

PETROLEUM HISTORY SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Ray Anthony

INTERVIEWER: Aubrey Kerr

DATE: April 9, 1985

Tape 1 Side 1 – 30:05

AK: I'm Aubrey Kerr. And today is Tuesday, April the 9th 1985. And I'm in the home of Ray and Joan Anthony. And Ray you live on Pamberton Road?

RA: 1019 Pamberton Road in Victoria.

AK: Unit #4?

RA: Right.

AK: And your phone number?

RA: 595-3077

AK: Right. And how long have you been in Victoria?

RA: Oh just a few months. I actually retired from Esso Resources Canada Limited on February the 1st 1985 so we've just moved here.

AK: Right. So let's go back to day one in your life. Where were you born?

RA: Well surprisingly I'm a native Calgarian. I was born in Calgary and was raised in Tuxedo Park when it was all prairie land. And went to Tuxedo Park Elementary School, Belmore Junior High School, and Western Canada High School.

AK: Right. And what were your parents... what was your father's occupation?

RA: My father worked for the City of Calgary for oh, a good number of years, I was going to say 40, but I don't know whether that's the exact number. But he was with the City of Calgary civil engineering department, roads and so on and so forth. But I was a late comer in my family, so my father by the time I had reached my late teens had retired.

AK: Oh yeah. You had some brothers and sisters?

RA: I have 2 sisters and a brother, all older than myself.

AK: Were any of them in the oil patch?

RA: No. They lived on the West Coast as a matter of fact. Well I have one sister still living in Calgary, but my brother and sister moved to Vancouver before the war.

AK: So you were what age when the war broke out then? You were just a young...

RA: I'd be 11 years old.

AK: Right. So by the time the war was over you were still...

RA: Yeah, I was just... probably influenced, had a considerable influence on my eventually ending up at Imperial Oil was the fact that completing my high school just at the end of the war, and had enrolled in the University of British Columbia and of course all of the patriots were coming out of the service and University of Victoria was covering events... sorry... University of British Columbia was.. lined with Quonset huts filled with ex-service people, it was very difficult.

AK: Yeah, well I know. You decided not to continue your university pursuits?

RA: Well it guess it was somewhat decided for me. I was home in Calgary at Christmas time, and it's still a mystery as to how Imperial Oil got hold of my name, but in any event, I received a phone call from Frank Clark. Frank was the, in the personnel department of Imperial Oil at that time. And Frank, you may recall, ended up as Colonel and Chief at the Calgary Highlanders and was quite a highly decorated individual during the war. And Frank is presently living out in the Shuswap area along with a number with ex-Imperial people.

AK: But he had returned from the war, and he had resumed his duties with Imperial.

RA: Right. I believe he was an employee of the Imperial organization prior to the war. And so he phoned me up and asked me if I would like to go to work for Imperial Oil. And I guess being a product of the depression and the way things were looking at that time and Imperial Oil had, and still does have, an excellent name and employment, I weighed the job opportunity versus the schooling at that time and took the job.

AK: So Frank indoctrinated you. What month and year was it when you...?

RA: That was January the 24th 1947.

AK: Right. So you will have... you have now completed 38 years of service?

RA: 38 full years of service.

AK: Yes. Just while we are on the pension business, was it necessary for you to have worked any more years to get a higher pension? Or would your pension have continued to increase if you had...?

RA: Had I continued to work my pension would have continued to increase because it's based on annual earnings.

AK: Yeah. Like in the Feds, you see the pension can't get anymore than 70% which is 2% x 35 years. So even if you worked more than 35 years you don't get any benefit.

RA: No, ours was based on last 3 years average, which supposedly isn't, of course, your maximum earnings, times the number of years, times 0.6.

AK: Times 0.6. Yeah, well old Bill Raloff??, who'd I'm not sure is still alive, he claimed that he had put in 50 years with Imperial. Started off as an office boy. But so that was the formula that was used, right. So who was your first supervisor?

RA: I'm not really sure that I can say. I guess I would have to say it was R.D. Armstrong. He seemed to control the non-professional group around the office at that time. And you may recall R.D. Armstrong subsequently left Imperial and went with the Canadian National and one mining company I'm not sure...

AK: Yeah, that's true.

RA: And carried on and had a quite a spectacular career I believe.

AK: But I believe one of his duties was also to manage Devon Estates.

RA: I believe that's right. Mind you, Devon Estates was not in existence until probably the later part of 19... might of come in the later part of 1947 or early '48.

AK: That's right. Because that's when they purchased that quarter section out there.

RA: To build the town site.

AK: Right. So they created the vehicle by which they would handle the real estate.

RA: Right. But the reason I was a little hesitant there, the first task that I was assigned was with Charlie Visser in straightening out and examining the records of the drilling of Muskeg Number 1. Now in our conversation the other day Aubrey, you mentioned that that may have been a 2-stage well and my memory doesn't...

AK: Well that's okay.

RA: Doesn't fit with that.

AK: No.

RA: It was sort of an opening experience working with someone like old Charlie Visser.

AK: Yeah, he was popularly known as the Dutchman.

RA: Right.

AK: And he had pretty well control of all the drilling department, but could you give us a little detail of just what you were examining in the drilling costs? Little detail there, or as you can recall it.

[00:08:47] RA: Well as I recall, the drilling of that well it was probably one of the more expensive wells at that time and they had done an awful lot of drilling in chert and in fact I think they subsequently abandoned the well because they couldn't get out of the extremely hard formation.

AK: Yeah, just for the record chert is spelled C-H-E-R-T and that a flinty quartz-like substance. A rock that's very hard. You are probably right that they got into some tough drilling.

RA: And I don't really recall all of the details now, but I do recall that one part of the examination was to determine the number of diamond bits that were used which was again an excessive amount I gathered in comparing that well to other wells drilled. Seems to me there was several hundred diamond bits used before they finally gave up on this particular well. And it was to log all these, and determine what the drilling rates were, and so on and so forth.

AK: That was a company rig I believe.

RA: Yes.

AK: Up to that time...

RA: I believe that was National One that drilled that hole.

AK: Very few contract rigs until Leduc broke.

RA: Correct. Seems to me at that time we had a couple of Nationals and 2 or 3 Ebscos and I think some Franks rigs that were brought out from Norman Wells.

AK: Well there were Franks rigs used in Southern Alberta that I was looking after.

RA: Yeah, that's so long ago I've forgotten where they came from.

AK: Well, there were truck... one was a truck mounted rig, and you could move it and drive it and then spot it and theoretically get ready to drill very soon. But it didn't have much capacity. So then you spent some time with Charlie. Did you find him instructing you on the in's and out's? In other words, if you had a question would he help answer it? Or was he pretty preoccupied?

RA: My recollection would be that Charlie was then in the position as a drilling superintendent but had not been an office person too long at that time. And I found him very helpful. He would... he certainly and never did as long as I knew him, like paperwork. But he was more than willing to sit down and explain any particular operation and why you needed a particular tool or piece of equipment or so on. So no, he was really good that way.

AK: But he wasn't an office man.

RA: He was definitely not an office man.

AK: No, he didn't like offices and he wanted to be out in the field. Did you have any contact with other drilling people at that time? Or any engineers such as Maurice Paulson or some of the others?

RA: I recall them, they were certainly in the office. But no, not a working relationship with those people. They were... at the time that this took place we were on 606, 2nd St West in Calgary, which is where the Hudson Bay Parkade is now. There was an Imperial Oil service station, drive under service station underneath the corner. And the offices were on one end and upstairs. I was located upstairs. There was a number of people there at that time. There was Walker Taylor and Vern Taylor. Walker was the manager and Vern was the assistant manager. Surprisingly when I first started I thought, gee it helps to be related to someone around here if you are going to get ahead. But of course I subsequently found out that there was no relationship between Walker Taylor and Vern Taylor.

