

## **PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT TRANSCRIPT**

INTERVIEWEE: Lou Stevens

INTERVIEWER: Tina Crossfield

DATE: October 25, 2001

### **Tape 1 Side 1 – 47:00**

TC: Okay. Today is October the 25th, 2001 and we are with Mr. Lou Stevens at his home and my name is Tina Crossfield, and if you'd like to say something.

LS: Yeah. My name is Lou Stevens.

TC: First off is Lou short for something else?

LS: Louis, L-O-U-I-S. My mother was expecting a girl and I was going to be Louise.

TC: And where when and where were you born?

LS: Born in Danville, Illinois, July the 8th 1924.

TC: Do you have brothers and sisters?

LS: Have one brother, no sisters.

TC: And what would his name be?

LS: His name is James. And he was, was a school teacher, he's retired now.

TC: Did he remain in Illinois or did he come to Canada?

LS: Well, he was he was in Illinois teaching and then he went to Missouri and teaching at a private school in Baldwin, Missouri.

TC: And tell me about your parents.

LS: My father was James Roland Stevens. He was a laborer worked in a brickyard. My mother was Bertha Skadden and she worked occasionally ant five and dime stores and things like that, but mostly was a ??? mother.

TC: How do you spell her last name?

LS: Her maiden name was Skadden, S-K-A-D-D-E-N. It probably used to have a ??? in front of it when they came over from the old country but...

TC: Were they were they born in the US? Yes, they' were both born in the US.

TC: What would the heritage have been?

LS: Basically, my father probably was from England originally, not, he wasn't but his background, and my mother was Scotland and Ireland and I think that's about the size of it.

TC: So your grandparents would have immigrated.

LS: No, no, before that.

TC: Before that. Well, okay. Can you describe your childhood and education?

LS: Well, the childhood was fairly simple. We lived out in a small community that was outside of Danville, Illinois, place called Central Park. Grade school, used to walk to grade school, was about 1/2 mile away, half mile to a mile. And then just routine education there, I mean nothing like, nothing special, and high school was in Danville and there again, nothing special. We were about five miles from high school. We had a school bus, we caught a school bus and rode a school bus to the high school and back.

TC: Was it a small school?

LS: No, Danville's about 40,000 people that time. We had one high school. So it was probably in been excess of 2,000 people in the school.

TC: Did you have favorite subjects

LS: Not particularly.

TC: Really? Okay. What did you do after high school?

LS: After high school I went to work. Went to work for a Machine Tool Company. And then I went to work after that for Parmor?? the meatpacking people. And then I went to work for a brick yard.

TC: Is it the same brickyard?

LS: Same one that my father worked at, they made fire brick, it wasn't just a wasn't a building brickyard, it was fire brick which they used to line blast furnaces with, stuff like that. Then took off to go to university.

TC: And where was that?

LS: University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. And then I went off and joined the Marine Corps after finishing one semester of University.

LS: What kind of program were you enrolled in at university.

LS: At university I was in chemical engineering.

TC: And what prompted you to leave and join Marines?

LS: The Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, there was a war on.

TC: This was volunteering service on your part.

LS: Yeah.

TC: Yeah, it would have been early on.

LS: I just enlisted and that was it. It wasn't early on compared to the war in Europe and people in Canada and Europe have been fighting for about three years by then. Seems to me the Marine Corps had schools and being that you could read and write why, they sent you off to school. And I went to a radar school which was sort of secretive at that time. I spent about a year, first I went to San Diego and after boot camp he we spent about a month in San Diego gathering up enough people to send on to a class. And we got to Logan, Utah. University of well, it was, what did they call it then... Utah State Ag at that time? And we enrolled in regular college courses, but we were sort of isolated from the regular people.

TC: Because of the Marines and being in... and the fact that you were...

LS: Yeah, we had enough to make a class of what they wanted us to take. So we were taking everything together. But we got the college credits for it. Then we finished that we were sent off to, we were split up, the group was split up and some people were going to go into airborne radar and some were going on the ground-based radar. And I was sent off into airborne radar to Corpus Christi, little island off of Corpus Christi. And we were there for six months. And then we were transferred to Quantico, Virginia. Just outside of Washington DC. And there we installed radar in airplanes, usually what's called a Hellcat. The carriers would come off shore, the planes would fly in at night and we would install the radar system in a plane at night. And they'd fly back out to the carrier. So we did that for a few months. Then I was transferred to Cherry Point, North Carolina, where again we were installing radar in B-25 bombers. And basically there we installed the radar, and then we'd go out and flight test it over the Atlantic Ocean. We installed one of the, one of the main things we installed was the radar gun sight on a 75-millimeter cannon. It was in the nose of the H model of the B-25 and they used that in North Africa to shoot tanks. I doubt if they hit very many but...

TC: What was the state of radar then?

LS: It was it was getting better. We had at that time, the gun sight was pretty good and the other thing that we installed was called loram, L-O-R-A-M, which was called long-range radio navigation and you could, after we trained the pilots and navigators you could set a course and fly it. And that's how they bombed Europe. It would just get on a hyperbolic curve and just stay with it and you kept your blips together and you'd just go to where you want to go. And then you make a reading and you get an intersection and you, if that's where you wanted to drop your bombs then you dropped your bombs.

