

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: E Ben Hochhausen

INTERVIEWER: Aubrey Kerr

DATE: July 8, 1991, 1993? (not indicated)

Side 1 – 46:31

AK: Okay, I'm Aubrey Kerr and I'm in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hochhausen, and it's 159 Oeming Road, in the southwest part of Edmonton. And your beautiful home is facing out into a tributary of White Mud Creek. And I'm very pleased that you're giving me some of your time, Ben, to bring back some of the memories about the old days at Redwater. So, first of all, where were you born and what year?

BH: Aubrey, I was born in 1924, December 15th, on a farm 14 miles south of Provost. I lived on the farm with my parents, I'm one of ten kids. We moved to Provost in 1925 and stayed there, where I took my early schooling, until 1935 when times got pretty tough. And my father was not able to maintain two places of living at both the farm and the town. So, we all moved back to the farm. In 1939 I went to Hanna. My father had a very very good friend who was a priest. And the Father Harnett?? told my father that if young Gene, my name is Eugene, my Christian name, if young Gene wants to come and stay with me, I'll get a cow and some chickens and he could look after that and I'll see that he gets through high school. So, that's what happened. I went back, stayed three years in Hanna, and then went back to Provost to finish my high school. By that time my parents had got back into Provost again. And I went through high school with the intention of taking medicine. However, after quite a long talk with one of the high school teachers, who incidentally had a degree in science which was rather unusual for teachers in those days.

AK: They had to have all kinds of jobs, some of them.

BH: And, so, he suggested I take engineering. I told him I didn't know what that entailed. In my mind an engineer was one of those guys who drove a locomotive. So, I came up to Edmonton and checked with the Registrar, Mr. Eckwell. And he told me, yes my marks were very good in maths and sciences. And yes, I should get into the field of engineering which I did. The intent was to go into the field of chemical engineering, but after a year I decided I wanted a very general course in engineering, civil was the mostly general course they had so that's what I took.

AK: Well, now just before we go any farther. Going back to your parents, had they immigrated, or was it their parents that had immigrated to Canada?

BH: My father was born in 1881 in Minnesota. His grandfather came over from Germany in the early 1860's. And my father's father, my grandfather came over as a young boy, was a schoolteacher and a farmer in Minnesota. And when they opened up land in Alberta and Saskatchewan, he came up in 1906 and homesteaded with my uncle in the Provost area.

AK: I wonder how he found out about that land being available. Was there publicity about it in the States?

BH: Very much so. As a matter of fact, the first year he came up to Saskatchewan. And my grandfather came along and said, Phil, this soil is not what you want. You better look a little further. So, he went beyond. At that time, the railroad went as far as North Battleford. And he went up to Battleford, North Battleford, hired a horse and buggy. And a friend of his had preceded him, he told my father that, where the location was that he was going to get a homestead, and then my father went up and after a day and a half, found him. And the following year, he and my brother and a friend came up with settler's effects. They were allowed one boxcar full of effects, which included horses, cows, and so on.

AK: Yeah, right.

BH: I would think that my father had one of the first prefab homes. Before he left, he built four walls and two slabs and a roof. And when he got up there, it was all loaded on a hay rack. As a matter of fact, they knew they needed horses but they needed cattle too. So, over the winter before they came up, he trained two cows to be oxen (laughs).

AK: And he harnessed them?

BH: And he harnessed them. And I have a picture as a matter of fact, of the train that came down with my father.

AK: Well, it's important to...

BH: They came from Lloydminster, the railroad had been built. They went 80 miles from Lloydminster down to Provost..

AK: Yeah, right. The land, of course, by that time would be... there would be no minerals going with it?

BH: No, it was after 1905. However, my father did purchase some land from the CPR. And he was one of these people that was involved in the celebrated case of...

AK: Oh, the split title?

BH: Yes.

AK: Yeah.

BH: And he had the gas rights, and so in 19... just a couple townships from the Saskatchewan border, and in fact, they did drill wells, and there was some heavy well production of crude oil. And for a short while, the family of course got gas rights. My father held onto it faithfully through the years because he was interested. He never lived to see the well drilled that'd he'd always hoped to see on his land.

AK: No.

BH: But that is the beginning of our association with Alberta. My mother came up from North Dakota.

AK: Had they known each other in the U.S.?

BH: No.

AK: They met here.

BH: They met here and were married in 1911. My father was 30 years old when he married, my mother was 18.

AK: Oh, my.

BH: And they didn't have family until my father was thirty-six. Six years with no children. We have a little joke in our family that once mother got it turned on she didn't know how to turn it off.

AK: You had how many brothers and sisters?

BH: I have one... my oldest brother died in his 20's. But I still have 4, I still have 9 in the family, 3 brothers and 4 sisters. There was 4 boys and 4 girls in the family. And I'm the middle child.

AK: And I guess the other thing we should get is how you acquired that nickname of Ben?

BH: Well, I mentioned before that I went down to Hanna. And shortly after I got down there I went into the high school bonspiel. At that time the grade school teachers were also part of the bonspiel, the curling bonspiel. And I was, they picked names out of a hat. The skip of my rink was one of the grade school teachers who I had not met because I was new to town, and he asked me my name, I said it was Eugene Hochhausen. No, he says I'll never remember that. He says, my name is Rod Penny. I'll call you Benny to rhyme with Penny.

AK: Is that right?

BH: And the name stuck. Kids were calling me that, the school teachers started calling me Benny, and of course it went from Benny to Ben. As a matter of fact, I can tell the vintage of my friends and so on. The Provost people called me Gene. People that I first met at University and the early days of working with Imperial, Gibby for example called me Benny and so on. But about twenty-some years ago it changed to Ben.

AK: Right.

BH: So, that's how I got the name.

AK: Wonderful.

[00:10:49] Okay, so you applied yourself in Hanna, now, what were you doing in the summertime there? Did you have a summer job down there?

BH: No, in Hanna I was back home working on the farm.

AK: When the school was closed?

BH: When school was closed we went back. I went back home at Provost and worked on the farm. When I finished high school I came up to Edmonton and worked as a truck driver with the U.S. Army for building the ??? Airport. And it was then.. and as matter of fact, I... well, there was no money around Aubrey. And I came up here to go to the short course in normal school, a teacher's training course. I was too young to get in the services. And of course at that time there was such a shortage of teachers. They were getting kids from school, high school, giving two months of Summer School courses setting them up to teach school.

AK: That's right. This is what happened to Ann Key I think. To some extent.

BH: Yeah. There is a number of ??? that happened. I was there in normal school, which was being taught at ??? school.

AK: Right.