AK: That's true.

RA: And oh, there was Ivan St. George Burn was the head of the land department at that time. And George Fisher was head of purchasing department.

AK: What about S.F. (Bobby) Herd.

RA: Herd. No. I knew the name, but I never met Bob Herd. He was the head of Royalite. And Royalite was a separate organization at that time. And the only one that I know that's sort of still around is Bill Cunningham. Now Bill Cunningham and I started relatively the same time, but he started with the Royalite organization.

AK: That isn't Lloyd Cunningham's son.

RA: No, this is Bill Cunningham with BP in Calgary.

AK: Oh. Oh yeah, he's land. Yeah right, sure.

RA: Land Manager of BP, yeah.

AK: And he was with...

RA: He was with Royalite at that time.

AK: I'll be darned.

RA: Yeah. I met Lloyd Cunningham, well Lloyd was in the office at this time in Calgary.

AK: Right.

RA: And Lloyd... it was rather interesting, Lloyd was bald very early in life.

AK: Yeah, we called him Cue Ball.

RA: Cue Ball, yeah. And although he worked in the office, he never took his hat off. Lloyd always wore his hat, even inside the office there. Lloyd's job at that time, it was, at least I would think, a very interesting job, was handling the transfer of the inventory from the United States Army and the Norman Wells operation over to Imperial Oil. We had purchased all that equipment at Norman Wells.

AK: There was a lot of it bulldozed into the ground.

RA: A lot of it's buried, yeah. And a lot of it's still there. Well I think it's all been cleaned up now, but it was there for many many years.

[00:15:19] AK: Did you have anything to do with the, this is jumping around a little bit, but it just occurred to me, did you have anything to do with the moving of the refinery from Whitehorse to Edmonton?

RA: No.

AK: That would be marketing and refining.

RA: Yes, and that was... I'm trying to remember what year that took place.

AK: In '47. They didn't fool around very long, as soon as they'd hit Leduc they made moves...

RA: It would be late '47 and early '48.

AK: Yeah, they were really...

RA: It was after the Leduc discovery. It was rather interesting though at that time. As I say, when I started with Imperial it was about 2 or 3 weeks before the discovery of Leduc. And yet there was sort of an air of enthusiasm around the office, even though this hadn't happened. It was almost it was to be expected or something, I don't know.

AK: Well maybe I can explain that. I think by the time they got down, it was around Christmas time that they actually hit the zone. And I think everyone was in a very buoyant mood then, and that would account for this.

RA: That may very well be.

AK: And maybe this is the reason why you were hired because they said, hey we are going to have to staff up here.

RA: Could very well be, yeah.

[00:17:01] AK: Speaking of staffing up, when did you first start to notice the influx of Carter and Exxon people coming in to bolster the ranks?

RA: Well, of course we had always used Carter crews or had used a lot of their geophysical crews in the operations in Canada even prior to the discovery in Leduc. But I suppose to see them actually in the

office, that probably would have occurred in late '47 or early '48. There were some people that had come in from Carter, Frank Spragins I believe was one.

AK: Yeah, he worked summers. You see back during the war, the Carter crews would come up for 6 months less a day. And they had to be back over the line at a certain date.

RA: Yeah, you'd probably know more about this than I would.

AK: Yeah, well yes.

RA: I keep forgetting that you were involved in those early times.

AK: That's all right. No, but I want to get your views you know, and Frank certainly was up on those crews. And he'd go back, you know, and Jack Armstrong was a student assistant when I was there at Taber. But did you have much to do with Frank Spragins?

RA: Not a great deal, I knew him.

AK: Of course he switched from geophysics gradually over to oil sands.

RA: Over to the heavy oil, and then eventually was the father of the Syncrude.

AK: Right. Well then moving along, this clerical work; I guess you could describe it as clerical work...

RA: Oh very definitely, yes.

AK: Continued, and when did your next change in duties take place? Or do you recall when?

RA: Yes, it was only in a matter of a month or two working actually with Charlie. I would say at the most 3 months maybe. And then I was moved into the plant and equipment section in the accounting department.

AK: And that would cover what?

RA: Well this was keeping records on plant construction and equipment purchases and so on; tanks, and separators, and battery equipment, well heads, so on, so forth.

AK: Did you have anything to do with the actual contractors like Sparling Davis, and BS&B at that time?

RA: Not directly, no. No, that came later.

AK: So you...

RA: So this was really the task I was doing that lead up to my, I guess getting the job working on the records for the Atlantic 3 operation and relief wells.

[00:20:32] AK: And when was your, the first indication that Imperial was going to get involved with Atlantic Number 3?

RA: Gee. I don't think I can recall now.

AK: You probably weren't involved with a lot of the politics that went on leading up to the decision of the Board to hand the operations over to Tip Moroney on May the 15th?

RA: No.

AK: Okay, but I guess shortly after that then you started to get involved with...

RA: Very shortly after that because once Tip got hold of this operation, of course, the time was of the essence, and it was... to get things going, we had to get everything in place. So, you know, I don't recall the exact date, but I know it was very shortly after the release that Imperial Oil would be handling the relief operation on this that we got involved.

AK: Well, here again, did you work directly under Tip? Or did Charlie, was he in between there?

RA: No, I worked I guess I would have to say, I worked with Tip rather than... I was still of course, my boss was Bob Armstrong.

AK: Yes. For administrative purposes.

RA: Yeah. No, I worked directly with Tip at that time.

AK: And by that time I think Charlie Visser was out, right out there on the... looking after the well.

RA: Charlie always spent a good portion of his time in the field even though he was the drilling supervisor, he spent, oh I would think as I recall, 2 or 3 weeks out of each month he would be in the field anyway.

[00:22:50] AK: Well, now this may not be a very fair question but just while I'm thinking of it. Either or both Charlie Visser or Tip Moroney, but can you recall any particular anecdotes or any particular little events that took place that were hilarious or disastrous or whatever you want to call them?

RA: Well, as I mentioned with Charlie Visser, he was definitely not an office man. And I recall one time that we had received a lot of invoices and contracts and service orders and so on that had been written by a number of people and we wanted to get these processed. And all of the people were scattered over. Some would be generated by Tip Moroney and some would be started by field people but they required approvals of senior people in the office, so...

AK: In other words, these were just, you might say, packing slips or invoice...

RA: No, these were the actual work orders. Or purchase orders if you like, or service orders to get work done. But they needed approval. They may be written by the driller or so on.

AK: Now, is this before the day of the AFE?

RA: I don't recall an AFE for the Atlantic well.

AK: No, but I mean you know what a...

RA: Oh yes.

AK: Later on, you can't turn a wheel without an AFE.

RA: Oh well no, this was...

AK: This was before the day before AFE.

RA: There may have been AFE's, I don't recall. But this was strictly ongoing field work, and I know it because as I say, some of these should have been signed by a number of people but they were always scattered around. It was month-end and we wanted to get them. So we just stacked them up neatly in a row with a signature spot and laid them out on Charlie Visser's desk and said, 'Charlie we need approvals on all these.' So Charlie went down the whole works and signed them. And we cleared all our books off and Charlie signed everything. And he was quite willing to do that.

AK: So there wasn't what... you would have kind of eyeballed them first.

RA: Oh yeah, they were all correct but it was just a way of getting things done and so on. No, no we wouldn't have...

[00:25:20] AK: Did you get involved in any of the drilling contracts themselves between Imperial and any of the contract drillers? Say for instance with Ralph Will.

RA: No.

AK: Okay, so...