TC: So the range was pretty far.

LS: Well, yeah, we had, with Ioram, you had, you had a master station and two slave stations. And you could go across the Atlantic. We used the same thing later doing offshore work in Vancouver Island. So then after that I went to, we put in for, a buddy of mine and I would put in for overseas training treatment and transferred to San Diego. And from San Diego went to, ending up in, we were going to land in New Guinea, but the Japs were bombing it so we shipped on up to the Admiralty Islands. And then we were going to go, we were attached and are were a dive bomber Squadron, and on that we had very simple radar, it was able to A-scope, that was just a line that went straight up and the blips came out on the side of it, fairly primitive. Anyway, we were attached to MacArthur's outfit and we flew up to, flew over to New Guinea and then we flew up to a couple other islands and then finally up to the Philippines. So we were in Zamboanga just on the southern part of Mindanao. And then we proceeded to dive-bomb a place called Devalle?? every day. Unbeknownst to us, that's where they'd sent the prisoners of war from Corregidor. They were there. So they probably dug in quite well. One thing I did there was I, we had no use for this radar. So I took the radar out and we could carry another 250-pound bomb. So replaced the radar with a bomb. The only thing I left in was that we had a piece of equipment called IFF, which was Identification Friend or Foe and it was a transponder type thing, triggered it from the base. And then if you had a code on it and answered back and so you didn't shoot your own plane down, hopefully. So we had some exams out there, they were college courses back in the States and I took that and they sent me back to the States, only I had to get there myself. They just gave me my orders and my papers and catch a ride, go back. I was supposed to report to Camp, Lejeune, North Carolina. Got down to the Admiralty Islands again, I'm hitching a ride down to there.

TC: You got around.

SL: Got around.

TC: That was true of the Marines though I think.

LS: Well, we were weren't too many of us, especially in radar. We just had a handful, and I got down there and I knew a captain down there, a ship was in the harbor and I was able to board the ship and we were getting ready to sail back to the States. And the lights in the harbor started flashing up there all kinds of noise and signals and things, so we turned around and came back and the MacArthur had dropped, not MacArthur but the US Air Force had dropped the first atomic bomb, so they froze all transportation. So we disembarked. Then a few days later, they dropped another bomb that completely froze transportation. So we sat and waited about a month before we could get a ship.

TC: So then you waited it out on the Admiralty...

LS: On the Admiralty Islands, I think we probably spent most of the time on Los Negros. There's two of them there, Los Negros and Manus. Are we spent most of our time just firing at coconuts floating in the ocean. Then we zigzagged on our way back because the Jap subs were still out in the Pacific. So we'd. about every 30 seconds we'd turn. Took us a month to get to San Francisco. And we had, we had the guys who had been on Iwo Jima on board too, they were coming back. One guy got the Congressional Medal of Honor. He was the only one left in his platoon. So I got there, I caught a ride across the country on the train because the war was over. I stopped off at home for a couple, three days and went on to Camp Lejeune.

TC: Can you just spell that for me?

LS: I don't know how you spell it, L-E-J-E- something like that.

TC: Exactly how it sounds. I think I think it's probably one word. It was one of the main training bases for the Marine Corps on the East Coast. So I got there, the war was over and the college program was over, so I had three choices. I was a Master Technical Sergeant then, six stripes. And number one choice was I could go to back to my outfit, who were then in China, I could go to Officer's Training School there and become a second lieutenant in three months. Or I could get discharged. So I asked him to repeat the offers and then I said I'll just take the last one.

[00:18:25] TC: How did that feel when you knew the war was over, you know after the bombs were dropped and...

LS: Oh, pretty good, it was unbelievable in the amount of damage they did with the atomic bombs. We didn't, we didn't really learn then how much damage they had done of course, but they probably killed a hundred thousand people with the first one and blinded the rest of them. One other plan that the U.S. had at the time that was I found out later, somebody suggested, well when we fly over, they didn't know how effective was going to be, we'll will drop a bunch of flares and people will look up and then we'll drop the bomb. If we don't kill them will blind them. War is not good. And so after that it off I got out in October '45. And I started back to university in January?

TC: Did you go back to...

LS: University of Illinois. Danville is only about 35,40 miles away from there.

TC: Did you go back into chem engineering?

LS: No, after spending all that time in electronics, I went into electrical engineering. Basically with, well, that's good enough, concentrating more on communications and that. And a bunch of us friend of mine bought a car and we commuted back and forth every day.

TC: Did you find that what you knew was in advance of what was being taught?

LS: Quite a bit. We'd had a lot of experience in microwave equipment and stuff like that and, so the electrical engineering part of it was a piece of cake. And the other parts were a little more difficult, but you were able to take, we could take the exams and if you were not too keen about making an A, if you could make a C on the exam you get credit for the course, so I got rid of Rhetoric or English, got rid of French and a few other non-essential courses.

TC: So what year did you graduate?