BH: And I spent about 10 days there and I said, this is not for me. I didn't think I wanted to do that. So, I got in touch with my father and said, Dad I'll get a job. I can get one and I can drive a truck, and I'll work out there and I will.. if you can get scratch any kind of money for me at all I'll stop University. So, that's why I got into. ?????? I did lots of stupid things. As a matter of fact, things were.. money was pretty tight and well, the U.S. Army was around. Maybe better not strike that on the record.

AK: Well, now just let me ask this question.

BH: Go ahead.

AK: I was just going to ask- when you drove truck for them, what was your wage? Do you remember?

BH: I think it was something like 60 cents an hour. I know my summer jobs, when I finished.. when I was going through University, which jobs were assigned because we had to get permission to take the particular job. Because during when we finished our first year University, I was then age-wise eligible to get into the services. And there was a half a dozen of us that went down to join the Air Force. This was then 1943 or beyond. And they told us that.. go back to school, we don't need you now. There were well on our way in Europe. And they said we're going to need Engineers when this thing is over very badly. But we were, of course, as you probably appreciate Aubrey, in the Officer Training Corps in school. Spent three days.. afternoons a week in training.

AK: I know. I was in it.

BH: That's right. And that was of course, a pretty rigorous schedule. Had to study and go to Army.

AK: Well, that was under P.S. Warren wasn't it?

BH: That's right.

AK: Yeah, geology. Well, there you are. You got directed by a geologist. But those summer jobs that you had, when you were attending University, what were they?

BH: Well, the first year I worked for the bridge and building department of the CPR. And we were building wooden trestles and repairing wooden trestles throughout the Edmonton subdivision. The following year I went to Yellowknife as a surveyor. And we did the reconnaissance work on the Snare River hydroelectric.

AK: Snare river?

BH: Yes. Which was the first electrical power that was supplied to the giant Yellowknife gold mines when they discovered gold there. It was a very interesting up there. We were looking at finding whether or not we could in fact divert water, ???, tunnels (or puddles???) and so on to get water to add a drop of some hundred and twenty feet into Steven Lake. But the following year I went back there and we did the transmission line survey. I still think about designing those transmission lines, just a kid going to University, 3 or 4 of us on a crew with the responsibility of designing a power line cross country. But we.. Well, there was a lot of interesting incidents. The wolves, the bears... things and so on.

AK: Boy you are right on. But giant.. Yellowknife had been discovered in '38. So, what had they been using for power up to that time?

BH: Well, there was some power coming from the power source of the Con Mine. But when they were getting.. we went up there in 1944-45, they were just then getting to the point where they were sinking their main shaft and they were really going to get into it in a big way. And they had to have more power than they can get from anything else. They had diesel power in the first instance. The power from the Con. But the Snare River Project was able to supply the power necessary for them to go into full-fledged mining operation.

AK: Well, then in the next year did you.. what, did you continue there?

BH: Well, I was too.. Well, I was with the railway. And the two following years, of course, was in the North.

AK: Yellowknife.

BH: And that in fact was the year I graduated.

AK: Oh, I see that's when you graduated.

BH: 1947.

AK: Yeah.

BH: I was slated??? to go back in the north again because they wanted me when I graduated to go back and work with them, but then they discovered oil in Leduc. And they were interviewing students, Harold Stolman, and I forget who else there was. But there was three of us sitting at class who were interviewed. A number were interviewed, but three of us were chosen to go with Imperial.

AK: And it didn't matter that you Civil?

BH: No.

AK: They wanted anything that was warm...

BH: They wanted engineering.

AK: Yeah, they wanted engineering.

BH: As a matter of fact, they wanted people for exploration. Harold was of course, headed up their geophysical department in Edmonton at the time. And so I spent from spring of 1947 until December of '49 with the exploration Department. Working mostly in the Edmonton area, but a stint in the Grand Prairie area with ???.

AK: And you are saying that Spragins was your party? (pause in audio)

[00:19:40]

and Spragins is spelt S-P-R-A-G-I-N-S.

BH: Marty Dueths was on ..?? Carl Chaplin was the fellow worked in the office, and the Garrity boys were doing the drilling.

AK: Right. Did Carl ever talk to you about the work that he did in assembling that map for the Leduc discovery?

BH: No. I knew of it. But he didn't speak to me about it.

AK: Yeah. He was pretty reticent about it, but his name is on it. He used the combined efforts of the Frank Roberts party with Jim Ziegler's Highland party. I don't know whether you knew them.

BH: I knew them. I knew Frank.

[00:20:45]

AK: Anyways, this sort of thing, did it really appeal to you this geophysical work?

BH: I was a kid. I was making some better money than I ever made before.

AK: What kind of money did they pay you?

BH: Well, I was paid \$200 a month. But since I was on an exploration crew, I was getting a \$60 a month living allowance.

AK: Right. But you weren't married yet?

BH: No, not yet. But I but I got married a year following my graduation. As a matter of fact, Mary was a high-school sweetheart.

AK: Is that right? From Provost?

BH: From Hannah.

AK: Oh, from Hannah. Oh, well.

BH: The last year I was in Hannah, I had met Mary and we went together in school for a while. When I went back to Provost that was the end of it. Went to high school, went to University first year. But she moved. She transferred to Edmonton. She was with the Royal Bank. And I met her, took her out, and started all over again.

AK: Oh, great.

BH: When they discovered oil in Redwater, they needed people, and I thought that would be kind of nice to be more stable because I was then married. And when the opportunity came for.. or the notice came out that there was an opportunity for employees in exploration move into production, I thought I would check it out. And it was then that I met Morris Paulson and Willis Gibson who were interviewing in the King Edward Hotel.

AK: Yeah, and that's what Gibby said, that he and Laurie had interviewed you.

BH: So, I left exploration and went to Redwater in December of 1949.

[00:23:03]

AK: Now at that time had the houses been built?

BH: No. Matter of fact, I was very deeply involved in the development of the Town site for a while.

AK: Well, you'd have worked with Jack Harvey then?

BH: With Harvey, yeah. And we put in the pipeline to the river for water for the town. An incident there of course was rather strange; they put the pipeline in, it was a four-inch pipe line, put a gallery on a small island in the North Saskatchewan River down in the Amelia end of the field where the Redwater river empties into the North Saskatchewan. And there was sufficient water came and filtrated into the gallery, so it was clean water. But they ran a bare steel pipe line from that gallery oh some 9 miles into town. And as a result of picked up a fair amount of iron. And the washing that all the girls had hung out, mostly diapers because there was a wealth of little people. The diapers all turned orange. And it got to the point where if you didn't have that kind of a rustic color on you, they knew you weren't bathing often enough.

AK: Well, did you hear the story of the far more serious complaint was that when you took this water mixed it in with rye, the drink would turn black.

BH: It would really precipitate.

AK: So, that had a.. there was certainly very urgent reasons apart from the diapers to get that water put right.

