

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Ken Thompson

INTERVIEWER: Tina Crossfield

DATE: July 2001

TC: This is July 24 and we're at the home of Mr. Ken Thompson and my name is Tina Crossfield. Mr. Thompson if you care to say a few words and I'll just make sure the tape is running.

KT: Well, hopefully it's running, that's the best we can do. . . [in mid sentence] magistrate and various things in High River. There's a lot of history out of High River, that's the family's.

TC: So you actually have some family records of the Thompson family at the Glenbow.

KT: At the Glenbow, yes.

TC: Well, that's a really good place to begin, can you tell me when and where you were born?

KT: I was born in High River in 1931. And went to school there until Grade 2 and then moved up to a ranch at Cochrane. When I was living in High River my father owned the TL Ranch west of High River and it was too far to go to school so my mother and I lived in High River and he finally decided that was too much travelling and we moved to Cochrane.

TC: Did he continue ranching in Cochrane?

KT: Yes, he did.

TC: And do you have brothers and sisters?

KT: I have one brother, younger than myself.

TC: And what's his name?

KT: George. And he has his own land company, he's a landman, has been for years.

TC: Any sisters?

KT: No sisters.

TC: Just you and your brother.

KT: Just the two of us.

TC: So the records that are at Glenbow, are they about ranching?

KT: A little bit about ranching, a little bit about. . . in the history of High River, with the Fisk family and the A. W. H. Thompson family, Edward Fisk and A. W. H. Thompson.

TC: So did you complete your schooling then, in Cochrane?

KT: I completed grade 12, except for one year and Cochrane in 1949 was not equipped to give you the second year of Grade 12. So I went to Mount Royal College to complete it.

TC: And then after that?

KT: Then after that I started with Shell.

TC: Oh right away.

KT: Right away. I was on my way to the university to take chemistry and I hired on with them for a couple of months and liked the outdoor work and what they were doing and said, to

heck with university and I became a surveyor.

#027 TC: Was that something you learned on the job?

KT: I learned it on the job and I was interested in surveying and math was my best subject, so surveying fit in pretty well. And then in the evenings, 2 or 3 of us from the seismic crew, which was stationed in Cochrane used to come in here at night and go to Mount Royal and we took geology courses in the evening. And that went on for about 4 months, the winter of 1950-'51 and then we started moving around the country and we moved so often that that ended the education in the evenings.

TC: Whereabouts were you sent?

KT: We went from Cochrane to High River to Nanton to Didsbury to Pincher Creek. We used to spend the summers around Pincher Creek for about 3 years and we'd spend the winters working northwest of Calgary most of it on the Forestry Trunk Road.

TC: How large was that crew back then?

KT: That crew in total would have been about 24 people.

TC: Really, that's quite large.

KT: That included the drillers and the cat skimmers, who were with us most of the time. We'd spend a lot of time in the bush, even when we were down in Pincher Creek we were working west of town. Also we had a 3 man camp crew. And once we moved to Pincher Creek we were in a camp from then on pretty well during the summers and winters. Unless we went to Saskatchewan or Manitoba for the summer work, then we got out of the camps. Our families moved with us all the time. I got married in 1955 and from then on my wife. . my wife moved with me 17 times in the first 2 1/2 years, 3 years. So we did move fairly regularly.

TC: Where did you live?

KT: When we got married it was in Pincher Creek, we went back to Pincher Creek three years in a row and the third year down there I got married. And from Pincher Creek we moved to Edson and then back to Pincher Creek and then to Innisfail and then to Cochrane and then to Weyburn, Saskatchewan back to Vulcan and from Vulcan back to Cochrane. All this time in a trailer and then I bought a house in Cochrane and then in 1964 we moved to Edmonton for 4 or 5 years and worked northern Alberta and northeast B.C., from Edmonton. And then about '65, '66, we moved to Halifax for offshore exploration. We did that in '66 and '69. Also in the meantime, at different times I went on my own and we worked for 2 months in Quebec. And the following year a couple of months off and on in Ontario.

#068 TC: Was this all the time with Shell?

KT: All the time with Shell, I spent 36 years with Shell. Started November 1st, 1950, and retired November 1st, 1986.

TC: How did your position change, you started off as an observer?

KT: I started out actually, I wanted to go in the field so I worked in the field for two months when I first started. That's when if I was going to continue my education, should have left and gone back to university but I didn't. So I got into the office and I worked as a

computer on the geophysical records. And I spent the fall and winter in the office and about May I decided that office work was not what I liked best, I was an outdoor person and I got on the survey crew and became a surveyor, which I did for about 1952 - 1959. Then I took over supervising a seismic crew. I did that until about 1966 following the crews around and then I moved into the office in Edmonton and became a supervisor in the office, supervising various seismic crews. At that time I used to have maybe 4 seismic crews in the summer and up to 15, 16 seismic crews in the wintertime. The winter crews of course, worked mainly in the bush and in the muskegs where you could not work in the summertime. At this time we had 3 Shell owned crews, company crews, and they did the same as a contractor from the ground and worked in much the same areas.

TC: Were you up in the Territories at all?

KT: Yes. I was in Inuvik off and on for 7 years, worked out of Inuvik in the Mackenzie Delta.

TC: When you said that you were supervising seismic crews, that wasn't the same as being a Party Chief or was it?

KT: Well, we weren't as much as contract crews who actually had a Party Chief who looked after everything. We had a Party Chief who stayed in town and looked after the records when they were sent in and looked after the office work. I was a Party Manager in the field and my responsibilities were the field, the crew, the contract bulldozers and the contract drilling and contract line clean-up.

TC: So did you deal with land owners too?

KT: My job was to deal with land owners if we were out in the . . . I didn't see them myself too much, we had surveyors, that was part of their job was to see the land owners, get the permission and then carry on starting the job. It's only more recently that they actually have people who do nothing else but permit, go ahead and see the farmers and turn everything over to the surveyors and they carry on and go from there.

#104 TC: Is that kind of like what your brother does, as a landman?

KT: Not really. He could do that kind of thing but his is strictly office orientated and he has his own company. He did do something like that in his earlier days but it was mainly for well sites rather than for seismic. He never spent too much time on seismic. He was more in land acquisition and lease sales, more related to drilling rather than seismic.

TC: Could you describe what the state of the technology was then?

KT: Well, at that time I think the biggest difference is we had larger seismic instruments, that took much larger ??? to record what we were doing because we didn't have the digital. But we did use analogue instruments, we used cables that are likely 5-10 times thicker than the ones used nowadays. Our geophones were at least 10 times the size of the ones used nowadays as well, so there was a lot of bull work to hauling those cables out and also hauling the geophones around. And in the bush as much as we were, we weren't working on road allowances, especially with our own company crew. So we spent a lot of time doing bull work, getting cables up hills, around detours and the geophones laid out and picked up.

