the program includes a joint doctorate in ecology]. So, in the
Fall semester I had an ecology section, a biology 4 lecture of
plants and animals with 95 students, and two biology labs. In the
Spring, I had biology with two lecture sections -- one with 103
students, and another with 93 students -- three of the three
biology labs, and I supervised eight instructors who were also
teaching those biology 4 labs.

LO: I hope you had some help in the way of TAs or something.
AO: I had some. In the biology 4, in the lecture sections I had
readers and help, but for ecology and parasitology I always read
my own exams because I had to write letters of recommendation for
those students and I wanted to know them. I could tell by their
exams, because I didn't just give true/false exams. They were
exams that required a little thought on the part of the students.
It couldn't be just guess work. As I say, I wanted to know my
students so I worked hard.

LO: It sounds like you did. Do you think things have changed
over the years? Do you think the instructors have it easier now?
AO: Well, I don't know. I think they have different kinds of
pressures. Now there is so much emphasis on research. Of course,
I was also handling graduate students getting their master's
degree while I was doing this but, then, they helped as readers,
and so on, too. They were TAs in the labs.

LO: When did you start doing a lot of your own research? It
looks like you started this in the 1960s.
AO: First, I was working on my dissertation research which was
started in 1949. My dissertation was completed in 1955 but I still added to my work on the parasites of the grunion. That has more or less continued up to the present day.

LO: You didn't have any kind of a lax period where you dropped the research.

AO: Not really, no. A lot of it has been kept alive by the graduate students in their theses and research, and I worked along with them.

LO: How many publications have you had and which one (or ones) are you the most proud of?

AO: Maybe we can count them -- I just happen to have this binder here -- 28. Probably the one book which was written back in 1961 (and we had later printings in 1962 and 1963) *The Natural History of Plants and Animals* which was a laboratory text to supplement the general biology text book in the natural history of plants and animals course which was taught here. These were the laboratory directions. Finally, when the course was changed and was no longer a biology 4, the copyright ran out. We do know that an author in Los Angeles, working with the junior colleges and colleges up there, wrote a book that included much of our material, and it served as a skeleton for them to build on. They added things which were appropriate for the Los Angeles Basin. It was used in a number of higher education schools up there.

LO: It's nice to see that built upon and continued to be used.

AO: Yes. I was involved in naming four new species. Those are contributions that just don't happen.
LO: I want to borrow that page on the four species out of that binder and make a photocopy of it.

AO: You’re thinking of the ones that were named for me. That’s different again. I also had the opportunity to describe new species. As far as publications are concerned, I’m not so much of a wordy person -- although it might seem like that in the interview. In our scientific journals we have to pay by the page to get things printed so you just don’t do a lot of verbosity. You keep it short and to the point. The latest of those namings was 1983 with a person in England. Here’s another one described as from the bat ray.

LO: These are the ones named after you?

AO: No. These are the ones that I named. I was the author naming the things as new species. The ones that were named after me -- this is one that goes way back to 1953. It says: "Mr. Andrew C. Olson, Jr., Assistant Professor of Zoology at San Diego State College, kindly sent me about 40 specimens that he collected at Mission Beach and along the shore of San Diego Bay in California. In one collection, he obtained 38 copepods from 42 fish. The host in all cases was a grunion Leuresthes tenuis and the species is named for the man who discovered it."

LO: It started early, didn’t it?

AO: Yes. "The species is based on specimens collected on the 3rd of July, 1954 from the grunion Leuresthes tenuis by Andrew C. Olson." It ended up as Leuresthicola olsoni. It was named for me. There’s a Gyrodactylus olsoni. I know I have another species of
that genus which has yet to be identified by name and that’s in
the grunion. Dr. Kritzky did this one for me -- you can’t name
another one olsoni. My wife keeps kidding me. She said, "I ought
to have something named for me." I’m still trying to get the
combination of the right collection material for Dr. Kritzky, who
has said he’ll name it Gyrodactulus lilolsoni. It’s a big genus
with about 600 species in it and so many anatomical structures’
names have been used that they started using people’s names on
them. Here’s a Daubayala olsoni. This is a round worm named by a
fellow at Berkeley -- "specimens of Daubayala removed from a
preserved leech (Dina anoculata) were collected and submitted to
the present author by Andrew C. Olson, Jr." Some place in here it
says that it was named for me. That’s the way it gets done. You
don’t name things for yourself.
LO: That’s very interesting. I’d like to look through this a
little bit more after we’re done talking. I’m going to divert you
back onto another question. You may have many more thoughts about
your years on campus as an instructor. I think we just barely
touched upon it but I’m just going to ask you a few more
questions and get into something else. You mentioned that you
were a faculty advisor for a couple of student groups. What all
was involved in being a faculty advisor and what were you an
advisor for?
AO: Probably helping to see that they have a place to meet on
the campus, an apartment, or wherever. Also, if you are a senior
faculty advisor you try to coordinate other faculty advisors who
are also working with the same group.