BH: That's right. And of course they put a sequestering agent in the water to fix it up. However, the pipeline, since it was all iron, had a very short service life. And they were doing a lot of patching on it before the system was put out a service.

AK: Yeah. And then later on Redwater.. currently Redwater is on Edmonton water.

BH: That's right. They drill a number of wells in the Redwater area also.

AK: It didn't seem to help.

BH: It didn't do much. But the was a real boon for the town to get on the Edmonton water system.

[00:25:38]

When we started up there Aubrey, I was given the task of ??? to locate and design tank patterns. And I had no idea in the oil field ??? what a battery was.

AK: Really? ????? your flashlight.

BH: That's right. We learn quickly. We had to. It was a matter of necessity with pipelines going in and ??? going in and so on. So, I spent quite a bit of time in the early stages of production, rather the development of the Redwater field, with Imperial on design, battery design, on roadwork code design. And then 1951, it became very apparent they had a field that was going to produce a fair amount of water. And I was put on an assignment to look at my pipeline gathering system for Imperial.

AK: Just to interrupt you again there.

[00:27:04]

When did you actually.. you and Mary actually moved to Redwater?

BH: We moved in December of 19..?

AK: You mentioned December of '49.

BH: '49. Well, when did they discover Redwater?

AK: It was October '48.

BH: I moved there... I started working there in December.. It was January of '49 I guess it was. It must have been.

AK: Yeah.

BH: Because it..

AK: But you weren't living there?

BH: I was living in the bunkhouse.

AK: Yeah, that's right. It was those bunkhouses that..

BH: Yeah, they were.. I think they were old Air Force type things.

AK: Wasn't that tied into Sparling Davis? Didn't he have a bunkhouse too?

BH: Well, they had for some of the crew. But the Imperial people stayed in.. There was six buildings put together with connection. One was the wash-house, two were bunkhouses, and there was ??? So, it was in 1949 that we moved to Redwater. By that time the town site was built. We were one of the first people that moved out there in to the town site.

AK: And you were saying earlier that the square footage of that house was 500 and..?

BH: The house was 22 by 24. The main house. And alongside it had a little addition that was 18 feet by 4 feet to accommodate a front entry and the stairs down to the basement. It was an old gravity furnace, well there was a gravity furnace down there, a big one that took up most of the basement because it wasn't a very big house.

AK: But you were being fired by gas though, weren't you?

BH: We had gas.

AK: Yeah, you brought gas in from that... there was an Ellerslie well there.

BH: There was a gas well not too... just south and east of town, I think it was, that we brought gas into the town.

AK: Yeah.

BH: And there was a... we brought gas in from a well that was just right adjacent to the discovery well.

AK: That's the one...

BH: That was the first gas well. And later on they drilled another one as a backup for the discovery.

AK: Right.

BH: But we, because that winter, that was the first year we were there that was extremely cold. Many of the people over Christmas wanted to get away back to Calgary where some of their family was. But I said no, I wouldn't go. I'll stay there and I'll look after servicing the water system, the pumps and so on, down on the river. But day after day, we would go down there with a Dodge 4x4 because that's the only

way we could get through the roads, and it was minus 40 and minus 50 day after day. But we got through the first winter and things just looked up from there on.

[00:30:22] AK: Did you have much to do with Campbell Aird, or..?

BH: No.

AK: Or Lornie Leeson?

BH: Yes. Lornie Leeson was in Redwater, although Lornie was in a different department, we got into working in various areas. The chap, the brother I got a kick out of, I've forgotten his first name. I don't remember his name, I won't carry on with that one. But Lornie was..

AK: He was in drilling.

BH: Yeah. Was a very interesting man. Very capable as far as I was concerned. He could get a little upset at times.

AK: Well, that's putting it mildly, yeah.

BH: But he lived, Lornie live down the street just a few doors from us in Redwater. When I went out there, well, when we first started the town site up, it wasn't long after that that Vern Hunter came out as field superintendent.

AK: But the first superintendent was George Bannantine.

BH: George Bannantine was out there. Fine man.

AK: Very fine, yeah. That's B-A-N-N-A-N-T-I-N-E. And he'd come from Romania.

BH: Yes, he'd worked with one of the Esso, subsidiary, standard companies there. And he had his problems getting out of Romania. A constable was out there at the time.

AK: Yeah. Lee. What was Lee's job?

BH: He was assistant field superintendent.

AK: I see.

BH: Working under Hunter and Bannantine.

AK: And then there was Bud Kelly.

BH: Bud was a drilling superintendent.

AK: Right.

BH: It's interesting, when after Bud retired, he came out and supervised the drilling of a couple wells for us in Redwater. Redwater Water Disposal Company. I think he enjoyed.

AK: Oh, sure he would.

BH: Until it interfered with something, I forget what it was, and we got somebody else to stand in.

[00:32:46] AK: I'm getting you a little off the track, but I thought I'd mentioned some of these names because of the connection with Si Cormack who was production person too. And I interviewed Si. So, this first indicator then was from Gibby who said go and look at what you can do about the water situation.

BH: Yes. I did a fair amount of work in the field. For a while, both Ralph Flanders and myself looked around for a bit. In early 1952, the Redwater operators formed an independent company for the purpose of looking after the saltwater, the imminent saltwater disposal problem. As a matter of fact, there was a lot of water at that time being hauled to pits throughout the field. Much to the sorrow of people like Gulf and so on, who took over the Royalite properties and eventually had to suffer the consequences of the water, out of these pits, migrating a half a mile down through the river valley and outcropping and killing everything.

AK: Well, now at this stage, Ben, how much of the presence did the Board have in saying, hey you can't do that.

BH: Well, ERCB, they, was in its infancy then of course too. George Govier was running with the Board.

AK: Well, he was under MacKinnon.

BH: Under MacKinnon, but he was looking after that..

AK: Yeah, right. And he had Frank Manyluk up there.

BH: That's right. But George, just to back up a little bit, the Redwater operators were told that they had to clean up their act and they had to do something with the water. Dome Petroleum drilled a well, disposal well, in the Simmons area. And people were hauling water to that particular well. Imperial drilled a disposal well, just about a mile and a half east of town. And the people in the north end that were producing water were hauling water to that particular well. Neither well was a very good disposal well. Took very, very poor receptivity??? But the operators, it was very apparent that they were going to have to do something about gathering. So, they formed Redwater Water Disposal Company and became the chartered company, I believe, in the spring of 1952. And they brought an engineer in from Kansas, a consultant who had worked for Gulf at the time that, Lockney, was down in that part of the country, and Lockney, he could come up. He talked to people from the East Texas Saltwater Disposal System and brought up somebody from there. I guess were not too satisfied, but he was the man that... Ivan Rice was the man that came up from Kansas. He had gone out on his own just a year or two previously. He was in the saltwater disposal business in Kansas. He was designing and putting in these small systems there. So, when he came up, he was hired by the Redwater Disposal Company to study the field, design the system, and start installing it. He asked that I be on loan from Imperial to him. And I started working with Ivan at that time. In September of 1952, we started our program. We purchased one well from

Imperial, the well that Dome had, and Simmons was so far off the beaten path that it wasn't of much value to us. So, we didn't want it. We drilled two other wells and put in about 13 miles of pipeline and had the system going by December.

