

## PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Jim Ewasiw & Anne Ewasiw

INTERVIEWER: Aubrey Kerr & Jean McLaws

DATE: July 10, 1992

### Side 1 – 46:00

AK: I'm Aubrey Kerr and here we are the evening of July the 10th at 8:20, and I'm in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ewasiw, that's E-W-A-S-I-W. And you pronounce that "E-wash-u".

AE: James and Anne.

AK: James and Anne. All right, and the address here is 5113.

JE: 5111.

AK: 5111- 50th Street, and I'm very pleased and I have along with me, of course, I have Jean McLaws and we've already done several tapings today. We've done three already today. This is our fourth and we're very glad that you were able to give us the time to talk about the old days in Redwater. And what I usually do is I start off... Jim, I'd like to know where you were born and when, and some of background of your parents, whether they had been born here or whether they come over as children.

JE: They arrived here, Dad came in 1903 and Mom arrived in 1904 as singles. They were singles.

AK: They hadn't been married. Had they known each other?

JE: No, they had not known each other but they met through church, ??? well no, as church attendants because they actually were with Melnicks, you know, one is a Melnicks. In fact, both were brought into Canada by the Melnicks, sponsored by the Melnicks, but one Melnick did one and the other Melnick did the other and that's the way they met. At Scarrow??, I'm sure at Scarrow is where they met and then that's where they married and came into Redwater and bought the old homestead.

AK: Now when you say the old homestead was there an Ewasiw before that?

JE: No.

AK: Well then who had the homestead before that?

JE: No, but that ... when I said the old homestead that's to me the old homestead. But to Dad it was the first piece of land that...

AK: Okay, and he filed on it did he? As a homesteader, and he proved it up?

JE: They had to prove a total because it was what, \$10, 10 or 15 I'm not quite sure. And they had to prove so many acres before they received the title. And at that time, he could have picked up the mineral rights for another \$10.

AK: Well now what was the section number? Was it an off or even-numbered section? You see the only land that was available, that could have been was CPR land

JE: Yeah, well they bought the CPR land because there was so much land with CPR and the CPR land had joined that because, what the CPR went out so many miles or so many quarters away from that and actually it was ... it would have worked out because one, two ... well, that'd be a total because that's the third quarter that was still CPR. So, it was three quarters in all of the CPR.

AK: Yeah. Well, it would have to be an odd numbered section because CPR got odd numbered sections, and, that's interesting, now, what year did he...?

EW: But it's funny ??? I know what you're saying, the CPR and the homestead are in the same section.

AK: Well, you see when you'd made a deal with the CPR you paid them so much down. You could pay the rest over a period of years. But when you, if you got that land before 1905, you started the purchase process and then you would get the... well, no, let's leave the word homestead out.

EW: No, no, the CPR, he never acquired the CPR until somewhere in the, you know about the 15s or ...

AK: Oh well then that would be too late, 1905 was the cut-off.

JE: Yeah, but he bought the CPR around 1905. First he bought the homestead because actually, what he was doing, he was working on the sewer lines because Fort Saskatchewan was really the main area, and Edmonton was starting to develop, and they were digging the sewer lines and he used to you know, he'd work there for the ... three or four days he had to work something like that, and he'd come home and actually walk from Fort Saskatchewan to here until they acquired an ox, and, you know, that's the way they...

AK: Okay, well, I just wanted to, if I may correct you politely, is that anybody that filed on Crown land as a homesteader after 1887 did not get his minerals and there was no provision for getting your minerals.

JE: He always said if you would have paid the ten dollars, he could have had the mineral rights.

AK: That's very interesting. I'm not, you know, I like this because this is important history. There may have been some other provision.

JE: I don't know but he always said, you know when the oil boom, when the oil was struck and then they were talking about the mineral rights, and he always said, well my God, if I'd have known I could have paid the \$10 and had the mineral rights.

AE: Do you know the township and range? Do you know the location of it?

JE: Jeez I don't.

AE: Somewhere in the...

JE: I could easily pick it up because it's ???

AK: And you were born in what year?

JE: 1918.

AK: 1918. Right. And by that time your father and mother were settled here. And they had their own home?

AK: Yeah. Actually, when I was born that's just when they moved into a new house they built from the earth-covered house. In the same homestead, on the very homestead.

AK: But north of here?

JE: Well, yeah northwest because it's now the main highway. Highway ???

AK: So, northwest means that ??? alright and you obviously survived the flu then because that was the year of the terrible flu.

JE: That's right, in 1918. Mother was one of the people that ... and how she got through it without attracting it or bringing it home because none of us suffered of the flu, but there was, in certain places, there were as many as two and three that died, and she was there, she used to go out and you know, because each one helped each other and ??? they'd they just go and she was continually on the go because the sister was already, the older sister would of, the oldest sister, now she's passed away, but she would have been already at that time about 10 years old.

AK: Well then, your parents continued to live on that homestead? Till their death?

JE: No, they moved to Edmonton in, gosh 19 ... after the oil struck. Yeah, after the oil struck.

AK: And they lived until ...

JE: 19... oh no wait because we married in '39 so they were still on there. They never moved off till about the latter part of 50s, in the late 50s. They moved in to Edmonton and that's where Dad passed away.

AK: And you did you move out on to the homestead yourself, you and your wife?

JE: No, we did not. We were, actually at that time, you know, when, this was already in the... because we've lived through the dirty thirties, just to give you an idea of how the conditions that were... on the farm you were never hungry, there was plenty to eat, but there was nothing to wear. So, going to school we used to take turns in changing clothes. That's the way we attended school.

AK: You mean one child would stay home?

JE: Well one child would stay home and then the other would pick up the clothing because, especially the shoes, you know, the shoes were the main thing.

AK: Yeah, that would be tough.

JE: Well that's the way it was. Like, you know, they weren't any ... they were soup kitchens but there wasn't relief, but the thing is that the people used to go and ... all right specially in the fall because it was all wood, everything everybody burnt wood, you know, and the stooking in the fall and they used to come out of it until you know, walk in and then step in and maybe well, jeez what can we help you for, for a meal? They'd want a meal because there hungry. So, they'd go out and either stook or maybe cut wood or some, anything at all to help and maybe stay a couple of days then they move on.

AK: Yeah, right, just an existence.

JE: Absolutely.

[00:11:24] AK: Well now Anne, you were the daughter of Nick Zinnick, and had they come to Canada as children or adults?

AE: They came out... my mother came at 17 years old, she was single, and my dad was single too when he came.

AK: So, they were both born in the old country?

AE: Right, in Ukraine.

AK: Right. And what year was it that they come?

AE: Later, maybe 1910. That's about the time, 1910.

AK: And what impelled them to come to Canada? Did they have advertising?

