

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Jim & Alice Lukes

INTERVIEWER: Aubrey Kerr

DATE: June 29, 1993

Side 1 – 45:09

AK: Okay, I'm Aubrey Kerr and today is Tuesday, June the 29th and I am in the home of Jim and Alice Lukes, L-U-K-E-S. And your address is 3039 Underhill Drive Northwest in the university and we've already established a lot of mutual friends. So, I'm very glad to be here and I appreciate your giving me some time to get your interesting story about Redwater. But let's start with you Jim, your birthplace was where?

JL: Randall, Saskatchewan in May 1925.

AK: Right and your family had come from?

JL: Well, my dad was a foreman in the shops, the CNR shops in Radville.

AK: Was he born in Canada also?

AK: He was born in Toronto, yeah, and my mother was born in Washington, Olympia, Washington.

AK: Is that right? So they were, he was working as a mechanic on the ...

JL: He was a night foreman actually in the shops.

AK: Right, right. So you grew up in Radville?

JL: I was born in Radville, and grew up there took my, to grade 11 in the Radville school there.

AK: Right. And what do you remember of your childhood summers? Did you, was that like W.O. Mitchell "How I spent my summers?" Because that was his country down there wasn't it?

JL: We always had to write an essay, coming back to school in September was your first things they'd ask, tell about your experiences during the summer.

AK: What was your first summer job, do you remember?

JL: Well, like in Randall I used to work for the market gardener, like for Carl Larson, I used to go out and pick vegetables and a number of us boys did that, and we used to ride our bikes out ... he used to live about a half a mile out of town.

AK: Now, that sounds like W.O. Mitchell.

JL: Yeah, something like that.

AK: And what would he give you, 25 cents?

JL: 25 cents an hour I think it was, and you know, we used to make money to, you know, well we weren't that poor, but we used to help with mostly for spending money.

AK: Right. So when was your first serious job for summertime? What, do you remember?

JL: Will actually when, after I finished grade 11, I went out to Turner Valley because Norman my brother had been working in Turner Valley, and...

AK: Oh, he'd already been there...

JL: He'd already been there for some time, and so I went out there and started working with Royalite, like he got me on with Royalite, and...

[00:03:25] AK: Yeah. And what year was that?

JL: That was in 1942.

AK: Oh, that was when you ... and so you were finished high school, but you were...

JL: I had just finished grade 11.

AK: Yeah, you were getting ready to...

JL: Yeah, and I'd just planned actually to work for the summer and then go back and take my grade 12, but I took this job and then I started going with Alice, and ...

AK: Was that when you met Alice?

JL: Well, I'd met her before of course I'd been out, we'd been out... the folks, my sister came out to Turner Valley a few years before that and actually how long ...

AL: She stayed.

JL: She stayed with Alice.

AL: Until her grade 12.

JL: Helen was your sister?

JL: No Alma.

[00:04:18] AK: Alma, oh. Well, Alice tell me about your beginnings - where were you born?

AL: I was born at New Brigden, Alberta, and when I was three years old my folks took me to Turner Valley. Now you asked about where Jim's folks were from. Mine, I just looked up in my Bible that my folks were both from Ontario and I note too that Dad was born in Oil Springs, Ontario.

AK: Yeah, isn't that interesting.

AL: And so, we, we went to Turner Valley because Dad had been in New Brigden and he was a mechanic and he had built a new garage and he had three Model T Fords, and he took those Fords and he traded the three Fords for a garage at Turner Valley. That was in 1929.

AK: Just before the crash, eh? Or was it starting to crash?

AL: Well, it was it was poor in New Brigden, things weren't good. And so we had an uncle who was in real estate, he worked for a real estate company in Calgary and he heard about this service station, and it was through my uncle Red Baldwin, who worked for, I should know the name of the company it was, well, it was a real estate company anyway, and he told Dad about this garage. And this is where, how we got to Turner Valley. And Dad always said it was a good move. He loved to hunt and he loved to fish. And...

AK: Well this is... lots of land.

AL: Lots of land, oh yeah. And it was a busy ... I mean, things were good at Turner Valley in those days.

AK: Right. And that was right in the village of Turner Valley?

AL: Yeah we were right downtown. We were diagonally across from the Royal Bank

JL: What, do remember what gasoline that you sold?

AL: Oh, yes Imperial. Esso....

AL:/AK: [talking over each other] ??? 3 stars...

AL: ...never lived on Imperial land.

AK: Well, in Turner Valley, oh you did...???

AL: Oh yeah, right behind the garage, our house was on that property and had a big garden, a very large garden at the back of the house

AK: So then... were you together?

AL: I met Jim, because his brother was boarding at Miss Busks, who was next door to us, at, they lived, her boarding house was next door to our house. And so we, we boarded boys that worked at the garage. We had accommodation at the top of the garage for two men., and there was always two men living upstairs. And we fed those boys like, and they lived ... and so with the boarding house next door, and our borders, we often saw each other a lot. And then when Jim's mom and dad came to see Alma, or

came to see Norman, the sister wanted to come to Turner Valley to take her high school. And so she stayed with us because Miss Busk didn't take ladies, but we had a large room which my sister and I and our hired girl shared. And my mother said, well, there's two double beds in there, there's room for Alma, so the four of us shared that room. And the only thing I can remember is they used to get after me because I would put my shoes under the bed and they said, Alice will die with her shoes under the bed.