AK: So, this was the beginning?

BH: The beginning of the system of the gathering system. Pipe was all asbestos cement.

AK: Did you call that transite?

BH: It was transite pipe. Or cement asbestos, or asbestos cement. There was two people manufacturing the material. One was Johns Manville, and the other was Century Pipe people out of the US. The following year we had a big program on, and we drilled three more wells and put in a great deal of the system, so that by the time the system was complete, essentially complete, by the mid '50s, we had put in about a hundred miles of pipeline.

[00:39:09] AK: Okay, and there's one thing that if you could clear it for me is, when the Redwater Disposal Company was created, how were the shares divided up? Was it in accordance with the number of wells each company had?

BH: Yes. At that time there was about 800 wells in the Redwater field. And each company was given two shares for each well. Except Imperial, since they had greater than 50% of the number of wells, they agreed so as not to be a monopoly company, they would hold their shares down to 45% and agreed that they would forever do so. So, Imperial owned 45% and with that 45% on the eleven-man Board that was formed, they had five directors. And depending on the shareholdings of the other operators they had directors on the Board accordingly. It worked out very well as a matter of fact. We had incorporated a large number of meetings in early days, getting the thing going. One of the things, Aubrey, that we used to have trouble with was a chap from Texaco, and a chap from Seaboard, who knew each other in the old days so to speak. They used to sit beside each other at the Board meetings and would think of all sorts of questions to ask, and wanted things studied and so on. And the next two or three weeks when we got back, we'd find out that they had forgotten they'd asked for it, but we had done a great deal of work.

AK: Uh, oh.

BH: So, we decided that the best way to handle that situation, Rice and I did, was that when the first one came in, one would sit on one side of him, and one would sit on the other so they couldn't get their heads together. And from that time forward, we had no problem in that regard.

AK: Well now, was that fellow that was working for Seaboard, was his name Bischoff?

BH: No.

AK: Was there Bob Bischoff?

BH: It was, Gene was his first name.

AK: James Powell?

BH: No. Powell was BA. British American.

AK: No, Powell, he worked for Seaboard.

BH: Well, this Gene...

AK: Alright, well whoever it was, eh?

BH: Yes. The first Chairman of the Board was Vern Taylor.

AK: Right.

BH: And the members of the Board was Tip Moroney and Vern Hunter. I mentioned Lockney was on the Board. Powell, there was a chap by the name of Powell with BA. Gordon Connell was with Royalite.

AK: Right.

BH: I'd never get the surname for the rest of them. The man from Texaco, and the man from Seaboard. Oh, and Pacific Petroleums had... you'd know him Aubrey.

AK: Lyle Caspell?

BH: No. He was... he was on the management team. Pat Bowsher.

AK: Oh, yeah, Pat. Well he was Mr. Everything at Pacific.

BH: That's right. Pat was on the Board.

AK: Did some of these meetings take place in Calgary?

BH: Mostly in Calgary. Always in Calgary. So, we would drive down to Calgary and have the meetings and come back again. And ate in the Pump Room every night.

AK: Oh, yeah. Well, that's the right place.

[00:43:25] So, anyways, there was an equity formed that was amenable to everybody.

BH: Yes. They formed the corporation and they agreed that they would put in up to \$2400 per well to set up a company. But the original study indicated that the maximum water that was going to be produced in Redwater, would be around 60,000 barrels a day.

AK: For the total...

BH: Ivan Rice, when it came up, said this is ridiculous. It's a reef and my experience is that there's going to be a great deal more water produced than that. So, he had the foresight when he designed the

system to say, let's look generally at 200 barrels per day per well. And it was with some difficulty that we got this figure passed by the Redwater Water Committee. But as you know, Aubrey, we field produced water more and more until today, of the last 10 years, producing a million barrels of water a day.

AK: Right.

BH: This evolved really. When they first produced water, of course, they had nothing but ??? and they can produce so much water, or 500 barrels was a maximum you'd get from any one well.

AK: 500 barrels of fluid?

BH: Of fluid.

AK: That'd be oil and water.

BH: That's right. So, we were getting, well, and of course in the early days, they could produce so much from any one well, and that was it. Today, they can only produce the quota for the well.

AK: Yeah, that's right. It was the allowable.

BH: That's right. And so the maximum fluid they could withdraw was about 500 barrels, and that was a big well, a big pump. But one of the operators in the east end of the field, southeast end of the field, decided they wanted to put in a REDA pump. And got permission from the Board do so.

AK: Now, REDA. That's R-E-D-A.

BH: Or a submersible pump.

AK: Yeah, submersible.

BH: Which in those days were REDA's. But this changed the whole picture. It almost caused a breakdown of the Redwater Company. Because a number of the operators said that there's no way that anybody would be allowed to produce more than 500 barrels a day.

AK: I think we'll stop here and turn the tape over and continue.

Side 2 – 45:00

BH: ...Pump would go it alone. And that would break down the organization such that it wouldn't be one operator operating all of the saltwater system in the field. And it was agreed that they could operate these high-volume pumps then, but they would pay so much up to, or the charge would be equitable throughout the field. And at that time, we were charging not on the basis of the production given to us, but on so much per well. If a well made five barrels of water, or made a hundred barrels of water, had the same charge against it.

AK: Right.

BH: With the thought that one day it was going to be a high producer and there's no point in complicating the system with a bunch of meters and so on. However, the arrangement was made that those operators who wanted to produce higher volumes, could put in meters. They would be charged on a per well basis up to 500 barrels a day, and thereafter they would be charged a surcharge based on the volume. And that worked quite well. And we formed an agreement in that regard. It wasn't long though, before the whole concept of production in Redwater changed, where they went off the 40-acre spacing, and as far as production was concerned they started producing in production blocks.

AK: And what was the size of these blocks?

BH: Some of them were very very large. Some were quarter sections or sections in size.

AK: Was this at the instance of the Conservation Board? Or was this within the companies themselves?

