Name of Interviewee: Fritz Maytag
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00:00:00 Theresa McCulla: Okay, so it's March 28th, 2017. This is Theresa McCulla. I'm here with Paula Johnson from the National Museum of American History. We are interviewing Fritz Maytag, former owner of Anchor Brewing. And we're here also with Dave Burkhart, Design and Graphics Production Manager and Brewery Historian. We're meeting here at the brewery in San Francisco, California, and this interview is part of the American Brewing History Initiative, which is a project to document and collect the history of beer and brewing in America. So, Fritz, we'd love to start at the beginning. Could you mention where and when you were born?

Fritz Maytag: I was born in Des Moines, Iowa, in, on December 9, 1937.

McCulla: And did you grow up in Des Moines?

00:00:47 Maytag: No. Newton. Newton's thirty-five miles east. Our family physician recommended to my mother, it being winter with storms and blizzards, he thinking that the Des Moines Hospital might be a little safer, he recommended she go to Des Moines, and so she did. And I, when I go to the Savery Hotel now, which I do occasionally, I stayed at this here before I was here. Because my mother stayed at the Savery Hotel when I, for two weeks, before I was born. It's funny, huh?

McCulla: And who were your parents?

Maytag: My father was Fred Maytag. Actually, Fred Maytag the II. And my mother was Ellen Elizabeth Pray, married and became Ellen Pray Maytag.

McCulla: And what was it like growing up in Newton?

00:01:39 Maytag: I had a wonderful childhood. It was in some ways odd because my father ran the company that was the primary employer. And his father before him, and his father before him. And Newton, Iowa was very much the Maytag town, if you will. And yet it was the county seat, and a real town. Lots and lots of companies. The Maytag was the biggest, but there were many other companies. Very successful manufacturing, other, marketing. And I was blessed with a childhood of a normal boy in a small town in Iowa. My parent's friends knew that I was a Maytag kid, or whatever. And my friend's fathers worked at Maytag's, as they used to call it. But in fact, I was just another boy in town, and my friends, by and large, we treated each other just as boys would, and. So, I see it as having been an absolutely fantastic childhood. Absolutely fantastic.

McCulla: And so, your family, you come from a family of entrepreneurs.

Maytag: Yes.

00:03:11 McCulla: And innovators and, what kinds of, what did you learn about business while growing up, from your family?

Maytag: Well, I learned that my father was seldom at home. There's an interesting way, if anyone was interested, you might look into it, to see what my life was like, to a significant extent, and that is in Life Magazine article about my father in December, 1949, I think it is. There is a picture of a young girl in a, in a pajamas or something on the front. But it's a multi-page story about my father and about Newton, and what his life was like, which included our family. And it tells the story that I saw, which is my father worked very, very hard. He took over the
00:04:03 company as a very young man. Gosh, he was born in 1911. He took over in, probably when he was twenty-five or something. And then the war came and they had to stop making washing machines and make war material like so many companies. Quite a struggle. I remember my parents telling me that they wanted a fourth child, but decided not to have another baby until they were sure we were gonna win the war. And to many people today, that doesn't sound reasonable, but I've studied the Second World War enough to know that it was not a clear thing at all until '44. My brother was born in August of '45. There was some dark days there. And so, there was my father, just a tiny, a very young man trying to run this company and go from washing machines to war.

[Laughter]

00:05:06 Maytag: And then back to washing machines. When the war ended, the competitors had come out with an automatic washing machine. Oh my God. Maytag dominated the washing machine world with their ringer washing machine, but suddenly you could put your clothes in and go out to lunch and come back and they'd be done. And so, they had to do the automatic. So, I remember my father's business career as being very challenging, but I also remember him as being very capable and I think I ended up with a very positive
00:05:36 view of making things. They had a very difficult relationship with the United Auto Workers. My father explained it to me once that they pick on us first because they know we have only one factory. And they try to get from us what they really want from the auto makers in Detroit, but they start with us. And they go hard at us, because they know how fragile we are. We have only one factory. And unfortunately, that was an element in my childhood of this, this sense that the, that the, that there was a antag-, animosity, antagonism, competition. And I think it had a big effect on my own attitude towards business. I wanted to have a company where everybody was a part of the company, and there was no us and them aspect to it. And I think what I felt in Newton as a boy was that in fact the problem was not the employees or the company, my dad worked very hard at labor relations, but the union. The fact that they had, they were working for the

union. Not for the company. When I first, and so it was not that the reality was adversarial, but that the attitude was ad-, if you follow me, it was, it's a subtle thing but it, I've come to realize that it had a huge effect on me and business. Among other things, I wanted to have a very small company so that I would know everyone personally. And I wanted to have a company that treated our employees with fantastic camaraderie, respect, you know, it's become quite common to say we're a team. But when I first started in business in the mid-sixties, that was not so common, and my attitude was that I wanted everybody to be on the same team and see everything alike if possible, and so I stayed small partly for that reason.

McCulla: And do you feel like?

Maytag: And.

McCulla: Go ahead.

00:07:43 Maytag: No. I think, I used to, you're sitting in the, my office, at the, at what we call the new brewery in San Francisco, and when you come up those stairs and walk in, you see the brewhouse, and, right there. And you see the offices all around the brewhouse. When we did that, we moved in in August of '79, there was no brewery in the world even remotely like that. We put the place where we make the stuff, right in the middle of the people managing the company. And we tried to focus everything we could on this floor in the building, so that all of the employees would be constantly seeing each other. One of our concerns was we were, at that point, so small compared to the size of this building, we were afraid we weren't gonna bump into each other. At the old building, where we were so crowded, the communication was extraordinary because everybody was bumping into everybody constantly. So here we put everything we could on this floor. But,

00:08:50 the point is we put, I had visited breweries all around the world, and it, one in particular I remember, but there were many, many, many like this. There was a Lo-, a brewery in London. The brew master's office was way down the other end of the building and under the roof, and then out, and then. The brew master was not in the center. The brewhouse was a nice brewhouse, but there was no office at the brewhouse other than maybe some guy with a clip board or something. I wanted our offices in the brewhouse. And that's how, we were small enough that we worked it. Everybody that was in managing the company sat here right around the brewhouse, looking at each other through the windows, and it was all very intentional that we were, we were proud of what we did. And when you, I used to say when, I want, when they come in that door I want them to fall down because it looks like you had dreamed that somewhere in the world a brewery would look. And it did. And I don't think anybody ever fell down, but I can.

[Chuckles]

00:10:00 Maytag: Occasionally I would hear a gasp or something. So, anyway, all of that is to answer your question about my childhood and business. I did have, growing up,

a sense that business, that I, if I were in business, and I didn't think I would be when I was young, but I later realized I knew that if I was in business, I wanted to have a sense of partnership and egalitarian, non-adversarial. Which is difficult, you know. Somebody has to be the boss, and you're not, almost never are you paid as much as you'd like to be and all that sort of thing, but still I think we did have a unique camaraderie here. I think, I don't know if they still do, but people used to comment to me after they'd come on a tour or a visit, and they would say, I have never been in a company in my entire life where it was so obvious that the employees were proud of what they were doing and happy to be here. Attitude of optimism and enthusiasm. It's just extraordinary. And I think that was intentional. We all shared an attitude. I used to say that people who don't fit in leave. I can't make all of you have an attitude of respect to each other. You can only do that. But if you do it then it'll happen, and then other people will come and have that attitude, and we will have an atmosphere here of respect and camaraderie, whatever. That's what we need.

McCulla: So, you mentioned early on as a child, you had a positive view of making things, from seeing your father's ex-.

