OCS Study
MMS 2004-051

History of the Offshore Oil and Gas Industry in Southern Louisiana

Interim Report

Volume III: Samples of Interviews and Ethnographic Prefaces

U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

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Volume III: Samples of Interviews and Ethnographic Prefaces

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project is to study, document and explain the history and evolution of the offshore oil and gas industry in southern Louisiana in an objective and comprehensive way. The geographic extent and complexity of the industry, the tremendous number of petroleum and associated service companies, and the vast array of impacts has required the identification and recruitment of hundreds of individuals with direct experience with the industry and its effects. University researchers have spent thousands of hours with people responsible for the offshore oil and gas industry in southern Louisiana. They recorded interviews, collected written documents, and obtained digital copies of photographs and video from the early days. This volume illustrates how the information gathered during the interviews is being organized. The first section includes a sample of the many photos that were shared during interviews and excerpts from interviews conducted with the individuals who contributed the photos. Together, these photos and descriptions provide a unique visual dimension to the history. The second section presents samples drawn from the full database of interviews. Within that database, which includes background details and summaries of the interviews, information about the interviewees and what they discussed is distilled for researchers and others interested in using the collected materials.

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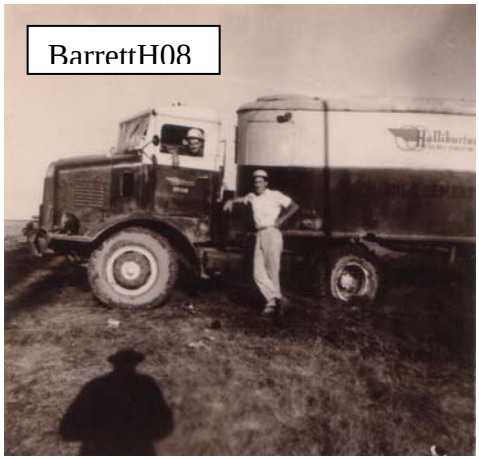
1. Sample Photographs and Selections from Transcripts

1.1. Herb Barrett

Herb Barrett was born in Duncan, Oklahoma in 1928. He graduated from high school in 1946 and went to the University of Oklahoma to study petroleum engineering. He left after two years to take a job with Halliburton working in the machine shop. He moved to south Louisiana in 1949 and began working on boats. He stayed with Halliburton for 23 years. He then went to school to study mechanics and worked for Duplantis Trucking for 14 years.



1.1.1. Excerpt from Interview of January 28, 2002

HB (Herb Barrett): Number 1 is what was known as a super cementer. And it had the cab in front, cab over the truck and it had the 2 engines mounted behind and the engines were coupled where you could drive the truck over what's called a teaser engine, and you could run, it would normally run the 2 pumps by separate engines. But the 2 pumps could be run by one engine. One engine went out, you could still run both pumps out of one engine.

EB (Emily Bernier): What kind of engines were they?

HB: They were Detroit Diesels. Or GM's as we called them back then. And that was called a super cementer.

EB: Super cementer. How….

HB: Halliburton made 13 of them, and they originally came out in the oil show because the first one, saw it in 1947.

EB: Do you know what year this picture was taken?

HB: This picture was taken about in either 1952 or 53.

EB: OK

HB: There were 3 of them in south LA. There was one in Houma, one in Lafayette, one in Lake Charles.

…..

HB: OK, number 3. This was my truck in 1954. It was brand new. It was a 1954. That's me.

EB: That's you.

HB: That's me on it. You can barely see the rig back in the corner. We're actually on the rig.

EB: OK, so here, what kind of truck was this?

HB: That's an International. Halliburton had started using them. We still had FWD's lots of time, but about half the trucks we had down here were Internationals.

EB: OK.

HB: Because we didn't have to worry about the mud and all that so bad. The FWD's we had front wheel drive on them so if you were up in the country where you had a lot of mud, where it rains a lot, you needed the front wheels. I mean, it drove on all wheels. That's what an FWD was, it was a 4 wheel drive truck. But the name of it was actually FWD. [laughs]

EB: OK. Conveniently enough. What are these pipes right here near the door?

HB: Well, that's what you hook up, that's what you hooked up to the well. You had all different lengths, you had long lengths and you had short lengths and you had some that had what we called chicks and joints, they were moveable joints. We carried all that on the truck and you had the racks on the side of the truck.

…..

EB: So on number 6, these long joints right here, that's what you were talking about.

HB: yeah, you just carried them on the truck right like that. But when you hooked up to the well and all that, that's how you tied into the well, with all those pipes. They had unions on them that you had to hammer up, tight. They tightened up. And this picture is the same truck that I was on. It's from the front. You got a front picture of it.

EB: And this year was 1954 too?

HB: Yeah…. Now number 8, this is up in Oklahoma. This is my very first truck.

EB: What year is that?

HB: that was in 1948. That's an International; little short nose truck was an International. It was left over from WWII. It's a surplus WWII truck. At Halliburton they didn't, they originally came out to the Army. When they were in Army, they had canvas tops on them. At Halliburton, they took them to their shops and put metal tops on them. But they were all brand new, they were surplus, hardly any of those trucks had been used. Halliburton bought a whole bunch of them, right at the end of WWII.

EB: What kind of engine was this?

HB: It had International in it. That was a boat cement truck.

EB: And who are these people? This is you hanging your head out the window?

HB: Yeah, that's me.

EB: And…

HB: That's me standing right beside it.

EB: Oh, standing right beside it.

HB: There's somebody in it?

EB: Yeah, there's someone driving it.

HB: Oh, there sure is… well now that's me driving it.

EB: That's what I thought, I though that was you driving.

HB: Yeah, that's me driving. I don't remember who that is standing beside it. That's too long ago [laughs].

EB: That's a long time ago.

1.2. James "Peanut" Crochet

James “Peanut” Crochet was born in 1927. He was drafted into the service in 1944 and toured Marseilles and Belgium for 20 months. His first job was at a factory called "Weatherhead,” a canning factory in Houma, Louisiana. In 1949 he got a job with Kerr McGee as a flunkie and then moved onto roustabout after a year or so. After Kerr McGee he went to work inshore for Texaco. In the 1970's he worked as foreman for a few years. During the downturn of the early 1980's, he was transferred to work on a clean up barge by the name of Barge Lawrence.

1.2.1. Excerpt from Interview of July 25, 2001

AG (Andrew Gardner): Well here’s picture number 2. What are we looking at there?

JC (James Crochet): This is Lake Pelto field office, you see right there. They would figure out production and all of that. That’s where the supervisors met. That’s the office right here, where they would work at. We had about three or four of them working in there. That’s where we’d keep all the records and all of that.

AG: And so, do they sleep on there too?

JC: Yeah, they sleep – there’s a camp. You see, they got a walkway from the sleeping quarters that comes up into here, you see that? Right down there.

AG: So was the supervisor working at that office responsible for all those fields you just mentioned?

JC: No, they were responsible for that field, Pelto. Each field had their own office at the time.

AG: And that was built on pilings in, what, ten feet of water?

JC: Oh, we're looking, at that time, about ten feet, ten to fifteen feet. Right there.

AG: Well, this is probably a picture of the same thing right here, a different view.

JC: That, that's our kitchen. This is our kitchen, and that's the sleeping quarters for the cooks and all of that, right there. That's the men's sleeping quarters back in here. See, you had walkways to go around all of this, tie in to all of this right here, right in to the office.

AG: Right.

JC: Yep, that's our kitchen and the sleeping quarters for the cook.

AG: Well these look like cooks right here, number 4.

JC: Yep. That's my dad, right there.

AG: Is one of those guys you?

JC: Yep, right here.

AG: On the far left, huh?

JC: Far left.

AG: Do you remember the names of some of these other guys?

JC: Yeah, this is Sam Troughound.

AG: On the far right.

JC: And that's a Broussard right here. That's our head cook, old Segue right here.

AG: In the middle.

JC: And that's a Broussard right here. You know a Broussard.

AG: Second from the left.

JC: That was our two cooks, and this here was a flunkie, and this here's a helper, and I was a helper. What he's doing, he's putting one of them empties … we used to get our milk and all, 35 gallons, and this is a cover, and he's putting it on his head.

AG: And this is when you first started out there?

JC: Actually, this is when I come back from the service right here, this is when I first started. I was a flunkie before I was going out in the field, you see. I was a cook's helper.

AG: What was it like working in the kitchen? Did guys get along well?

JC: Oh, yeah. They was nice. Kitchen was open all the time.

AG: you guys must have been pretty busy in there.

JC: Yeah, that's some young men there. Fifty years, fifty two years ago there!

AG: Yeah, it says that picture was taken in 1951 right at the top.

JC: I was in my prime there. Let's see, I'm 74 now, 51 … 23! Wish I was back there!

AG: what kind of shift work were you working then?

JC: That was all twelve hour. We'd work from … we'd get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and go until seven at night, and we'd get a nice break in the afternoon. After 12:00, after 1:00 we'd get a couple hours rest there.

AG: So there was a whole other crew that was sleeping while you guys were working?

JC: No, uh-uh. All the men was working on Lake and all. They'd come in … actually, some of them would come in for dinner, and some would stay out in the field, and we'd send them lunch box out, prepare a lunch box for a meal. And at night we'd … we didn't have no night crew. We'd have that lunch box for them when they'd leave to go to work.

JC: See, the crew would work from six to six. And we'd work … we'd get up at 4 o'clock, and we had to start feeding them at 4:30, 5:00.

AG: Long days, huh?

AG: Well,here's the last one. We talked a little bit about this one yesterday.

JC: That's the airplane right there! This is our airplane pilot right here, on the right. And I believe this is old George Sherman right here …

AG: In the center?

JC: The guy with the hat. And I believe that's Light "one eye" Gonselet, yeah, one eye. He had one eye.

AG: He only had one eye?

JC: Yeah. He was our tool pusher at that field.

AG: So they would come and go out there by seaplane?

JC: Yeah. Every team breaks, and they had the plane there. You see, they would change every seven days, and they had the plane. Toolpusher and that.

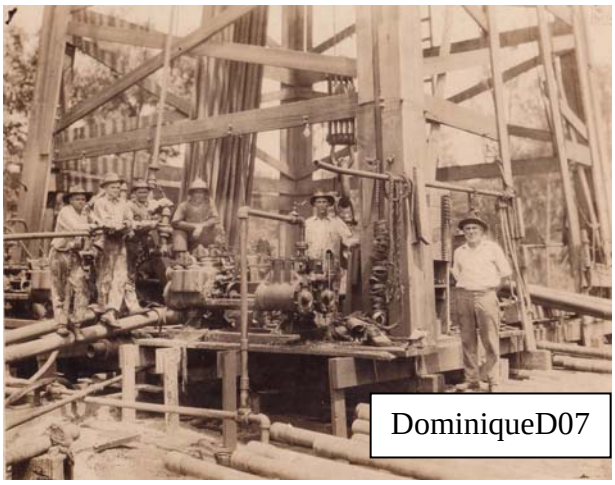
AG: Were they friendly guys, or were they tough cookies?

JC: Oh, yeah, we had some tough cookies that would try to be tough, and we had some … some was nice guys. The other one … the one that really wanted to be a tough cookie was the one that couldn't write or something, you know? But he knew he had experience there, and he tried to be a tough cookie, but he didn't have the experience to do the paperwork!

1.3. Doughty Dominique

Doughty Dominique was raised in Raceland, Louisiana. His family moved there when he was about six years old when his father bought an old sugarcane farm. His father was born in 1893 and went to work for Gulf Oil Company in the mid-1920s. He worked as a driller in the oilfield, first in east Texas and then in south Louisiana. At times before he had a family, he lived in a boarding house with members of his rig crew. Doughty entered the oilfield for Kerr McGee and worked his way up to production supervisor.

Note: Photos 4-8 taken by Gulf Oil Company.



1.3.1. Excerpt from Interview of January 21, 2002

EB (Emily Bernier): OK, number 4.

DD (Doughty Dominique): That's the old wooden derrick. You can see how prominent safety was, these chains were totally exposed here on the right. Whenever you were drilling, turning the rotary, that chain was doing that and if you ever got close enough you'd be part of it…

EB: So this thing right here sort of in the center right, these are the rotaries…

DD: That's a rotary. That's what turns the drill pipe when you're drilling. This is a….

EB: On the left.

DD: On the left, the bottom left, that's a joiner pipe in the right hole they called it. You can see a pair of pipe tongs holding it. What they would do when they would get this all the way down, then they would pull it up, and the joiner pipe that was at the bottom of this would become exposed. They'd unscrew the kelly, take that up, put it in there and extend it by 30 feet so you could drill an additional 30 feet. This is Dad, 2nd from the left. The other guys I don't really, really recognize. I don't remember him saying who they are. That's an old set of elevators, holding the pipe in the rat hole.

EB: Elevators, what are they?

DD: That's what you use to latch on the pipe to pick it up from the dirt.

EB: OK. So is this just equipment that wasn't being used right now just sitting there? Or do you think it was sitting there because they were going to use it soon?

DD: They were going to use it very soon. Probably as soon as they got this joiner pipe, they drilled it down, they would pick it up, break it off here, and pick that up, and screw it in there and extend it. And then start drilling again. And this was Blade Water, Blade Water Texas. I think Blade Water is a little north of Longview.(pause) No safety what so ever.

EB: It sure doesn't look like it. Did anyone get their overalls or anything caught in them…

DD: Oh, I'm sure they did, almost on a regular basis. Now they have to have guards over everything which is great. I mean it saves a lot of toes, and hands, and feet, and everything else.

EB: Right. Here's picture number 5.

DD: This is a picture of a barge with some guys working on it. My dad told me that this barge was taken in the Atchafalaya River here in south Louisiana. They were building, before he went to work for Gulf, they were in there building a location for Texaco if I remember right. But it's just a bunch, and I don't know who's who on there, I'm sure that Daddy's in there somewhere but I just don't know who he is.

EB: About what year would this be?

DD: Probably 19… I think he went to work for Gulf in 25, so this may be 24 or something like that. Maybe even 1923.

EB: And what is all this pipe here to the left?

DD: That's all drill pipe. It looks like drill pipe but it'd be either drill pipe or line pipe that would connect the well up to a battery to allow it to pull them up. But I would assume that's drill pipe. They're going to probably end up bulk loading that on the barge and it's going to float down here to the rig to be utilized there.

EB: And so this is an old wooden barge.

DD: Yeah, it looks like it. In fact those were fairly common when I was coming up back in those days.

EB: Oh, yeah.

DD: Yeah. They used haul sugarcane up and down Bayou LaFouche in these open barges, old wooden ones….

EB: And what is this thing right here that looks like a canon? To the right?

DD: …….. that's a pump, that's a pump. That's the flywheels on the pump, shoots the piston in and out, siphons water up. This is, this going into here is probably a relief. That's a water pump.

EB: When I was first looking at it I thought it was a canon. I was like what….

DD: Looks like wheels like a canon.

EB: Here's picture number 6.

DD: That's an old boarding house. That's, I think that's my dad in the back with the dark shirt on.

EB: On the left hand side.

DD: Yeah, on the left side and the boarding house. That's the rig crew he worked with. Old knotty pine, no ceiling or anything like that, bare light bulbs hanging from the ceiling. He talked about this place quite a bit, said the lady was real fair, gave you a real good meal, packed you a lunch to go to work. From what I remember he, this was around Orangefield also, in Southeast Texas. This was a boarding house also.

EB: So was this where a lot of the guys would stay if they didn't have wives?

DD: yeah, if they didn't have wives or had wives and couldn't bring them where they were. Sometimes they would go out on these isolated locations where they would put them up in a boarding house, and feed them.

EB: Now did they have to pay for that or did the oil company pay for that?

DD: I'm not quite sure. I imagine in someway the company subsidized it someway. Gulf was very, very generous with their employees so I wouldn't think they would put them through that hardship and make them take it out of their own pocket.

EB: Was there a lot of boarding houses around? When you moved down here to Louisiana did you see anything like these Texas boarding houses?

DD: I didn't see any private boarding houses but all of the oil companies down here had ……

EB: camps

DD: camps. Where they cooked, they served three meals a day. They boarded you up. In fact as a civilian you could drive in there, I've done that in the 50's, early 50's, like at Chevron, Venice or Tidewater. Tidewater was famous for it's food. I mean, we'd go down there and have lunch. So they'd just pile it on, all you could eat, it was good too.

EB: Did you have to pay for that?

DD: yeah, maybe like 50 cents or something like that.

EB: Wow.

DD: They had that practice for quite a few years. This is interesting.

EB: yeah, that's a neat photo, especially since that was…...

DD: Very clear isn't it?

EB: Yeah, real clear. Especially since this is how they did it in Texas, you know, and they don't have anything really similar in Louisiana. It was company camps from what I hear, where you stayed. Unlike this which seemed like it was a private venture.

DD: yeah, Gulf had camps in Venice also, Buras actually. In fact they had camps scattered all around but this was a private boarding house. It wasn't a company camp.

EB: OK, here's number 7.

DD: Orangefield.

EB: Orangefield.

DD: Yeah, this is a real interesting photo also, I think. It looks like the same guy standing, my dad's third from the left, and I've seen this guy in another picture. But you get an opportunity in this to see some of the equipment that they used. There's a mud pump.

EB: OK, so the middle of the picture.

DD: Yeah, right in the middle of the picture.

EB: And that would pump the mud down into the well?

DD: Yeah, down into the hole to remove the cuttings as you were drilling. Traveling block, the hoist that lifted the pipe. I'm sure there're a couple hand saws hanging on some here cause with all the wood they used a lot of saws. Thread protectors hanging on the leg of the derrick in the front, foreground.

EB: What were those used for?

DD: Protect the threads on the pipe when they weren't in the hole. Here's a drill pipe.

EB: On the bottom?

DD: yeah, this is a drill pipe. Drill pipe laying in the V-door here. Here's a pair of chain tongs.

EB: OK, hanging right above that man's hat on the right.

DD: Yep, that old guy there.

EB: Wonder who was the driller on this, was that your dad?

DD: Dad.

EB: OK, so wonder who the old guy was…

DD: Probably a fireman or maybe even, see 4, 5, he may even been a landowner just hanging around. I think he might have been, he could have been I'd say that. I don't know that for sure. I know back then land owners stuck pretty close to the rig because they always thought they were getting cheated out of something.

EB: Were they?

DD: Maybe some did, maybe some, I don't know. I think in east Texas they had probably the biggest, one of the biggest scandals in the oil industry up to that time and maybe even now where they had to bring the Texas Rangers in to resolve it. People were putting flow lines in and putting a valve in there indicating it was open, it'd be closed, and be diverting oil to their own private tanks. It was a real crooked, crooked place. They were shootings all the time. I can still remember the pistol my daddy had bought for defense. They slept with the doors locked.

EB: Really?

DD: Yeah, I can remember reading in later years about sending the Texas Rangers down there, but they only sent one Ranger and asked why they didn't send more they said there was only one problem so we only needed one Ranger. They didn't have a jail in Kilgore so what he did, he took chains and shackled them to the trees outside to restrain them. He said once you'd been locked up out there in the weather or a lighting storm for a few days, you didn't want to come back. So once they let you go you went.

EB: Turned a new leaf.

DD: Yep, yep.

EB: yeah, this is a great picture.

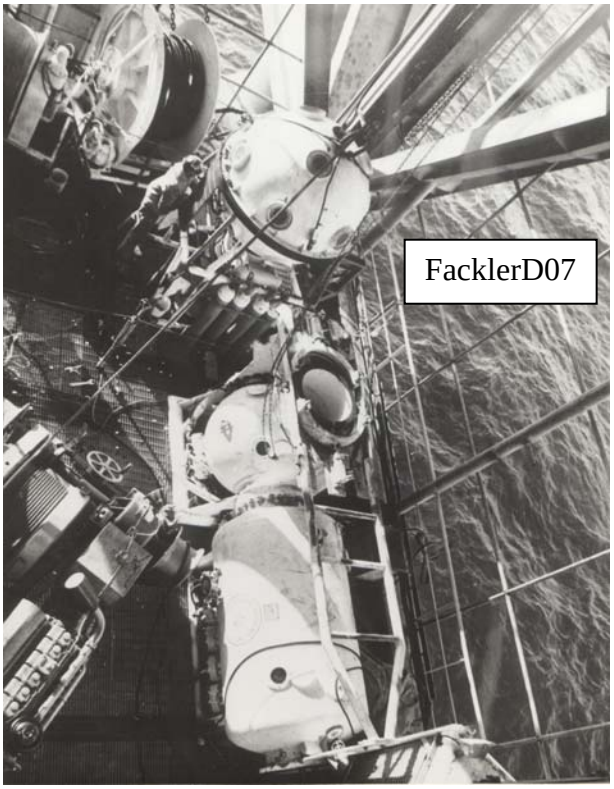
DD: yeah, it is. That's a real, real good picture.