BH: It was worked out in cooperation with both the Board and the companies. The companies, of course, wished to produce these things in blocks, cut down a great deal of their costs, in lifting costs. And the Board went along with it in their application. When that happened, we started getting wells that were producing 4,000 and 5,000 barrels a day of fluid. So, we had to handle that. Then they went to the Fuel gate system for their production. And when they fuel gated the producing areas, with Esso being the operator of course, at this lovely?? field. The Fuel gate battery, at the gas plant, there were Esso, two or three of the major companies got together. Some of the other companies never did get into the Fuel gate. They refused to go in. But that created another situation where they were then producing oil and water from the batteries at 3,400 PSI. In the past, our system had always been gravity. We had pipelines big enough to handle the flow, almost like a sewer system, follow the river or the river valley to the various wells. But our production got so great that we needed so many more wells, that we started to have to put in pumps and so on. And it came, we decided then, that what we should do is utilize some of the pressure or the power they had at these various Fuel gate batteries, and we redesigned the complete system as a two-phase gas/water slug flow gathering system.

AK: So, you were carrying wellhead gas then, solution?

BH: We were carrying the gas, because our experience and experimentation that indicated that if we had, in the water, if we had a 100 PSI pressure, we had about a cubic foot of gas per 1,000. If we had 200 lbs, 2 cubic feet of gas, just about that ratio. So, what happened was that we utilized that pressure to move the water from the fuel gate locations, or the satellites, to our various disposal wells. That, in turn, created quite a problem because we had an awful lot more gas coming down on us than we had when we had water coming off treaters at 15 PSI.

[00:05:19] AK: Okay. Can I interrupt again Ben? Was this new system coincidental with the Board's order that all gas had to be gathered?

BH: No.

AK: This was before they put their foot down?

BH: It was after the gas gathering system. This was something that we did ourselves.

AK: Yeah, but they..

BH: But they'd already established a gas gathering system.

AK: Yeah, and of course that gas gathering had to be done because the Board forced it.

BH: That's right. But at the satellites, they had ??? water knockouts.

AK: Yeah.

BH: One of the things they did with the system, of course, was that they measured the oil, they measured the gas, and they measured the water. They'd put the gas back with the oil and took it to fuel gate. But the water volume was so great at that time, that they could not put in pipeline systems economically to take it to fuel gate and handle water from there. Because they would have had to take all the water all the way back again. So, they would balance the pressure across the field. Otherwise, they'd put all the water in one spot. They would have a great big water blimp.

AK: Well, that's right. Even though it was being put in, thousand ??? on it.

BH: That's right. So, we so we ended up utilizing that pressure. In the early days, Aubrey, there was not too much worry about some gas getting into the atmosphere. And so the gas that came off the water from these 15 PSI treaters, we took down to our disposal wells. And at the batteries, we had a wooden gas boot. Because nothing, no metallic ones would stand up and so on.

AK: Yeah, that's right.

BH: So, we had a 20-foot high gas boot. And we took the water from the treater and dumped it into the top of that wooden boot. And the elevation of the water in the boot, it sought its own level of water elevations which is sufficient enough to boot the water down the pipeline to...

AK: Hyperstatic, yeah.

BH: Right. Then the gas went off the top. As a matter of fact, in the Amelia area, it was rather interesting, the woodpeckers would hear the water gurgling into these wooden gas boots, and they were start pecking holes in it.

AK: They thought there was worms in there.

BH: Something back in there. And the one time we had to take one of them down because there was holes in it, and there was 27 dead woodpeckers in the bottom of the gas boot.

AK: Just shows you, they got in there.

[00:08:06] Another interruption if I may Ben, by this time had you severed your connections with Imperial?

BH: Oh yes. We started in 1952 as I've mentioned before with Redwater Water Disposal Company. And then in 1955, Imperial asked us to do a little bit of work down in Saskatchewan. I wrote up a little report for them. And then Chevron Standard in Verdun wanted us, somebody, to put in a full-fledged system for them on a turnkey basis. And it was at that time that we told them that we could not under the auspices of Redwater Water Disposal Company go outside and do outside work at that magnitude. We could sit and talk to people and give them some advice. So, we talked to Tip Moroney, at the time, who was President of Redwater Water Disposal Company, the Board. And he thought it was a good idea for us to get out on our own and operate Redwater on a management contract. We had a simple agreement with Redwater Water Disposal Company. We agreed that it would cost them no more than it would cost them to operate themselves as one-page agreement.

AK: And this was between Rice Engineering, and?

BH: And Redwater Water Disposable Company. So, we formed, well, Ivan Rice was involved in this thing too. So, we formed Rice Engineering and Operating Limited. With the U.S. people having 50% of the shares of the company, and a Canadian people having 50%. I at that time that 30% out the hundred, and two U.S. people involved had 25 each. Dave Hindley had 5%, he was the fellow who I stole from Imperial when we first started. And Les Hunter, who was a chartered accountant, had 15%. Les Hunter was Vern Hunter's brother.

AK: Oh, yes.

BH: Interestingly enough, with Harry being in the gas business, Vern in the oil business, Les in the water business, we had a little joke about it. But it was in '56 that we formed Rice Engineering. And as Rice, we were able to expand into areas outside of Redwater. We operated with this simple agreement for 20 years or 25 years until they decided they better rewrite it into something a little more concise.

AK: But all through this piece, unitization could not become a reality?

BH: It didn't become a reality. And they could never get the operators to agree on a formula. The water disposal was costing them nothing, because we got to the point where we were collecting the oil off the water.

AK: And that was your gravy?

BH: It was Redwater's. But we, and we had quite a time convincing the operators that we should go into a system of that type. Aubrey, I had been reading a lot of literature about systems settling. And in the sewer business, water treatment business and so on, they'd make large settling ponds as you know. And they use what they refer to as a radial flow system. My feeling, that if we could do it to settle small particulate from water down, why couldn't they reverse the thing and have little oil particles come up and coalesce?

AK: Yeah.

BH: So, we put in a trial system, and it worked very, very well. So, we ended up in Redwater by putting these units in at every saltwater disposal well.

AK: Now, whose property were they? Was that Rice's, or was that Redwater?

BH: The whole system in Redwater was all Redwater. They financed it, they put up the capital money and so on.

AK: When there was a call for money, they would cough up.

BH: Yes. But we only called, for the first, we called for \$2400 out of the first, I think I said \$2400 each, it was \$2500. We called up to \$2400 dollars per well, after that we financed ourselves.

AK: Right.

BH: And the whole system, the big expansion of the system when they really started to produce large volumes of water, came out of oil sales that we made from skimming oil from the water. One year we sold seven million dollars worth of oil off the water.

AK: Well now, whose oil was that?

BH: That oil belonged to the operators. But we credited the operation. We had to reorganize the company completely, so that we had classes of shares for each operator. And the amount of oil, the amount of dividend that they got was dependent on the amount of water they produced.

AK: So, you're assuming that every barrel of water had the same amount of oil in it.

BH: That's right. And there were times when we knew that an operator had an upset. But once it hit our pipeline, it was our oil.