00:11:52 Maytag: Well, yes. And I worked in the Maytag company in the summers, when I was in high school and college. And saw the assembly line, saw the plant, saw the real places. Oh my God, I can still hear the noise in D3, which was the machine shop. And the smell of oil, and the porcelain ovens, and the assembly line, the pieces coming down, and the. It was a fantastic feeling that in that little building, that one little building, they dominated the washing machine business. It was, they had the largest, when the war started, Maytag had the largest aluminum foundry in the world. And aluminum of course became very important because of aircraft and weight and all that. Maytag changed over from making washing
00:12:44 machine tubs out of aluminum to making the engine blocks for the P-51, the Rolls Royce, P-51 engine. And Maytag was famous for the quality of the engine blocks. There were stories about mechanics off all around the world working on these airplanes who said they would look for the Maytag mark on the engine block of these engines, aircraft engines, because when it said Maytag on there, then they knew that it was unusually high-quality aluminum, and it could be machined or changed in some way, you know, they probably bored out the cylinders and, that it was a, that it was gonna be a high-quality work. So that whole tradition of integrity and liability and quality and making that stuff right here in this building was very strong in my, in memory. My childhood memory. You take a look at
00:13:38 that Life article and you'll see what my dad's life was like. It's quite charming. There's a lot of, a lot of stuff in there that's not quite true. It shows him eating in a local shop, a local restaurant. I think that's extremely unlikely. Sitting on a stool with a bunch of guys from the factory. But, I mean, it was like that. But it's a charming article. The photographer, just as an aside, I'm sure you're gonna edit all of this, so I won't hesitate to put something in that I don't know that you want, but I can't help. The photographer was, became a very, was very famous, but, man, Englishman, Leonard McCombe. And wrote books, had published books,

became, this was in the forties, you know, the black and white photography was an artform, and there were certain people who were considered to be absolutely geniuses, and he was one of the top ones. After the team, the Life team left Newton, and he had been there for ten days, I think, taking photographs, he wrote to my father and he said I've been wondering for quite a while now whether to become an American. But after meeting you and seeing your family and how life is lived in Newton, Iowa, I've decided to become an American.

Paula Johnson: Wow.

00:15:01 Maytag: It was a wholesome life. I mean the town. A small town, Midwest, absolutely fantastic. There, of course, were terrible troubles and suffering and poverty and all the social problems that come from normal life, but it was a wholesome environment. I can remember, later when I got to New York, you go to Salisbury and you see the cathedral and it's, of course it was the center of town. All those, all those towns. The church was the center. And in Newton the courthouse was the center. And they had a bell.

[Laughter]

Maytag: You know, this is constitutional democracy. This is America. And right in the center is the symbol of it, it was, and that's the way it was. It was marvelous. Like a village, in many ways, a lot of the positives of a village.

00:15:58 McCulla: You mentioned also, your father became involved in cheesemaking and I'd love to hear you talk a bit about the food culture, the drinking culture of the town when you were younger.

Maytag: Again? Say again please?

McCulla: So, your father became involved in cheesemaking.

Maytag: Yes.

McCulla: And I would love to hear you talk a bit about what you ate as a child.

00:16:17 Maytag: Oh. Well, my father, for some reason, loved really strong, flavorful cheese. And in those days in America, my memory of it is there really only was one that was called Liederkranz. Of course, there were cheeses from Europe, but they were very, very hard to get. There was a delicatessen in Des Moines, one place, deli. And then if my mother, who had been raised on the east coast and was a little more aware of ethnic or exotic food, would go to the deli and would get, oh, she would get smoked salmon, I remember, and she probably would buy maybe a brie or something. And my father would often have cheese before dinner as a, like a little appetizer. He used to hand it, and he had his own refrigerator. It was years later that I realized why, which is, my wife complains, because our

refrigerator frequently has a very strong smell. If you like strong cheeses, you're gonna get strong smells. And I've slowly learned to put the strong cheese in a little jar of its own, but my dad had his own refrigerator because he loved strong cheese. And I can just see my mother saying, "Alright Fred, you get your own damn refrigerator. I'm tired of this." Anyway, he would hand me a piece of cracker, bread with cheese on it, and he would say, "This is man's cheese." By which I think he meant to, you know, your mother doesn't like this stuff, but I really do. And don't be afraid to eat things with strong flavors because, come on, we're in the big world, and don't have a narrow point of view. Open your mind to things that smell like, smell terrible.

[Laughter]

00:18:11 Maytag: Tastes strong. And he opened my mind. Anyways, so his father had had a prize Holstein dairy herd. Literally prized. They traveled around the country winning prizes. They were frequently considered the finest Holstein herd in America. They often competed and would get first or second in competition with the Pabst family herd who had lived in Wisconsin, and the brewing, of course, family. And my father's father loved cows. He was a, apparently a brilliant businessman, but of a quiet kind, not a dynamic salesman but a quiet, detailed person, and obviously introverted. My mother said he liked cows because they didn't ask him questions. And he was running the Maytag company. He died fairly young. Left his dairy business. They had a, the herd of course was, had produced milk as a way of winning awards, and proving the worth of the breed, and so they had a milk business. They delivered milk around town. There were several other dairies in town that did that. Maytag was one. And my father started the blue cheese business as a, as a, I think as a, I'm not quite sure what, his own entrepreneurial endeavor. That was part of it. His father had died, left the business. They sold the prize herd, but kept the milk business for quite a while. And he started a little tiny blue cheese processing plant in the, where the, bottling
00:19:59 building. Got advice from Iowa State University in Ames, which I later came to understand was part of the great American tradition of the land grant college. We have the same thing here with UC, California Davis. If you're in business, if you're a farmer, if you're in any kind of practical enterprise, or animal husbandry, or anything, you end up at Davis, getting advice or attending a seminar or reading the latest bulletin. And this is a, just a fantastic American tradition. And its part of the charter of these land grant schools that they would help provide practical, not just scholarship, but practical advice and guidance to the enterprising people. And, so my dad went to Ames and, as we used to say, just like we say, well I went to Davis, asked them what to do about olives, and he went to Ames, asked him if, can't we make an interesting cheese here. And they said sure, and not only that we got a guy on the faculty who thinks he has some ideas about how to make a good blue cheese, and he did have some interesting ideas. And they, so they got
00:21:19 the advice, got, did that. Similar thing happened here in the wine business with, oh dear, let's see, Hol-, um, oh dear, the winery in Sonoma. I'll think of it. The man went to, he loved Burgundy, he went to UC Davis and said, why can't we

make great Burgundy wine here? Chardonnay and Pinot Noir? And they said, well, we could but you'll have to do it right. We've got some people who could help you. And they did. And they planned, they picked a place with cool weather so the grapes would not be overripe. They planted Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, good clones of those. They hired a winemaker who knew how the wines were made in Burgundy. And they got wooden bar-, oak barrels from France that were the same as Burgundy. And had a success of it. And it was all due to the fact that this guy had the money and had the enterprise and got advice from, from Davis.

00:22:24 And my dad did that with cheese. And that was years and years later that I came to realize that it was my father who was a real pioneer in the food, mic-, craft, food world. To have done this. And, mind you, sold the cheese by mail. So, there was no question the Maytag blue was the very first craft artisan cheesemaker. Mind you, there were lots of other small cheesemakers, and still are a few, that were there way back when. Of course, there are a lot of new ones now, but Maytag sold their cheese at a premium price by mail. Took me a long time to realize that that might have been an influence on me. I don't think it was a strong influence because my dad did not really immerse me in the cheese business much. My mother, when I took over the cheese business as a family member responsible, in the mid-sixties, about the time I took on the brewery, my mother said that the dairy farm has always been an orphan child. Your father never had the time to get as involved as he wanted. And, so then, then I had hard, had a hard time find, getting time, finding time to get involved in those early years as much as I wanted, but I did. So, anyway.

Johnson: Were you thinking of Hanzell?

Maytag: Hanzell, yes. Zellerbach.

Johnson: Zellerbach.

