to 1980 in Tanzania, Africa, and Jamaica. From 1981 to the present time Rudy has been retired on a small ranch stocked with blackbuck antelope.

Bill Allred, SCS Regional Range Conservationist, asked Rudy if he wanted to "hit a good lick" for range management in 1947 and join the fledgling American Society of Range Management. Six dollars, Rudy thinks, was the dues. The Texas Section was started a little later. Rudy says that Texas A&M was active in its formation.

Rudy did not participate in the first meeting at Salt Lake City in 1948 but did work at the meeting in San Antonio the next year. His expectations were that the Society would help keep him abreast of new developments and provide reports on what others were doing and learning as well as summaries of research results. These expectations were well met. Also, he wanted to meet and visit with other rangemen.

Rudy was President of the Texas Section in 1954. The Excellence in Grazing Management award was started that year. He served on a few national committees. He helped start the plant judging contests and awards. One of the first judging contests was held in 1947. The first place award—a free appendicitis operation! That got into the newspapers and the number of plant judging contests increased greatly. Rudy received the Outstanding Rangeman award from the Texas Section in 1980.

Rudy conveys to young people that interest in plants and natural plant communities can be a lifetime interest. One can always be near and see plant communities and they can be companions through life.

## SRM Charter Member – Lowell K. Halls

*Editor's Note: Lowell Halls lives at 2720 Dogwood, Nacogdoches, TX 75965. He graciously composed this in response to the charter member format.*

I was born May 7, 1918, in Monticello, Utah, and graduated from Monticello High School in 1936. I attended Utah State Agricultural College before World War II.

In April 1941 I was conscripted into the Armed Services at Fort Douglas, Utah. During World War II, I began military service in the Field Artillery and was transferred to the Army Air Force in January 1943. I graduated as a Bombardier, Second Lieutenant in March 1944. I received further training at Colorado Springs, Colorado, and then was assigned to the 8th Air Force in Europe. I completed 30 missions as lead Bombardier, receiving the Air Medal and 3 Oak Leaf Clusters. I then served 21 years in the Air Force Reserve, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel.

In September 8, 1945, I walked out of the Fort Logan Separation Center in Denver, Colorado, with honorable discharge papers from the United States Air Force and a basket full of money in my pockets. I had absolutely no idea of what I was going to do next. I wasn't particularly anxious to go to work so I finally decided to take the bus to Fort Collins, Colorado, and look over the Colorado State Agricultural College campus (Colorado State University) with the possibility of going back to school. I sauntered into the Forestry Building, visited with Clint Wasser, Professor of Range Management, and tentatively arranged to enroll in school the fall semester. I had saved up some money, and with the GI bill I had no financial worries.

My next few years at Fort Collins were extremely pleasant and productive. I definitely made up my mind to major in Range Management. Finally, I had a goal. The professors were friendly and helpful. They were more like friends than a distant scholar or an ivory tower. The classes were interesting and informative. I easily passed all courses with an A or B and was elected to Xi Sigma Pi, an honorary forestry fraternity.

Those were exciting years. The attitude of the students was exceptionally good. There were no groups of dissenters. We were all thankful to be alive and have a chance to learn a profession. We wanted to have a good time, yet we didn't neglect our studies. The war had matured us and we had an aim in life. Everything was in our favor and we took advantage of it. To a large extent, I believe the whole nation shared in this feeling. These were the good old days insofar as national pride and initiative were concerned.

My studies at Texas A&M University were also informative and enjoyable. Faculty and students were most friendly. My major professor was Dr Vernon A. Young, a native of my hometown, Monticello, and whose brother and family were my childhood neighbors. Dr and Mrs Young took a special interest in me and accorded me many courtesies and help, even to loaning me their family car to conduct fieldwork on my thesis.

My career with the US Forest Service began in June 1946 when I received a temporary summer assignment as a range crew member on the Pike National Forest with field headquarters at the Manitou Experimental Forest in Colorado.

In June 15, 1949, I began work as a Range Conservationist with the Southern Forest Experiment Station, US Forest Service, with headquarters at the Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station in Tifton, Georgia. My main job was to find out how to grow cattle among the longleaf-slash pine forests of the southern Coastal Plain. Field research was conducted mainly at the Alapaha Experimental Forest in cooperation with Dr Glenn Burton and Byron L. Southwell. The research was quite interesting and we devised a pretty good routine for managing the cattle and their forage on land devoted primarily to timber production. We were never entirely successful, however, in selling the idea to landowners. They either wanted to grow timber or cattle but not a combination of the two on the same land. In April 1957, I was transferred to the Southern Forest Experiment Station in New Orleans, Louisiana, as an assistant to the chief (Dr Robert S. Campbell) in the Division of Range Management and Watershed Management Research. Phillip Briegleb was the station director.

In early 1961 the Station decided to strengthen and expand the research program in wildlife habitat and to establish a project for that specific purpose in Nacogdoches, Texas. Dr Campbell asked me to screen interested candidates for project leader and to give him a recommendation by late summer. In September I politely told him I was the best available candidate.