RA: The other thing with when we first started working with Tip was of course he would, having spent considerable time in South America he would get talking away and all of a sudden he would switch from English to Spanish. Or he couldn't recall the English name for a particular area or event so he would use the Spanish name. And this would... we'd have to slow him down on these things and did, but...

AK: How would you describe Tip as a man? What was some of his main attributes?

RA: Well I think that Tip was good to work with because he was positive. You could get a decision from Tip, there was no idea of taking something to a committee. You'd present what you required, or what had happened, or whatever was necessary to describe the event or circumstance and Tip would give it consideration and you would get an answer and that was the end of it. So it was very, in some ways, very easy working with Tip because as long as you could nail him down. He was very busy, and he was again a bit like Charlie Visser, he didn't spend too much time in the office at that time but he could certainly get the work down. And... no I found Tip very easy to work with. He was demanding, I'm not

saying he was lax in any way. He was very demanding, but as long as you performed your task and presented things in a nice clear and concise manner you could get the job done without...

AK: Well I think I said the other day that the fact that he'd only been there a few months and yet was recognized as being the man for the time.

RA: Yes.

AK: That would be a fair statement wouldn't it?

RA: I believe so.

AK: And some of the people said that, you know, he's never done very much drilling but I think Imperial chose him and maybe the Board had him singled out as a man with such leadership qualities that it didn't really matter what he knew, that he was able to pull the thing together and provide leadership.

RA: Yeah, I think that's true. On a project like that that's what you need.

AK: Right and make tough decisions fast.

[00:28:33] So when you worked along there now, did you have occasion to go up to Leduc to the Atlantic 3 site?

RA: Oh yes.

AK: Could you give me a little background on that?

RA: Well most of the, in fact all of the trips that I would be involved with would be checking out on equipment suppliers confirming costs and so on. As I recall, on the site there in Leduc was really something to see. They had bulldozed the dykes up along side of it there and it was an awful mess. It's getting so long ago now you don't really think too much about it.

AK: What was your impression? Maybe I could put it that way. Just, you know like you have something in your minds eye, like I do, you know what was your impression of the site?

RA: Well I guess being, my initial impression being of course new to any field involvement I didn't really know what to expect. Of course...

Tape 1 Side 2 - 30:15

AK: Okay, this is side 2. And we were talking about your impression at the Atlantic 3 well site. And then I think we were also talking about the segregation of accounts I think.

RA: Yes. Well, I think we may have caught it on the other side there. But as I said, I really didn't have much appreciation as to what to expect on an oil field operation, field operation. But the first view of that... of that quarter section was in one hell of a mess, and you didn't really know how the hell they'd ever get it cleaned up, but I guess...

AK: And I believe you...

RA: And this segregation of accounts as I recall, now this is a long time ago of course, but I know definitely we certainly kept separate accounting for each of the two relief wells. And I seem to recall that there were other accounts identified for various things such as the containing of the oil and so on, so forth.

AK: And for each of the two relief holes they were separate.

RA: Oh very definitely. Yeah. No question on that I don't think.

AK: Do you know where those records might have gone to?

RA: Well...

AK: For all that...

RA: I would have to say that if they if they still exist, they would be in in the control of our Controller's department in Calgary now. But I would suspect that they may have been destroyed because those were all manually kept records and the office itself has physically moved several times since then, of course. So if they're in existence at all they'll be in dead storage somewhere under the supervision of our Controller's department.

AK: And I don't... I imagine that the Board might have got a copy.

RA: They may have but I seriously doubt it. I would suspect that what would happen in a case like that, and here again I'm I have to be guessing because I don't recall, but I would suspect what we would do would be to invoice someone for the cost of that well and that the records would be audited. But I don't think there would be copies made for anyone because of course copying was not an easy thing in those days anyway.

AK: Well, I think that the, all the costs are picked up by the Board as Administrator and then they in turn parcel them out.

RA: I believe that's correct. Yeah.

[00:03:26] AK: Okay. I'm sorry about that little mix-up there. But let's go on to Devon town site, and the reason that you moved up there.

RA: Well, I think the reason had to be of course, they just the, increase in activity and the necessity to have people there in the field who identify what was going on and confirm with Calgary that certain pieces of equipment were there. And so this was the job that I was doing was sort of a field, not in the sense of field inventory, but just an examination of construction invoices and going physically out to the field and saying yes, there is a battery and yes, there is a separator and a manifold and so on and so forth.

AK: Who did you work for there?

RA: My supervisor was Bruce Wilson.

AK: Right.

RA: I remember when I reported, well it was interesting, I received the transfer and I left Calgary on the Sunday night and I boarded the train to go up there and I took the overnight train to the South Edmonton station. And I was picked up in the South Edmonton station by Walt Dingle. Walt, I had never met Walt, and so he met me at the station and drove me out to Devon. And I reported first of all to George Thompson, old Grey Wolf.

AK: Personnel man.

RA: Personnel man for Imperial there, and then and to Bruce Wilson's office.

AK: Is Bruce still alive?

RA: I couldn't answer that. I don't know.

AK: I wonder where he is? I...

RA: He'd be in Edmonton probably if he is.

AK: There was a couple of other Bruce Wilson's around...

RA: Yeah.

[00:05:28] AK: So you were working for Bruce.

RA: Yeah. He said to me, the first thing he said when I walked in the door, he says, well now I'll tell you what you do, you go downtown you buy yourself a pair of rubber boots because you're going to need them and then you'll be living in the Braun construction quarters. So that's what I did. I went over there and then they he drove me over to the Braun Construction camp there.

AK: That was...

RA: Over by Battery 7 I think it was, where the gas plant was.

AK: And that was not the batch?

RA: That was not the batch, no. And there was ten of us to a room. I can imagine what would happen if you transferred people like this in 1985.

AK: Sanitary facilities?

RA: Well, actually it was akin to being in the services. It was, there were H huts with the toilets and showers in the center of the block and beds on either end. And I'd say ten or twelve men to a room. And every morning we'd get up and put on these rubber boots and walk across what was formerly a plowed

field down to the Chinese Cafe on the Main Street of Devon there which was again an old army hut that has been cut in half, and half of it was the cafe and the other half was the living quarters for the cooks and waitresses there. I'll tell you that was a real experience.

AK: Now did they deduct something from your wages to pay for your room? Or how did that work? Did you get paid all found? Or how did you get paid?

RA: Well, I think if I recall correctly, we paid \$7 a month for this room.

AK: Wonderful service, eh?

RA: But there was no extra pay as I recall for living. One of the things that we did do though to cut down our costs, was that in the geological lab in Devon at that time, they had a large geological sample oven for drying the well cuttings. So every day Bob Schwartz would run down about quarter to 12 to the local store and pick up two or three quarts of milk and some strawberry jam and some loaves of bread and we toast the bread in the drying oven in the geological lab and have these bread and strawberry jam and chocolate milk and sit around and play Crib.

AK: Did Bob live in the Braun quarters too?

RA: No, Bob was over in the original batch I believe at that time, which was down just across from the cafe on the main street.

AK: And just to round out on Bob, is it correct he was your best man?

RA: No, he was, he stood up with me when I got married. He was not my best man, but he stood up with me as one of the attendants. Yeah.

AK: Oh I see.

RA: Yeah. I forget now how long we were in these Braun quarters and then they built two new batches right across the street from the office. And I moved over to there and then subsequently started chumming around with Bob Schwartz and Don Stuart and Jimmy Brinker and so on. And initially, I guess, I was living with a fellow by the name of Ed Melnick. I have no idea where Ed Melnick is now. But then Bob and I moved in together and roomed together for, well I guess right up until I got transferred back to Calgary in December of 1950.

AK: Was that in one of the batches?