00:23:50 Maytag: Hannah Zellerbach was his wife. Yes. I'm sorry. Thank you. Yeah, Hanzell. So, you do know your wine. And they had Brad Webb as a wine maker. And they had the little fermenters. I can remember. And they punched the cap down by hand. And the Burgundy barrels. I was, I remember visiting in the sixties when I first was learning about wine. Brad was still there. Brad then left further and went to Freemark Abbey. But it's the same thing. You go to the land grant college and they give you advice and you have money, and you have ambition, or what can we call it, creativity and eccentric attitudes of something different or better or whatever, and they give you advice. It's a marvelous thing. Absolutely marvelous.

00:24:34 McCulla: Regarding your education, where did you go to college?

Maytag: I went to Stanford. I like to say, when we're on these topics, and I've often said it in, at Davis, I went to Stanford but I've been going to Davis ever since.

McCulla: What did you study at Stanford?

00:24:50 Maytag: I studied American literature because I wanted to study literature, and I wanted to study America more than England. But really, it was because I wanted to study ideas. I had the mistaken notion that, since I had read some absolutely thrilling books about deep, deep, deep ideas, first book I ever read that overwhelmed me was Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, and I thought since these books had these fantastic ideas and attitudes, that if you studied literature you'd be studying ideas. Huh. It has nothing to do with what you study when you.

[Laughter]

00:25:38 Maytag: You know. You don't, nobody does bring up ideas when you're talking about, I mean, I'm exaggerating for effect, but. So, but I was very fortunate because at Stanford they had some absolutely wonderful teachers, including one guest teacher from Berkeley. But, they also had requirements that were real, Western Civ and that sort of thing. But there were lots of open units you could take, and I took, well I call it just a classical liberal arts education, I studied history, philosophy, religion, religious history, all kinds of, oriental, graduate things. So, I had a, a really wonderful, broad education, and technically a major in American literature, but don't ask me too much about, well, go ahead and ask me about American literature.

[Laughter]

00:26:33 Maytag: But I, I didn't, it wasn't the love of my life. It was a, an intriguing background type of major, but that's all. I should say, though, that you should have asked me where I went to school prior to college because I had a blessing in that I went to public school in Newton, Iowa. Walking, as we did in those days, uphill both ways, a mile, through the.

Johnson: Snow.

Maytag: Through the snow. And the reason that we laugh about that is that people tell those stories and those stories are true. I would pull my sled behind me on the way to school when I was, on the grade school, which was only a few blocks away. Then we walked or rode bicycles for a mile to go to high school, downtown to the central, the high school. But having the blessing of that public education and I can still remember the people in my classes, the teachers. Some wonderful teachers. Then I had the extraordinary experience of going to a New England
00:27:41 boarding school. I went to Deerfield Academy. Which was a challenge, polite word for it. I met, had been my mother's intention, I met people who were smarter than me and people who were bigger than me and people who could run faster than me and. She felt strongly that we were in danger, my siblings and I, of being big frogs in a little pond and that we needed to go out into the big world. Plus, she

was from the east coast, Philadelphia, and knew what, that Newton, Iowa was not the center of the world and that it would be vital for her children to get a broader point of view. And that was one of the reasons I went to prep school in the east, and then of course college in the west, which was kind of my mother's ideal model, to see the whole thing. So, Deerfield was a powerful experience for me. I often say it was like being in the military. I was never, fortunate not to have to go into the military. I know many people who did and who found it to be fantastic and maturing experience. Training, learning, growing up. And Deerfield was a big challenge, and I have in later years come to be just in awe of the degree to which the headmaster, who was world famous, and many of the faculty, were doing that noble thing of trying to raise boys into men, which is just about the most important thing that you can do. Boys are a problem. I know because I used to be one. And I have seen them. Boys have to be, boys without fathers, boys without structure, discipline, inspiration to manhood, we're suffering in our country today from this. It's just a horrible challenge. And Deerfield was at four hundred boys, a little over a hundred in each class, and the whole place was designed to create integrity, honesty, wholesome involvement in America. And I'm just stunned looking back on it, how it's so obvious to me that that's what they were doing and
00:30:08 they knew it. Some of it was just almost instinct. The head master, Mr. Boyden, who was world famous for having some kind of magic with boys, which I didn't really see because he was by then quite old, but I later have come to realize of course he did. He infused that whole place with this spirit of, I don't know how to put it, just, doing the right thing. One of the things I used to say, and I tried to do it in my company, there were no rules at Deerfield. There was just one rule, which was you had to behave yourself. My sister went to a boarding school, Ethel Walker, and there was a bulletin board with nothing but rules on it. I remember being shown, she showed me, there's a new rule that we're not allowed to curl our doilies at the dinner table. There were no rules at Deerfield. You had to be on time. You had to show up, and you had to be on time. That was it. And if you didn't, if you weren't on time then you got punished with more me-, me-, you, we waited on, we served our own meals, waiters. You served your time as a waiter every month. But there were no rules. The rule, the point, the rule was you had to behave yourself. I just love that. This is a message of responsibility and integrity coming from within, not just within us, me, but within our system, within our group, within our team, and I think that had a big effect on me, in business. We used to try not to have any rules here. You just had to come to work on time.

[Chuckles]

Maytag: And then you had to behave yourself.

[Chuckles]

Maytag: I don't know.

00:31:56 McCulla: Well, I'm interested in the transition between these formative academic experiences and your entry into business.

Maytag: I see, yes, I'm just not sure about that. I've thought about it a little bit myself. I think certainly the Maytag company, and seeing that production facility and that assembly line and watching the people work there, and making those machines that were a world-famous product, white, little white porcelain enamel aluminum tub washing machines, used to be one on the back porch of every house in America, it seemed like. It had a big effect on me, but at the time I don't think I realized it. I think the real effect was simply living in a small middle western town, with all of those values, all of those people, attitudes, that were just wonderful, wholesome way of life.

00:32:50 McCulla: Could you describe the end of your time in academia, how you transitioned into San Francisco, what, what, how that change took place?

Maytag: How I went from aca-, from my college days to being in the brewing business?

McCulla: That's right.

Maytag: Wine business?

McCulla: Yup.

David Burkhart: Interject with a little, I, I hope you don't mind, can I interject with a question?

McCulla: Sure.

00:33:11 Burkhart: Just to, just to ask you, long before the beer started, gets involved, just to see if what vivid memories do you have of your very first visits to San Francisco? I mean, you came to Stanford, but everybody that comes to Stanford goes to San Francisco. What do you remember of San Francisco in the fifties?

[Long Pause]

Maytag: Well, I came to North Beach immediately, and we had dinner with wine. It was just assumed that they would bring you a little bottle of wine to the, you know, family style dinners. And I got the sense of San Francisco as a exotic place. Not just for food, but for culture and things. Went to the City Lights bookstore. I was in on all that stuff. I remember picking up Gary Schneider's first book, with, the first edition. And the basement at City Lights. And I came to San Francisco from Stanford frequently with friends. Sometimes by myself, but, to the theater, to the music, to the bookstores, to the cafes, to the coffee shops, so it had an effect

00:34:23 on me. But I was gonna go back and talk about the fact that after I studied, got a bachelor's degree at Stanford, I studied Japanese. And I studied Japanese language, which meant of course culture and history too, but primarily the language, for years. It was a little over three years that I did that. It was a side track in my life, one that I don't regret at all because I had a powerful feeling that I wanted to understand Japanese culture. Well, originally Oriental, Chinese, Japanese, culture, religion, philosophy. And had become, as many people are at that age I think, very discouraged about the west. I had been through the Second World War, mind you as a little boy, but.

[Long Pause]

00:35:24 Maytag: Anyone who's ever thought about the evils of the Second World War, from Germany, and the horror of what the Japanese attitude was and what they did and how they acted, it's just, how could you believe in God or have confidence in human beings ever again. I think still my generation, and the one before me, lives with that. And I had kind of given up on the west. I think, like so many young people, I was ready to think of other things. But, I, shipwreck was a common term. Who was one of the existentialists, the European guys, who was that, who used that term, I thought the west had.

