

WILLIAM NEUFELD
1924 OLYMPIC GAMES
TRACK & FIELD



AN OLYMPIAN'S ORAL HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

Southern California has a long tradition of excellence in sports and leadership in the Olympic Movement. The Amateur Athletic Foundation is itself the legacy of the 1984 Olympic Games. The Foundation is dedicated to expanding the understanding of sport in our communities. As a part of our effort, we have joined with the Southern California Olympians, an organization of over 1,000 women and men who have participated on Olympic teams, to develop an oral history of these distinguished athletes.

Many Olympians who competed in the Games prior to World War II agreed to share their Olympic experiences in their own words. In the pages that follow, you will learn about these athletes, and their experiences in the Games and in life as a result of being a part of the Olympic Family.

The Amateur Athletic Foundation, its Board of Directors, and staff welcome you to use this document to enhance your understanding of sport in our community.

ANITA L. DE FRANTZ

President
Amateur Athletic Foundation
of Los Angeles

Member
Southern California Olympians

AN OLYMPIAN'S ORAL HISTORY
METHODOLOGY

Interview subjects include Southern California Olympians who competed prior to World War II. Interviews were conducted between March 1987, and August 1988, and consisted of one to five sessions each. The interviewer conducted the sessions in a conversational style and recorded them on audio cassette, addressing the following major areas:

Family History

Date/place of birth; occupation of father/mother; siblings; family residence;

Education

Primary and secondary schools attended; college and post-collegiate education;

Sport-Specific Biographical Data

Subject's introduction to sport—age, event and setting of first formal competition; coaches/trainers/others who influenced athletic development; chronology of sports achievements; Olympic competition; post-Olympic involvement in sports;

General Biographical Data

Employment history; marital history; children; communities of residence; retirement;

General Observations

Reactions and reflections on Olympic experience; modernization of sport; attitudes on and involvement with the Olympic Movement; advice to youth and aspiring athletes.

Interview transcripts were edited and may include additional material based on subsequent conversations and/or subject's own editing.

WILLIAM NEUFELD
1924 OLYMPIC GAMES - PARIS
JAVELIN THROW

INTERVIEWED:

April, 1987
Riverside, California
by George A. Hodak

WILLIAM NEUFELD

Interviewer: George A. Hodak

Hodak: Today I am in Riverside, California, visiting with Mr. William Neufeld, who competed at the 1924 Paris Olympics in the javelin competition. Before you discuss the '24 Games and your subsequent involvement in sports and sports education, I'd like you to tell me about your family background.

Neufeld: Well, my mother and father came from Europe. My mother, Margerethe Rempel, came from Switzerland and my dad, Wilhelm Peter Neufeld, came from Germany, and gradually their families migrated to Prussia. Then, in 1783, Catherine the Great of Russia offered land to farmers of various countries to serve as buffers against the Turks. The Turks had recently taken over much of the land north of the Black Sea and much of the Ukraine and the Crimean Peninsula near the Sea of Azov. So, that's where the families moved to when the property was offered to them; a stretch about 30 miles long and about 20 miles north and south. And so that's how my father and mother met.

I was born February 27, 1901, in Halbstadt, a city in the Ukraine. I was the third member of a family of nine. I had two sisters, one half-sister and six brothers. My father was a professor of history and music in the university serving this particular colony of 63 villages, mostly Mennonites. He was also a minister of the churches of those 63 villages, and he served as editor of the only paper that we had in that area. We went to German schools, because the agreement with Catherine the Great was that we would have our own school system, religious freedom, and the sons would not have to serve in the military. This was revoked by Czar Nicholas II. That meant that brother Herman, who was about 15 at that time, would

soon be serving in the military and brother Heinrich, 13, would also be due for the army. So we decided to move from Halbstadt to the United States. We took the ship from Bremerhaven and sailed to Philadelphia, where we had to refuel with coal, and then traveled around Florida to Galveston, Texas. It took us 21 days for the entire trip. We had some pretty rough seas. My father, being a professor of music . . . well, we were all singers of one sort or another. So Herman and Heinie and I formed a trio and performed on board ship.

Then, from Galveston, we visited Kansas to see what Kansas had to offer for us. It was pretty much like the steppes of Russia where we had come from. But we didn't seem to care for Kansas. There were a lot of Mennonites there, but we didn't care for the weather or the conditions of that area. Then somebody suggested that we go to California, so we traveled by train to California. I remember eating my first orange on that trip. There were three Mennonite churches at a place called Reedley. We bought property there, a home with 10 acres with the back of the property on the Kings River. It was mostly grapes, prunes and peaches, but it was enough to give us a comfortable living.

Hodak: Was your father able to serve as a minister in this area?

Neufeld: Well, he served as a part-time minister. He filled in at the pulpit there in Reedley at the Mennonite church. He also tried to start a Bible school. We built a little house on the side of our home and that served as a schoolroom. But it never worked out; he never had enough students to make it worthwhile. So, he gave that up and devoted his time to farming. His sons were a big help in this case, because they were the right age to help out with the work that had to be done on the farm. My brothers were active in sports. They loved sports like I did.

My brother Herman played football, basketball and track. My brother Heinie played basketball. So they went off to college:

Herman to Davis Farm School, as it was called at that time, and brother Heinie to the University of California at Berkeley. So they left much of the duties on the farm up to me, because the next one was my sister Margaret. So, I had a deal with my father. If I worked early in the mornings—that meant four or five a.m.—I could go out for sports in the afternoon. I would rush through my work in the mornings, doing a lot of hoeing and sulfering or whatever else needed to be taken care of, like milking the cows or feeding the horses, mules and pigs, and then I'd go to school, and in the afternoon I went out for sports. I went out for all sports, that is, all major team sports: football, baseball, basketball, and track and field. In football, for instance, I played end and was called on to do the punting, too. In basketball I played center. I wasn't much of a shot though. We had a gym that was rather unique. It was originally the opera house, and the baskets were right up against the brick wall on each end. There was room for maybe 200 people on the sidelines. We were allowed to run up the brick wall and dunk the ball. So that was a rather unique kind of basketball. Of course, we were allowed to shoot from the floor too, but we found it more convenient to run up the wall. (laughter)

Hodak: This was at Reedley High School?

Neufeld: Yes, it was about 24 miles from Fresno. It was very much in the fruit district. It was near Selma, Sanger, Dinuba and Porterfield.

Hodak: You mentioned that you made a deal with your father. Did he have reservations about sports or athletic competition in general?

Neufeld: He didn't encourage it, by any means; he tolerated it, I think. He never came out to see any sports except one baseball game. He came up, driving his two mules and haywagon, and said, "Willie, it is time to go and get some hay." So I had to leave the pitcher's box and climb on the haywagon and do my duty.

Hodak: He let you know where the priorities were.

Neufeld: He definitely knew where the priorities were, as far as I was concerned. I remember once at a party—this was a high school party—we started rather late, and at ten o'clock he came, in his regular work clothes, and announced that it was ten o'clock and it was time to get home. We had some pretty strict rules. We started breakfast by reading from the Bible and then we sang a song and had a prayer. We wouldn't dare look at the food, because that was sinful. Evenings, we had the same thing. But he was a great father. Strictness didn't hurt me.

Hodak: Did you take up the weight events, which you later competed in, in high school?

Neufeld: Yes, I threw the javelin. The coach believed in a lot of throwing, so he would have me throw the day before the meet. Well, the javelin tears up a lot of tissues when you throw it because it's not as natural a motion as throwing the discus. It's hard on the shoulders. Your shoulder needs two or three days' rest before a meet. But he didn't know about that at that time. So the harder I worked, the worse I got at the track meets. So I didn't do too well. I think we had a discus, but it was falling apart, so I didn't do much of it in high school. I did some high jumping, too.

I remember playing football. We won the county championships and thought that was quite something. So we had to play off with Bakersfield. The Bakersfield team seemed to be all young men—21 was the age limit—big, muscular, all working in the oil fields. We didn't know what to do with them. We tried hard to stop them from scoring 100 points. But they finally made it, the score was 101-0. It was the worst trouncing we ever had.

Hodak: Did Reedley participate in any state track competitions?

Neufeld: I don't think we ever got to the state level. We had our own Fresno County meet and we had the regional meets, but that's as far as Reedley ever got.

Hodak: Where did you go from Reedley High School?

Neufeld: Well, my older brother was going into farming, and my brother Heinie was going into medicine; he was studying as a doctor at the University of California in San Francisco. And my dad thought it was time for one of his sons to become a minister. So there was Bethel College in Kansas, which was a Mennonite college and was primarily for teacher and minister training. So, he made another deal with me. He said he'd pay half my expenses, and I would pay the rest of it from my savings in the summertime. I did a lot of grape-picking and peach-picking in the summertime and I worked very hard, 10-12 hours a day, for as long as it was daylight. I was picking grapes for raisins. I got five cents a tray, and there were 32 pounds of raisins on a tray. I brought it up to 300 trays a day for 15 dollars, which was a lot of money at that time. I saved that and then later on I ran some grape-picking crews in my senior year of college. This is the way I saved my money. We figured it would cost about 800 dollars to go to Bethel College, with tuition and all the food and other expenses. So I agreed, not knowing a thing about Bethel. I played a lot of basketball there—that was the sport in Kansas. We had a pretty hot league at the smaller colleges, like Southwestern, Wichita State, Friends College, and Washburn.

I, again, played center. It wasn't as rough in those days as it is now. I know the only thing I had broken was my nose; otherwise, I had an ankle injury, but I could get that loosened up and play. Playing center, I had to do a lot of jumping, because in those days every time you made a basket it came back to the center. Under the basket was where I could do my best scoring. That was about the only sport at Bethel College. I did a little track and won a gold medal at the state meet in the shot put with a throw of 40 feet. We didn't have a football team and no baseball, to speak of. I then decided that it was a little bit too conservative for me—and highly religious. I remember we had a Halloween party there and there was a girl dressed up as a witch, and the board of trustees of the college came to the president of the school and said, "How dare you

have a Halloween party where there is a witch." So, he got chastised properly. And somebody else had a professor there, Jensen, and he was not very popular. Somebody took a buggy apart and put it on top of his home, and they boarded up his room and let a sow and some little pigs in there. (laughter) That also was very improper.

Hodak: So you decided to transfer to the University of California?

Neufeld: Yes. My brother was at the University of California and a friend, Harold Eymann, was there a year ahead of me. He was really my best friend there at Reedley. He took me under his wing when I first came. I couldn't speak English, and he could speak German. And he urged me to come to Cal. So I did and I've never regretted that. I think it's a great institution. I thoroughly enjoyed my years at Cal.

Hodak: At the time you transferred, the University of California was a dominant power in track and field.

Neufeld: I didn't even know it at the time I entered. Of course, I found out that California was a dominant power in football and in track and field. Andy Smith, the coach of the football team, had his "wonder teams" there that went undefeated for four years.

Hodak: Who are some of the more notable players on these teams?

Neufeld: Of course [Harold P.] "Brick" Muller, the All-American, stands out. He was an end, and Bob Berkey played the other end. Then there was Stan Barnes, who played center. We really had some outstanding players. We had a rather nervous type of quarterback. It seemed that there was only one play in which the quarterback was to carry the ball. The score was 67-0 and he thought it was time to call his play. Just as he got the ball the whole opposing team was on top of him. He got up bewildered and said, "What happened?" We said, "You got tackled!" (laughter) The point was that we had

agreed that if he ever called this play, we were going to let everybody come through like a sieve. I remember in my junior year we were going to the ICAAAA [Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America] meet in Philadelphia. Andy Smith was in the berth right across the aisle from me. He started to talk to me, he said, "We're losing Brick Muller and Bob Berkey, our best ends. How about you coming out for football next year to help replace them?" Well, I couldn't picture myself replacing Brick Muller; I hadn't played any football since high school and, besides, I was working my way through college doing various jobs. I had to take care of the animals used for research work in the zoology department. Then I was also mailman for the agricultural department. So I decided not to go out for football.

Hodak: Were you immediately eligible to compete after transferring to Cal?

Neufeld: No, in those days they had a rule that said if you transferred from another college, you were not eligible that next year. But I practiced regularly. And we had certain meets in which I could compete. For instance, I could compete against the Olympic Club in San Francisco. I could compete in the inter-class meet.

Hodak: What sports were you developing an interest and ability in?

Neufeld: My main interests were the shot put, discus and javelin, but I did compete sometimes in the broad jump or the high jump.

Hodak: So you were almost a candidate for the decathlon or the pentathlon.

Neufeld: I wasn't really aware of the Olympics until shortly before the time for the Olympic tryouts. So I thought, "Well, if I don't make it in one of these events, I'll just try the decathlon." I never had pole vaulted in my life and I had never run the mile. I had run the quarter, as far as distances were concerned. The jumps, well, except for the pole vault, I could take care of those—the same with the weights. And I could sprint and hurdle. So, I thought I would

try it anyway. In those days the competition was not as tough as it is nowadays, by any means. The decathlon men usually had two or three weaknesses.

Hodak: Talk about your collegiate competition, once you were eligible to compete.

Neufeld: Well, in my junior year I competed in the full slate of meets. We were members of the ICAAAA, which consisted mostly of the Eastern universities and colleges. Then we also belonged to the Pacific Coast League. The league had USC, Stanford, Oregon, Oregon State, Washington State, the University of Washington and, of course, Cal. At that time, we called UCLA the twig or the branch, it was kind of like the small brother or the cub, and they resented that, and rightly so. They were growing pretty rapidly. I remember competing against USC down south. [Lemuel Clarence] "Bud" Houser was the weight man there in the shot and discus, and the only reason that I beat him was that he had a sore throat. I think that's the only time that I ever beat him. In those days we were able to beat USC.

We had Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin come and join us out on the track. It's surprising that Douglas Fairbanks was such a good hurdler. Charlie Chaplin didn't try the high hurdles, but he tried the low hurdles; and of course he had those low bottom pants on, and it was quite a sight to see him hurdling. It was a lot of fun to see him get in the spirit of the track meet.

Hodak: I think California won three consecutive ICAAAA championships in this period.

Neufeld: We won that ICAAAA meet with 39-and-a-half points. We had Brick Muller as our high jumper; Paul Boren; a sprinter and a broad jumper; and Jack Merchant, who was good in the hammer throw, the broad jump and also the sprints. We also had [Allen C] "Red" Norris, who was our pole vaulter. I believe he won the pole vault

that year. I happened to win the discus, get second in the javelin, and fourth in the shot. And that made me high point man of the meet with 11 points. The discus was so late that they had to use lanterns to find the place where the discus landed. I thought I was in good shape, and there was one throw I was sure they never had the right spot. I did manage to break the record at that time. I was sure I was up in the 140s someplace, but they gave me 138 feet. The second-place javelin thrower, a fellow named Storrs, was a Yale man, and when the camera people asked us to pose together he refused, because I had come from the wilderness of California and he was a Yale man. Everybody thought that was very funny. (laughter)

Of course, all the traveling was by train in those days. We took the train across and went to Pullman, Washington, or to a place north of there. Then we took a bus from that city down through to Pullman. We drove through 76 miles of wheat fields. We finally arrived there and it started to rain. And it rained and rained. We were sitting around a hot stove trying to keep warm during the meet. And I remember Brick Muller was trying to jump five feet, and he was on his last try. It was all mud and water. Well, his feet slipped and he never even touched the bar, he just slipped under and landed in the pit. We warned the judges in the shot put that when the shot landed it was going to splatter a lot. But . . . they still got splattered. (laughter) In the discus, there was just a sea of water. You landed the discus flat and then of course it skidded. So how are you going to know what the mark was? Well, they had to guess at it. I remember Washington was determined to beat Cal in this meet. We only had six men that we took from Philadelphia to Pullman, and it all depended on the relay. If Washington won the relay, they would win the meet. Well, we won the relay, so we won that meet as well as the ICAAAA meet.