AE: Yes, they did have advertising. Dad said they didn't have to come but when the British government got all his land, they went into the Ukraine because people, they were masters of the land, and they had these meetings, public meetings, and encouraged the young people to come to Canada.

AK: And the government allowed them to come in and speak to the peasants?

AE: Yes.

AK: Which is what they really were, because they were under these Lords and Barons and they probably didn't own any land.

AE: Yes. My dad's family owned a lot of land. But young, you know experience, here's a chance to see the world and so he came...

AK: So, he was attracted to this sales talk?

AE: Right. And my mom came over at 17 because her dad had been over previously.

AK: He's kind of cased the joint?

AE: Yeah, and he did some work and earned some money and went back and then brought back her brother. And then after he got some more money brought back my mom.

AK: Oh, I see. Right.

AE: And she worked in Calgary. She worked at that hotel...

AK: Allister?

AE: Yeah, the Alister Hotel.

AK: Well now, they weren't married when they came to Canada?

AE: No.

AK: Did they meet here?

AE: Yeah, they met here.

AK: And they got married in?

AE: Oh, I don't remember. And my dad worked in Calgary too and then he worked for the city of Edmonton.

AK: Right. And then you were born in what year?

AE: 1919.

AK: And where? In Edmonton?

AE: In Redwater.

AK: Oh, in Redwater? They'd moved to Redwater.

AE: Oh yeah, they'd moved previously.

AK: Well then they had...

AE: They moved to Eskey just about five, six miles out, but my dad stayed for a few years and then he sold the land there and bought this land in Redwater where the old town site was, just a small hundred feet or so, he brought the land around that... the track divided that land, this track. That was the quarter section. And he went into business. He was a, he used to buy livestock for O.E. Brown Limited and he

was on Council, Municipal District of Smoky Lake. And he was on the School Board. He was one of these...

AK: He was a public figure.

AE: Yeah, he was one of those people... even till today the people from Radway say, like he was confident, they should have had a monument, I mean, I don't know, but yeah.

AK: Yeah, well that's good. So, they continued to live here. But the land that they had... was this land that they'd filed on?

AE: This land that the Tombulls (???) built on belonged to my dad and the next quarter section, and kitty corner, but when Jim was discharged from the army my dad sold him this to start us off.

JE: Not when I wasn't discharged from the army, I was in the army...

AE: Yeah during the war, yeah. He gave us this land. Well partly gave and partly we paid for it, eh? He gave us this land that the town was on, that the track divided. So, when they discovered oil they wanted my dad's joining, 160 acres, plus this 130 acres here where the town was.

AK: Right. But at that time there were no houses on it.

AE: There were no houses that (???) construction built on it, but there was a blacksmith shop, Boston's store, ??? store, a hardware store an old hotel, an old pool room and an elevator and a few old people. That is our... and three elevators.

AK: Right, and somebody said 99 inhabitants?

AE: About.

JE: It went down to 99. ??? it was 83.

AK: Oh, was it?

JE: It was 83, you were lucky if you caught another dog, you were ...

AE: I knew every corner because I was the youngest in the family and us kids played all over.

JE: Because we were already in the post office.

AK: But of course by, but this, this here there was no houses where we...

AE: There were no houses but this still belonged on my dad's original first place that he bought. And when this subdivision opened, a guy in Edmonton ... we had sold our property downtown, we built a big house down there, it was too big, and I went to him and said, when he opened this subdivision I want the first choice because this was my dad's land and I want it to be the first you know, here on it. And he did, he saved us our first choice on this subdivision.

AK: So, this quarter, I mean this town lot is how you got it, by first choice?

AE: Yeah by first choice. And we got this subdivision.

AK: Well, who was this? Was he some kind of a developer?

AE: What was his name?

AK: Well, he wasn't under Devon Estates?

AE: No, this was later he got this. This was left vacant during Devon Estates. Somehow, they built there and there.

AK: Yeah up around 53rd Avenue. And up there was a house at the corner that was Bannatyne's.

AE: Yes.

AK: At the very far corner.

AK: Yeah, we kind of staked the place out, and then Cy Cormack ...

JE: Cy is still in the same house.

AE: The same house, yeah and when Bird Construction was building the hotel, the guy that was in charge stayed at the hotel, but the hotel burned down that night so he was running in circles asking, where am I going to stay, where am I going to stay? And my brother Mike was there and he said, you know, my sister has a little bedroom too, you could stay there for the night. So, he brought him over but this wasn't for the night. This was for quite a few months I had to board him. And then we were getting busier and busier in the post office, so I didn't really have time, you know, when you're boarding someone you want to put out, so then my neighbor was boarding him and he slept at our place because he didn't want to leave us, he liked us.

AK: Yeah. Well, that's nice. But this had nothing to do with Devon Estates?

AE: Yes, this chap from the hotel that burnt down was from Devon Estates.

AK: Yeah, I know but this fellow you're talking about, was he at Devon?

AE: Yeah, he was at the top of the whole ...

AK: Devon Estates. Now was his name Jack Harvey?

AE: That's right, I think so.

AK: Yeah, Jack Harvey. Well Jack was sent up here to help with the construction of the houses. So, it was Bird Construction that built it?

AE: Yeah Bird Construction.

AK: Even those 500 square foot...?

AE: Yeah, they come up fast too, because they had a whole bunch of bottoms, and well next the roofs all went on...assembly line.

JE: In fact, if you look back in here and in the next block, in this next lot, that's where they were being built.

AK: Oh, they were kind of fabricated?

JE: Yeah. They had a long kind of a trailer with a little old tractor and that's the way, and they just slapped it up, and up it went.

AK: Well then they left... [tape cuts]

AE: Yes, they did.

AK: They didn't build right next to one another?

AE: No, no.

AK: They left those vacant lots in between, and that's what John Rinchuk, he was living in a house that he built, in between two Imperial houses.

JE: Yeah, that was in that... well that was the Devon Estates.

AE: They were selling it, those lots [inaudible]

AK: Yeah well, he bought the lot.

AE: We bought one too, but over there, but at that time we didn't build and then we built here so we resold that one. Right on the corner down the street. Like, they ... you put bids and they chose who would get a lot, not everybody got one. But somewhere along the line...

AK: Some were more equal than others, eh?

JE: That was Bannatyne...

AE: Mr. Bannatyne, I think so, He always used to come to talk to us. He was very nice.

AK: Yeah well, he was the first superintendent...

AE: Yes, we were young kids and he put some brains into us. It was a challenge for him to help young people I think.



AK: Is that right. Isn't that wonderful.

AE: He used to come to the office...

AK: Well he was very well respected.

AE: Oh yes. He went to the merchants and everybody would talk, you know, it was a small town, big all of a sudden and you know everyone was excited and he kept us all in line you know.

JE: Well the position he had, you know, which was, I think superintendent.

AK: That was his job.