Burkhart: [unintelligible]

00:36:17 Maytag: No, no. I thought the west had self-destructed in a funny way, philosophically, I just couldn't get it. And the Orient appealed to me very much, on a superficial level at first. And later just as, culturally, I just fell in love with Japan and Japanese culture. And I pursued it, which was interesting. I wanted to read, I loved the literature, and I had to, had to read it in translation. And of course, having grown up during the war, I'd see, I would see these Japanese documents, you know, that you'd see in a movie or in a newspaper picture or whatever. Why, if you don't read Japanese it just looks like chicken scratch. It's just frightening. Plus, there's often a tone, you know, the Japanese culture in those days was extremely nationalistic and puristic and monoculturalistic, I don't know how to put it, but it's just like an extreme version of an ethnic, intense, ethnicity, and it's just a, almost frightening. So, to me reading these translations of this literature that just absolutely astonished me with its, I thought with its wisdom and certain sense of meaning of life. I wanted to read the real stuff.

[Chuckles]

00:37:41 Maytag: So, I started studying Japanese. And I did learn to read the real stuff, read all the really great, all the great literature. It'd be like reading everything from Chaucer to Hemingway, you know. We didn't read all of Chaucer, we read parts of Chaucer, and in Japan we read the great, the great works. Parts of them. Enough to get a sense of it. Studied with some great people. One of the them, Seidensticker who was the great translator of his age. And it was of a great, a

great adventure for me. Spooky. It was first time I was ever a serious student. I was very serious, partly ‘cause Japanese is a very difficult language.

[Chuckles]

00:38:25 Maytag: And partly because I was by then all alone. I was in graduate school, and had to work, there was no, didn’t have time for fun, I just was working hard. Quite a wonderful time. But, suddenly I realized this is ridiculous. I’m not gonna be the ambassador to Japan. I’m not gonna be a scholar. Seidensticker, who in later years I got to know, again more as a friend than anything, said once in public, not to me but to someone else, well, he’s a better brewer than he was a Japanese scholar. But coming from Seidensticker, that’s not too bad, ‘cause he was a terror. He was a brilliant translator, and I was in seminars with him, just four of five people, and studying the great Japanese classics, and him, being able to sit there with him and hear him talk about how he would translate it or criticize how we were doing it, it was a thrill. And so, anyway, so I was not a great scholar and I just left. I just kind of up and left. I didn’t finish my Master’s, which I was about to get, but I didn’t, I just quit. And moved to San Francisco, and not long after that got involved in the brewing business.

00:39:40 McCulla: So, can you describe your, your initial encounters with, with the brewing company that you went at?

Maytag: Well, I used to hang out at The Old Spaghetti Factory. It was what the English would call my local. Was the easy place to go for a beer in the evening before bed. You’d go there hoping to run into some of your friends, which you often would, and they’d be doing that for the same reason. Not for dinner, just socializing. And the only draft beer they had there was Anchor Steam. That’s another story, but, and so, I drank Anchor Steam. I had also drunk it down in Menlo Park when I was at Stanford, at the.

Burkhart: The Oasis.

00:40:25 Maytag: The Oasis. Yeah, thanks. And it wasn’t any good. It was sour. And I never drank it again down there, and then they took it out. When I bought the brewery, I had to beg them to put it back in. But I did have it at The Old Spaghetti Factory and it was not bad. A lot of the time it was actually, it was fairly good. It was sour occasionally. And I can remember later when I owned the brewery trying to deal with that and just being terrified and becoming much more aware than I ever had been as a consumer about how erratic it was. The quality was not, not, not there. But I would drink beer and talk with my friends. There was a small
00:41:04 group of us who were just kind of the locals. And one day the owner Fred Kuh, who had saved the brewery himself in his time in another context, asked me if I’d ever been to the brewery, and I said no. And he said, well, you should go, they’re gonna close, and, and then, just in the next few days and, you should go down and look at it ‘cause I know you’d be interested, it’s really very interesting. And I later

realized, probably he had hopes that I might get involved. He had loaned them some money. He was a true believer in the idea of a local beer. Having grown up in Chicago where the Sieben Brewery still existed, I bought their bottling line when they went out of business in ’67. They had a little, a café, what today, we’d call it a brewpub. It was the last state in the union that allowed a brewery to sell their beer retail on premise, and they had one. And Fred Kuh had gone there and had enjoyed that. And came to San Francisco to visit, friend of his met him at the airport, took him to The Crystal Palace, which was the great grocery store here, and where there was a little tavern, little bar inside where they had Anchor Steam on draft. And Fred said to me that when he sat there drinking Anchor Steam, having seen that market with its fabulous, sort of like a farmer’s market, he realized he was where he wanted to be. And he said, I vowed, I’m gonna come back to San Francisco, I’m gonna open a restaurant and buy my supplies at The Crystal Palace, and I’m gonna serve Anchor Steam Beer on draft. And he did. His entire career, he opened in the summer of ’56, and he closed, I don’t remember, but forty years later, the only beer they ever had on draft was Anchor Steam. And when you know anything about the beer business, you know that there was a constant stream of brilliant salespeople, explaining to him that he couldn’t survive if he didn’t have Budweiser, Miller, Coors, Schlitz, Pabst, whatever, Meister Brau. And he just chased them all off and had only Anchor Steam on draft, so it was he who really, who saved the brewery. When I took over the brewery, only had about ten customers, and he was selling more than half of all the beer that we brewed. So, it was he with his business that saved the brewery. So, that was my

00:43:44 early experience with Anchor Steam. I went down to see the brewery not because I loved the beer, I really was not a beer enthusiast, but I had had a lab, a room in the basement as a boy that I called my lab. I have since come to realize it wasn’t so much chemistry that intrigued me as alchemy. I loved mixing things and understanding changes and watching changes and. I walked into the brewery and I, I now realize, I was home. I was made for it. I had loved basic science, physics, chemistry in high school. I had thought I would study chemistry in college but I quickly realized I didn’t, I wasn’t good at math, and that wasn’t gonna work. But I had then, and still have, this magic sense of mixing things together and, to see what will happen. And, walked into the brewery, I remember there was a giant copper coil hanging on the wall, I had no idea what is was, now, now I know exactly what it was, but it had a magic effect on me, and I just fell in love with the idea. And they were in trouble financially so I gave them some money and bought some controlling stock from the people who had put money in to save it. But I had a partner for several years, remarkable, wonderful man. And I just fell in love. I was made for it. I, there’s nothing more interesting than a brewery in terms of a combination of chemistry, physics, biochemistry, engineering. It’s a wonderworld

00:45:24 of basic science. And in fact, much of modern science came out of breweries. Beer was a place where applied science could make you a lot of money, because beer spoils, easily. As long as you keep the barrels full. But wine doesn’t spoil. As soon as you leave the bung out of the barrel, you get oxygen in and the acetic acid bacteria take over and you’ve got vinegar. But once the vintners learned how to put the stuff in a jug, and close it, which was certainly 2,500 years ago, wine

would keep for a year or two before it would go bad, and, but beer goes bad right now, and, from lactic acid. There's no way to keep the oxygen, it doesn't need oxygen, it just spoils. You put it in the jug or in the bottle or in the barrel, and two weeks later it's sour. Not vinegar, not acetic acid, but lactic acid. If you look in
00:46:35 Pasteur's book, and there's a copy right over there, in French and English, first edition, you'll see the photographs, the drawings he made, of the bacteria that ruined beer, lactic acid bacteria. And, so, brewing was a place where a lot of money could be saved, if you will, by having better quality. And microscopes were applied, really, first in breweries. Thermometers were applied in breweries. Refractometers. Ebulliometers. Beer was a place where simple science had, early scientific instruments, were applied, and to great effect. There's a wonderful story about a man with a microscope who wanted to consult in England. And he went into the brewery, talked to the brew master, and he said, I've got this device here that allows me to see. And the brew master said, well, what would I do with that? And he said, well, I'll tell you what you can do. I think you probably have some tanks of beer here that you're a little bit worried about. You're not sure about what, maybe it will be sour before you can sell it. You bring me samples from all of your tanks and I will tell you which ones you should worry about. And how much you should worry. And they did, and he said this and this, and they said holy smokes. Maybe we better get one of those.