TC: When you were in those small towns did you run across other seismic crews who were there?

KT: Sometimes when there was land sales on and the rush to get information for a land sale. We hit towns like, I said we were in Vulcan, when we were in Vulcan there were 5 crews there at the time. Pincher Creek there were 2 or 3 at a time. But only once in awhile. Everything was pretty well planned ahead of time but there would be certain lease sales come up and everyone would want to find out information so we could bid on the leases in a hurry, they would all send a crew down and by all, I mean 4 or 5 of the major companies would send crews to a certain town, such as Vulcan. We'd all work out of there for maybe a month, month and a half, and then they'd disappear. And if you were there for long you'd still be there when they were gone, otherwise you were gone as well. And we have gone some places where we only worked 2 or 3 weeks and that was the reason, we wanted to do a certain seismic line to find out what was below us.

TC: So being in the bush, must have held different challenges, as you were mentioning before, a lot of hauling and a lot of bull work involved.

KT: There was quite a bit, but it was good work. In the summertime you usually had a lot more rain than you should but it was interesting work. And it was cold but you were always dressed for it and it didn't bother anyone. Even when we went to Inuvik, we had extra parkas, we had extra wind pants and balaclavas for our face and so on. So the people were able to work without too much in the way of hardship. On a seismic crew you also spend a lot of time in your vehicles waiting for the move ahead and so on. It depends on what type of work you're doing of course. I guess jumping around here a bit.

#155 TC: Yes. Let's see. I guess if you could just sort of talk to me about what the work was like and some of your colleagues, maybe some of the problems you encountered and . . . ?

KT: First of all, the Party Manager, it was his job to get the crew to the right place and make sure they had sufficient supplies. At that time it was mainly dynamite because that's what was used for seismic shotholes. The drillers, the driller supplies, you had to have a mechanic on the crew as well and you supervised him, supervising the repair of all the vehicles. You were responsible for the camp, the catering and so on. Then it comes down to the surveyors, the surveyors, their job was to get out ahead, with the dozers and cut the seismic lines where necessary. And then following them would come the drills who would drill the shotholes at various distances apart and then the recording crew would come along, lay their cables and their geophones, detonate the holes, get their recordings and so on. And this was a continuing operation, you were always on the move, one was following the other all the time.

TC: So it was handy for Shell to have their own seismic crew.

KT: It was good I think. Your own seismic crew was also a way of telling of the production of your contract crew, you had a comparison. You kept pretty good track of your own crew, you tried to do the best you could and it kept the contract seismic crews going at the same rate or better. They usually tried to beat us which was a good thing, it helped our production and everything you did was pretty well a cost per mile basis, so you wanted to get things done as cheaply as you could and as efficiently as you could of course.

TC: Who would you have contracted out to?

KT: WE would have contracted such companies as GSI, Teledyne, Frontier, Beaver Geophysical, United Geophysical, Western Geophysical.

TC: Oh my gosh, there were a lot of them.

KT: Yes. And Mercana, and many others as well. Those were some of the basic ones that were used at the time. Prior to my being, there were other ones that were in town including Heiland Exploration, who did a lot of work up here at one time.

#194 TC: Tell me about the state of geophysics at that time?

KT: At that time when I started in 1950, it was fairly new in Canada. It had been going on up here since about 1942 on a very small basis. But around about that, 1952, it started to pick up in Canada, more companies became active. All with roughly the same type of instruments and the same methods. And then as it graduated we got away from the use of dynamite exclusively and we got into different energy sources, such as offshore we'd use air, onshore we'd use pounders or anything that we could get some reflection from above. We had to use pounders, any type of energy source we could come up with and I've used several, including many surface sources but to try and get some vibration from below the surface, that's what we were after.

TC: Someone I was interviewing recently described almost like a compactor that was used, they use in construction now, something similar.

KT: The same thing, it's a thumper and it thumped on the ground so many times per minute. The times were adjusted for the area you were working in and if this thumper would give you your reflections that you were after to record on your seismic instruments.

TC: Was it loud?

KT: No. Other than the noise of the truck, that was the main thing. You got rid of most of your noise once you stopped using dynamite in some areas. And that's why these sources were used, they got closer to towns. Dynamite was used mainly out in bush, or out in the country.

TC: Was that hazardous, handling that dynamite?

KT: No, not really. The people were trained. There were a couple of accidents but normally it was very safe. The dynamite was loaded down the hole with a cap and the people came behind and detonated the cap and dynamite. You kept a safe distance away from the hole when you were doing it. No, no more dangerous than anything else in any other line of work. I think the more dangerous the work is the more careful you are as a rule.

TC: Just out of curiosity would you have worn like a hard hat and boots?

KT: At that time the only ones that wore hard hats and boots were the drillers and the fellows doing the shooting, detonating the dynamite. Because there was always a certain amount of debris, especially if you were in gravel country, rocks and so on, thrown in the air and you had to protect yourself. You usually were right beside the truck and you always had a canopy over the truck to protect you from rocks as well. But anyone who was working around the shotpoint, either drilling it or detonating it, would wear a hard hat. And as time went on more and more people started to wear hard hats.

#245 TC: Now it's the standard I guess, you can't even go on. . .

KT: Now it's the standard in a lot of cases, yes. You didn't have to wear them at that time as I say, except for the few spots around the shotpoints. Safety shoes, you could wear them or not. I know I wore them most of the time working in the field, trees could fall on you, when you were surveying or almost anything.

TC: Yes, especially in the bush.

KT: Yes, that's right, in the bush. And when you look back, surveyors should have worn them all the time, hard hats especially. There was always a chance of a tree going down, a tree that was in there that had been left up by the cat.

TC: Did you kind of clear your way into the bush, to bring your trucks in?

KT: What you'd do is start out from a known point and if it was in the bush you'd have a cat there and a surveyor there and he would set out a line for him to follow and as the cat went ahead the surveyor would follow and keep him on a straight line. It was much easier to interpret the information if it was a straight line because it brought in less chances of error than if you had crooked lines and what have you. But the surveyors kept the cats on line. Some of these lines are 50 miles long, some of the longer ones, they start out in the open country and go into the bush. I know one line I had in particular was 50 miles long. But it started out in areas like Cardston and went back into the bush. But normally a seismic line is only the length required to cover the land that you're after getting information from. Usually 2 or 3 miles to 10 or 15 miles is normal for most lines I think.

TC: Could you describe the air method?

KT: The which method.

TC: The air, for offshore.

KT: Oh for offshore. Okay. Normally an offshore dynamite was used to get our implosions and explosions and over the years we found out that there was a tendency, if you happened to go through a school of fish that you could kill fish with dynamite. So they decided to find a source that would give us the same results but would not kill fish and they developed air guns. And these were pneumatic guns that were triggered by a solenoid, the air would be built up in them to a certain pressure, you'd detonate it by triggering your solenoid and this would release the air. And this would not kill the fish and also give you the necessary energy you need to get records. And now, I think everything pretty well is being done with using air, there is no dynamite used anywhere that I'm aware of. And hasn't been for 25 years, 30 years.