EB: Where did your dad get all these? I mean who took these?

DD: I'm not sure who did but I'm sure Gulf furnished them.

1.4. Dale Fackler

Dale Fackler grew up in Ohio. He moved to California two years after finishing high school, where he learned to SCUBA dive. He joined the service and was married. He and his wife returned to Ohio, but they soon made their way back to California where Dale enrolled in the Coastal School of Diving. He traveled to Morgan City in 1967 with plans to work long enough to earn the money needed to get out of Louisiana. He worked for Ocean Systems, a diving company that had been formed by Union Carbide, until that company was sold to Oceaneering. He worked for Oceaneering until 1983 when he formed his own company, Wet Solutions, which he still operates out of Lafayette.



1.4.1. Excerpt from Interview of December 12, 2002

DF (Dale Fackler): My name's Dale Fackler with Solutions in Lafayette, Louisiana.

DA (Diane Austin): And today we're looking at some of the photos that you have. We're going to call this one number one. What are we looking at here?

DF: You're looking at a dry habitat that was used to make the first underwater hot tap saddle weld and it was being carried out by Ocean Systems Incorporated in Morgan City. They were a part of Union Carabide and they had a welding engineer from Lindy, a division of Union Carabide. And the first weld was done for Tennessee Gas. As I can recall it was an eight into a twelve.

DA: For someone who doesn't know what that means, that's?

DF: It was an eight-inch pipeline being tied into a twelve-inch gathering one.

DA: And a hot tap we talked about earlier but just to refresh for this sitting is where, what does it mean to have a hot tap?

DF: They locate the point where they want to tap the line, remove the concrete and coating from the twelve inch, jet all the mud, everything away from the area, set a sort of overturned water glass down over the pipe line and seal where the pipe enters on both sides. And then when the water is blown down by pressurized gas or air that section of the line is exposed in the dry where a saddle can be welded on to the pipe with the eight-inch flange. After testing for weld quality the habitat is

removed and a valve and hot tapping machine is placed on the flange and then the hot tapping machine goes through the valve, cuts a coupon, an oval, a bent oval shaped metal cut out of the twelve inch line while pressure product is still flowing through the line. The coupon's extracted, the valve's closed, the machine bled down and removed and you're ready to tie the eight-inch, the new eight inch line into the twelve.

DA: And so at no point in that process do they stop the product flowing through the main pipeline?

DF: No that's why it's called a hot tap. This was the first one done sub sea.

DA: And so what we're looking at here is which part of that? That's the habitat or it's the hot tap machine?

DF: That is the habitat.

DA: And the people in the picture are?

DF: People in the picture, this is Frank Pelia from…don't ask me to spell, how he spells his last name, from Union Carbide from Lindy division. The gentleman across from him is the company representative from Tennessee Gas.

DA: The one with the hard hat on?

DF: No the one without the hat.

DA: To his immediate left. So Frank's on the left and then you have the engineer?

DF: Yes, the other people shown in the picture- the fellow with the hard hat is a barge superintendent and I don't recall his name. The other two people are workers on the crew.

DA: Okay. Anything else about that particular…? Where did this take place? You said it was for Tennessee Gas.

DF: Yeah this was in approximately two hundred feet of water. I am not exactly, I can't recall. This was in 1967. And in approximately a hundred feet of water and as I recall it was in the Ship Shoal area.

DA: Okay so one hundred or two hundred somewhat?

DF: It was in approximately two hundred feet of water.

DA: Two hundred feet of water, in the Ship Shoal area. Okay, great.

…..

DA: Okay now the next one number seven.

DF: Okay, this is on a drill ship, a drilling rig. This is the wench that these will [lower the bell].

DA: Okay so as we look then at the top of the photo the wench is just past, to the left of the center.

DF: Yes. The second wench that has the diving ability turns to lower the, all of the electrical and all of the air hoses and gas hoses.

DA: Okay and that's off on the right hand side.

DF: This is called the entrance lock and it has a top flange to set the bell in [place]. This picture shows the bell sitting down on the ground where tools are attached, the two divers that are going to dive get in the bell at that point- fully dressed and so forth. And the door would be sealed on the inside as well as on the outside. Now once the bell is lifted over the side of the vessel the wench would go to the bottom atmospheric, in other words wet because the interior door has no [seal so] that you could just open that door anytime. The exterior door, the one that closes up from the bottom, that one is sealed by water pressure outside. So as the bell goes down the inside door is not holding any pressure. It can be opened, go on down to the bottom then as gasses come out- oxygen, helium is added to the inside of the bell to pressurize it. It will rise until the bottom seal has greater pressure inside the bell than outside. One diver will assist the other…and there's communication with a secondary [device] to the diver who exits the bell.

DA: Can a diver inside the bell talk to the diver outside the bell?

DF: No, we've attempted at communication to do that but it doesn't work well. Maybe in saturation... In this case everything we relate through the person on the deck. He would say the diver needs some more slack …

DA: The person inside the bell can you talk and be heard or how does…?

DF: Yes. You just talk.

DA: Now is there an unscrambler attached somewhere to the valve that is what he's saying is understood at the top or?

DF: The unscrambler, the tone change is made in the radio topside. The person in the bell plus the diver are both [on helium]. There are two separate radios on two separate lines on the same radio or you can listen to one [on each line].

DA: When they're in the bell then can they talk to each other?

DF: Yes.

DA: If they're both in the bell…?

DF: Yes, if people are speaking with a helium voice in saturation it becomes this normal speaking out here. After being in there a few days, people who are familiar with helium speech that are on radio topside of the diver is used to that , his hearing is attuned to that type of voice. He doesn't have any trouble understanding. But to another person who walks in the room they can't believe what they [are hearing].

DA: Okay.

DF: Okay and this [bottom of photo] would be the decompression chamber. After they entered this they would remove their wetsuits or hot water suits or whatever.

DA: So they're removing their suits in the diving bell before they get into the chamber?

DF: In the entrance trunk, in this entrance trunk. They would go down a ladder into the inside and do this while the bell is sealed to the top. This is called the entrance trunk.

DA: Okay so that's the piece that's looking off towards the front towards us.

DF: Yes. Looking at it like this, this is sitting down in front.

DA: Okay.

DF: Then you have the same double door where you…, where they can open the door when the pressure's equal in the entrance lot to the chamber and they go inside and be on the little bubbles.

DA: And how long does a diver stay in the chamber?

DF: It depends on the depth of water. On, we've had bounce dives where people have to stay in the chamber fifteen, sixteen hours. But of course if this were a larger saturation facility they, two would get out and two would get in and two would [be working].

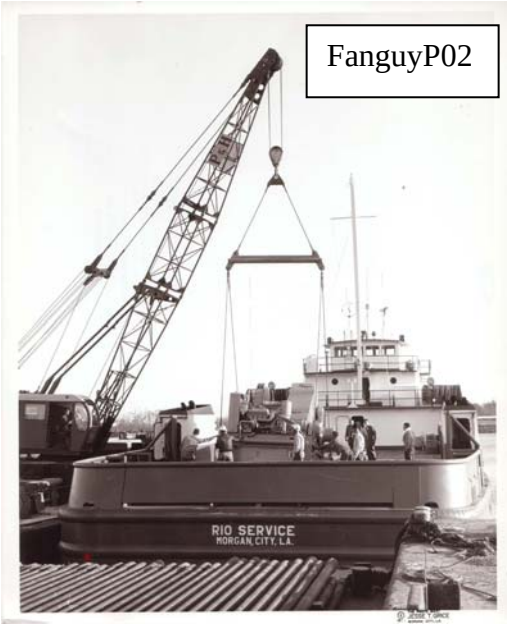
DA: Okay. This system looks pretty well engineered. Does it work most of the time or are there particular kinds of problems that would arise?

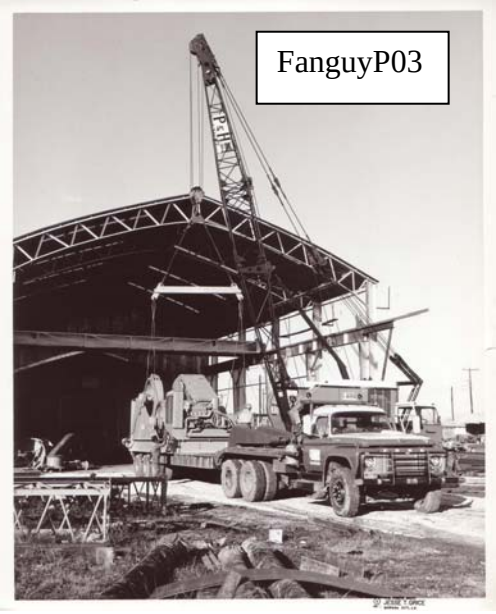
DF: It works most of the time. If you follow the maintenance schedule. On all equipment, there is a maintenance schedule for the wire that rings to lower the bell. There's a spelter socket on the end that attaches to the bell that has to be cut back at such and such a time. Pieces of cable have to be put into a laboratory strain test, make sure it's strong, the end for end cable on the wench on a schedule. Maintenance of all seals, valves, things like that. That's what the people are doing on board the drilling rig when they're not diving.

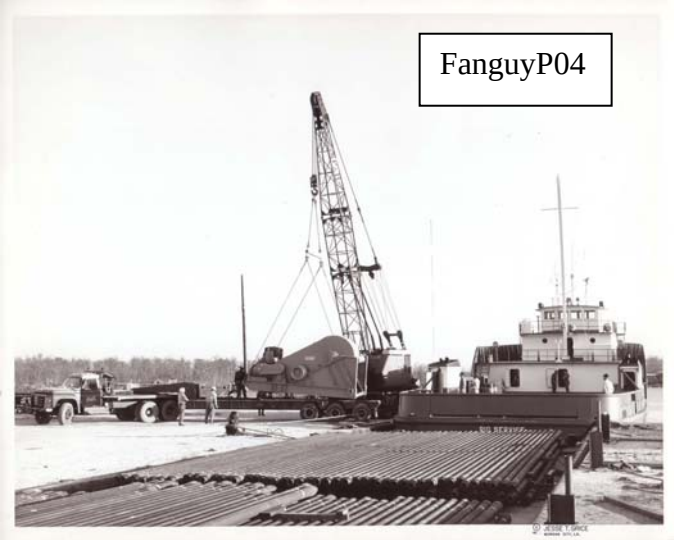
1.5. Philip Fanguy

Philip Fanguy got into the trucking business when he married the daughter of Elwin Duplantis, the founder of Duplantis Trucking, in 1957. Elwin started the company in 1936 with a dump truck and a shovel. He got into the oilfield trucking business by buying trucks from the New Orleans Department of Sanitation. Philip and both his brother-in-laws worked for Duplantis, and Philip now runs the company.

Note: Photos taken by Jesse Grice. The Grice Collection is now housed at the Morgan City Archives.







1.5.1. Excerpt from Interview of April 10, 2002

EB (Emily Bernier): Oh, about what year is that, this number one? [Laughs] How about February 11th, 1958.

PF (Philip Fanguy): February 11th, 1958.

EB: And what is this a picture of?

PF: This is a picture of a mobile crane and they're handling casing. And this is the pipe that when they drill a hole through the earth that they put down into the hole and they start drilling within [a short distance] of this project.

EB: So the two pieces of pipe on the crane are casing?

PF: Casing.

EB: And then the pipe…so I mean the casing obviously has to be a lot bigger. We can tell with this guy in the white jacket down here in the corner how big…

PF: This is drill pipe.

EB: Oh the pipe on the…

PF: This is what's used with a drill bit to drill the inside of this into those.

EB: Okay and what are these three big…?

PF: These three things are blowout preventers. And these things are designed where this one stacks on top of this one.

EB: The one on the left?

PF: Then these two stack on top of this one. And these things have what they call rams in them and they close against this pipe to close, to keep…like if they did gas pressure. The gas pressure could just take this pipe and push it up. Well these preventers have these rams in it, they come on the side and squeeze against the pipe and hold it in place where they can't come up.

EB: And do those work all the time? I mean obviously not- there's blowouts but…

PF: Yeah they really do. The only time you have a blowout, which is very rare if they hit a gas pocket you know that they just didn't see in the <inaudible> work. You know that's always a possibility that they'll blowout but under normal conditions…if they have warnings that there's gas you know they can close these things off.

EB: Well it looks like Number Two is sort of similar. The date on this is 1970.

PF: This is the first wench that was built by a southern machine here in Houma and this wench was used for towing operations in Africa. This is one of the first offshore boats built also. And this boat was going to work in Africa.

EB: Do you know who built that boat?

PF: Halter Marine and Harvey that built this boat.

EB: Okay, so all that is drill pipe.

PF: Yes that's a drill pipe.

EB: And then here's the Duplantis truck off to the right. And you're loading the wench?

PF: Loading the wench onto this boat.

EB: Okay and what's the crane doing?

PF: He's lifting it off of the truck and going to set it on the deck of the boat.

EB: Okay.

PF: And what they do is they weld this wench down to the deck of the boat and of course you have this is a drum and a wench and this is another drum which is filled with cable and the cable, see this door back here? It comes off, you can see there's hinges and the cable come out the back and attaches to the barge or whatever they're gonna tow out in the ocean or in one of the gulfs.

EB: Okay. So was that your crane as well? Was that a double duty?

PF: Yes.

EB: Okay I feel like this [Photo Number 3] is just another…

PF: Yeah that the same one from when we were loading it from the plant.

EB: Now here, when did the rest of the, it looks like the hanger of the air base is still there.

PF: No this is the machine shop.

EB: Oh, that's the machine shop, okay. And that's just another view of that same one?

PF: Right.

EB: That was Number Three. This is Number Four. Now this is when they're halfway putting it on okay. Were jobs like that dangerous? I mean were jobs like this one dangerous? I mean I know its just lift and put but that things so big.

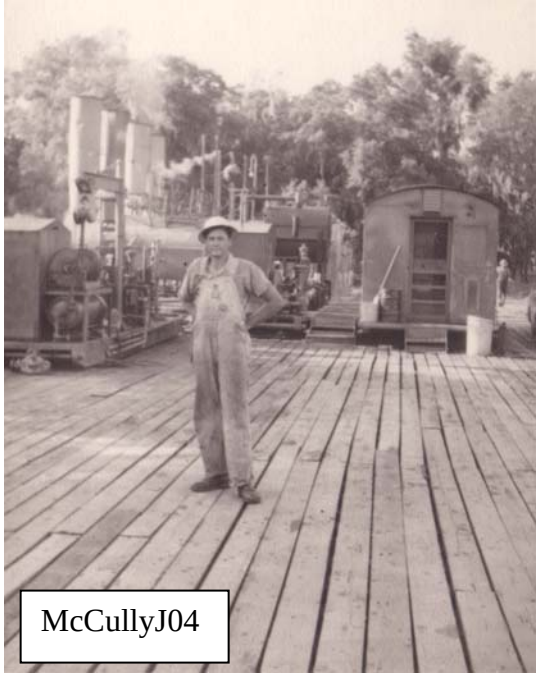
PF: Yeah you have to be very careful, really I mean when you're pulling with this type of weight you just have to be very careful.

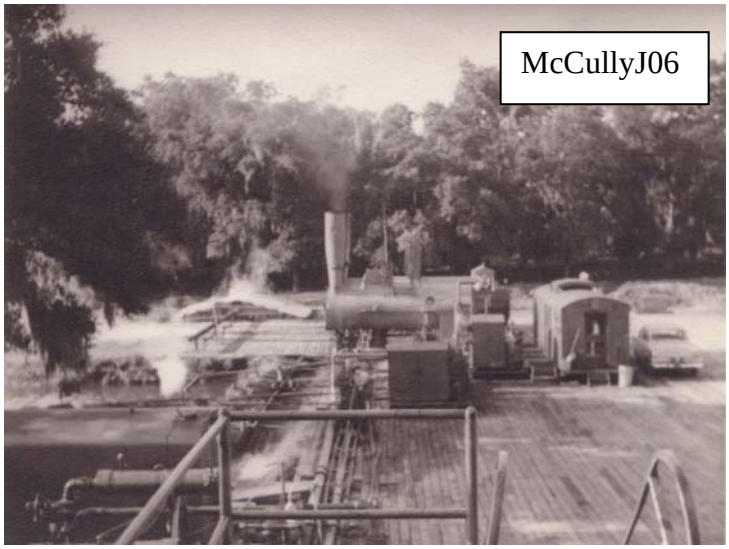
EB: So, that was going over to Africa?

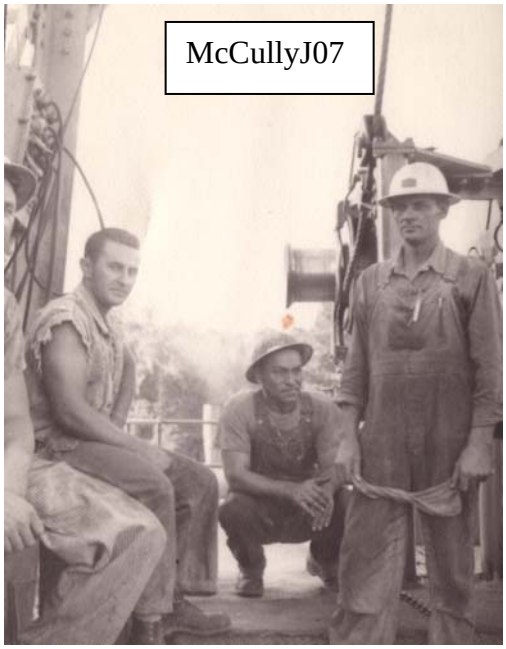
PF: Right.

1.6. Jack McCully

Jack McCully is a transplant from Texas. He worked for Abercrombie in Texas when he was 16. He began working with Humble in Texas and was then transferred to south Louisiana in the mid 1950's. Included are photos of steam rigs and discussion of drilling problems.







1.6.1. Excerpt from Interview of January 19, 2002

EB (Emily Bernier): OK, number 4.

JM (Jack McCully): That was when we were in Texas and I was on rig 1 right there, no that was rig 30. This is part of it right here too. We was all out here. This is the draw works right there; there was an old boy, T.C. Williams.

EB: So who is this gentleman standing to the….

JM: You don't recognize me?

EB: So this isn't rig number 1 in Texas this is rig 30?

JM: That's rig 30, that's the first rig I got on. I got on it and after they shut it down, I went to rig 1. That was a little rig; it had 3 boilers on it. That thing could only go about 8500 (feet down) it was a small rig. This one here we could go 13-14,000 you see.

EB: was this a steam rig? (Meaning rig 30).

JM: Yep, all these were steam rigs, rig 30, rig 1 rig 9 and rig 18 was all steam.

EB: OK. Number 5.

JM: This is 1955 we's over there in Texas right close to Raymond Person's Estate. He was that big Ford dealer in Houston, I don't know if you've ever heard of him or not but that's where we were drilling over on his place. This right here (6) this is all the same place right here.

EB: So this Number 5 here is this also a company car or…

JM: no, no that's one of the guys he drove his car out there.

EB: OK then the black car that says "Humble"…

JM: That one there was a crew car.

EB: So would y'all park somewhere and the crew car would pick you up?

JM: Yeah well see what it was we'd drive out with a company car and what they would do the other crew would take the comp car and go back. You see sometimes the guys would drive their cars out there but after they had that boiler explosion over there in Texas they asked people not to drive them. Some of them still did some of them still did drove their cars out there. One thing two see all these board rows (Number 1) the nails would sometimes would pop up like that (Number 4) and that was bad too for blowing your tires like that. That was another reason they didn't want people driving out there.

EB: So this is you in the middle on Number 5.

JM: On the end.

EB: Oh on the left on the end.