AK: So then, was that then, was that in early '30s or?

AL: Oh no.

AK: Beyond, getting close to...

AL: Late '30s.

AK: Late '30s.

AL: That right, Jim?

JL: I think the first time we came out to Turner Valley was around '37 wasn't it?

AL: Yeah.

JL: That's when we really met I guess.???

AK: You were just on a trip though...

JL: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

AL: 13.

JL: Yeah and like our two families would go out on, to the...

AL: Picnics and fishing and ...

JL: Picnic together and things but, we didn't, well we were... I kind of had my eyes on her in those days

AL: But my sister thought he was her boyfriend, like she always accused me of stealing. I have a sister who's two years older than I, Pat. And she thought that Jim was her boyfriend.

[00:09:15] AK: Oh dear. Well, anyways, then you finally got serious. And when did you get married?

JL: Well, we went together for a long time with... because we started going together like in '42, started going steady, and actually, her mom sort of thought that she should kind of cool it. And of course, I was studying my grade 12 by correspondence, like, so, I was pretty busy, and then we just used to see each other on weekends and go to a show or something. And then we kind of got, we kind of thought, we wrote all the time that... and I went back to Saskatoon in '43.

AK: ???

JL: Both. In '43, I went into Pharmacy, first year, and we wrote, we wrote every week or so, all through that time, I went there for four years.

AL: There was at one time I don't think we saw each other for over a year like, because he didn't come in the summer like, if he could... but he had to go to Radville to do his apprenticeship, Pharmacy.

AK: Oh, that's where you went.

JL: Yeah, in two Senior's Centres, I had to go back there.

AK: Maybe, well then what was the actual day of your marriage?

JL: Well, we were married in '49, November the 19th, 1949. And then that's when we went to Redwater, right after the wedding.

AL: We were married in Turner Valley...

JL: And we had actually...

AL: Well at the United Church in Turner Valley, and then our reception was at the golf club.

AK: Oh, yeah out there. Yeah, that's very new.

JL: We actually started, probably August in 1949 or something like that. We hired a fellow named Giroux, was his first name Al?

AL: I don't remember.

JL: Called him Mr. Giroux. But he was quite an older chap and we, because I actually, I had my Saskatchewan license, but I didn't have my Alberta license and I was preparing to get that, and I had to write exams and I had to go to Edmonton and write exams for that.

AK: Over and above ...

JL: Over and above. I had a four-year course in Saskatchewan, but I needed a three-year here in Alberta, but I still, they still made me go to Edmonton to write exams, which we did, and ...

[00:11:44] AK: Now I'd like to develop with you how you chose pharmacy as your profession. The early beginnings of, or can you...

JL: Well I sort of was thinking about taking law or taking pharmacy, and I kind of chose pharmacy because I thought it was maybe a little easier. I thought at that time, I kind of liked the idea of working in the store and meeting the people and being sociable that way, and I thought it might be a little less stressful than being a lawyer.

AK: Was there anything particular though, I mean, was it more the meeting the people or was there an interest in the drugs themselves and, or an interest in the...

JL: Well ...

AK: Why, I don't want to pry into, you know, it's interesting to know if there was some particular, or some individual that influenced...

JL: Well, probably the druggist in Radville, Harry Koch was the druggist there, and he was quite a well-to-do successful businessman. And he wasn't really what I wanted to aspire to in some ways, but his business acumen and his, he, but I don't really know why I chose pharmacy.

AK: Well that's all right, you're here!

JL: Yeah.

[00:13:31] AK: And Alice, how did you choose nursing?

AL: Oh just something I always wanted to do. I just felt I would like nursing and I did. But I didn't do too much nursing because we were married soon after. And I did special, a little bit, that all before we were married, and then when we went up to Redwater, Dr. Lastuka would come over from Radway and there were penicillin shots to be given, often, you know, and sometimes those things I would do, like when he would leave these things for me and I would give shots and ...

AK: That name is not Lakusta?

AL: No Lastuka.

AK: Lastuka? Oh that's interesting because there's a very well established Lakusta family.

AL: Oh, yeah. Yeah, no.

JL: Marion.

AK: Yeah. That's another story...

JL: They has a variety store there. Just a couple doors up from the ...

AK: Yeah Peter had the farm out, Ed was there. I've interviewed them.

JL: Oh, yeah,

AK: But no. I just wanted to check so ...

JL: Ray Lakusta and his wife, Ray and Marion, did you know them?

AK: No. The Lakustas, I've met Helena Lakusta, who is the widow of Peter. She's still alive, she's 85. She lives in Edmonton. But okay, now we've got you married, and how did you choose Redwater?

[00:15:14] JL: Well, my brother-in-law Clive Brown was working, worked for Lion Oils, and he was up in Redwater and working with the oil company up there. And he thought that would be a good place to start a drugstore. So actually, him and I, we started the drugstore together, like, we were partners. Like we, well the first time we went up there, I think we hitchhiked up there, right to Redwater. And then we went up there and we were wondering where we could get some property, how we were going to go about it. And we run into this Mr. Horvall, Philip Horvall.