#292 TC: Does it matter the water depth?

KT: No, it doesn't matter too much about the water depth other than you're concerned about when the drilling rigs come in, it does then. Because when you're doing your seismic work you tow your geophones inside of a plastic cable to keep the water out and it's almost the same thing as on land, the only thing is you're moving all the time. Your ship is moving, your cable is moving, your ship that is firing the airguns is moving, they all move at a certain speed, the same speed. It's not like a land operation where you can stop whenever you want because everything would sink. And you maybe keep your cables and geophones and so on, maybe 15-20' under the surface.

TC: So it's not like a drag line then?

- KT: Not really, no. Although you're dragging a cable behind you for maybe, 2 or 3 miles.
- TC: But it stays in the water.
- KT: It stays in the water, you weight it so it will stay in the water. You put weights every so far along it so that it will stay at the depth you want. Because if it's too deep or too shallow you don't get the same information you're after. You want it at the same depth all the time. And that's why you can add kerosene, or you can add fluid to this cable case and you add it and subtract it depending on how deep you want it and how hot or how cold the water is because that also affects how deep it will run.
- TC: Did the lines ever become entangled?
- KT: Yes, we lost the odd one that would become entangled in fish nets or in shallower water, get too close to the bottom and get caught in rocks. But didn't lose too many, very few. Fish nets were our worst problem because if it once got entangled in the fish nets they had a tendency to tear in half or we'd lose part of them.
- TC: Was the company liable for that sort of damage, if you messed up somebody's net?
- KT: It could be but usually the nets we ran into were not active nets, they were ones that had been dropped to the bottom of the ocean by someone else. So I don't know at any time that we had to replace any nets. They were mainly ones that had been discarded or the people didn't know, they'd lost their nets and didn't know where they were either.
- TC: How large were the ships that were used for that?
- KT: They would be 120-180 feet long.
- TC: And were they owned by Shell?
- KT: One of them was. The only ships that were owned by Shell, we leased them from Shell in the United States and brought them up to Canada to use. But normally they were just contract ships off the east coast, or the west coast. We'd contract the ship, outfit it the way we wanted and carry on from there. And usually our season was maybe, June, July, August, September, October, something like that. That was our normal season for working offshore.

#345 TC: Was this work that took place near Halifax?

- KT: It took place near Sable Island for the most part, on the east coast. And of course, it took place on the west coast until a moratorium was started around 1970, when they decided not to do any more work on the west coast. And at this point in time, it's under review. The new government in B.C. would like to get exploration going again on the west coast. But most of the work was all along the coast of Nova Scotia. Sable Island is sort of the centre at the moment and then of course, you get over to Newfoundland and off the Grand Banks, there's a lot has gone on there in the past and is still going on.
- TC: It's so deep there though.
- KT: It is a lot deeper water, yes. But the rigs are getting so they can drill in deeper water too.
- TC: Yes, I find that amazing how they can do that.
- KT: Yes, and with GPS for surveying you can get back on the same spot if you ever have to leave a particular location with the rig, you can get back on the same spot again within a couple of metres or less.
- TC: It can be pinpointed that accurately?

KT: That accurate now. With the number of satellites, there's roughly, must be 24 satellites at least up there now. And you can pinpoint with great accuracy.

TC: Gosh, what did you do in the old days to get back to the same spot?

KT: Well, okay. In the old days, we had shore stations, survey stations set up and we maybe had 3 stations set up 100 miles apart on the Nova Scotia coast and we would keep our instruments running on the shore stations and we had a web net that we could receive on the boat and it could tell the boat where it was at all the time.

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Tape 1 Side 2

KT: Yes, our sites that were along the shore were not as accurate as the GPS is today of course, but they did give us the location as we were shooting our lines. Every few minutes there was a pulse and that would tell the boat where it was at. You would have a chart in the wheel house and all the skipper had to do on the boat was follow a straight line. If he got off the straight line it would show up on the chart and he would get it back on course again.

TC: So it was like a radar.

KT: Much like a radar, similar to a radar because it gave you your distances and so on.

TC: So with two points you could sort of pinpoint.

KT: Yes, we had three points.

TC: Like triangulation.

KT: Triangulation with the three points, right. And that was the way it was done until GPS came in and GPS has been in for 25 years almost now. It's not nearly as accurate as it is now, we had many less satellites in the air, so the more satellites you have the more accuracy you can attain.

TC: Where were the interesting spots on the west coast for offshore?

KT: Along the Queen Charlottes, on the outside of the island.

TC: I'm going there in about a week.

KT: It was good working out there. The Pacific coast though, the Pacific Ocean is a little rougher than the Atlantic Ocean. Not seemingly to watch it but when you're on a boat it's a little chippier and choppier. People who got sick on the west coast did not get sick on the east coast. So there was a difference.

TC: Would you be out there for days, on the boat?

KT: They sometimes go out as long as 14-20 days at a time.

TC: That's a long time.

KT: As long as they had sufficient supplies they'd stay out. And unless they were driven in by storms, which happens. If you're in a storm, if they're far enough out they'll try and ride the storm out. If not they'd head for shore but in most cases, even along the east coast, it takes you 12-24 hours to get to shore. So if the storm is going to last that length or just a little more you might as well stay out there and rough it.

TC: Yes, I'm going up the west coast on a boat.

KT: Well, you'll have a good trip.

TC: Apparently it's a very big ferry. It's the ferry. So the moratorium in the 70's that said no more offshore exploration on the west coast, was that a grassroots movement that started?

KT: No, it was mainly . . . they were worried about pollution if there was production. And then the Valdez having the problem it did when it did, that sort of cinched it at the time. Because it was a big spill.

#030 TC: Yes, that was huge, I think they're still recovering from that.

KT: But it's a case of weighing how badly people want the resources developed to what you can expect to put up with having miscellaneous accidents. It's very controversial and both sides have their opinions and both sides have good opinions. So time will tell I guess, what will happen out there.

TC: Yes, interesting. Do you think there's a big reserve out there?

KT: I couldn't really tell you that. The possibilities are good, I think so, yes. You have so much in Alaska and you have so much in the U.S. and nowhere in between. So the chances of having a field there are pretty good.

TC: Tell me about the Arctic, what was it like working up there?

KT: The Arctic we would work from possibly sometime in mid November or a little later until about mid April. You had to have it frozen up there so you could, where we were, we were on the Mackenzie Delta and you had to make sure the creeks and lakes and everything were frozen over before you could go to work because you had to get cats and drills and equipment across them. So our season was very short and when you consider the time of year, around Christmas on, it's . . . well, even when we started, the dankness is hard to work in. You might get 2 or 3 or 4 hours of daylight a day at the most, the rest of the time you are in darkness. So you accustom yourself, you can accustom to it.