JE: But he could live with the lower class, the working class, but he could associate with anybody.

AK: Well maybe his experiences in Romania had something to do for that.

AE: Well, I mean these were, the most of these boys were war vets, young, unexperienced you know, in their ??? and this and that. So, he really had to, was tying all this together.

AK: Yes, and then a lot of the local boys had never ... didn't have any idea what a job was on a rig and John Rinchuk, he didn't know what he was supposed to do, but he hired on with Angle and...

AE: Yeah, well Jim once asked Mr., you know the wages in the post office were very small, so Jim asked Mr. Bannatyne, could he get on and he says to Jim, sure I can give you a job, he said, but the oil field is like this, it's a big thing for a while and then drops right down and he says, and where you are you'll stay, but you know, it's your choice, that's what I mean. He had a lot of wisdom which these young boys didn't have.

AK: Well, that's right, yeah.

JE: Well the opportunities, you know, as you were talking about, a bunch of jobs and so on, first thing is that you know, when the war was over, which is in '46, '45,'46 actually because '45 it ended and some of us were getting discharged in '46, and when you came out there was no jobs. There was nothing to turn to.

AE: No not at the end of the war there wasn't nothing to turn to ???

JE: And really when you went in then and you grabbed on to anything...

AE: And they'd say come back tomorrow, come back tomorrow, well you didn't even have anything to come back to...

JE: When they struck, when they had stuck already the well, the oil well, well then it came into contract because Imperial Oil, they only had a ... in fact the rig is here in town. I'm sure you're aware of it.

AK: Yeah, the derrick.

JE: Yeah that derrick is here, but it was a derrick that they had to dismantle every time on the move. Well that took time but then Commonwealth came in.

AK: Yeah with the jackknife.

JE: Yeah, they were able to drill in four or five days. And at that time, I was you know, she was in the post office because really the post office [tape cuts] and we had to provide [tape cuts]

AK: Oh, Is that right? You had to pay the rent.

AE: [unintelligible - talking at once]

AK: Yeah we'll come to that in a minute.

JE: But when the Commonwealth came in and it so happened that I, because I was in the grey area you know, doing grey, I had a two-and-a-half-pound truck., and ??? bit stuff, but geez, when I drove into the Commonwealth, and who is the superintendent but it happened that he was my sergeant in the army.

AK: And what was his name? Well it wasn't Lloyd MacCallum, because Lloyd was the head...

JE: He was in charge of that rig.

AK: He was the tool push then.

JE: The tool push, yeah.

AK: Wasn't Tiny Bevans?

JE: Yeah that's him.

AK: Big guy.

JE: That's right he was big and while you're talking about it...

AK: That's B-E-V-A-N-S. And so, you reconnected there.

[00:26:25] JE: Yeah, we got talking and so on and then sure enough, I dropped, and I had to bring in plaques and drop those off. About then a day or two after that he drops in, you know, I was helping around the post office because it was getting in to the post office work that... [pause in tape] at the time that Commonwealth was running already, they must had about, really at that time, they must have had about somewhere of about six or seven rigs and the population, this was already in the '50s, in the early '50s. Yeah it was in the early '50s. And already at that time the population mushroomed ... that really, that two-ton truck, and it was, it had the side racks on it, and when I met the train, because I did that, pick up the mail from the train, it was almost impossible to unload all that mail into that truck, the volume of the mail, because everything was by mail.

AK: How many sacks?

JE: 75.

AK: 75 sacks a day?!

JE: That's right. And there was only, just to give you an idea, there was only four, no three of us, no two of us.

AE: For a while it was only two of us.

AK: Didn't they recognize in Edmonton that you had...

JE: Not at all, they actually, and this was going out, we used to work anywhere between 12-16 hours. I would do a bit of ??? and then come home in the evening. Until it got the stage that it got so that I told her, you know, I says, this is it. That's the end, I said that's as far as it goes. So, and this was around about, at least about ten o'clock and the superintendent was Neil ...

AE: Mr. Neil.

JE: Yeah, Mr. Neil. And I had his home address, you know his home, so I phoned him and I told him look, this is, do whatever you want, if you're not here tomorrow, I says, we are not opening the post office, It's impossible. I said we cannot handle it, it's just ... and then you know that he was here at seven o'clock in the morning and he thought hey, I'm going to give my hand ???

AK: He looked at all those sacks.

JE: Yeah, sad it lasted, he was there until about noon and then all of a sudden, he got a call to the city and, and he caught a plane for Ottawa at two o'clock. From here to Ottawa and within that week they authorized the additional help we needed, whatever it was, you know, whatever we needed to help and at the same time they authorized for a bigger ???

AE: And in 11 days it was updated.

JE: And the post office was up in 11 days.

AK: Right.

AE: They put me on full time then.

JE: We used to have, all right, you're talking about Christmas cards, and like Mildred Corman, was it Mildred?

AE: No Isabel Devitt.

JE: Isabel, oh yeah, and Anne Amos was ... you might have heard of the Amos' but ... because the Devitts they were another, they were...

AE: They were next door to us ???

JE: But we used to have, anywhere like on a Christmas, because it got to be competitive, who could get the most cards. And this was it. Nothing to, for one family to put out 150 cards was nothing.

JM: [inaudible]

JE: Oh yes, this happened in here ... we used to put out roughly anywhere up to as high as [tape cuts] ??? and this lasted for about two weeks prior to Christmas.

AK: And you'd have to cancel all them, and...

JE: Done it by hand. Everything had to be cancelled by hand.

AK: Not on one of these machines?

JE: No, no everything had to be cancelled. One was staying out there because Anne Amos, she was a sturdier woman and a strong woman, she had a good arm so we put her on the stamping and she was good at that.

AK: She was good at that, eh? She had it beaten on a rhythm, eh?

[00:32:30] But let me go back to the very beginning of this post office thing. When was it that you started with the post office Anne?

AE: On the first of the third month, 1949.

JE: No, you started in '47

AE: You started in '47.

JE: Well the thing is actually when the post office came, ??? the post mistress and she decided to retire and the thing is that actually you had to be ??? almost to get that position but it wasn't for me that I wanted it, I wanted it for her and this is why.

AK: So, you applied?

JE: So I made the application, and she started, that was in '47.

AE: That's the way, they left the wife do it because it wasn't enough money for both, you know.

JE: That's the way it started.

AK: And did you occupy the premises?

JE: Yeah, and it was... the premises were exactly 15 by 16 feet. That's right, that's all it was. This room is bigger.

AK: That was the authorized size, was it?

JE: That was where Mrs. Walker has conducted the post office for years and years because it was only 85, 83 people ???

AK: So, Anne you took over the actual duties, now did you work a full day, or?

AE: Yes, I worked more than a full day.

AK: I mean before the boom.

AE: Oh I worked a full day.