AK: Oh, yeah, and he had a store and he also had a house that he that rented space out.

JL: Yeah, he had a house and he had a store there and he'd still have his garage, and we were sitting on Coke boxes, and people were in there eating garlic sausage and drinking Coke, of all things. But he, well, he didn't really want to sell the business, like, we had actually sent out some letters to some of the property owners and we had indicated that we were interested in buying property to start a business in there. So when we went there, Mr. Horvall pulls up this letter, he says, here, I've got a lot of people who want to buy my property, you know. And he says, I got this letter here from RC Brown in Calgary, and we said well, that's us. So, but then, so had wanted to sell it to us, but I think the reason that we were able to buy it I think was because his wife had her garden, a big garden plot right on Main Street, Redwater, and she wanted to have her garden and she didn't want to sell it. And she was a lot younger than him and just because she wanted it, I think he wanted to show her that he was boss. And I think that's how we got it.

AK: Did you did you get the garden?

JL: We got the garden? But of course, we...

AL: Well we used the garden, and even the Chinese restaurant across, next door to us, used to grow their lettuce, their Chinese lettuce in that garden, and there was rhubarb roots and things, yeah, we still had the garden

AK: But by the time you'd gotten there, the boom was in full ...

JL: The boom was going ...

AK: Yeah a lot of outfits moving in and...

[00:17:58] JL: They were, it was sort of a shack town, sort of, but Imperial were starting to build their area for their housing.

AK: Yeah, I think they bought that from Jim Lebossiew's (???) wife.

JL: Well, didn't the (inaudible)

AK: Yeah, the father of, what was his name? He owned that property.

JL: Oh did he?

AK: And he sold it to them. You know one thing we didn't get on the tape and this is an interruption, this is what happens when you do these tapes you get so interested. Could we get a just a little brief sketch of your experiences in Turner Valley, like you said you worked for Royalite.

[00:18:54] JL: I worked for Royalite, like I went and worked in the garage, with, Max Dawson was my sort of straw boss and Trivet Peacock was the garage foreman.

AK: Trivet. Yeah, was that with an "E"? That wasn't Tommy Peacock?

JL: No, Trivet, his name was, and Sid MacDonald was the transportation foreman there then.

AK: Right. What about Fred Cameron?

JL: Well, he was the Personnel Manager. He was the one that sort of, well he, yeah, like he was really the one that sort of officially hires everybody again.

AK: Yeah, I guess so. Well, then you worked, these were kind of summer jobs ...

JL: Actually, I started out, like, I worked a couple of days or a week or so in the office, like in the production office like typing because I'd taken typing in school, and I could type about 50 correct words a minute.

AK: They found that out, did they?

JL: It turned out that that wasn't fast enough, that it...

AK: This was during the war?

JL: No. Yeah, during the war, yeah.

AK: So there was a shortage of...

JL: Oh yeah there was a shortage of, that's how I got a job I guess.

AK: And then you said you worked down there with Alex Piercey?

JL: Well, I worked in the garage like filling cars, and that's how I got to know a lot of the fellows that I met later on in Redwater. You see, I met all the people, like I used to fill up the cars for everybody, you know, like if, and I'd have to see that they were, the gaugers at their little coops, and then all the trucks, I used to fill them all up, and you get to know them.

AK: Yeah you would. Well then, you did work for Alex though?

JL: And then I went to university and then after I'd gone to university for a year, then I came back again and they asked me if I'd like to work in the lab. And I jumped at that.

AK: Piercey is spelled P-I-E-R-C-E-Y. And his wife's name is Mary, right?

JL: Right.

[00:21:05] AK: Okay. So you mentioned also, just to pick up these pieces, is that you had to spend so many months apprenticing in a pharmacy?

JL: Like I took a four-year course at university, a B.Sc., and I had to work my two senior summers apprenticing in a drugstore. So, I had to give up my job, which was paying me, I think I was getting about \$150 a month in those days. I was getting pretty good money. And I had to give that up and go and work for \$40 a month in the drugstore.

AK: Yeah, right. And did you go back, you said you went back to Radville?

JL: I went back and worked with Mr. Koch, with Harry Koch.

AK: That's, K-O-C-H

JL: K-O-C-H, right?

AK: So you learned the ropes there then?

JL: I put in a lot of hours in there as an apprentice. And I got \$40 the first month, and then he raised me \$10 every month, \$50 a month, until I got to \$80 and then I guess that was the top dollar. He wasn't going to go any higher than that.

AK: So, you went back the following year then?

JL: Yeah, and that's when we didn't see each other for a while because ...

AK: So down there, there was some drilling.

JL: Yeah, in Radville,

AK: There was some drilling before Leduc hit.

JL: Mmm hmm.

AK: I didn't ... I guess you didn't have much to do with to do that.

JL: Didn't have much to do with that, no.

[00:22:48] AK: Okay. Well, I just thought I'd pick those pieces up. Well now, I can see that you and Clive has decided that this was a good plan ... while he had the foresight. I'm trying to remember Lion Oils.

JL: A fellow named Plotkins, Leo, Leon....