LQ: Do they still have faculty advisors for groups on campus?

AO: I don't know because I haven't been active with anything like that for a long time now.

LQ: Did you help them out with their publications and newsletters?

AO: I would help expedite the meetings and that sort of thing, and make sure of continuity because as the students come and go it helps to have continuity. In Alpha Phi Omega, for example, a national service fraternity, the members all had something to do with Scouting. When I was a student here, Dr. Crouch and Spencer Rogers along with Dean C.E. Peterson, and Herb Peiffer were faculty advisors. When I joined the faculty in 1946 I started out as Senior Faculty Advisor. They went along with being advisors and would show up at meetings -- Dr. Crouch and Dr. Peiffer in particular. We expedited many things.

LQ: To help them through the rigamarole of whatever they had to get through.

AO: Yes.

LQ: That's an example of how things have changed over the years. I don't know that there are faculty advisors for groups anymore. If there are, they are probably not as involved as you were.

AO: Again, in the later '40s there was no problem. These fellows out of the service ran themselves. They would have dances and we would go to the dances as chaperons, but we were just there enjoying the dances. The whole campus would have a ball out at
Mission Beach. My wife and I went as faculty but were more or less just a part of them. Anyhow, there was Alpha Phi Omega, the National Scouting Service Fraternity and they set up the campus directory of students (Red Book) which they sold each year and made money. That was their big project. They had little pocket size directories with the names of all the students in it. You couldn’t do it now. Then, there was Phi Sigma Xi which was the biology honorary society. We attended their meetings. There were only three or four faculty advisors. I attended as the Senior Faculty Advisor, mostly because I had been a member and, maybe, president of the group as a student. I was familiar with what they did. We had field trips and arranged for their meetings. They would have larger meetings and people from on and off campus would be invited to a special program (some in the Little Theatre). We would have lecturers from Scripps Institution and some of the bigger names in San Diego would come to speak. We had Dr. Claude Zobel out here, and Dr. Carl Hubbs, and many others. I helped Delvers also, the Geology group. They were still organized as such in the later ’40s, and I attended their meetings. Dr. Baylor Brooks was the faculty advisor and they didn’t need another one.

LO: He is a very charismatic individual. Tell me about this Tuesday luncheon crowd. How long has this been going on and how did it start?

AQ: Last Tuesday I took Dr. Spencer Rogers out to Anthony’s (restaurant in La Mesa). I picked him up in the parking lot by
the Museum of Man. He has an office there and works a few days a week. I took him out, and he and Dr. Adams got to go over old times. What I got from Dr. Rogers, Tuesday, is that he, Dr. Adams, and Paul Pfaff of the Speech Department (those were the prime names that he came up with) would meet under a eucalyptus tree on the lawn or on a bench, north of the Science building and have lunch. That was around 1939 or 1940. He wasn’t sure of the date but it was just prior to the war years. They kept on, apparently, through the war years.

LO: Then it changed to Anthony’s when they retired?

AO: There were probably two or three restaurants before Anthony’s. They went once a week.

LO: How many people are still attending? Are there still quite a few people that go?

AO: It’s very informal. You never know. It could be as few as nine or it could be 20.

LO: It’s still a large group.

AO: This last Tuesday we had two tables and there must have been at least 16 of us.

LO: That’s wonderful.

AO: As I understand it, the only time they don’t meet is between Christmas and New Year’s. Dr. Adams has, in the past (and I assume still does although I haven’t seen him bring out his little black book) a little black book in which he records the names of the new people who haven’t attended recently. He checks the number of individuals there. At the end of the year, he comes
up with a tabulation of how many different new people showed up at one time or another and how many meals were served.

LO: It's good to know that new people are continually joining. Do you get some people that are recently retired or some people that are still teaching?

AO: They come as guests.