AK: Yeah, even before the boom.

AE: A full day, the farmers would be working during the day, they'd come to your door, house in the evening, could I get my mail? So, we'd give it and that was the way it went.

JE: There was no such thing as a house ???

AE: Whenever they came.

AK: And the boxes, you had boxes in the...?

AE: No...

JE: No boxes?

JE: Everything was general delivery.

AK: Is that right.

FE: Just to give you an idea how we worked, and after that influx of people came in there and the thing is, because, the first thing, you opened up in the morning and there was a lineup of about 30 people. That's all you can see. So, okay, you looked up, hey, there's about ten Smiths in there, so you just grab the "S", and then all you chose the Smiths out, they sorted it themselves.

AK: Oh, so they did a lot of sorting out on the street?

JE: They would pass one to each other.

JE/AE/AK: [unintelligible all talking at once]

AK: Well, yeah, but you had, that's why I was very interested in interviewing you people because you had a unique job and you would see the whole thing kind of explode in your face when it hit.

AE: That's what I meant, it was so fast.

AK: Well now, what about, if a person wanted to come in and register a letter, would you do that?

AE: Yes, everything.

AK: And the insurance on the package? And you had to know all the fine print.

JE: They had, not only, but at that time they had, alright, you had to issue the money orders, postal notes, you also had savings.

AE: Unemployment insurance.

AK: Oh, that savings, that annuity savings.

JE: That's right, you had to have that, you had to do that too which was a banking affair, you know.

AK: Yeah, I remember I had one of those.

AE: It wasn't hard to catch on.

AK: Oh no, it was...

AE: But mind you, it hit like lightning because we were a small office and all of a sudden all this came on you.

JE: But Mrs. Walker was very great. When we took the post office she spent the total of a month with us.

JE/AE/JM: [unintelligible]

AK: Now this Mrs. Walker was she Len Walker's ... no relation?

AE: No. Arthur Walker was her husband. And Arthur Walker was Len Walker's dad.

AK: Oh that's right, because Arthur Walker, the granddad, remarried.

AE: Yeah.

AK: And was she from England, Mrs. Walker? She was what, Bingham was her name?

AE: I don't know what her name is.

AK: But she moved in ... had her eyes sighted on old Arthur. So yeah, I kind of got some of that from Kitty Wilkins.

AE: Oh yeah, Kitty would know.

JE: [inaudible] paperwork coming in because actually as the drill, rigs were coming, well then there was the ??? tanks, the building of the pipelines, there was all this, and the people were just walking in,

and from, by the end of '50, you know at the end of the year '50, 3,000 people and there were no accommodations.

AK: Oh, that's right, they were living everywhere.

JE: We had a little, kind of a little shack at the back, which was I was obviously in [tape cuts] She was, you know, and we used it as a little kind of a hot house and also a storage. You know, that a fellow came in, we, ??? he said I am going to live here, I'm going to stay here. I got nowhere to stay.

AK: So, what did you do with him?

JE: Well, I couldn't you know, I says well, we just can't and then I phoned the, well I didn't phone, but to her dad and he had a chicken coop on the place and he already had three people in there. I says there's a chicken coop in there, it's been cleaned up, I said, there's three people, go in there, maybe, sure enough he got squeezed in there and that's ... you lived in [tape cuts].

JM: Was this summer or winter?

JE: Well, this was during the summer. And then they started the building and some of them even lived, you know, in these this kind of a makeshift premises. They lived through the winter.

AK: How did they ever keep warm?

JE: I don't know... wood fire, coal fire, we had no gas in here.

AK: Was this house built then?

JE: No, [tape cuts] until the year of, oh God, it was the year of about '70.

AK: What's the premises were you occupying?

JE: Well, we bought the place from Bessie Walker and that was with the house and it was exactly two little bedrooms. And a part of it was the post...

AK: Package.

JE: That's right. Yeah, we bought that, we bought that as, there was actually a total of two acres on it. And I didn't have the money but you know \$4,000 that her dad had to borrow from the Bank of Commerce you know, that's the way I got it, you know, and that's the way we made our start. And that was just before the before the oil boom came. Actually, when we bought that it was in '47 we bought that, that was before the oil boom came in. You know and when they came, some of them, like Sandy out there, had to live on our, because the campsite was just to the east... the whole camp site off that drilling because what it was ... they were working it in three shifts, day and night, it was three shifts. And it took about somewhere around, what it was eight men, eight to ten men per shift, something like that. So, it was, yeah because actually they said 24, yeah eight men per shift because it took 24, a crew of 24 to operate the rig. And they were all ??? and they had a kind of a you know, the Imperial Oil, they already had moveable [tape cuts]

AK: Like Quonset huts.

JE: Yeah little huts, yeah.

AK: But then they, yeah, the first place they had was a very primitive place and it was very cold.

JE: Oh, yes, it was cold and mud, and because the place that they set on there, it was muddy. Alright, where this office is, where they put this office, and now you drove that main street, just to give you an idea, that was in the '50s, because it never got paved until way later, ??? you could not pass through with an ordinary, like with a car or anything, no way, it was mud to the hubs.

AE: Well, what made them is the big trucks with all the pipes [tape cuts]

AK: Built a road on it...

[inaudible, talking at once]

JE: But they built a, oh yeah, that was the pipeline, Sparling and Davis, they built on the south side, what we called the south side, it was not a housing, it was like a big, something like what you have, call them motels now, I think that's where the motel came in, the idea of the motel.

AK: Was that the building right next to the Red Rest? The Red Rest was built...

JE: No, that condominium, that's already built in way before.

AK: No, I mean on this side, there is a blue building on the east side of the Red Rest. See the Red Rest was built in '76.

JE: Yes, yes, yes. That's one of the buildings, one of the older buildings.

AK: Yeah it looked like an old building that had been refurbished. I'm going to turn the tape over here.

## **Side 2 – 47:00**

AK: And the living quarters, the offices were just a little east of the present Redwater water disposal premises and a little north of Tartan Transport?

JE: That was the offices.

AK: Yeah, of the Imperial Oil, and that was the warehouse is too. Whereas the Pioneer Club, which was the living quarters, and it was part of the living quarters, and it originally was in an H form...

JE: And that portion has not been moved, portion ???

AK: That's right, yeah, and it has a bit of the H on it there I think. And the other portion was purchased by, what was his name?



JE: Dan Bohachuk.

AK: Bohachuk. And he skidded it over across the tracks and it's now the Southside Apartments, and I've got a picture of both of those for the record. So, that was what, now, when did, did Imperial in the early days, did they set up their own courier service to bring mail out?

JE: No, ???

AK: Even the Imperial Oil.

JE: Just to give you an idea of that, if they mailed anything, you know, because actually it goes through Edmonton, there was no such thing as a courier service.