JL/AK: [simultaneous] Leon Plotkins.

AK: See I know some of these names, you know, I'm not a phony. Isn't that right Sophie, I'm not a phony am I. So you got settled in and I just started to raise a family when you were Redwater?

JL: Well, no, we didn't like...

AL: We were married in '49 and then we didn't have any family till ... Bob was born in '53. After we came back to Calgary.

AK: So, the type of clientele you'd have was fairly rough and ready was it?

JL: Oh, yeah. Well you mean in Redwater they are when we started?

AK: Yeah.

JL: We had like Lauder Nowers, do you remember him? He was the super ... Personnel Manager of Imperial, and he would he kept everybody in line. Like he told me, he'd say, any, you know Imperial Oil people charge, he says, don't worry, he says, you'll get your money. And he was good to his word, I never had any trouble with anyone, no, they were very good

AK: Well, you're probably aware that Lauder passed on.

JL: Yes

AK: Yeah. It was a very sad thing. I just finished the story on him.

JL: Did you?

AK: Anyways, that's beside the point. But you're were quite right, and Betty with a beautiful voice, did you get to know her?

JL: I can't remember her too well.

AK: They were in the Anglican Church.

AL: Yeah, I'm trying to think.

JL: Yeah, her name's not on there.

AL: It isn't.

AK: They were probably, see there were a lot of people in and out. There were people come in and then they'd go out. This is what I've had trouble trying to locate, all right, Maurice Paulson for instance. He was there for a while and then he got transferred and then there was ...

JL: You talk to Chess Laszlock at all? Do you know Chess?

AK: No, I don't know him.

JL: Yeah, he worked for Imperial too. He was...

AK: Laszlock.

JL: Laszlock, yeah.

AK: Was he a local Redwater person?

JL: I don't think so. No I think he came with the oil.

AK: I think I've really got enough about Imperial but I you know, what I'm trying to get from you is the kind of the atmosphere that prevailed there and how you met with these people and, what about the Americans that come in. Did you find that they were asking for things that you didn't have or, was there a different attitude?

JL: I can remember, it's funny, I can remember like at Christmas time like, you know, they'd come in and they'd buy a whole bunch of stuff and they'd just say, sack it up. And I remember another fellow, I think his name was Stewart Drelling, he come in and he wanted some stuff and he wanted to charge it and I said well, I said, who are you anyway, you know, he says well, he was Stewart, and he said his first name, he was the owner of the company.

AK: Well, there were some of them that were kind of fly-by-night.

JL: Yeah, right.

AK: There were a lot of them that come up, I don't know whether you got that experience, the first winter, was the worst winter, '49, '50 was a cold winter.

JL: That was a cold winter. That was the year we were married and that the year we were cuddling up.

AK: I betcha, yeah you weren't...

JL: We banked... our store never had a basement like, you know, we were just built right on the ...

AK: You banked up with snow?

JL: Yeah, well we banked up the dirt, we had it piled up.

AL: And wore our boots. It was cold floor.

JL: Clive and I when we went into this Fred Carstensen, he was building everything in Redwater. He was quite a builder. I remember we saw him when we ... actually we hitchhiked up to Redwater and arranged to buy the property from Philip Horvall, and this Fred Carstensen, we just we just drew out we wanted on us on a napkin. We were telling him how we wanted it and you'll notice that the store's kind

of in like that in the front. And he just drew it out and gosh, we and went up there the next week and he had the thing half built you know.

AK: Is that right?

JL: Yeah. We hadn't given him a dime, you know.

AK: What property, did you buy, was this a vacant property?

JL: Yeah it was vacant.

AK: I see. And then you... do you remember how much you paid for the lot?

JL: Thousand dollars.

AK: Yeah, that was lot of money in those days. But up to that time, you know, land was virtually, you know fifty dollars or whatever. So, this building, is it still standing?

JL: No, no the drugstore's still there though in the same spot, but they have rebuilt it.

AK: Oh rebuilt it.

JL: While, we were there, you know the whole floor, you know, it's built right on the ground, like, with no basement.

AK: Even with this other, the new one?

JL: Oh the new one maybe. I don't know about the new one ...

AK: Oh no but I meant the one that you had built.

JL: The one that we had built, no it never had any basement.

AK: I see.

JL: We just heated it with unit heater like, first we burned oil and then of course we changed it over to gas. But then the floor actually rotted, rotted out.

AK: Oh the moisture, yeah.

JL: Yeah moisture. And we without closing up we put a new floor in the building.

AK: Over the rotten...

JL: Yeah. Well, we they mean they tore up the, moved things over to the one side and rebuilt it. I remember I was watching them build it and they, we had a piece of plywood, and I don't know how it

happened, but my glasses dropped, and the plywood fell on the glasses and it just flattened them right out, but it never broke the lens. I straightened them up and ... I'm sorry are we using all your tape?

AK: No. No, that's all right. That's what the tape's for, is to get these reminiscences. And how did the, the Ukrainian element react to your ...

JL: At first they were a little, you know like, cool to us. But then they gradually, when we sort of won them over or they won us over or something we, they were very loyal people.

AK: Yeah well this is, I found the interviews with the Ukrainian people to be very warm, once they found out, you know, and there's some marvelous interviews I've gotten.