[Laughter]

Maytag: Because there was real money to be made, and saved, if you will, by putting science. Single culture was invented at Carlsberg. Growing up an organism from a single cell so that it would all be identical, which we just take for granted. I mean, that's just a normal process of all kinds of things today. But that was invented in breweries. So, a brewery is a magic place, and it was magic for me, because it involved all these things that intrigued me.

00:48:46 McCulla: Could you describe some of the early challenges in-.

Maytag: Oh, I wouldn't want to even think about it. I, I'll just tell you this. I have seen more horrible bacteria in beer and in wort than any other brew master in history. I had the last medieval brewery. And I had to figure out how to get it into the modern age all by myself, and it was a struggle. I've been thinking, we talked about wine earlier, again, I mean, I don't want to change the subject but I thought
00:49:19 it might be pertinent. It occurred to me recently that Paul Draper, who was one of my friends at Stanford when we were college boys, and then he and I were in the wine business briefly together, and then we were, we came back from the wine project and he went to work at Ridge and I bought my vineyard up in the wine country. He became one of the most well-known winemakers of our era, I would certainly say, if not the most interesting. The competition, would be hard to find anyone as interesting as Paul in terms of his success and his attitudes and his honor. He and I were both totally self-taught. I did the same thing in beer that he did in wine. He, we read books.

[Chuckles]

Maytag: And we went around and asked people questions. And then, in his case, he started, he tried to make wine, in Chile, he and I did in a project. And, you know, there's nothing like doing it to learn about it. He and I pulled ourselves up into these roles of the beer, the brew master and the winemaker on our own. We're so untrained. Completely unqualified.

[Chuckles]

Maytag: Which is very interesting.

00:50:44 McCulla: And do you remember particular books that you?

Maytag: Oh, sure. Of course. Yeah, I wore out. They're all right there. I wear out, wore out one set of De Clerck. Well, not one set, one. De Clerck was a Belgian whose work was translated by an Englishwoman and, into English, and volume one was how to do it and volume two was how to measure what you've done and, I certainly studied volume two and spent a great deal of time thinking about all that. But volume one was how to do it. And, I literally wore out one set. I had to buy another, it was just falling apart. I used to fall asleep with De Clerck in my lap almost every night in my early years. So, I had quite a struggle. I try not to go into that, partly because it, you know, there was just, all you gotta do is say, well, it was, it was tough. And anyone who, it was like people who were in the war, they don't wanna talk about it. There were the other people who were in the war, they just look at each other and say, yeah, it was, it was not, wasn't fun, was it? No. That's all you need to say. It was tough.

00:51:42 McCulla: Will you describe? So, you described the initial brewery when you encountered it as medieval. What kinds of things did you change when you came in?

Maytag: Well, it had no refrigeration. It had one pump, and that was never really cleaned. There was no sanitation of any kind really. The boiler was a joke. We didn't use treatment compounds in the boiler because we were ejecting live steam into the mash. And the yeast was kept in a jug in the refrigerator, and it would foam out of the refrigerator onto the floor. It was just utterly primitive, and we reformed everything. You know, slowly, slowly. Understood what brewing, biochemistry was, microbiology was about. And the biochemistry, and the physics of it all, engineering of it all. I got it from the, from books. Primarily De Clerck. And I can still remember going out into the brewhouse for example, and De Clerck said that the pH of the wort in the kettle should be 5.4 before the boil and 5.2 afterwards, and I thought, gosh, I wonder what we've got. It might be wildly different, 'cause we don't know what we're doing. And of course, I had to find out about pH. Well, I took the pH and it was 5.4, and then after the boil it

was almost 5.2, not quite. We weren't boiling very well in those days, but, so, I began to apply the, all of this theory and practice and slowly try to build the
00:53:34 brewery up by our bootstraps. One of the first things I did was we got rid of the coolship. Again, medieval, there was no refrigeration in the brewery, and so we pumped the hot wort up to the roof at the end of the day and left it in an open vessel, open to the atmosphere, open to the outdoors actually. I came in one morning and there were pigeons in there, sitting above the wort. I can still remember what the wort looked like when the microscope was on. Unbelievable. Anyway, we got rid of the coolship, or rather we stopped cooling the wort there. We held it in the coolship hot, but I put in a wort cooler, a heat exchanger, which was the first step towards bringing our brewery into the modern age. You go from boiling hot to cool enough for fermentation in pipes and heat exchangers that have been sterilized. And you go into the fermenter with pure wort. No spoilage organisms. Now you have to worry about your yeast because it'll have spoilage organisms from the last brew and on and on and on. But, at least you start with the
00:54:57 sterile wort and that was our first great achievement. We put in a plate and heat exchanger to cool the wort and we used the coolship originally just as a hot wort holder. Later we put in something that was a new thing at the time, brand new thing, a Whirlpool hot wort tank where you put your wort, the part of the, the beer before it ferments, sweet liquid made from the mash. You pump it in in a circular fashion, and into a circular tank, and then let it swirl in a circular way. And if you've ever stirred a cup of tea, you'll know how the tea leaves will go down to the bottom and kind of in the center. Likewise, a poached egg, you can swirl the water in the pan and then put the raw egg in and it'll go to the middle. And that's what happened with the hot wort tank. A guy up in Canada had discovered it. He wrote an article about it for a brewing journal. And then a second article in which he'd say, yeah, well I've read all these letters from everybody who has all these theories, but let me tell ya, don't worry about the theory. Just do it. It'll work.

[Chuckles]

Maytag: So, I did. I put one in. We had a, one of the first hot wort tanks. It was circular. Whirlpool. Hot wort tank. So, slowly, slowly, piece by piece. And as I look back on it, it took, well, years and years before we were ready to bottle.

Johnson: Did you write?

Maytag: And I could have done it much faster if I had known better. I'm not sure I even wanted, I wanted, I was deep in doing this myself, and. But I could have hired a brew master who would have come and said, well, you gotta do this, and you ought to do that, and you should do this and that and the other, and I can help you, and we'll call so and so and get it pumpin'. It would have been a lot faster, but I didn't do it that way. Excuse me.

00:56:49 Johnson: I was just wondering whether you wrote this stuff down. Whether you had any notebooks or anything like that?

Maytag: No, I used to think about that. That would have been interesting to do a tape recording on the way home every night. I had the most interesting life of anyone. I knew Bob Noyce at Intel and Steve Jobs at Apple, and I used to tell my wife, well, maybe Bob or Steve had a more interesting day today, but I kinda doubt it. I, I had a wonderful, interesting life, partly because the brewery attracted, once we became known, it attracted interesting people from all around the world who would come by and see this curiosity. People in the food world and stuff like that. Yeah, no, I didn't keep anything. I mean, I have notes with stuff, but nothing like a journal or anything. No.

00:57:38 McCulla: Well, beyond the more scientific innovations, I wanted to ask too about the styles of beer that you brewed. And so.

Maytag: Okay.

McCulla: Soon after you arrived here, you brewed a porter.

Maytag: Yes.

McCulla: You brewed a barleywine. An IPA.

Maytag: Yes.

McCulla: At a time when no American breweries were really making those styles.

Maytag: No, no.

McCulla: And, so.

Maytag: Or in England.

McCulla: Right. Or European. And so, I'm curious, what inspired you to brew those styles at that time?