RA: Yeah. Those two buildings are still there now. Yeah.

AK: And then you had the women's batch.

RA: The girl's batch, it was down... also down where the old men's batch was down on the main street.

AK: Now you've got to, you must have some stories about some anecdotes regarding the girls' batch.

RA: Well, I don't...

AK: One's that you'd care to tell.

RA: One's that I'd care to tell. Not really. Maybe I did at the time but I don't recall any offhand. I know that I think there was some pretty good parties went on at those batches and the gals... there was some pretty nice girls living under some pretty adverse conditions at least certainly adverse compared to today.

AK: Do you remember Eleanor Burton?

RA: No, I remember Ethel Coates.

AK: Who would forget her?

RA: And I remember Eleanor Turnock.

AK: Eleanor Turnock, that's who it was.

RA: Eleanor Turnock was the last person I saw two or three weeks ago when I left the office. She's one of the secretaries in the Human Resources department in Calgary.

AK: And she is still working there.

RA: Yeah.

AK: I ran into a couple of months, years ago. But she was up there at the time I think.

RA: Well so was her brother. He was a civil engineering surveyor.

AK: Oh yeah, Turnock. That's right. And Ethel Coates...

RA: Ethel was... I'm not sure of Ethel's background. I think she had worked at Norman Wells. I think she'd been around the company a few years. But I'll tell you I don't think I ever saw a stronger girl in my life than Ethel Coates was at that time.

AK: Oh, yeah. She was a powerful Katrinka.

RA: Yeah.

[00:11:39] AK: So during this time you were carrying on the same kind of work?

RA: Yeah.

AK: What prompted you to be transferred back to Calgary then?

RA: Again, I guess it was, certainly was not at my doing, it was whatever the company must have had plans or they maybe wanted experienced people in Calgary or people that had been to the field to have some idea what was going on. And...

AK: When you...

RA: By the time that I got back to Calgary our staff must have doubled, maybe even tripled. We had, the office had moved then from 606 2nd Street West into the old Albertan Building on the corner of 2nd Street West and 9th Avenue.

AK: Right.

[00:12:29] Just going back to Devon for a minute. You recall Vern Hunter?

RA: Vern Hunter was the manager at that time. Labby Laberge was the assistant. Oh, Harry Simpson was out there at that time. I guess you had just left. Ray Slueser was in charge of the geological section. Garry McCourt, and Warren Henker, and Don Stuart.

AK: Was there a D.Y. Smith?

RA: No, he had left.

AK: Very quiet person.

RA: Yeah, he had he had left by then. Jim McNinch was there at that time.

AK: Right. And what about...

RA: Now there should be some antidotes about Jim McNinch because, I don't know whether...

AK: Well he met, he married Barbara...

RA: Barbara Schneider.

AK: Schneider. Yeah, whose father was production...

RA: Production Foreman.

AK: Yeah. Jim is retired in England.

RA: Jim McNinch? Is he not with PanCanadian?

AK: Yeah, he's with PanCanadian, but he was given a transfer to London and he decided that was where he's going to...

RA: Oh well Barbara passed away a few years ago.

AK: Yeah I know.

RA: But Jim was a terrible man at that time of course. He was single, had been in the Army I believe, had completed his university after coming out of the army. But Robert Service was Jim's favorite and whenever Jim got into a good drinking party with the boys, there was nothing like Jim's recitation of the Dangerous Dan McGrew.

AK: The shooting of Dan McGrew.

RA: Shooting of Dan McGrew, yeah. I remember one night we were in the, in fact it was in the geological lab, which is where we held all our parties because it was the largest area if you'll recall. It was open-ended on one end where they had the layout tables and so on.

AK: Yeah, where they put the...

RA: We rigged up a ping-pong table in there where we could play ping-pong and we used to have quite a few parties in there. By parties, I mean these were usually stags. Just the boys getting together with few boxes of beer and we'd sit around and swap lies. And we got Jim up there one night and he was really giving us a roaring rendition of The Cremation of Sam McGee or something like this, and he grabbed the chair and got very enthusiastic and put the chair up just a four-legged chair up over his head to quote something and pushed it right up through the ceiling. It was, working in Devon was one of those circumstances that you have where you're sure glad you never missed it and you'd probably never do it again. You couldn't recapture the circumstances.

AK: Oh no. No. That's the important part of all this, things that we are doing. Did you remember Van der Lee? He was an engineer up there I believe.

RA: Van? No.

AK: Hank Bonet.

RA: Oh Hank Bonet. I saw, I was talking to hanging to Hank not too long ago. He's retired.

AK: Yeah, right.

RA: Still living in Calgary. Yeah Hank was there at that time?

[00:16:10] AK: Yeah. So when you went back to Calgary you were still in this administrative...?

RA: Was still attached to the control, accounting department I guess it was then. Involved with what they called plant and equipment. So, I suspect that they... and I know it was a benefit to have people that had actually been in the field and had some understanding of what was really going on. And that was in December of 1950, and I stayed in that section until, if my memory serves me correct anyway, until 1954.

AK: Had you by that time become married to Joan?

RA: Joan and I were married in 1952.

AK: Right.

RA: September 27th, 1952. Yeah.

AK: And you were living where in Calgary? Did you have an apartment?

RA: When we got married in 1952, we had a basement suite on 17th Avenue and Centre Street North. It's now I believe a parking lot.

AK: Yeah, it's up near the liquor store there.

RA: Well, there is a liquor store. It was across the street then from the old Crescent Theatre, which is also gone. And then we built a house in Renfrew, on 15th Avenue.

AK: Northeast.

RA: 915 15th Avenue Northeast. 916.

AK: Oh, you were south of 16th?

RA: Yeah.

AK: Just south.

RA: On what was the old Calgary Airport. When I was a kid, raised in Calgary, the airport hangar which is now a boy's school was on 12th Avenue and 6th Street Northeast. Just south of the Regal golf course.

AK: So you live there for how long then?

RA: I lived there from 19... January of 1954 until April of 1960. When I was transferred to Dawson Creek.

AK: Right, but you were mentioning earlier about some activities in Saskatchewan. Did you operate those out of Calgary?

RA: Yes. We, okay in 1954 I was transferred over to the land department.

AK: 1954.

RA: '54, yeah.

AK: And who is your supervisor there?

RA: Merv Crockett.

AK: Oh gosh. I forgot all about him.

RA: Yeah.

AK: Is he still...

RA: No, Merv Crockett, he... There was Ewing Smith was in the land department, but he was transferred up to the admin ... management. Management secretary I think he was. And Wes Hewitt was around at that time. And Merv Crockett and...

AK: Johnny Jackson.

RA: Johnny Jackson had left by then I believe. I'm not sure I, things are getting a little gray about then, but I'm pretty sure, yes it was, because I can remember going for an interview with Merv, Merv Crockett. And I wanted that job pretty bad, so I made sure I did my best on the interview. I recall that and it was with Merv Crockett. But at that time I came in to the land department in the records section but was not there very long before I was transferred over to the titles because of the heavy involvement that we had going in Saskatchewan at that time. And we were, we had a number of land men working in Saskatchewan. Fred Burks, Fred Cousins.

AK: What about Gus Hobbs? Was he still...?

RA: Gus was around at that time, I can't recall. He may have also left the company by then too.

AK: Well this meant just...

RA: Now this was...

AK: Getting Freehold.

[00:20:36] RA: This was getting Freehold. But Freehold in Saskatchewan was pretty tough. A lot of the titles had not been examined in many years. What had happened there with mineral rights in Saskatchewan, of course with the depression, a lot of farms were abandoned. And in abandoning the farms the surface rights were lost of course for non-payment of taxes, but they couldn't lose the mineral rights. A big migration was into the United States and into the Peace River Country.