JL: Yeah like the *Ewasiwis*, like they would do anything for us. Like, you know, with the mail. But at first though, they were you know, he followed the law right to the letter at first and then after...

AK: There's some great stories I got from Jim. I interviewed him and his wife Anne. So, the, I suppose a lot of them had been used to going to some other place for their drugs?

JL: Well, I don't know, they must have been getting them in Edmonton, I guess. You know, there was no dispensary in...

AK: You were the only dispensary?

JL: In Redwater, yeah.

AK: What about Radway, was there one up there?

JL: Radway had the hospital, yeah, they had a drug store there too, yeah.

AK: So you got to be known, you served quite a fairly large...

JL: I think they had one in Thornhill too.

AK: They might have, yeah. Well Radway was the hospital where the sisters were.

JL: Yeah.

AK: And then of course that's changed. Redwater got its own hospital now. Well, what about, to get into the more, what will we say, the more adventurous parts of Redwater. Did you ever have any accidents or crises that you had to look after, I mean, supply drugs or...

JL: We used to get a lot people like welders in with welding flash. And we used to put Pontacaine on their eyes, you know, and they thought we were God, you know, a couple of drops of that and their pain is gone, you know. This freezes it of course, it doesn't cure it. But that's all they need to do is relieve the pain and then they're healed sort of, because it'll heal over...

AL: We had burns come in one time and we treated them, and they said that we did the right thing and they didn't end up at Radway. And the doctor said that...

AK: Yeah well you see there was never any real disasters there, you know, but there was probably a lot of you know, like fellas freezing their feet off, almost freezing their feet off, you know, because of the terrible cold.

JL: There was a big military plane crashed, remember not that far from, where was it? We went out there and seen that, we did have pictures of that...

AL: Was this it, or was this drilling a well?

JL: No, that's...

AL: No this was just putting in pipeline or something.

AK: Did you people go out and see what was going on at the rigs at all? Did you ever go out and look around? Or were you too busy?

JL: Well, we were pretty busy, but we did, I used to go, I don't know if you ever knew a fella named Bob Brown. He was with, who was he with?

AL: He was an American, until his wife, I think his wife died because we used to be in touch at Christmas always.

JL: He was running one of the companies. I went out with him a couple of times. Ken Lloyd was, we were good friends. Did you know Ken Lloyd? He was a BA superintendent.

AK: Yeah, BA.

JL: Just a young chap. Bob and Irene, Ken and Irene, I mean.

AK: Yeah, did you know a couple named Courts, C-O-U-R-T?

JL: Yeah, that sounds familiar.

AL: Oh, didn't the girls work for us? Did they have family?

AK: I don't know whether they had a, yeah, they could have, yeah, but they live out on the edge of town. Probably one of my most interesting personal interviews.

JL: Oh really?

AL: Oh, and they're still there in Redwater?

AK: Oh, yeah, they live in a trailer out there. No Pearl is her name. Ted and Pearl. And he was a veteran of World War II, with some stories to tell, but he worked for BA and come up from Coutts when they needed production hands. BA moved in there and drilling those ...

JL: He worked under Ken then didn't he?

AK: Oh, yeah, he was a...

JL: Yeah there was another chap, an older chap that used to work with Ken too.

AK: Yeah. It was a probably, he come up from Coutts and I can't remember his name.

[00:35:59] [pause in tape] AK: Let's just resume here. When you put your mind to putting this together, you rented this space from Horvall.

JL: Bought it.

AK: Oh you bought it, yeah, and then you, how long were you in that property before you went and built your own?

JL: Well, that's when we, we built it. And that's where we started, like...

AK: Oh, I see.

JL: We built the new building and started...

AK/JL/AL: [speaking simultaneously] On Horvall's garden...

JL: Yeah exactly. I think it was a 50-foot lot. 50 x 120.

AK: And this building was a frame building?

JL: Yeah, a frame building.

AK: And no basement.

JL: No basement, just built right off the ground.

AK: And this is the building that ultimately the floor rotted out on.

JL: Exactly.

AK: And then you rebuilt that.

JL: Replaced the floor, yeah.

AK: And Alice, you were saying that when you first, shortly after you started you were stocking quite a few of, other things that wouldn't normally be in a drug store, is that right?

AL: Well people just seemed to need things and we bought things that probably we wouldn't have carried, other than that, like, well like I remember having suspenders, you know, just that, there were things that people were asking for and we would carry, anything that people asked for, if they came available, we would get them.

JL: Yeah, and we had a little counter like for ...

AL: We had a soda fountain.

JL: Soda fountain. When we started, yeah.

AK: Oh did you? Marble?

JL: We had seven stools, I remember.

AK: You'd sit up high and then you'd drink ...

JL: Milkshakes and that type of thing.

AK: Ice cream sodas. So, you'd start, well that was, that was okay for a drugstore then.

JL: In those days, yeah.

AK: Yeah. And that, how many people did you have working for you?

JL: Alice and I and maybe two girls. We were just open from 9:00 till 6:00 mostly, and then we used to close a half day on Wednesday, sometimes didn't we?

AL: Yeah and closed on Sunday.