Hodak: This is still in 1923?

Neufeld: Yes.

Hodak: And in 1924 a number of the track men graduated from Cal?

Neufeld: Yes, we lost a lot of good men. We lost Jack Merchant and Brick Muller and Bob Berkey. We lost just about the whole team. We had to almost start all over again. So we had a small team with us. I was captain that year, and we didn't do too well. I had a sore shoulder. I think I took second in the javelin and fourth in the discus.

Hodak: At the ICAAAA?

Neufeld: Yes. That was in 1924 at Harvard. Then two weeks later they had the Olympic tryouts, and two of us were chosen to stay for the final tryouts.

Hodak: Had you thought of possibly making the Olympic team?

Neufeld: No, I wasn't even aware that I would even be selected to stay for the Olympics. That wasn't my main goal at all. I was just delighted to hear that I was selected to stay for the tryouts.

Hodak: Before we discuss the tryouts, I'd like you to discuss various techniques involved in the weight events, and what sort of training regimen you developed to perfect your competition.

Neufeld: Well, we used the orthodox method of a hop across the ring in the shot. You'd carry the shot up against your neck and lean your head against that shot to get full control of it. Then you'd hop and drive the shot as far as you could. We had no idea of using the discus method of circling the ring and getting greater momentum that way in order to get better distance. Our ring, of course, was just plain dirt. It was often soft and you couldn't get good footing, and soon holes would be dug. So, in the later periods of the competition there would be a lot of holes and the ring would be all torn up. This was true of both the shot and discus.

Hodak: I would imagine the track conditions varied from track meet to track meet.

Neufeld: Oh, entirely. Some had cinders in their rings.

Hodak: What about the discus?

Neufeld: The discus ring, eight feet two-and-a-half inches in diameter, was also plain dirt, with a steel circle around it level with the ground. You weren't allowed to use it as a ledge as you do in the shot put board, where you could use it to lean against and to control your forward thrust.

Hodak: Would you bring along your own discus and javelin? What were the rules concerning equipment?

Neufeld: The shot usually didn't mean much. We didn't worry too much about it. But the discus and javelin were important. We were permitted to use our own in dual meets and other major meets. In the javelin, for example, I shifted the grip on my javelin. I wanted the weight forward a little more so I moved it. I rewound all my javelins. I would check the weight carefully so that it would be in the proper balance, and I'd also try to put a little softer rope than they usually put around it. They usually had a smaller, hard rope. So you had to make all those changes in order to get your best distance.

Hodak: How did you deal with a warped javelin?

Neufeld: That was a real problem. They were hickory sticks at that time, and they were very flexible. They would flop like a crow. You had to get your power into that point, the steel point. If you raised the javelin too suddenly in the middle, it would have a big flop and you wouldn't get power into it at all. So you had to worry about that. With the present javelins you don't have that problem because they are so rigid—the metal as well as the laminated javelins.

Hodak: Would a javelin occasionally break on a throw?

Neufeld: Yes, I've seen them crack. Those were birch javelins. There were some more rigid javelins that came from Finland. They were thicker around, which I liked too, but they didn't have those until later. I never got to throw them until just before the 1928 Olympics.

Hodak: Those were certainly an improvement.

Neufeld: Definitely. But they broke pretty easily, particularly at the joint where the end of the steel point and the shaft came in.

Hodak: Talk a bit further on the technique involved in the weight events. I can see that you were an athlete that didn't rely simply on brute strength, but on form and technique.

Neufeld: Yes, you're right. I was one of the lightest weight men in collegiate competition at the time, so I had to depend on technique and physical conditioning. I did quite a bit of running and a lot of exercises, like push-ups, to build up my shoulders and arms. The techniques we used in the javelin, for example, were very simple. We had a fairly short run, of about 60 feet, and used the hop. The hop had a tendency to slow you down for the throw, but it gave you a chance to get your shoulder and your arm back. You'd try to get a full arm whip into it; the tendency is for a javelin thrower to tighten up and bend his elbow and tighten his muscles, and that in itself could ruin a good throw. So we just used a simple hop. I didn't see the cross-step until I competed in the Olympics. The Finns and the Norwegians and the Swedes used the cross-step, which gave you quite a bit more speed and gave you a chance to get your shoulder back. And you needed a pretty good run. The trouble was that most of our runs were on grass, and unless you placed your foot down flat you would slide and lose your footing. Then your run, of course, is ruined. In those days, we used a board across as a mark for fouling. If you went beyond the board it was a foul, and that throw was disqualified. They would measure

the distance from the point of where the javelin entered the ground at a right angle to the line, not from the point of your throw. So you didn't get your full distance unless you threw in an exact line. Now they have a circle and they measure from the mark to that circle. That makes a lot of difference in your records, combined with the difference in the javelin. My son Bill said, "My dad must have been throwing branches in his time." (laughter) It wasn't that we threw branches, but they certainly were inferior javelins and inferior conditions compared to what they have now.

Kodak: How would you take into account the strength of the wind? You're disqualified if the tip of the javelin does not land first, correct?

Neufeld: That's right. If it lands flat it doesn't count, the tip has to come into the ground first. So you had to adjust with the wind. If you had the wind directly against you, you'd have to keep a low trajectory to get that point to come down. If you have the point tipped up, the wind will just throw it back and the tail will land and usually break the javelin. So you had to be pretty careful about getting your trajectory just right. With a side wind, well, you just had to take a chance on it, depending on how strong it was. Usually, the side wind won't bother you any.

I remember that at the Olympic tryouts we had a very strong wind. We had to throw the javelin directly into the wind, and none of us made very good marks. But my mark of 192 feet won it because I kept my javelin pretty low. I put my power into it that way. That was a big factor. I remember on one of my last throws that the wind was so strong that it blew off someone's straw hat, and my javelin went right through that hat. I pulled out my javelin and apologized to the man in the grandstand who owned it. He said, "I'm going to put that on the wall as a souvenir." (laughter)

Hodak: You had very little indication that you were going to be involved in these tryouts?

Neufeld: That is correct. The Olympics weren't publicized like they are now. So we knew very little about it. I didn't know the history of it at that time. We went to New York and stayed at the Yale Club and worked out at Columbia University. I had a bad shoulder at the time of the ICAAAA, so I didn't throw the javelin at all. I just went to the trainer and he gave me treatment for my shoulder for two weeks straight, and that made a lot of difference in the tryouts. I felt much stronger and better at that time.

Hodak: It seems that shoulder problems would almost be chronic to any javelin thrower. Is there any way to avoid nagging shoulder injuries?

Neufeld: If you do have any torn muscles or tendons pulled loose you'd better give it a rest, because throwing will just aggravate it. I was very grateful to the trainer. I don't know who he was, but it sure helped.

Hodak: One person we should mention is your track coach, Walt Christie, who was one of the members of the American Olympic track and field coaching squad. What sort of things did Christie help you with at California?

Neufeld: Walter Christie was a very lovable character. He had over 30 years of coaching at Cal. He used to be a sprinter for money; he would go and travel from town to town and arrange races, and they would put bets on it. He would tell us how he made money that way. One of his good qualities is that he didn't over-coach. Some coaches talk too much and confuse athletes. You have to establish habits. If you make a change in the technique you have to practice it that way until it's established, it's a habit, and you do it naturally. Too much talking does not give the athlete a chance to establish those habits. Walt was very good about not talking too much. He would talk very kindly—he certainly never yelled at an athlete like some of the coaches you see nowadays. He had a peculiar habit of sitting there on the fence, and just as the pole vaulter was taking off he

would throw a rock and knock the bar off. He was that accurate in his throwing. Then he would say, "Oh, too bad." (laughter) That was part of our life on the track. He always had good teams, and championship teams for several years straight. I think he quit coaching in 1934. He was getting too old, as he was well into his 70s at that time. They were looking for a coach and they got Brutus Hamilton, who was a coach at the University of Kansas. He had gone to the University of Missouri, and I think he had studied English in graduate school there.

Hodak: He had finished second in the decathlon at Antwerp.

Neufeld: In 1920, that's right.

Hodak: When did you first meet Brutus Hamilton?

Neufeld: Well, the University of Missouri track team came out in 1922, and Brutus was on that team. He competed in four or five events because he was an outstanding decathlon man. I wasn't allowed to compete at that time against Missouri, because I was a transferee, but I watched the meet. Then, of course, we met again on the Olympic team; he was on the 1924 as well as the 1920 team. But he was not able to compete because of a bad ankle. He and I wandered through a rose garden where I understand Napoleon Bonaparte had planned his campaigns. So we tried to get his spirit. (laughter) Brutus was very good on poetry; he could quote poetry by the hour. Later on, after he became coach at Cal in 1934, we kept in close touch. I was then coaching at Riverside Junior College. Well, he invited the junior colleges to compete against California. I had a sprinter that I thought was possibly the fastest human being at 40 yards. He was a lad that weighed 138 pounds, his name was [Ernest] "Mushie" Pollock. Later, after finishing at the junior college, he went to Cal and became captain of the track team at Cal. At one point I tried to get a meet between Mushie and the best sprinter they had at USC, who was winning all the sprints, but Dean Cromwell somehow either heard of or saw Mushie run and

canceled it. (laughter)

Hodak: Now, getting back to the Olympic tryouts. You were also selected as an alternate in the discus?

Neufeld: The discus throw was going on at the same time as the javelin throw was on. So I had to compete in the javelin first, they told me, and then I could go and compete in the discus. So the discus throwers were all through when I came after finishing the javelin. Well, three of them had broken the world's record. That was because there was a strong quarter wind and they learned to scale the discus so the discus would be carried by the wind. So they were throwing 158, 159, 160 feet. One hundred fifty-six feet was the world's record at that time. So, when I came the wind had died down. The officials said, "If you break the world's record now, it will stand." But I didn't have the wind advantage and I threw about 147 feet, which was a good throw for me at that time. But I never broke the world's record. The others had better distances so, naturally, they qualified as number 1-2-3-4, and I was the alternate. Bud Houser, [Glenn] "Tiny" Hartranft, and two other fellows ahead of me.

Hodak: And the Olympic tryouts were held two weeks prior to your departure?

Neufeld: No, two days prior. We had to move on to New York and we got on the ship.

Hodak: Talk about the travel on the ship to Paris. Certainly that must have been interesting.

Neufeld: Yes. It took about seven or eight days to cross the Atlantic Ocean. There was a deck that was cleared so all the runners could run. The wrestlers had their mats, the boxers had their rings. Most of them had an easy time. But what do you do with a javelin? Well, if you throw it around promiscuously, you kill a lot of people. So that wasn't satisfactory. Then we hit upon the idea of using a light

string, and we would coil and bore a hole through the tail end of the javelin and hold it that way and throw it overboard at the bow of the ship. So that way, we had a 300-foot string and we could throw until we reached the end of the string, which was way beyond the world's record. Well, we claimed the world's record, but they wouldn't allow it. They said, "No, the ship is going in the opposite direction and going at a good speed of 20 knots an hour. And then it's 30 feet down below, so you get an added distance that way. So we have no way of accurately measuring your distances." (laughter) Sometimes we imagined that we saw blood on the tip of the javelin where we either hit a whale, a porpoise or a shark or something. We kind of let our imagination run wild. For the shot and discus, we had a canvas we would throw against.

All the swimmers had a canvas tank, not more than 10 feet long and 6 or 7 feet wide. They would have a rubber band around their body tied to the back of it, so they just had room enough to splash around. But they didn't get anywhere. It was too far down to swim and, besides, they couldn't use the ocean very well for swimming practice.

Hodak: Were the quarters on the ship suitable?

Neufeld: They were okay. Of course the officials, no doubt, had better quarters than we did; I guess that was expected. We had some rather interesting incidents. General [Douglas] MacArthur represented the military aspect of the team, and there were several athletes from the military, particularly saber and foil. He spoke to us rather sternly, he said, "Now remember, you are ambassadors of the United States and we expect you to behave accordingly." Then, we were told that on arrival in France we would be met by beautiful French girls that would greet us with flowers and give us a kiss on each cheek, because that was their practice. We looked forward to that very much. We practiced the national anthem very vigorously in anticipation of this meeting. Actually, what happened is that it was raining and all we saw was a bunch of bearded men to greet us.

That didn't particularly encourage us to kiss on both cheeks.
(laughter) So that part of it was rather disappointing.

Hodak: And you landed in Cherbourg?

Neufeld: We landed in Cherbourg, yes. We had one interesting situation. There was a fellow named Joie Ray. He was a 1500-meter man. Then there was Gertrude Ederle, a distance swimmer.

Hodak: Who later swam the English Channel?

Neufeld: That's right, the same girl. She was pretty heavysset. Well, they were about the same weight and they had wrestling matches. We would get around and close them in. We would watch the wrestling matches between the two. The committee heard about it and they told us that was the end of it. I might add that we also saw Johnny Weissmuller when he first became Tarzan of the Apes. The last night onboard ship we had a talent show from our own group, and just as the show was over, he jumped on the table and he swung on the chandelier and scratched his side and let out a yell, like he later did in Tarzan. (laughter)

Hodak: Tell me about your accommodations outside of Paris?

Neufeld: We stayed at an estate. Chateau de Rocquencourt, which was kind of a small palace. We had a number of fields there. We found when we arrived that they had built some prefab houses made of pressed board, and they were pretty austere. We had army cots with thin mattresses, and they had canvas sheets for us which were pretty rough. There was two to a room, and that was about all we had in it. We had a chair or two, and that was our furniture. The field itself was pretty rough, we had to go to Colombes Stadium for our workouts.

In order to get light for our prefab houses, they overloaded the current, and then a fire broke out in the village. One of the

Frenchmen's houses was burning and he climbed up a ladder, grabbed a live wire, and fell off dead. He left a widow and their two or three children. We took a collection to help her out; I think we raised \$1,500 to \$2,000 or so. We gave it to her and that received a lot of publicity in the Paris papers. We received any number of invitations to weddings and parties after that, and it helped establish good relationships in that way.

Hodak: In looking at the official reports on the 1924 Games, there is discussion of the travel back and forth to the stadium as being somewhat of a problem for the athletes.