JM: This old boy named Jerry Lewis, the same kind of name that Jerry Lewis used to have, but he's gone now. He had the cancer in his head and they operated on him and the next thing I know he's gone, he's dead. This guy here, his name was PJ Palmer (right), he went back to Texas I believe it is. He came to Louisiana for a while and I think he's back over there again.

EB: OK, Number 6. Now this is the same rig 30 we've been looking at.

JM: This is the same rig right here, all this is the same rig. This is the doghouse.

EB: That's the doghouse on the far right?

JM: Yeah that's where we changed clothes and all that. We had our pumps and everything else out there. The steam pipe comes up here to the rigs and the pump. You can see just a little bit of the pump right here. (Left bottom corner). That's what they used to pump the mud into the ground. We used to have those earthen pits before they came out with the tank metal pits, you see.

EB: What is this right in the middle here?

JM: That's the boiler right there. The one that blew up was on the end we had to replace it with another boiler.

EB: OK, Number 7.

JM: this is the corner of me right there (far left). This is T.C. Williams and Jerry Lewis again and this is PJ Palmer. (Starting from the right). This is a good old boy called red eye Regan, he quit the company. This old boy here he retired the company and he's in bad shape. His wife died a few years back and he had one of his legs amputated because he was a diabetic. He's over in the hospital in Thibodaux and I think he's just hanging on. (Referring to another picture not in set) This is Harold Saunders right here (referring to another picture).

EB: Real quick, this picture 7 is this on rig 30?

JM: Yeah that's rig 30. All this is together here. This is offshore after I left there…

1.7. Pete Rogers

Pete Rogers was born in Patterson, Louisiana in 1914. He started work for Shell Oil in 1935 as part of an exploration crew, but they had a temporary layoff in 1940, and he decided to join the military for service. When he got back from the war in 1945, he joined the production department at Shell. He retired in 1976 after 35 years. Pete's photos show his work with the early exploration and seismograph crews. He worked with an instrument called the torsion balance - a German-designed machine that would soon become a relic in oilfield exploration.

1.7.1. Excerpt from Interview of January 16, 2002

AG: This is Number Nine, it looks like the same picture we were looking at close to it before.

PR: Yep, yep, yep that's the same thing.

AG: Walking through the, walking through, walking through the swamps, the marshes.

PR: Through the marshes. Heh.

AG: Here is Number Ten, it's somebody in a boat.

PR: Yep. We used pig hooks in the marsh, because they came in real handy, because the trappers made trenasses; those are little itty bitty canals, they made those canals by hand, so they could get to their traps. We used to use those trenasses instead of walking, and we used our pirogues to hold our equipment. You know, we benefited from the trappers.

AG: Fantastic! Now this is Number Eleven.

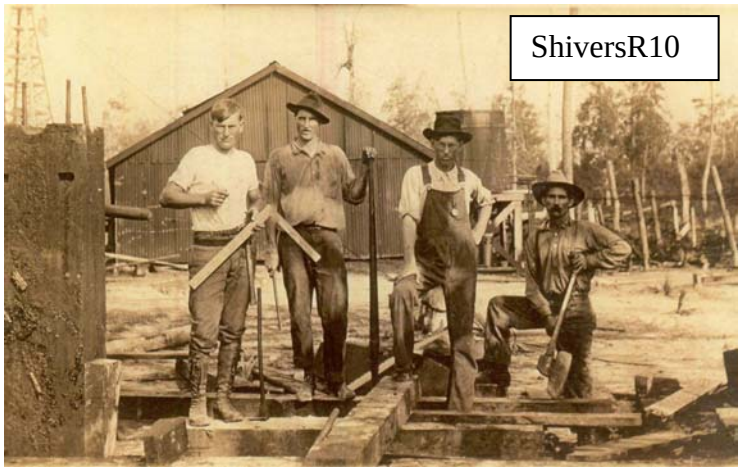
PR: Yep, that's holding our equipment in the sugarcane field, that's the Shell Oil Company vehicle. But I may not, maybe it was a Plymouth, an old Plymouth.

AG: Here's a good picture of the instruments set up, this is Number Twelve.

PR: Oh yes, it sure is, absolutely. In that marsh, to get a good foundation. You see this 2 by 2, you put three of them in the ground and sometimes you had to go as much as 15 feet deep to get a good, solid foundation otherwise, when you set the instrument up it would get out of level. We had a lot of stuff to haul.

1.8. Robert Shivers

Robert Shivers was born in Hull, Texas in 1929. His father built derricks for the Gulf Oil Company and later worked for the Sun Oil Company and for the Rio Bravo Oil Company. Robert stayed in Hull through the 11th grade of high school, and graduated in 1946. Then he went to the University of Texas, and finished in 1950. He began working in the oilfield in 1944 in Monroe City, Texas. Then in '52 he entered the Army. He got out in '54, at a time when the oilfield was cutting back. He built an office for a doctor and got into the home-building business. He moved to Morgan City, Louisiana in 1957, when it was a boomtown. Houses were in short supply at the time, so he settled there and began his business. Robert shared photos from his family's business in Hull.



1.8.1. Excerpt from Interview of January 12, 2002

AG (Andrew Gardner): Here is Number 8.

RS (Robert Shivers): Oh that is a roustabout crew I was working with. This man's name is Huffier but I said about Huffier. This man hurt his back and I had no doubt he had back injuries somehow and he was going to a ride to do his work, but on the way he would hook some boots like the rodeo (laughs).

AG: His back must have been all right at least part of the way ah. When did you figure that was taken?

RS: 1948

AG: '48

RS: Let me put ah…

AG: That is all right. I got it

RS: That was the summer I worked for Gilford

AG: That is a Gulf Oil roustabout crew boat?

RS: Yeah

…..

AG: OK so this is Number 10, that is a nice picture.

RS: Yes, that is my Grandpa right there.

AG: And what was his name again? OK let's just get it on the tape.

RS: His name was William Gilbert Shivers, but everyone called him Pa'. Do you see that access that has a 16' inch blade on it?

AG: Yeah.

RS: That is a broad axe and if you hack it, when you chopped it you called it hack it, so if you hack… and if you cut a tree that was mostly a pine tree cut one seven foot long of whatever and then you just hack it in a square across that and that was barely useful, but here it was a standard wooden, not a derrick, but a standard rig and that is what you used that broad axe for. This right here is like…

AG: On the left.

RS: Like <inaudible>. When he built those decks and called them up like him, two men on top and two on the bottom… the next level or whatever. This right here, you get up on the derrick and jump with a rope.

AG: Oh man (laughs).

RS: Well anyway…

AG: So this will be Number 11 then?

RS: Right, well this is obviously a production in Saratoga and that is my Grandpa right there, he's got a little mustache.

AG: Right as pie uh?

RS: Yeah. That is a contractor… I can't reckon. Well someone has his picture I got his name written on but ah that was his crew.

…..

AG: And we are going to call this one Number Twelve instead.

RS: OK, that was of course Hull, Texas, were I was born. This was about the time I was born and you could see Main Street and… you know, you need gravel and ….

AG: Right, right.

RS: Shells or whatever you need, look at those chains on there.

AG: Right.

RS: This fellow here delivered the mail down on Death Row you know, he had the ...

AG: Right, right, right.

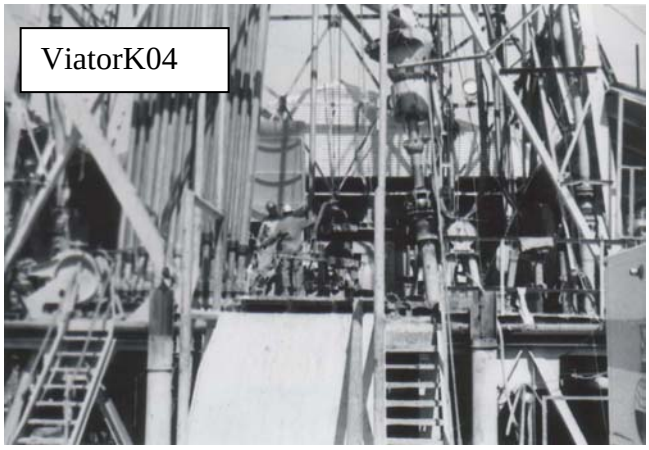
RS: He had to pick up those by the depot and… Now he had to hold it to <inaudible> and Saratoga which was 7 miles away. He will pick it by the train and take it to…

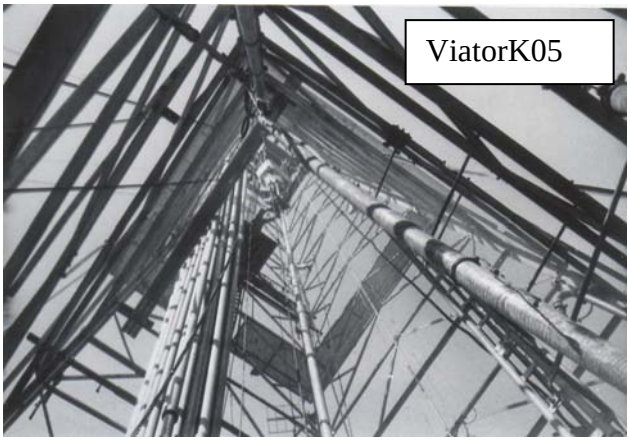
AG: Right.

RS: And take it to the office and carry them out to the closest communities.

1.9. Kenneth Viator

Kenneth Viator entered the industry around 1958. He grew up in Delcambre, Louisiana where people earned their livelihoods from shrimping, salt mines, working in the oil industry, and running mom and pop stores. He began working on the crew boats for a contractor, and was eventually able to get on a contractor roustabout crew. Later he got on with Shell, where he started in drilling but eventually shifted to production in 1967. He worked mostly as an operator, but just before retirement in the 1990's he advanced to maintenance leader.





1.9.1. Excerpt from Interview of July 20, 2001

AG (Andrew Gardner): OK, we can move on to Number 2 then. This is the Shell rig Number 4, which is the first Shell rig you worked on?

KV (Kenneth Viator): That's right.

AG: What can you tell me about that?

KV: This was an inland barge, done most of the drilling inshore, on canals, had some canals drilled … dredged out so we could get to some locations.

AG: Was it a relatively new rig when you started working on it?

KV: No. This was an older rig, I think. Pretty old, because I don't remember if it was maybe three years after I was working on that rig they got rid of those inland rigs and they were sold. They got rid of all the onshore rigs and just kept the offshore rigs.

AG: You guys didn't stay on this rig?

KV: Yeah.

AG: You did?

KV: Right. This back part here is the living quarters. You had a living quarters on that rig, that's right. We had living quarters, and we'd sleep and eat and did everything on that rig for seven days. Seven days on and seven days off.

AG: Do you figure this is somewhere around Weeks Island this picture was taken?

KV: Well, I don't remember exactly where this was. I'm not sure that that would be Weeks Island. We did some work at West Lake Verret by Morgan City. And when I did hire out on it, it was at Intracoastal City, which was in the part of Vermillion Bay called Little Vermillion Bay. It's a part of Vermillion Bay.

AG: Let's see … what's going on here in Number Three, now?

KV: OK, Number Three is the same thing. We were tripping some pipe here. Well, right here, I take that back. This here is the Kelly, when you're drilling. That's the Kelly, and we're probably fixing to take that Kelly off, disconnect, and maybe start pulling the pipe. See, we were pumping mud with that Kelly, drilling, and it looks like we were about to take it off and set it back, and we're coming back to trip the pipe. We're fixing to get … and I remember those people too. That's me on the left, and this is Dupré … I forget, we call him Pappy. He died. And this is that George Caisson. He's the motorman helping us out.

AG: So what are we looking at here in Number Four?

KV: OK. This one right here is still looking at the rig, but what they call the V-door, where the pipe is out on the rack and we pull them out the V-door. We tie them up and bring them up as we're drilling. But right there it looks like we tripped the pipe, and we're either still racking them back or we're fixing to go back in the hole. It's hard to tell what we're doing. But you can see the pipes in the derrick.

AG: And this is looking up the derrick in Number Five?

KV: That's right. This is looking up at the derrick, and right there it looks like it's the same job – we're pulling the pipe and racking them back.

AG: So you pull three lengths of pipe up to the top …

KV: That's right, and disconnect them and set them back into the derrick. They had some fingers to put them in. You put maybe ten or twelve in a row. And you'd rack all that pipe.

AG: As here in Picture Four. Those are the stacked pipe.

KV: Yeah.

2. Sample Ethnographic Prefaces and Summaries

2.1. Gerald Adkins

UA-0133; TM021

City: Houma, LA
Date: January 14, 2002
Interviewer: Tom McGuire
Format: 2 tapes, 3 sides

Ethnographic Preface:
Gerald Adkins, now retired, started working for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in 1963 at Grand Isle. Kerry St. Pé had referred us to him on a previous trip as one who knew a lot of the commercial fishermen in the area. I had called him several times in September 2001, but his "on-call" job forced him to cancel a couple of appointments: he drives vehicles around to car lots all over the region. He retired in 1997, and rather than return to his native Shreveport, he built a house in a new subdivision behind the shopping mall in Houma. His wife, Jane, a nurse, was home but did not participate in the interview.

The interview ranged across a number of topics dealing with W&F data collection and management, environmental changes and fluctuations, local entrepreneurs, and the differing propensities of shrimpers and oystermen to interact with the oil industry. He agreed with an impression I had been formulating: because of the greater degree of variability/volatility in shrimping (i.e., year-to-year changes in catches due to environmental factors), compared to the relatively steady nature of oyster harvests (function largely of how diligently an oysterman cared for his reefs/leases), shrimpers were more aggressive than oystermen in trying to find niches in the oil industry as it developed.

Summary:
Early years: graduated from college at Northern; in the 1960s, decline in shrimp production put pressure on W&F to study the problem; he went to work as biologist at the lab on Grand Terre Island off Grand Isle, doing basic research on shrimp biology/population dynamics, though his preference was for finfish research; passage of Public Law 88309 in 1966 provided research funds to all GOM coastal states; biologists in each of LA's 7 districts would select research; in 1966 he moved to Houma as District Biologist, until he retired.

Finfish research: stimulated when Florida clamped down on gillnets and the fear that Florida fishermen would bring "thousands of miles" of monofilamant nets into Louisiana waters; at the time, almost nothing was known about the magnitude of commercial and recreational fishing effort in the state; finfishing was only a supplemental activity, done in cold weather, by crabbers, shrimpers and oystermen; federal law prohibiting contraband fish shipments made it easier to get more reliable data on fishing effort.

Recreational fishermen: not powerful group in the 1970s, but in 1980s, the GCCA moved into Lake Charles from Texas and united all recreational fishermen, gaining power in legislature;

though "compromise" legislation - primarily outlawing unattended nets by both commercial and recreational fishermen, and restricting gillnets to mullet and a limited black drum fishery - the fishery is now "stable".

Impacts of oil activity: until 1972/1975, very little state regulation of activity; he did study of effects of canals and recommended that oil companies do directional drilling from central canals; his boss wouldn't let him publish recommendations because it implied added costs to oil companies; philosophy of little regulation was that "we have millions of acres of marsh;" canals disrupt natural water flow; offshore activity has little effect on fisheries, and rigs concentrate fish and thus make it easier for them to spawn; Houma Ship Channel increased in width from the original 150 feet to 1500 feet since banks were never stabilized; saltwater intrusion now impacting Houma's drinking water supply; Ellender got funding and Houma boomed with access for deepwater shipping; Houma Courier ran article on this 2 or 3 years ago.

Freshwater diversions: do some good in small areas, much major diversions, e.g., running the Mississippi down through Bayou Lafourche, resisted by landowners.

Effect of floods: 1973 to 1975 were flood years, displacing species 10 miles offshore; oysters were reestablished in some areas, though overall catch was down.

Game wardens: he was a biologist, but wore a uniform; "everyone was a game warden by association;" difficult to collect information from fishermen after someone from their dock gets arrested.

Local entrepreneurs: Motivatit Seafood started by A.J. Busey in 1940s; Mr. Ernie Voisin moved to California and worked in aeronautical industry, bought out oyster leases and company, and automated it based on his experience from his California work and worked to broaden market in urban areas.

Oyster reef damage claims: W&F biologists assess damages done by props and barges; testify on behalf of oystermen; oil companies have their own assessors; reef off Grand Isle, right near shipping channel, known as "Million Dollar Reef' because lessee would (supposedly) move the navigation buoys onto his reef and collect damages repeatedly from boat and oil companies.

Recent marsh repair lawsuit: Michael St. Martin brought it for his own marshes, but offered to include state school lands in it, so it meant money for the parish; he's very generous in donations to causes around town.

2.2. Thomas D. Barrow

OEC006, OEC007

City: Houston, TX
Date: October 30, 2001, November 7, 2001
Interviewer: Joe Pratt
Format: Tape, transcript

Ethnographic Preface:
Dr. Barrow received a BS in Petroleum Engineering at the University of Texas in 1945 and his Master's degree in Geology in 1948. He went on to complete his PhD in Geology at Stanford University in 1953. Even before completing his doctoral work, Dr. Barrow joined Humble Oil and Refining Company. He became president of that company less than 20 years later. When Humble was transformed into Exxon, he was elected senior vice president and member of the board of directors. He also served as CEO of Kennecott Corporation when it was acquired by Exxon. When Standard Oil of Ohio acquired Kennecott, Dr. Barrow led their exploration division and served as vice chairman and member of the board of directors of SOHIO. He retired again in 1985, but couldn't stay out of the oil business. He is currently president of T-Bar-X, Ltd., an oil and gas exploration company, and chairman of Tobin International.

Summary:
Interview begins with discussion of geologic studies offshore California in the 1950s. Talks about Humble Oil's analag 3-D seismic system developed in the early 1960s. Moves on to discussion of Humble's early offshore gravity surveys along the Gulf Coast in the 1930s. Shift in geologic thinking in the late 1950s and early 1960s from salt domes to lower relief fault features. Story about Humble's West Delta 72 field. Change in Exxon worldwide exploration structure in 1964. Shell-Esso partnership in the North Sea. International explorations offshore, especially Asia. Story about concession from Thailand.

This is a second interview with Dr. Barrow. Starts with background on the creation of the National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA). Talks about NOIA's effectiveness in lobbying Congress on offshore issues. Discussion of offshore Malaysia and Australia. Problems working in Algeria and former French territories in Africa. Exxon's role in Aramco. Wallace Pratt and Exxon's entry into the Middle East. Story of Barrow's father's trip to the Middle East and Europe in 1937. Barrow' experiences running Humble's exploration effort during 1965-1970. Barrow's role in the discovery and development of Alaska's Prudhoe Bay field. Story about radar system in Valdez area. Barrow's move in 1972 to head Exxon exploration and production research. Time as head of Kennicott beginning in 1978 and relationship with SOHIO. Story about John Browne of BP.

2.3. Weber Callais

UA-0178; TM034

City: Golden Meadow, LA
Date: June 4, 2002
Interviewer: Tom McGuire
Format: Tape

Ethnographic Preface:
Mr. Web Callais, 88 years old, had been referred to me by his nephew, Ronald Callais of Allied Shipyard (a regular with the coffee group at PJ's in Golden Meadow). I had contacted him on previous trips but never hooked up with him. His grandson, Brad, was visiting him when I arrived, and I explained the project to both of them; several other female relatives came in and out during

the interview. After the interview, we walked over the Chene's netshop, where Mr. Web goes many mornings to help make nets and get exercise (and, according to Ronald, play bourée). He owned a netshop for decades, but his primary business was boats, first tugboats after the war, then crewboats, then offshore boats. He serviced Humble Oil out of Grand Isle for 22 years. With only a 2nd-grade education, he is proud of a career of running boats, serving on bank boards of directors, making nets, and running a 100-acre crawfish farm up in Larose. He is still on Hibernia Bank's board, but he noted that board members don't make decisions anymore - they just get occasional free lunches.

Summary:
Family: 4 Callais brothers from France jumped ship in New Orleans; some went west to Lafayette area, rest came down here; daddy farmed, trapped, trawled, converted trawler to seismic boat in 1935; oldest brother (Harold, "Don") owns CCTV (Callais Cable) and solid waste company; daddy was Abdon (Abdon Boats); other brother in tugs; younger brother in boats (Harry, who passed away Sunday), youngest brother in boats; Ronald got out of boats and into shipyard.