LS: The end of '48, beginning of 49? I went straight through, went straight through Summers and that. And a fair number of companies were around on campus recruiting people. And I had gone down to, I got an offer from Sperry, an offer from General Electric, offer from AT&T, offer from Shell. And Sperry that was an interesting one, they wanted me to look after their loram system on freighters and stuff like that all over the world because I'd had the experience of that and the AT&T, wanted me to go to work in Chicago. I went in and saw the guy that designed it, the 10-note system that they still use. He was sitting at a desk facing another desk and another desk beside him and another desk was there. I thought, no, I

don't think so. So Shell gave me an offer and they were, they were paying more than any of the other people. And so I went off to Houston. And then they sent me up as a seismic operator in the Rio Grande Valley.

TC: That's New Mexico?

LS: No, it's in south Texas, well the Rio Grande Valley is also in Texas, it's on both sides of the river. It's full of wetbacks. We were down in south Texas was basically where we were, doing seismic through grapefruit orchards and stuff like that. But then Shell sent me up to Houston to go to school. Shell was great on sending people to school.

TC: Well, it's good to invest in your employees.

LS: That's right. That's right. And they were good at that. So then after finishing there, I think it was, I don't know what the name of the school is not, with the geological field trips and some more work on their equipment, Shell built their own equipment, built their own geophones, built their own amplifiers.

[00:24:32] TC: How large was your crew when you were working in South Texas?

SL: We had about, oh, not too big. You have a basically have a shooter, an assistant shooter, so it was a normal seismic crew. Half a dozen jug hounds??, operator, assistant operator, surveyor, assistant surveyor, that sort of thing.

TC: And what was your title working...

LS: I was seismic operator.

TC: Okay. Oh, yes. Okay.

LS: And then, they wanted to know if I wanted to go to Canada and ??? so we took a seismic crew which later became Shell Party 4, so we drove up to Canada. Along with my new bride. I don't think that's the honeymoon she had in mind, but Houston to Calgary in a Dodge Power Wagon.

TC: Now, what year would that have been?

LS: We got into Canada July the 25th 1949. Drove to the Dodge Power Wagon straight down to the Palliser Hotel. And some of us stayed there and some of us went over to the Wales, so we drove over there.

[00:26:29] TC: Did you begin working right away?

LS: We did, we would turned around went down to High River. Shell had an office in Calgary at the time and they'd been waiting for us, and they had the programs already laid out for us to go shoot. So went to High River, did some work there, moved, for that winter, we went to Castor, Alberta. Had a pump in the front yard that you had to prime, and an outhouse out back, all the conveniences of home. And the weather that winter was very cold, - 50.

TC: Were you in a house or a trailer?

LS: We were in a house.

TC: A house.

LS: I just rented it, everybody rented a house there, I think, pretty well. Well somebody, some of the, some of the bachelors I think stayed in the hotel. They got their expenses paid. That's a funny thing too, when we went to High River, we started hiring local people of course and one fellow, Ted Isles had worked for Shell before the war in South America, and he ended up in High River for some reason, I don't know what. So we hired him. And later on he got credit for his service time he spent with Shell. So he got his pension earlier. But the government would only let us pay 85 cents an hour so we wouldn't upset the local labor, see. Very sweet of them. So after Castor her we went to, which was a long cold winter, we went to Didsbury and my first child was born there. And after Didsbury we went to Cochrane which was the main place that Shell had wanted us to go anyway, we were just sort of warming up in the meantime. And so we started exploring the discovery Shell had made in the early 40s at Jumping Pound. So we expanded to Jumping Pound field, they built a plant there, Shell did, the Jumping Pound plant, using the California company, I won't mention their name. They're still in business. And used the cooling system that they used in California, like having the water flow over, wouldn't, it doesn't work in Canada at 30 below zero so they had to rebuild the damn thing.

TC: Gosh couldn't have foreseen that?

LS: You would have thought somebody would have thought about it. It's the same system they use in Houston, I'm not sure if you've ever has been in Houston, where you see these air conditioning things and they've got wooden, I think they're made out of cedar with just baffle boards like that and the water goes them and it cools and recycles fine. They did the same thing out there at Jumping Pound.

TC: Ice.

LS: It was really, I don't think, I don't even think the company, I think they totally did it, they got paid for it and they got paid for doing it again.

[00:30:20] TC: Can you describe then the crew in Cochrane at Jumping Pound?

LS: Well there we had, we hired some more, we hired one more guy from Cochrane. And he worked to become a surveyor later on and a party manager later on, Ken Thompson was his name. And the other guys came with us, we had we had any Ed Lockhart, he had worked in the tar sands project for the Alberta Government, early on they had a tar sands project going and he'd worked up there. And then we had a guy from Black Diamond, Lineham, I think.

TS: Was it Fin Lineham?

LS: No, I can't think of his first name.

TC: Maybe it'll come to you.

LS: He was from Black Diamond. Another kid from Gladys Ridge, I can't think of his name either. He was a good guy. Whiteford, Gene Whiteford. And Ted Isles were still with us as surveyor. And by then we were getting ready to send back our American party manager that we brought up. And an American surveyor that we'd brought up. We' were getting ready to send those guys back.

TC: You'd, by that time you would have replaced that expertise with local people?

LS: Yeah, we just promoted some of our guys that with hired on...

TC: And you were still a seismic operator.