Neufeld: There was some resentment on the part of the athletes because of their austere conditions. The officials were housed in the chateau itself. They had very comfortable beds. Of course, they said they were older than we were, so they were therefore entitled to better conditions. They had limousines in which they traveled, and we traveled in lumbering buses—and it was quite a long ways to the stadium. The schedule for the buses was not very satisfactory. I remember one day I had finished my javelin competition, and Brutus Hamilton and I stayed over to see the finish of the decathlon. Well, it was dark by that time, so this bus had to wait for the athletes to get showered and dressed. Then we went back to our quarters at Chateau de Rocquencourt. Here was Harold Osborn and Emerson Norton, who was leading in the decathlon for the first five events. Well, he taunted Harold Osborn. And there wasn't much to eat there. We had bread and celery, as I recall. And Harold Osborn just chomped away on his celery, but never said a word. And the next day he won rather decisively. He definitely beat Norton. He had a very competitive attitude, as I remember. Two of us, a fellow named [Allan] Helffrich and I, were doing some standing hop, step and jumps behind our little cabin. We thought we were pretty hot stuff because we could jump around 37 feet from the stand. We challenged Harold and we both beat him. Two or three days later Harold came around and said, "Let's try that again." He had been practicing secretly all this time, and this time he beat us. He had a

very competitive attitude.

Hodak: Is there anything in particular that you remember about the Opening Ceremonies?

Neufeld: It was quite a beautiful spectacle, even in those days. We marched in, and we all had different kind of uniforms. I think there were only about 13 countries competing at that time. We had 213 athletes. We marched in—and that in itself was a beautiful spectacle. Then to have the choir singing and the cannon fire, and then pigeons were released from their cages and were flying, circling the stadium. There was a French athlete who took the oath for all of us to compete in the right spirit. Then Pierre de Coubertin made a short speech, then the President of France spoke. It was a beautiful ceremony. I will always picture it in all its color.

Hodak: The javelin competition was held and completed on the first day of the Olympic competition. Could you talk about the competition?

Neufeld: It was the first time that the United States had competed in the javelin. The javelin was introduced earlier, but it wasn't one of the events at the very beginning in 1896.

Hodak: It was introduced in Olympic competition in 1908, I believe.

Neufeld: Yes, 1908. Well, we were divided into two units. I was in the first unit to compete. So, I was given the dubious honor of being the first athlete from the United States to compete in the javelin. I was leading in my division when we finished the first six throws. Then we went off the field. When I tried to get back on the field, I was blocked by the gendarmes. I couldn't speak any French, he couldn't speak any English, so we were at loggerheads. I finally had to find somebody that could interpret for us before they would permit me back on the field for the final throw that I had qualified for. (There were six people that qualified for the final competition.) But the difficulty was that they threw a bunch of

javelins to us, and then we all started grabbing for javelins. They were all warped and, as I recall, they were all hickory sticks which were very bendable. For me, the grip was in totally the wrong place, it was the wrong type of grip. We had to throw on grass and it had just rained and was very slippery. So, it was not the ideal conditions. None of the fellows threw up to their ability, including Johni Myyra, the world-record holder at that time. He had the world's record of 216 feet. Gene Oberst of Notre Dame, who was about 6-foot-4 and weighed 230-240 pounds, had one handicap, a club foot, so he couldn't use his run very well. He threw mostly with his shoulder, just sheer strength, because he could not use his run. Well, I couldn't use my run either because the ground was so slippery, and, of course, I relied much more on the run than Gene did. So Gene came in third and he deserved it—he almost made second. Finally, Johni Myyra, I think it was his last throw, threw 203 feet. That was the best that anybody could manage in that meet. So I came in fifth.

After the event, two of us. Lee Priester and I, decided that we wanted one of the Olympic flags that were flying on all the flagpoles around, so we talked a French boy into climbing up the pole to get an Olympic flag for us. He climbed up and looked down, and there were two gendarmes standing behind us. So we were led away; we never did get our Olympic flag. I understand some athletes did manage to get them. That was my major meeting with the gendarmes in Paris.

Hodak: In addition to that "disappointment," were you disappointed in your performance? Is this something you thought much about later?

Neufeld: Well, I thought later, "Why didn't we learn this cross-step?" The Finns were using it, and we felt that that's why they were first, second and fourth.

Hodak: And they were first, second and third in 1920 in the javelin.

Neufeld: They must have used the cross-step, even at that time.

Hodak: So that, in addition to the conditions of the track surface—

Neufeld: Yes, it made it a rather disappointing meet because I felt better, my shoulder was okay, and so I felt I was ready to really throw.

Hodak: What was your best throw in amateur or collegiate competition?

Neufeld: I think 198 feet was my best throw, and that was after college. I was training for the next Olympics at that time. So, I was consistent in the 190s. In the discus, I was consistent in the 130s and 140s. In the shot, 47 feet 10 inches was my best. None of them breaking world records, but all of them fairly close to the world record at that time. I had the American record for awhile. That's why they put me on the All-American teams: the discus in 1923 and the javelin in 1924.

Hodak: As I mentioned before, the javelin was held on the first day of competition. What other events were you able to observe?

Neufeld: The performance of Paavo Nurmi was outstanding. He always carried a stopwatch in his hand. I remember one race, I think in the 3000 meters, [Vilho] Willie Ritola ran against him, and it was obvious that the race was between those two chaps. And there at the last lap I saw Paavo Nurmi throw his watch away on the turf. He did beat and establish a couple of world records. He won four events.

During the Games we took a trip of the war zone in France. We had two buses. All the athletes who had finished competition were allowed to go on this trip and, naturally, track men got together on one bus, and boxers and wrestlers were on the other bus. We came to the first city, Verdun, to stay overnight. The bus arrived in Verdun, but there was no bus with the boxers. So we stayed that night, and they finally came in at 11 o'clock, because the bus had broken down. The next day we traveled again. Again, the same

thing happened. The boxers and wrestlers were furious, so they insisted that we give up our hotel. So we did, and that's what we called the "boxers' rebellion." (laughter)

Well, I mentioned Paavo Nurmi as the outstanding athlete. He was known as the "Phantom Finn." But the British also had some outstanding athletes, particularly in the shorter running events. That of course culminated in the film *Chariot's of Fire*. Harold Abrahams won the 100 meters. Then Eric Liddell won the 100 meters and Douglas Lowe won the 800 meters, and that was quite a surprise. Of course, Eric Liddell's story in *Chariots of Fire* is very interesting. There was considerable debate about what they should do when he refused to run on Sunday. It turned out that finally Lord [David] Burghley, who was scheduled to run the 400 meters, offered his place on the team to Eric Liddell. Of course, he won and broke the record. It's interesting to see *Chariots of Fire*, in connection with the '24 Olympics, where the Americans were more or less put in the position of the culprits.

Hodak: What do you mean?

Neufeld: Well, if you recall the picture, just a few were mentioned. Charlie Paddock—he was beaten. Jackson Scholz was mentioned; he happened to win the 200 meters and was also elected as captain of our Olympic team. But the heroes were the British and, in a way, the United States team was the main opponent in this competition and more or less pictured as the antagonists, as the enemy.

It is interesting that Eric Liddell had taken Lord Burghley's place. I happened to meet Lord Burghley at the British Empire Games that were held later on. My daughter, Mary, was married to a British man and they invited me to come over and visit with them. So I agreed, provided they arranged for me to meet as many Britishers as possible. One of them I wanted to see was Lord Burghley. So they invited Lord Burghley to lunch. He wrote back and said he was sorry he could not accept the invitation due to a severe case of

arthritis, but that we could come over and have cocktails with them. So, this is April 26, 1984. We drove over and here was this huge castle. I think it has well over 200 rooms, it's known as the Lord Burghley House. We walked into the kitchen with the director, and we saw hundreds of turtle heads sticking out of the walls. Then we walked through all kinds of bedrooms, and all the various kings and queens had slept here and there. Things were pretty dusty. Well, we finally came to the room where Lord Burghley kept all of his awards and trophies. There was one trophy that looked exactly like a bathtub, and they said it was a champagne cooler. (laughter) We then walked in, the director knocked at the door, the butler appeared and said, "Come in. Please stand here, I'll announce you." He then brought out Lord Burghley and Lady Burghley and we had our cocktails. We talked for about an hour and a half. I wanted to talk about the coming Olympic Games, but Lord Burghley wanted to talk about the old Olympic Games. We had a very interesting session. Afterwards, they showed us their apartment, and I was struck by the number of beautiful paintings. He said he made arrangements with the Metropolitan Museum in New York to exhibit these paintings by women artists. Somehow that had been canceled, but nothing came of it because Lord Burghley died in October of that year.

Hodak: That was a rather interesting visit. Let's turn back to the 1924 Games. What other events were you able to see?

Neufeld: Well, I watched the decathlon, where Harold Osborn broke the world's record and beat Emerson Norton. And then I watched the marathon race, which was held on a very, very hot day. And as the runners came in, well, one circled the flagpole, one ran across the field, and there seemed general confusion. I understand only 14 of the runners finished.

Hodak: It seemed that heat was a problem throughout the two weeks of the 1924 Olympics.

Neufeld: Well, it rained the day that we threw the javelin, which caused us some trouble, but it was a good climate as a whole. Although I said the British stood out in some events, actually the United States dominated the Olympics very decidedly. For instance, we had three men finish in the shot put, 1-2-3. And to see three United States flags going up and hear the national anthem played was a very emotional situation for us. I think we placed first and second in the pole vault. We won the high jump; we won the broad jump with [William] De Hart Hubbard, who jumped some 24 feet 4-and-a-half inches; we won the discus with Bud Houser winning that. We didn't win the javelin and we didn't win the hammer. But we won most of the field events.

Hodak: You mentioned De Hart Hubbard, who won the broad jump. An interesting note to that competition is that Robert Le Gendre, in the pentathlon competition, established a new world's record in the broad jump.

Neufeld: Yes, that was a surprise, and rather amazing, because he had not been known as an outstanding broad jumper. Then, to have him beat De Hart Hubbard by over a foot and be established as the best jumper in the world was shocking, in a way.

Hodak: He established a new world's record, but Hubbard won the gold medal as Le Gendre wasn't entered in the broad jump. De Hart Hubbard was one of the few black members of the track team. Was there any type of friction on the track team?

Neufeld: I wouldn't say friction, but he was rather talkative and was not the favorite. Now, [Ed] Gourdin from Harvard, who took second in the broad jump, was well liked and very popular. I don't think it was any type of racial type of situation we had at all. We had a good spirit on our team as a whole. I made a lot of friends and really appreciated the Olympic experience and I consider it one of the most outstanding experiences in my life. I wouldn't give it up for anything.

Hodak: What about the awards presentation, was it different than it is today?

Neufeld: There weren't any ceremonies; we got our certificates on some other occasion, as I recall, where the Prince of Wales was invited. The ceremony was the raising of the flag and the anthems were played to winning countries. That was very interesting, but it wasn't a big occasion like it is now.

Hodak: What do you recall of the Closing Ceremonies?

Neufeld: Well, the Closing Ceremony was rather brief, there were not nearly as many athletes there. I guess some had gone home and some probably decided not to show up. It was not as big an occasion as it is now. I enjoyed the Opening Ceremony much more than I did the Closing Ceremony at that time.

Hodak: You referred earlier to the British Empire Games. When did you become aware that you were to participate in the British Empire Games?

Neufeld: Well, they announced the team selected for the British Empire Games about the middle of the Olympics, after the track and field events were over. They were arranged in the form of relays. Even the field events were a matter of totaling the three athletes who had the best marks from each country. The running events had four members on each team and they were run in the regular way. The meet was pretty lopsided because the United States won practically every event, except for a couple of running events.

Hodak: How did you do in the javelin or other field events?

Neufeld: Well, I threw the javelin and I took second place. Homer Welchel from Georgia Tech won it this time. Gene Oberst was third, as I recall.

We were housed in London in a number of hotels. Our group was mostly the weight throwers, and I was the smallest one in the group. Walking down the street, the six of us, why, everybody moved aside to get out of our way. We had tea there with several English ladies. That was quite an affair. The trouble was that we were all pretty hungry and we took advantage of that and ate all the sandwiches and pastries that were available. They also had a banquet for us when we arrived and it was rather interesting. After a few short speeches, we sat down to the banquet table. It seemed that there was a ceremony. Prince George, who later became King George VI, was the toastmaster, but he did little talking. There was a man dressed in a red coat with brass buttons who stood behind him and made all the announcements. He would start out with "His Majesty the King of England, Her Majesty the Queen of England," and then, "the President of the United States, and Vice-President of the United States," and then he would name some dukes, then finally, "The British and the American Olympic team may now eat."

Hodak: So it was a very formal affair.

Neufeld: Yes, very formal. But Jackson Scholz was supposed to make a speech. He had contacted us in Paris during the Olympics. He said, "What shall I say?" We said, "Well, just as long as you make it short, that'll be all we need." So Jackson Scholz started his speech very formally with majesty's and presidents and so on, and then he got stuck. He pulled out this wad of papers in his back pocket and started to read. That took Prince George by surprise and he spilled his glass of red wine all over the table. So when the medals were presented to us, he extended his hand of congratulations across this red sea. (laughter)

Hodak: Before we discuss your return trip back to the United States, is there anything else that you'd like to bring up? Anything about the Olympics, outside of official competition?

Neufeld: Well, I remember that for three days we ate horsemeat and didn't know it. And it was kind of stringy. Then we came back from the "boxers' rebellion," we had invitations to the opera where they had a special Olympic show. There was a dance of the seven veils. But, unfortunately, she had an eighth veil on. (laughter) Then we were hungry—we hadn't eaten for some time—so we sent a fellow by the name of [Karl] Anderson, a hurdler, out to get us some food. We had a box seat in the opera house, which had a little bannister about a couple of feet high. Right opposite this middle row of seats, which was elevated by five feet above the lower audience, is where all the dignitaries sat. That's where the President of France sat and Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford and other dignitaries. We didn't dare eat our sandwiches openly, so we ducked behind the bannister every time we took a bite. The second part of the show was the running of the marathon in Ancient Greece. That was also a very beautiful show. Then after the show we left. And it happened to be Bastille Day. The bus that we were in was stopped right in the middle of this cobbled street and they asked us all to come down and dance with them. There were a lot of ladies, and I happened to be unfortunate enough to get a rather heavysset lady, and dancing on those cobblestones was really quite an ordeal—particularly with my companion and I not knowing anything about dancing in the first place. (laughter) We finally got away and went back to the Chateau de Rocquencourt.

Hodak: Are there any additional reminiscences you have of the Olympic Games?

Neufeld: No, but there are plenty of them in my diary. I kept this diary during most of the Olympics. I don't recall any offhand that are worth repeating at this point. I know that when we did get back onboard ship there were no incidents. We did get back to New York and there they had a ticker tape parade for us. We marched down Broadway to City Hall and then the mayor gave us gold medals with his name on it. I think it was Mayor [Richard F.] Hyland. Then everybody traveled on back home. I went back to my job running

three grape-picking groups in California; one was Filipino, one was Mexican, and one was an American group, with about 30-40 people each.

Hodak: Did you continue training after you graduated?

