**TOM ALEXANDER INTERVIEW**

**(Sizzle Reel\_1st File)**

**TRANSCRIPT**

INT: When did someone first walk up to you and say, “This is marijuana. You’ve got to try it.”

**16:25:52 – M/S**

Tom: I was in my second week in college, in 1969, and a Vietnam veteran had just come back from Vietnam, and his whole duffel bag was Thai stick(?) and Vietnam stick(?). And it was ? to me a ? on a stick. And um... We all tried it and went to a uh, Vietnam war protest at Yale University, and uh, on the New Haven green. And I consumed it and we had tanks and armored car vehicles and National Guard, and that night tear gas went off, I thought I was in Vietnam. And so the next day I said, “Man, that was fun. Let’s do it again.” And so for a couple days we kept trying it and I had a good time and liked it ever since. And that was you know... 36 years ago. No, 46 years ago.

INT: What had you heard about it before you tried it?

**16:26:58 – M/S (slightly closer than above shot)**

Tom: Oh in high school I was against it, I put a guy up against- I was a jock, I played football and hockey and baseball, and put a guy up against the wall cause he accused me of smoking it and dealing it and you know I almost decked him. And six months later that Vietnam war protest happened and it totally changed my mind 180 because I didn’t experience all the lies of Reefer Madness that is propagated by the media back then. And, and so I did a 180 once I tried it, and I think that’s the reality for most people, that um, when they try it they realize what they’ve been told was a lie and propaganda.

INT: That’s a thread that runs through this a lot. So why did you start growing it?

**16:27:59 - M/S**

T: Well in 1975 I was living in Cape Cod, and a friend and I had some ditchweed(?) Mexican full of seeds, you know, almost more seeds than product, and we said, “Let’s try it,” and put some seeds in the ground, and uh. We didn’t know male/female, we didn’t know any of the intricacies of growing, and so you know end of August/early September, this male pollen bag broke on the male plant and spread pollen throughout the air and we thought we hit the jackpot. And we dried it, smoked it, and got a little more than a headache. But then you know, a month or two later we did get some seeded female and it was, you know, it gave us a high but nothing like what’s out there today.

INT: So did you just grow it for yourself? What happened after you came to Oregon?

**16:28:55 – C/U**

Tom: So that was 1975, just grew it for myself. And then in 1976 I came out to Oregon cause I had heard that the, the Oregon and California were becoming a big growing area and that people were making money and... And so um, in ’76, too late to grow a crop. But in ’77 I put in like a dozen plants down there in Coos Bay, between Coos Bay and Roseburg, and uh, the uh, deer ate them all and I didn’t you know, realize that deer loved the plant also. And so that crop got wiped out. But then in 1978 I met a grower from Hawaii that was buying four farms in Oregon, and hired me to be a manager on one of the farms. And so we put in over 4,000 plants and ended up with 2100 plants of females pulling(?) the male. And um, I didn’t know it at the time, I found out later, that he was taking the Oregon product, exporting it to Hawaii, and selling it as Hawaiian, and my cut of the action was on the Oregon end which at the time was $800-$1,000/pound. He was getting $3200 in Hawaii for Oregon-grown that was marketed as Hawaiian. So the next year, 1979, I decided to strike out on my own, bought a Caboda(?) tractor, put a, a, rent on a 16-acre homestead near Alsea, Oregon between Corvallis and Waldport, and put in 2500 plants, a little more than 25. Got 1230 plants female, which the sheriff arrested me in late September of 1979 and um, spent 24 hours in jail until my arraignment, got out on my own recognizance, and um, two weeks later I pointed out to my lawyer that this search warrant puts the property that they describe way somewhere else, and so the judge took a half an hour and said “Case dismissed.” Well they didn’t need the evidence anymore so three sheriffs of the Benton County Sheriff Department stole the evidence. The state police subsequently arrested them for stealing the evidence and they pled no contest and um, were sentenced after the District Attorney pleaded their case, leniency on their case to the judge because “they’ve suffered enough by losing their career,” and got three years probation. So I was facing $100,000 and 20 years in jail. They got 3 years probation and it outraged me and so I started Sinsemilla Tips Magazine.