AK: No.

JE: But if they mailed today, they got the answer the next day. That is something, we'd guarantee them and that's what it is. It, I don't know why, what happened to the services now, but that...

AK: Well that's...

JE: That's the way it was. People were, and with us especially, you know, let's face it even with us in the post office... because they were a big company, because they, you know, they bought the big portion of stamps, our salaries were based on the sale of stamps.

AK: Oh, were they?

JE: Oh, yes, the base, it was a commission of the stamps the money orders and all the transactions, the financial transactions, you got, you got a percentage of it. So your salary was up and down...

AK: Over and above your base salary?

JE: That's right.

AK: You were guaranteed a base salary from which you had to pay rental.

JE: And then, and in that, the others, actually, it was, you know, during the year, what your commissions were, that's what your next year's salary was.

AK: Oh, they build it into next year's salary.

JE: Yeah, so it was divided evenly into months, you didn't actually know, but like, say, some office that dropped in their sales, then next year their salary went down.

AK: Oh, I see.

JE: Yes, we didn't have any unions before.

AK: No, no. And you'd have to make sure you had a supply of stamps?

JE: Well, that was no problem. They were willing to supply the stamps as long as we sold them. And this is why we catered to them. So, when you came in, the first thing you used like, you know, because even at that time, the mail came in in bigger envelopes, you know, and you knew that it was companies, so we generally, with these, you know because the certification when it was done, well your envelopes had to be sorted, you know, like the letter size. Yeah, the small ones, then you had the business envelopes, the white business... they had them already in that time. They had the little larger, the brown business-type envelopes and then they had the big ones. So, we grabbed them and the sorted those first because that was the companies and we wanted to make sure that we gave them service because then they stuck with us, you know, they knew they were getting service and that's where they brought it.

AK: Go ahead Jean. You got a question, go ahead.

[inaudible]

JE: Even then it was favoritism you had to.

AK: Okay, now in Imperial's office in those early days was there such a thing as a postage meter?

JE: Not at that time, the meters came in, I'd say the meters came in about the 60s, we got the them in,

AK: Oh, not till then.

JE: Yeah the meter machines, you know, they were able to get the meter machines but that came in about, in about the early part of '60s probably, is when they got them. Before they had to buy the stamps and lick them on just the same as any.

AK: Well then what about your cancelling machine? Did you get a cancelling machine ultimately? To run your letters through?

JE: We never did. We never had a cancelling machine. Even when I retired out of it, they brought in a cancelling machine but it was too cumbersome, too slow and every time... and it used to damage too much mail. So, we still did it by hand, when I retired, it was still done by hand.

AK: Well then, what did they do when you retired? Did they hand you one of these stamps?

JE: I have it.

AK: Hey, good. Well you're entitled.

JE: They didn't hand it but I made sure I got a hold of it.

AK: Well, then there must have been a little thing in there to change the date then.

JE: Yeah, it's screwed on.

AK: No but I mean every day you had to change...

JE: Oh yeah, there's the date and the month. ??? Redwater and then in there were slots, you know, and then you got them... they looked like, okay like a key in your lawn mower, that's the shape. You slip that in, you unscrew that, slipped that in there, screwed it back on and there it was. That was the date, the month. We didn't work it on time. Although there was allotment for time we never did know the time of the day because who was going to bother with the time.

AK: Right. So, oh no, there, you couldn't...

JE: In fact, I have a ... I won't put that on tape.

AK: You got something else... well no I think it's important that you have that memory.

JE: And even because like they provided us already, T. Eaton was, the thing is at that time, you must understand at that time the T. Eaton and the Simpsons, they were doing a terrific amount of business through the mail.

AK: Oh, yeah, mail order business.

JE: Mail order business, yeah, and parcels was, well you know, like alright, when we say 70 bags, you know, this wasn't 70 bags of letters, there would be only maybe about three bags of letters, the rest was parcels.

AK: And a lot of those were COD's.

JE: That's right, you had to collect the COD.

AK: You couldn't hand them that parcel until they paid you.

JE: Or if you did...

AK: That was your tough luck.

JE: That is your tough luck and a lot of postmasters got themselves in trouble.

AK: So, you had to be very strict and stern about that.

JE: Oh, yes.

AK: And I guess there is a lot that said, hey come on, give me the parcel. Trying to wheedle it out of you.

JE: Oh yeah, I'll bring it tomorrow...

AK: Famous last words.

JE: Yes the COD's and it was unbelievable. [speaking to Anne] Yes, open the fridge. Yeah pass it out.

AK: But do you think that was one of the mainstays of the T. Eaton Company was when one of their sources of real wealth was the mail order business?

JE: It was.

AE: Oh yes, Eaton's were better than the Simpsons.

JE: They have, they were doing that...all right, you take like in Redwater, and with that population, our COD revenue was nothing then, well within the, what about 30 to 50 thousand dollars a month?

AK: Is that right, that you had a collect?

JE: That's right. Especially, you get your... before Christmas, you get before summer the spring time and all the kids, you know, before school it was just...

JM: Did you have good security, like a safe and all those...

JE: Oh yes, sure, I'll show you what kind of security we had, it was one of those, if you ever seen those old type that you just slip it in, you know you had ... and it was a little bolt, the tiny little bolt on the slip tool. That was the security. We didn't even have a key on the lock on the door.

AK: When did you, when did you first get boxes installed? Or did you ever get...

JE: Oh yes, actually when the new build building came in and this is what I'm telling you, it was in about what, about the '50...'49. And this is when, and what happened actually the boxes, just to give you an idea, you know, because when I pressured them and all that and then they realized, because this was the first place that it happened so, you know, and when they realized when the postal people realized, they were good. I've got to say that they were really good in that, when they realized that...because, when they realized that, actually the, well it was Mr. Neil that was in here, and he was very helpful to us. [other background conversation] Jeez where was I?

AK: You were talking about the security.

JE: Oh, yeah. Oh, the boxes. We were talking about the boxes and actually what happened when the building, the building was not complete yet, they were actually finished on the outside of it and they were already building in a screen, and a screen was done up in Edmonton. They were already installing and the building was not even finished inside in no way, but that's how fast... about 9 days after the building started, or is it 11 days after we moved in and the post office boxes were ordered by St. Paul, that's where they were going, on that train to St. Paul, St. Paul post office.

AK: And what did you do, you take them off the train?

JE: Mr. Neil, now, ??? that's the way it was, he came in down to the station and got the conductor and then and actually because, you see at that time, what happened in that time the post office department had a car of their own, the postal car.

AK: Well, did they have sorters on?

JE: That's right. There were sorters on...

AK: There was, a railway car.

JE: That's right, and there were sorters on it, and all the supplies came through. So he just said, dump them off here???

AK: Well then was it a daily train?

JE: Yeah, it was daily.