Neufeld: Well, I had been promised a job with the Sunmaid Raisin Association by a California graduate, Ralph Merritt, who was the director of the Association. So I was working with the SunMaid Raisin Association. I moved to Fresno and learned the advertising aspect of the whole operation. I played basketball on a city team in Fresno and we played various other cities like San Diego and Sacramento and so on. But we met up with a team called the Olson Swedes from Kansas, and they really had it down, they were a semi-professional team. The terrible Olsen Swedes passed behind their backs, which we didn't know how to guard. They only had five men with them on their team, and one of them was eliminated by too many fouls so they played with four—and they still beat us. Then in 1925 I got married to Katherine Boardman, whom I had been engaged to for several years. We decided not to stay with advertising, so I got a job at Piedmont High School, near Oakland, for \$2,500 a year. I had to take some additional courses so I went to the University of California.

Hodak: What did you study as an undergraduate at California?

Neufeld: I studied business administration. So I took additional physical educational courses in statistics and measurements, courses of that type. I worked in a shoe store three hours a day for three dollars, and that was our income. I entered a contest of the *Oakland Tribune* and worked many nights on it hoping to get some additional money, because we were certainly running short. Afterwards, we went to the Oakland vegetable market and there we found we could buy a bucket of artichokes for 10 cents. So we bought them—and it was our last dime. We lived on that and the shoe money until the report of the contest came. And I won \$600 in this contest. That

pulled us through.

Then I went up to Oregon and stayed at my wife's uncle's place, who was head of the math department at the University of Oregon. I studied coaching, so I had coaching classes in football, basketball, baseball, and track. That is where I met Knute Rockne. He came there to play golf with the head coach of Oregon. He spoke very well, he was evidently a very convincing type of speaker. I then went back to Piedmont and coached eighth grade football and varsity track and cross-country. The eighth grade football team got an invitation to play in the University of California stadium against another team between halves. But the other team was so decidedly larger and stronger that we felt very fortunate to come out of it alive. (laughter)

Hodak: During this time were you also able to participate in AAU track meets? Did you continue competing as an amateur athlete?

Neufeld: I was invited to join the Olympic Club in San Francisco, so I competed for them in a number of meets. That was in 1926. Then I was offered a job at Riverside Junior College. I accepted it even though I took a reduction in salary of 100 dollars. I had to coach all sports: varsity football, basketball, track and field, cross-country, baseball, swimming, and tennis. That was quite a job. Actually, what I did was appoint captains of the teams as coaches and looked in on them every once and awhile; except for the varsity sports and football—they took full time. I knew that football was not my strong point, but with the coaching I got at Oregon and from [Glenn] "Pop" Warner on football, I managed to pull through. Three years later, Jess Mortenson and Jess Hill came out on the staff, because our enrollment had more than doubled during that first year. So they took over football, basketball and baseball. We had quite a coaching team. Jess Mortenson and I decided we were going out for the 1928 Olympics, so we started to practice for that. We joined the Los Angeles Athletic Club and Boyd Comstock, the coach, came out and coached us. We would compete in various

meets. But then we were told that we would not be eligible because we were coaching. We said, "No, we're teaching physical education and we have four or five classes a day." But at that time it was a point that was being discussed, and the AAU decided to take that position.

Hodak: So you were no longer eligible?

Neufeld: No longer eligible for the 1928 Games. We thought we were in pretty good condition, ready to compete. I know Jess Mortenson was. He was in good condition to compete in the decathlon.

Hodak: So you had trained up to 1928 in anticipation of trying out for the Olympic team? And through this period you were competing in various meets?

Neufeld: Some meets, yes. It was not a good strong schedule of meets where you would compete every Saturday. We'd compete maybe every third Saturday. I had improved my javelin throw and consistently threw around 200-plus feet, which looked like it might be enough to make the team.

Hodak: How much of a disappointment was it for you to be informed that you were no longer eligible?

Neufeld: Well, I enjoyed the 1924 Olympics so much that I was all ready for a repeat and would have been delighted to go with the team, but by that time we had children and it was a little more difficult for me.

Hodak: How long did you coach at Riverside Junior College?

Neufeld: Well, my wife died in February of 1935, and I coached on through 1936. Then, in order to get a new focus, a change in conditions or atmosphere, I decided to go to the 1936 Olympics with Bill Henry. Bill Henry had quite a group of Americans from Los Angeles to go to the Berlin Olympics.

But before that I should also discuss the 1932 Olympics. At that time, I had to take some more courses in order to get my teaching certificate. So I went to USC, which of course is right next to the Coliseum. I got a job as one of the head gatekeepers and had a slight part in measuring the discus throws in the Olympics. They gave me some free tickets which happened to be right next to "Big Mouth" Joe E. Brown, who was quite a famous actor at that time. My family was seated next to him, and they got a big kick out of being with him.

Hodak: Anything stand out in your memory about the 1932 Los Angeles Games?

Neufeld: I was surprised to see Bill Carr beat Ben Eastman in the quarter-mile. Ben Eastman definitely was the stand-out at that time; Carr was practically an unknown. Then there was the controversy about one of the Finnish runners [Lauri Lehtinen] that ran in front of [Ralph] Hill and blocked him on the distance run. I guess it was the 3,000-meter race. Of course, there again, the United States dominated the Olympics rather decidedly.

Then I went to the '36 Olympics in Berlin with a group of 63 people from Los Angeles. I found about 13 people in this neighborhood to join the group, which paid my way over there. There I met Bill Bingham from Harvard. The fact is, he found me on the bus and offered me a job at Harvard.

Hodak: What was Bingham's position?

Neufeld: He was director of athletics at Harvard University. He was also the manager for the Olympic team. I think he was instrumental in the dismissal of one of the girls who was not behaving according to the instructions. I forgot just what she did, but she was told that she would not be able to compete on the team. Those Olympics were very outstanding. Jesse Owens was the outstanding athlete. Hitler, who attended many of the track and field events, refused to meet

him. But he was anxious to meet some German person who was at the swimming pool at the time. He asked for the best German girl swimmer to come, and he wanted to congratulate her. Well, it seemed that no German girl won, but one German girl took second. So he invited her. As she was coming into the passage leading to his seat, this girl from Santa Ana slipped behind her and just as they got to Hitler—Hitler congratulated the German girl—this girl from Santa Ana presented him with her autograph book. Everybody thought she would be carried out on the end of a bayonet. (laughter) But, he finally broke into a smile and signed it.

Then we had two men on our group who were photographers. They were paid, I think by some movie studio to take pictures of the Olympic Games. One was a fellow named Lee Hansen, who was a half-miler on the USC track team, and the other was Harrison Chandler, of the *Los Angeles Times*, Chandler family. They wanted to get some pictures of Hitler, and that area was forbidden to the regular tourists. So they came to me because they knew I spoke German and asked if I would help them. I said, "Well, let's go and see who goes in." Some had passes, and some of them didn't, but it seemed they had certain kinds of medals. So, we said, "Let's try the medals." They had shops there where you could buy medals. We bought some medals and pinned them on and put up the best front we could. Two soldiers guarding it opened their bayonets and let us through, and they got all the pictures they wanted. Things of this kind were rather interesting, centering around Hitler and the state Germany was in.

When eating at the restaurant, the understanding we had was when the band played the charge was 52 pfennigs per liter. If the band was not playing it was only 18 pfennigs per liter. We had fried potatoes and some sausages for breakfast. Well, these sausages were made like rubber. I tried to cut it and it bounced off the table onto another table. I apologized and the man came over and said, "You understand we don't usually eat breakfast at this place. But I wonder if you'd be interested in taking a ride and seeing

Munich." We said we would. He called his chauffeur, who wore leather pants and a Napoleon hat, and he drove up in this long black limousine with the top down. We rode through Munich in great style. We came to a place there where 16 black shirts were shot. This was an honored corner in Munich. Two soldiers were guarding this plaque. They stood there for two hours without blinking an eye. We walked passed them. We did not give the Hitler salute as was the regulation.

Hodak: I'm curious as to what Bill Henry's role was at the 1936 Games. Was he merely a spectator?

Neufeld: No, beside taking this group—and his family was with him, Margaret, Pat and Virginia—he had a job as technical advisor to the broadcasting people. So he was pretty busy with that aspect of it. He was really a very fine leader. I always thought he was a great man. He was so calming an influence and so alert to situations. Any difficulties any of the 63 travelers had, he resolved right away. I've always admired him.

Hodak: Anything further you'd care to mention on the 1936 Games or your travels following the Olympics?

Neufeld: I had signed up for a two-week summer session at the Olympic Games stadium in Berlin, where there were doctors and teachers and professors from 26 different nations. Altogether, there were about 75 of us. We had the outstanding German athletes and German professors in physical education to teach us. That's where I met Carl Diem. He was very active and instrumental in bringing the Olympics to Berlin. As I recall, he was a strong character and very much involved and interested in sports of all kinds. And he had his own ideas, and that came into play in his two summer sessions. He was there with us most of the time and handled the sessions in a rather militaristic style. We were expected to march from one class to the other. But the two men from England and the two of us from the United States that were there refused to march, and the poor

interpreter, the *Dolmetscher*, would run after us and say, "You've got to march with the group, that's the regulation. Why do you want to disrupt the procedure?" And we said, "No, this is not a military camp. We just don't believe in this kind of militarism with our academic program." Another problem we had was that they had a ten o'clock curfew—they closed the gates at ten o'clock. We wanted to see more of Berlin and go to the theater and so on, this is one of the reasons we stayed there. We would frequently stay out late, and when we came back we had to sign the black book and climb over the gate in order to get back to our beds. Nothing happened, we just didn't conform to their situation.

Hodak: So you returned to the United States in the fall of 1936?

Neufeld: Yes, I went back and sold my place, sold the car, and got on the train and went to Harvard. I came a little late, but it was alright.

Hodak: You mean a little late for the fall term?

Neufeld: Yes. It was the 300th anniversary of Harvard in 1936. One member of the class was Jack Kennedy. He was in the freshman class at the same time I came. So he was, of course, pretty well known at that time. He tried out for a lot of sports. He tried out for football and he made the junior varsity. He tried out for the swimming team, and I think he got into some meets. But he was not outstanding in that respect. His roommate was a sprinter. Jack Kennedy would sit in the bleachers every once in awhile and kid him. This sprinter of mine, Torbert McDonald, became a member of Congress.

Hodak: You were an assistant track coach at this time?

Neufeld: Yes, I was. First I was assistant track coach, then later we split the team in half by events; I coached one group—the sprinters, the field men and weight men, the broad jump and the high jump. The coach who was already there took over the rest of it. We had some outstanding athletes. Of course, the winters are so long in

Boston—you don't have spring until the middle of May. So you had to watch out for pulled muscles a lot more. Harvard was very limited as to athletes. The Ivy League competed in indoor meets more than they did on the West Coast, primarily because of weather conditions. We had our Madison Square Garden meet, our Boston Garden meet and then we had the ICAAAA meet and several dual meets. We had a pretty full winter season. At the indoor meets, the ones in Boston Garden and Madison Square Garden, they had officials all dressed in tuxedos and wearing carnations. It was really quite a social function. It was really interesting to see because it was so different from outdoor meets. Everything was so close in. We, of course, had difficulty in our training. For instance, we had to carry a cage in which we did the high jumping, pole vaulting and the shot put. We had a wooden straightaway in the stadium. We'd have to shovel the snow off of it so we could practice sprints and hurdles on this wooden track to get used to the indoor track. The javelin presented difficulty. I invented a method of using a rubberband to give a pull to the javelin so that they could bring their shoulders back and use the regular step in throwing the javelin. This we could also practice indoors. So we had to be very innovative about many of these things in order to meet head-on with weather conditions. Every other year we'd have a Yale and Harvard team combined against Oxford and Cambridge. Oxford and Cambridge would come to the United States, and two years later we would go to the meet there. It was surprisingly good, stiff competition.

Of course, insofar as getting athletes, it presented difficulties because we could not go to high schools and make speeches and invite them. We couldn't speak to athletes unless they came to the Harvard campus and talked to us. So the regular way of recruiting then was not the type of thing we have now. Besides, the academic standards at Harvard were so high that very few good athletes could ever get in. That also presented a problem. Most of our athletes came from private schools.

Hodak: Is there anything in terms of training technique or practice that you might have brought with you from the West Coast that was somewhat new to East Coast athletes?

Neufeld: Yes, some modifications possibly; I don't think there were any miracle remedies to bring with us. For example, in the shot put we believed in getting more leg power into the shot by getting a lower position. And the same in the discus, we believed in getting more rhythm continuation and increase in speed in the turn. We were able to bring things of this kind with us. The tendency for sprinters is to hunch up and bend forward and tighten up that way. In order to teach them to keep their body in line, I'd put a rod in their back and tape it around their forehead and just above the hips. You can use these artificial methods of bringing ideas home to the athlete, so he would do it naturally in a regular meet.

Hodak: Did you see much in track improvements and facilities over this 10- or 15-year period, from the time you had competed for the University of California?

Neufeld: I think there was a definite improvement in the implements used in the weights and the runways and so on. Then in the pole vault, your old bamboo pole became obsolete when they used the fiberglass poles. Then it became more of a gymnastic event. In every event you can point to improvements of conditions; and also in coaching methods through all these years.

Hodak: Was there more emphasis on weight training by the time you had begun to coach?

Neufeld: Weight training and training in gymnastics, like using the rope for pole vaulters, was just being introduced at that time. But it's being used much more extensively now.

Hodak: Are there any notable athletes that you coached at Harvard that you'd care to mention?

Neufeld: Yes, there were some outstanding athletes. A fellow named Doug Pirney, he was a sprinter. He was one of the best in the United States at that time. I had three shot putters and they often finished one, two, three in our meets. In the high jump I had Robert Haydock, who broke the Harvard school record several times. He later went on to work as a lawyer for the Pentagon. Torb McDonald was a good sprinter, but he was so busy with football and baseball that we didn't have him the full season, like we had other athletes. He later became a member of the House of Representatives and was trying to take Jack Kennedy's place in the Senate. But he failed in that effort. I saw quite a bit of him later on, because I usually dropped in to see him after finishing a tour overseas with the State Department. He was always interested in what was going on in other countries.

Hodak: What were the years that you coached at Harvard?

Neufeld: I coached at Harvard from 1936 to March of 1942. Then I entered the Naval Air Service. After a one month training at the Naval Academy, I requested duty in California at one of the pre-flight schools. This was one of the main jobs that the V-5 program had established. There were five pre-flight schools where there was military, academic, and physical fitness training in preparation for the training as aviators. I was assigned to Washington as headquarters. Actually, our headquarters was at the Naval Academy in Annapolis. I had to do three things as a staff member. One was to write the manuals for the officers who would do the pilot training; second was train the next class of officers, they came in groups of about 200; third was to select the next group. We had to go to Washington for that because all the applications were there. We were looking for 2,000 officers for the V-5 program, whereas applications ran into 12,000 to 15,000. So it was quite a job.

Hodak: On what basis would you select one applicant over another?

Neufeld: Well, number one, what kind of jobs they were presently holding.

then their experience, their interests, their background, and what were they able to teach. For example, ones who had some military experience were chosen for military training. From the faculties of the universities, we chose people for the academic training. And that kept us very busy. It seemed to me that we had 15-hour days most of the time. We just got to sleep and went right back to work into the middle of the night sometimes.