AK: Yeah. So these girls would work part-time then, I suppose.

JL: Pretty well full-time I think.

AK: Right. Were they, they were just clerks?

JL: Local girls.

AK: They couldn't dispense...

JL: Well like, you probably met that the Nevengloskys maybe?

AK: No.

JL: Ann Nevenglosky?

JL: We still correspond with her, she was one of our clerks in the store. Just a few months ago she phoned us and she was passing through town.

AK: Is that right? No, well some of the names, well you know, after all these ...

JL: And they still live in Redwater.

AK: Yeah? So, but you were the only one that could dispense?

JL: Yes.

AK: Alice, you didn't have your ...

JL: Well, we didn't have that many prescriptions you know, but sometimes there would be one doctor in town and sometimes there would be two but we kind of worked together, like, no we didn't have a big dispensing ???

AK: No. This picture here was taken when?

JL: That was I think pretty early, you know not too long after we started, because we had this big six-foot Nielsen, the chocolate bars, I don't know if you remember those big Nielsen stands they used to have.

AL: A lot of mirrors and then you'd sit a big display of chocolates in the bottom box.

AK: That's when, that's when chocolate bars, a dime got a good-sized chocolate bar. So, well, you'd had quite a good bunch of shelves there with your different...

JL: We had the Rexall line.

AK: Oh, yeah.

AL: The one-cent sales, sell goldfish and...

JL: [incomprehensible] Rexall sign ???

AK: Yeah. The other thing I wanted to talk to you about was these pictures. We're looking south here towards the elevators. I'm just putting this on the tape to give an idea, and your store was on the right-hand side looking south, the west side, and that was the one next to the Chinese restaurant?

JL: Yeah.

AK: And you said that was ...

JL: Jack Milner's.

AK: Milner's.

AL: The mercantile.

JL: The mercantile, yeah, Redwater Mercantile he called it.

AK: Then there is Royer's pay grading station...

JL: Yeah, and then like, I think the Bank of Commerce, built on the corner there and then of course the post office is just north across the street there.

AK: Yeah. But then, do you remember Mrs. Sawka over there in the corner?

JL/AL: Mmm hmm, yeah.

AK: Ever since day one she was a young widow, and she brought her children up. So I've interviewed her. Did you see much of her, or did you notice... she worked in the hotel.

JL: I remember the name, but, you know, like ...

AK: Well, there were a lot of people, yeah.

JL: And then Bruce Williams, did you remember him? He used to have a little radio shop in close, closer... and then the hardware store built in...

AK: Yeah, and then looking down the street that runs in front of the tracks would be Maloney's, the Maloney's Garage.

JL: The Maloney's Garage was across the tracks, yeah. And there was quite a street along there too...

AL: Railway Avenue I think we called it.

AK: Yeah, and it was, and then there was...

JL: The motel was way over here.

AL: And the theatre.

JL: And then the station.

AK: The theatre was right...

JL: The station, yeah. Nick Cernik, was it?

AK: Cernik.

JL: He was the mayor when I was on the Council...

AK: Oh, you were on the Council?

JL: Just briefly, very briefly.

AK: Oh, is that right?

JL: Just in '52, I got elected, and then I left because I had this other store in Calgary around ...

AK: So by the time you'd you've gotten to '52 all the drilling had finished, the drilling was pretty well finished.

JL: I don't know about that, I can't really say, there was still quite a bit of activity going on.

AK: Well there was a lot of activity on the producing side. And then the shipment of oil, did you know about the Pasemkos? Victor Pasemko? He had a farm out there where they put the tanks, that they shipped the oil from. Did you ever...

JL: No.

[00:43:45] AK: Okay, then when you got '52, then your business was prospering and what compelled you to come to Calgary?

JL: Well, of course my mom and dad were here in Calgary and we were, you know, from Turner Valley and close to...

AK: Yeah, right, so it was kind of a ???

JL: We kind of thought, yeah...

AK: Did you know where you wanted to locate your new store?

JL: Not really. We just ...

AL: Well it had already started. The store in Calgary.

JL: Well no, we started it ...

AL: No, well we started it in a way but then we didn't run it.

JL: No, but I mean we were in on renting the property and then we hired Marv Bishop to run it, actually, and he managed it for us, briefly while we were still in Redwater and then we hired Al Armstrong to manage the store in Redwater, and then we came to Calgary and then we managed both of them, like sort of, oversee them mostly, and then we, Marv left us after a while.

AK: I think we'll just stop here and turn the tape over. I've got another side.

Side 2- [00:17:49]

AK: We're on side 2 of the Lukes tape. Yeah, there was a company called Tartan, Tartan Construction, I think it was.

JL: Well that was MacDonald wasn't it? Burt McDonald, yeah.

AL: Well this was just a little, he did it out of his house and his wife helped, you know, it was just right across from the store. This building was directly across from the store, and then this was back from there. This was right across, this is what we were looking at from our store.

AK: Right. Did they, yeah, there's the pipe. Those are the mines right there, doing construction work.

JL: I think that's Floyd Medill there. Did you know him?

AK: Yeah. Yeah, he's still alive. But not well.

JL: His wife, like Anne was born, like we used to live right next door.

AK: In Redwater.