Boats: built the first 100 footer at Halter Marine in 1963; up to then Coast Guard would not permit oil boats bigger than 65'; kept building more and bigger boats, would sell off smaller ones; things got bad in mid-1980s but he had good record of service to companies so he kept all his jobs.

Edison Chouest: Chouest's father moved to Keel, MS to be in pulpwood business, came back, Chouest's a shrimper; Humble asked Weber to build a crewboat; Weber asked Chouest to go 50-50 on it, Chouest reluctant, then Weber heard of a steel-hulled shrimp boat for sale in Bayou Le Batre; Chouest bought it, even though Humble would only offer him a 6-month contract for its use; so Weber got Chouest started in the boat business; now they have 400 men at shipyard; Weber and Chouest calculated how much money/time was wasted by giving 2 15-minute breaks every workday, at average wage rate of $15/day; now building 324 footer, will have biggest winch to set casing in 4-5,000 feet of water; with rigs now 120 miles out, Chouest converting 2 230 foot seismic boats to floating hotels with 80 rooms; Edison Chouest kept half interest in one of the icebreakers, and still has shares in 3 boots used by LOOP.

Otto Candies: had contract with Humble to procure all boats; company paid him flat day rate; he would keep a percentage of this, rest to boat owner/crew.

Boat contracts: no good - easily broken by oil companies when oil prices turn bad.

Coast Guard: requires inspection every year for "top" of boat (safety equipment, etc.), every 2 years for hull, every 3 years for shaft - which is the most time-consuming; Weber thinks its unnecessary since boats are twin-screw (always a backup); lose 15-20 days/year to Coast Guard activities; lose $25,000 to pull the 5 inch shaft in drydock every 3 years.

Financing: his father got him started with a boat, but after that he could always get financing from local banks; bank wanted some local on board after Citizens' Bank sold the Raceland branch 30 years ago; he always used his judgment when asked if local applicants were credit-worthy; now Hibernia owns former local banks; he financed a couple of boats through GMAC [General Motors], but they charged 6-7% interest, so he stuck with banks at 4.5%.

Net business: used to buy trawl nets in Morgan City, but decided he could make them here; in 1950, Gulf coast shrimpers started fishing in Mexico - so many shrimp that the nets would break; always had 10-11 men working; remembers taking 16-day bus trip with New Orleans mayor (Morrison, former ambassador to Mexico) through Mexico to El Salvador to open up Pan American highway in 1958.

Changes in area: don't see neighbors anymore; used to be only 7 houses between Corporation limit and his house - now many more; had 7-8 ballrooms, now only 1; big stores/restaurant chains killing small ones (Randolph's Restaurant just sold); 4 shrimp canning factories gone; he sold big ice plant he owned-shrimp so scarce now that it wasn't needed; younger people moving up bayou to new subdivision homes.

Environmental change: used to haul fresh water from lakes for steam rigs; bayou used to be fresh below Golden Meadow; canal cuts erode in no time; need to restore beach [he has camp on Grand Isle].

2.4. Ferrel Chauvin

UA-0053; AA003A&B

City: Chauvin, LA
Date: July 13 and July 18, 2001
Interviewer: Ari Anand
Format: 2 CDs; good sound quality; total interview time - 132 minutes

Ethnographic Preface:
Mr. Ferrel Chauvin was referred to me by his younger brother, Mr. D.J. Chauvin, who also called him to introduce me. Both Mr. and Mrs. Chauvin (Grace) were quite friendly (she came in mid-interview), and the interview was quite informative. We talked for a while about traveling, and about various things in general like cultural differences. The Chauvins have traveled a fair bit, and Mr. Ferrel Chauvin is very proud that he has traveled to Europe a few times and taken his kids to most of the big monuments across the U.S.

Mr. Ferrel was born in Chauvin in 1932. He served in the Army in the early 1950s. After leaving the Army in 1953, he joined Mobil as a kitchen hand, then became a roustabout, and then a roughneck. He went to work for Texaco in 1954 and worked his way up from being a derrick man, mud engineer, and driller, to a senior drilling supervisor before his retirement on December 31, 1989. Mr. Ferrel remembered his years in the oilpatch fondly, particularly the jokes crew members played on each other, a subject on which he said he could write a book! I returned to interview him on the 18th for more specifics about his work experience.

Summary AA003A:
Early Life: Born in 1932 in Chauvin. Father worked for Texaco. Attended University of Southern Louisiana for one year then enlisted in Army.

Oil Industry Work: Went to work for Mobil Oil after leaving the Army; worked offshore as galley hand, roustabout, and roughneck. Schedule of 7 days on, 7 days off; changed to 6 and 6, which paid less so went to work for Texaco in about 1955. Worked on Texaco rigs as roughneck, then as derrick man. Most rigs were steam back then because no market for natural gas. Started working on drilling rig around 1956 or 1957. Then went to work on pile rig powered by natural gas. Then worked on derricks until 1970 with same crew for 12 years. During this time there was a big push to increase production.

Mud Engineering: Took mud engineer job in 1970, stayed in that job until 1976 or 1977. Invented a mud cleaning system and some other items.

Motivation to Work in Oil Industry: 7 and 7 schedule allowed him to work during his time off. Cultivated large orange crop, which he sold for extra money. Oil industry was one of the only places to make "good money." Also just fit his personality.

Early Oilfield Work: Working for Mobil, 5-6 hour boat ride to rig. Took awhile to get over his seasickness. Rigs were not equipped to live on so stayed in a camp. Worked 12 hour shifts, mostly nights. Camp was on pilings.

Family Life: Married while in the military. Wife had to manage family and make all the decisions.

Life on the Rig: No telephones when he started in the 1950s. Great food. Hard work in early days because had to do all lifting manually. Crew played lots of tricks on each other.

Work History: After derrick work, was a mud engineer until about 1976. Then worked on a drilling rig until 1977, when he became drilling supervisor (a.k.a. tool pusher). Describes drilling supervisor duties. Drillers used to be in charge of rigs but supervisors became more common as rigs got bigger over time. Describes more supervisory duties. Remained drilling supervisor until he retired on December 31, 1989. Never went back on rig; never misses the oilfield. Talks about retirement activities. Had plenty of money in his retirement plan.

Mid-1980s Bust: Working as senior drilling supervisor overseeing various drilling supervisors. Describes duties. Starting around 1985, lots of rig work started to be contracted out to save money. Then, in about 1987, the districts began to be consolidated. When they consolidated New Iberia and Harvey Districts, someone took over his job, and he went back out in the field as drilling supervisor. Then there was a big blowout that destroyed 24 wells on one platform. He was sent to clean up the mess and try to redrill. Still working 7 and 7 schedule.

Injuries and Safety: Worked in oil industry for 35 years, from 1955 to 1990. Never had a serious accident. Most workers end up with back problems or missing fingers. His brother was blinded in a car accident. Oilfield work is dangerous. Company always had a safety program, but safety really depended on who was the driller and the experience of the crew. In mid-1980s Texaco got rid of all their rigs and started contracting rigs instead.

Family in the Oil Industry: Son has worked for Texaco for about 20 years. Son-in-law has worked for Texaco for about 25 years. Father worked for Texaco.

Technical Changes over Time: Everything was done by hand when he started. Now rigs are much more modernized. Rigs have become more technically sophisticated as began drilling offshore in deeper and deeper waters. Lots of technical advances in equipment. Oilfield work has also become a lot safer. Progressed from on land drilling to offshore to deeper waters. Now can drill in 9000 feet of water. Communications have improved; now have fax machines, computers, and telephones on rigs.

Social Changes over Time: When he started working, most workers were not well educated. Soon people had to have a high school degree to get a job. Today, company jobs are hard to find; most work is through a contractor. From when he started work in 1954 until about 1975, oil jobs were very secure; "you had to really screw up to lose the job." But by the early 1980s, people had to worry about their jobs; companies were giving retirement packages and shutting down rigs. Companies tried not to fire people when they shut down rigs; instead moved people to different jobs; some people had to take pay cuts. Now people worry about keeping their jobs and being able to retire. Most workers do understand that companies have to do something to cut costs. Describes contractor hiring and training process.

Unionization: Never unionized because the refinery workers were unionized and oilfield workers would get raises when the refinery workers got raises. Refinery workers went on strikes and all the company employees benefited. Shipyards are now trying to unionize.

Environmental Regulations: When he started working, dumping oil or whatever overboard was not a big deal. Things started to change around 1968-1970. Now people have to report any spillage and recover the oil. Oilfield destroyed barrier islands and marsh areas by digging canals. The government should have had more control earlier. Now can go to jail or be fined for dumping oil. Regulations made job a lot harder but everyone realized they were necessary.

Mud Engineering: Describes mud handling process. Designed a system to take solids out of mud and a lost circulation field to minimize mud loss. Describes use of mud in drilling. Have to treat mud with chemicals to prevent water loss as it circulates. Worked as mud engineer for six or seven years, moving from rig to rig. Texaco had 10-15 rigs in the Harvey region, including both land and barge rigs.

Future of the Oilfield: Future will be offshore, either in the Gulf of Mexico, Alaska, or Florida. Still lots of oil in Gulf, but will have to go farther and farther offshore. Might use secondary recovery techniques if oil prices continue increasing.

Funny Story: Tells story about a joke played on one rig, which involved a rivalry between the day and night crews and an angry nutria.

Summary AA003B:
Family in Oil Industry: Father worked for Texaco for about 25 years; started in about 1944; retired when he was 65; worked as laborer then mechanic; never went offshore. Lots of onshore work in the shipyards. Son and son-in-law worked for Texaco on rigs; at one time, both worked for him on the same rig. When Texaco sold rigs and went to contracting, son and son-in-law were moved to

production. Both still working for Texaco; one on offshore platform, one on inland lake barge. Describes processing oil and gas from various rigs, which is done at a "tank battery."

Work History: Got out of school in 1951. In Army from 1952 to 1953. Went to work for Mobil; worked in kitchen in 1953; worked as roughneck in 1954. Went to work for Texaco in 1954; worked as a derrick man on a rig for 15 years, from 1954 to 1969; mud engineer from 1969 to 1975; driller in 1976; drilling supervisor from 1976 until retirement. Paid by the hour until became drilling supervisor, which is salaried. Pay at all levels is pretty good. Last few years before retirement, he was a senior drilling supervisor in charge of all the rigs, working out of an office. Retired December 31, 1989.

Drilling Problems: Pipe getting stuck in hole. Drilling into pressure hole, which can kill a well. "There's always a problem" when drilling a well. Describes all the ways things can potentially go wrong. Time is money on a rig; expensive to run; need to drill as fast as possible. Describes potential problems. Problems are really common. Most dreaded problem is a well blowing out and catching fire. Describes more potential problems.

Training: Sent to school before becoming mud engineer, but the training was really a waste of time because he already knew most of the information. Talks about early mud engineering experience.

Worker Demographics: Most workers were from the area; some workers from northern Louisiana, Mississippi. When the boom started, most supervisors were from Texas. Few Cajun supervisors until about 10 years after drilling began in the area. Lots of workers from Many, Alexandria, and Bunkie; few from Mississippi and other states. Most early engineers from out-of-state, mostly from east coast and Texas; also some engineers from other countries. Crews from certain areas tended to stay together. Texaco put workers on "extra board," in which you could go from rig to rig until you found a job you wanted; so tended to cluster with similar people. Some Cajun crews would speak all French.

Desegregation of Oilfield: Less clustering of crews after desegregation in the mid-1960s; extra board system ended. People from northern Louisiana seemed to have harder time with "colored" workers. He had no problems with "colored" workers; skin color did not matter to him. Started hiring women in mid-1970s, which was more of a problem. Some women sued company for sexual harassment. Work not as hard as it used to be so women can do it. Integration changed how workers talked and behaved; more "carefree" before integration.

Job Security: Job security per se has not changed that much. Texaco tries not to lay off workers; instead, cuts work force through attrition and by offering retirement incentives. He took early retirement because of incentives, but it was still a hard choice. When he began, the oilfield was booming and there were tons of jobs. Just not as many jobs today. Now Texaco offers retirement at age 50, but few people have enough money to do that.

Worker-Supervisor Relations: Less personal relationships between workers and supervisors than in the past.

Unionization: Oilfield might eventually unionize. Boom-bust cycles result in lots of hiring alternating with lots of layoffs. So workers might unionize to get more steady employment. Also, workers get paid less in Louisiana than in other areas so might unionize for better wages. 14 and 14 schedule attracts lots of people from other states; can fly back home during time off. Oilfield workers never needed to unionize because benefits accrued by unionized refinery workers were also given to oilfield workers.

Mid-1980s Bust: When Texaco sold their rigs, many workers went to work for drilling company contractor, Bid[?] Drilling Company. Bid[?] Drilling Company was owned by Texaco but was a separate entity. Started cutting benefits in 1980s. Later Bid[?] Drilling Company sold all their rigs. Many rigs ended up "in the junk pile."

Marriage to Oilfield Worker: Gracie Chauvin describes being married to an oilfield worker. No communication while he was out on rig. She made all the decisions. Later, Texaco got more lenient and let workers call home. Then, when he became a mud engineer, he came home almost every day. When working as driller and drilling supervisor, he could call home daily. Only time she ever called him on the rig was when his mother died. Most of her friends had husbands offshore, mostly working for Texaco. He would work extra hours to get extra day off. Have five children, all married now and living nearby. Working 7 and 7 schedule allowed him to start an orchard.

2.5. Jay Cochennic

UA-0178; EB039

City: Cut Off, LA
Date: March 18, 2002
Interviewer: Emily Bernier
Format: 1 tape, no sound problems

Ethnographic Preface:
Mr. Jay Cochennic's name was given to me by Mrs. Viviane DeFelice of Larose. When I interviewed the DeFelices in January, I asked about finding someone who worked for Schlumberger, as we had not found anyone who had worked for them yet. Mrs. DeFelice told me she thought Mr. Cochennic had worked for Schlumberger. When I reached Mr. Cochennic in March, he was happy to be interviewed; in fact he suggested I come down the same day I initially called him. He and his wife Doris greeted me when I pulled up. They have a lovely home in Cut Off. There were fans going and the wind blowing and out back they had a partially covered pool, whichmade me feel like I was in the tropics.

Mr. Cochennic was born in Golden Meadow to a bar owner and his wife, a jewelry shop proprietress. He grew up living behind the bar and remembers every Saturday night listening to oilfield workers, shrimpers and oystermen fighting. He spent summers working for Exxon and Brown and Root while in high school. He was in the Air Force for six years and was trained in Radar. He got out of the service, returned to Louisiana, and almost immediately got a job at Schlumberger. He felt that he was well trained to work there because of all his technology training

in the military. Schlumberger was a very technology-oriented business and invented many oil field tools. Jay worked his way up to an electronics technician and retired in 1997.

Summary:
Early Life: Born in Golden Meadow, went to high school there. Father owned a bar and mother owned a jewelry store. Remembers the oil field workers feeling that they were really tough because of the nature of their jobs. Also, oystermen and shripmers at the bar, a fight every Saturday night. Remembers hearing stories about locals and outsiders not getting along but by the time he was in high school that wasn't the case. Went to college for awhile but didn't like it much so he went into the service.

Air Force: Went into Air Force and was trained in Radar. Wanted to get trained in something that would be useful and that he could make some money. Also had the draft so he wanted to go in before he was called. Never saw any combat but was in during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Then went back to Lousiana. Mother had someone who worked for Schlumberger come into her shop, she asked about a job for her son and this man told her to send him down.

Schlumberger: Didn't know much about the company before applying, knew that they were involved with technology and electronics. Didn't know it then but later learned that they used the same technology that NASA used but in the opposite direction. Began in 1965.

First Day: Applied for electronics but didn't have a job yet, wanted him to work in the field for a while. His first day he was sent offshore. Everything was on the job training, you learned from someone with more experience. Now they have schools for everything, from how to get on a boat to how to do your job. 3 man crew, 2 operators and an engineer. Had to ride a boat out because no helicopters yet, only a couple of hours at that time. Later even the helicopter rides were several hours because they were drilling so far out in the gulf. Was paid for "drive time."

Payment: Paid for the number of tools you ran in hole as well as a base salary, and then drive time. Base salary wasn't very much nor was the drive time. Incentive to run as many tools as possible.

Schlumberger Duties: Put a string of tools together and put them down the hole. It was induction and open hole work. Tool's purpose was to measure the dome as well. Good company for research and development, interested in finding out what was down there. The number of tools you use is the luck of the draw. You didn't have too much control over how many tools you'd use. If tools don't work you run the risk of getting kicked off the rig, didn't happen very often.

Personalities: It was "weird" how big a part personalities played in the oil field. If personalities didn't mesh that could make big problems. The company men had the biggest egos.

Crew: 3-person crew for Schlumberger. Sometimes you could have over 100 people on the rig depending on what was going on in the hole. Sometimes there would be too many people and there wouldn't be any place to sleep.

Hurricanes: Called in before hurricane. Some still waiting to the last moment. Didn't have all the technology to tell you when to leave. Each rig was different. Individual judgment as to when crews

went in. Usually was for the company's benefit, not yours. Wanted to make as much money as possible.

Retirement: Worked 1997, worked 32 years for them. Twice as busy as he was when he was working for them. Made lists of things he had to do and wanted to do. Drives to Chicago to see his daughter and her family every year a couple of times.

Operator: Was an operator for 4 months. Began getting familiar with the tools and making sure they work well. Enjoyed working in the field and thought it was extremely beneficial.

Dangerous situations: Had never been in one before. Getting on the platform was scary because of "the basket". Also talks about the Widow Maker being very dangerous. Learning was by watching and doing. Widow maker was the way to get from the tender to the platform. Basically a plank with a rope swing. First time he almost slipped but managed to hold on. Some made it out, but many fell. Oil companies did not like to talk about any of the accidents. Really rough in the winter because of the bad weather.

Electronics Shop: After 4 months moved to shop. It entailed working on all of the electronics in the tools. Felt that his military training was extremely helpful in this part of his job. Worked with two other guys in the shop. Herby Doucet and Matt Muntz. Herby had been trained by a correspondence course and had been an operator for a long time. He was color blind which made the fact that all the different components were color-coded irrelevant.

Unions: In 1965 talk about the union and some people fired because of their attitudes toward the situation. People from New Orleans had come down on their own time. Most people down here are against unions, even though there is a possibility that they could make your life a little easier. Says that lately Chouest has put up signs, but even since the 60's people were against unions. Says it's because people are very independent and didn't want any more people telling them what they had to do.

Electronics: Long skinny electronics and often very heavy. They fit into the tools, pipes and casing. Outside had to be strong because of the temperatures. Uphold portion, panels which received information that the tools sent them to be read at the top. When he left computers were talking to computers down hole and info was being sent quicker because it was between the wires and not through the wires.

Biggest Change: Technology was state of the art, up with NASA. Always a new tool coming out and old tools being updated.

Training: First training was driving, first aid, how to get on the boats and platforms. They had to get trained for all of this as well as a couple of weeks a year to get trained on the new tools that were coming out. Still had some antique tools that some companies would want for a lesser price. Some would think we've done it this way all these years and we don't need to update: Booker Platform. Majors wanted new technology as soon as it came out.

Offshore: After the first 4 months only went offshore as a trouble-shooter. He would take a tool with him to solve a problem. Would have to arrange for his travel back (not pay for it) sometimes had to wait for a day to get a ride back inshore.

Marriage: Met in 1965 and married in 1966. The girls thought he was a Texian because he didn't have a strong accent. He spent 3 years in San Antonio.

Climbing the ladder: He was in charge of the electronics shop less than a year after he began because everyone else had gotten fired.

Schedule: Home every night except for the times he was offshore. Might have to leave early but for the most part was home every night. You went out by the job and usually didn't come home until you were finished, someone would come and relieve you after 14 days. 14 - 7 when working offshore. When he first began he didn't have any days off because they were short handed. He would sleep on the rig or on the boats coming back.

Positions: Electronic technicians, senor electronic technician and general electronic transitions. They were in charge of repairing tools from all over the oilfield. They would send tools in to the shop and then would fix them. Made more money as a general technician for doing the same job but they expected more from you. He remained a technician until he retired. The only other step up was as an engineer, but needed a degree to do that and he didn't want to go back to school. Asked for volunteers to go to Libya, and he almost did it but decided against it. Worked most of his time in Larose, and 4 years in Houma.