AK: So a farmer...?

RA: So what we would find was that the mineral rights were still recorded in the name of maybe the original settler, but he had long since pulled up stakes and moved to North Dakota or California or wherever. And a lot of them of course had died, their wills had never been probated in Canada. And so it was a case of tracing down these people, finding out who the beneficiaries were, having their wills probated in Canada, transferring the job. So this was what I was involved in at that period of time.

AK: Well, the, what was the land titles offices' view of these minerals? Did they feel that Joe Blow who had gone to Kokomo was still the rightful owner of the minerals?

RA: Oh Absolutely. Absolutely. There's no question.

AK: So was it your job to trace these chaps down?

RA: Well, of course this is what we had to do if we wanted to get a lease from someone.

AK: Yeah.

RA: The only way we could get a lease was to find out who was the rightful owner.

AK: So it meant going back, historical search, and...

RA: Tremendous number of historical searches.

AK: But you didn't do that in Calgary?

RA: No, that was all done in Regina.

AK: You had somebody...

RA: We had... a lot of it was done by private law firms that we would hire to do historical searches for us. Yeah.

AK: Well, that's interesting.

RA: What of course what was going on in that time was that they, the land men were going out, they would take a current search of the title and they would go out. The considerations paid for leases at that time was very low. I think some were ten cents an acre and some of that maybe a dollar an acre consideration.

AK: For a 21-year lease?

RA: Yeah.

AK: How much for delay rental land?

RA: A dollar an acre? There was, no, I believe now that I think about it there were some even ten cent delay rentals on there too.

AK: And 1/8th royalty.

RA: 1/8th royalty. Yeah. So what, well the reason that I was involved was that the field land men were going out just based on the current search and taking a lease. And then we would have to do the historical, or obtain the historical, and make sure that that current owner had the legal right to that. So, there was an awful lot of title work. I can imagine that Imperial Oil probably cleaned up more titles in Saskatchewan than anyone else in history.

AK: Well, it had to be done.

RA: It had to be done. Yeah.

AK: Yeah because...

RA: It was a very interesting job. I think it was probably one of the most enjoyable jobs I had. I can recall I had three secretaries going and I'd come into my office every morning with a stack of files and keep all three of them going.

AK: Yeah. Well that would require a lot of secretarial work.

RA: Yeah.

AK: Any of those girls still around? The ones that you worked with?

RA: No. Long gone.

[00:24:47] AK: Now there was an event that took place, and I'm not sure whether it was before you got transferred to land, and that was that mix up with Carl Nickle, Engall??, and Morris Role and that crowd. And Scurry. There was some split, do you remember when they split the title on some of those leases and the farmer virtually lost his mineral rights and signed them away for 99 years.

RA: No, that must have been before my time. I don't recall it at all.

AK: It was quite a kerfuffle over that.

RA: Nope, don't have any recollection of that at all.

AK: And do you remember a fellow named Robertson that was working in Regina, down in Weyburn at that time?

RA: Nope.

AK: He was in equipment and transportation.

RA: Nope. No my involvement with, well actually with field people, drilling people, and construction people and so on was actually quite limited to that very brief period in the late 40's.

[00:26:25] AK: Right. And once the drilling boom and the main discoveries had been made, I guess that title curing died down pretty good did it? Or did you continue to...?

RA: It... well, I would say that it probably continued. I worked on that for three years until 1957. From '54 to '57.

AK: And that was at the height of the boom.

RA: Yeah. I suspect it carried on probably for awhile after that. I moved over onto some Crown Lands at that time. Old Alberta Petroleum natural gas reservations and so on, and maintaining those, I took over from a guy by the name of Harlow Way. Harlow was doing that job at that time.

AK: Oh yes. He went with Northsand?? didn't he?

RA: Yeah, he was, Harlow was transferred to Saskatchewan at that time in '57 and I took over from him.

AK: Well during your time and involvement in Saskatchewan I suppose you wouldn't have any direct contact with the CCF government and its monkey shines.

RA: No. No, because I was dealing almost exclusively with Freehold.

AK: With Freehold. You wouldn't be involved with the Crown. Because there's a lot of things went on in those Crown sales that ??? Do you remember the net royalty they had?

[00:28:07] Okay. Well, then you went.. You moved over, and you started doing Alberta Crown.

RA: Alberta and BC crown. Yeah.

AK: And at that time... you were mentioning reservations. I think most of the acreage had been pretty well filed upon hadn't it?

RA: Oh no. No, we were...

AK: There was still some reservations that could be filed on...

RA: Yeah, because we were still filing on reservations at time. And, I was trying to remember when the Zama discovery took place.

AK: Rainbow was discovered in '64-'65.

RA: Yeah. No, we followed that up. I was pretty sure it had to be... when I was in Devon there, we followed up that Slave Point trend all the way down into Northeastern Alberta and filed on tremendous spreads of acreage up in there.

AK: You said you were in Devon?

RA: No, I was, in 1960 I was transferred to Dawson Creek.

AK: Right. So you meant Dawson Creek?

RA: Yes, I'm sorry Dawson Creek.

[00:29:19] AK: Now what was the idea behind your being transferred to Dawson Creek? Could you give me a little background on that?

RA: There again I think it was a case of activity. Boundary Lake had been discovered of course by Texaco, and then we were developing our share of the Boundary Lake, and our activity was pretty high at that time. And it was just a case of staff increase.

AK: And did your job increase in responsibility when you went up?

RA: Oh, yes. I was then classed as the office land man, and my boss then, my immediate boss was Chuck Rankine.

AK: Oh I see, and he reported in turned to George Shultess?

RA: He reported in turn to Gordon Darling.

AK: Oh, Exploration Manager.

RA: Yeah.

AK: I think we'll stop the tape here.

Tape 2 Side 1 - 27:40

AK: This is Tape 2 side 1 of interview with Ray Anthony. Now you just finished telling us about your move to Dawson Creek. And it was a company town, and did they provide you with a house?

RA: No, Dawson Creek was not a company town. Dawson Creek was a town of approximately 12,000 people. When I moved up there in 1960 Dawson Creek had I guess gained its fame and maybe its notoriety from the construction of the Alaska Highway during the war. It was mile zero on the Alaska Highway. But no, there was no extra benefits other than career enhancement if you like, by going to Dawson Creek.

AK: Well I thought they built some houses there. The company built some houses.

RA: The company had some apartment blocks up there called Canalta Apartments. And there was four units to a building and I believe there was five buildings, about 20 apartments up there, which you could rent from the company. But it was still... you couldn't really call it subsidized housing. Because I recall when I went to Dawson Creek I think I was paying eighty-five dollars a month on my 20-year five percent Mortgage in Calgary, and my apartment in Dawson Creek was going to cost me 96 or 100 dollars a month in rent. So this was no big deal for me.

AK: But did you hang on to your house?

RA: No, I sold my house in Calgary. Yeah. And then subsequently built a house in Dawson Creek in about 1962.

AK: Yeah. I just seemed to get the impression from Jack McCaskill that there was a group of houses because he said that they built them up when they moved away.

RA: Oh. There was a housing policy.

AK: It was a bailout. Wasn't there?

RA: Yeah, which Imperial has always had of course, on transferring people.

AK: So that you don't bankrupt yourself.

RA: No.

[00:02:41] AK: there's one thing that... I'm sure there's quite a few episodes up there because Kay told us some stories about a New Year's Day party, and it snowed so bad that nobody... she didn't think anyone was going to come but... so you have any anecdotes about Dawson Creek that are a little different? I mean there's another Frontier Town.