AK: And there must have been passenger traffic too.

JE: Oh yes, the train was anywhere, at least, three to four passenger cars were going through.

AK: And it had this mail car.

JE: That's right, it had a mail car.

AK: And how many sorters would be on that?

JE: There were two people and they had a helper that did the bags, but the two...

AK: And they would get on at Edmonton, and they'd...?

JE: Well by the time Redwater's mail came into Edmonton they already had it sorted for Winnipeg and whatever it is, they already had it...

AK: So, it was ready to dump off and go its proper way. Well I guess... well where did that line start?

AE: At St-Paul-de-Métis...

AK: Oh, at St-Paul-de-Métis.

JE: And the de-Metis was... actually why they called it the de-Métis because...

AK: de-Métis, the Metis line, ???

JE: Yeah, because there was a branch line, from St. Paul there was a branch line that was going towards Cold Lake and that's why they called it the St-Paul-de-Métis line. But very few people know.

JM: No, but I remember my father saying that...

JE: St-Paul-de-Métis.

JM: [inaudible]

JE: And then at Ashmont, it broke off at Ashmont for already later on it came in where it broke off at Ashmont.

AK: Yeah but this wasn't the line that went to Fort MacMurray?

JE: No, no, no.

AK: It was this other one over here.

JE: The old NER.

AK: And that's all be torn up?

JE: Yeah that's all been torn up, to Egremont. From Egremont it proceeds on, on the old line.

AK: Of course, there is no more passenger service.

JE: No, there is no passenger service. [inaudible]

AK: Well that's interesting and that, that mail car stayed on quite a long time?

AE: Oh yes. I have a picture of the last...

JE: God, it went out in about the 60s.

AE: I don't know exactly when but I ...

JE: in about the middle of 60s, that's when they start to truck. And that's why our mail was starting to slow down.

JM: It was never on the bus?

JE: No.

AK: Well then what year was it that you people packed it in with the post office?

JE: I did it in 1981.

AK: That late?

AE: I did in '84.

JE: 37 years.

AK: 37 years. And by that time was it Canada Post?

JE: Yes.

AE: I was under Crown Corporation already.

JE: No, I wasn't, she was because Canada Post came in 1983.

AE: October 13th, 1983 Crown Corporation came in.

AK: And you had been working for her majesty.

JE: That's right.

AK: You never mind this other stuff.

JE: But the thing is, really when I went into that post office. Tell you the truth, I dreaded it every day 37 years. I always wanted to be a truck driver. I always had trucking in my mind. Well I did my job, I'm not [unintelligible] But I always wanted to do truck. And when I gave up the post office actually the reason I gave up the post office is because of the [unintelligible] worked on my benefits. I would have lost a total of four percent.

AK: Oh gosh isn't that nice. That's a lovely emblem. Look at that Jean.

AE: Its was what Jean got from the Legion.

AK: Oh, voluntary service.

JE: We built the Legion voluntary. A ninety-thousand-dollar project and it was done totally volunteer.

AK: So, the 90,000 was just the materials?

JE: No, that's counting our volunteer work.

AE: That's the highest award that the Legion presents.

AK: Well that's lovely.

AE: He did all that financial grant work. And building too.

AE/JE: [unintelligible]

AE: He did all the arranging, all the financial all the grant work all the [unintelligible] all the men working. There's two of them that really go this... but I'm proud of this one.

AE/JE: [unintelligible]

JE: It was getting into the fall and then we, you know, the first thing and we had a station master, Len Donaldson. And he was quite the guy but he was the station master and he was the one that actually, and him and, Anne, what was? Because I curled with him. A happy fella from Imperial Oil.

AK: Gabby Laberge?

AE: No, he died at the ???

JE: No that was...

AE: Lorne ??? was one, and then there was another one. The one that I curled with. And we decided that hey, we need some entertainment so they decided to build a curling rink. And we built the curling rink voluntarily. Well the Imperial Oil, they helped with material, you know and equipment and so on, and that's the way we got...???

AE: Imperial Oil always helped, they were very good.

[00:20:06] AK: Okay, now you've shown us a very interesting facet only of the town. Now what about all these people that would, fly-by-nights, that come in, they'd be here for a couple of weeks and then they'd leave and then... did you have much contact with those people?

JE: To a certain extent. Yes, there was the gambling as usual. And what was his name???

AK: Did they have organized gambling downtown?

JE: Yes, they had and alright, to give you exactly where the place was, Marshall Wells Building was in there and there was a shack back of that and that's where the gambling was going on, and then what was his name...?

AE: [inaudible]

JE: Peggy, they used to call him Peggy? Well that was already entertainment, that was, no, no, that was entertainment. But this was actually a gambling place and it was going year-round and actually he was ??? because actually, in the card games he used to take the week off. And he slept in the day time.

AK: He was the house? That's right. And then they had their good ladies too.

[talking at once]

AE: We had a party one night and everybody had to get up and talk, about 1949 ??? anyways, so when I had my part ??? I said when the oil boom came everything came with it. And I would tell them this instance that all these men used to come to the office and come and ask for a Mrs., I would never give a name you know, they just said Mrs. G, and this...

JM: They wanted her address, yeah.

AE: Yeah, and I said, and a few, this came so often all ??? and everything asking for her. Well as dumb as I was I said you know, I'm a small-town girl but I got the message, you know. So, everybody was so curious at the party about who it was and I mean I never did let on. I wouldn't do that, hey. Oh yeah, there was a few in here.



JE: Some of the things ... that it was quite the town, honest-to-goodness.

AE: I wouldn't go out at night.

JE: It was active day and night. But that's the way it is.

AK: Well, they were working shift. The rigs never stopped.

JE: And then the poor... who got raped?? The blacksmith. Yes, in those days too, he got raped.

AE: In the back of the, where the post office is.

AK: I don't know, how do you blame that, eh?

AE: Oh, everybody in town knew that. Whatever. And we were lucky that we had a second chance, because the fertilizer plant came. Because when the oil field died down ??? it was too slow already. And then the fertilizer plant came in so it got busy again.

AK: You serviced the fertilizer plant from here rather than from Fort Saskatchewan?

AE: They had the mail from us.

JE: Well it was the same thing.

AK: Well by that time there were bags, weren't there?

JE: Oh yeah, and then there was already, they were serviced with courier. They had their own courier. They used to come and pick up the mail but we serviced them until later after that they lost the service.

AE: After Jim retired we got a lady postal master. I was in line for it, but I only had so much to go so I didn't bother. With my wage and what I was getting in overtime, I was making more than that anyway. And it's not just that, I didn't want to handle staff. And there was a lady postal mistress, and she used to run around with stuff anyway, so they let her go in 11 months. Then we got a man. And he was from that cut?? that he didn't care if the mail was sorted or not. This was hard on me because we were used to service, you know. In about two, three months...