LS: Yeah, I was still seismic operator, then I was, about that time, I got transferred into the office in Calgary, and I became Chief Seismic Operator. And my main job was to look after the contract seismic crews that we had. Most of our seismic contract crews were run by their, owned by former Shell employees. Frontier Geophysical was one of the larger ones, owned by Ted Rozsa, he had been Chief Geophysicist at Shell, I won't say what he did.

TC: His name comes up very frequently.

LS: He stayed here, he's donated a lot of money. He made a lot of money. And his wife, his wife was Lola, was with, my wife who in my present life was my third. When Cat on a Hot Tin Roof in the early 60s, she was Big Mama. But what we did, main thing we'd do is, and General Geophysical was another large geophysical contracting crew we had used. And we would do what they called, what we called turkey shoots, which meant we would take three or four contractors and we'd lay out, each one of them would lay out their own equipment their own geophones and cables. And then record, they'd all record a shot at the same time and we'd compare who was doing the better work. And it started humorous, but we thought... the thing that really was obvious is that one of the companies, General Geophysical, had a, did not have an automatic volume control system in their equipment. So they had a system that after about a second had gone by it would kick it kick in and up till,, and you would it would come in so strong it suppressed things. So we were losing a lot of deep signals. So we got rid of that equipment, kept the contractor.

TC: But you would have sent these contractors to different areas right?

LS: Well we'd go to the same spot. Oh, yeah, they'd be all over. Yeah. I mean we used to have I think about one time we had five or six camps in southern Saskatchewan. Shell had a big acreage in southern Saskatchewan. And then in the wintertime we'd send everybody up north. In fact General was on horse crews early on up north. They'd let the Indians have the horses over the summer and they'd go back and get them again. And we had a crew, Shell's own crew. We did the timber and that area is hand cut lines and things that you can't do now, like we pre-loaded the holes. And that was a horse crew also, a guy named Stan Barrel had charge of the horses. He was from Sundre, died in an airplane crash.

[00:36:44] TC: Were you involved in the analysis end of it?

LS: During a physical interpretation?, yeah. ah, I forget ??? job.

TC: I'm getting ahead of myself here.



LS: No, I'm just too slow. No, I went into interpretation after I was Chief Geophysicist job. First thing I worked on we made a discovery.

TC: Oh, that's great.

LS: It was great until a friend of mine who came up from Houston, he was a very smart man, Harold Austin, pointed out that I had mapped a multiple. But we got an oil well.

TC: Yeah, tell me more about that. I don't understand that, mapping a multiple.

LS: Mapping a multiple is a reflection that comes from a shallow, arising, the energy comes to the surface and then it goes back down again. And the thing is that it has a lower velocity because of its origin. So it ends up sort of making a little rainbow type thing down deep, but it's not real. It's not there. This happened a lot in the northern part of the province in Rainbow Lake field and things like that because the Devonian reflection was very strong, it would come to the surface and then go back down again as it has a new energy source, only it's phony as a \$3 bill. And there it would be. So Shell developed a method of eliminating multiples. That's one of the first things that we did up there, just called what's called stacking common depth point. And what that does is take advantage of the step-out on the reflection as it goes out and you can, and you just pick up the points and stack them together and the low velocity multiple will get wiped out. They do a much better job now than it did then but Shell had developed that down in Louisiana on the offshore work.

TC: But even though this was a multiple you still got an oil well.

LS: Yeah, blind luck, you know, like serendipity. What was even funnier than that, it was an oil well that was combined with Imperial because the acreage where I plotted the anomaly was in the zone where neither one of us owned the land so we pooled land together. Which they wouldn't let you do now.

TC: I think there's a lot of things they wouldn't let you do anymore.

LS: That's true.

[00:40:23] TC: Have we missed a step in between you being a seismic operator to...

LS: Going into geophysical?

TC: Yes, so that was a straight promotion for you, going from...

LS: It was, yeah. No more money. I don't think. And that I think my boss got tired of me driving around in a company car with my golf clubs in the back.

TC: What year would that have been that you were Chief Geophysicist?

LS: '52 and '53, not Chief Geophysicist, Chief Seismic Operator.

TC: Seismic, okay. I'll just change that on my notes the way back there. So after you made a discovery, then...

LS: You just keep on working. The, a few interesting things that Shell did during that period of time, we had a guy named Vogel, Charlie Vogel, and he had, one of the things you want to do is know the velocity of the earth. And so he had invented, along with some other people at Shell, they invented a method of putting two geophones about 200 feet apart, hydrophones, actually, and lowering this into well bore so you could measure the interval velocities throughout the depth of the well. That later, and that in itself was how Waterton was discovered because they interpreted the information as having porosity in the Devonian section, very very minor porosity, but the production department were ready to abandon the hole, because they didn't have any shows or anything. And we were running about 2,500 feet low to prognosis. But with the interpretation of what we called a vogel meter at that time, with the interpretation of that, why they went ahead and tested the well and Waterton is still producing today, millions of cubic feet of gas, tons of sulfur. Shell later gave that equipment to Schlumberger, and it became known as a sonogram. They used it commercially all over ???

TC: So that was a case of sharing the technology then.

LS: They gave it to them.

TC: It wasn't like selling the rights to...