This was sort of a crossroad in my professional career. I had to decide whether to continue in a staff position and live in a big city with emphasis on administration or get back into field research and live in the country. It didn't take me long to decide and on December 3, 1961, I transferred to Nacogdoches to fill the newly created position of Project Leader for Wildlife Habitat Research in the Southern Forest Experiment Station. It was a decision and move I have never regretted.

The unit's mission was to devise systems for integrated production of wildlife and timber. My major research efforts were directed towards finding how to grow food and cover for white-tailed deer in shortleaf-loblolly pine-hardwood forests. Field tests were concentrated at the Stephen F. Austin Experimental Forest near Nacogdoches. Minor investigations were conducted at the Sylamore Experimental Forest on the Ozark National Forest in Arkansas; at the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana; at the Desoto National Forest near Hattiesburg, Mississippi; at Brewton, Alabama; and at the Jacinto Experimental Forest near Huntsville, Texas.

As an extracurricular activity from 1965 to 1977, I taught a course in Wildlife Habitat Management at the School of Forestry, Stephen F. Austin State University.

Professionally, I was associated with the Society of American Foresters, the Texas Forestry Association, the Society for Range Management, The Wildlife Society, and the Texas Outdoor Writer's Association.

Honors include the following: Texas Forestry Association Award of Merit, Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Service Award, The Wildlife Society Publication Award, and the C. W. Watson and Southeastern Conservationist Award for Outstanding contributions to Fish and Wildlife Management.

I was a charter member of the Society for Range Management and served as Secretary, Vice chairman, and Chairman of the Southern Section 1955–1957, Book Review Editor of *Journal of Range Management*, November 1958–May 1962, and Associate Editor for *Journal of Range Management*, March 1972–January 1975. I served as Secretary and Chairman of the Range Management Division for the Society of American Foresters, 1957–1958, and as Associate Editor for the *Southern Journal of Applied Forestry*, August 1979–August 1986. I also served on the board of directors for the Texas Section of The Wildlife Society.

I thoroughly enjoyed my work in wildlife habitat research. The general subject fascinated me, especially since it fit right in line with my favorite hobby, hunting. It enabled me to spend many enjoyable hours in the woods and gain a better perspective and appreciation for natural laws, and for the role that animals and plants play in the welfare of our society. The people I worked with, and for, were additional pleasures that contributed to a satisfying experience.

### **SRM Charter Member – Harold F. Heady**

*Editor's Note: Harold F. Heady lives at Grande Ronde Retirement and Assisted Living Home, Apt. 321, La Grande, OR 97850.*

*Dr. Harold Heady has been interviewed numerous times in one form or another. **Rangelands** 25(6):58–59, February 2003, contains an article by Kindra Gordon, **Rangelands** Managing Editor. For excellent historic information, consult **A History of the Society for Range Management 1948 to 1985**, pages 1–5, on the formation of the Society, which documents Dr. Heady's role in that endeavor. In addition, Dr. Heady appears on videotape as a past president (1980) and as one of the charter members interviewed in Spokane in 1992 (tapes are at the Society headquarters office). An article on Dr. Heady also appears in **Parade of Presidents** (page 23), which was prepared for the 50th anniversary SRM annual meeting in February 1997 at Rapid City. Consequently, this statement will only be to "fill in the blanks" using the charter interview format utilized by the SRM History Committee.*

In 1947–1948, Dr. Heady was on the range faculty of Texas A&M University at College Station, Texas. He had moved there after having been on the faculty at Montana State College. He received a BS from the University of Idaho in 1938 in Forestry (major in Range Management), an MS from Syracuse University in 1940 in Botany, and a PhD from the University of Nebraska in 1949 in Plant Ecology.

The following are Dr. Heady's statements:

"My career has been centered on university teaching. I began as a lab assistant in a course on wood identification at the University of Idaho, spring of 1938 of my senior year in the School of Forestry as a major in Range Management. Next was a half-time lab assistantship in botany and half-time studies in ecology for an MS in the New York State College of Forestry, Syracuse; followed by 6 months as a range technician in the SCS in southern Washington; then teaching for a semester back in New York; and in 1942 until 1947 as Assistant Professor for Range at Montana State College, Bozeman. From there it was Associate Professor at Texas A&M; and 1951 to retirement in 1984 at University of California, Berkeley (UCB). During the latter part of that time I was a Dean for 3 years followed by Associate Director of the California Agricultural Experiment Station that included the title of Assistant Vice-President of the University System.

"There were many leaves from UCB for overseas assignments in 20-some countries. I put together the International Congress on Range Management in 1978 and was its first President. I was elected Honorary Member of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa and have held memberships in Rangeland Societies as well in East Africa, Australia, and India.

"I led the formation of the Texas Section and was its first President. Later in California I was elected to the Section Board and was President for a year. In 2001, the California Section presented me with the Range Manager of the Year award."

Dr. Heady was the first Secretary–Treasurer of the American Society of Range Management in 1948. He served as President of the Society for Range Management in 1980.

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*Tom Bedell is a member and former chairman of the SRM History Committee and a member of the Pacific Northwest Section living in Philomath, Oregon, [tbedell@peak.org](mailto:tbedell@peak.org).*