AK: Right.

BH: And we would... it would go into, the revenue from it would go into the Redwater coffers. So, we had to reorganize to handle the produced oil. And it wasn't very much, Aubrey. Six barrels per 10,000 barrels of water.

[00:14:37] AK: Now, at this time, were you an employee of Redwater Water Disposal?

BH: No. I was an employee of Redwater Water Disposal from 1952 until 1956. After which time, when we left Redwater, we took all of the employees, Rice did, Rice Engineering. And took the vehicles, the operating material. They retained Redwater field office and the capital equipment in the Redwater field.

AK: Did they supply the hands to run it?

BH: We supplied all the people.

AK: Oh, you supplied it. And then you charged them for that.

BH: We charged them back. Yeah.

AK: Yeah. For whatever time it was.

BH: Well, that's right. We operated for a fee. For a fixed fee. We told them what we would operate for, and they agreed that they could not operate any less than that, and ??? If we made a little, fine. If we lost a little out of it, too bad.

AK: Yeah, right.

BH: But we agreed that the fee would be roughly equivalent to what it would cost themselves to do it. And worked very very well. We had no problem with it. As matter of fact, Aubrey, the last 20 years of operation with Rice, of my time with them, we had meetings two or three times a year with the Board, and that was it. We had a meeting in the fall to talk budget, we had a meeting in the spring to advise what program we were going to put in, and that would be about it, unless there was something unusual.

AK: And then today there is a Redwater Water Disposal Company, isn't there?

BH: There always has been.

AK: Yeah. And this is the same company?

BH: It's the same company.

AK: I thought maybe different...

BH: It was started in 1952. It's exactly the same company. Reorganized as....

AK: Yeah, sure. but has Rice provided services?

BH: Rice Engineering is still providing the operating services for that company.

AK: Now, take a fellow like John Chekerda, is he...?

BH: John Chekerda is a member of the Rice Engineering payroll. All of the men that work in Redwater are Rice Engineering Employees.

AK: I see. So, the Redwater Water Disposal Company is a kind of a shell?

BH: It's, the Redwater Water Disposal Company consists of a Board of Directors.

AK: Yeah, okay. And there it is.

BH: And that's as much.. as a matter of fact, probably for 10 years, none of the directors were out at Redwater. Didn't even look at it. And I encouraged them to come out, I'd say look, why don't you come and see what you are buying, see what you're paying for. But we've had some interesting problems. Of course, when we started producing all of that water, and we started taking the water from the fuel gate, satellites rather, we were getting a large amount of gas coming down with the water then because we

had water coming in, getting four barrels, four cubic feet per barrel rather, of gas that we had to do something with, and it was rotten, it was 17% H₂S.

AK: Yeah, pretty lethal.

BH: Nobody wanted it. We couldn't gather it. But we had, you know, when you look at two, a million barrels of water, and two cubic feet per barrel, that's two million cubic feet.

AK: Yeah.

BH: But nobody wanted it because it was rotten. It was exposed, had been exposed to the atmosphere. Some oxygen entrainment. The gas...

AK: Oh, the oxygen had been ingrained in it?

BH: There had been a certain amount, because it comes through the pipeline into our tanks and so on.

AK: Oh, yeah.

BH: We ended up finally by, of course, we had a real problem with the environmental people because we had this gas, and we were getting, they started putting H₂S monitors in the field, and they traced a lot of it back to us. And it was then that we developed the incineration devices that we have out there. And they worked..

AK: That's in this picture right here. Is that the incinerator?

BH: No, that's a stack. That's a relief stack. But I don't know whether you can see it.

AK: Oh, I don't think.

BH: It's a big desolate...

AK: No, there's none in those pictures.

BH: Okay. But it's a vessel that is the refractory line, and we would take the gas off the top of these tanks. These tanks were concrete. And as such, we could maintain a few ounces of pressure on the tank.

AK: So, they could be anaerobic then?

BH: So, we put a stainless steel fan on it so that we could take suction from it. Enough so that we wouldn't bring any more oxygen into the tank, as, when the tank dropped down, the level would change a little bit. And we went through this last line, or refractory line vessel, and brought the temperature up to some 8 or 900 degrees centigrade and cracked the H₂S with the SO₂ right there.

AK: Oh, did you?

BH: The SO₂ went into a...

AK: What did you get then out of that?

BH: Just burned it.

AK: Oh, you incinerated it.

BH: Incinerated it.

AK: Yeah.

BH: Took the temperature right up. Then we were, it was quite, was very successful as a matter of fact. We eliminated our environmental problem.

AK: But this had nothing at all to do with the solution gas that was being produced with the oil?

BH: No. Well, the solution gas, it was gathered and it was eventually taken back through the fuel gate system, to the fuel gate battery. This was a separate gas stream. Well, separate stream rather. It was all gas in water solution at 400 PSI, okay. As soon as it hit that valve off the feed water knockout, the pressure would drop to whatever it took to get it down to the vessel. And of course the gas broke out of the water.

AK: Well, sure.

BH: And we had slugs of water and gas coming down the line. We put our whole system on computer. We had to do that in order to design the slug flow system.

[00:21:30] AK: So, the job of... like John has, is making sure that these wells today are producing, or at least are taking..

BH: That's right.

AK: Are taking an X number of barrels per day and that everything is running smoothly. Because it seemed like there was a bunch of walkie-talkies and trucks running all over the place.

BH: Well, that's right.

AK: And so it's a constant, it must be a constant...

BH: We had a million barrels of water coming down, all of which is extremely corrosive. One of the people from the Board said to me one time, Ben, he said, how do you sleep at night? And I said, fitfully. But it operates, we have all of the wells, there's 48 wells out there now, injection wells. And any one of them, or many of them can take up to 40 and 50,000 barrels a day by gravity. There is no pumps in..

AK: No. I know, it's all in a vacuum.

BH: The whole system operates on a vacuum. And we utilize that vacuum when we designed the system to real advantage.

AK: Yeah. So, this must have been one of the things that you dreamt up.

BH: Yeah, that's right.

AK: You're not taking enough credit in this interview.

BH: No, it's like I said Aubrey...

AK: Right. So it's, and then five years ago you packed it in and turned your company over to your...

BH: To seven of the employees.

AK: With certain instructions, and certain requirements?

BH: That's right.

AK: And they've been met?

BH: They've been met. They've done very well, and they're doing very well. And I think today they are still doing a good job in the Redwater area.

[00:23:19] AK: And you have other projects, you were mentioning them before supper, about this plastic..

BH: Yes. Aubrey, we, and they still are, internally lining steel pipe with plastic. The system we developed, and this is for downhole tubing for high, they can use it for high pressure. It has the strength of the steel tubing, but the corrosion resistance of the plastic. And we actually have this plastic extruded to the drift diameter of the pipe.