RA: Well Dawson Creek is again another experience which I am very pleased to have had but wouldn't do it again. Yeah, there was, weather was a certainly a factor in Dawson Creek in our lives up there. I don't think I've ever seen it so cold even living in Calgary as one winter we spent in Dawson Creek, it was extremely cold. It hung around 50 below zero therefore for 10 or 12 days. Most of us were from southern parts of Alberta and so on and of course all our connections were down there so we always wanted to get out for Christmas and so on. So we did have some trying times. I remember one time Joan and I were going to Fort St. John, that was where the plane landed, in Fort St. John, the old CFESO, which was the Imperial Oil DC-3. And so they were going to take the wives and children out for Christmas down to Calgary. If there was any space and then the husbands out later. Well we drove to Fort St. John on terrible roads, nothing but ice. Got to Fort St. John, waited for seemed like untold hours for this DC-3 to come down from Norman Wells. We found out when it got to Fort St. John that it was loaded with the people from Norman Wells and all the turkeys that they had flown up for the people in Norman Wells. So these turkeys must now have been worth about \$50 a pound because they've been flown all the way from Calgary to Norman Wells for the Christmas dinners in Norman Wells, and now they're being flown all the way back out again because they'd taken all the people out for Christmas.

AK: Well those are pretty expensive turkeys.

RA: Those were very expensive turkeys.

AK: Did you get one?

RA: No, I don't think so.

AK: During that time were there, would supply companies come around with goodies for the...?

RA: That had pretty well been stopped by then. I seem to recall early, say 1960, that happening. But it was pretty well phased out as it was with the spectacular Christmas parties that they used to have around the city of Calgary in the 40's and 50's.

AK: Right. Yeah, they were pretty...

RA: Pretty well done away with.

[00:06:04] AK: One of the things that I'd like to maybe get you to shed some light on, Ray, is the events that led up to the Rainbow Discovery which Banff made on a Mobil farm-in.

RA: Okay, with respect to the Rainbow Lake discovery, it's too bad Chuck Rankin isn't here, because I know that there were some interesting dealings between Imperial and Banff at that time. We had identified the Rainbow Reef. And I recall Mel Parsons was a geophysicist with it at that time, was currently in Houston. Took the farm out to Calgary and they had identified this Pinnacle Reef but said, well okay, the reef is there all right. It's readily identifiable geophysically, but it won't contain enough oil to make it worthwhile. So it's was... the farm-in was turned down in the Calgary office. Now I also seem to recall that we made a deal on the seismic on this. And we traded the seismic information for the well information. On the first, on the Discovery Well. And we were getting all the well information on that well.

AK: Well, the story I had was that the seismic was giving you a reverse picture. I won't spend a lot of time on it. But as soon as the discovery was made, Banff went out and did some CDP shooting and this seems to have been the first CDP shooting that was done. Maybe that's an aside, but, when you fellows were in land, did you also have to do surface permitting?

RA: The surface up there of course was all provincial government, so you could do that just by...

AK: Yeah, so it wasn't patented?

RA: No. Now the only surface work that I got involved with there was the Habet??? mission which of course was on Indian land. That was a rather an interesting little thing, because I had not been a surface land man. And at Dawson Creek we didn't keep a surface land man because primarily we were drilling on all vacant Crown Land. So if you were in Alberta, you did it to Edmonton just by contact and in British Columbia you had the right to the use of the surface by virtue of statute. So the Rainbow Well that we drilled just north of the lake there, was on Indian lands. So Cliff Labey??? and I took off one day and we flew out to and landed on the... right at the Habet Mission there. In fact it was a potato patch if I recall rightly, right at the mission. There was no roads into the mission in the summertime. The only way he could get into there was either by plane in the summertime and landing on Hay Lake, or in the winter time there was a winter access road. So we flew out there and we were going to take a surface lease from the Indians. Well, we got there and the... now how did this work? Well anyhow, we had to go to two translators before it would... The Indian agent could speak English and Cree, and the Chief could speak Cree and Slavey. So I would tell the agent what we were wanting. He would tell the Chief in Cree, and then the Chief would tell his people in Slavey. And we sat around this room and negotiated the surface lease for the drilling of Imperial Rainbow.

AK: But you already had had the minerals, you had received a permit from Indian Minerals.

RA: Oh, yes.

AK: That was when Ark Irwin was running it, I guess, or Ed Moore.

RA: Don't recall who was there. Yes, we would have either a perimeter or a lease, I don't recall what stage it was at that particular time. Yeah.

[00:11:25] AK: Now just switching over to British Columbia for a minute. Did you have any particular experiences in permitting and leasing in the acreage from the BC government?

RA: I'm not sure exactly what you mean there, in terms of buying the Crown sales do you mean?

AK: Well, I think most of the permits had already been acquired. Then there was a bit of Crown Reserve being created from time to time.

RA: Yes. There was considerable Crown Reserve of course, right up until, well there still is, but I mean large blocks right up into the late 60's. I guess my first involvement in British Columbia of course, was with the old original Pacific agreement in 1954, where the McMahons made a massive farm-out to Imperial in northeastern British Columbia.

AK: Oh, Yes.

RA: The subsequent conversion of all those...

AK: That was the 75-25, 25-75 wasn't it? 75% of the oil to Imperial, and 25% to gather the....

RA: Oh, no. It wasn't anywhere near that simple.

AK: Oh.

RA: There was actually, there was a subsequent agreement which involved the shallow gas, but the original agreement was... involved all of the oil and gas below 450 feet below the base of the Triassic. And in that area we earned very, 45% interest I believe. And then there was a subsequent agreement to cover what they called shallow gas. In other words, gas above 450 feet below the base of the Triassic and that was generally in the Nig Creek, Jedney Bubbles area.

AK: Right. And Rigel?

RA: No, Rigel was not involved. Rigel was a farm in... Oh boy, can't remember who that was with now.

AK: That would be maybe with the Sinclair Atlantic Southern...

RA: The Atlantic. Yeah. Rigel, yeah.

AK: The old Atlantic Refining.

RA: So, there's some interesting things came out of that Dome Pacific agreement. For example, was a rather classic decision of once an oil well, always an oil well, once a gas well, always a gas well ruling on this particular agreement, because of some drilling that happened around Fort St. John. And the well was initially an oil well. But it was a shallow well and subsequently went to gas. Well, this is excluded

substances gas. So we had to get a ruling there. So the ruling was, well once it was established that this was an oil well, even if it subsequently went to gas, well, that was too bad. Once...

AK: Yeah. Did that deal, 54, is that still in existence...?

RA: Oh yeah. Very much so.

AK: So it's Petro-Can versus Imperial isn't it?

RA: Well Petro-Can with Imperial, I wouldn't say versus.

AK: Well, I mean...Yeah, with.

RA: We're... I suppose that, well the big operations there of course, are the Jedney Bubbles gas and the Boundary Lake oil.

AK: But Dome had quite a chunk of Laprise?? and some of those others.

RA: Yeah. There were a lot of other operators in there.

AK: But I think you're right. It was Imperial Pacific and...

RA: And then Clarke Lake of course is another one.

AK: Yeah, but there's Union in there as well.

RA: Yeah, well Clark Lake is... but it was, it's operated by Petro-Can. Whereas on, like Boundary Lake is operated, it's a unit now of course, and is operated by Imperial or Esso.

AK: Right.

[00:16:04] Did you have, well, let's see, let's go on. When you left Dawson Creek, was that when Imperial had this...

RA: ??? Consolidation.

AK: This was the consolidation.

RA: In Edmonton, in 1968. August of 1968.

AK: Then, did you move to Edmonton?

RA: Yes. We moved the whole office. Both the Regina office, the Dawson Creek office, and some of the Calgary office actually moved to Edmonton.