00:58:03 Maytag: Well, by then I had learned a lot about brewing and brewing history. I decided to collect brewing books, almost accidentally, but of course I just did. And if I went to London, I would always go to Foyles, and there's a section, and there was a section in Foyles where they would have books on brewing or winemaking. And I would get any brewing book there was, and I. So, I had a collection of books. And then I began to get into, peripheral brewing type things. And they're all over there. And in many, I used to say I built the brewery on those books. From Pasteur with his bacteria pictures, to the, to De Clerck, to the early English books on, textbooks on brewing, to the encyclopedias of beverages, and all that stuff. And I studied all of that very vigorously. So, I was quite aware of

00:59:03 brewing styles and the history of beer. And when I, when the brewery began to become profitable, or even before that I guess, I began to realize that there was, that it would be wise if we had more than one product. That to have a range of products, and I'm not sure, I suppose looking back on it I might have picked this up in the wine business, it was a rare winery in our country that didn't have more than one wine. In Europe, of course, it was very common. Chateau Latour would just have one, and. But I thought it would be smart to have more than one. And I'd become aware that dark beers were, in America in those days, were made
00:59:50 simply with coloring. Caramel color. And in England. That a real dark beer was made dark with roasted malt, which intrigued me. And I'd read about brewing traditions in England and in Europe and, so I decided to get rid of the dark beer that we had made. When I first got involved they were making Anchor Steam Dark. But it was just colored with caramel. It was just fake. You couldn't tell these dark beers apart. You get Pabst dark, and you'd much prefer the dark. You couldn't tell the dark apart with your eyes closed. It was just coloring. Same was true in England. And there were no all-malt English, beers or ales made in England. They were using sugar. That was the norm in England, as a short cut to stretch. And, so I thought that we were making an all-malt beer. Of course, all the beers in Germany were all-malt, that was the rule, but in England they were using sugar, which was perfectly understandable. It's just that it was not traditional. So,
01:00:54 I thought we'd make a traditional, dark beer. And we'd call it porter, partly because I liked that term. I don't know if I knew that there were no porters being made in England in those days. We later learned that. But I just, I called it Anchor Porter, and I can remember the first brew. I was standing up on top of the floor and feeding, cutting open a bag of black patent malt, and I fed it down into the mill, and I could smell it and I thought, my God, they've sent us coffee. It smelled like espresso. They've sent us the wrong, the wrong stuff. We'd never seen black malt before. And, but it was the real thing. And that very first brew was just superb. And to my knowledge, until I left, we never changed the porter formula again. Beautiful dark beer. The only real dark beer in America and the only porter in the world. There was a brewery in Pennsylvania that still makes a product called porter, but it wasn't porter, it was just colored, a good caramel I suppose. Now it's re-, they use dark malts, but in those days it was obviously just colored caramel, caramel syrup. So, it was a thrill to make a second beer that was real. I loved having a real, dark beer in the old tradition. And then, well, then we did a series of others, ale and.

Burkhart: Can I interrupt with a question.

Maytag: Barleywine, and.

01:02:37 Burkhart: Did you? I would imagine that black patent malt was pretty hard to track down. Did Bauer-Schweitzer malt that for you, or did you?

Maytag: No, no I bought it from a maltster that we used to get malt from later, too. Mind you, these dark malts were used in the food world. It was very common

to buy a cookie that would say malted barley or whatever as an ingredient in these. Because, you know, the, when you toast, when you toast barley or malted barley or un-malted, it's like making biscuits, you can, or toast, you can lightly toast, you know every toaster has a little dial on it, doesn't it? Some people like it three and some people like it five. Some people like it three for turkey sandwiches and a five for peanut butter and jelly. I mean, you know, and so that's what happens with malted barley. You can roast it to different degrees, you can roast it, well, anyway. Slowly or fast. You can do all kinds of stuff. So, it wasn't that hard to get. It's just that it wasn't a normal part of brewing.

01:03:44 McCulla: How did consumers react to these beers when you?

Maytag: Oh, it was terrible. We had a horrible time selling any beer. You can't imagine. I mean, it was just impossible. Then we started bottling, however, and that helped because I learned quickly that the real market for us probably was people who were buying imported beers, and who would maybe take it, try a bottle of ours, take one home, try it, and if they liked it, come back and get two. And then we began to realize that some of our business was people who were locals, who would keep some in the refrigerator in the bottle as a novelty, so that when they had a guest, and of course people who live here have guests, but people, everybody comes to San Francisco, and so there's, there are lots of visitors. And people coming through, I think we learned, the locals would say, well, try this. It was a curiosity to have a, to have a local beer, but also to have one with flavor. And there was no end of people who would say, oh, the European beers, they know how to make beer in Europe, but American beers are thin and watery and stuff and. We didn't, we tried not to, ever say that, get caught saying that. We just emphasized that flavor was fun and good. Anyway, so we had quite a struggle, but we did slowly sell these beers. Slowly, very, very slowly. It was a
01:05:12 very, very small market. If you went to the store that would have our beer, they would have, it would be the store that would have interesting wine and would have imported beers. And they would have Guinness, and they would have Watney's, and they would have Sapporo. But mind you, in those days this was not, normal places didn't have a range like that. They just had the American lagers. And, of course, there were still family breweries in, back east, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania. There were eight or ten breweries that brewed lager beer of the kind, they were trying to sell for less than the cheapest brands of Budweiser, like. Miller's and Bud and those people would always have three levels of price. What they called premium, and then they called popular, and then, I forget what, anyway. So, you went from Michelob to Budweiser to Busch Bavarian in terms of price. And Busch Bavarian was cheap and they were cranking it out and for these poor, family breweries to try to compete was just hopeless. Seemed to me. And you didn't see them here, but they would be sold in their home markets. Here you would see the local big brewers and the imports. And so, we were in there with the imports. And, once we started bottling we did slowly begin to get some sales.

01:06:49 McCulla: And do you feel that that was partly an effect of consumer's taste changing, but I imagine perhaps also the distribution?

Maytag: Oh, it was a little bit of everything. It was us trying to meet the distilled, the imported beer market with our own flavorful, traditional beers. It was the packaging that was designed to entice people and to send a message. One of the things I did when I first started getting ready to bottle and I designed the original label with almost, I mean I had an artist later fix it, and it taught me a great lesson, that he made it work, even though I had to had all the basic cate-, all the basic elements. But as I began to study the packaging, I took a lot of the beers we were gonna compete with and I lined them all up. And it was obvious to me that they were all trying to look like champagne. By that I mean they were trying to justify their premium price, I don't remember the numbers, but say Budweiser in those days would sell for twenty-seven cents a bottle. And these were beers trying to get forty-six, or fifty-one, or. And they were all dressed up in foil. That was the big deal. To make the beer look like a fancy, valuable. And so, I purposely made our
01:08:16 Anchor Steam package very, very plain. It was flat, it was common, it looked like we didn't know what we were doing. Just real little brewery that didn't even know how to do packaging. It just made beer. And it worked. It looked like that. And I put on the neck label, I put whole bunch of text, so small that many people couldn't read it. But I used to say, even if they can't read it, it sends a message that there, this beer has a story. And it did. It sent a real. And have a wrap-around neck label, and the whole thing was text. Well, you saw the label earlier this morning. A lot of text. And that was just unheard of in those days. You're giving me a story? Come on. I just want a beer. And, well, if you wanted our beer you had to read the story. I mean, it was a, it was part of the package. And so, there was an element of complying with the import world by getting it in a bottle and getting it in a distinctive package, even if the package was different from the normal import by being common or flat or plain. And it was, the beer itself, which was wonderful. The price, which was less than the top imports. Mexican beers, when we lost our beer, were thirty-eight, Mexican and Japanese beers were thirty-eight cents a bottle. We were forty-one. And the Guinness and Bass and the imports from Europe were fifty-one or something like that. So, we were well under the top imports, slightly above the less-prestigious imports, less prestigious being Mexico and Japan, and well above the American beers and, of course, the question was how in the world could you charge a premium for an American beer? And that was our challenge, and that was, remained our challenge, for many, many years.

McCulla: Well, in, related to the labels and the text, I think you could also say that certainly if you look at, if you look at a bottle of Anchor beer, it conveys a sense of history.

Maytag: Yes.

McCulla: And, so.

Maytag: That was very intentional.

McCulla: Okay, and you are a student of history, and so I was wondering.