TC: It must be cold as well.

KT: The cold was tough. We used a lot of, mostly the people working on the crew were native to the area so that helped, they were used to it.

TC: So you would have hired Inuit?

KT: Yes, we had both natives were Eskimo and aboriginals of various types. We used them for two reasons, one that they were used to the area, most of them were reasonably good workers and it gave them employment. I think that's what you try and do is to make use of the resources you have when you go to these different areas.

TC: I guess used to the area is a big plus.

KT: It is really. Also they have the clothes, they have the endurance. And people normally went in for 3 weeks of work and 1 week off. And we would keep the operation going 30 days a month so there were relief people that took over.

TC: Did you work sort of, around the clock or. . .?

KT: No, you usually worked from about 7 in the morning till about 7 at night, except for drill crews, sometimes you needed more holes and you'd work them around the clock, 24 hours a day. But the normal was just a 12 hour day.

TC: It's still a long day.

KT: It was dark in any case, it was dark when you started and it was dark when you finished

each day. So you tried to speed things up as much as you could during the daylight.

TC: Were you living in trailers?

KT: We had camps out on the Delta. And at all the camp sites, because of the lakes and rivers, we were able to build temporary airstrips and crew changes were made right at the camp.

#071 TC: Was it plane or heli?

KT: It was flat, very flat. There were no hills on the Delta at all.

TC: Oh no, no, aeroplanes, you used planes.

KT: We used aeroplanes, not helicopters, no. We had them and could use them if necessary. But normally used planes because it wasn't too hard to build an airstrip. When it came to moving, later on in our operations when we had to move heavier loads we would use the heavier helicopters. Most of this stuff I'm telling you, I don't think Shell would have any concerns about but it all happened during my career with Shell. But at this point I don't think there's anything that would concern them too much. It's funny I have to be careful, you don't want to say things you shouldn't. Even if I am retired and have been for 15 years.

TC: Just in general, was Shell a good company to be with?

KT: I found them an excellent company. I stayed there for 36 years. They treated me very well and I hope they got something out of my work. I found them very good to work with. Public relations wise they tried to do their very best, as I think anyone does, especially if you sell gas and oil and so on, you want to keep your public relations up. Emphasis was put on safety and public relations.

TC: Where was the head office for Shell?

KT: The head office was in Toronto for many years, up until about the last 15 years and it's been in Calgary. Of course, 70 some percent of the company is owned by Shell in The Hague, Dutch Shell. And we had various ties in with Shell U.S. too.

TC: Would that be in Texas, in Houston?

KT: That would be in Houston, yes.

TC: As a geophysicist, in the geophysicist line of work, did people try to recruit you for other companies, did they try to tease you away?

KT: Oh yes, head hunters would phone occasionally, using the same ruse of, do you know of anyone, they wouldn't ask you. They'd say, do you have anyone you could recommend, we're looking for such and such. You know what they're after. But in times when people are short, that happens. I'm still working and why am I working, because they need people. I've been retired 15 years and I'm still consulting. I try and take a year off now and again but I keep getting back into it. My wife says I've retired every year for the last 5, now I guess I have again. I intend to work another 2 months and that will be it, I'm going to retire.

TC: Yes, that will be it.

KT: Yes.

TC: Oh, I don't know, I don't believe it.

KT: I'm 70 years old so it's time to stop.

TC: The year you retired, in '86, was that sort of a mandatory retirement at a certain age?

KT: In my case, I could have retired 5 years earlier, I did take retirement then because things were very slow and it was a good time to retire. So I retired and then I went right back to work again for the same company.

#113 TC: As a consultant?

KT: Yes. A consultant can help a company quite a bit, you don't have a high overhead of having him around all year and the health benefits, other things that come along with it. Consultants have become a way of life now.

TC: That's right. Plus it allows you some freedom too.

KT: It does.

TC: You can always say no, I'm too busy.

KT: Yes, do something else. It's good for both.

TC: Do you have any thoughts about the NEP, when that government program happened?

KT: Well, I'm not a politician. It hurt, it hurt a lot of people. I don't know what it did for the, I don't know about the economy, what it did for Canada as a whole, I can't comment on it. It certainly hurt the local economy and it hurt a lot of people.

TC: Did you see a direct affect within Shell?

KT: I saw more of a direct affect on people that I had working with me who are no longer working. That was the affect I saw. Mainly in the line of contractors and so on, people who had worked for years all of a sudden were out of work. So rather than comment on Shell I'll comment on the geophysical industry slowdown.

TC: Yes, okay. When did it start to pick up again, how long did that last?

KT: In the 90's it picked up. It's had its fluctuations all along I think. The biggest pick up really, has been the last couple of years. There's more activity than there has been for quite awhile. But there were some tough times since the NEP. It does fluctuate so it's hard for me to say.

TC: I mean the industry is cyclical, boom and bust.

KT: Right. But things are very active at the moment, and I think we'll stay that way for a year or two.

TC: Do you have the sense that geophysics emerged into its own science?

KT: Well, I don't think I can answer that too much for you really, Tina. Being a field man mainly, I can't answer that, let the geophysicists answer it.

TC: Well, I know a lot of people became geophysicists, basically through on the job training.

KT: Quite a few of them did, especially in the early days.

TC: Going into it, learning how.

KT: ??? instrumentation and working on the crews and gradually brought themselves up into geophysicist. Quite a few of them did, you can't really do that now. It's the same like any other job, you have to have that university education first and then come down from there. But in the early days, especially right after the war when a lot of the fellows had gone back to university and taken a little bit of university here and there, a lot of them got going and if they were inclined mathematically, they worked towards becoming geophysicists. And possibly geologists too to a certain extent but mainly geophysicists because geologists, the terms were a little tough, all the words.