JE: [inaudible]

AK: And you were working with these people?

AE: Yeah, I was working with that guy. And in about 2-3 months after he came it was more important for him to fuss around the girls and them around him ??? With Jim it was sorting mail because when the people came at eight o'clock he wanted it all in. In about 2-3 months we lost the [inaudible].

JE: That's when the courier, well actually the courier system was already in the wind when I was there. And at that time, it wasn't... not Walker, yeah it was Walker, Walker was the district director.

AE: Oh Yeah Gordon Walker.

AK: Gordon Walker?

JE: Gordon Walker was the district director when I retired.

AE: He used to be on television and on radio, he's still alive.

AK: Oh, I see...

JE: He was stern. When he spoke to you, you almost shook but that didn't bother me.

AE: He spoke for service and productivity you know. The young generation now, they don't want to hear about the word productivity. You know my last 2, 3 years were hard, because I'd gone into this already.

AK: It was whole new ball game, and you...

AE/JE: [inaudible talking at once]

JE: You know, the thing is, the fertilizer plant gave us the idea because they wanted you know ... the fertilizer plant when they were building and so on, when they wanted something they wanted it right now. You know, to tell you the truth if they wanted a special bolt now, they had a courier service that was doing it, they drove that back and forth and it would cost them seventy dollars.

AK: Just for that bolt?

JE: What they needed then and that's...

AK: But that bolt may have represented two or three thousand dollars of lost time.

AE: But you can see why it was important. Why it was important the mail was in. They had 20-30 girls working there. Those girls need the mail when they open the day. They started ????. And we always had the mail for them.

JE: Now they have the Telex and they have the ??? system and the fax machine. But before there was not of that. You know so these were the services...

[00:28:36] AK: Well getting back to the early days there in '48. Was it '48 or '49 that the hotel burnt down? Was it shortly after the boom started?

JE: '49. '49 it burnt down.

AE: '49 I think.

AK: Well, I was told that Len Walker was the clerk at the hotel.

JE: He might have been. He was the mayor, he was working...

AK: Well he was the mayor, yeah.

JE: It might have been him.

AE: Wasn't he a bartender?

JE: No, he was in the office.

AK: Well anyways it wasn't his hotel.

AE: No, no.

AK: He was working there.

JE: Yeah. Maloney's wasn't it? Wait a minute...

AK: Well there was Walter Maloney and Chris Kurniak were the three.

AE: ??? the town was formed. Before they were under the MD of Smoky Lake. That's when my dad was on Council. But then they formed a town and after that my dad said this is a young man's game. This is not for me. He was on for 23 years, eh. So, Walter Maloney, Chris Kurniak and ???

AK: Len Walker?

JE: Yeah, they were the Council, but the owners of the hotel were...

AE: Alec Melanka, Bill Melanka and Steve Maloney

JE: No, no Melankas came in by themselves.

AE: The hotel burned down under Melankas, they had ???

AK: Well then when the hotel burned down...

AE: ??? the greasy spoon...

JE: No, but the hotel already... the Churnichins owned it.

AE: Oh, that's far before that.

JE: But actually, there was a store and hotel ... when that thing was on fire, the great part about it was that it was burning on the back, because that's where somewhere the fire started, in the back. Well, they were trying to, you know, in those days, the first thing actually the vault came out, you know, and well, alright, how come Fred Maloney was sitting on that vault and they tried to you know, because the fellows were wanted to get a hold of that vault and they just about...

AE: Fred Maloney's grandma was sitting on the vault.

JE: His grandma? Oh, that was the story of ...

AK: You mean the vault...

JE: The store vault, because the store was next to it and they were worried...

AE: There was a pool, a hotel and a store. They took the vault out of the store across the street, on the CN grounds.

JE: And he put his grandma, he put his mother to watch.

AE: His mother was sitting on there. But his mother was a sister to my grandma in the old country, so his mother used to tell us to call her Grandma because we never had a grandmother here either. So anyway, she was running and they somebody managed to steal stuff ???

JE: Well, they were trying to get her out, but she made such a fuss that they didn't. But as the hotel was burning, so what they were doing, they were trying to save all that beer because you know that ??? and really so when the first truck backed in there, you know, it was a half-ton and they loaded up back. I thought I looked at that and they didn't say anything, you just went ... it's a local fella, so he just backed his truck in there and unloaded ???

AK: But Len Walker was involved in that fire?

JE: Yeah, he was. Well, he was, actually he was the clerk in there, with the ??? mind you ???

AE: The pool room burned and the hotel, both the two buildings burned down.

AK: Now was that right where, near where the theater is?

JE: That's right, the theater is exactly where the hotel...

AE: The pool room came up, and the theatre came up there, and the hotel went up a block down the street.

AK: But my understanding was that the fella that built the theater defeated Len Walker at the next election.

AE: Nick Cernik.

AK: Cernik?

JE: Yeah, Nick Cernik.

AK: Was there was a lot of pressure to have Len Walker removed or do you think...?

AE: Len Walker, he was okay, but he drank a lot. He was an irresponsible man. I mean, we all liked him but he had his weaknesses and that's why he lost out. But he was good in certain areas because you know, he could speak ???.

JE: Well at that time already when Cernik came in already, well, they had the town secretary and actually, you know, like they talk about the town secretary or something like that, that it's only books, well Jack Warden was the fellow that was the town secretary. There was... Jack Warden was the town secretary, he was the town cop, he was the town manager, he was the town foreman, he was everything.

AE: And he was a good man.

JE: And he was a good... he liked his drink.

AE: And the kids liked him and the adults liked him.

AK: But he liked the odd drink, eh?

JE: Well he did like an odd drink but when he was... and she was the Librarian you know because the library and she was...

AK: Mrs. Gordon?

JE: Yeah, they both passed away. But they actually were the ones that set the base of the town, he was the one actually set the base of the town.

AK: Kept it kind of going?

JE: Well, he kept it going and then because as I said, you know the most of the Councillors, they were just, it was a part-time pay it wasn't, you know, even now they're still part-time, you know, but at that time, I don't know if they got maybe ten dollars for the meetings or whatever it was you know. So, they all had their businesses and they had to tend to their businesses. So, Jack had to do everything, it was in his hands you know, that's all. I remember, my goodness, one time we had a ...

AE: We worked next door to...

JE: Yeah the post office and jeez we, my goodness there was a ... when actually the lady, she was in business doing ... but somehow there was a parcel that she wanted to insure to ... oh no that wasn't that lady, it was the other lady ??? because her, you know, at that time they used to, you know, she was on welfare and like, the cheques when they came in, although they came in advance, you could not pass them out until that date.

AK: Yeah, they were pre-issued.

JE: That's right, they were pre-issued but they could not be handed out.