JL: In Radville, where I was born.

AK: It that right. Well getting back to Redwater now, when you were running the store, where did you live?

JL: Well, when we first went, we lived in the, well actually we lived in the hotel for a while, didn't we?

AL: Yeah.

JL: And then we lived in the back of the store.

AK: Oh, did you ever think of buying a house over in the Imperial Oil...

AL: I don't think you could in those days.

AK: Well, there were lots in between, there were lots, vacant lots. between houses to accommodate other people. Did you ever think of buying a house?

JL: No, not really.

AK: No. So, well, that would be another thing that you wouldn't get... and then the other thing that you said, you were involved with the Lions Club is that right?

JL: Not in Redwater.

AK: Oh not in Redwater.

JL: No. It was the independent ???

AK: You were elected on the Council. Was Cernik still ...

JL: Cernik was the mayor.

AK: Cernik was still the... you were aware of that Walker had been mayor.

JL: Yeah, Walker, I...

AK: You see, his daughter-in-law, former daughter-in-law was Ann Key, Ann Walker. She lived in a house just on the east edge of Redwater. Did you get to know her?

AL: I don't think so. But I remember the Walker name, but I don't ...

AK: Well she married a fellow named Key K-E-Y. Well, I guess the other thing was that you, according to that card Alice, you must have got to know quite a few people.

AL: Well, you know, it was this group, it was the beginning of Oil Wives wasn't it?

AK: Yeah.

AL: Is that when Oil Wives started?

AK: Yeah. Tell me a little bit of your experiences with Oil Wives and with Dean Hunter. I'd like to hear that.

AL: It seems like such a long time ago, but it was a very friendly group and because I have the picture I guess, I remember that evening of us all being together and I realize now that the reason why we had that party, as a hard time party, is a lot of us girls didn't have clothes that we would have dressed in if we'd have had a special party. A lot of girls wouldn't have come probably. But to come as hard time, it made it a fun thing, and the ladies that organized that were very smart and I look back at it now and think, that was pretty special that they made us all so welcome and really created a community atmosphere that probably wouldn't have existed. Because people coming into the drugstore and people you meet on the street were very friendly and we always, and the fact that Imperial Oil helped so much with the curling rink ...

AK: Yeah, they provided a lot.

AL: They provided so much. And our water, to put in the water for the town was really special because they could have had it just in the town site, but they brought it into the town so we had water.

AK: Right. So, what have we got here?

JL: There's Alice and there's me, there's my dad, and brother Norm.

AK: Oh for heaven's sake. Yeah that goes back a few years doesn't it.

AL: That's a picnic at the Highwood.

AK: Yeah. That's when you went picnicking.

AK: So, the, I guess you could just say that Dean was the spark plug behind the...

AL: Oh, I think she probably was, I really don't know.

AK: Do you recall her?

AL: Oh, I remember her, oh yes. There were a lot of nice fine ladies in the town site. Lots of really special people, it was a good experience.

[00:05:57] AK: What about the, just running a couple of names past you, what about Blakely. Do you remember ??? and Steve Blakely?

AL: I don't think so.

AK: What about Doug Lavoie? L-A-V-O-I-E. I don't see their name on the list there.

AL: No.

AL: Then there was another, the Nesbitt. Remember Mrs. Nesbitt? Those where geologists.

AL: I don't think so no. I think we probably saw a lot of people with young families that came into the drugstore. Those people that had young children needed the drugstore probably worse than anybody else.

AL: Yeah, I guess so. So by the time '52, as you said, rolled around, you thought you had the resources to expand, but, to Calgary ...

JL: Good friendly bankers.

AK: Well, that's good that some of them were friendly, I guess. Now is your present drugstore, it the same ...

JL: Still going. We started in '51 years and still is...

AK: What's its location?

JL: Its 1st Avenue and 4th Street Northeast.

AK: 1st Avenue and 4th Street, that's at the foot of the hill?

JL: Yeah. Its right adjoining the Alberta Furniture. Just north of the Alberta Furniture...

AL: Between two one-ways.

AK: Oh, yeah, that's right.

JL: We used to, when she was training, we used to spend a lot of our time across in the Cozy Lunch, right across, on our dates. It was a vacant lot.

AL: And there was a big sign that had a blue bird or a bird in a nest in it says, you supply the home and we'll feather the nest, or something.

AK: That was Alberta Furniture.

AL: Alberta Furniture's slogan.

AK: They've been there a long time. We just lived up the hill from there for a while, 5th Ave Northeast. So, when you moved, and you got this drugstore where did you first live in, did you live, you didn't live down in...

JL: In Calgary, no, we rented a suite out on Broadview Road. And, about 2001, wasn't it? Broadview Road?

AL: Yeah.

JL: Just off 19th Street, the corner of 19th Street and Broadview Road, just south of Kensington.

AK: Oh, yeah. I don't remember that name, but south of Kensington.

JL: Just two blocks south of there.

AK: Then you gradually worked your way up?

JL: And then we bought a house over in Renfrew in '55 I think.

AK: That would be handy to...

JL: And that was handy to the drugstore, yeah.

AK: Did you belong to the Elks Club when you were there?

JL: No, no, we didn't, no.