- #160 TC: What do you feel was the highlight of your career, if you could go back and pick one year or one event or one. . . ?
- KT: I think the onset of us working offshore rather than just onshore all the time was a highlight, it was a different way of life altogether. Instead of worrying about small drilling rigs and bulldozers and so on, you had to be concerned with ships, which was something I knew nothing about at the time. So I think that was sort of a highlight as to a new learning trend, that you had to get on to. And being a surveyor, the development of the GPS was most significant as far as I'm concerned. But all the way along, there's 4 or 5 things that I think improved our work so much, communications were one of the biggest things that I can think of. Instrumentation for our seismic crews is another. Our mode of travel, being able to use planes more and helicopters more. And the different energy sources we developed for different areas, so you could work closer to towns and so on. There was a development of 3-D seismic when we'd only used 2-D up until a point, 3-D gave us a lot better coverage. And as I said with surveying, the development of the GPS to the point where it's at right now. Things that might take us 2 or 3 weeks to survey at some locations, you can now drive out there and set up and know exactly where you're at on the earth. Those things are big changes.
- TC: Did you ever get lost out there, in the bush?
- KT: No, I never did. I had a good sense of direction. I also was a private pilot for awhile and that helped your sense of direction quite a bit as well. No, I never did get lost. Had a few close scrapes and so on in the bush, with trees and with vehicles and so on, nothing ever too serious.
- TC: Bears, no?
- KT: I've had bears come around us when we were surveying but never bothered us. We usually had vehicles fairly close, the odd time we didn't but we used to make a noise and they never bothered. But they were not grizzlies, they were black and brown bears.
- TC: With the analysis of the data too, the advent of computers helped a lot, moving into digital and. . .
- KT: Yes, that's made a big difference. Of course, that was mainly after they left my hands, the records went into the office and these were the things that they had developed, which includes the 3-D and so on. And the advent of all these computers, it's changed things significantly. But those are sort of past my end of it.
- #204 TC: But these are all. . .
- KT: They're all good points.
- TC: They're all good points, they're all good things, yes.
- KT: From a supervising aspect, which I was in the field, communications I think, was the biggest thing. You knew that you could get hold of anyone whenever you wanted them, you knew if you had an accident that you could get hold of someone to come out and help and so on. When I first started our communications, I can remember, I'm going way back here again, I can remember working out of Hinton on the Jasper Highway and the Jasper-Hinton stretch was under construction, getting ready to pave it. And I can remember going into a hotel to make a phone call, which the only phone in Hinton was underneath

the staircase in the hotel. And you went in at 8:00 in the morning saying you'd put your name down and you might get a call into your head office by noon. The rest of the time was filled by contractors ordering equipment and various things. Some people would go in and sit for 2 or 3 hours having coffee waiting to get their turn in line. And the same, even after that, the seismic crews that worked in High Level, Manning and so on, you had to get up in the morning at 5 and put your name in and the mobile operator would call you 2 or 3 hours later and say, all right, you booked 5 calls, yes, okay, you can have your 5 calls. And you got 5 calls and that was all and then the next person that had their name on the list would come and make their calls, be in 1 or 5. So in my case I would get up at 5 in the morning and say, I have 5 calls. I may only make 4 or 3 but in case something happened in the meantime I wanted to be able to make that last call. So that's why I say communications have changed so much. You know, you only had 2 or 3 towers that you could make these phone calls through and they were busy. And you may have had 20 seismic crews up there at the time, plus drilling rigs. So the only way AGT could do it is put you on a priority list, you put your name down and your number and they'd call you when they were ready.

#232 TC: Wow, and today we carry cell phones in our bags.

KT: Yes, now you can talk to anybody any time you want. Originally we started out, we didn't have the mobile phones even, we used single side band radios and that's how we communicated directly with the office. But they were subject to atmospheric conditions and sometimes they'd get so noisy you couldn't talk, you might not talk for 2 or 3 days. So you had to know what you were going to do and you had to have your plans made up ahead of time all the time.

TC: It must have been a lot of fun though.

KT: It was, it was interesting. From my standpoint I enjoyed working in the bush and I enjoyed working outside. So I had a rewarding career, I guess I must have or I wouldn't have stayed in the same job for all those years and still at it. Now of course, we use satellite phones, if we get into places where the mobile cell phones won't work.

TC: Did you do any work in the States, or was it all in Canada?

KT: It was all in Canada although I did, on 2 or 3 occasions, made trips across the States for 2 or 3 weeks to see what they were doing and to tell them what we were doing and so on. We did work, one summer we worked in northern Montana because we were the closest crew to that area. But normally the States and Canada work separately on their seismic work. I had worked in Greenland which is, actually we were working in Canadian waters but the nearest port was Greenland. And we would go to take our boat in every three weeks to Greenland, to Hølestensbord and came in and fuel up and get food supplies and so on. And then they'd go back out to work. In times like that I would have to fly to Denmark and from Denmark back over to Greenland to meet the boat when it came in because there were no direct flights to Greenland. But that was a foreign service, as far away as I got really was Greenland, everything else was pretty well in Canada. Just going back to where I started, I started working for Shell Oil Company, who was out of Houston and we worked for Shell Oil Company for approximately 4 years I guess, 5 years and then

they formed Shell Canada. Because at that time I had been there about a year and a half, two years and I thought, I'd like to get into some other countries, so I wrote a letter to personnel department in Houston and asked for an assignment somewhere else. And I got a very nice letter back saying that Canada is a foreign assignment and we need people there more than we need them anywhere else in the world at the moment and we can't honour your request at this time. Shortly after that I got married so that ended that anyway. Now it doesn't matter if you're married or not you still go foreign because you can get back and forth so easy.

#281 TC: Do you have more than one child?

KT: I have three children.

TC: You have three, Doug is. . .

KT: Doug is the youngest. I have one daughter, Deborah, who was born in Pincher Creek in 1956, another daughter born in Vulcan in 1957 and Doug was born in Calgary in 1960.

TC: And what are your two daughter's names?

KT: Deborah is my oldest daughter, Dukes and she has one son, he's 18 now, my daughter in Cochrane Sandra, who was just married for the second time, she married at Christmas and lives at Cochrane and my son who lives in Brandon, Manitoba.

TC: And you wife is Terri?

KT: Terri, and she was born in Pincher Creek and raised in Pincher Creek and I took her out of Pincher Creek. And the children have gone to school in Cochrane, Sherwood Park, Halifax, Edmonton and Calgary.

TC: They got to see the country.

KT: They did, yes. It was good for them to go to Halifax, they only put in a part of a year in school there but they learned a lot, just travelling down there and back.

TC: It's so different from the west.

KT: It is, altogether different. The biggest problem that Terri had, Doug was in kindergarten the first time we were there, he was in Grade 1 the second time we were there, no, it was the first time I guess, anyway, she'd see him leave in the morning and see him for 50' and he'd disappear into the fog. It was 4 blocks to school and she wondered how he ever got there and how he ever got home at night. And at night she'd wait for him on the step and she'd hear him through the fog and then he'd show up, coming out of the fog, he'd got home. For a prairie person that was an odd feeling to see your kids disappear in the morning and they did day after day.

TC: You get a fog bank in there and it stays for days.

KT: It would yes. We'd sit in our house and listen to the fog horns. But we rented houses when we went to Halifax. The people were glad to see us come, they were wondering at the time and we got some of the nicest letters of recommendation from the people in Halifax for the way we looked after their houses. We still have those around. And in my capacity as an operations supervisor in town here I was also on a native employment committee for the Northwest Territories. And in that, we tried to educate other seismic crews on the hiring and so on of the local people. We wanted them to have as many on their crews as they could, as well as our own.