AK: Now, is this the kind of plastic that is lining those seven-inch tubing that you have in these holes?

BH: No, this is a little different. We don't really use it for the smaller size tubings. But it's, and these plastic line materials are generally used in pressured pipe. But this pipe is extruded to the drift diameter. We insert it in the pipe, and we pump a cement slurry between the plastic and the steel. And that gives it, that allows a pressure transfer from the plastic across to the steel. And then we fold the plastic back over the pin end of the pipe, and in the box, and there is a little patented ring that fits in there between the two layers of plastic. And we squash it together to API specs, and it works.

AK: Well, what's the purpose of putting cement in there?

BH: Because it holds the plastic in place.

AK: Well, does it solidify?

BH: Oh, yes. Cement slurry solidifies. If you didn't...

AK: It would be a real bond then.

BH: That's right. We actually scarify the outside of the plastic with a milling machine. It scarifies it. And then we put it in there, and then they put the cement in there. If you don't do that, see the plastic has a coefficient of linear expansion that's five times that of steel.

AK: Oh. That's it. And one of those ??? and the other one.

BH: Well, if you put it on the rack and pretty soon you got to 5 inches of plastic..

AK: Sticking out, yeah.

BH: So, you have to hold it in place.

AK: Right.

BH: And that's what we've done. And we've developed that.

[00:25:52] AK: Well, then your company has gone afield, and you have your own machine shop, at least...

BH: Yeah.

AK: The company that you had...

BH: It has, we have probably 10,000 square feet of manufacturing area.

AK: And you fabricate...?

BH: We are building pumps with rubber impellers. Gear pumps. They're used on pump trucks for pumping fluids, or hauling fluid to drilling rigs, oil, saltwater, and so on. We probably enjoy 50% or more of all the truck mount pump business in the oil fields in Alberta.

AK: Those pumps that are on the back of the truck.

BH: Those are our pumps.

AK: And they're all impeller...?

BH: They are rubber impellers.

AK: Is that right?

BH: They are steel spline?? with a rubber coating on them. We have also built, as I mentioned before to you at supper time, we developed a pipeline insulating nipple that you can operate up to 1500 PSI. And

it's something that I've got a patent on. And it was really quite a problem developing his thing. We had the idea, Shell started by saying we have a problem, we'd like to have something that has a long path inside, plastic inside, so that they wouldn't get a skip of current across the... what they normally have for a gasket in the flange. So, we developed this thing. And Esso was very interested and very cooperative. They opened up our lab. They came to us and said Ben, whatever you want to test under whatever conditions, we will do it for you.

AK: Isn't that wonderful.

BH: And so, I had thousands of dollars worth of tests I'm sure. I finally found, finally got it. And those nipples are being sold right to the States now.

AK: And they go on the end of the pipe?

BH: They put them, ??? the well head next to the flow line. So, there's no current can come out of, from the pipeline and then through the well head.

AK: Oh, you're talking about cathodic current.

BH: It's cathodic current.

AK: Ah. So it's a barrier?

BH: It's an insulating nipple, with cathodic...

AK: Oh, I see.

BH: And it's been very very good.

AK: You'd wonder why it was, it sounded fairly simple talking about it.

BH: It is simple. I don't know why, Aubrey, I don't know why anybody hadn't thought of it before.

AK: Yeah, right. Well, that's to your credit. I'm just going to stop for a minute here.

[00:28:58] Let's go back to Redwater, the early days, and can you give us some of those stories, especially the... you and some of your fellow employees with Imperial getting into politics. Could you give us a bit of a rundown on that?

BH: Well, Aubrey, originally, or initially Redwater was a little hamlet, and the jurisdiction of a municipality. The first year that Redwater was in operation, the field, they formed a village and had three counselors. ???, Malowany, and mayor was Len Walker.

AK: Yeah, Malowany is spelled M-A-L-O-W-A-N-Y. And it is pronounced Malowany.

BH: Malowany.

AK: Yeah.

BH: Melowany, some of the..

AK: Yeah, I know. I have to clarify this for Sophie, are you hearing me Sophie?

BH: Malowany, is Walter pronounced it.

AK: Yeah.

BH: Walker, in the eyes of many of the people in the town site and the newcomers to the town, was not too popular. And there were a few of us decided that when the town was formed, and they had a council of six people, that Walker had to go.

AK: Well now, at this time was Walker, was he the proprietor of the hotel?

BH: Len Walker...

AK: Or what was his job there?

BH: He either had it or he ran it. I'm not sure.

AK: Yeah. But then it burnt down.

BH: The hotel burnt down and was rebuilt.

AK: Right. So, I didn't mean to interrupt, but then this thing, the word got around that there had to be some changes. Now, one of the incidents that you mentioned was the first anniversary of Redwater when Premier Manning came up.

BH: Yes, there was a podium set up on the ball diamond. And Mr. Manning was talking about the beginnings of Redwater, what the Alberta Government was doing, and all the people were standing around, and he turned to Len, who had had one or two, and he said it isn't that right. Mr. Walker? And Len said, that's for Goddam sure. There was a few incidents like that and we felt it was time. That he was really not suitable to be the Mayor of a new town.

AK: No, he didn't have the bearing.

BH: So we, Ken Oakley, who you may have known, and myself...

AK: Yeah, he ended up in Newfoundland.

BH: Yes. He's there now, as matter of fact. Just to digress a little bit, we're going to see Ken in the fall.

AK: Oh, are you?

BH: He has had a series of strokes and not able to speak. But a little visit, I talk to him on the phone here as much as he could, but in any case, there was a man came in from Saskatchewan who had had some experience on Town Council. Nobody in Redwater, none of the business people in Redwater of course, were willing to stand, run for mayor, because they were concerned of the politics of running against Len Walker. But Nick Cernik came to town and bought the theatre there. And we convinced Nick that he should run against Len Walker. We had the very silent but intensive campaign throughout the town sites and hauled people to the polls to vote. And my recollection is that Mr. Cernik beat Mr. Walker by one vote.

AK: Boy.

BH: I was on Town, I in fact ran for Councillor. And then was part of the First Council of town.

AK: Well, then who else from Imperial were on the Council?

BH: Just myself at that stage.

AK: But there was no agreement between Devon Estates or Imperial Oil or the Town that, hey I think it would be good idea?

BH: No, but certainly it was the townspeople wanted somebody representing their interests on the Town Council. And had always made a point in having at least one person there.

AK: Right.

BH: However, I got out of the town politics in 1952 when I joined Redwater Water Disposal Company and moved in to Edmonton.

AK: Yeah, and by that time the drilling had stopped.

BH: It had fallen back.

AK: Fallen way back, yeah.

BH: That's right.