Retirement: Profit sharing and a retirement plan in the beginning, then a 401K came in plus the other two. It is still the same now. Trying to work towards a 401K as a "nest egg" and your retirement will be a sum for each year you were employed by them. In order to retire you needed 85 points. 55 years old and 30 years for the company. He had to go past 55 because he needed to get more points.

Wife: Nurse for 33 years, retired a year after Jay.

Changing area/Houma: Nobody paid too much attention to what your dad did. Whether you were rich or not was irrelevant. In Houma there was only one restaurant there, no shopping center or Mall. The oilfield made Houma big. In Morgan City during the boom had a sign that said, "Last one out turn out the lights". So many people left the city. Isn't sure what industry is supporting all of the building that is going on, especially the $250,000 homes. Wants to know where they are coming from and how they are living. There seems to be a lot of out-of-state license plates at the Walmarts and shopping centers. Thinks it must be because of offshore where they come down here to work and then go back home. Mall opened 20 - 25 years ago.

Bust: The 80's at Schlumberger found some of the people getting laid off but most of them still had jobs. You could get a rig at a very good price because there wasn't a need for them but they were still drilling and if you're drilling you need Schlumberger. Didn't feel the recession too bad.

Laying off: Used to retire or get laid off only because of boom and busts or if you did something really wrong. Now that things are changing they are going more by evaluations, which is good and bad. If a man gets several bad evaluations, he can still get laid off even though he had 22 years.

2.6. Nelson Constant

UA-0080; DA004, DA050p

City: Thibodaux, LA
Date: July 23, 2001 and July 18, 2002
Interviewer: Diane Austin
Format: Tapes

Ethnographic Preface:
I was referred to Nelson Constant by his granddaughter, Alana Owens, who was working as an intern for the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program. She accompanied me to the first interview. Nelson's wife sat at the kitchen table through most of the interview, but she did not say much. A couple of times she made a comment or two, but she asked that she not be recorded. Nelson had a notebook of photos from his work as a surveyor, and I visited him a second time to do a photo interview.

Nelson was born in 1914 and raised in Kramer, Louisiana. His childhood was unique because his mother was a teacher and ensured that he finished high school, even though it meant he had to live with several different aunts. He entered the oilfield after working in his daddy's store for several years and getting to know a party chief who did business with the store. He began with a survey crew in the swamp and advanced quickly to surveyor and permit man, jobs which he kept for most of his 23-year career in the industry. When he left the industry, Nelson went to work planting soybeans for about 8 years and then built some crawfish ponds.

Summary DA004:
Early personal history: about 50 families in Kramer when growing up; no roads, traveled by boat; started working in grocery store with father in 1933; graduated 1935; boarded at aunt's house in New Orleans to get high school education; finished high school at Thibodaux College after roads completed from Kramer; father leased land to fur trappers, had to manage property lines; got job working as surveyor for Humble Oil Company, big benefit being able to speak French

Surveying: company would pick up lease, would go mark property lines, get permits from property owners; was more successful than others; some people frustrated with how contract companies had treated them; mostly French people, some rednecks near Hammond and Sulfur; experience with oyster fishermen in Bay Adams; started in 1945 through connection with party chief; started laying shot; would go ahead of crew and talk to the people living in the area; (showed photo album); pulled quarter boats as close as possible to job for living quarters; advanced to surveyor and permit man within one and a half years; worked 10 and 4, but called in on off days as well

Early days in the oilfield: one would prod for oysters; used Breton compass; no radios; then phones; wife only called one time in 25 years when child sick; wife good friends with party chief's

wife; started $.60 an hour, shipyards paying $1.25; people came out and tried to unionize, would have been bad because needed flexibility; sometimes worked 10 hour days; like a family; no major changes; lots of tricks played - short sheeting, taking hinges off ice box, pack suitcase with canned goods; 3 blacks on crew; lived on little quarter boat behind theirs; workers from Kenner, swamp people, and they knew how to handle it; a few of the Texas college graduates would come out but then quit and went home

Swamp buggies: slot wheel buggies; Model B chassis with wheels and motor; could not cross bayou; then to iron craft built by Houme Marine about 1952-1953, would get stuck, had to walk the back wheels; talked company into renting Cheramie buggy (has photo); then track buggy with pontoons; film at Exxon plant in Baton Rouge of Party 10 working in Plaquemines

Work experiences: worked as boat driver on Shell job and then got Humble job; did everything by hand at first; would give crew a sketch of where to lay charges and they would go do it; usually brought quarter boats in harbor during storms; worked 23 years and then retired because they were going to break up the crew; was successful surveyor without education, company sent people out to learn how he did it; had the best cooks; would drill hole and leave a slush pit, did not know dangers of what was going on; would talk about holes, dangers at dinner table; blacks started during WWII, 13-15 from Opelousas, stayed on barge because no more room; kept leaving because were drafted; Nelson was drafted but got deferment, with 4 others, because activity was essential for the war

Growing up: went to 6th grade, mama teacher from New York, went to New Orleans, lived with aunt to go to school in New Orleans, then with another aunt and another; Kramer was closed community, mostly French and a few Germans; would take daddy's boat to go get ice

Laying shot points: now have to pay more per hole for shot point; never offered anyone money for shot; talked to the people and they'd agree every time; would get map from conservation department showing oyster leases, would pole to check for oyster beds; only had about 4 holes blow out with gas; worked on Pecan Island, some families never came off island; sometimes had to use mud boats to get to the trenasses; only one guy bit by snake out of 25 years in the marsh; don't regret the work

Summary DA050p:
Getting workers: Choctaw and Kramer were places to get workers; we needed people who could work in the swamps; we carried everything on our backs, had to take apart the instruments from the cab and each person carry a different part; we hired them with the understanding that we'd lay them off when we got to the water; they had nothing else to do, it was 1932 and the Depression; the only work besides trapping and fishing was to work in the shipyards; young people could not go to school beyond the seventh grade, they would listen to you; had sawmills in Kramer so the people lived in wooden homes; most of the people in Choctaw lived in palmetto shacks; would find them where people gathered after passing their traps; I was assistant to the party chief and would talk to them in French or English; I got my job by translating for them

Experiences with others: trappers were very good workers; they were used to swimming, we sunk a work boat in the canal, one swam down, hooked a cable, and we wrenched out the boat; on their off days they'd go to drinking and we'd have to get them out of jail; none were bad; there was no

stealing, could leave pocketbook on the bed; would help each other out if one had a heavy load; guys from Houston would come to the quarter boats and work there, two or three of them were very nice; no communication in the beginning unless we were close to Thibodaux; no phones in the community back then, no electricity; electricity came after they started getting jobs with the oil companies when people could pay for it; started working at 16 or 17 because already broken in in the swamp

2.7. Walt Daniels

UA-0241; DA077

City: Morgan City, LA
Date: November 21, 2002
Interviewer: Diane Austin
Format: 2 tapes

Ethnographic Preface:
I was referred to Walt Daniels by Steve Shirley. Dr. Daniels has been practicing medicine in Morgan City since 1961 and is also an active member of the civic community there. He was born and raised in Gadon, Louisiana where his father, one of the original West Texas rig builders, worked for Pure Oil Company. Dr. Daniels decided to become a physician because he disliked his early experiences working on the farm and in the oilfield and because of the positive influence of the physician in his hometown. He completed medical school and was accepted into the practice of Dr. Brownell, Morgan City's mayor and one of its two town doctors. He remained in Morgan City throughout his career and is now semi-retired.

Summary:
Personal history: Physician in Morgan City, Louisiana associated with the oil business since birth; father was one of the original rig builders from West Texas and moved the family to Gadon, Louisiana in 1930; Gadon was a Cajun farming community that was transformed because of local oil-related businesses; later many of the men from Gadon commuted to Morgan City to take boats to go offshore; when I completed medical school I was looking for a place to practice and Morgan City was a boom town; spoke to the hospital administrator, got the names of two doctors; went to see Dr. Brownell, the mayor at the time, and came to Morgan City as his associate in 1961; Brownell's father had come here, purchased swamplands, gone into the lumber business, and become state representative; Dr. Brownell took over his term when his father died, was the mayor for 20 years

Early days in Morgan City: Oilfield was an important part of the economy when I first came; had been through several industries - lumbering, shrimping, oil; the practice was very large and busy, very different from today; Dr. Brownell took no appointments; patients came in from the bayous and city at 8am; social gathering; Dr. would arrive about 10am; by then people outside; segregated waiting rooms; I said we have to end this; closed the black waiting room, at first they were uncomfortable

Oil related work: Large amount of physicals and work related to industrial accidents; no specialists at the time; if we could not handle it we would send them to New Orleans; had to do so many

physicals that we would put men in 14 by 14 foot rooms, 8 at a time, did them like an army precondition physical

Early practice: Fees were low; Dr. Brownell was independently wealthy, a generous man; in 1961 the first visit was $3 and all others afterward $2; made a lot of house calls, calls to little boats on the bayou; oil business was a good old boy network; people in the oil business responsible for sending individuals for physicals, for industrial accidents had access to your ear, got to come in for their appointments early; offshore business was booming; had heard that some doctors had to go offshore to deal with injured people

First trip offshore: Shortly after arrived Dr. Brownell said have to go deal with diver injured in diving accident; he had city business so sent me to helicopter pad to go offshore; tried to recall diving medicine I had learned in medical school, about 30 minutes worth; met company man and flown to the middle of the Gulf of Mexico; helicopter landed and I met the guy in charge of the divers; he knew more diving medicine than I did; led me over to tank; one guy inside was awake and alert, the other was unconscious; something happened at 120 feet; he rose to 60 feet where the other guy was working, caught him, and held him; I didn't want to go in; had problems clearing my middle ear; worker handed me his knife, said we're going down; tap if too fast; I tapped and guy said we have only gone 16 feet; by time to depth my hearing affected tremendously; out there 48 hours, used expertise of physician in Georgia, talked to him 6 or 8 times; guy was okay

Other offshore work: Guy injured on a tugboat; went out on a boat and met the boat offshore; young man dead on my arrival; long line had broken, struck him in the middle of the chest; many horrendous accidents, still are but not as many; another time a guy was vomiting up blood, I went out in a Coast Guard cutter; waves were high, boat was bouncing; captain said he'd get the ship level and I was to jump over; guy was in a steel gurney; 4 guys on boat, 4 on cutter, they pitched him across; guy was alert and talking, had cut tongue and swallowed blood; took care of numerous accidents, on call 24 hours a day

Morgan City: During oil boom times rest of U.S. went through depressed economic times; we had a lot of work and a lot of money; people got quite arrogant toward the rest of the U.S.; I had worked as a roustabout for Shell Oil between second and third years of medical school; next year I got a job offshore for Rowan Drilling Company working 10 on and 5 off; worked 12-14 hour days, but the food was good and there was lots of it; unique conversations, lots of talk of sex; summers offshore gave me insight into how things worked; when I was approaching my senior year in medical school the guys would call me doc; story of whittling out fishhook without telling anyone so would not ruin the safety record

Growing up: Dad worked for Pure Oil till I was 11 or 12; he also had cattle, I milked cows; then he went to work for himself as a dirt contractor; when he first got his bulldozer I was the first operator; we had two doctors in my hometown, I didn't want to be a farmer or work in the oilfield, decided I wanted to become a doctor; doctors were held in high esteem; told me stories; mid to late-1930s had inland oil around Gadon in rice fields; if had oil became wealthy; lived at Pure Oil camp, six houses; when began school French was not allowed in the schoolyard; mother was Cajun but father was Texan; I did not speak French; our school was the pride of the community; people in the area put a premium on education; parents emphasized education; father's father had a stroke and

father had to drop out of school in 5th grade to go to work; mother went to 7th grade, all that was available, would read to me a lot; also had great teachers

Working in Morgan City: Never dreamed of leaving; none of children stayed; very rewarding to be a physician in a small town, financially, socially, individually; civic clubs have always been very active in Morgan City; no Medicare or Medicaid when first came; physicians gave lots of pro bono care; group of black people formed an organization to guarantee payment for all, even those who could not pay; learned industrial medicine by doing it; most of the stuff what would see elsewhere, except more trauma; went out and visited a couple of companies once a week to do physicals; now Industrial Medicine has become a specialty, due to the litigation factor in our society it has increased tremendously; not about care but about the paper trail

Physicals: In the 1960s the purpose was to make sure the person coming to work was physically capable, not going to get hurt or cause others to get hurt; insurance the big thing; healthy people have less accidents; now do whatever you can to get the person back to work, even if light duty; oil and gas was one of the few industries that required physicals; Americans with Disabilities Act changed failure rate of people coming in for a physical; back then it was fairly common, maybe one a week; women now working offshore; unheard of when I was working; maybe 20 percent are women, not only clerical

Surviving the downturns: Area never has recovered from 1980s; prior to that downturns were mild and would last a couple of months; survived because government instituted so many programs; industry only about 20-25 percent of my practice; always icing on the cake; medically easy, mostly pre-employment physicals, bruises, bumps; during downturn people who could normally pay their bills requested credit, many lost insurance, had to refer patients to Charity Hospital

Early practice: Started as doctor on call in July 1961; after a couple of months Dr. Brownell quit the practice; seeing average of 65 patients a day; made house calls at noon and after hours; everyone had access to your home phone; hospital had unmanned emergency room; I got another associate after about three years; hospital was quite busy when I arrived; built in the late 1950s; prior to that the hospital was an old boarding house that Dr. Brownell donated to the city; hospital reflects links to offshore industry; has helicopter pads, industrial medicine specialty

Reflections on career: Would come back in a minute; area has so much to offer, nature, wildlife; seen a negative change in Morgan City; when I first came Texaco and Shell had local facilities, had professional people who moved here, played an important part in the community, lots were active in civic affairs, were big donors; McDermott still active, but top people don't live here anymore

Amelia: Was a trapping and fishing community when I first arrived; became a Vietnamese community after the Viet Nam war; people there are very family oriented; kids started graduating at the head of the class; family and community spirit; Vietnamese started to work for McDermott, bought shrimp boats, opened family businesses

Patterson: Was bedroom community of Morgan City; river has become prime property for well-to-do housing

Gadon: Pure Oil had six houses, storage and office buildings, car garage, mechanic shop; had rope swing inside water tower; the lease where drilling went on was about a mile away, 8-10 rigs there; camp still in existence; oil people were held in high esteem in the community; they made more money than farmhands; Gadon was a relatively poor community; during WWII would have scrap metal drives, get metal from the drilling rigs; all inhabitants of the camp were Texans or Oklahomans except for one Cajun family; Texans and Cajuns got along pretty well, but there was always a distance; they were Protestant, others were Catholic.

2.8. E.J. Ellzey

UA-0213; TM049

City: Venice, LA
Date: July 19, 2002
Interviewer: Tom McGuire
Format: 1 tape

Ethnographic Preface:
On Bud Latham's suggestion, I looked up Mr. E.J, by dropping into the Ellzey Marine Hardware Store in Venice. His son-in-law, Ray, who now owns the operation with his wife, said the 80-year old usually comes into the store in the morning, and that he might talk to me. So I came back the next morning - no Ray, no E.J. I called EJ, and set up an appointment for the next morning. As it turned out, EJ had been visiting his wife in Belle Chasse, where she's undergoing treatment for cancer.

EJ was born 1922 in Jackson, Mississippi, where his father was a lawyer/judge and farmer. The family moved to Plaquemines Parish in 1933, settling on the other side of the river a few miles above Pointe a la Hache. There his father started to grow rice - running a pipe over the levee into the river to draw irrigation water. EJ had 2 sisters and 2 brothers, one of whom apparently died young. The family soon bought up some land in Venice and established a grocery store and post office. They ran a mail boat down to Port Eads, delivering groceries along the way. The father also owned a hotel in Venice. One of EJ's early ventures was road building in Venice using barges and barges of shell. He has 6 kids, one of whom is on the 25th floor of Chevron - a "troubleshooter" with degrees in engineering and business administration.

Summary:
Early days in Venice: native mostly French-speaking trappers, could make $5000/winter from it; if they had oil jobs, they would quit during season; 1-room school in Venice, then up to Buras for high school; fruit business was big; was a regular bus running down to Venice; in 1933, land for sale and people from all over bought it up.

River pilots: river and bar pilots, make $300,000/year; all "family," a closed group; have to put up $40,000 cash to get into associations; just recently hired first black man and woman; pilots work 2 weeks on, 2 off; big houses for them at Pilot Town, cisterns for water; bar pilots had camp at South Pass/Burrwood; state pilots are cheaper than association pilots.

Oil activity: oil field started in 1935/36; Texaco built dock on river; Gulf and Tidewater had big fields on land; Tidewater Oil Company had camp with cookhouse; Mr. Fitzgerald had fuel dock; Cenac Towing brought fuel in; local companies were mostly welders; Tom Popich's Offshore Shipyard now does mostly minor repair work; lots of blacks work for contracting firms in oil; use air boats now instead of marsh buggies.

Judge Perez: Judge had a plan to build fence around Fort St. Philip, across the river from Ft. Jackson, in incarcerate blacks - a mosquito-infested swampy area - but never went through with it; parish government got mad at judge so stopped maintaining the park set up for him as memorial; now apparently someone is cleaning it up; Chelon Perez (son) has cancer now; Clyde Giordano, a past parish president who is running again, is a Perez kin; Judge would visit Venice (present parish president never comes to Venice), and hand out $75/monthly to widows/widowers.

2.9. Ted Falgout

UA-0174; TM033

City: Galliano, LA
Date: March 14, 2002
Interviewer: Tom McGuire
Format: one audiotape; good sound quality

Ethnographic Preface:
Ted Falgout, executive director of Port Fourchon, was one of our first contacts in south Louisiana, when we began the baseline study in 1997. We have tried to maintain contact with him and his assistant, Davey Breaux, during subsequent trips. The interview took place at his office. Much of the interview focused on the history of the port, from the formative efforts of Senator Rappelet to the countercycle expansion in the 1980's, when oil companies made strategic decisions to consolidate their operations at the port.

After graduating in fisheries biology from what was then the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Ted Falgout got a job with LSU as the first Marine Advisory Agent in the state. This was a new program being tested by the Sea Grant Program in cooperation with the cooperative Extension Service. Working with fisheries in Lafourche, Terrebonne and St. Mary's Parishes, Ted got to know the port commissioners for Port Fourchon, who convinced him to serve as the port's executive director. He has presided over the expansion of the port into a primary staging area for deepwater oil and gas operations. He and his brother Errol run an alligator farm above the Intracoastal Waterway in Larose.

Summary:
Port Fourchon: port has experienced phenomenal growth in the last 10 or so years especially, but it's a relatively new port, was established in 1960, by act of the Legislature. The Port Commission was established in 1960; targeted the development of Port Fourchon, had no infrastructure other than the channel. Belle Pass and Pass Fourchon went out into the Gulf, which made a fork Fourchon means "the fork."

A.O. Rappelet: Senator at that time, had a vision of developing a port at this site to accommodate the fishing industry; oil and gas was starting to develop. Some of the first offshore wells were off of this area, also take the banana trade from New Orleans, create a more efficient route for moving bananas. It took a little longer than he had anticipated to get the infrastructure in, to create this port, the trade went to Gulfport [Mississippi].

Infrastructure growth: Port developed over time; through the '60's just some basic infrastructure was put in place, with some aggregate roads, some levees for hurricane protection. The Port is a 3000 acre area down at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche. Water lines were put in in the early 70s, along with a couple of docks for public use, a shrimper's marina, and two oil and gas slips. Two companies operating out of the Port in 1978; today over 130 companies, phenomenal growth.

LOOP: Louisiana Offshore Oil Port established Port Fourchon; became operational in 1981 and showed the logistical advantage of the port close to deep water. The channel improvements made it very attractive.

Marsh restoration: starting a rather unique project, a "maritime forest ridge" to recreate a ridge that once existed across that expanse of marsh but has subsided to below sea level; will have fringe ridge and plant center with woody species to accommodate the migratory birds that use this port area as a resting area.

Edison Chouest Offshore: came on after '95, not part of the original port, didn't even have a dock, virtually no presence other than some vessels working out of other docks in the port. In the early to mid '90s they decided to get into the logistical business; built a second facility in the port, and have a third one planned, looking at one in Galveston as well.

Airport: we have the capability for industrial park development surrounding the airport, which would again further support the port activity.