#340 TC: Was that a government program?

KT: It was a government program as well, yes. It was a joint venture between government. . .

TC: And industry?

KT: Yes. And the man at the time was Jean Chretien was the Minister of Indian and Northern Development.

TC: Do you have any regrets, something that you would have liked to have done that you didn't get the chance?

KT: No, I don't think there are any regrets. Sometimes you might say you wish you'd gone a little further in school, maybe some things would have come a little easier, but I have no regrets. I was a field man from the start and when I had to go in the office 15 years later, I was prepared to go in the office then, so it wasn't bad. I can't say I have any regrets, I enjoyed the places we went, I certainly enjoyed the people I met and made life long friends in a lot of towns. I still get Christmas cards from Halifax and that's 30 some years ago.

TC: How long did you spend in Halifax?

KT: Two summers. Actually 6 months one summer and 3 months the other. And then for the next 5 or 6 years after that I used to go back to Halifax every 2 or 3 weeks because we had crews working down there, offshore. But we didn't necessarily always have an office down there, sometimes we kept the office in Calgary. So I'd go down for 2 or 3 years when the boat came in and then come back, three weeks later when the boat came in again I'd be down there to discuss things.

TC: Maybe you could talk to me a little bit about all these great photographs here.

KT: Okay. This here is when we first started, this is working out of Cochrane as a matter of fact.

End of tape.

Tape 2 Side 1

KT: . . . [in mid sentence] the developed during the Second World War and they were one of the few four wheel drive vehicles you could get at the time. Chev also had one out but these were the most popular. And these were the areas we worked in, we had to build our own bridges and so on, across muskeg areas. This one didn't quite hold up.

TC: Yes, I can see that.

KT: ???

TC: Oh my gosh, how did you ever get it out?

KT: With a cat, this was actually working southwest of Calgary at Jumping Pound. We weren't more than 30 miles from Calgary when this was going on. So then we had to start developing equipment that we could get around with better and that's how we developed the tracked equipment, the Nodwell's and so on. They were just a jeep with big tractor tires on it. Here's a machine here, unfortunately the day I took the pictures it had just rolled. But these were the big tires, flotation tires and you could work on land and go right into water and keep going. Your tires propelled you through the water to a certain

extent, we also had a little propeller on the back of these, we could put it in gear there and propel ourselves across the lakes. It was a way of getting around.

TC: That's a pretty versatile. . .

KT: It was and it came up, developed in Houston for working down there in the sand and so on and we used it up here with the water more than anything. And then of course, whenever we got into areas where we could work because it was too wet we used our Nodwell's and Foremost's and so on, all that tracked equipment. And it started coming in in the late 50's and improved over the years. We could haul bigger loads with the bigger trucks and put tandems on and big flotation tires. These were mainly made so that you get less pressure on the ice and you could haul earlier in the season. And all these trucks of course, ??? we went into Nodwell's that had the same, our doghouse on with our instruments in.

TC: Is that you standing there?

KT: No, that's a local up there, as are these two here, these were all taken about the same time. These were local boys out of Inuvik and Aklavik and Tuktoyaktuk. Here we are hauling supplies into Inuvik in the summertime on barges. That's the way we got our supplies up there for the winter. This is the camps we used back in 1953, these camps were used by crews in the States and came up to Canada and these are the first camps we ever used. And they slept 8 people at a time.

#030 TC: It looks like just a steel outer shell.

KT: Yes, it's just aluminum. Aluminum covered trailers, square ones. Now we're into our offshore work, I showed you the one of the boat, this would be the same type of boat from the back end. And we had a big reel that we put on here and this is the reel that let the cable out into the water, drifted 3 miles behind us. And then we'd have another one that came long back, maybe 600' and deployed the air guns. As we developed we started deploying the air guns right off the same boat so we got down to a one boat operation. Here we are on our seismic boat coming into St. John's, Newfoundland. And this is, all we need is an antenna and this is the antenna that received the signals from land to tell us where the boat was at all the time. As they fired a shot it would trigger an instrument inside of our doghouse and we'd know exactly where our boat was at the time that shot was fired, as close as we could get it then. This is the instrumentation inside the boat. The boat had 4 or 5 times as much instrumentation as a seismic land crew would have because we did all of our own work there, all of our tapes were digitized, we played everything back and then sent the tapes into Calgary for the final. But we needed quite a bit of equipment because we went through many tapes a day.

TC: This system, would have kept your on track too.

KT: It would have kept us on track because we would pre-plot where we wanted to go and we put it on the ??? table and on a chart and all he had to do was keep steering and following on that line and if he was off it we recorded it with this so we would know if he was off it. And that way the geophysicists could do their work accordingly when it came to interpreting the records.

TC: So if you had to go around obstacles or . . .

KT: Yes, which we didn't have to do. The odd time with a fishing fleet we might have to get off line but we would talk to the other ships and work it out one way or another. But there were times we had to stop shooting because of a fishing fleet. And we'd turn around and go back on another line and then finish that one later. This is Sable Island, this is the little horses that you hear about on Sable Island. They're all stunted, they've all been deposited there by ship wrecks and so on. These are some of the whale bones you'll see around Sable Island. This is a government lease??? on Sable Island, they had their communications but this is the type of tower we had to use for our ships. And we've had two of these stations on shore and then we had a third station out on Sable Island. It just gave a better triangulation sort of. And this is the back end of one of our seismic boats. I went down to Freeport, Texas and had this outfitted the way we wanted it and I spent a couple of months down there doing it in the spring and we came up to go to work. And this is not one of our ships but it's a ship in St. John's, Newfoundland again.

#068 TC: That's a container ship.

KT: Yes, we were working off of Newfoundland at the time, in the Hibernia field. And this is just to show that we can find mud other places than Alberta, this is down on a crew working in Ontario and we had to tow him in.

TC: That's a pretty muddy field there.

KT: Yes, that was around Sarnia, Ontario. When we were down there we heard all the stories about Esso and ???, all the oil companies that, in hauling fuel and so on down there, they had to put in corduroy??? logs and so on to haul out of the rig sites, and this goes back to 1900 when they were hauling oil. And this is one of the helicopters, this would be a heli-portable crew, this is something I should have mentioned to you earlier, this is what they're using now in the foothills instead of these seismic trucks going from place to place on the ground. They hand cut a line 4' wide and every so often, where they want to drill a hole, they'll haul one of these rigs in with a helicopter, set it down, drill a hole and it'll take it on to the next one and so on. And the recorder will come along and he'll set in those places as well and it's all handled by the helicopter. The men do all the cable laying and all the geophone laying by hand, everything is walking for them pretty well. And the helicopter will pick up the geophones here when they're ready and drop them off every so far for them and as they get there they pick them up and away they go.