LS: No, well they, I don't think there was ever any money that changed hands. Schlumberger probably had better machinery to build equipment and all that and Shell didn't ??? Although Shell built their own geophones and built their own instruments. Yeah, the other thing is when Shell came to Canada, Shell always be buried their geofolds. Now in the frozen ground of Canada that is a difficult job, and you're not going to get any work done. Although in Montana they hired a logger to go out and drill through the frozen ground. Up here. We just designed a thing that encased the geophone. And we just put the geophone it with the big basin, was about 6 inches across just set it on the ground covered over with snow. And went on about our business.

TC: Just as long as you had a good contact with ???

LS: Yeah, Shell had a guy named Dr. Merton who is a real nut, a real Genius type person and we came up to check it out because we always had to report to Houston what we were doing. And we'd go down there, once a year you have to go down and tell them, and he said, well, all right, he said it would have been better if you'd have made it in a tripod. That's all. Let us go ahead and do it because they weren't getting any work in Montana, all they were just, they'd go out and shoot maybe one hole a day and we were talking about 10 a day without any trouble. So they let us do that. They tried one other experiment when I was doing ???

### **Tape 1 Side 2 - 47:00**

TC: Yeah. Surface energy?

LS: Well we thought we could use the surface energy, ??? off an explosion so we decided we'd build a bell. So we built a bell, big bell, put the dynamite under the bell, and we fired. We decided we weren't going to do that anymore. Next surface one was we used primer cord on the surface. And we got too much of an air wave so we gave up on that, it just, I think now today they could they could get rid of the air wave. We had a problem doing that.

TC: Well it really, it shows Innovation.

LS: Oh, Shell had a lot of things, Shell were very much into that doing things. So then we went on the seismic side of the business and like the next most interesting thing was doing offshore work off of Vancouver Island. Spent I guess we spent three summers doing it and we used there again in those days you could use dynamite, we used dynamite. We had to hire and maintain a boat with conservation people, Fish Conservation people or whatever you call them. They would, there again, one of the things I mentioned before multiples, in water, in using dynamite you can't let the dynamite explode without breaking the surface of the water. You have to break the surface of the water. If you don't you'll get a multiple from the surface of the water. So we'd always just explode the dynamite about 4 feet deep. We put a balloon on it and a dye bag, so the conservation guys can see where the explosion had taken place and they'd come up and net the fish and count them.

TC: Did they, did the conservation guys control when you would do the blasting? No? So if there was a big school fish you'd wait until the fish were away?

LS: No. I think we killed something like, I was given credit for getting... we were doing refraction work also, which is takes a larger explosive. And we'd let off one charge one time in the school of herring. They estimated between 12 and 13 thousand. But you must remember that the Russians and the Japs were out there scooping up the fish all the time, and we were much over, see Canada never had, acknowledged the 12-mile limit. So we were out way beyond the 12-mile limit and we still had to put up with the conservation people. And we had a gas exploder boat also which ran, well, they would run day and night. And Shell had invented these rubber tubes that we filled with a combination of acetylene and oxygen and just popped it. It would fire about every once a minute. You just tow those behind and you tow the cable. You get pretty good, pretty good penetration for, you get the bottom for sure.

TC: How deep were you at?

LS: Well we stopped usually at the, what we called the continental shelf, which is 600 feet. That's where the slope goes down.

TC: They don't do that anymore do they?

LS: No. No, they don't let you do dynamite out there anymore. They do, they use the gas exploders, a type of gas exploder and bigger rays because they do 3D surveys now. And, so that's about the time I left Shell, at the end of '65 I left Shell. Moved back to Calgary, they moved us to Edmonton. That was another interesting story. The vice president of exploration insisted that the two divisions that were left be in Edmonton. But he wanted at least weekly reports in person. So that was the beginning of Shell's air fleet, had to buy airplanes to fly people back and forth.

TC: In person, gosh, you couldn't just call and say...

LS: No, he wanted to talk to people.

TC: But you left Shell then. Should have left them long before that.

TC: Really. What prompted your leaving in '65?

LS: Money. I've been offered a job a year before and then, that was funny, I used to go to the Doodlebug golf tournament, I managed to go there 36 years in a row. A friend of mine came up from CNE at that time, Dick Siegfried, his son is still around town. So he'd offered me a job the year before at The Doodlebug and I said no and so the next year Doodlebug came up and Dick called and said well, I didn't want to go with him because he was, Canadian Superior and CNE were owned by the same people. And I didn't particularly like the chief geophysicist at Canadian Superior, so I'd always assumed that when they merged those two companies together that Siegfried would go back to the States and the other guy would still stay. Then he informed me that he was here and the other guy was gone. So I said, okay.

TC: And CNE is?

LS: Calgary and Edmonton, they'd got a lot of land given to them to build a railroad between Calgary and Edmonton. They got a lot of mineral rights given to them along that right away. They never built the railroad, but they kept the rights. And Superior bought them out took them over and kept the rights.

TC: But there would have been a CN line going that way. Why did this company feel they could step in and build a railway?

LS: It seemed a reasonable thing to do.

TC: Compete with CN.