LO: I have another question for you that has to do with another group of people that get together. George Sorenson told me about an association of campers that was evidently started by Everett Jackson about 50 years ago. Do you know anything about it?

AO: Way back when, I guess. That was primarily for Thanksgivings. Earlier gatherings were down below Ensenada or in Baja, anyhow. They would have, maybe, 150 people together.

LO: Did this start about 50 years ago?

AO: I don't know. John Dirks or Everett Jackson would know. We are newcomers in the thing. The Jacksons are not active participants now due to the logistics of getting ready for camping and they have a lot of steps at their house. It takes 14 trips or something, back and forth, up and down the steps to get the camper loaded. Their grandsons occasionally join us now. In fact, we had a camp-out the week after the 4th of July weekend at a ranch up in Ramona. On the Sunday one of the Jackson grandsons came up to visit with us and have lunch. There is still that tie but the Jacksons, themselves, are not too active with it.

LO: Do you make any trips down to Baja, California any longer?

AO: We haven't been going down below the border. The tendency
now is for the Ramona area or the Lagunas or maybe local trips up into the mountains during the summer. In the winter, we take trips to the desert.

LO: You stay a little closer to home.

AO: But it’s just the logistics of keeping the organization going. Actually, it’s John Dirks now who has taken over as “chief wagon master.” To handle more than six or seven couples becomes a real project and it’s also hard to find places for more. We don’t want to just go out to the big campground areas. We like to be out by ourselves. We’ve found some interesting places -- sometimes on private property.

LO: But it takes that leader to go out there and research those places.

AO: Yes. This last one we went to in July was on private property of friends of the Jacksons.

LO: I assume you had a good time.

AO: Oh, yes, a very good time. We always do. When we go to the desert at Thanksgiving, Dr. Aubrey Wendling roasts a turkey in his trailer and we have a turkey with all the trimmings -- mashed potatoes peeled right out in the desert and cooked there, pumpkin pie.

LO: You have campers, right?

AO: Yes.

LO: You’re not pitching tents.

AO: No. It’s not rough camping and we only go for three or four days. There are a couple of individuals (like the Jacksons) who
are invited to come and spend a day if they want. The Jacksons
join us when we are down at Shelter Island.

LO: I have some other questions for you about the San Diego Zoo.
As you know, I did a few interviews myself of people at the zoo.
I’ve done numerous transcriptions and editing of transcriptions
of people at the San Diego Zoo, so I am really curious about some
of the people that you worked with there. I saw a newspaper
clipping of Kenton Lint’s wedding in which you served as best
man. Have you known the Lints for many years?

AO: I knew him when he came to town. I knew Alice Marie Saul
(whom he married) some years before they met. We were all
involved in the same young people’s group at the University
Christian Church.

LO: You knew his wife first?

AO: Yes.

LO: I would have thought that the connection would have been a
natural between you and K.C. because he also talked about the
parasite in the blue sow bugs.

AO: The tie-in there was Dr. Gerald Cosgrove (who was the
pathologist at the zoo until he retired 10 years ago). Lint and
Cosgrove were interested in the small arthropods around the zoo —
— cockroaches and the works — where they might serve as
intermediate hosts for parasites of the Zoo animals. Cosgrove
collected sow bugs and found the worms in them. Also he was
involved with the blue sow bugs — the pill bugs — with the
iridovirus. He’s the one who followed up on the round worm and
got to Dr. George Poinar at Berkeley. He came down and they dug in the ground around the Zoo and found the adults of the worms that were in the sow bugs. In fact, it turned out to be a new species of round worm and Dr. Poinar named it for Dr. Cosgrove. It’s Thaumamermis cosgrovi. Anyhow, K.C. Lint was interested in parasites of the birds, so he picked up on that pill bug thing. That would be the tie-in there.

Way back in the late 1930’s when he was still preparing food in the bird yard, I would go in with Lint when he was working and spend time there. Later on in the later ‘40s when Lil and I were married, I remember one evening having dinner at their place. Around 11:30 he said, "Come on, Andy. Let’s go over to the Zoo and feed some baby birds." We went over and it was a very haunting experience going into the Zoo at that time. I think there was one light on and, I suppose, a night watchman around somewhere. We were by ourselves with all of the eerie noises of the Zoo at night. It was different.

LO: It was certainly an experience.