Maytag: Well, I, by then I knew a lot about brewing history, and I had a, I think a very instinctive sense of what became many of the themes of the food renaissance, American food renaissance. Localness, historical validity, distinctive flavor, real qualities, not hype. And those were, I had just a kind of a, I was just an early believer in some of those themes which worked for our beers.

01:11:07 McCulla: So, in the early decades of Anchor, or as you felt, that perhaps, the business was starting to become more successful, to what extent would you say you were aware of being part of a kind of renaissance or of a new movement in food or drink?

Maytag: Well, that's interesting.

[Long Pause]

01:11:31 Maytag: I was aware of what was happening in the wine world, which happened in the wine world long before it happened in the beer world, or even in the cheese world. The wine world had an explosion of committed, interesting, new winery owners. When I first got involved in wine, I visited all the wineries I could visit, here, and I can tell you right now, I can name all of the wineries in California, which means all the wineries in America, that were trying to make great wine. There were a lot of wineries trying to make good wine, pretty good wine or fairly good wine or quite good or nice wine or reasonably priced wine or wonderfully priced reasonable wine, and all kinds of stuff. But there were only a handful of wineries that were trying to really to make great wine. Wine to compete with the great wines of Germany, France, Italy, Portugal. I think there are nine. But, mind you, rapidly there was an explosion of small wineries. The Bob Mondavi, Freemark Abbey, Schramsberg. This was an explosion that took place in the middle sixties, just when I was getting involved in brewing. And I was involved in winemaking, because we had an ambition to try to make great wine in Chile, or, make, teach the Chileans that they should try to make great wine and earn
01:13:07 foreign exchange. So, my early impression was that the small brewers who, and there were still ten or so, family brewers back east, all in remote, almost all in rather remote areas, and in German areas, selling their beer for less than the cheapest, big brewers, that they were just in horrible trouble. I started meeting them. I started going to some of their brewing, brewer association meetings. You know, I just, I just felt sorry for these people. And I kept my mouth shut. Hardly any of them knew anything about beer. Hardly any of them knew anything about brewing. Hardly any of them knew anything about beer history. I had a brewery owner once tell me, well, my brew master says we can't make an ale because we

can't have two yeasts in the brewery. Well, you know, I just felt sorry for the guy. He didn't know anything about. That was one of the reasons I, until I finally sold
01:14:20 the company, I called myself owner and brew master. And I was a brew master. I was saying today when I came in here, I can't walk in the brewhouse anymore. You're not allowed in there unless you're the brewer, or in my case, I designed it, I found it, I installed it, I, you know, it was mine, and I ran it. So, these people were hope, were lost, they had a brew master, Otto or Fritz or somebody, who had them buffaloed. He was the expert. They didn't know brewing. Mind you, they'd know a great deal about their businesses, and about the marketing and this and that and, but they didn't know anything about brewing. I just kind of kept my whole purpose secret and just went to the meetings and got to know them, but I felt sorry for them. And there really was no, nothing like a movement of any kind for a long time in my experience. The first person who started up was an interesting character, but he closed right away. He didn't have cleanliness. He didn't know anything about brewing and, I think, probably, and tended to, I would
01:15:40 say, made the mistake of using English brewing methods in America. In England, you make a beer, you take it out into your pub, you tell your pub manager when to sell it. If it goes sour he calls you and says, you know, that stuff is going sour, and you say op, don't, don't sell that, I'll be right down to pick it up. Well, the American beer market is a whole 'nother story. Totally competitive. Totally open. And, so, to make a beer that's gonna go sour, you know, it's just hopeless. You don't have your own pubs. In those days, you couldn't. So, the idea that there was a movement or a group of small breweries, took a long time. It did finally happen, and then of course it went slowly at first, but then it exploded. It was quite a while before it really exploded.

01:16:40 McCulla: And you served as mentors for many who did?

Maytag: Yes, I did, and they used to come here. There would, people were just amazed. You know, you got a little brewery that works? Yeah. And I would recommend to them that, I can remember saying many times, I don't recommend that you do it. You know, here we are and you can see what we're doing. But the only other brewery is Sierra Nevada. And theirs, is smaller than we are, and they too are trying. And, but there's no evidence that we're gonna succeed, it's very risky. But there's lots of evidence that restaurants, good restaurants succeed. And can make a lot of money. And so, my advice to you is if you're desperate to brew,
01:17:26 find a state where brew pub is legal, and open a brew pub. And that way you have the good chance that your restaurant will be a success because it's a restaurant. And the brewing aspect of it can be a sideline. It could gradually become the main line, but at least you have the comfort of being in the restaurant business, not in the microbrewing business which is clearly, there's almost no evidence, that that's gonna work, whereas there's countless restaurants that are successful. Mind you, it's not necessarily easy to do a great restaurant, but it's done, a lot, and they've done well and continued. And so that would be my advice. And I gave that advice to a lot of people. I really was not by any means sure that a small brewery could make it. For a long time.

01:18:16 McCulla: You mentioned your ambition was never for Anchor to become very large. That you wanted it to stay small.

Maytag: I did want it to be small, partly because I like to, I like small things and I liked having my hands on everything and being on top of the whole thing. I got to know Steve Jobs. He told me once he'd hired a thousand people the year before. I said, Steve, I cannot imagine that.

01:18:42 McCulla: So, and, related to Steve Jobs, I do have a question about Northern California as a kind of exceptionally entrepreneurial place. You know, it's been somewhere that's long drawn innovators.

Maytag: Yes, my theory about that is that it has a Mediterranean climate, and so when the people from Europe came, not just the Spaniards originally of course, but they were busy doing religion primarily, and feeding themselves, but later immigrants, Italians I think especially, came here and realized, oh, this is the place. You know, it's pretty hard to play Italy in Maryland when there's no leaves on the trees, I mean. And this place just shouts out Italy, and Mediterranean climate, and the Greek, Roman, human climate where you can, you actually have time to think, even in the winter time whereas in, back east, in the north, you just ter-, you just freeze to death. You don't have time to think, you just have to keep chopping wood and finding more and more coats and jackets and stuff. You know, there's a sense here that, like in Athens, where you can wander around and talk about funny ideas and, it's just a natural in this climate. And so, I think the
01:20:02 Italians and the French, the wine people, saw right away California, north and south, mind you, the great vineyards in the early days were down south, but that whole food, wine and food culture of southern Europe, the Mediterranean climate basically, France, Italy, found a home here and that that had a big effect early on. And I think many of us who came here, like in the, I came in the fifties, saw that right away, that we went to North Beach and you ate in an Italian restaurant. And it's just natural. It just felt right, so, that's my ex-, my feeling about how, why that happened here. But certainly, the food renaissance, I, we used to call it the Californian food renaissance, happened here. And it happened, it involved, intertwined with wine. A little bit with beer, but we were really the only ones in the early days, it was before the food renaissance really, in our early days. We
01:21:13 were sort of there at the very beginning. Restaurants, it was a slow thing, but restaurants began playing around with, there was an element of creativity, localness. It's hard to pin down because I was in the middle of it, you know, we didn't see it in those days, we, later that we saw that it was a movement. I can remember going back east and just feeling sorry for people who had to live like that. We had, not only did we have delicious, interesting food and wine and stuff, but we had fabulous service. It was an unnoted element, I think, of the food renaissance. Northern California had wonderful service. The waiters, the waitresses, the serving people, the kitchen staff, there was a sense of involvement and the competition was ferocious. If you had a restaurant that wasn't polite and

courteous and helpful, you couldn't survive because the other ones were. They were, there was a element of creativity that was entwined with competition that was ferocious. And, well, I mean, you sat down and they took care of you. And you go back east and you just sit there and sit there and sit there and then if you looked at the wine list it was all European wines. And it was just sad.

[Chuckles]

Maytag: Happened here and then it happened in the northwest of course, same thing with beer. Not northern, I mean, not southern California, northern California, I would say. And then it, and then it began, it did spread to southern California. And then it got intertwined with the nouvelle cuisine, so it became kind of a mix and who knows what happened. Anyway.