AL: Our son golfed over there though. They let those kids golf for I think \$15 or something a season. He learned to golf there.

AK: Did you take up golfing?

JL: We both golf a little. We belonged to Inglewood for a while, and we used to go to Turner Valley and golf too.

AK: Yeah, well that, you'd get your [incomprehensible] is your brother living out there?

JL: No, he lives in Calgary.

AK: Oh he does?

JL: Norman lives on Richmond Road out near the Children's Hospital.

AL: We see him every Friday, we have

AK: That's the, that's the connection that you mentioned on the phone.

AL: Yeah, we always have Friday with Uncle Norman. Yeah, his wife's a patient at the Bethany Hospital. She has Huntington's, Huntington's Chorea?

AK: Yeah, there's a lot of people [incomprehensible] forced to stay there.

AL: When you've got good health, you've sure got lots to be thankful for.

AK: Well, I'll tell you. You didn't get to know Gibby then?

JL: Yeah, I met him. I think he was in Turner Valley wasn't he?

AK: No, he never worked in Turner Valley.

JL: Oh didn't he...

AK: No, he worked up at Coalspur and Leduc for a while. [00:11:14] Well going back to Leduc, when Leduc hit, did you people, how did you people feel, you hadn't got married yet, you were still apprenticing. How did you feel about Leduc as a turning point?

AL: When you're saying Leduc, you mean Redwater.

AK: No, I'm talking about Leduc, because that was in '47, that was before you got married. I just trying to get a kind of a view of what you thought. Did it really impress you?

JL: No, we didn't know that much about Leduc, because I just graduated in '47 you see, in Saskatchewan.

AK: It didn't seem to have too much of an impact?

JL: I didn't know really what was going on.

AK: But then of course Redwater was discovered in '48, in October '48 so you probably, now that didn't get much publicity.

AL: No, not like Leduc did. I think a lot of people from Turner Valley went to Leduc.

AK: Oh they did, yeah. Oh yeah, there was a lot of them, like, now there's one other name that... I keep tossing names here.

AL: Dick McFadyen was our barber at Turner Valley and I think they went to Leduc.

AK: What about Campbell Aird, do you remember him? The great curler. You got a picture of him?

AL: I've got a picture of him with my dad curling at Lethbridge.

AK: Oh, is that right? But Campbell lived right next door to us in Leduc, I mean in Devon. We lived in Devon for a while.

AL: This was...

AK: Oh, there he is, sure.

AL: The announcer, Whiny Viney, Henry Viney, announced that game over the radio, and he said that that was the first, or at least we understood that that was the first time that curling had been televised, or not televised, broadcast over the air. And so we listened to the game, we knew when they played who won. Like I don't remember ...

JL: Did you ever meet Alice's dad?

AL: Shepard, Charlie Shepard was his name.

AK: No, is that...is that him there?

AL: Shepard Motors.

AK: Is that him there?

AL: Yeah.

AL: Yeah, I can't see from here. But yeah...

AK: These two people, are they identified?

AL: McGregor.

AL: Bill McGregor?

AL: Bill McGregor. Now you see I did this for the Turner Valley book, but I couldn't identify the one man.

AK: Oh Bill. Yeah, well, you see, Bill has become quite a figure in the Edmonton scene, you know, he had this company called Nuvac??

AL: What kind of company was that?

AK: It was an oil company. That's a very interesting picture of old Campbell. Well I thought maybe I'd wind this up by, now that you've spent all these years and doing all these things, and we can look at the pictures afterwards, but what... Jim what is your, all these years experience, and getting into these different ventures, what is your, you got any philosophy of life that you'd like to tell us about?

JL: You get too soon old and too late smart.

AK: Well, that's a pretty good start, that's a pretty...

AL: One thing I think is nice and even though we've been really busy all our lives, we've always taken a holiday and I think that's pretty important. You need a holiday, and anytime we'd go, we always went for annual checkups and the doctor would always check us and say, what you need is a holiday. So, people need to get away.

AK: Well, that's true. Any other pungent or trenchant remarks about life?

JL: Well, we've enjoyed life. I'm not sorry that I went into that type of business. I met a lot of people, enjoyed the work and I still work a little bit., I still work at the store. See our son's a pharmacist, and he's running the store.

AK: Does he live over in that part of town?

JL: No they live up in ...

AL: Edge Valley.

JL: Yeah, Edgemont, Edge Valley.

AK: Oh, yeah, way up on the hill.

JL: Yeah, right up in the windy...

AK: Well, I want to thank you both very much for letting me come into your home, it's a beautiful place. When did you occupy this house?

JL: 1969 we came, November 1969.

AK: It looks like you built it yourself.

JL: No, we didn't actually.

AK: You didn't?

JL: No, we didn't.

AK: Is that right?

AL: It was 4 years old.

JL: We never actually, the only new building we had was our Redwater drugstore actually.

AK: Well, it's a lovely spot, very nice.

JL: Well our (???) Calgary store, we built that too actually, but we didn't, we didn't build it but we ran it. We were the first tenants in it, and then we bought it after 5 years.

AK: Well, I want to thank you very much for having me to your house and after all this time, and we'll say so long, it's nine o'clock already. Over and out.

End of Interview