(July 15, Tape One, Side Two)

LO: Let’s talk about your early years at SDSU as an instructor. You told me a little bit about how you were hired. You simply filled out a form and you didn’t have any direct interview.

AQ: I had written Dr. Hepner back in 1941, not knowing what was going to be happening in the World War situation. I asked Dr. Hepner if there were any positions available. That letter was written at the request of Dr. Myrtle Johnson who was head of the
Biology Department at that time. She talked to Dr. Harwood whose assistant reader I had been as a student. He wrote to me and suggested that I write the letter to Dr. Hepner. But I kept in touch with Dr. Harwood while I was in the service. In the Spring of 1946, when I thought that I was going to be getting out of the service, I contacted him. He said to apply, and Dr. Hepner approved the application, so I started in September of '46.

LO: Had it ever occurred to you to apply to other institutions as well?

AQ: I was going through correspondence just yesterday and I ran across a letter from Dr. Hugh Raymond Hall at Berkeley who had written four letters of recommendation -- one was to Berkeley. The remark he made that stuck in my mind was "I'm surprised that you didn't apply at Harvard." At any rate, it's pretty hard to beat coming back to your own home town. I would give that preference, certainly. But, again, I had the disadvantage of not having the Doctorate. I had the Masters Degree but still had the Doctorate to go. So, my being hired here was essentially on a temporary basis with the assumption that it would be made permanent when I got the Doctorate. That's why I left in 1950, took a year off, and started my work at Oregon State which was completed over a period of time, and I received my Doctorate in 1955. It was at that time that I was promoted up to Associate Professor and, finally, Full Professor and went through Department Chairmanships and so on.

LO: Was the Department a challenge for you when you first
started here? I would imagine that you were young, jumping in with both feet, and you wanted to see things move and develop. Did you have some grandiose ideas when you first joined?

AO: Not necessarily, no. I was too busy teaching and keeping up with things. There was still much that I was familiar with from the '38-'39 times when I had been working with general zoology with Dr. Harwood. When I started here, my prime teaching was in general zoology. So, it was something I was familiar with. I saw no reason for making any changes in that. Gradually, I was able to develop a couple of courses of my own -- field zoology in the summer, and a parasitology course.

LO: Do you recall what two courses you taught when you first started working here?

AO: General Zoology and General Biology -- 10A and 10B. They were essentially laboratory teaching at that time.

LO: Were you a good instructor all the way through?

AO: I was a hard-working one. I certainly tried, particularly in those early years which were my challenging years, getting my feet wet, although I had two years as a teaching fellow at the University of Idaho. That set me up for the lab work and much of the things that go on in teaching. Up there, instead of having 24 students in laboratory, we had the laboratory set up for 50. When it began, Dr. Pratt (who eventually became my doctoral advisor) just turned me loose in the class. The first day, by myself, I taught fresh material on amoeba and how to use a microscope to 50 students. In fact, he gave me full control. He would come in only
occasionally during the semester and the students began to refer to him as Mr. Pratt and to me as Dr. Olson because I was the one who had to make all the decisions. If students went to him with a question he said, "Well, ask Olson." I really got my feet wet.

The interesting thing here was that it was a real challenge because it was after the war and the students had missed two to five years out of their lives, and they were out to make up for lost time. They were very eager, they were good, there were no discipline problems. You just put out the work and the students went to it. They asked you challenging questions. In 40 years it was the most challenging and interesting teaching that I ever had. It was a busy life.

LO: That's what I've heard other people say too. The students who were entering school then, were really gung-ho.

AO: We were here to teach. We had to be on campus five days a week. We had to have an office hour scheduled every day. It's not like now. Things are so different.

LO: It's changed quite a bit. Did you have much time to pursue any of your research, then?

AO: Not much of that time because, particularly in the sciences for our laboratory teaching, we got two hours credit for teaching a three hour lab. So, I was putting in 16 hours of actual student contact work compared to those giving straight lectures totaling 12 hours.

LO: Which classrooms did you use early on?

AO: We were in the old Life Sciences... well, let's see. It was
the Science Building, really, because the Training School was occupying what is now Physical Sciences. The Science Building was off to the north side, east of the Library. The downstairs portion was Astronomy and we had biology labs there. On the first floor was the zoology and botany labs. Upstairs was Geology, Physics, and Chemistry.

LO: It was pretty compact.

AO: Very definitely. We were a little world to ourselves there.