2.10. C.E. "Whitey" Grubbs

UA-0181; DA043, DA061p

City: Baton Rouge, LA
Date: March 20, 2002
Interviewer: Diane Austin
Format: 2 tapes. Some noise of birds in the background because we went out by the motel pool because music is piped through the motel lobby.

Ethnographic Preface:
I was referred to C.E. "Whitey" Grubbs by Jim Doré of Global Industries. Whitey had recently retired, and Jim said he was a wealth of information and was considered the father of underwater welding. I met Whitey's son at the 2002 Underwater Intervention in New Orleans when he was there to receive an award for his father because his father had been ill. I told him about the study and that I would like to talk to his father but was concerned because of his illness. He told me to call him at home. After a few rounds of phone tag at various motels and places I was staying, I

finally reached Whitey at his home near Baton Rouge. He agreed to a meeting. We met at the Holiday Inn in Baton Rouge. Whitey arrived with a heavy briefcase filled with two large photo albums that he had prepared for our meeting. He talked me through the various projects and achievements of his career. Much of the information is quite technical and requires at least a basic understanding of welding and working under pressure. I met Whitey again in DATE??? for a follow-up and photo interview.

Whitey began his career in 1939 with Chicago Bridge and Iron, worked his way up through that company, moved to CBI Ltd., retired and formed his own company, D&W Underwater Welding Services, and then went to work for Global Divers and Contractors, Inc. He became manager of technical services where he was responsible for supervising underwater repair. In 1989, he and a group of divers/welders qualified wet welding procedures at 325 feet. At age 81, he retired from Global as the director of underwater welding research. He is considered to be the father of underwater welding.

Summary DA043:
Brief occupational history: started with Chicago Bridge & Iron, worked his way up to managerial, then to CBI Ltd. in Venezuela; formed separate company, SeaCon Services, to expand and include all kinds of offshore work, including laying pipe; underwater welding became a very important though small part of business; didn't think the people at CBI Ltd. knew what they were doing; retired and formed D&W Underwater Welding Services; sold assets, went to work for Global.

Timeline: Chicago Bridge & Iron - 1939; to Venezuela - by 1955; general manager and vp of CBI Ltd. - 1969; SeaCon out of business - about 1981; sold out to Global - after 1984.

Early experiences: at CBI Ltd. had emergency problem; crude oil storage tank "burped" (listed sideways); had more diving experience than others in the company, transferred to marine operations as assistant manager; primary responsibility to develop underwater repair procedure; research department had worked 1 year trying to develop repair procedure with no promising results; had a little welding experience, hired best man - experienced diver and one of the best welders - sent him to diving school because had to have someone in the crew who knew how to use decompression tables; made 131 carefully selected experimental welds at 33', 1 atmosphere pressure.

Proving value: had just gotten started when the vice president of welding said you're wasting your time and the company's money; called to backwaters of Mississippi River out of Memphis; sheet piles driven out of interlock at fabrication facility for nuclear power plant vessels - will send complete description of this with depths, etc.; found splits in sheet piling, zero visibility, used tube attached to face mask to displace water couldn't see through; successfully completed job.

Development of underwater welding: goes back to WWII for salvage work; had to modify welding techniques for new jobs that came along; 600' Houston ship channel dock caved in, center of piling corroded, out of service; 1,400' of vertical half-inch fillet welds; put sheets in to span corroded areas; used wet welding on offshore structure - K brace.

Role of offshore oil and gas - in almost all cases had visibility offshore; everything goes better in seawater because of conductivity; welds look better, slag cleans off far easier, mechanical properties are better; already had learned most significant things onshore; always more offshore work than onshore work; offshore made up about 99 percent of work; however, had depth differential - offshore down to 325'; example - replaced a member on Chevron's "Heidi," filled up a hole and butt welded a plate on it, brought in a new member; 15 years later all the other joints had failed, those put in and reinforced with double plates were in perfect condition.

Workers: trained our own divers; one year put 32 CBI experienced welders through diving training; majority of work is fitting and design of the repairs.

Innovations: patented electrode transfer tool; repaired corrosion damage down to 170'; impressed invert system - had generator on deck, pipe anodes on deck emitting current to protect it; system on deck interfered with radio communication, would turn it off and leave it off; improper grounding of welding machines on barges and boats; problem with unanticipated leads - too shallow for groundswells and waves; get bending, results in fatigue cracks; went back to hotel room and worked out solution.

Wet vs. dry welds: dry hyperbaric welding far more expensive but in some ways better; state of art now is stainless steel and nickel where wet welds are far superior to dry welds; wet welds fall short because have not been able to eliminate porosity, have greater bend radius.

Doing a job: called in when something happens; example - dropped pile cap onto structure and damaged structure; sometimes they have divers on site, others no; divers go down and produce diver inspection report; the company sends out underwater welders to see what we're going to do about it; for us to get the call may take only a couple of days or, if someone discarded the diver's report, much longer; may bid a job for a lump sum or at a day rate; more profitable to do lump sum if you come up with a good estimate; customer who has used the company before and has confidence prefers day rate.

More innovations: electrode transfer capsule - special process to "water proof" the electrode - two coats of liquid material, baked between coats; arranged with diving company for experienced workers, worked out of their facility and bought equipment as we needed it; then opened facility with warehouse, offices, and 33' tank in Prairieville, LA; got welding engineer and metallurgist at Memphis, guidance in selection of materials.

D&W: started with 10-12 people; immediately went to training welders from scratch; went for 29 years with only one diver lost in an accident; one year put 32 welders in the water that had no diving training; all but 2 made it; only sent 1 man to diving school in 29 years; would put man in the water at 40' and have someone above him to watch out for him.

CBI - at one point bought a passenger submarine; one of the executives thought it could be used for underwater work; they assigned me to make a study of its potential capacity and what it would cost to give us capability; I recommended getting rid of it.

Global: went to work for Bill Doré; had done some work for them; he talked about buying D&W because he wanted underwater welding capability; I left D&W, sold my share, went to Global for 6 months, stayed 15 years; in 1989, we qualified a welding procedure to 325'; took deck decompression chamber attached to hyperbaric facility in sat; 5 companies invited to bid; Oceaneering and Taylor declined; Subsea International and SeaCon tried and failed; then it was our time; Bill Doré never had a discouraging thing to say; we tried for a week or so; tried once, brought divers out of sat to hotel; put them back in a week later, qualified 5 welder/divers at 325'.

Dealing with pressure: gas of the electrode generates bubbles; as go deeper, the bubble shield that protects the arc decreases; at 33' it's half the size as at the surface; have to increase the volume of gas; stumbled onto an electrode that worked at 33'; went to France, took 2 welder-divers, trained welders there to make multi-temper bead; biggest and last advance in wet welding - explanation of process.

North Sea: no underwater welding; everywhere in the world see straight polarity, if use reverse polarity get a good weld; in North Sea have reverse polarity, magnetism in the rocks; first use of multi-temper bead - Amoco (UK) Montose Alpha Platform; going to replace vertical member; removed damaged one and reattached.

Chamber for dry hyperbaric welding: to 1200'; connects to vertical tank decompression chambers on outside of building; can make welds at 3000'; chamber had been around yard, built to pressurize something; converted it for testing.

Funding for Research and Development: at CBI no problem because they needed research for big jobs; because successful they kept funding it, only 3 people; at Global Divers, MMS had just recently passed ruling that structures would have to be inspected underwater; Bill Doré saw opportunity for wet welding that had never existed before; never spared a penny.

Qualifying welders: wrote set of standards for qualifying underwater welders; available from the Welding Society, covers wet and dry welds; Type A (dry hyperbaric), Type B (wet), Type O; was chair of the committee for 15 years; committee formed in 1972, no specs until a couple of years after that.

Finding people: at Chicago Bridge & Iron had an unlimited supply; took some of the key people from SeaCon when formed D&W; immediately started training young welders just out of high school; at Global brought in some of the people from CBI, D&W, SeaCon and brought in some outsiders; in Venezuela, all welders were expatriots; "I made up my mind if I ever became boss we would eliminate American welders," called in a guy and said pick out 4-5 natives and teach them to weld.

Communication: we had what no others did - interdiver communication, so if a guy had suggestions or needed help he could share with other divers right there; most diving supervisors are under the opinion that divers should not be able to talk to each other.

Spread of ideas: did not spread fast; at CBI lost only one man; he took the information and went to Oceaneering; didn't catch on until Global; today we've just about eliminated wet welding

competition with one exception - Oceaneering has contract with U.S. Navy, kept a man with capability; a little group of 4-5 guys broke away from Oceaneering and formed Phoenix, but they did nothing; one of my men went to work for Phoenix, was severely injured on the job; they dropped a crane boom on him, he settled out of court for a big settlement; in North Sea, only do dry hyperbaric - Comex; D&W still doing some welding, but not much.

Personal history: grew up in Oklahoma, went to college 1.5 years, All American football player; one summer went to work for CBI, making more money than the professors so stayed; traveled all over, worked all over the southwestern U.S., some Illinois, then to Venezuela; when first started built refinery vessels, oil storage tanks, on a bull gang; no formal training in design - just horse sense - never took engineering courses; sometimes a lack of conventional information can lead to better ideas, more originality.

Review of career: would do it again; the most wonderful part was working with the people; the sense of accomplishment and the association with the people; 3 milestones in wet welding - (1) established the fact of when you would get cracks and with which electrodes; (2) first to do wet welding in the North Sea, made possible because of undeveloped multiple temper bead technique; (3) qualifying at 325'; The really big one was the development of the multiple temper bead; retired in January 1999 at age 81; working to complete a paper for the Journal of Underwater Welding.

2.11. Doris Mullendore

UA-0280; DA100

City: Morgan City, LA
Date: March 3, 2003
Interviewer: Diane Austin
Format: 1 tape

Ethnographic Preface:
Doris Mullendore was recommended by Steve and Jean Shirley and by Val Mullen. She is one of three founding members of the Morgan City Chapter of the Desk and Derrick Club. She is currently the bookkeeper for the First Baptist Church in Morgan City but worked for several companies associated with the oil and gas industry. When I asked her if she would be willing to be interviewed for the study, she agreed, and we met at her house.

Doris was born in Lafayette, Indiana and moved first to Oregon as a child and then to Amelia, Louisiana in 1946 as a young teenager. She graduated from Morgan City High School and took a job as a bookkeeper for a local Buick agency. When the owner bought a crew boat, she began what was to become a career in the offshore oil and gas industry. She left that company to work for a pipe and supply company, worked for a short time for a hardware store, and then in 1976 got into the diving business with a couple of friends. That company folded in 1986 during the downturn, and Doris worked for a few different companies until she got a job with Morgan City Rental, where she stayed until her retirement. In 1966, Doris helped found the Morgan City Desk and Derrick Club, an organization for women who worked in the offshore oil and gas industry (see Moye Boudreaux (DA014) and Debi Baiamonte (DA033)).

Summary:
Occupational history: Born in Lafayette, IN; came to Amelia from Oregon in 1946; dad died, mom kept rental house; graduated from high school at Morgan City High; first career job was as a bookkeeper for Buick agency; owner bought a boat, got into offshore business, moved it to Amelia; took job with pipe and supply company in Morgan City; then worked for hardware store; then got into diving business with a friend who had moved into rental house in Amelia; ended about 1986 with the downturn, had a few jobs; ended up at Morgan City Rental till retirement; took part-time job at the church

Desk and Derrick: Helped found club in 1966, with 43 members; goal to educate women about the oil and gas industry; companies were supportive; would have speakers, learn about how particular companies fit into the industry; had to let in men, but no great influx; have field trips; when president had 60 members; when money got tighter, bosses no longer paid for everything, some dropped out; having contacts with girls in other companies helpful; formed lasting friendships

Jobs: With boat company was unofficial port captain, would have to find relief captains; when guys wanted to come in they'd run the boat aground, call in with problems; with diving company did accounting, billing; started with Martech Diving, left with others and formed S and H; sold to Sonet, sold to American Oilfield Divers, drove back and forth to Lafayette; Martech had been in business a couple of years when began; would go from about 180 to 250 divers; seasonal; knew nothing about diving business when started; learned, it was fun; as payroll clerk got lots of perks; divers came from all over

Boats: Worked for Paul's Boat Rentals; had crew boats with captain and deckhand; began about 1957-58; crew came from all over; lots were shrimpers; some resistance to oil and gas industry from oystermen and shrimpers; career has been challenging and fun; don't know what's going to happen each day

Community impacts: Things started yo-yoing about 1978; all kinds of people came in to the area; got to where people had to have an ID from the police station to work, had to have a background check; companies would bring people in; at one time about 8 major oil companies, then all the service companies; many mixed with the locals, the malcontents weed themselves out; a lot of trailer parks, the majority came in with house trailers; lots of divers from the west coast, Texas, Florida; they had diving schools there; they learned to live in Morgan City; lots of Coast Guard people come in, some come back to retire here

Early days in Amelia: When moved in Amelia was strictly an old Cajun community; everybody spoke French; at school everyone spoke English, but not in the summer; father had been in the service in WWI, contracted TB; moved to Portland for health; was a fire fighter with the Civil Service, he wanted someplace to hunt and fish; they sent him to New Orleans to Fish and Game Commission and from there to Amelia; never thought about leaving; Mom, Dad, Doris all only children so family ties there; had the opportunity to work for Mobil Oil out of school, but the application said had to be willing to move; been extremely fortunate all these years, ended up with good bosses, overall a good atmosphere

Working for diving company: Learn as you go; when you get in at the beginning you work a little harder and it all falls into place; divers had to call time in from offshore; never knew when the phone rang if someone had had an accident; never a dull moment; would send out divers according to the job, depended on depth of the water and type of job; would go to the boards and look for who was qualified for the job; would call till found a guy, or send someone out looking for him; hung out in barrooms; divers would work for whoever they could because they did not get paid unless they were offshore

Supply stores: Did inventory control and secretarial jobs; was more or less purchaser for seven stores; work mostly to supply the offshore rigs; had to know size and types of pipe

Schedules: For boat company 24 hours 7 days a week; same with bookkeeping and payroll for the diving companies; had to figure depth pay and mileage, no computers; at supply company had a 40-hour per week job, almost didn't know what to do with myself; working at the hardware store, the owner bought boats so ended up keeping seven sets of books; everyone thought they could make a killing in the boat business

Changing companies: Went from first boat company to supply company to get out of Amelia; then to hardware store, to diving company for more money; left Martech because didn't like the way they were doing things; there had been an S and H in 1957, but they shut down because the divers decided to go union, the oil companies would not have union people working offshore; S and H was still a corporation, so six core people started it up again; bought by Sonat; then by Stolt Comex; buyouts to try and eliminate competition; lots of companies went into business with the idea of selling out and retiring; when S and H was in business the first time there were probably 40 or 50 diving companies operating in the Gulf, in the mid- to late- 70s; about 6 or 7 were in Morgan City; liked the diving business best because it was nothing consistent; good people

Working with divers: Consequences of seeing divers hurt was heart wrenching; we were fortunate, lost only 3 divers in 20 years; often from lack of experience; not a happy time; for single guys would do their banking; lots of social events; during hurricanes it would be a mad rush; every company that has damages wants the crew out there now; there's a lull time before the hurricane hits to get the gear ready because you know it's going to come; turnover not too high if you had a good group of divers and tenders; Jack Smith was a boss everyone dearly loved; he started S and H, Smith and Hamacker

Reflections: Would not have changed; enjoy accounting; graduated in 1952, about 90 percent of the graduating class lives in Morgan City, Berwick, or Patterson; their parents were either shrimpers or something when the oil and gas industry started, and they just stayed

Biggest changes: Growth; have seen businesses come and businesses go; biggest effect of downturn was that young people graduating from college could not find jobs, did not come back; impact on companies depended on what phase the business was in when things went down; people with service companies either moved on or waited until things went back up again; executives ended up having to move; it would be nothing to see 25-30 families leave; diving industry was not as bad because you work the whole Gulf, Oceaneering and CalDive were growing at the time; "I

consider myself real fortunate for the fact that I have always been able to hold a good job, got paid good money for it, had good people to work for and have been able to stay right here."

2.12. Jim Perron

UA-0123; TM020

City: Lafayette, LA
Date: September 28, 2001
Interviewer: Tom McGuire
Format: 1 tape

Ethnographic Preface:
Mr. Perron, part of the network of Chevron retirees, was referred to me by Bill DeCells. I called to set up an appointment, introducing myself as from the University of Arizona. He asked if I was calling to recruit him to come out to coach football. As it turned out, he wanted to be a football coach/high school teacher, but, after working summers out of Grand Isle while going through college, he discovered he couldn't take a cut in pay from oil work to pursue that career. We arranged to meet at the Hilton in Lafayette, then went to his house for the interview. In the car, we chatted football: he mused that USL always schedules a big-time opponent to start off, but the kids get so beaten up that the team is ruined for the rest of the season. He and his wife live in a very attractive house in a small gated complex along the banks of the Vermillion River. The complex was built in the mid-1980s by Chevron for upper-level managers; with the downturn, the houses were put up for sale, and Jim purchased one with funds from his retirement package (he took the "lump sum" deal). At the end of the interview, he pulled out several packages of photos, some of himself and co-workers, some of early transport vessels, several of the fire on "C Structure" off Venice in 1970 - the last fire they could actually fight before MMS came in with requirements to drill relief wells. Jim's primary job was as a "safety engineer," which included many additional duties, one of which was to keep an eye on potential union organizing. He and his wife are both from Ville Platte, in Evangeline Parish, where his father had a farm; Jim still drives up there most mornings to look after it.

Jim graduated from Southern Louisiana University (now University of Louisiana - Lafayette) in English / History and went to work dockside at Chevron's Grand Isle operation in 1949. He began working offshore as a pumper/gauger when Chevron took over Gulf's leases. He was transferred to Leeville as a production clerk and then in 1962, to New Orleans as a safety engineer. His job responsibilities expanded to include environmental issues, and he stayed in New Orleans until his retirement.

Summary:
Early career: graduated from "SLI," which became USL (now UL-L) n English/History; went to work "dockside" at Chevron's Grand Isle operation in 1949 as "casual" employee, $12/day; married his wife who started teaching school on G.I.; started as pumper gauger/relief pumper offshore when Chevron took over Gulf leases; transferred to Leeville as production clerk, then to New Orleans in 1960 as safety engineer.

Servicing drilling rigs/platforms: on LST's captain, mate, engineer were company people; big tugs would haul the motorless LSTs; then motors installed; then self-contained drilling rigs; since mid-1960s, most crew transfers were by helicopter - safer since, before then, "we were doing boat transfers when we shouldn't have;" Chevron had no weather forecaster, so would contract with Humble's man.

Oil company mergers/acquisitions: in the 1980s, Chevron was poised to acquire Getty but Texaco got it; CEO said we'll acquire next company - Gulf; Gulf had an extensive training program, which Chevron kept up after acquisition.

Chevron Retirement Group: most active of any company; 100 chapters; he was president of Lafayette group; impressed that Ken Deer, company CEO, would meet with chapter presidents at their annual meeting in California; groups kept abreast of company activities as well as getting financial/retirement management advice; groups are being told to keep "hands off" Texaco retirees after recent merger, though Chevron did earlier incorporate Gulf's retirees; remarks on camaraderie within company when he worked for it - levels of management not separated; now no one expects to retire from a company.

Unions: as "safety engineer," he was in direct contact with most of the company's personnel, and was the company's "eyes and ears" regarding potential labor problems or union activity amongst the company's contractors (especially when unions courted drillers and caterers); unions were successful in organizing Chevron Chemical plant in Belle Chase (an area where shipyards already unionized) after Chevron's labor man from headquarters refused to work with Leander Perez to try to prevent the union there; Chevron's production segment furnished workers to the chemical plant during the strike.

Safety and environmental issues: when "environmental thing" got added to his list of duties, it was the hardest thing for him, required new book learning; would be sent to San Francisco for training; headquarters safety men would be sent out to sites to audit safety and environmental issues and would insist that we show them what we have, don't hide it, and they would work with us; he dug pits with "a heavy heart" (wasted a lot of company money) to dispose of "NORMs," naturally occurring radioactive materials.

Work after retirement: he took several overseas assignments, as Chevron got active (company had been in Saudi Arabia for years); "Cal-Tex" had operations in Asia and Europe; Gulf had all of the Africa stuff; Chevron's CEO Ken Deer got into Russia.