TC: That really minimizes impact on the land eh?

KT: The impact is very little, in fact from the air you can't see these lines part of time and from the ground it's very hard to see them. So there's been a big improvement in helping the ecology and the trees and so on. But I don't know what percentage, I've been out of seismic, I now do sour gas well consultations. So I'm out of seismic so I don't know what percentage, it must be 30% of it's done by helicopters now.

TC: Is this one in Alberta?

KT: Yes, actually that's right out Simons Valley. We were out there experimenting, a bunch of, we were all different oil company personnel watching this rig drill. And we had it on a pick up to haul it out there but actually it comes off the pick up and it's hauled around by a helicopter. And this is working in the dark at Inuvik, surveying in the dark. You use ???

on your rod, when you're taking elevations and so on. The fellow carrying the rod down the road would shine the flashlight on it so you could read the reading on it. And of course, you used to have radios, you would say higher or lower until you got it where you wanted it.

TC: The gauges must have been hard to read too.

KT: Oh yes, they were but you had to use a flashlight.

TC: Nice, very nice photos.

KT: These were taken by a ??? photographer.

TC: Yes, they look professional. They're so clear.

KT: We used to have to put a plywood wind break along here to help them from getting too cold.

TC: This looks like it's either a road bed or it's dug down.

KT: It's dug down. Actually, what you have in the Arctic, so that you don't tear up the ground, you have an ordinary blade that's on a caterpillar only you put shoes on the bottom of the blade and the shoes are about this high above the surface. It's just a flat thing I guess, with a thing that hooks on your blade so your blade can never get closer than 6" to the terrain. So you're not digging up any permafrost or anything like that. You don't get over the brush as well either, but it does save the surface, so when you're done really, what you're pushing is the odd bit of bush and snow to make that seismic line so they can get through. There they are loading a stick of dynamite and it's put down the hole and then pushed down with poles to get it down to the bottom of the hole you've dug. Depends on the area you're working in whether you have a 60' hole, 100' hole, 200' hole, 300' hole, it all depends. There we are with our geophone laying with the Bombardiers, or Nodwells in this case. They're doing a special type of work here so we had two lines. In the Arctic unroll their cables from here as they go, their geophones hang at their sides just the same as you see in Alberta here and they hook them up as they go. These are called bridles that the geophones hang on. And these are the natives working here, there's your bridle again and there's your geophone. The ones I used to have are about the size of a one quart milk jar, and heavy. That's probably why I spent one summer at it and got in the office I guess. This is clamping the cables together, because you'd have 3 or 4 miles of cable out on the ground at once. You may be only using a mile of it but the rest would be laid ahead so you don't lose time. These are fellows from down south, the operator and the assistant operator. This would be getting towards spring, why I'm able to be take the pictures. This would be the Party Manager and the operator. And there's the end of our camp. Of course, everything had to be plugged in at night so we had lots of cables so we had to have big power plants.

#133 TC: So you dragged a generator around with you too?

KT: Yes, we had one trailer that had nothing in it but a generator and a workshop. One of the worst disasters we had was this particular trailer, not this one but another one like this burned up one night. So the crew's out there with no power whatsoever, and with no power you have no heat. So it didn't take us long to fly one up from Calgary. We had to get a ??? aeroplane that could haul it ???. All our garbage, we're working on the lakes,

we're on the lakes all the time here so all our garbage is incinerated. And it's a power incinerator with a working motor on it, so you burn everything to nothing. And then you take the ashes that are left over on to shore and every now and again a driller would drill a hole so you could put it in the ground.

TC: That's a very cool way of doing it.

KT: It is, yes. Very environmentally safe.

TC: Gosh, look at that yellow sky. Wow, that's a very interesting picture.

KT: The sun was just getting ready to go down I think. Now, we'd hook 7 or 8 of these trailers together and then they'd be pulled by the cat. And we'd have maybe two trains of these, one cat would pull this train, one cat would pull this train. You never had to put the fires out or anything, the cooks could cook while you were moving even. It's on a channel so it's pretty smooth. There they are on the move.

TC: Looks like a train.

KT: Yes. You'd take up to 4 trips to move a camp. You'd have trailers and ??? and then you'd have your trailer of dynamite and so on and other sleighs and so on. There's the incinerator being pulled. These camps, instead of 8 like those old type, they'd sleep about 4 in each compartment. As days changes they get a little better all the time.

TC: Those are very nice pictures.

KT: [in mid sentence] are almost the same really, cables are laid out using trucks. This was Southern Party 192, which was a Shell crew.

TC: 1959.

KT: Yes. This is up at Liard River crossing. This is about Mile 400 roughly of the Alaska Highway. That's a picture of myself, I was looking after surveying at the time there. This is the records that we came in with every night. What we were trying to do is follow these horizons here to see whether it was level or whether it went up or whether it went down eh.

#172 TC: Was this. . . it wasn't paper though?

KT: It was paper, actually developing paper, almost a film type paper, a very hard type paper and you had to develop the pictures and fix them so that they'd stay.

TC: The Shell Chinook was a. . .?

KT: A Shell magazine, yes.

TC: Is that still around?

KT: There's a Shell magazine but it only comes out once every 2 or 3 months and it's a different format altogether. This is when I was Party Manager in the field, receiving a safety award here. As I saw, Shell was very high up when it came to safety. There's Terri and there's myself there at a dinner. But they used to give the ??? and what was happening in Shell itself. There's when I first started with Shell, my first year, I was surveying then, the start of my second year I guess. And here's the safety schools that we went to. Some of our Christmas parties and some of our barbecues and so on. It was a real newsy thing, nowadays it's not very newsy. Now it goes back to showing some of the ???, down around Fernie, down around that area, Pincher Creek.

TC: This is really nice that you've kept this.

KT: Yes, I have kept these, you can sure look at them. There I was receiving an award again I guess, we had three crews, 1, 2, 3 crews and the Party Managers are all receiving their awards.

TC: 11 accident free years.

KT: Yes, I had the big one. The other ones were receiving two year awards. That was ??? Manager was no longer around. He was born at Nordegg in the mines, his dad was a miner and he got into . . . I don't really know why I saved some of these, some of these are the same magazine as before. Here I am trying to train two fellows how to be surveyors. They're walking along with the ax over their shoulder, ??? their instruments. This is what I said, our explosives truck he wore a hard hat and this would be the roof that he put his head under when he fired it. And this is the geophysicist and everything went into the office. There's a shopping cart, this is Pincher Creek just before I was married and I saw this fellow on the weekend at a family reunion, he lives half a mile south of the hall where the family reunion was held. Dick McKeage. This goes back to just before I was married, this is my friend, we were the same age identical, born the same day, here I am getting steak with a smile on my face. And this is the camp I was showing you down at Pincher Creek.

#220 TC: Who is the fellow here?