AK: And who was the honcho there? Was it still Shouldis?

RA: George Shouldis was... I can't remember his title at that time, but it was sort of a general services manager of which they made the land part of.

AK: And the McCaskills followed you over there didn't they?

RA: McCaskills were there for a very short time, and I don't recall exactly when Jack left the company.

AK: It was round '71. It was that...

RA: Okay, before we consolidated again into Calgary.

AK: In Calgary, yeah. That was a bad period there. There was some fellows...

RA: Yeah. Again, Chuck Rankin was my boss. So Chuck was my boss the whole time I was in Dawson Creek.

AK: Right.

RA: And then for that period in Edmonton.

AK: Had Patrick McCauley come into the land department at that time?

RA: Patrick was in the scouting department in Dawson Creek. And he came over into the land department in the latter part of our time in Dawson Creek as I recall.

[00:17:51] AK: So what happened then after your period at Edmonton there? You moved back to Calgary.

RA: Yeah.

AK: Was that as a result of the final consolidation?

RA: Right.

AK: What year was that?

RA: That was 1972.

AK: Right? And then what was your position then?

RA: In Edmonton I was the Western Canadian District land man. And I guess I retained that position on the move to Calgary until 1976. And '76 I was transferred into our exploration budget and economics group. And I was with them for a year and then I was transferred over to exploration services and research. And we were working on plans for offshore development and so on. Running economic models in the Beaufort, and off, East Coast offshore.

AK: Well, would you be working with, you wouldn't be working too closely with Bob Teske. He was in...

RA: No. Bob, I was working with Bob Teske when I was with the exploration planning and budget group. We would meet with Bob once a month and go over the drilling plans and timing and so on for the Beaufort wells.

AK: Because he was the, kind of a manager up in Edmonton, wasn't he?

RA: He was the drilling services manager.

AK: Yeah, right. Who is your supervisor then, Ray? When you got into this exploration?

RA: Okay, in the first period in land it was Oskar Friesen.

AK: Oh, yes. Spelled with a K. O-S-K-A-R.

RA: Right.

AK: He's retired now.

RA: He's retired. Lives on the Sunshine Coast. And then I moved over to planning and budget and it was Gordon Wells. Who's still there.

AK: What about Jack Underhill? Is he fitting in there anywhere?

RA: Well Jack, first time I met Jack he was head of the geophysical department in Dawson Creek. And then he moved to Calgary. And then he moved to Toronto and became a corporate manager in Toronto. And as best I understand, he was involved with, as contact work with the federal government out of Toronto. And then he came back as head of our external affairs. That was the position, manager of external affairs that he was in when he retired. He retired I think the same day I did.

AK: Is that right?

RA: Maybe a month earlier.

AK: Oh, I thought he retired in '84.

RA: He may have gone on December 31st. I'm not sure.

AK: Well... Yeah.

RA: No, it was very close anyway.

[00:21:40] AK: Well, what were some of your duties in this modeling and budgeting? What...?

RA: Well, we would develop a series of scenarios with regard to offshore drilling and production. Have production engineers work out costs. And then we'd run economic models on this to determine whether it was economically feasible to develop East Coast offshore natural gas and oil, and various volumes, and

various distances, and various types of our methods of producing this production platforms versus artificial islands versus sub-sea systems and so on.

AK: Assuming a certain pay thickness and reservoir...

RA: Reservoir capacity and so on.

AK: Yeah. Right.

RA: So, and then I was transferred back as, hmm, in 79, I believe it was. I was attached to exploration management to, along with Ray Ellard, and later Joel Lefebvre. We had a special little contracts group going at that time. One of the major ones that we were involved in was the Canadian Hunter farm-in.

AK: Oh, at Elsworth.

RA: Yeah. And then in 1980 I took over from Chuck Rankine as the assistant manager of the land department, and then six months later took over as manager.

AK: Well speaking of Joel Lefebvre, now was that the one, the fellow that worked for DeCalfa??

RA: Yes for years.

AK: Well was this some kind of an inter...?

RA: No, no. Joel had been on his own as a consultant for a number of years.

AK: Oh and you were hiring him?

RA: We hired him as a consultant.

AK: Oh, I see. Yes, right. And then he died unfortunately. Several years ago wasn't it?

RA: About a year ago.

AK: Yeah. That was a bad thing. So Chuck retired on medical grounds...

RA: Chuck was on medical leave when he passed away, yeah.

AK: So you...

RA: He suffered quite a number of years there for...

[00:24:24] AK: Well then what year did you say you became land manager?

RA: 1981.

AK: '81.

RA: Late '80.

AK: And then that was for what part of Canada?

RA: All of Canada. All the vessels of Imperial's operation.

AK: Everything eastern? Everything.

RA: All over. Yeah.

AK: Well that was quite a big responsibility.

RA: 83 people at one point.

AK: And then you'd report to whom? Gordon Hate?

RA: No, I reported at one time to, direct to Ray Wilkinson. And then we reorganized a little later on so that I reported to Gordon Wells. Gordon Wells was a general manager.

AK: Of exploration?

RA: Exploration, yeah.

AK: So the land department, despite the fact there was a lot of production acreage, producing acreage, developing acreage, still come in under the exploration department.

RA: Always did and always has, yeah.

AK: That's different from a lot of companies where they'd have maybe quite a big split there.

[00:25:45] So you had... who were your two IC's under you then when you were getting near retirement?

RA: Ken Willing was my assistant manager. Then we had a breakdown then into the various districts. We had three districts: Arctic Atlantic and Beaufort, or the frontier district, and then we had a western Canada district and we also had a, well it's called reservoir geology, but it actually, it dealt with the close-in producing properties. And then we also had a separate lease administration group and a contracts administration group.

AK: In your, as you moved on up through the echelons, what committees were you on with Canadian Petroleum Association for instance?

RA: On the CPA I was on the mineral rights committee.

AK: And that had to do with what?

RA: With... primarily dealing with government regulations, new legislation involving mineral rights and so on. Canada lands act or Alberta mines and minerals act, this sort of thing. If they're going to make changes we would normally review them and pass comments on to the...to...

AK: Were you involved in the COGLA...?

RA: Oskar Friesen was around at that time and he pretty well handled that at that time. And he was on that committee at that time. But had I been there that would have been one of the areas, yeah.

AK: What about royalties?

RA: Royalties would have been another area that they were involved with and so on, yeah.

AK: And so in the latter years when you were land manager, did you have any other committee duties?

RR: Well, it was the CPA committee we just mentioned, and then the CAPL, I was on the education committee for a number of years with that and then just recently we're working on establishing a guideline, if you like, with regard to particular salary levels and job levels with, through the Landman's Association, similar to the engineer's...

AK: Yeah, something of the kind that is regulated. Do you feel like the landmen should have a regulated organization, a policed organization?

RA: I think so, but it should be self-policed. I don't think that they should be regulated to the point where they're policed, but I think that they...

AK: But not by legislation.

RA: Not by legislation, no. I think they're heading the right direction right now though.

AK: Just a minute, I think we'll turn the tape over.

Tape 2 Side 2 - 14:00

AK: This is side 2, tape 2, and can you give me some of your views on legislation and regulation and that sort of thing as it applies to landmen?

RA: You mean the landman professionally? Or...

AK: Yes. Do you feel that...?

RA: Well, I think that land, the landman as a profession has taken quite a turn over the last decade and hopefully I contributed something to that because I think we had to upgrade the position of the landman. The landman needs to get professional recognition. And I think that the work that has been done and the work that's going on right now is certainly in the right direction, but I would not like to see it so that they are policed by legislation. I think they should be self-policing. But they should have a code of ethics and a certain standard that landmen are required to meet.