Hodak: And part of the Navy V-5 pre-flight training program was to organize various teams on various bases?

Neufeld: The teams were kind of a side line. The training, for instance, in track and field was one of my responsibilities. The daily training in various events was a major part of the fitness program. I had to develop an obstacle course, for example, which was really quite an endurance training job because you had to do a lot of running, climbing through tunnels, climbing walls, going over water hazards, running through a maze, running over hurdles, and so on. It got so bad they called me the slave driver, and a few other names, because that seemed to be a real problem for many of them. The outstanding athlete there was probably Cornelius "Dutch" Warmerdam, the pole vaulter. He broke the world's record while he was on our track team. But we had only a few meets, it was just to keep the interest up. We had some good football schedules. We had a lot of outstanding athletes, All-Americans on these teams.

Hodak: There were a number of people who became coaches following the war who were involved in this pre-flight training program.

Neufeld: Oh yes, there was Bear Bryant, for example, who coached at Alabama; Gerry Ford, who later became President; Bud Wilkinson from Oklahoma; Woody Hayes, Don Faurot. There were a lot of outstanding coaches. Jess Hill and Jess Mortensen came in the later classes, for example. Well, you go down the list. I have a book that has what they were doing at the time they were inducted and what they are doing now.

I had several assignments. I couldn't get my family in Annapolis because there was just no room. I had four children and my sister was taking care of them and so I tried to find some place for us to live. Well, I couldn't, so I told Tom Hamilton to transfer me to North Carolina. They had plenty of room there. He said, "No, you stay right here." So then Tom Hamilton left on a trip, and I saw his boss, an admiral, and I put this proposition to him. He said sure and signed the papers for a transfer. I was just leaving at the time Tom Hamilton came back and Tom said, "What do you think you're doing?" I said, "I'm transferring to North Carolina," and he said, "Who told you so?" I showed him my papers and he kind of said, "Huh." So I transferred to North Carolina. Then they transferred the training program to North Carolina, because the facilities there were better than in Annapolis. So we had to start all over again, training these officer classes at North Carolina. I was the assistant director of the program there at Chapel Hill. I had a track team, was building an obstacle course, developing a program of evaluating all the athletes, and a couple of other jobs. So, we were pretty busy there. I remember that one of the athletes was reported as not being qualified to be a pilot because he wouldn't be aggressive enough. So they suggested that he be washed out. I was on the board for checking out any athlete that should be washed out. We said, "Why don't we give him a chance? Let's see how he'll stand up under a good boxer and a good fighter." Our commanding officer there was "Scrappy" Kessing, who was formerly a boxing commissioner for the state of New York. So we set up a fight for these two, and Scrappy Kessing and the coaches that condemned him came in casually. But he was knocked down three times and came back each time, so we decided to keep him in the pilot program, and he graduated.

Then I was transferred to a new pre-flight school in El Monte, California. We only had 13 months there and then the indication was that the war was going to end pretty soon. We had a surplus of trained pilots feeding through the pre-flight school, so that was closed up. I was then transferred to headquarters in Pensacola,

Florida. They have seven fields there, it's a big training school. One of our jobs was to inspect the other schools to see what they were doing, and to see if they were on track. We stopped at Iowa and watched the "Thundering Herd" football team. Then, on boarding, everybody has to be on the plane except the commanding officer, who is the last one to get on. Well, evidently I was late, and the commanding officer was already there waiting, everybody else was already on board. I got a mean stare from him, but I never was late again. We flew over the Rockies and got into the worst blizzard. The pilot seemed to be lost, and the admiral said, "Land at the first landing field you can find." So we landed safely in Reno, fortunately.

Hodak: And you returned to Harvard in 1946 as director of physical education?

Neufeld: We were able to resign from the service in May of 1946. You had to have so many years of service. Then, I went back to Harvard and was appointed director of physical education. We had required physical education for the freshmen and sophomores, so we had a number of teachers and classes. But they were mostly in sports classes. We had a lot of war veterans. I think 500 came to Harvard. Many of them were injured, so we developed special programs for them. I remember one case, this chap had lost a leg and had an artificial leg, and he wanted to play handball. So we played with him, and when we sneaked over into his territory to help him, he would object very strenuously . . . he wanted to take care of his share. One day he didn't show up when we had planned to play. We found out that he had loaned his strap band, that shoulder strap that held his leg to his body, to a friend who had to go to an examination. So he was flat on his back in bed. This to me exemplified the spirit of those fellows that came back from war—they were very determined.

I worked very hard on a revision of the program. I felt it was just not up to date and was not meeting the needs of the students.

In the spring of 1947 I was ready to present a new version of the program, extending it to more students and also offering a more diversified type of curriculum. Mr. Bingham didn't seem to see it that way. I guess he had been with the old program for so long that he felt, after all, Harvard had been at this a long time and it seemed to be satisfactory so there was no need for a change. The curriculum set up provided opportunities in various sports, but no real corrective type of program, for instance, for students that needed it, and no program of physical fitness. I felt a stronger physical fitness type of program was necessary, and this is where we disagreed. So I resigned and decided to study for my doctoral degree at Harvard. I took a rather long two-day examination and was accepted for it.

Then, in the summertime I went to camp. We had a boy's camp up near Wiscasset, Maine. Then I entered Harvard as a student and I enjoyed it very much because it was right down my field, primarily in tests and measurements, which was really my strong point. We had some really outstanding professors on the faculty for it. Then I was running out of funds and didn't have my degree, so I decided to see about a program in the foreign service and, sure enough, I was offered a job by SCAP, Supreme Command of Allied Powers, to revise and restructure the physical education program in Japan at the elementary, secondary and university levels. I was also given the job as advisor on international and Olympic sports. General MacArthur was very interested in it. I was a member of his staff.

Hodak: This was following World War II?

Neufeld: Yes, this was following World War II. This was in 1948. So, I got ready for it but was told that my wife and child could not go with me at that time because there was not sufficient housing for a family in Tokyo, Japan. So my daughter, Mary, and wife, Esther, stayed in Belmont, which is just outside of Cambridge, while I went on to Japan. They housed me there in what was one of the hotels built for the Olympic Games, which were to be held in Japan in 1940.

Hodak: What were your initial duties once you located in Japan?

Neufeld: My two major duties were revising the program of physical education and to bring Japan back into international sports and the Olympics. The physical education program was highly nationalized. It was a matter of students sacrificing for their nation. Our program was, of course, self-development of the individual. So we had to rewrite all the manuals for the teachers for physical education, in sports, and in school health.

Hodak: So you were consciously attempting to steer their physical education program away from this more militaristic tradition?

Neufeld: Oh, very much so, yes. We only eliminated one sport and that sport was kendo. And I understand they've taken that up again. It was a matter of fighting with bamboo sticks, kind of more like a saber or foil competition. But we allowed all the other sports to continue, including sumo wrestling.

Hodak: Who were some of the people you might have been working with?

Neufeld: Well, Dr. Ryotaro Azuma, the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee, was a physician as well in practice. Then we had many others, some from the newspapers and so on, who were on the Olympic Committee and they were very cooperative. As you know, General MacArthur was president of the United States Olympic Committee at one time and had been active in sports all his life. So he was always very interested in the development of that program. I know that he often received requests for his appearance at various sports events, but he never did go out of his office to speak of. He never accepted any of those engagements, so that request was turned over to me. I would write a speech of acceptance or whatever it was that he was supposed to do and then turn it over to him, and he would rewrite it or make any changes that he thought were necessary, and then I would make the speech.

Hodak: With a translator alongside you?

Neufeld: Oh, yes, always an interpreter. We were forbidden to speak in Japanese. I was not fluent in Japanese, by any means. Some of the others were much more fluent in Japanese, but they were never allowed to make a speech in Japanese because of the criticism that no effective speech could be made unless you were really fluent in Japanese. We did not qualify in that respect. So rather than butcher the language, we relied on interpreters. And when speaking with an interpreter, I found that I spoke one third of the time and my interpreter spoke two-thirds of the time. So it was a matter of trying to explain just what it would be in Japanese, because you just don't have the same words sometimes.

Hodak: Now, on a more general level, before you discuss your work in preparation for the 1952 Games, what did you observe or what would you say about the Japanese response to the American postwar occupation?

Neufeld: They were highly cooperative. They had a number of fears when we first came there, but when they saw that it was primarily to block any possible future wars and to create a real peace and to help the people to recover, they lost this fear. They just were very cooperative in every respect. We tried to discuss changes with the Japanese first, so they might see the reason behind it and do it willingly, and also, so that it could last. If you just dictate changes, chances are they would just drop them again as soon as final peace was declared. So we, at least in education, tried very carefully not to make any changes where they did not understand it, and made changes where they were willing to do it and saw the advantage of it. For instance, like the school boards, it was a highly centralized type of educational program. Everything was centered in Tokyo, but by establishing school boards in all the various prefectures—there are US prefectures in Japan—that diversified and built up the responsibility within the neighborhoods for their schools and their schoolchildren. We also recommended

coeducation in the schools. (They were separated quite early in the school system.) And they agreed to that. I think that is still going on, too. I think the school boards are still going, 40 years later. I went back to Japan nine years later to see what had been going on, and I found that they were pretty much following the program that we had suggested and urged them to carry on.

Hodak: Who approached you about serving as liaison for the 1952 Japanese Olympic team? How did this develop?

Neufeld: Well, the Japanese wrote a letter to General [Matthew B.] Ridgway, who replaced General MacArthur at the time that President Truman called him home. And, incidentally, the Japanese people were very disappointed. They looked at General MacArthur as their emperor. They had looked up to him as a benevolent monarch, so to speak. It was interesting that when he went from his office to his home, which was the ambassador's former home, why, he would have a straight open road all the way there. There would be no intersections for him, all police were notified to stop all traffic so General MacArthur could go directly to his home without interference of any kind. So they were very much disappointed to see him go. Five universities asked that I be retained here and said they would pay the same salary that the United States was paying for me to continue as advisor in Japan. So I considered it, it was approved by Ridgway, but I considered I would have to deal with *yen* totally. They only had *yen*; dollars were hard to get in Japan.

Hodak: At this time, is your family still in Massachusetts?

Neufeld: No. After I came to Japan, nine months later, they came to Japan. We rented a house that had 26 doorways that were all too low for me. So I developed a kind of a ridge around my head, and I had to wear a padding because I sometimes forgot to duck. (laughter) I think you would have had one too if you had been there. Then, they wrote and asked me to serve as liaison officer for their Olympic Team in the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, which Ridgway also

approved, and that's how I was asked to serve as liaison officer for the Japanese Olympic Committee.

Hodak: What did your work as a liaison officer entail?

Neufeld: Actually, it was primarily an honorary duty. The Japanese Olympic Committee was very efficient and knew all the contacts, and all the preparation, of course, was made for the Japanese team well beforehand. I attended meetings occasionally, primarily their social functions, both American and Japanese. At one time the Japanese Olympic Committee came to me and said, "We have here some vaulting poles we'd like to give to the United States Olympic Committee, but we have no way of transporting it to the United States. Can you help us?" So I went down to Yokohama and saw some of the navy captains, using my former navy connection as officer and so on, and asked them if there was any ship that was going to California that could deliver some poles. And the captain of the ship said, "Yes, we can do that, but it's not done usually. You wait until I give you a call, I'll be off the ship at the time, and you deliver the poles and put them in such-and-such a place, and then we'll see that it's delivered." We did and I had it delivered to Brutus Hamilton.

Hodak: Who was still a track coach?

Neufeld: Yes, he was the track coach at California. Of course, this was in 1952. I understand that this fellow [Bob] Richards won the pole vault with one of those poles. Now, I can't vouch for that because I didn't see him, and I didn't recognize the pole because they were all bamboo poles in those days.

Hodak: You did travel to and attend the 1952 Helsinki Games?

Neufeld: Yes. I left Yokohama on a French ship and we stopped in 12 places enroute. We visited Marseilles and stopped there for awhile, bought a car, and then drove up to Copenhagen. My wife liked Denmark so much she decided to stay there and not go to the Olympic Games.

So I went to the Olympic Games. My brother, Henry, and his wife was there and we stayed in the same home. The man with whom we stayed was a starter for the Olympics. He was the principal of the high school there, but he was a starter for the Olympics. Every night we'd come home, why, they'd have a big supper out for us, which was not in the contract. So, at the time that we left, we gave him a silver plaque with an inscription that said, "To the best Olympic host during the 1952 Olympics." I really had a wonderful time.

Hodak: What stands out most in your memory of the 1952 Games?

Neufeld: Well, I attended a lot of sports, not just track and field. And as I recall, there were some arguments in fencing. There always seemed to be some big arguments in fencing. I watched some of the boxing and a lot of the swimming. The United States did very well in the Olympics. The Finnish people were very good hosts. The entire nation learned to speak English for the Olympics, so anytime you walked around the streets of Helsinki and stopped for a moment to look around, someone would come up to you and say, "Can I help you?" And there were so many other functions that they invited you to. Here was a small nation hosting the Olympics, and they made it not just a city's Olympics, the Helsinki Olympics, but an entire nation's Olympics.

Hodak: Following the Helsinki Games, did you have further assignments in Japan?

Neufeld: No, I did not return to Japan. I should mention that we had other assignments. One of my colleagues left, Don Typer, who had an offer for a presidency of a college. He wanted to go, so I took over the youth program of Japan. There were 48 youth officers. We had eight American officers supporting the program. We had 48 offices, and visiting all these offices was quite a job in itself. They had a youth organization that was primarily a matter of all for the nation, sacrificing everything for the nation and so on. And we tried to

change this by having all different kinds of internationally accepted youth organizations, like the Junior Red Cross, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and the YMCA.

Hodak: So you were aligning Japan with international sports movements?

Neufeld: Yes, sports movements as well as the various youth organizations. We had an expert on square dancing on one team. He was very good, and he got all of Japan square dancing. They danced on the hilltops and they danced on seashores, even the royalty danced. One of the princes and his wife specialized in all the square dancing. It was really very interesting how the royalty there supported these sports and youth programs.

Being part of the youth program and physical education program, that, of course, made all the contacts with the universities and colleges, as well as the high schools and elementary schools. General MacArthur felt that there were too many colleges and universities in Japan. Altogether, there were 800 on the islands, in an area not even as big as California. He thought that maybe we should try to get the universities to consolidate and to abolish, or abandon, some of the least effective higher institutions. We had a Dr. Walter Eels, who had written numerous books and was known as the father of junior colleges in California. Don Typer and I were also very active in it. So we arranged 30 conferences with faculty members, administration, and with students, where we brought all three groups together. And ALL the universities would be involved in these 30 meetings. Well, Dr. Eels had his speech, and in it he said the communists on the campus were like a mad dog. Well, everything went well for 25 speeches, but when we got to Sendai, which is north of Tokyo all hell broke loose.

Hodak: In response to the speech?