LS: Well I think they would have, getting the land was worthwhile. But they did it before the oil business started up and then a long time before that.

TC: And CNE merged with Canadian Superior.

LS: Superior took them over.

TC: They took over. And then Dick Siegfried.

LS: He was Chief Geophysicist at Superior, and then he later went on to, became president of the propane company out of Winnipeg, IGG, something like that. They've gone.

[tape is muffled at this point]

TC: What position did you take?

LS: Senior Geophysicist. I taught them how to do common depth work because they didn't know.

TC: I'm just stuck on the name of the company after the merger. Was it Canadian Superior?

LS: It was Canadian Superior.

TC: And you instructed them on how to do common depth work.

LS: Yes. And I supervised an airborne helicopter crew.

TC: Which location were you working in then?

LS: Calgary.

TC: The field crews would have been ??

LS: The crews were out, at that time we were doing ??? Creek, just southwest of the Rainbow field.

TC: Do you know the year?

LS: Probably '66. ???

TC: And then where did you go?

LS: [inaudible] Central Del Rio?? and that was the beginning of ??? '49 CPR. [inaudible]

TC: Can you just spell that for me? I don't seem to have it right. Central Del Rio?

LS: Central Del Rio. Two words. A guy named McQueen started that company, he'd been with Imperial.

TC: It's an interesting name for a company.

LC: They had a company called ??? Leduc and they dropped Imperial when Leduc was discovered and then they got together this ??? Central Del Rio. I don't know why, I don't have that ??? but I know he had ??? Leduc first. And then Superior are decided that they would merge us with CPOG. The technical term that we actually [inaudible] CPOG.

TC: What does that stand for?

LS: Canadian Pacific Oil and Gas. Royalite ??? bought CPOG. After we bought them, ninety percent of us, at which point our president, Mr. Hardy, and the land manager Bill Mugler, and Mr. McKillam stayed on. Most of the geologists left and I went over with them and thought that I would be there for a month, to round up the business and stayed. We went over there, the geologists were on one floor, the geophysicists on another floor and they didn't speak very often. They had two chief geologists, they were completely unorganized. So the vice president at that time, was the vice president ??? at that time, Mike Rogers, asked me to draw up an organizational chart, which I did, ??? Shell system followed up what they did. They followed up [inaudible] I made them three districts. One chief geologist and one chief geophysicist and one vice president and one exploration manager. So we put all the new people into the district managers' jobs and one of the chief geologists ??? and the other one in a district ??? and the chief geophysicist they had at the time ??? district manager. [inaudible for the next few minutes]

TC: What year would that have been?

LS: Probably in '69, it could have been '70, '69 or '70. Could have been '70, I can't remember. [inaudible] See they had the ??? also, [inaudible] became district manager, I was chief geophysicist for awhile, because the other two had become district managers. And then I became district manager at ??? And about a year later, they asked me if I wanted to go to London, I said okay. So I went to the London office, London England, and out of there we did exploration work in the North Sea and Iran, Liberia...

TC: [inaudible]

LS: [inaudible]

TC: Were you on site there, ???

LS: No, I was [inaudible]

TC: How did you ??? like,

LS: Oh, just a running sketch. [inaudible]

TC: When did you write that?

[inaudible dialogue from both]

TC: How did you come across it, I'd be interested in talking...

[inaudible]

TC: ??? Everything is just, you don't know which is in which box, or... [inaudible]

LS: We had just got confirmation of the building?? with Ranger Oil [inaudible]

TC: Ranger Oil was ???

LS: Yeah, we had a deal with them in the Dutch??? But we'd been ??? with them. Had we done it ourselves, at Canadian Pacific we would have ??? We had Ranger and BP. BP hadn't fulfilled their obligations on previous ??? and we didn't know that. We ??? our trust with them because CP ??? had the airline, and [inaudible] So we got ??? up with BP because ??? British Government [inaudible] You didn't find anything ???

TC: [inaudible]

LS: No, I didn't get the confession from ???

TC: How long did you live in London?

LS: Three years.

TC: What was happening with your family life during this time?

LS: They were over there. Except my son stayed here and went to school.

TC: Okay. And you have one son.

LS: One son, two daughters. And we got some nice chartered holidays, we went to Spain, Norway, Paris.

TC: [inaudible]

LS: That's now, not then.

TC: [inaudible]

LS: That's right, I have one stepson now. My oldest son died.

TC: Oh, dear. Was it an accident?

LS: No, he was a [inaudible] needle. Got some dirty needles.

TC: Oh, I'm sorry.

LS: One thing about London, I got to know a lot of the CP other people and the CP ships?? [inaudible]

TC: Why, was it becoming its own company ???

LS: Yeah.

TC: Including Pan-Canadian.

LS: Well Pan-Canadian had been carrying ??? for years.

[inaudible]

TC: I think there's some anxiety now about the standalone company, ???

LS: [inaudible] the last passenger ship that they had, they went to container ships. And [inaudible] into Canada and [inaudible]

TC: Well the Intermodal?? has worked well for them. You mentioned before about the relationship between the geologists and the geophysicists.

LS: Well they just, the geologists did their work and the geophysicists did their work, they were on different floors, and ???

TC: And your reorganization is what brought them to the other...