AK: Yeah, I mean we get back to the days of some of this like I was mentioning, Scurry Rainbow, and some of these other shenanigans that were going on. Charlie Shock, did you ever know him?

RA: Know the name.

AK: Yeah. Well, you know there were some of those. And I'm not, when I mentioned Mickey Laineoff or V. Paul?? They are kind of scouts landmen.

RA: Yeah.

AK: They were pretty colorful but, I think because a lot of the land has kind of settled down to a, I wouldn't say a humdrum scene because there's still land deals have to be made, and they're getting more complex because you get so many splintered interests that it's probably more important to have more education, more knowledge, of what a landman is supposed to be. And I understand there's a course at Mount Royal, isn't there?

RA: There is presently a diploma course at Mount Royal which you can continue at the University of Oklahoma into a degree program. But there should be, starting in the fall of '85, a degree program at the University of Calgary under the...

AK: Law department?

RA: No, under the Commerce. It'll be, you'll come out with a B. Comm, but with a land, petroleum land management major.

AK: Is that right? Would that be as a postgraduate course?

RA: No, undergraduate. Leading to an undergraduate degree.

AK: Has that been funded?

RA: The funding is coming into place. That was one of the parts I was working on before I left, along with, well Lavon Louie certainly and Tim Mart... Lavon Louie with Esso and Tim Martin with Gulf were big pushers of this. But, no, I was trying to change the image, certainly with Imperial, of the landman. Because like you say, the name landman is really a hanger-on from a bygone era when people stomped out onto the farmer's land and said I want to lease and so on. And really what the land man, the modern land man should be is the business agent for the exploration and producing company. And they need to be generalists rather than specialists. We've got all the specialists we need, we've got geologists, geophysicists, engineers, and so on, but you needed a generalist that can put the agreements together. And they should have a good grounding in economics, so that they know what the agreement really involves in terms of dollars and cents, and how it affects their corporation. So they should be able to do economic modeling. And they say, be the general business department for the company.

AK: Did you see in your final tenure with Imperial, a tendency for the company to be very, to examine all of its leases in its exploration licence and everything with a view to chopping, and reducing where possible, or was it a case of hanging on just in hopes that something might happen?

RA: I think that had already happened. We had trimmed down just about all of our excess acreage in the early '70s when the cutback came there in the early '70s. There was a trend I guess in the last few years to retain acreage rather than surrendering it, because the cost of acquiring land had gone just out of sight. So that while you may not recognize a particular play on that parcel of land it was so expensive to get it back that it was better to hang on to it than to give it up for a dollar an acre. So yeah, I could see where companies were not dropping land the way they used to.

AK: Well, take in a province like this where the gas picture is dormant, it's in real bad shape. Would you say that the companies have hung onto their acreage despite the fact that they've, I'm not talking about ??? now the oil patch, I'm talking about gas...

RA: No.

AK: Or are they...

RA: Well, I think that the, certainly the companies are going to hang on to any acreage that they've got that's proven.

AK: Oh, yeah. But I meant exploratory.

RA: Well, you can't hang on to it for too long unless you're prepared to do some work on it.

AK: Yeah, and pay some pretty heavy...

RA: And pay your rentals, and then... so you can hang on to it for 10 years and then you can go to a penalty. Well, most of those big blocks of acreage are well beyond that now, so I wouldn't think that companies are hanging on... well, okay. The companies are riding out the dollar an acre rental, there's no question about that. Because there again it costs you so much to get it back.

AK: That's right. So they figure it's their trade off.

RA: I think that, I understand that there is a review coming of the petroleum and natural gas act in BC. And I wouldn't mind taking a look at it. Because I think that they have missed the boat on some of the revenue. I don't...

AK: Do you think that was a good idea switching back to the royalty regime rather than the BC PC buying all the gas?

RA: Absolutely. Never should ever let government in the marketplace!

AK: Of course that was Barrett's idea.

RA: Well, I don't know who, I mean, I'm not saying that specifically either about British Columbia. I think the government has no business in the marketplace, and once you get governments in marketplaces then, they get screwed up.

AK: Well, I think Manning realized that pretty good.

RA: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

AK: Although Brocklebank in his day, and then our friend, the one before Divine, what was his name?

RA: Thatcher?

AK: No, in Saskatchewan. The regime before the NDP regime. Blakeney.

RA: Oh Blakeney. Oh, yeah. Gee, I'd forgotten about him.

AK: In SaskOil, and that sort of thing.

RA: Yeah. Oh yeah, no.

AK: Of course, that's part of it to, the SaskOil thing is, I understand that they've been told they can only live off their cash flow so.

[00:09:11] Is there anything else that you'd like to say philosophically about your career? Your experiences with...

RA: No. I don't think so.

AK: Imperial and...

RA: I certainly enjoyed it. I guess I can now speak freely and say that Imperial has got to be one of the finest corporate citizens this country's ever seen whether people realize it or not, and I don't know how you get the message across, but... and they're certainly an excellent company to work for.

AK: It's not universally perceived that way.

RA: No, I know. No, we're the big bad multinational, but...

AK: Because it's still an uphill battle fighting public perception. And it's the perception really, it's not actually what the company does or doesn't do.

RA: No.

AK: I would say for the oral history project that they were very kind to us. They furnished us with space on the sixth floor there. I don't whether you were aware of that.

RA: No, I wasn't aware of that, no.

AK: Yeah. The space... well, they moved 7, 6, and 5 back and forth different floors, but Imperial provided telephones, furniture, mycom??? and everything like that. So that was a big plus. And this is part of this oral history, but... No, it's tough. How do you see Petro-Can fitting into the picture, on an unbiased view, do you think that now that the government has turned them loose and they can't, they're not going to get any more handouts, do you think that they'll become a tougher company?

RA: I guess there was probably no one more vociferous than I was about the creation of Petro-Can in the first place, but now it's there and we're going to have to live with it. I guess I go back to what I was saying, that I don't believe that the government has any business in the marketplace. So for Petro-Can, I think that the government has their window, if you like, into the petroleum industry. But I think that they should divest themselves of Petro-Can. I don't know how they would go about doing it, but, except maybe to create it into a public company.

AK: Well, there's some talk about that and yet you know, there was something in the paper the other day about Petro-Can no longer gonna be Mr. Nice Guy.

RA: In the area of marketing and so on. Yeah, well...

AK: The marketing end, that's another business entirely. That's a jungle of its own.

RA: Well, the head of their marketing department, as is with a lot of their departments, are ex-Imperial so I can't see their marketing policies... Bill Esten, Barry Stewart and all those fellows.

AK: Yeah, Barry went over.

RA: I really can't see them all of a sudden somehow changing direction too much.

AK: No, because those fellows will impose their perception.

RA: Certainly.

AK: That's why they were hired. I think Hopper was half clever. You know, about, because he had to do a lot of cleaning out.

RA: Yeah.

AK: And he brought this layer of Vice Presidents in and he brought Ed Lakusta in and they went about their work pretty brutally. But they had to. I think they realized, and that was maybe if you want to say anything good about it, that was one good thing they did.

RA: Well, of course that's the best thing a good manager can do is surround yourself with good men.

AK: That's right. Well, look Ray, this has been a great pleasure talking to you about your career and your early formative days with Atlantic 3. Although it was only a part, I'd like to leave with you the idea that if there's anything else that you run across about Atlantic 3 I'd like to hear from you about it.

RA: Well, as I say, I may have some stuff, but I've still got boxes of books and records and stuff up there packed away.

AK: Well, it's now 5:35. And thanks again for your time and enjoyed talking to you.

RA: All right. You are welcome.

End of Interview