McCulla: Alright. We can, I'd like to start wrapping up so.

Maytag: Sure. Of course.

McCulla: I have a couple big questions for you.

Maytag: Go ahead.

01:23:20 McCulla: The first would be if, what, how would you define craft beer.

Maytag: Well, I invented the term microbrewing.

McCulla: Okay.

01:23:29 Maytag: Microbrewers. Standing right there one day, talking to somebody, who had said, used a phrase that I, that terrified me because it was so obviously likely to take on, again, going to take over, and that was boutique brewery. And it was also an insult, I thought. And I had become a friend of Steve Jobs. I had one of the very first Apple II's, long before I knew Steve I had an Apple II, and we had used it at the brewery and I was very aware of the whole micro, of the micro-computer world. IBM was the, they were the big guys, and Apple was making little computers for little guys like us. But we were just real people and we had our own computers. Years later there was a program on PBS, talked about the earliest, the Microsoft, Apple, Steve Jobs and Gates and the brewing, and the, the little committee people that used to meet and then go, actually it was, one of their names was the Steam Beer Club because after these meetings they would go over to The Oasis and drink Anchor Steam.

McCulla: Oh, that's great.

01:24:40 Maytag: They used to meet at, oh dear, anyway, one of those high-tech companies in Palo Alto, after work. There was a program on them and on how the mi-, the

small computers. And afterwards I realized, that it was a wonderful program, and I realized how fortunate we were that these guys literally brought the computer right into our house. Until then, computers were mysterious things that the government had, or IBM, or General Motors, or something, but suddenly we had one. And we could program it. And we could hit return and it would do things, and we learned what it was, right in the living room, and. And I thought, I'm gonna call Steve, and there must be ten million people who saw that program who would like to call Steve Jobs and thank him for what he's done and I can do it and I'm gonna go do it, so I went over and picked up the phone and called Steve. Well, of course he didn't answer, I'm sure he was maybe watching it with some friends or some, but I left a long message and later I realized, it had, he'd really been touched by my message. It really hit the point. Millions of people wanted to

01:26:01 say thank you. Anyways, so I was very aware that microbrewery, microcomputer as a term, and when they said boutique brewery I right away started thinking real quick, and I said something about microbrewery. And I felt, for many years I used only that term because I kind of liked it. Craft is a vague term. Micro at least means small. So, I wouldn't say it. However, in later years I began to realize you have to have a definition, so I would say a microbrewer, craft brewer, artisan brewer, the whole revolution that has happened is they followed the magic formula, which is you make a very traditional product honoring brewing history, and you make it with modern food technology, food processing technology. The most modern. And you use traditional methods. So, history in the product, tradition in the process, and modern in the environment, basically means cleanliness and keeping oxygen away from where you don't want it and other things like that. And it was, it's a unique combination. There were brewers making old fashioned beers that weren't quite really traditional, but pretty traditional. There were German brewers who were making beers by traditional rules, but they weren't interesting. There was almost no variety. So, it was a nice combination. And similar to what happened in the wine world. I do think that we were really partially, strongly influenced by the wine industry.

01:28:00 McCulla: And what do you foresee for the future of brewing in the next ten, fifteen years?

Maytag: Gigantic crash.

McCulla: Oh yeah.

01:28:07 Maytag: There are four thousand breweries. It's ridiculous. Now, it doesn't mean they're all gonna crash and die, but you can't have four thousand very, very successful, I mean, it's just absurd. So, there will be a shift I think towards many of them, which are already, it's already happened, not as a development but just from the beginning, many of these breweries are brew pubs, or restaurant brewers, or whatever, what do you want to call it, brewers as a sideline, or something like that. That makes sense. There are bakers. There's still bakeries on ev-, almost every street has a bakery, not as many as there used to be, but, you do, you, they,

you know, they bake cakes and they bake, what are they, the sugar things, the, anyway. And so, there'll be brewers making specialty beers. But I think they have to have a shake out, and that there'll be, I don't know, when I got involved in brewing there were something like fifty breweries in America of fairly significant size. So, I don't know, ten times that would be five hundred, that's about right. Beer is in fashion, and fashions change. You know, Merlot was popular until that damn movie.

[Laughter]

Johnson: That's right.

Burkhart: Sideways, yeah.

McCulla: That's right. That's right.

Maytag: Let's just hope they don't make a Sideways beer movie about craft brewery.

Burkhart: I talked to Mr. Bunching about that. [unintelligible]. And he had quite a story to tell about that movie. And he and his wife went, in Napa, to a showing of that movie. And they had just planted, you know, tons of Merlot and so he looked at his wife and said we'd better get home, dear, and.

Maytag: Start de-budding the vineyards.

McCulla: Yeah. Right.

01:29:59 Maytag: So, I don't mean to crash in the sense that a disaster so much as a major change, has to come. You know, there's a basic rule that if something can't continue, it won't. And we can't have a thousand new breweries every year, you know, for much longer. I don't know that beer will ever go out of fashion again like it did though, because food is in and drinks are in and wine is in and novelty is in and local is in and tradition is in and flavor is in and variety, I mean diversity is in. And beer has been around for thousands of years, so it makes a lot of sense that we would have a thriving, competing, creative brewing business. And that'll take hundreds of breweries. But, probably not thousands. That's what my own instinct.

McCulla: And one very final question which is a big one, which is.

Maytag: Sure.

01:30:57 McCulla: What do you value most about your career?

Maytag: Well, I've been asked that and I would say that one of the things I used to say to myself and to my employees was that we made a success of this company in the face of very great challenges without breaking the law. And people don't realize that because alcohol is highly regulated, for real social reasons, understandable reasons, nonetheless that means there are many, many laws, and then of course in America we have fifty states, each of which has its own law after prohibition, and these are laws that are completely un-based on history, these are sumptuary laws. You know, the Romans told you how much silver you could have at a banquet, and how many slaves you could free in your will. There's, it's not logical. It was designed to create a certain attitude in society, or to protect one class from another, or whatever. And these alcohol laws are, were designed to try to solve some of the social problems that go with the misuse of alcohol, which we still have. But in the shoe business, if you, if you're gonna buy shoes, and I'm selling shoes and I tell you, well, if you buy a thousand shoes the price is ten dollars, but if you buy ten thousand it'll be six dollars.

01:32:42 That's obvious, isn't it? But that's illegal in the beer business. In California, Safeway pays exactly the same for ten truckloads of beer as you pay in your little delicatessen, for one bottle of beer. Same price. No discounts allowed. Crazy, from a businessman's point of view. And so, the people break the law, all the time. And it's not considered a felony, unless you lie about it I guess. It's just naughty. But I had to rea-, I had to decide, I realized, when I first got involved in the beer business, this was just everywhere. The only brewery that wasn't breaking the law was Coors, that I could see. Everybody else was giving away free beer. If you buy ten, we'll give you one free. And Coors was not. And I often wondered if it, just because of the integrity of that family-owned brewery, or a part of it, that their beer was so popular they didn't need to give it away 'cause nobody could.

[Laughter]

01:33:42 Maytag: I used to go around, and when they asked me for these deals, I would say, well, we're like Coors. We don't do that. I didn't have to say we're holier than thou, or we don't like to break the law, or anything. But, in fact it was a tremendous challenge to succeed in the brewing business without breaking the law. It was wonderful. And we lost battle after battle after... I could tell you stories you won't believe.

McCulla: But you, it was a.

Maytag: But we did it.

McCulla: A great success, continuing today.

Maytag: And you know, I like to say, I'm from Iowa. I don't do that. I had to decide. Am I gonna be a gangster or not? And I wasn't gonna be, so.

McCulla: Alright. Well, thank you so much.

Maytag: You're very welcome.

McCulla: Thank you very much.

Maytag: Okay.

Johnson: Thank you. Thank you.