AK: Then who replaced you on the council? You mentioned...

BH: Jim Lyman I believe was my successor.

AK: Right.

BH: And he followed, he came in at the next election. So did Len Walker. And there were at times as I understand, 'words' at the Town Council meetings.

AK: Yes.

BH: One of the incidents that was rather strange though, that were rather, not funny really but, Ralph Flanders and Ken Oakley and myself were doing some testing on the water pump station for the new town site. And when they put the gas into the pump station, obviously there was a leak in a break in the line, a leak in the line, and the gas followed the backfill, which was frozen backfill, and I was on the, upstairs reading the meters, there was actually a well cellar, pump cellar, and then there was a meter,???, was on the top. And Flanders and Oakley were downstairs doing things, and Flanders decided he couldn't see something so he lit a match.

AK: Bang.

BH: And there was one big explosion and the side, I was upstairs, and actually the roof eaves lifted off about two or three inches and then came back down again. But the only access to this hole in the cellar, was about a two-foot square opening with a ladder coming up. And both Oakley and Flanders came through that thing at the same time. Just like that.

AK: They were ejected.

BH: That's right. It was almost funny. They didn't have eyebrows...

AK: Yeah, I'll say.

BH: But, it was a little interesting anecdote.

[00:36:40] AK: Right. Then through this time you had quite a few different changes. People seemed to be moving quite a bit. By that time Paulson had left. He was over at Devon, and then he went to work for Home Oil in around '50-'51. Was Gibby there at Redwater when you were...?

BH: Gibby was in Redwater. As a matter of fact I worked with Gibby with Imperial too.

AK: Yeah.

BH: Gibby was there. Alec Hemstock...

AK: That's right, Alec.

BH: Was the chief engineer out there for awhile. Gibby left and went to Calgary, and then he went to Toronto.

AK: Yeah, he was on his way.

BH: That's right. And then he came back to Calgary and he was manager, he and Tip Maroney and Gibby and the chap with Imperial who got the gas end of it.

AK: Was it Bob Welch?

BH: Bob Welch, yeah. They were trying to get Gibby..

AK: Right.

BH: Heading up the producing department. And Gibby was looking after the oil aspect. Gibby and I worked together for many many years with Redwater Water Disposal Company. Gibby was manager of Redwater. I'm sorry, President, of the company and Chairman of the Board of Redwater for many years. And he, Gibby did a lot for me. He went to bat many times when we were trying to do things in Redwater and he was able to see the things that we were trying to do.

AK: Right, well...

BH: Another chap that I was with in Redwater, involved with the Redwater company for years and years, was Rich Swan.

AK: Oh, yeah Rich. He was with Thena.

BH: He was with Thena.

AK: Right.

BH: Thena, to my mind Aubrey, ran, certainly in Redwater, ran one of the most efficient operations that I've seen.

AK: Yeah.

BH: Under Rich.

AK: Well, they had taken over some of those other...

BH: Leaseholds.

AK: Leaseholds. Western Leaseholds.

BH: They were good operators. Rich asked an awful lot of questions, and he was a taskmaster, but he was very good.

AK: There's all those companies have disappeared. That's one of the things I have to trace back, and I'm trying to find out who this fellow was that was running Seaboard Barnsdall Honolulu Group. See they got those half sections from Western Minerals, and they drilled them themselves.

BH: What was his name?

AK: The name Bishop was the name that was given to me.

BH: Yeah.

AK: But I don't know whether that's the right one.

BH: The chap out in, man out in the field for a while, and he was in Calgary. I don't recall his name. You might get that from Don Baker.

AK: Who is...?

BH: Don was with Newmack for years and years.

AK: Oh, yeah.

BH: He worked for ???

[00:40:19] AK: Listen, we are getting down near the end, and I've taken a lot of your time. I'd just like to wind up. Now, you and Mary have raised a lovely family. That picture upstairs there with your, how many children do you have?

BH: Five.

AK: You have five. Boys?

BH: Two boys and three girls. The oldest boy is with Digital. He went into the computer field.

AK: Right.

BH: And my youngest son is an engineer with Shell.

AK: Oh. Where? Down in Calgary?

BH: In Calgary, yeah. And one of my girls, well, they're all married. The oldest girl and her husband are in business together. Have done a lot of development work in building and so on.

AK: Oh, is that right? Kind of real estate?

BH: Well, they built 75 homes in Slave Lake.

AK: Oh, for Heaven's sake.

BH: Saw the opportunity and went up and did it.

AK: Isn't that something.

BH: They are now at St. Albert. And the second daughter is a property manager for one of the major holders in town, looking after 4 or 5 hundred suites. My youngest daughter is with the Alberta Government Telephones. And I have 10 grandkids.

AK: Wonderful. You've got a lot to be proud of, your career, and I didn't know that much about you before this evening, but I got all kinds of vibes from old Gibby there.

BH: Well, Aubrey, I have made a point of staying in the background.

AK: Well, that's fine. I'm not trying to...

BH: I've enjoyed what I've done.

AK: Certainly.

BH: And I've been very busy lately. I've gotten into a lot of volunteer work. I'm on ??? Board, and CNIB for Alberta Northwest Territories.

AK: Oh, that's very important now.

BH: National Council.

AK: What impelled you to.. was there any particular thing?

BH: Willie Hannah.

AK: Oh, sure.

BH: Willie Hannah was working for CNIB and they were having some problems, some business problems, and they said could you help me. And I said sure. So, I went over there, and reorganized a good portion of their business. And I'm on the Board right now, Foundation of one of the colleges in town here.

AK: Well, that's important.

BH: But it's...

AK: Well, those are places where you can apply your expertise and, you know, off your experiences.

[00:43:22] Well, just let's wind up here Ben. Can you... Okay, I think it's working all right. Can you give me, and maybe like the guy says, in 20 words or less, your philosophy of all of this, these many years that you told me about?

BH: Aubrey, you have to like what your doing.

AK: Yeah. That's right.

BH: And if you like what you're doing, it isn't very difficult to work long and hard at it.

AK: That's right. Because it's not really work. It's fun.

BH: That's right.

AK: I find that with my books you know. That's why I'm sitting here tonight.

BH: Oh, I'm sure that's true. And I tell my wife once in awhile, I'm going to get off these Boards, I belong to 4 or 5 of them. And she said, Ben, you wouldn't be happy.

AK: That's right. You've got to be involved.

BH: It gets a little hectic once in awhile, but I go down south. I fly back up here for meetings. I've got a little interest in some properties. I own a little piece of the East Swan Hills unit. Bought that ??? But, enough Aubrey, so that I know what's going on in the oil patch. I know what the oil prices are...

AK: Yeah, you got a handle on it.

BH: And it's kind of fun to keep.

End of Interview