Neufeld: In response to our speeches. Dr. Eels was the first one to speak. When he got up there some of the students jumped up on the

platform and grabbed the microphone away from him and started yelling. They tried to restore peace and got the mike back again. But they were so noisy that he couldn't speak at all. So that stopped our speeches as well. We then broke up into three divisions and I met with the students. Well, I had some communist students in that group too, but there were only about two or three, and the others threw them out when they started heckling me, and then I was able to hold my conference. It was more of a conference forum, rather than an announced speech. So we finished that one and then we had the final meeting in Sapporo, way up in Hokkaido. There again, they had barricaded the building where we were supposed to go. They broke it down and, again, we had the same problem making speeches. The military in Sendai, when they heard about our problem, immediately telephoned MacArthur. He said for us to go into hiding, and the Marines furnished us a house and our meals and so on. So, we were imprisoned until they caught all the leaders that had been involved.

Hodak: Other than in Sendai and Hokkaido, were there any other disturbances?

Neufeld: No, those were the only two.

Hodak: Where did you go from serving as liaison officer for the 1952 Japanese Olympic Team? What field of work did you pursue following the Olympics in 1952?

Neufeld: Well, I had this assignment in Germany, I was being cleared for it. But the final approval for the appointment didn't come and didn't come.

Hodak: You were being cleared by who?

Neufeld: By the State Department. So, I left for the United States to check on it, but my wife and daughter preferred to stay in Heidelberg, Germany. Mary went to school there and Esther got a job there

with some general. I couldn't get clearance, they said they didn't have all the returns on it yet. So, in the meantime, I got a job as landscape architect, you know, planting various kinds of gardens, mostly for new homes, and providing the shrubs for them. That was with the Jay Morris Company, I think. I enjoyed it. My wife decided not to wait any longer, so after Christmas she came home with Mary. By that time I had negotiated for a job in Iran. I had a friend who was active in it there in the State Department. So they gave me this job recruiting and sending trainees to the United States for further training. That meant faculty members, government officials and so on, all kinds of national and state or provincial officials. Then I was also given the job to work on physical education and work with the Olympic team in Iran. They did not have much of a team, but we worked on it anyway. They did send a token team to the next Olympics, the 1956 Olympics.

Hodak: Did you ever get a sense of what was holding up your clearance for assignment in Germany?

Neufeld: They said that they had sent some requests for clearance to Russia, where we used to live, and they never got any answer; I think that was holding it back primarily. I know they had gotten every clearance from Riverside and Reedley, because friends told me they had been there asking about me and so on. But it was only this other clearance that was lacking—which never came, and hasn't come yet, as far as I know.

The day before we left for Iran, we were told that there was a revolution in Iran and that my wife and my daughter would not be able to come and that they would have to go back to California. We objected strenuously to that kind of planning, and said that if there's something we can do about it she'd travel part of the way. The State Department agreed to this, so they assigned her to Athens because there was a good American school there for my daughter. We stopped at Athens for a few days and then I went on to Iran. Well, I was flying with a professor from Harvard, a geologist, also

going to Iran. And when we came to the landing at the airport, why, we saw all kinds of action going on. There were military people marching, generals running around, ambassadors in their tails and striped pants and high hats, even tanks wheeling. We thought, "My, this is certainly a unique reception we're getting here in Iran." (laughter) When we saw our chief of education, who was there to greet us at the airport, he said, "The reception is not for you, it's for the Shah and the Queen, to greet them." And he said, "The fact is, there's a revolution going on. It took a lot of courage on your part to come here at this time." I said, "Well, I don't feel courageous about it, I'll just take it in stride and see what happens."

Hodak: So the Shah, in effect, had been reinstated?

Neufeld: Yes. [Mohammad] Mossedegh had been imprisoned and the revolution had been waning. There was still some fighting going on in Tehran, as well as in some of the outlying cities. But the majority of the revolution was over. I remember going out to a plantation I was invited by a friend of mine, that was about 15 miles out of Tehran. It was a field where they harvested beets for sugar. So they were entertaining the two of us, we were having lunch, and just as we were about to dive into it we hear a clatter of horses, and this host of ours said, "This must be them." It turned out that they were a group of Nazis on horseback. They all came in, and they saw me and kind of stiffened. They didn't hold a conversation, they were silent, then they started to clean their guns and sharpen their knives. I thought, "Well, if these are Nazis they must be German." So I spoke German to them and that relaxed everything; it seemed that's what they thought. I certainly wasn't a Nazi, but the fact that I spoke German seemed to make them feel more at home. I didn't want to get my host in trouble so I didn't say much—I wasn't about to start anything.

Hodak: What, pray tell, were they doing in Iran in the mid-'50s?

Neufeld: They were hiding out there. Well, I reported it to our director, but I don't know whether anything was done about it or not. I don't recall any follow-up on it. But Iran was a very interesting post. The people were so different and there was so much work to be done to help them. As is the case in any of these foreign aid programs, it was always by invitation. They asked for the people they wanted and we were the guests of that nation and so, consequently, it was a nice relationship.

Iran has about 610 square miles, I think, and it is ringed by mountains. The Elburz Mountains are roughly 12,000 feet high, with one peak at 19,000 feet. It's very mountainous with a very mean desert in the middle. The average rainfall there is about the same as California, around ten inches. But around the Caspian Sea, they have about 40 inches of rain—that's north of the Elburz Mountains. They had a lot of oranges and other citrus fruit there and so on, and were able to raise good crops there. The cities in Iran, except around the Caspian Sea, are usually around the 5,000- to 7,000-foot level. And that's good climate there. So it was very comfortable.

Hodak: And your work in Iran—

Neufeld: I was getting people who needed further training and assigning them to universities in the United States for the specific training that they needed. I think that first year I was on the job we sent about 600 faculty members, administrators, government officials, even graduate students, and also industrial people, engineers. That was my first year. The second year they sent a specialist in that field and I was given the assignment of improving the educational program, the literacy and, particularly, the physical education program.

Hodak: Did you get a sense of what sort of network of sports organizations had existed in Iran up to that time? Certainly they were different sports.

Neufeld: Well, there is an ancient sport called the Ancient Iranian Games. It consists of five different kinds of exercises. The men that specialized in them were professionals; they wore leather pants, for example, with a lot of needlework on them and special shirts. They threw clubs around that weighed about 20 pounds each. Then they had a bow with a string in the form of a chain and the bow was a heavy wrought-iron bow and they had exercised with that. Then they had a board that they did push-ups on both hands or one hand and so on. They were strong men and while they were doing it they would recite prayers. While we were sitting there, they said death to the infidels—and we were infidels, of course. (laughter) The exercises were given in a hall which had small doorways about this high, so you had to climb on your hands and knees in order to get in, and there were seats around the center, which is where the men exercised. Then they had camel races, for example. And they had the racers carrying trays of glassware up on top, and men running with these trays.

Hodak: So you were introducing more conventional, or at least more Western sports?

Neufeld: That is true. That was one of my jobs, to encourage that. They played soccer, but they had no baseball, and very little basketball. We introduced basketball, and I coached basketball there for awhile.

Hodak: In Tehran?

Neufeld: In Tehran, yes. Then we introduced all these games; volleyball, for instance, and also camp sports. One of the problems we had in Iran was that the faculty and the students were miles apart—antagonistic in fact. Twelve years before I came, the Shah was shot by a student who was acting as though he was taking a picture, and he shot the Shah and grazed his cheek. So then they passed a ruling barring student assemblies, and no more than two students could be together at one time; and no students in the libraries, only the professors could give out the knowledge. So they sat on their

books and protected their domain, so to speak. They were the sole distributors of wisdom. So the consequence was that a lot of communist cells were located all around the campus where the students met.

Hodak: It was an outgrowth of this friction?

Neufeld: Yes. We had a small contingent of the military there. The military had a small club up on top of the hills. They were active in military training primarily, not to quell the communists. The Russians came over the northern border. They have something like a 1,500-kilometer border with Russia there. So they had their little cells up in the northern part of Iran, too. They had a system of using toilets to flush any literature that they had in case the police came to inspect them. Then they had a collection of the literature there in their room next to the Boy Scout office, which I was given a key to. But I couldn't read Farsi so it really didn't mean anything to me. There was quite a bit of this going on.

One of the first things we did was to recommend that they open the libraries so the students could use them. We set up a camp where we could get the faculty and students together; faculty serving as counselors, in a leadership capacity. And we had to find a camp, so we visited the likely places, the three of us, two Iranians and I. We located this place on the Caspian Sea and thought this was ideal. Here was a beautiful sandy beach with the mountains in the background. There was an open field there where we could have sports events and pitch our tents and so on. So, with the United States funds, we bought 65 Sears and Roebuck tents. They were big enough for about four campers. Then, with Iranian and United States money, we built a kitchen and kind of an outdoor dining room. Then we invited the Shah and he came up. We invited students from many countries, and 12 countries were represented there, four of them from Cornell University. It was a very good session because it brought at least some of the faculty and students together and they found that they were both human beings. The

Shah was very good. He went swimming with the students, he talked with the students, he ate with the students, and played some games. So, it was a very worthwhile session.

So the next year we decided we'd start with the girls. Well, it was announced in the newspapers that there would be a camp for girls. Then all hell broke loose. The mullahs came running to the prime minister, even to the Shah, and objected to girls leaving their homes: "How can you possibly expose them to the world when they're not ready? To the wicked man's world that will take advantage of them. You can't possibly do it." The prime minister said, "We are going to do it. What do you object to?" They said, "Well, we understand that they swim in bathing suits and that they wear shorts. Well, at least we can't have them take any pictures of the girls in that condition." They agreed to that and then said that we couldn't have any men coming into the camp, and we agreed to that. So they decided to build a high wall and have soldiers marching around it day and night—no men admitted, not even the Shah. They also insisted that an American woman take charge—they didn't trust any of their Iranian woman to do the job—so we had to find a woman for that who had a lot of camp experience, and she was made head director of the camp.

So my wife served as a counselor and my daughter Mary came as a camper. She was the youngest camper in the group. And everything was done as they requested. Oh, they also said, we must send their servants with them. Well, we couldn't have that because we wanted to teach them self-sufficiency and independence, and here you are just making them dependent again, just as they are in the home. So they agreed to that. The camp was very successful and gradually, after a couple of years, the fence was torn down and men were allowed in the camp. And the Mullahs were invited to speak to them.

Hodak: So they slowly gradually accepted the ideas that you had promoted? You mentioned the Boy Scouts—

Neufeld: Yes, but the thing was that they were very militaristic in their Boy Scouts. It was more like the Hitler Youth in Germany, where they tried to train them in early life. So the Boy Scout program had to be revised considerably in order to get rid of that aspect of it.

Hodak: That parallels, in a sense, what you were doing in Japan too.

Neufeld: Yes, and it worked fine. We had no objection to that, military or anybody else.

Hodak: When did you leave Iran?

Neufeld: Well, I was transferred to Taiwan in February, 1958.

Hodak: And were you given a specific assignment in Taiwan?

Neufeld: Yes. Vice President Nixon at that time suggested that the Chinese students from all over the world who had formerly been going to universities on the mainland be transferred—that is, students leaving the mainland—to Taiwan.

Hodak: So these were students from the People's Republic of China?

Neufeld: These were students from many nations, including the United States, who had left mainland China. So we invited them and had some 40 nations represented in this group. The United States helped build a new university. There were 32 universities on the island of Taiwan. To promote this program and to send them back as leaders of the Chinese people in those various areas was part of the job. Then I worked with the universities; they needed libraries, they needed a lot of scientific equipment, the science building, and dormitories for this program, because we had 12,000 students coming to that little island. I had a couple of American assistants on my staff; one was a library specialist and one was a student activity specialist. So that helped with a Chinese staff as well.

Hodak: Were you working with sports organizations or the physical education curriculum?

Neufeld: Yes. I worked with the Olympic Committee in China and we had two outstanding athletes there. One was "Ironman" C.K. Yang, who later transferred to UCLA and then took second in the Olympics in the decathlon. He also at one time held the world's record in the pole vault.

Then the other athlete was Chi Cheng, a hurdler and a sprinter who won the bronze medal in the 80-meter hurdles in the 1968 Olympics. I started her in sports and I could see that she was just a natural athlete but was very sensitive. Any time I made a recommendation she would burst into tears. That kind of worried me as to how to tackle that, so I would always preface each remark with a commendation of some kind, "Now, if we just do this a little differently or something." Then I brought my daughter in. She liked track and field; she high jumped and broad jumped and sprinted. Between the two of them, we got along fine. She wasn't by any means a champion at the time that I left, she was just beginning. But "Ironman" was a good athlete when he left China. He was good for 21 feet 8 inches or so in the broad jump, he was vaulting around 14 or 15 feet, he was a pretty good high jumper, and he threw the weights. So he was a natural for the decathlon.

Hodak: I'd like to interrupt a bit. I'd feel remiss if we didn't mention your son. Bill Jr., who was an athlete at the University of California. Talk a bit about your son's development as an athlete?

Neufeld: Well, he loved athletics; he didn't pay much attention to the studies. He played quarterback on the high school team in Concord, California. Then he went to Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo. He was quarterback there, and I don't know that he did much in track and field. He stayed there for his freshman year, and then he joined the Marines and served in the Korean War, in anti-demolition. After three years there, he was there at the signing of the peace

treaty. He was one of the guards appointed for this job. Then he came back and attended the University of California. He turned out to be an excellent student. Of course, he concentrated on track and field, but he also was on the boxing and weightlifting teams. I told him to lay off of boxing because he was going to knock his brains out and he wouldn't be too much of a student. So he did concentrate on track and field; the javelin, the pole vault, and the hurdles—which is not a very likely combination. That's not usually the combination; usually the combination is a weight man or a sprinter or a jumper. So, he was elected captain in his senior year and was considered as a Rhodes Scholar at that time. But he was told that he was too old, that they would not accept Rhodes Scholars over 26 years old. (He was 27 at the time.) He beat my distance in the javelin by a considerable distance and he made a very good captain, I understand from Brutus. Brutus took him under his wing and they had kind of a father-and-son relationship there.

Hodak: And Brutus Hamilton coached for sometime at California.

Neufeld: Oh, indeed he did. He coached well over 20 years. He was also Dean of Men for awhile at the university and also the director of athletics.

Hodak: Let's return to your work in the State Department. So you're in Taiwan in the late 1950s. Where do you go from there?

Neufeld: Well I was in Taiwan a little over three years and they asked me to go to Quemoy to review the schools there. That is the island that is right in the harbor of Amoy. So, the Chinese were bombarding that island every other day, the uneven days of the month. Well, the island commander said to the Chinese, "If you do this, we're going to bomb Amoy and we can do far more damage than you can on these islands." So they said, "What shall we do?" Well, since you are committed to bombarding us, put your shells in this particular watermelon patch." They told them where to put them. When I was there on the uneven day, I wondered why people weren't running

for the bomb shelters. They told me about this arrangement they had with the mainland Chinese and, consequently, nobody feared any event. I only stayed there three days because there were only a few schools there. A couple of them were underground . . . everything was very neat underground, with schoolbooks and their clothes, students actually lived there. You see, no women were allowed on Quemoy except a few prostitutes, but I won't go into that. When we flew in, we came down low, almost to water level, and we flew right into a cave. That was the protection they used when they were bombing other parts of the island as well.