LS: Yeah. They had a district manager and the district manager had a district geologist and a district geophysicist, and workers, it was simple, straightforward [inaudible] to tell you the truth, because ???

was the chief geophysicist and he asked me to organize the geophysical department. So I told him, I said, I just couldn't just do that. I'd have to organize the whole exploration department to ??? Which I did, but I didn't do it until about the end of the month.

TC: Did you ??? organizational chart and drawn it up?

LS: I got around to it, I wrote it up, took it into Mike Rogers and next thing he took it down stuck it on the bulletin board, down where we ran our meetings ??? and this is what we're going to do. It was still on a legal sized ??? and little boxes.

TC: And that was something that had been, it was a system that Shell had...

LS: Oh yeah. It was organized, it was, an International organized company would use practically the same thing. You sure ??? to keep your job, people have to work together, [inaudible]

TC: Was there any resistance to that?

LS: No, they were happy as clams. The three guys got district managers jobs which was a promotion for them. Well it wasn't a promotion for the chief geophysicist, but ??? but the chief geophysicist on my chart sat with the chief geologist directly under the exploration manager. And the district geologist and district geophysicist reported this way to them on technical problems, but they reported to the manager on day-to-day work. And I set up an exploration, we called an X file which was all the people got together and for land work, farmouts, so we'd have a meeting once a week. And the district landman with bring in the proposal they had from people for farmouts and we'd record them and people didn't believe us when we did. We honestly kept track of every approach we had and then we'd go over to them the next week and answer it. Had two good land people, Bill Webb and Gordon Hawkins. They were excellent.

[00:28:33] TC: So you remained with Pan-Canadian for the remainder of your career?

LS: No, who would want to stay with those guys? I came back and I was manager of the US operations for Pan-Canadian out of Calgary. So Gordon Hawkins, and I'd take a week, Hawkins and I would fly down to the States five days out of the month and usually a geologist and geophysicist also. Set up an office in Bender, no reason to go there. And we had an office in Houston and went into, because we had, we had money we were able to make joint ventures with people like Mobil, Getty, Shell, so we went into offshore plays at a great expense. Baltimore Canyon was of one of them. I think that block of land went for \$107M, which we just had a small piece of. Offshore California after the spills in '69 I think, about there, went out there and it was Mobil and Shell and I think Getty, and we lost to concession. Because all of those leases had been drilled previously. And so everybody knew what was there. The government took our, one away from us because they said something about the, Mobil and Shell and the other guys ??? too much and they took the thing away from us. Mobil Syncrude?? lost. Then we drilled the one well up in the Gulf of Alaska, hit a huge flow of water, fresh water, and in fact Shell was drilling it ??? and they finally, it finally sanded itself off. It was flowing so much. Just went into the ocean didn't hurt anything.

TC: But you didn't find any oil up there.



LS: No. Then I went, our exploration manager in Canada left, ??? He left the company and they transferred me from the US to, I was still in Calgary, but they just switched me over to the exploration under Canada. About the only thing I did, there was made a deal with my friend Jack Plott, who was with SoCrude?? which is a Quebec oil company, to shoot the Saint Lawrence River in the lowlands of Quebec. We drove one well on ?? island, the island off of ????. Interesting. Got a little gas not enough to make it worthwhile. Probably could have completed it and sold it to the locals, but you don't make any money doing that. Then that was when they asked me the ask me to go to London, after that. So I went to London. That's going back to... getting ahead of myself. But that's, after that they asked me to go to London, that was in '71.

TC: Now after London, you were in London for about three years?

LS: Yeah. After London I did that US work. And then that part there and then then I got approached by Amerada Hess, Amerada Minerals, so I went to work for them as vice president, exploration.

TC: Can you spell that for me?

LS: Amerada, you got it. They were owned by Hess, out of the States. Owner of the New York Jets, if he's still alive, the old goat. So I was at Amerada, I reorganized them a little bit. I made, two guys, we had two districts so I made two district managers and set up the same type of organization. And then somebody approached me if I would help them, a guy came over and wanted to know if I'd help them find somebody to run their US operations, I mean their Canadian operations. At that time the company was working for was called Paul Imperial Continental Association, I think, it's an old British ??? about the 50th in the British Empire. So I sort of talked to this guy and all that. Meantime my first wife had died after we got back from England.

TC: Was she ill?

LS: She had lung cancer, smoked too much. So these guys were pestering me about that and then they finally asked me to go over to England for an interview with them. So I did.

TC: And this is Imperial Continental.

LS: Yeah. And went over to England, came back, and, trying to think of the next step. They then went through a recruiting outfit here in Canada, can't remember the name. Anyway, they offered me a job with them. And what had happened, they had made a deal with Ultramar, and they'd ask me to look at the deal they made. And I told them that with deal, they didn't need any enemies. They already had them. At that time Ultramar were hiring here in town. They were hiring. I think they were operating under Golden Eagle then. But they are hiring people like mad. Because I.C. Gas had given them a million dollars a year budget, so they were hiring people. And the contract was just was not in their favor at all. These guys were going to do the work and then they would get the majority and then I.C. Gas was going to pay for the land, and they were going to get I think it was 60 percent interest for putting the deal together and then just, you know. So I convinced them not to do that. I found out later that at one time Ultramar and I.C. Gas had had the same chief executive officer. So they were old buddies. They finally offered me a job, which I took as president and opened a company here in Calgary, Parallel Continental Gas Association of Alberta. Sent me the first year's budget, a million dollars, and that was when the interest rates were high so I just dropped it in a CD, 22 percent interest. I told them I couldn't

make that and they were just bottom line people, anyway, I said, I can't make that in my own business, but I can make it in the bank. So that paid our expenses, it paid my salary, paid the office man. Then I convinced them that they, this is about the time that dingbat had put in the gross petroleum tax, what was it called?