2.13. Russell Poiencot

UA-0084; AG037, AG038

City: Houma, LA
Date: July 25, 2001
Interviewer: Andrew Gardner
Format: 1 miniCD, some interference from the fan.

Ethnographic Preface:
I met Russell through my presentation to the Morgan City/Houma group of the Shell Retirees' Group. He is the president of the group and was the host of the meeting. Afterwards, I made arrangements to meet him in Houma for an interview. He provides descriptions of his work, the regulatory environment in which he worked, the kind of laborers Shell employed, and so on. Like many of his generation, he perceived a change in company/labor relations near the end of his career, and he describes this well near the end of the interview. I returned to Russell's house the next day for an additional interview based on the photographs he loaned to the project.

Russell was born in 1928 and raised in Houma, spent some of his summers as a young man working for Texaco, and eventually found employment with GSI, a geographical surveying company with an office in Houma. To get this work, he utilized his training in the military. GSI was steady work, but the pay didn't compare to working for one of the majors, and he finally found his way to Shell Oil Company, where he finished his career. Most of his time was spent in surveying and seismic work, with a focus on surveying. He eventually became responsible for Shell's surveying activity in much of the Eastern US.

Summary:
Early history: Russell was born near Houma and grew up here as well. He describes the various bayous that comprise Houma, and the periodic floods. He was born in 1928 and was a young boy during the Depression. He talks about the hard times of the Depression. His father had no education, and did everything he could to get by - trapping, sharecropping, cane-cutting.

Schooling: Houma was a small town back then, about 5000 people. He lived outside of town, but came into town for high school. His family spoke French to him, but he spoke English back. He wasn't thinking about a career in the oil industry at all back then. He wanted to be a mechanical engineer. He graduated from high school in 1945, and then he went to work for Texaco during the summer. The toolpusher sent him to the office to be a radio operator. He took the test and got his license, but then Texaco said they didn't need radio operators.

Work: Russell went to work for GSI, a geographical exploration service, and he stuck with them for a while. They made use of his radio operators' service. Before that it was just flag waving and such, but once the radios came it was a big thing. In the 1945-46 winter he spent the entire time in the top of a lighthouse out near the beach, working the seismic crew - his job was to record each shot point through triangulation.

Summer job with Texaco: They were hiring anybody and everybody because the war was on. His first day on the job was on a slow moving tugboat. The tugboat loaded up supplies, ice and people to go out, whole sides of beef, everything. It took forever to get out - late in the afternoon they got to Dog Lake. He started working out in the galley. Most of the guys working at that time were local. There were so many qualified people here, but the only people who got the good jobs were from elsewhere. It might be because most people around here didn't have education.

Military: He got into the service just after the war. He was going into aerial photography. In the military, he got trained in processing the film, and then in aerial photography itself. He went to Japan after the war. He talks about this for a while.

College: When he got back from the war, he went to Nicholls State, and was in the first class there. He took some classes in architectural drawing. It was a two-year college at the time, and he went with his cohort to LSU. He stayed there two semesters and then left. He worked for seismic companies during the summer - he was "picking records" - finding the faults on the seismic reports and sending them to the analysts. This summer work was for GSI.

Surveying: He came back from LSU as a surveyor. He stayed with GSI for a while, and he began to get tired of working in the field with the offshore crew. He came back and worked in the Houma office. Then he went to work for Shell. At the time, GSI was still mostly working inshore. They started working offshore in '45, about when he started working for them. Deeper waters were where the companies wanted them to go. They were working for California Company, Shell, Texaco - that's where they wanted them to go. They weren't equipped for deep water, but they could do the shallow areas. They were limited by the line of sight to the towers on shore.

Shell: In 1956 he went to work for Shell. GSI was not a good paying company. His father worked for them too, and retired with no pension, no security. Shell was altogether different. Shell came to his office to interview him and sign him up. And all the companies weren't the same: Shell was well ahead of the others with the savings plans and retirement funds. We thank Shell for everything we have today. Texaco didn't have anything near this for their employees. He started in the New Orleans office, and working the East Bay field at Venice. He was an instrument man for two years, then he became the head of a crew. They were staking out locations for production, supervise the laying of pipelines, and so on. There were four fields that they were taking care of with the survey crew. He left Venice in '61 to go to deepwater. East Bay was 20 feet, and that was considered deep at the time, but in 1961 they moved out deep. They were using boats with lights, and this allowed them to get out further. They also used balloons. He was a senior surveyor at the time.

Radio and Satellite: They trained all their workers, and they were all good workers. By '65 and'66, they were working 30 miles out. Once they couldn't see, they had to go to RADIS, which were radio signals set up on the bank for triangulation. They would also do a visual check on platforms they could see. In 1963, the government released the satellite system for use too. He had a 110 foot boat, and they tested the satellite system for three years on that boat. Even though the satellite system was up and running, they were using three different coordination systems (RADIS, triangulation, satellites) to meet the requirements for working in federal waters.

Contracting: In 1970, they started contracting out all their surveying work. It was just easier that way - they had the crews and the equipment. He talks about some of the difficulties of getting platforms on location in deepwater. His job was to make sure the platforms went off the barge and onto the right spot. He talks about the Cognac platform, built in three sections, for 1000+ feet of water. It was built in Morgan City. They had to prepare for any kind of emergency when they were transporting the platform.

Fires and blowouts: He mentions some of the big fires and blowouts he worked on. It would take weeks to sort out these problems. They had to find the slicks and so on.

Away from the Gulf: He talks about the Atlantic and other places Shell was working. They released the East Coast for exploration, and Shell did what they have to see if there was oil out there. They had to watch out for telephone cables going to Europe. They also had to do archeological surveys - they couldn't drill within 500 feet of any anomaly - sunken ships and so on. They found all kinds of stuff down there.

Regulations: We talk about the change in the regulatory structure and how it affected his work. He talks more about the marine archeologists that were required. He tells a story of a diver that went down there and got scared - it must have been his first dive. The feds made them draw circles around anomalies, the states made them go look at what was down there.

Dumping: Back in the old days, anything you didn't want went overboard. There was trash everywhere, and everybody dumped everything overboard. Shell emerged as a leader, though - they mandated that the boats that worked for Shell had to be clean when they were working out there.

Loyalty: We talk about company loyalty. Shell did a good job of recognizing people for service. And even the departments within Shell would do stuff like this. The savings plans were also part of this. And the matching savings plan from Shell was much better than the other companies. They would redistribute 1% of the company profits, too. The job changed in the end, though. You weren't treated the same. Everything came down to the bottom dollar. Companies were merging. It just wasn't the same.

Reflections: The oil industry has been a big plus for the people of South Louisiana, but everything that's going on now, they say, is the fault of the oil industry. Yet everybody here benefited from the oil industry, and now they're suing.

One of his sons went into fabrication, one son is a contractor, and the last is an A/C contractor. One of his daughters owns a computer company in Austin, and there's one here in town, and a third in New Orleans.

2.14. Mary Samaha

UA-0057; EB004, EB029

City: Houma, LA
Date: July 16, 2002 and January 22, 2002
Interviewer: Emily Bernier
Format: 1 CD no problems. 1 tape: difficult to hear when all participants talk at once.

Ethnographic Preface:
Mrs. Mary Samaha was born in 1930. She is active in many different organizations, clubs and groups. She approached Andrew Gardner at an oilfield workers meeting in New Orleans expressing interest in talking with someone about her experiences growing up in the oilfield with her step-father, Escoe "Joe" Benton. She lives in a newer part of Houma, LA. in a large modern house. Her husband, M.J., was present for most of the interview. He would add things that Mary wouldn't, such as reiterating time and again how important Mary was to Joe as well as how much work she

did while working in the company. M.J. also worked in the oilfield. He worked at Shell in the exploration department for 36 years. Mary is a master gardener and does a lot of community outreach work, mainly in the field of community education concerning environmental issues

In the second interview, I asked Mary about the growth of Houma and how local businesses associated with the oilfield contributed to the transformation of Houma from a small fishing town into a thriving oil town. I acquired the names of five businesses that began in the 1950's and are still operating under the same name. Mary's stepfather, Jerry Benson, Sr., owned one of those businesses, Benton Casing. Mary had been one of the major shareholders in the company as well as head of the accounting department. She was pleased to talk about the company. She called her brother, Jerry's youngest son, who was still running his own business under the same name. Jerry Benton Jr. had only 20 minutes to sit and talk, but he agreed to be interviewed again later. Mary, Jerry, M.J. and I talked about how the business got started, how Jerry Sr. made contacts, and how he kept his business running even through the rough times.

Summary EB004:
Early life: Mary's mother married Jerry when Mary was 9 years old in 1940. Living in Harvey in 1939. Her mother rented rooms to the oil people. People in the town called them "oil trash". They moved around with him for the next 9 years, sometimes only staying in one place for a few months.

Stepfather: Born in 1909. Worked in oil field since 1920 for Laughlin Brothers in the drilling department. Worked at Jennings and Lafayette with his crew. They would work 8-hour shifts with no time off. Says that the oil people were a rough bunch.

Moving around: Mother had 3 children when she married Jerry. Each child had a suitcase; mother would bring the cooking supplies and the ironing board. They would get to town and immediately find a place for them to live while Joe went to work. Would usually have a day or two notice to pack up before leaving town. It was exciting for a young girl. As she grew older it became harder.

School: She talks about how difficult it was to build friendships. It was easy to fall behind in school. She said she got C's most of her life and was happy with that due to her situation most of her adolescent life. People looked down on you because you were lower class and weren't going to be there very long. Would repeat towns and schools sometimes. Dropping out wasn't an option because she always wanted an education. Graduated from Jennings High School.

Offshore: 1947 was the beginning of building a life of permanence. The men would go offshore but the women and the families could stay in one place. Moved to Houma in 1947. Couldn't find a place to live in Morgan City so they had to buy a trailer. Mary got married in 1948.

Memories: Close knit group of people who moved around. Says this way of life was a great education. Oilmen were not mean, they were fun loving but rowdy. Would drink and play cards a lot.

Relationships: Didn't get to know Jerry very well because of his schedule. Every 6 weeks they would change shifts. He didn't even know his own children that well. When they moved to Houma was the first time that they got to know him.

Contractors: all of the workers would change who they worked for quite a bit. Was working for Penrod Drilling Co. when they went offshore. He was 50 years old at this time and the life was taking its toll on his body.

Starting a business: Began a tong business because he'd made lots of contacts during his years in the oil field and had worked himself up to a tool pusher. She worked for Jerry almost the entirety of the life of the business. Had offices all over Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. He had several planes and made quite a name for himself. All he knew was oil but he couldn't do the hard work anymore. Only had a 4th grade education but knew every aspect of the oil industry. One of his friends went into the tong business and asked for help.

Raising a family: Mary didn't want her kids to move around like that so she set up a stable life in Houma. She and M.J. had 8 kids. M.J. got tired of the life because he knew that Mary was raising the kids by herself.

Description of different companies: all separate, drilling, exploration, land crews, etc. After awhile the large companies began merging the different departments.

Old steam rigs: Remembers seeing the wooden structures from the old derricks. Mary talks about going out on the rigs to bring her stepfather lunch or dinner. The noise still rings in her head. Remembers all the boards they laid to walk around the drilling rig, was afraid to fall when she was little.

Accidents: Says there were no safety measures in the 40's. Jerry lost a thumb, but that was the only accident he ever had. No benefits or compensation. Her brother was hurt and laid up for over a year, this was about 30 years ago.

Oil field slump: They sold the business to Frank"s Casing business in 1992 because things had gotten hard and Jerry was really old at this point.

Life since the business: Jerry died in 1997. He was the oldest of 11 children and left home at age 13 to work. Got involved with the moonshiners and almost died. Went to Beaumont, TX. and began working for the oil industry when he was 16. His brother wrote a book, "Last of the Covered Wagons" by Phillip Benton.

Regulations/safety: There was a need but they went overboard. From one extreme to another with OSHA. It was impossible to follow every single little thing. Most ridiculous rule was wearing safety harnesses in the derrick that caused accidents because they were in the way. Hard to enforce rules when rules seemingly hampered jobs. Environmental regulations were horrendous. They had 18-wheelers and said it was impossible to keep every drop in. Biggest problem was getting rid of the oil. Constantly painting the machinery. Before regulations people were not that interested in environment. Mary, as office manager, would get the info but Jerry said it was crap. Insurance people just wanted to keep costs down. Thinks that many turned their heads because the most important thing was oil. Knows that the oil companies ravished the environment. Small companies

not interested in the environment because it was too expensive to keep up. At first, OSHA told you what you couldn't do but not how to go about putting regulations into action.

Has oil field been good for South Louisiana?: Yes, it provided industry and money for a group of people who didn't have anything else. LA should be getting money from oil companies to rebuild the coastlines. Says that politicians messed the environment up. Brought a lot of money into the state, which helped the growth of the state.

2.15. Joseph Schouest

UA-0177; DA041, DA045, DA047p

City: Covington, LA
Date: March 16, 2002
Interviewer: Diane Austin
Format: 2 tapes. Some noise in the early part due to conversation between Joe's wife and a friend.

Ethnographic Preface:
I met Joe Schouest at the divers' reunion on March 10, 2002. Several people told me I would have to meet and talk with Joe, and a couple told me the story of the diving accident in which he lost most of his right hand, before I actually got the chance to talk with him. He wore a blue leather glove on his right hand but did not say anything about his injury. He told me that he had saved over ten years' worth of diving logs from the 1970's and 1980's and that I was welcome to take them and read them. I told him I would certainly like to do so, and he gave me his phone number to contact him. I called a couple of days later and set up the meeting at his house. When I arrived, he met me at the door and invited me in to sit at the kitchen table. He had a stack of photos, magazines, and company materials on the table and began by talking about them. His wife and another woman, whom he later introduced as the wife of another diver who had passed away a couple of years earlier, were moving around in the background

Joe Schouest was born in 1929 in New Orleans, started working for Taylor Diving in 1960 and dove for Taylor for 28 years, the longest of any employee at the time he retired. He began work as a seaman in the Merchant Marine in 1946 and worked at sea for 10 years. He also worked at the Mishu plant assembling tank engines for the Korean War. He began diving in the Mississippi River in 1957, moved to the Gulf of Mexico in 1960 with Taylor Diving, and then did his first job in the North Sea in 1967. In 1968, he was sent back to the North Sea where he remained until 1980. He married an English woman in 1970 and had two children. He returned to the Gulf in 1980 and worked there until his retirement in 1987.

Summary DA041:
Taylor Diving: worked for Taylor most of his career; Alan Anderson was a diver killed in a fire in Mexico while working in the Gulf of Mexico; Taylor created an award named after him; Taylor had a 1,000 foot club for divers;

Diving bell: Taylor had a particular configuration where the diving bell was lowered off an A frame; the divers would be out of the bell working for 4 hours then back in; they would rotate

around the clock on 8 hour bell runs; the chamber remained on the deck; divers working at 400' would be pressurized to 350' so they could make a 50' excursion and to allow for wave action; the bell would not be on the bottom; maintain at least a 25' height so the diver would not get crushed getting in ant out of the bell; when finished have 4-5 days decompression; bell comes back up to the A frame, attaches to flange and is bolted, pressure between the bell and chamber is equalized and divers exchange positions; had medical lock through which food and medicines would pass; had phones to talk to people in the Dog House (where instrument techs work) or off the ship; 6 divers and 1 tender in the sat unit

Personal history: born September 24, 1929 in New Orleans; worked for Taylor 1960-1987; got started in diving in 1957 through a friend who owned Graffinini Marine Diving Co.; doing most of the river work in the Mississippi River; with Taylor dove all over the world; got into diving from the Merchant Marine; was a seaman and looking for a job; had seen a program on Jacques Cousteau, thought it was interesting, saw Graffinini was in the business; they had gone to boarding school together at Holy Cross College, Joe called him up and the next day was hired on the spot; started tending and he broke Joe out; work got slow so moved to Taylor

Type of work: insurance jobs, sunken barges, underwater burning, salvage; did a lot of river work; for Taylor was construction diver, did everything from setting down drilling rigs, removing them, removing jackets; to remove jacket from production platform had to go down inside pipe, burn it off about 30' below mud level

Burning off legs: they want you to go as deep as possible inside the pipe to save pipe and save money; hair raising job; describes being inside pipe, no room to stand up; pipes vertical, diver is lowered down to burn the pipe in two and be lifted out; very dangerous burning below mud level; use a lot of oxygen for burning torch, a lot doesn't burn up, forms oxygen pocket; can have problems if have to make a second pass with the torch, get explosion; story of explosion, getting pulled up, hung on ladder; a scary moment, "but in diving you get a lot of 'em"; problems especially in first months of the year when everybody is green; divers had decided among themselves if you make the cut and the pipe doesn't come out you have to do it again; they didn't think I had it cut, so I took a second pass; it was cut

First day offshore: working in the Mississippi River you lose visibility a couple of inches below the surface, have to do everything by feel, develop a second sense; first job offshore was off Grand Isle; setting a riser and putting on riser clamps; "I jumped in that water and I could read a newspaper down there;" as years went by the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico became kind of milky for about ten feet above the bottom; lots of jew fish - groupers; they'd head down to the milky layer and all we'd see are their eyeballs; the North Sea was different; could see right down to the bottom

Work in the North Sea: worked in the Gulf from 1960-1967; then in 1967 Mark Banjavitch got in touch, I was a barge diver, worked derrick, lay, dredge barges; Mark called me to send me to North Sea to work on a flange; I went and did the job, had lots of experience with that; the next year Mark was going to send me back, I didn't want to go because it was too dark and gray; he said I didn't have a choice; went there and stayed until the 1980's; North Sea is so different after diving in the Gulf; water is cold, have wetsuits; work at 140' with 40 minutes bottom time, half of that you are freezing; North Sea has rougher seas, current; work every 6 hours when the water becomes slack,

can make 2 40' dives then have to wait another 6 hours; takes a long time to get flange together; moved to North Sea, rented house, would come back if closed up for the year, but had it worked out so they worked year round over there; barges, tug boats, supply boats much bigger

Diving conditions in North Sea: danger in rough seas is at the surface when try to get on and up the ladder and in the current; come up and are so cold you can't feel the line, if it slips away the current sends you straight to the surface; use all your decompression time trying to get back on the ship into the chamber; barges carried 2 to 12 divers, worked all shifts, round the clock to get maximum bottom time

Schedule: worked until job was finished; could go in when they were moving barges; we got about a week until they were ready for us again; in the early days when they brought barges from the Gulf the divers could go in when the weather was rough and they pulled the barge into a protected area; barges got bigger and that stopped, they did not go in; if too bad would look for nearest port; have been out in 70' seas; the barge was cracking up and they had welders following the crack to repair it as it formed

Relationships among divers: Taylor Divers were from all over the U.S.; no English divers doing oilfield work in the early days; by late 1970s and early 1980s we started breaking in some English divers; they began as tenders and then began to work as divers; we all went home; returned to work in the Gulf until the crunch came in 1987

Retirement: had retirement savings; we put in 10 percent of our wages and the company would match it; had a good chunk because of all the years; only a few years when with Brown & Root did they lose money

Transfer to Brown & Root: Taylor was an independent diving company owned by Mark Banjavitch, John Values, and David Levy; as years went by and diving started to get deeper and deeper switched to gases, company started getting bigger; Brown and Root needed a diving company; first Mark held a controlling percent, later they forced him to sell the remaining percent; then Halliburton came along and bought up all of us; no major changes with purchase; office personnel stayed the same and ran the company as they had when Banjavitch had it

Transfer to Halliburton: company got another president when Mark sold out; Ken Wallace took over; had worked as a supervisor; Brown and Root sent Beau Smit, then Norman Chambers; after that they went by the wayside, with the oil crisis they started folding up; today Brown and Root is out of the marine business, so is McDermott; Taylor did most of the work in the North Sea, had an equal amount with McDermott in the Gulf

Return to the Gulf: lived in New Orleans, when they needed you they wanted you right then and there; if you weren't home when they called, you lost that job; had to keep in touch, make a lot of calls to the office; telephone company came up with pager; that meant a lot; quite expensive at the time, but worth it, if you got one job from that beeper it would pay for itself; divers who had been with the company from the beginning had priority; 3-4 barges, carried 2-3 divers each; could use your priority to stay out longer or go in; generally if you had seniority and you'd been out a couple

of weeks you'd go in, "no wrinkles in your belly," give somebody else a chance to make some money

Do it again?: no problem (laughs); don't' think you're going to see it again; we traveled all over the world; I love diving, I'd dive for nothing, sometimes I've done it; like the challenge; couldn't do the North Sea again, "that's a young man's game"

Equipment: in the beginning owned own, had little compressor, could put 125 pounds in the reserve tank, getting too deep; could get out there and compressor not work or radio not start; Mark had been a Navy diver, started getting the big compressors; his motto was to keep 100 pounds of pressure over bottom pressure; at first would pay us for our equipment, then when we didn't need them anymore he bought our equipment; I bought my equipment when I worked for Graffinini; every diver would like to have his own; throw your equipment in the back of a truck, go search the bars for your tender; if couldn't find him, go to the bars in the French Quarter, call out, "Anybody want to tend me?"