Hodak: A pretty fortified environment all the way around. So you were there on Quemoy just for a very brief period?

Neufeld: Yes, for a brief period, long enough to watch a wedding. The bride was allowed on the island and they had the wedding there at Quemoy. He was a hero; I think he had swam across the channel from the mainland down to the island to escape and join forces with this group.

Hodak: So what was your next assignment within the State Department?

Neufeld: Well, they asked for volunteers to go to Africa. We hadn't been in Africa and we visualized the assignment to Kenya or one of the eastern countries or colonies. So I said, "I can't have my daughter there because they don't have schools that are fit for her situation." And they said, "Well, why don't you leave her in Switzerland?" So we asked a national school in Geneva to accept us and they said no, they were filled up. So, we went to Switzerland anyway and found an opening there, and we placed her in the home of the vice-principal of the school. He was an Englishman. She was very, very happy there. She loved it so much that she went back later on and taught drama and English for two years. We went on to Liberia after we had taken some courses at Boston University for adult education.

Hodak: In preparation for your assignment?

Neufeld: Yes, in preparation for my new assignment and about Africa in general, which helped me a great deal. So we landed at the airport, which was on the Firestone plantation, one of the three major tire companies that had rubber plantations there. We were met there, of course, by our chief and then we tried to find a place to live, which was pretty difficult.

To get a clearer picture of the whole situation, I think I better mention a few points about Liberia as a country. It has a million and a half people and they were divided into 26 different tribes. It was the American freed and escaped slaves who were really the controlling and governing group. They settled along the coast back in 1821. I think it was officially made a country in 1943. The fact that they had 26 different languages or dialects made it difficult to have any kind of good communication. So United States money was used, and English was made the official language. It is a very rainy country. It rains for five months and is dry for seven. But it rains 220 inches a year, that makes it a very sultry country; lots of malaria and lots of leprosy in that country. I think the rates are the highest in the world for leprosy. The conditions in Liberia were very, very primitive. You had to be very careful not to get sick.

The job that I had was in adult education but it wasn't very long before I got additional jobs, like working with the three higher education institutions; one university, two colleges and a teacher-training program. We were told to make Liberia the window of Africa that would be an example for other African countries to follow. So, it was a matter of education, and a matter of developing a good economy. It did have some resources. It had mountains of iron ore which were 70 percent pure ore. And it had three major plantations, Firestone, Goodyear, and Goodrich. We set up a 10-year program in education and had all the details worked out, and about a year or so later it was announced that the funds were limited and that we would have to cut way back. This presented a

real difficulty because we had already worked with the country and they knew what funds we had promised and, consequently, my chief of education worked all night long trying to get reorganized and reestablished. And it finally drove him crazy, and he died soon afterwards because of this particular problem.

We had such a primitive situation in education. There were a lot of schools in the country that the ministry didn't know about. Some teachers were being paid that had died years ago. There were no books. Some of the teachers had only a three-year education—and here they became teachers. We had all these problems to face and we felt it demanded a really solid review of what was going on in the country. In 1963 we formed 14 parties; there would be one American in each of the parties to make a survey of a certain county or territory. Two Liberians, one from the ministry and one of the local supervisors, would make the survey of the schools, the books, the teachers, other facilities, grounds, gardens, kitchens, and so on.

I chose the most difficult territory to go into, which was in the eastern part of Liberia. There were no roads in there. We had to land by plane on a strip that belonged to a mission. When we arrived, there was nobody there to see us. The town was about two miles away. Finally, two hours later a truck came and we started back. The driver had to close his shop because there were four vehicles in that whole territory and two of them didn't work. The roads were very, very . . . well, you couldn't call them roads. They were trails or paths. There was a group of boys on the truck and they started singing, and I asked them, "Can you sing any English songs?" And they said, "We are singing in English." It just shows how changed the English language was in that area, the speaking language. We were housed in the so-called governor's mansion. I had difficulty with my two Liberian friends who were my associates in this survey endeavor. They didn't want to go in because we had to do it all by hiking, trekking. There were no roads in this area that we were covering. So, one night our man

didn't show up. I waited for him, but he didn't show up. The next morning, the wife of the governor of that territory said that he had a serious accident, that he fell out of the second-floor window. I asked the soldier who was marching around that house day and night if he saw anybody fall out of the window. He said no, but he did see him come in supported by two men, and he was evidently intoxicated. Well, I got a nurse from the mission and we taped him up, taped up his back. It was, obviously, a way for him to get out of going on this trip to the interior. The other one claimed he had a pulled groin, so we taped him up and gave him some pills, too.

So we finally made the trip. We had to cross the River Cess, which was about half a mile across, in a dugout canoe, where we packed all our blankets, our cooking utensils and our food. There were supposed to be head carriers on the other side to carry all of our equipment and supplies. There was only one that finally showed up. It seemed that others had used these head carriers but had failed to pay them the 50 cents a day that they were supposed to get. So they decided to skip it. Well, we had to carry our own stuff this time, and it was a three-mile trip to the village. After that, we raised the rate to 75 cents, and we made a public presentation of the money in the village so everybody could see that they were paid. After that, we had all kinds of volunteers, more than we could handle or use. They carried the stuff on their heads; they have a pad for their head and they carried the baggage.

In my territory, I got a list of ten schools, five of them were not in existence, but there were ten others that were in existence that they didn't know about. And the one school we visited didn't have a single book, they just had an alphabet and a number chart from which the teacher kept teaching these students. And we found that the supervisor had kept all these books that had been supplied by the United States in his closets and demanded pay for them, which was not part of the program. Anyway, we found that some teachers had not been paid for a couple of years. Their pay was 25 dollars a year.

Hodak: So what, ultimately, would you view as the State Department's contribution? Was it simply upgrading and modernizing the educational system?

Neufeld: Well, they had a law that all children 14 and under should attend school. But, they didn't have the schools or teachers for it. So, of course, building schools became one of my additional projects. We had funds for 20 new six-room schools. Actually, I'm not an engineer, so I didn't know about the construction itself. But we had 300 Peace Corps volunteers come to Liberia and they had some engineers. They were a fine group. I tried to work as closely as possible with them because they could install the pumps, for instance, and they could supervise the building of kitchens for the schools. The youngsters were not getting enough food. They built clinics, they taught them about agriculture. They had the scratch method of planting rice. They would burn the brush and cut it down and then they would scatter rice over that area.

As far as sports are concerned, Liberia and most of the African countries are way behind in using it as a tool for physical fitness. In the teacher training institutes—we had three of them built and faculty and administration people were trained and appointed—we introduced physical education programs at these institutions. They were mostly soccer, basketball, softball, and track and field. They seemed to like to introduce some marching also, using it as a facility for moving from one classroom to another. But that didn't stand up very well. I tried to coach a basketball team in Liberia. We had only an outdoor facility and it was a clay court. The baskets were the old-fashioned type that we used some 60-70 years ago. That is the best we could do in basketball. Trying to develop an Olympic team was a very haphazard task, and the only outstanding athlete was a discus thrower. Where they got the discus, I don't know, but they had a discus. One student could bring it up to around 140 feet, which was not so bad at that time, but certainly not Olympic caliber.

Hodak: But Liberia did have an Olympic team?

Neufeld: They sent a token team in 1964, I believe. I think there were one or two athletes, a flag carrier, and a couple of officials representing the Olympic Committee.

Hodak: More of a symbolic representation.

Neufeld: Yes, just on the hopes that it would develop.

Hodak: Did you, by chance, attend the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo?

Neufeld: No, I had plans to go because that was my old stomping grounds for about four years, but I couldn't make it. I got too involved in all these surveys and training programs. The fact is, after I had been given that one assignment of adult education, I finally finished up with six different assignments. That seems to be a tendency of foreign service. Somebody's got to do the job, so often the positions can't be filled because they can't find the right candidate. So I worked with the universities, I worked with the building of schools. We also had a cooperative effort where we provided the material, equipment and so on but they provided the building and the local material available. It was a very, very interesting job but it was also very time-consuming, traveling and working with the Peace Corps people in all their various activities. They lived in a very primitive situation. But they were a very dedicated group. I certainly enjoyed working with the Peace Corps, and I think Jack Kennedy made a very good contribution. At that time there were 70 countries that had Peace Corps groups, volunteers.

Hodak: Where was your next assignment?

Neufeld: After finishing our two tours in Liberia, I had made contact, in a conference for adult educators in Rome, with American members of the Office of Education and they offered me a job, in case I finished my foreign service, with the office of education. So, in going back.

we took eight months of vacation because we were kind of run down because of the climate in Liberia. Then I accepted that job as a regional director of adult education in one of the regional offices in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Hodak: So you assumed those responsibilities in 1965?

Neufeld: No, it was in 1966 that we moved from Washington to Charlottesville. We had seven states, I believe, and Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands within our region. It involved a lot of travel and working primarily with universities. In each state, there was one university appointed as an agency in that particular state.

Hodak: And these institutions didn't have a particularly long tradition of adult education?

Neufeld: This was not so much the adult education per se; that is, teaching reading, writing and so on. It was special training for groups of teachers, or people who wanted to set up day-care centers; sometimes for doctors, sometimes for lab technicians and so on. They supplied us with the plans that they had for this special training they felt was urgently needed in their area, and then each state selected what they considered the best. The universities had to fund two-thirds of it and the federal government provided one-third the cost of this training.

Hodak: Did any of your work at this time tie into sports in any particular field?

Neufeld: No, that didn't tie in to sports as such. My next contact with the Olympics was my going to the Mexico Olympics in 1968.

Hodak: I think that merits some discussion.

Neufeld: The highlight was when Bob Beamon broke the world's record in the broad jump, with a jump of 29 feet 2-and-a-half inches. I was

sitting right there. When it was announced, he just knelt down and kissed the earth, beat it with his hands, and then jumped up again. They kept measuring again, they wanted to see his shoes, how they fitted on that board. It was so close that they took 10 or 15 minutes to make it official.

Hodak: What were they measuring, other than the distance?

Neufeld: To see if he had stepped over the board. And the wind there—there was a slight wind—they had to check on that.

Hodak: And the officials were pretty incredulous over the distance?

Neufeld: Oh, yes. It was so far ahead of any record at that time. The altitude, 7,200 feet, also helped the situation.

Hodak: Even given the altitude, it doesn't take away from that record.

Neufeld: It's still recognized as the world's record and hasn't been beaten since. This was in 1968 and here it is 20 years later. Then it started to rain soon afterwards, so that negated any further records. It didn't rain heavily, but it did rain.

Hodak: Any other events that you witnessed?

Neufeld: Well, we stayed with a Mexican family. He was an official with the government there in Mexico City. We always enjoyed staying with families at Olympic Games in order to get a more natural contact with the people, rather than staying at a hotel. They were so very nice, they always waited up for us to report what we had experienced that particular day and so on.

Hodak: Are there other things that stand out in your mind regarding the Mexico City Olympics?

Neufeld: Well, there was a little student riot.

Hodak: How disruptive were they of the Games?

Neufeld: They did not interfere with our enjoying the Olympics. We really didn't see any riots, though it was certainly in the papers a lot. The students were evidently objecting to the funds used for the Olympics, where they felt they should have been used for students who were too poor to attend college and had difficulty making a living.

Hodak: This wasn't the first case of political issues entering into the Olympic Games, but one of the more controversial Olympics, certainly. What was your response, or what was the overall reaction to the demonstration on the part of John Carlos and Tommie Smith?

Neufeld: Those two boys were on the stands and raised their gloved fists. Then there was kind of a hush. I think people were stunned by this demonstration. I couldn't see what they hoped to achieve by doing it. The Americans certainly reacted very definitely against it.

Hodak: You mean the Americans in attendance, as well as the other athletes?

Neufeld: Yes. So they got very little support and the officials took immediate measures, as I recall, in quelling any further demonstrations and dealt pretty harshly with the two athletes, who had no business introducing politics into the Olympics. We were already having too much of it as it was. It's like the Moscow Olympics and the United States 1984 Olympics—it just has no place.

Hodak: I know that Avery Brundage followed de Coubertin's ideal in trying to separate politics from sports. I imagine he was somewhat aroused by the demonstration.

Neufeld: Very much so. He was very strong on that point. He stressed amateurism and non-politics in promoting the Olympic Games.

Hodak: Did you attend other events?

Neufeld: I attended basketball, swimming, gymnastics, and I think I saw one soccer game. But I enjoyed the Olympics very much. Mexico did all it could to make us welcome. It was very unique, and actually every Olympic Games is unique. I've been to six Olympics now, I guess.

Hodak: Counting the 1984 Games?

Neufeld: Yes.

Hodak: What would you remark about the progress of the Olympic Movement?

Neufeld: The interest is spreading, and I guess there's a limit. There were 140 nations in the 1984 Olympics. And I have a feeling that if we continue to add sports and make it more complicated, we may become overloaded and suffer from the sheer weight of complexities in various sports. I think maybe we should be more careful in the selection of additional sports, or possibly eliminate some that do not carry such broad interest among nations.

Hodak: This is something I think we should pick up later. Talk a bit about your work from 1968 on. Do you continue to work in Charlottesville?

Neufeld: I started working with the office of education in 1966. They moved our office to Philadelphia in 1969, so we moved to Philadelphia, and I carried on for another year and a half there and then retired. I retired back to Charlottesville, where we had our home at that time. I did work with the University of Virginia in several aspects; one was to teach relaxation to athletes at the University.

Hodak: What was your work based on, prior research that you had worked on?

Neufeld: Well, we used the system that we used in the naval air program. This was particularly effective in sports there during the naval air

program. It also helped many of the pilots in sleeping more effectively, and helped in their academic work too. This is being used much more broadly in universities and colleges than ever before, and I'm sure, since there were some two or three hundred officers there who were coaches in various universities and other institutions, it is used extensively in coaching sports.

Hodak: Were you providing input to the athletic department at the University of Virginia? Were you coordinating or helping implement this type of therapy?

Neufeld: Well, coaches of various sports send students there for this particular training. I think I had about 30 in the class—that's about as much as I could handle. Then I also officiated at all the track meets at the university and worked on an advisory committee as a consultant to the university in the program which I had previously participated—the adult education aspect of it—reviewing various projects that had been proposed by the universities and colleges in Virginia. So I kept pretty active. We like to travel, we like gardening, I enjoy golf, and then these other activities kept me pretty busy. I was doing quite a bit of writing so I had no problems about being bored by retirement.

Hodak: I'm curious as to what sports you might have kept active in through the years following your track career.

Neufeld: Well, I've done a lot of swimming, I've played tennis, I've played handball, racquetball and, of late, it's been primarily golf.

Hodak: You were able to keep in good physical shape through the years.

Neufeld: Oh, yes. I did exercises just stretching and warm-up exercises every morning, but it was just a matter of five or ten minutes. I feel better and I enjoy life more if I keep physically fit. I get kind of lazy if I don't.

Hodak: I'd like to have you talk a bit about the reunion of 1924 athletes that you arranged in 1984.