LO: You were Chair from 1957 to 1960.

AO: Yes. We took our turns at three year stints.

LO: Did anything spectacular happen when you were Chair that you remember or were things pretty run-of-the-mill?

AO: At that time, things were quite stable. I can think of no great challenges. I had nice people to work with and a good staff. There were no rumblings that I remember.

LO: Earlier on in Zoology, in the '50s and '60s, you really had spurts of growth in the Department and after that time period it probably slowed down considerably. Do you see a difference in the way the Administration or the bureaucracy works now? Was it easier to get things through earlier on than it was in the '70s?

AO: It seems as though we had much more autonomy. The things that tended to lead to change were the way quotas were set. There were various factors that entered into how much money was going to be appropriated or how much classroom space was going to be appropriated. We went to the Biological Sciences instead of having a separate Zoology or Botany. Where you can have large
lecture sections, you are able to generate a lot of FTEs. The laboratory got just a two-thirds credit toward FTEs. There was much to be gained by having large lecture sections and, then, by having large lecture sections you could get larger classrooms which, in some cases, were needed. Then there was the competition for funds and between the Biology sections and the Zoology sections which were so important to pre-med students. Some of those problems could be resolved by having a Biological Sciences Department rather than separate departments.

LO: That’s one of the reasons why this change occurred. I think the last year that Zoology was a Department was in 1984 or 1985.

AO: There are a number of factors involved. Some of the professional schools that the students applied to preferred to see a Biology major rather than a Zoology major. There were many factors. Then, some of the new faculty came from schools that had Biology rather than separate Zoology and Botany Departments. That’s what they were used to so they encouraged the development of the Biological Sciences Department.

LO: I was wondering what it was that caused those changes.

AO: There were a number of factors. They had meeting after meeting, and discussion after discussion.

LO: I guess it wouldn’t be an easy transition to make.

AO: There were a lot of feelings involved at the time.

LO: You had been around and watched the Zoology Department really grow, and have some considerable changes in the Zoology Department. It must have been hard on you, for one, to see this
change occur.

AQ: Right, but you have to roll with the punches and realize that times are changing. Over the years I was involved with 16 different courses. Those were the days that you more or less had to do that in order to accommodate the student’s interests and needs. We put that in front of what was comfortable for us.

LO: You were thinking of the students first.

Who were some of the movers and shakers in the Zoology Department? Who were the instrumental people that made things develop and change?

AO: Of course, I can think of Harwood and Crouch who maintained a lot of stability. There might have been individuals who would have liked to make some changes but we had what some of us thought was such a well-running thing, we didn’t want to upset the apple cart. I guess I’d better not mention names but certain individuals made some changes in the General Biology course. It operated for a year or two but it was found that it was not successful. We then went back to a lot of our old ways. There was some experimenting and attempts to modify to keep some people happy. Some of those things did not work and some of the old established courses, curriculum, were really more effective. This was my view of it.

LO: They were probably time-proven, too.

AO: Right. But, at the same time, some of the later changes that we have now, I think, tend to be working out pretty well. I think now of Dr. Al Johnson, retiring as Vice President of Academic
Affairs. I can remember when he was first hired. I sat next to him in the Biology Department meetings. We opted to either go into the Biology Department or the Zoology Department which were still identified as such. At the time I was teaching Biology 4 which is a natural history of plants and animals course. It was a big part of my schedule. With my having had a Zoology major and Botany minors through my degrees, I thought of myself as a Biologist. But when, I got into the Biology Department I found that I was much more at home in the Zoology Department. So, after a year I moved back to Zoology. Anyhow, I can say that Dr. Johnson was a very stable person who made very good contributions in the Department meetings. He was well thought of and became Chairman of the Life Sciences Department and moved on up to his Vice-Presidency. I have tremendous respect for him.

LQ: Since you are talking about Al Johnson, how about any of the other individuals on campus. We know all the big names, but who, in particular, stands out in your mind as being a particularly influential person?

AO: There were a lot of people who helped give the campus a good personality. Back in the later '40s, there was Dean C.E. Peterson. We had the Peterson Gym named for him. I always have to mention Jack Adams (Dr. John Adams) who has his building named for him. When I was involved with the Senate and the Senate Personnel Committee and involved with reports that were somewhat touchy, I worked closely with both Ned Joy and Dr. Kramer Rofleisch. Kramer Rofleisch was a very helpful person for writing