KT: Jim Flagle. And we just celebrated our 70th birthday together 3 months ago.

TC: Oh, that's marvellous. You guys go back a long way.

KT: Yes, he's out in Sicamous now, he has a place out there. This is the same fellow, Dick McKeage again. This fellow is deceased. There is one of the regional crews that we had when we first set up camp.

TC: Are you still in contact with all these fellows?

KT: Yes, Ed Howes, Jim Flagle I am, Dick McKeage of course and that would be it. Some of these I have no idea where they're at now. Oh Harry Clay, I'm still in touch with him, he was one of our drillers. And now we're just back to the picnic ones again. These saw a lot of moves and a lot of trailers, I guess that's why they're worn out so bad, if they'd just been in a filing cabinet all the time nothing would have happened. But that's pretty well the pictures that I have Tina.

TC: Well, that's very nice, I really enjoyed seeing those. What are your interests?

KT: I do a fair bit of camping. I'm a wagon master for about 27 rigs and we camp regularly, once a month during the summer. We have . . the ladies have a little committee and they arrange things for us to do during the winter, like we may go to Imax theatre one night, we may go to the opera one night, we may go to the Navy battalion one night, they find something for us to do and we always go to dinner when we do that, go to what we're doing and then go to dinner or vice versa. And we meet regularly the first Sunday of every month during the winter, at the Army and Navy and have breakfast, brunch. So that's our trailer club. Now my other interest, I have a farm that my folks had north of Cochrane 10 miles. We spend a lot of the summer out there. My daughter Sandy has a 5th wheel and her husband and they're on it right at the moment and they spend all summer out at the farm. And I have the land rented out to two of my neighbours, one has cattle on

the pasture and one harvests the hay on it.

#260 TC: And that's the original farm from your dad?

KT: It's the farm that came from my dad yes, when we left High River we moved to a farm south of Cochrane, which is just down below Glen Eagles, the flats down there, we owned that whole tip in the thing there, wish we still did. It sold for a couple of million dollars recently. Didn't sell for very much when I was there because it was all rock, but anyway. Then we moved north of Cochrane and my dad had that when he passed away. And my mother gave myself a quarter on the west side of the highway and my brother a quarter on the east side of the highway. And he lives out there. And he's moved his land consulting business out there, his office is out there now. He got fed up with coming into the city all the time, fighting the traffic, he can do everything out there he does in here, he has to come in twice a week maybe. That's usually just for meetings or a lunch or something.

TC: That's a really pretty spot out there.

KT: It is yes. So I would say that my interests, we did go to Phoenix for about 5 years in a row. We haven't done that for about 4 years now, I found that I'm not a heavy golfer so I didn't golf and I found that I had a lot more to do up here and the weather has been so nice up here for the last 4 years. So why not stay home and enjoy it here. We play canasta quite a bit and we have a canasta club we belong to, where once a month during the winter you go to a house and they have a pot luck supper and you rotate at different houses. My wife has volunteered for 25 years now at the Brentwood Lodge over here, for senior citizens and she goes there 2 or 3 times a month to volunteer. She also belongs to a craft group, the craft group are ex-geophysicist ladies, their husbands were geophysicists and they meet once every 2 weeks for crafts. So that keeps her going.

TC: I find our winters here have been a breeze, not much snow, not very cold. We're going to get it one of these years.

KT: We are. But the last 4 years have been good. So we're content to stay home. We enjoyed our trips down to the States and we travel well while we're down there. And that's why we have a motor home. We have friends that have bought something down there and I fell sorry for them because they keep going back to the same place every year. And they have fun, I'll admit that but it's nice to see the country. And we travel during the summer, last year we were in Greece and next summer we're going to Australia.

TC: Oh fantastic.

KT: So we spend our time travelling.

TC: Okay. Is there anything else that you'd like to add.

KT: I don't think so. I didn't write down much here, just a few things and they were mainly the advances that we've seen. That's pretty well it. I'm not sure how much of this you can use but whatever you can.

TC: Well, I think the field work is very interesting. And that was really your specialty.

KT: It was, was the field work. Once all those records got to the office, that was my concern and I was through with them.

TC: Yes, make sure you hang on to these photos eh.

KT: Yes, I'll hang on to these. And then when I retired I was in the geophysical end of it. I retired on the 1st of November, 1986 and I went to work in the drilling department with Shell because they were just starting to do their work up around Caroline and I got into doing community visits. And I'm still doing that now and the one I'm currently working on is up at Hinton for another company. And I've been doing it off and on for 10 years in the same area so I know the people pretty well. And my main job there is to make sure that they are aware of what's going on, that they feel safe with what's going on and that they have confidence enough in me that if anything should happen I'll make sure they get out of the area. And it's gone well. The company I'm working for is much like Shell, very safety conscious and it's gone well.

#325 TC: Do you think that Shell sort of pioneered the safety aspect?

KT: I don't know if they pioneered, I imagine they all had much the same but Shell has always been very strong safety wise. Also they've always done most of the work in the foothills where most of the dangers were in a lot of ways. To a point they drilled most of the sour gas wells around eh. So they were the most familiar with sour gas.

TC: So it was pretty dangerous in the foothills around this area?

KT: Because of the terrain we were working in, we worked in some pretty steep hills, cat wise, our drills, our recorders. Also the fact that what we were looking for, Shell's been looking for in my case was a lot of the sour gas quite often and we have been one of the foremost in safety I would say. But every company now is getting more and more conscientious when it comes to safety. Mainly because the oil companies will not hire contractors unless they have proven that they have a good safety record and are willing to keep it up. But I think any of the major oil companies in particular, have always been very safety wise, it costs you money if you're not safety wise to start with. Plus the loss of life or the chance of the loss of life and so on.

TC: Well, the environmental awareness too, has gotten better and better over the years.

KT: It has.

TC: I think it's just knowledge, the more we understand about the environment.

KT: It is, yes. And never once was I ever asked to do something by Shell that was not safe. If I considered it wasn't safe and I said so, I was never asked to continue. And that was one of my jobs, if I thought the terrain was too rough or the safety was a problem I was never sent to go ahead and do it anyway. And their public relations along the same line, any of us found things that did not suit the community we reported them. And in most cases I think they acted accordingly.

TC: That's good. Okay, I'd like to thank you very much for taking the time out to talk to me. I always learn so much by these interviews and enjoy them tremendously.

KT: Good, it's hard to put 36 years of one company and 50 years of total work into a couple of hours and try and catch everything. Sorry I jumped around so much but that's the way your mind works sometimes.

TC: It is and those are the kind of associations you make sometimes. If you do think of something else you can always contact me.

KT: No, I appreciate you dropping by.

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Tape 2 Side 1

TC: Okay, and I would like to take a photograph and you can pick the spot.

KT: I should have dressed a little better.