TC: NEP?

LS: NEP? National Energy... No, I think it was, I don't even remember what it was a national tax they had put on the oil patch but they put the gross tax on... so I convinced these guys that they should move to the States. So we moved to the States.

[00:41:01] TC: Okay. The year that you became president of ...

LS: It was probably '80 or '81. And I got married in '81 to this fine lady and at that time we had two stepsons. I left out another marriage in there, too.

TC: When was that?

LS: After my first wife died to keep it legal, probably '78, probably.

TC: But it didn't last.

LS: She died.

TC: You lost the second wife? My goodness.

LS: Yeah, she had leukemia, she used to do, she worked for PetroCanada, but she did pottery work. And I think probably all the chemicals over the years.

TC: Heavy metals, and...

LS: Yeah, I think and stuff like that, and the glazes. I think sometimes had some bad stuff in. So she had leukemia, that's what I was still with Amarada. And I left them, I went to the I.C. Gas people. You know, I took her down to MD Anderson in Houston, which is expensive.

TC: Very expensive yeah, and at that time I think treatment wasn't nearly as successful, you know.

LS: Well, I don't know. I think probably I think they can do better with leukemia, but they had pretty well killed the leukemia cells, but her liver gave out and then what are you going to do.

TC: Yeah, it's a terrible disease and chemo is like calling in the army to fight the enemy in your body. And you get so depleted, it's often a secondary thing that happens to you.

LS: yeah, she was in complete isolation down there, but I mean still you have no resistance left. So I had the new wife, my third, and we went down to...

TC: And where did you meet, just curious.

LS: She was a headhunter. She used to hire, try to hire, because Amerada never had a very nice reputation. And so she was trying to a hire geologist for me and we finally met. She came over dressed in her fancy hat and good clothes. I took one look and I thought, oh, that would be very expensive to keep. Which turns out was not the truth, but...

TC: Okay. Now. You were in the States now.

LS: Moved to the States in '82 to Denver.

TC: And the company again in the States?

LS: Imperial Continental Gas Association.

TC: But, the "of Alberta" now is gone.

LS: It's gone. Then we did some joint ventures with various companies.

TC: Would this have been drilling and exploration.

LS: Yeah, drilling and exploration both. And we got, then we got, most success was in Texas, we got some good shallow reef Wells, oil.

#### **Tape 2 Side 1 – 15:00**

TC: Okay now how long how long did you stay with Imperial Continental?

LS: I had a four-year contract. You know, we would be bought or I bought a company called, can't even remember what the name is. I can't remember.

TC: Was it a US company?

LS: It was a US private company. And we merged them and changed the name, was it Ancana. Did we call it I.C. Gas Ancana? Maybe we did, doesn't matter. Don't remember. [Mrs. Stevens talking in background]

Now, you stayed with them for the four years?

LS: Well, until they fired me.

TC: You mean they retired you?

LS: No, they closed...

TC: They closed the company?

Mrs. S: They closed the Denver office.

LS: The mistake I made was, when you take over a company should kill the princes. The guy who was president of that company survived. And I didn't. I didn't even feel the stab in the back. We had a good Board of Directors. John Taylor who was, had been president of CPOG and had been president of Pan-Canadian. He's since deceased. He was on our Board of Directors. Barry Harrison was on our Board of Directors. He is on Pan-Canadian's board right now. And he rolled up the deal with Altamira?? and I.C Gas that I turned down. No Barry's a good guy. So anyway, they put me on, eased out, I think I got half pay for a while, less than that, sort of a declining thing. Then a friend of mine who I had who would worked for me at Central Del Rio, Ken Gillies, put me in touch with some Australians. So I took over running an Australian company out of Denver called Expo. And we had good production in Texas, in Mexico. And Ken always ran the Canadian operation for them and I ran the US. Then they decided that they wanted to sell so they sold, we sold the US Operation. They also sold the Canadian operation. So then I didn't have any place to go to work. So I just [muffled - inaudible for next few minutes]

TC: At point did you come back to Alberta?

LS: We got back here,, we sold the house in October of '96. [inaudible] travelled around ???

**[From this point on the audio is very muffled and much of it is inaudible]**

TC: Looking back over your career, what have you enjoyed most about it?

LS: I suppose just basic, having some places to go and having some success, and [inaudible]

TC: If you had to do it all again, would you do it all again?

LS: No, ??? stock options ???

TC: So anything else that you'd like to add?

LS: I don't think so ???

TC: So in your spare time you are still golfing are you?

LS: [inaudible]

End of interview