Neufeld: Well, I attended six different Olympic Games, '24, '32, '36, '52, '68 and '84. We had tickets, that is, my two daughters and a grandson and I had tickets for the Moscow Olympics, but because of the edict by President Carter we didn't go. We still haven't gotten all our money back from it. I think some of it is located in Moscow now. I noticed that we, as athletes, who were good friends during the Olympics had never gotten together. What better time is there than in preparation or during the period before the Olympics? So, I had married back in 1982 again, and my wife was very happy about having a luncheon for a group of athletes, so I proceeded to write. I had this list from the Olympic Committee, with addresses of athletes of that 1924 period. So I sent letters to about 50 different ones in Southern California that I understood were still living. And I got a few replies, but not as many as I had expected, because some had died, others were in the hospital, and some felt they were too far away for the trip.

But we did get a few athletes for our reunion, and altogether there were 24 of us in the party to a sit down luncheon. There was Mort Kaer, for instance, who competed in the pentathlon and was also a USC running back. And then there was Doris O'Mara Murphy, she was an outstanding swimmer at the time. And then Mike Fekete, who was from Hungary, a 10,000-meter racewalker. And there was Russell Vis, he competed in wrestling. And those were the actual athletes that came from the 1924 Games. We had others that were so very welcome that we invited, like John Argue; his father had died but John, who was very instrumental in bringing the Olympics to Los Angeles, came and he brought a lot of Bill Henry's books with him to distribute among those present. And his mother came. Cliff's wife. So, they were very welcome and made a fine addition to our party. Then there was Pat Henry [Yeomans]. She brought some material she had gathered. She is now supplementing and adding to her father's book on the history of the Olympic Games. She has

done a lot of work and is vitally interested in the Olympics and had been very active in this respect. That, in essence, is the story of our particular reunion, I feel that there should be more because it was very interesting, it brought us together in a common interest. And it seems to me this should be a part of the Olympics really, where all the various people in the different Games have their reunion. It's a lot of fun and I think it's a very worthwhile activity. So much for the reunion.

Hodak: Did you do any work on the Spirit Team, or any other work in advance of the 1984 Games in Los Angeles?

Neufeld: Yes, I was asked to be a member of the Spirit Team, whose job was to talk to various clubs, to churches, to high schools, and develop an interest in the Games. And as I recall, I spoke on at least 25 different occasions visiting high schools and elementary schools, and to Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, even outside of Riverside quite a ways. I enjoyed it very much because the response was excellent and I feel maybe I did my little bit there. I was also asked to serve as an interpreter for the German contingent, both West and East Germany, because my second language is German. But that would have required my full time during the 16 days of the Olympics, so I turned that down.

Hodak: You mean you would have been unable to attend many of the events?

Neufeld: That would keep me from the Olympics and we, both Doris and I, were too interested in seeing the Olympics. There wasn't a day that we didn't watch the Olympics. We went into Los Angeles five different times seeing volleyball, gymnastics, basketball, and track and field. We thoroughly enjoyed it. I think that Peter Ueberroth did a really outstanding and amazing job of preparing and managing the Olympics, I think he had a good staff, I met several of them as well. And some thought they did it a little too commercially, but I didn't think that was the case. It was only in some cases, you just have to be that way about it if you want to raise the money and do

it in a top-level fashion, as California is used to doing anyway.

Hodak: And the money that was raised was used for the right purpose.

Neufeld: The money raised is used for training youths and helping youth programs all over the country, particularly in Southern California.

Hodak: As well as helping the United States Olympic Committee.

Neufeld: Yes, indeed. And I think it's involved in this project, isn't it?

Hodak: Yes, through the Amateur Athletic Foundation.

Neufeld: But I can't say enough about the work and the ability of Peter Ueberroth and his staff. Doris' daughter, for instance, worked in the Olympic headquarters there near UCLA. A daughter of ours. Patsy Hollister, drove in from La Habra, where their home is, to UCLA every day and worked I don't know how many thousands of hours or whatever. She was certainly an enthusiastic booster.

Hodak: Do you have plans for attending the 1988 Games?

Neufeld: Yes, we are planning to go to the Seoul, Korea, for the 1988 Olympics. We talked to some representatives of Korea; one of them was an advisor to the president and he assured us that they would have many homes available for guests. And that's what we prefer, to live with families, because we feel we'll get to know the Koreans, and it brings us so much closer to the Olympic Games, as well as to the people of Korea; rather than staying in some hotel where all or most of them are Americans. We see all of the Americans we need to right where we are in Southern California. So we have friends who want to go with us and I have made detailed arrangements, but I imagine we'll have to go into action pretty soon.

Hodak: Now I'd like to shift gears a bit and have you talk on a more general and summary level about changes you've witnessed in the

Olympic Movement and in the Games themselves. First of all, you could talk some more about what you've seen in the evolution in the Olympic Movement.

Neufeld: Well, it's certainly been quite an evolution since the time of the Greeks.

Hodak: Well, yes, I mean the modern movement.

Neufeld: (Laughter) Okay, the modern movement. Why, even there, tremendous changes have taken place since 1924 to '84, in a matter of 60 years. Take the events, for example, they have changed tremendously. They used to have standing high jump, standing broad jump, tennis, the pentathlon, and many other events. The first time they had the Winter Olympics was in 1924. Now there have been so many new events added. And I don't know what all is coming, but it's hard for me to keep up. Now they have different events farmed out to many neighboring towns and even villages. That requires a really rather stupendous effort, and most of the cities, unless they have considerable equipment and facilities available, can't afford to put them on. I hope they don't enlarge anymore. Maybe they can drop some of these events that are not so international in scope; that is, in the interest of the public as well as the competition itself, so that we can stabilize them a little more.

Then you take the individual instruments used on the site. For example, the javelin used to be an old hickory stick that flopped like a crow; now they have aluminum or steel shafts that have very little quiver. You can put your power behind it much more accurately and efficiently. And take the pole vault, for instance, now it's getting to be a gymnastic event almost. I remember they used hickory poles in the early days, and then the big improvement came when they used bamboo poles, but they don't give you anywhere near the lift that the present fiberglass poles give you.

Hodak: Certainly the overall process of the selection or tryouts is vastly

different today.

Neufeld: Now they look at athletes a year or two in advance and spot them and provide special training and special coaching for them. They are much more careful in selection. In my day, many of the athletes used to be picked from the various athletic clubs, like the Los Angeles Athletic Club and the Olympic Club in San Francisco. They provided coaching and the support and paid the expenses of going to the tryouts. Today, the Olympic Games are handled in a more evenhanded way so that all athletes all over the United States have a chance if they show the talents and abilities to compete in this top level of competition. It's a different story in the universities, where they have far better coaching than they ever had; and this is in hundreds of universities, not just a few like we had at our time.

I think most of the developments are all for the good, but ! don't like certain developments, like politics creeping into it and bringing more and more pressure on whether the athletes should compete because of different ideologies or other policies that have nothing to do with athletics. There is some talk about professionals being admitted; once you let the bars down the professionals will take over, and it will change the entire movement. I hate to see it happen here, but there seems to be a little tendency in that direction.

Hodak: I sense that with tennis, in particular.

Neufeld: They say it's needed because they want to see the very best athletes. I don't think that's so important I don't think that winning is the only thing in the Olympic Games, it's the participation. That's been repeatedly said by de Coubertin and Avery Brundage and many other outstanding authorities in sports.

Hodak: As a matter of fact, Brundage was highly critical of tabulating scores along national lines.

Neufeld: That was a media action, that was not from the Olympics. Each event is an individual event and we don't want to bring in antagonism between nations by keeping so-called team scores. And, actually, it's not a fair scoring system anyway, because they put equal emphasis on one minor sport against one major sport which has maybe a dozen or so team members on it. So I don't like to see it myself. To me, the Greek method of holding the Olympics placed the emphasis on peace. Wars were supposed to be set aside during the time of the Olympics so that people could travel freely to the Olympic Games from the various little kingdoms all over Greece. That always has left a great impression on me. It seems to me that we should really continue to emphasize that in some form or other. When we had our Olympics in 1924, we were housed at Chateau de Rocquencourt, as I think I explained earlier. But we were separated from athletes of other nations. I like the idea of housing athletes together so many nations are brought together. For example, in Mexico at the 1968 Olympics, we were traveling in a bus and were going to our home with a Mexican family. There were Russians, Norwegians, quite a number of countries represented on that bus. Before you knew it we were all talking; some of them knew a little English, and some spoke in Russian through an interpreter. But we were having a wonderful time. It didn't take any time at all to establish a rapport in that group. It was a lot of fun for me. I thought this was a way of representing the essence of the Olympics—or at least one of them. And I think the Olympic Village is one important factor in making the Olympics a success. This is just one of the improvements, I think, that developed over the years.

Hodak: What have you seen in terms of the difference of the amateur athlete today, as defined by today's standards, and the amateur athlete of your time? Do you see a big difference? Do you see athletes taking up sports for different reasons.

Neufeld: Well, I think there is a little bit of that coming in because athletes are being paid. Well, they keep their amateur status by putting the

money in the bank until they retire from amateur sports. Then they have a nice little pile of money.

Hodak: Some athletes—

Neufeld: Just a few athletes. There is a touch of that there.

Hodak: At the same time, there are a number of athletes who really struggle in order to juggle their professional work and their training.

Neufeld: I think those should be helped in some way, their expenses and so on should be paid. They should not have to be deprived from competing in the Olympics because they had no way of getting any coaching or getting any chance to compete. It may seem a fine line, but I think it can be carefully drawn. I believe the various nations should get together more on this particular point and really agree on what is an amateur athlete and stick by it; not just allow each country to have their own little system. It just doesn't give everybody an equal chance that way.

Hodak: Do you have further thoughts on the Olympic Movement?

Neufeld: Well, it just seems to me that one of the goals is to promote better international relations and this is being destroyed by the intrusion of political issues and pressures that really shouldn't have anything to do with the Olympic Games. It's an ideal we should keep clear and encourage among the athletes. I liked the way General MacArthur said to us on board ship, "Remember, you are the ambassadors of the United States." It meant a lot to me. It meant that we were supposed to be really on our best behavior so that people from other countries could feel, "Well, there's a good citizen of that nation." I hope that this is encouraged among the Olympic athletes right from the beginning.

Hodak: And you have thoughts on the issue of boycotts of Olympic Games?

Neufeld: Well, I feel very strongly about that. I feel that as soon as we start letting political issues in—and we always have an abundance of them—we start interfering with the Olympic Games and the best interests of the athletes. It's kind of a boomerang, in a sense. I bought tickets and paid for all my expenses and housing and so on for the 1980 Olympics. Well, I don't resent the money I lost, but I do resent the fact that we were told to stay home because there wouldn't be any United States team for us. I certainly think that the external pressures of economics and politics and so on should not interfere with the Olympics.

Hodak: Talk a bit in general about what sports and athletic competition has meant to you.

Neufeld: Well, sports have always meant a lot to me; maybe sometimes I overindulge myself in watching sports, but my wife doesn't seem to interfere or bother with it because she enjoys sports herself. And it has meant a lot to me as far as health conditions. Sports, the Olympic Games included, have definitely established healthy habits for me. I never had any problem with smoking or drinking and so on. I think it's definitely helped me to enjoy better health. Then, the friendships made; I'm sorry I haven't kept in touch with many athletes, but I've been keeping in touch locally with the Southern California athletes, to some extent. So I think that's of great value to me. I think the whole attitude developed in the Olympic Games, and in connection with the Games, has a tendency to keep your goals just a little higher than they'd normally be. And I think it's also reflected in my children and grandchildren. I think it has helped in that way.

Hodak: And the value of competition itself?

Neufeld: Yes, I think competition does several things for you; it helps to make friends, that's true, but it also helps to build up self-confidence in yourself. I think you develop a certain self-respect because you know you can do it. And it gives you a

certain amount of pride to be able to achieve it. I think that a person should have pride and self-worth so things don't bother you and don't throw you for a loss. There are so many ways that the Olympics and sports in general have given me a great stake in living.

Hodak: And you certainly have seen a change in women's sports over the years.

Neufeld: Yes, I have. I had another interesting experience while I was coaching at Harvard. I worked in the summertime as a counselor and later on as a director of a boys' camp. After working at that camp, I worked another three weeks at a camp sponsored by Boston University. I coached track and field and other sports, some which we added. And the girls enjoyed the sports very much. Then the head of the camp died and a new man came into power. Well, he decided that track and field and my other sports were not proper for ladies and consequently he dropped them off the schedule. So, that was the end of my job at that camp. I've always felt that as long as it develops good health in women, why should we worry whether they run two miles, 150 yards, or whatever.

Hodak: I think a lot of the medical rationales for not allowing women to compete have been shown to be completely foolhardy, at best.

Neufeld: Yes, certainly erroneous.

Hodak: You mentioned off tape that you stayed in a room that Helen Stephens had stayed in after the 1936 Games?

Neufeld: After the 1936 Olympics, I had signed up for a two-week summer session that was to be held in Berlin using the Olympic facilities. And I suddenly found that I was assigned a room where Helen Stephens stayed during the Games. During the Games, Helen was really an outstanding sprinter. And of course she won her event. Then, it was questioned whether she was a man or a woman, so she was

given a very thorough physical exam by I don't know how many doctors in order to check up on her. They finally decided that she was a woman and was an authentic member of the American Olympic Team.

Hodak: You mentioned Avery Brundage. Did you ever meet Avery Brundage through your work in the Olympics?

Neufeld: I didn't during the Berlin Olympics. I met him twice; once in Iran when he came there for a world weightlifting championship. He traveled around quite a bit and had quite an interest in antiques. I saw him frequently there. He met the Shah and they exchanged interests and discussed a few topics. The second time I met Avery Brundage was in Helsinki at the Olympics, where I was assigned the position of liaison officer for the Japanese Olympic team.

Hodak: How did Brundage strike you? Certainly he left his impact on the Olympic Movement.

Neufeld: Yes, he did. He was, in a way, like MacArthur. He had his definite ideas and he was sticking with it. He was a kind of driving force that was bound and determined to stick with his policies, particularly regarding amateurism and commercialism. I think he was a good influence on sports; although some people don't think so, that he was holding things back and not allowing development. I think that in the long-run he was effective and he left an imprint that is still there.

Hodak: Mr. Neufeld, we've covered quite a bit today, in the way of general issues. Do you have any concluding thoughts to offer?

Neufeld: Well, I'd just like to mention that I've enjoyed these sessions with you, George. I appreciate the work that you're doing because I feel that this brings the Olympics to the front in a totally different aspect, a totally different appreciation than just the ordinary Olympic report that is published by the officials. The real center of

the Olympics is the athletes. It seems there should be a presentation of the athletes, their thoughts, experiences and so on. I hope that other athletes will appreciate what you and the Amateur Athletic Foundation are doing. I think the very act of competition itself is an important factor in the Olympic Movement. We have a great number of Olympic athletes in this area, and I hope they get their say. I'd also like to commend Anita DeFrantz for her planning of this project. So, again, I thank you for coming out for these sessions.

Hodak: Well, it's been my pleasure. Thank you for your time and cooperation, Mr. Neufeld. The Amateur Athletic Foundation also appreciates your participation in the project.