AK: And you had instructions for that.

JE: Oh yes and these were the instructions, and...

AK: So, were these federal cheques or provincial?

JE: They were municipal cheques. At that time welfare was done at the municipalities.

AK: Well which municipal district was this?

AE: Smoky Lake.

AE/JE: [unintelligible]

JE: ... Smoky Lake for the longest time and then we fell under Thorhild when it broke up and now it's under Sturgeon. But I wouldn't give it to her and she got just belligerent, she created one of the ??? you know, and then she started to hammer, you know, we used to have this screen, and she was ??? I was there, and, because we had a slide door, I says, get Jack over. And he was just next door to it. Boy oh boy, and when he came in, you know that fella, you know they talk about police, and you must understand, that fella, he was a husky fella, he weighed about 220 pounds, 230 pounds. He was maybe like your height, he was a tall fella. But they are, you know, you hear of these police using force and so on, but there is the fellow that I got to give him credit, you know, he walked in there and she just, well she just starts, well she just starts ??? you know, because he presented himself as a police officer and asked her if she'd leave the premises and she started to pound on ??? Well actually he could have gotten a little rough but he handled her gently. Walked her out and talked to her and that's it. He did not use any physical force at all.

AE: He was a gentleman. Although he liked his liquor. What I always felt bad ... from Redwater, Jack never got the recognition that he should have.

JE: Yeah, that's right.

AK: And he's been dead a number of years?

AE: He's been dead but it would have been very nice [all talking at once] And she was the librarian but she had such a way, even our daughter was young, 19 years old, she takes these kids in with her and teach them and stuff and they liked her. They were just anxious to come from school and ???

JE: And he was a good PR man for the town. This is why I say, some of the things that town got, it's through his foresight, and ???

AE: And he didn't...

AK: Well Jack Gordon carried on this kind of this multi-function for several years then after the boom?

JE: Oh yes, in fact he retired out of Redwater.

AK: He was well liked by the ???

JE: Yeah, he retired out of Redwater...

AE: I think the people that got in should have recognized him more than they did.

AK: Yeah, right.

JE: And he went down to BC.

AE: ??? they liked him, they had nothing against him.

AK: And that's where he died.

JE: Yeah, Cranbrook.

JM: Did you say you came into Sturgeon, like St. Albert?

JE: Yeah.

AK: That's the Surgeon district now.

AE: Yeah, I think we're pretty happy under Sturgeon.

JM: Well, St. Albert is getting...

JE: Well, a lot better than what we were under Thorhild because actually the whole thing is with Thorhild was that, okay, the first thing is for some reason they've always envied Redwater. See Redwater was growing, you know, it had its hardships and it wasn't growing as fast as should have, but it was growing slowly and it was getting bigger and Thorhild was losing out on these ... and because we were at the tail end of it, that's exactly what we got, tail end service, you know, whenever it came down to roads, they'd work it up and by the time it got to Redwater ??? you know, anything we demanded, no, it wasn't and so on. And it got to such a mistake??, you know that they, even...

AE: [unintelligible]

JE: The roads to the gas plant and all this. So then it got so that, actually it was, well they had, it was actually through the petitions and it was almost a riot I'll tell you that to tell you the truth. And then the town, they just broke away from Thorhild and that's when they joined Sturgeon. Which we were still on the tail end but at least we didn't... we were treated a little more humanely than we were by Thorhild. Now Thorhild would wish that Redwater was there but they're a dying...

AK: That's part of the tax base that's gone from...

AE: Oh, about a population of 6-700.

AK: You see it's tax base that counts. As a kind of an irrelevant question, is the fertilizer plant part of the Redwater tax base or is it...?

JE: No, it's Sturgeon's.

AK: It's out of the municipal...

JE: No that's right it's the Sturgeon's. It never was Redwater. The gas plant was.

AK: Yeah, well it would certainly be part of the tax base. And that helped the...

JE: Although it doesn't, it's not in the boundaries of Redwater, you know, ???

AK: Oh, it's not in the...

JE: No, it's not in the boundaries of the town but they made some agreement when Sturgeon was taking it over. They allowed them that certain percentage because on account of the services were required out of Redwater and so on. And they're getting a percentage base of the tax rate.

AE: Would you like coffee?

[00:42:25] AK: Well, I think we're just about at the end of our tape here and I would like to wind up by asking you, both Jim and Anne, some of your philosophies. You've already expressed them I think but if you'd like to sum up in a few words as to, you know what Redwater has been to you or whatever you'd like to say about your...

JE: It still is a... you know, to me, I wouldn't even think of moving, although we're retired, I wouldn't think of moving you know. It's a lovely place, convenient to the city. I've lost maybe the contact with a lot of people, but it seems they haven't lost contact with me. They still, you meet them, they still say hello. Sometimes I wonder who they are, especially in the younger generation. But I think Redwater is a great town and community.

AK: Right. So do you have any final words here Anne? I got a few minutes left here.

AE: Yes, I like it all as much as Jim did. It's a friendly town, the young generation is friendly too. It's a neat town, lot of landscaping, which I'll...

AK: Yeah, your garden shows that, you have got a beautiful garden.

AE: Well Redwater is, it's got a lot of landscaping here and likewise, it's home to me. I'm proud to be on my dad's original farm.

AK: Yes, there is a feeling of connection there.

AE: Oh yes there is.

AK: I want to thank both of you for...

JE: And it's a growing town.



AK: Oh, yeah, I think it will grow.

JE: I know it will.

AK: And maybe as they say the boredom of slow steady growth.

AE: Oh, we're not bored here, we're so busy, we do volunteer work.

AK: Is that right?

AE: That's why you couldn't get a hold of us. Yesterday we were gone. Tuesday, we had a nifty fifty flea market to raise funds for a carpet bowling. And on Monday night we were working at the hall setting up, pricing all the things. Jim is very active with the Legion too and while I am too, he's the Treasurer and he is very active. And they have a group, you know, they go and have their coffee and they go and clean the hall, they do their own janitor work, which they save themselves a lot of money. And they're all retired, so actually it's not all work, it's fun to me.

JE: Like you see a lot of fellows walking around of boredom.

AK: Oh, yeah that's terrible.

JE: I would like to spend one day being bored. I would enjoy it.

JE/AE [talking at once]

AK: Oh, no, well that was fine...

JE/AE/AK: [talking at once]

JE: The youth organizations are doing a terrific job in keeping the youth occupied. Sure, we sponsor them because we sponsor ... the Legion sponsors 4-H they sponsor the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, the Brownies, the minor hockey, the 4-H Club. You know.

AE: And it's all voluntary work.

JE: And we do it through our bingos and so. But then there is, we sponsor them but there is the leaders of it, and they're doing a terrific job.

AK: Well, I think we're just about there, so thanks again for your hospitality.

End of Interview