Getting work: phone would ring, keep in touch regularly; I'd call every hour on the hour; had to stay in touch that way if you wanted the job; if get on as a barge diver, you had a job for the season, from March/April till November; as time went on, seniority increased, stayed on that barge and could throw the phones away; got to know the barge captain and foreman; they would request you, call you at home; when out and wanted to come in, call the company and they'd send me a relief; divers not established as barge divers were freelancing, would go from company to company wherever the work was; it takes 10 years to be able to do whatever they want you to do and be able to do the job; a lot of young divers get nervous, hard for them to sleep because they are worried about being able to do the job

Learning the work: learn by doing; have to be mechanically inclined to take care of your compressors, keep them running; learn underwater welding by doing; I learned in the Mississippi River where it was completely dark; keep doing that and can tell by feel, can tell by the sound of the welding machine; most divers and tenders become like a family, close friends and stick together; "We'll do anything for any one of them and help them out."

Developing relationships: live in close quarters on barges, doing same things others are doing; hold back on some tricks you learn, that's why they want you out there; if give all your trade secrets it will knock you down; in some things I took chances in the way I went about it; that's what made me; example of putting together flanges, hooking up davits

Changes: biggest changes in equipment; dependability of equipment, like compressors, diving radios, decompression tables; we worked out tables ourselves; Taylor Diving has our own tables we worked out; oil companies said we are paying these people too much money for the amount of work they're doing so companies started working out their own tables, guinea pigged us while we were on the job; found out breathing pure oxygen while decompressing would help with nitrogen; equipment and things engineers came up with for our safety, the whole thing in general has improved a lot

Safety: used to do a lot of experimental diving for the Navy, checking out different equipment, showing them how it can work; Navy divers wouldn't do some things, so we'd do it; at Taylor Diving the Navy master divers would come out and see what we're doing, shake their heads, "No way we'd do this in the Navy"; that's what you had to do to get the job done; some innovations, like frying pan shaped O ring to use in flange groove and help keep divers from losing fingers; new wrenches; was concerned about safety, but in commercial diving if you are going to think about safety you are not going to get anything done; offshore, everything around you is dangerous; you've got to take your chances there; "I think we put more safety into the diving equipment and all than we put into the job"

Incidents: lost tip of finger when setting a dredge; crane operator aboard drunk with only a few hours of sleep; beginning of season, people are off, takes them awhile to get back into the swing; the rest of the people are new; first 3 months you are going to have close calls; sand bag dropped on me, sprained both ankles

Attitude toward work: whole time I was diving I loved it; why I was good at it; always followed the job, would jump overboard if they needed help; I'd tell my tenders, if you see you can help these people, do it; don't wait for them to ask you

Relationship with engineers: got along alright; came up with habitat for hyperbaric welding; then would weld the pipe instead of putting on a flange; we'd make suggestions to the engineers; they'd listen and come up with some ideas of their own to help the divers; inside burnoff, dangerous; standing inside; first time I did it I went head first, tied my hose to my feet, my body was in one section in case the pipe shifted; was very uncomfortable; engineers made donut shape with explosives; would cut the pipe like a saw; big safety device for the diver; got the same pay putting the donut in as burning off the pipe; happened late 1970's, early 1980's; some divers had specialties, became known across Gulf; we learned from accidents; example of diver who burned himself up in the chamber; don't look for safety or you are not going to get anything done

After retirement: never went back out; a lot of times I think I could go back and help but never did.

2.16. Jerry Shea

UA-0026; AG022

City: New Iberia, LA
Date: May 31, 2001
Interviewer: Andrew Gardner
Format: 1 miniCD, no problems

Ethnographic Preface:
Jerry Shea's company, Bayou Pipe Coating, is one of the biggest employers in the region, and the Sheas have been around since the 30's. He lives on the family property in a beautiful, large house on the bayou. His wife, Harriet, arrived halfway through the interview but did not participate. Jerry is retired now, but he still plays a semi-active role in the business. Jerry is a nice and knowledgeable individual. Our conversation, however, jumped all over the place. The interview notes below include more detail about the other businesses that came and went. There are lots of

valuable sections here, including a description of the changing labor pool, the impact of environmental regulations upon business, the difficulties incurred by hiring Blacks, and the importance of safety in getting contracts.

Jerry's grandfather moved from Texas to the region (via northern Louisiana) as part of his employment from Texaco. His grandfather ended up being in charge of the entire district for Texaco and is well known by the Texaco employees I interviewed. Jerry's father and uncle broke away from Texaco and started a variety of different businesses, the most successful of which was Bayou Pipe Coating.

Summary:
Family and business: Grandfather started working for Texaco in 1908, family moved from Texas to northern Louisiana to southern Louisiana. Jerry talks about the report that's somewhere in his office about a blowout in Vermillion Bay. Back then they were working with shrimpboats and wooden barges … he remembers going down to look at the blowout as a boy. Back then when a well came in, they'd just let it blow. Photograph of RC Stewart, his dad's boss at Texaco. Jerry talks about the history of his dad, who left Texaco to form welding company, built a big business. Jerry had a college education, he had an offer for work from Chevron at $300 a month, Texaco offered $275. His dad said he should work for the family company, but Jerry and his wife didn't want to move all over the place, and if you don't move you don't get promoted. So they stayed. Photo of the New Iberia toolpushers that his grandfather brought down from northern Louisiana, East Texas, Arkansas. They ended up staying. They're all dead now.

Two districts: Houma and New Iberia. Describes districts. His uncle graduated from LSU in 1936, he was superintendent in Houma, and then he moved to the corporate office in New Orleans. He died at an early age. Up north, you didn't have productive wells like you had down here. Jerry moved here as a senior in high school. Went to college, went into the service in 46, then back to college after four years. Wanted to be a pilot, but ended up being a gunner because of a heart murmur.

Jerry's companies: When he got back from the service, oil was in full swing. It started pretty good in the 40's and 50's. There were lulls … his business history. Started bulding tanks, then got into welding. Started as a shack under the oak tree across the street. They kept expanding, but they kept the original office. They went into a new business at the port, putting concrete on pipe. They brought the old office down there. Bayou pipe was a later venture. Didn't start that until 72. Before that, they started building tanks, then they formed Bayou Welding, then they got bulldozers and laying pipelines. Had 150 people by the 50's. Then they got into swabbing. Description of swabbing. Also had steamers to melt the paraffin in flow lines. Then they started laying natural gas line on a contract with St. Martin Parish. They sold out that gas company because the regulations were too much. They also started a geophysical supply company … they just closed last week. Also went into the quarterboat business, they would rent quarterboats to geophysical crews in the 50s.

Bayou Pipe: They started a business building tank battery barges. Barges with tanks on them. Moved to the port in the 1972 when they went into the pipecoating business. Laying pipelines in the water, and they got up to 250 employees. Business grew fast. Then they started selling the other businesses.

Keys to entrepreneurship: Hard work. You have to have connections as well. You gotta know what you're doing. Last couple of years have been rough. Tried it all. Jerry served on a bank board for years. Finance is one of the most important aspects. It was hard as a Texan in the early days. They didn't care for oilfield trash back when his grandfather was here. People got over that when the oilmen started employing everybody. Oil business kept south Louisiana up. Trapping and sugarcane wouldn't have done it.

Environment: Oil industry gets a bad rap. They clean it up. Fishing has never been better, and we have thousands of wells. Talks about environment and pollution. Used to be when we'd swab them, they'd throw it overboard. The environment is fine. Only bad thing was when they dredged the canals, the waves and stuff, lost land. Environmental regulations became a problem in the 1980's. The state got rougher with regulations. It wasn't that they were polluting on purpose. OSHA man was so weighed down with gear, too ridiculous. People get hurt once in a while in the oilfield. Some of the rules are ridiculous.

Labor: The labor pool around here was pretty good, but in recent years, the quality declined. The Blacks they get today are not hard workers. It used to be better. You want somebody who can think. They have one guy in a safety office, and two guys who do nothing but patrol the yard. If your safety record isn't good, you won't get to bid on contracts. They shut the plant down to have safety meetings. Used to hire employees, but started using contractors recently. Talks about the ways that contractors save the company money. Started in the eighties. Lots of advantages to contract labor. And if there are good ones, they keep them on permanently. You find out who likes to work. Employment office doesn't have the same quality labor as the contractors. Some of them are just looking for a back injury. With litigation, it used to be you would just settle, but now everybody is looking for the big score. Now they try to move injured people to light duty work. Dealing with employee injuries.

Unions: Didn't hear much about it until recent years. Cajuns just don't care for the idea. They're hard workers. And they were happy. But their plant in Baton Rouge is union. It causes some problems … the crap you gotta put up with. Then we talk about loyalty… key is treating them right. They're like family. More like that in the past. Things are different now. They didn't work as much with the Blacks in the old days either. Talk about the history of Black employment. They've got one plant that's all run by Blacks. Story about a cruise and a Black employee that comes along.

2.17. Bill Wilson

UA-0249; DA084

City: Morgan City, LA
Date: January 3, 2003
Interviewer: Diane Austin
Format: 2 tapes

Ethnographic Preface:
I was referred to Bill Wilson by Harry LeBoeuf. Bill and Harry are among the few supervisors and managers employed by Texaco's Morgan City office who have remained in the community. When I called Bill, he said that he had talked with Andrew and agreed to do an interview but never heard again and therefore thought he had missed his opportunity. He was very pleased to have me come over. His wife, Jewell, answered the door; Bill was outside finishing up with the serviceman who had come to repair his windshield. Bill and I sat in his den, which he has decorated almost completely with LSU memorabilia. I did not see Jewell again until I stopped in the dining room to tell her goodbye. As we stood there talking, she told me that her uncle, who raised her, had worked for Texaco and that both her daughters had worked for oil companies. I told her that we were looking for women's perspectives, and she agreed to be interviewed on my next trip out.

Bill was born into an oilfield family in north Louisiana; his father migrated from east Texas to Magnolia, Arkansas and worked for the Interstate Oil Pipeline Company. After spending a couple of years in college, Bill joined the Air Force. He returned to Shreveport after the Korean War and went back to school, got married, and worked two jobs until he decided to get into the service station business. That venture was short-lived but taught him many important lessons and left him in debt. He was fortunate to get a job with Texaco in 1957, despite the recession at the time, and spent two years doing whatever jobs were needed until he landed a permanent position as a roughneck. He advanced through several positions and then ended up as yard foreman for the company's Morgan City shore base of its new offshore district. He continued to advance through the position of District Materials Manager and finally into the company's New Orleans Division Office, working in a position generally reserved for people with advanced college degrees. He occupied that position during the company's downsizing and retired as purchasing manager in 1992.

Summary:
Personal history: Born in Caddo Parish in Ida, Louisiana during the Rodessa oil boom; family migrated from east Texas to Magnolia, Arkansas; went to Ida High School, enjoyed the small town life; dad worked for Interstate Oil Pipeline Company, division of what is now Exxon Pipeline; during senior year family transferred to Sunset, Louisiana north of Lafayette, graduated Sunset High School; enrolled in Louisiana Technical University after high school; dad insisted Bill study petroleum engineering, but Bill wanted to be a coach; several friends decided to join the service, joined the Air Force, returned to Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport after the Korean War; met wife whom he had known as a youngster; married, finished Air Force service, went to work for Bossier Bank and Trust, taking classes at Centenary College at night; worked two jobs, went to school, wife pregnant

Service Station: Was managing service station on the opposite nights was in college classes; kept books for friends on the side; could see the money they were making, went into business; after six months a short-term recession caused a serious setback; eventually found a buyer and sold out at tremendous loss; lost home, car, was deep in debt; wife had been raised in New Iberia, said let's go home and look for work; put in many applications and heard "You don't have any experience."

Getting on with Texaco: Texaco was not hiring; Bill had financial training from the service and correspondence courses from Pennsylvania; was given a chance in 1957; hired by drilling

superintendent but on probation; spent first day at Ivanhoe Landing as welder's helper; handed the welder his rods, chipped flak after he made the welds; was put on the "xtry board" for anyone who was shorthanded; no days off, told maybe someday he would become a permanent employee; a few days later was put on a drilling rig as a roughneck; spent two years floating from one crew to another - pile driving, rig building, roustabout, flunky; worked 6 and 6; told the drilling superintendent was in debt and wanted as much overtime as possible; kept going out of necessity; sports and an autocratic daddy taught never to give up; was raised in hard times; that became a part of our way of life, you did whatever it took to achieve the goals you set out to achieve; finally got a job as a permanent roughneck

Career with Texaco: Worked as roughneck, derrickman, hurt back in accident and was put in production; made a gauger/pumper; spent five years in West Cote Blanche bay in New Iberia District; offshore district began to kick off; ended up in Morgan City; along with Harry LeBoeuf got shot at production foreman; started setting up shore base for drilling operations, was asked to come in and set up shore base; came in; got used to being home with family; long hours and hard work, loading boats, handling logistics, was a new challenge and enjoyed being home with wife and children every night; stayed as yard foreman; warehoused pipe; in the old days Texaco had warehouses and a dock; offshore vessels came in to be loaded with supplies and materials; at the shore base handled procurements, loading, logistics of boat and helicopter transportation; contracted out for all the equipment; 8 or 9 years later consolidated and created the Materials/Logistics Department; went from yard foreman to assistant district supervisor of materials; left and went to Africa to set up materials handling off coast of Ghana, was assistant supervisor of materials over there; had to demonstrate could do the job even without college degree; went for three months to set up operations to drill three wells off coast of Ghana; got promoted to District Materials Supervisor after returning to Morgan City

Move to New Orleans: Former District Materials Supervisor had been transferred to New York, then to New Iberia as vice president over Eastern Region over Texaco; he invited Bill to Division Office in New Orleans; did not have the formal education, they wanted a master's degree in business; he got that waived and Bill moved into the executive level; quite an experience; started downsizing, consolidated New Iberia, Morgan City, Harvey, and Houma offices into the Morgan City offices; the company had a human side to it; people worked hard, long hours, but were fair; some of the finest people ever met, were family; saddened that the company went in the direction it did

Importance of college degree: Texaco spent a lot of money on training, schooling, continuing education; brought in people for short courses; contracted companies; regretted that I did not have a degree; college does a tremendous job of preparing a person to learn; but also does a disservice to people who come out and believe they can conquer the world; is only just a beginning; people in New York set the Texaco company policy; at one time everyone went to the field whether they had gone to college or not; got real learning in the field; they got away from that years later, to their detriment; Dad was right, he said in 1952 that engineers would own the oilfield; in 1952 engineers were tolerated but seldom listened to, referred to as "Damn Engineers;" old timers did not want the engineers out there; they asked too many questions; Dad could see down the road 20 years and was right

Texaco career: Ended up in a win-win situation in my career; worked hard every day I worked for Texaco, never ran the company down, never bought gas from any other company; then when flying in Texaco planes saw them stop and refuel with gas that was not Texaco; change occurred when the technology age started coming in; had to have more technical employees, no loyalty either way; can't plan on a career with Texaco any more; retired when at the top of career and did not like the direction the company was moving; management people were raised in a house of plenty, brought a lot of good things and a philosophy detrimental to the longevity of the company; they built up the company to sell it off; in the past Texaco had an austerity program, employees had to turn in used pencil to get a new one; the philosophy was if you take care of the pennies the dollars will take care of themselves

Overseeing purchasing: Lots of extravagance going on in service companies, but not for me; lived in a glass house; guy who hired me was a reorganizer, could take a poor organization and make it efficient; lots of waste in entertainment, some in Texaco; boss centralized procurement to take a lot of that out, took buying out of the field; knew he could trust me

Business operations: Texaco would put technical and nontechnical person side-by-side on the same job, until about 1990; started going more with the technology, probably a wrong thing to do; when in the field, at night, we'd go out and try to figure out how to get better lift on the wells, how to produce less water; engineer and operator worked together to come up with solution; would experiment to see if we could get them to produce more; engineer motivated by certain desire to want to achieve the impossible; I've always had the philosophy everything can be improved on; had excellent high school teachers; no one failed, teachers made you get it; also learned a lot in sports

Morgan City: Industry affected Morgan City; departed in last few years, hopefully will get channel deepened and some will return; very diverse small community; a lot of people with a lot of knowledge about a lot of things; people make up a community; have a lot of problems but a lot of good here; during boom years did not have the foresight for development to keep people here as a result of growth; lack of space, poor planning, poor vision of what could be; with collapse, oil companies moved away; now trying to get people back and create infrastructure palatable to people raising families; years ago the goal was to make a fast buck and move out when the money was made; was not a very good place to raise a family because priorities were to make a quick buck; did have community spirit of rallying behind certain things, not too small

Raising children: Raised three children, two in grammar school and one in preschool when arrived; Morgan City was wide open, anything goes, typical boomtown; had the good points and bad points; was a 24-hour operation; prayed a lot when kids were teenagers; probably had to be more conservative with kids than parents in other areas, know where your kids were all the time; Morgan City was not as community-minded as it is now; after the boom was over it changed for the better; there was a core group even then but they did not have the influence they have now; biggest changes were in greater opportunities for young people; have lost a lot of young people who went off to college and have nothing to do unless working in the oil and gas industry; worked 6 and 6 and then 5 and 2; would rather have a few hours every day with family than a week off; am a church person, like to be in church with family

Religious services offshore: Served on committee of Southern Baptists, worked with representatives of state convention to try to set something up, but liability prevented it; ministry was thinking of renting a helicopter but could not resolve economic issues; decided to try to use video; ended up letting it be on volunteer basis; was involved in study in the mid- to late-1970s; local church tried to work with peoples' schedules to arrange meetings when people inshore; harder for city activities because people work for different companies on different schedules; guys who worked opposite schedules would team up to do volunteer work

Surviving difficult times: Almost missed the birth of third child, weather sometimes prevented flying; missed lots of things that normally would have done with family; did not have communication with family back home; wife was not expected to disturb her husband unless it was an extreme emergency - death or near death; wife had to take a stronger role in raising the family; survived by the Grace of God; "You just did what you had to do;" my situation complicated by severe business loss; didn't want to declare bankruptcy; people trusted me to pay it back, that was my upbringing; that was the mindset of everybody in the area I was raised, not just me

Reflections: Absolutely would do it again; the experience and the knowledge gained from those experiences could never have been learned anywhere else; no regrets; it was a learning experience the whole time.

The Department of the Interior Mission

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

The Minerals Management Service Mission

As a bureau of the Department of the Interior, the Minerals Management Service's (MMS) primary responsibilities are to manage the mineral resources located on the Nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), collect revenue from the Federal OCS and onshore Federal and Indian lands, and distribute those revenues.

Moreover, in working to meet its responsibilities, the **Offshore Minerals Management Program** administers the OCS competitive leasing program and oversees the safe and environmentally sound exploration and production of our Nation's offshore natural gas, oil and other mineral resources. The MMS **Minerals Revenue Management** meets its responsibilities by ensuring the efficient, timely and accurate collection and disbursement of revenue from mineral leasing and production due to Indian tribes and allottees, States and the U.S. Treasury.

The MMS strives to fulfill its responsibilities through the general guiding principles of: (1) being responsive to the public's concerns and interests by maintaining a dialogue with all potentially affected parties and (2) carrying out its programs with an emphasis on working to enhance the quality of life for all Americans by lending MMS assistance and expertise to economic development and environmental protection.