

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Mary Pandachuk (nee Turner)

INTERVIEWER: Susan Birley

DATE: November 1984

SB: It's November 23rd, 1984 and this is Susan Birley interviewing Mrs. Mary Pandachuk, who used to be Mary Turner. I wonder if we could just start with a little bit of background, could you tell me when and where you were born and raised and a little bit about where you grew up?

MP: I was born in Medicine Hat, 1914, I was a war baby. I lived there till I was about 6 years old and then my family moved to Edmonton and I spent the rest of my life in Edmonton until I was grown. Went to university in Edmonton.

SB: When you lived in Medicine Hat were you ever conscious of the oilfield activity around there or was there anything going on?

MP: There wasn't any. They're only starting to drill oil wells there now I think, it was gas though. Everything was gas in Medicine Hat then. The street lights were gas and of course, all stoves and furnaces, everything was gas in Medicine Hat. You were just sitting on the gas field down there. But I notice just recently they're talking about drilling in the Medicine Hat area for oil. Of course, there could have been something in between but I know while I was working I never heard about oil around Medicine Hat. There was field at Taber and Oyen, farther north but not right around the Hat.

SB: Nothing going on at that time. How did you decide to, you decided to go to university, had that been something that you'd had in your mind for a long time? Did you know that you wanted to go on to university and some other post secondary training?

MP: Of course, I went to university in the 1930's, during the Depression. There wasn't much else to do, there weren't many opportunities. Most of my friends were going to university so it just seemed the thing to do to go to university because, what else were you going to do.

SB: Was it very common for women to go to university at that time?

MP: Oh yes. There were lots of us. These friends of mine, 2 of them went into medicine, doctors, one of them still practising. Oh yes, there were lots of us.

SB: And how did you decided on geology specifically?

MP: It was a cousin of my mother's who was quite an old lady but she was quite a scholar in her own way too. When she knew I was going to university she said, Mary, I wish I could go with you and we'd study geology together. That was the first time I think I'd ever heard of geology probably. Then I guess I just took a general course the first year and there had to be some science in it so I took geology I with Dr. Warren and well, I was hooked I guess or something and just decided to go on with it.

#043 SB: Did he excite you about geology, was he inspirational do you think?

- MP: Well, I liked him very much. I enjoyed my classes and my work with him. I really liked Dr. Warren very much and felt quite comfortable with the idea of going on and working with him. But of course, I took mineralogy from Dr. Rutherford. I don't know if I had anything from Dr. Allen at that time, mostly Dr. Warren and Dr. Rutherford.
- SB: And was it soft rock geology that you were studying then or it was just . . . ?
- MP: Well, general geology pretty well. We learned to make thin sections. Gosh, that's a long time ago.
- SB: Did most people think of going into the oil and gas field if they took geology, was that a natural progression?
- MP: Actually there wasn't too much activity in the oil industry in those days. Just Turner Valley. Leduc hadn't been discovered or any of these other fields. I think most of the fellows figured that they were going into hard rock mining, that sort of thing, that took geology when I was there. We weren't a very big group anyway.
- SB: I was wondering, I have an old list of people who graduated with you, I was wondering if you remembered, there was an A. F. Bucken, was he in the same class? Or he got his Masters that year I guess.
- MP: Bucken? I remember him.
- SB: I guess you mentioned that Charlie Stelck and Bob Follensby you knew quite well.
- MP: They were younger than I am so they came after me but I knew them, we lived in the same part of the city so I knew who they were. I mentioned Hugh Beech to you the other day.
- SB: How about Doug Layer?
- MP: Oh yes, Doug Layer.
- SB: And Nicky Crockford, was he there at the same time?
- MP: I don't know if he was there when I was there but Nicky came to the Conservation Board after me. Some of these names here on this list are not necessarily geologists, they were people who were mixed up in the oil business, like R. A. Brown and Don Herron. He used to phone me and bug me about what was happening when I was at the Board.
- SB: He was with the Herron Brothers down in Turner Valley, was that the same one?
- MP: Not at that time, I think he was with one of the companies, I don't remember which one. And George Jones, we called him Jonesy, I remember him.
- SB: Was he working in the oilfield then?
- MP: Yes. It seemed to me he was going up north. It seemed to me he had been up north although I couldn't be sure. And of course, Carl Nickle, he wrote the, does he still make a paper?
- #086 SB: No, not anymore.
- MP: He wrote the little oil rag.
- SB: The Daily Oil Bulletin.
- MP: Yes. And Jack Webb, I think he worked for Imperial, Don Weir, there's quite a few names in here I remember. Of course, when I was at the Board you got to know quite a few people because they came over there. They wanted samples or they'd look up old logs or something so I got to know quite a few of them.

SB: So when you were studying geology I guess a lot of people thought that there was a chance for adventure in geology as well, you'd be able to work outdoors.

MP: Well, that was what I thought, yes. I thought it would be great to be out climbing mountains and picking up pieces of rock and whatnot. But it didn't work out that way. It wasn't convenient to have a female geologist in the field I guess. So I didn't do much field work.

SB: Did they have field classes at university where they'd take you out?

MP: Yes, but around Edmonton there's not much is there. I can remember Dr. Warren I think it was, taking us out and looking at the river bank. What else is there eh? Right around Edmonton. So we didn't do much along those lines really.

SB: So when you graduated were there many opportunities open to you then?

MP: Not for me. I was a female geologist and we do not employ female geologists, that's what I got told. That's when I decided I had to do something.

SB: You got your BSc in 1936 and then did you go on right away from your Masters degree or did you wait awhile?

MP: I don't know whether I was out for a year then or not. I did, I took a year out, that's right and I decided I better become a little better educated or something. I took a course in psychology and a course in philosophy I think it was and I worked in the lab at the university.

SB: The geology lab?

MP: The geology lab, yes. Just set out samples for the kids when classes were coming in. Yes, I'd forgotten about that year, that's right. I remember when I was writing the final exam, I think it must have been either psychology or philosophy and Dr. Warren was supervising. He was giving out the papers and he came to me and he said, what are you doing here. Then it was after that that I went to Toronto and I was there for 2 years. I worked mostly with Dr. Fritz in the Royal Ontario Museum. I did quite a bit of micro-palaeontology. They had a whole lot of samples from . . . that's what I wrote my thesis on. . ostracods. Ostracods from the oil wells of southwestern Ontario. Gee, I'd forgotten about that. So I spent a lot of time looking through a microscope there in Toronto.

#138 SB: Were there any other students out there that you later encountered in the Alberta industry, do you remember anybody?

MP: Herbie. . . he wasn't in the oil industry, he was the vice-president of the University of Alberta. What was his last name? He was taking post graduate work when I was there. Isn't that terrible I can't think of his last name. And then here he showed up at the University of Alberta. I can remember what he looked like. I went to see him, I was in Edmonton for some reason. Armstrong, Herbie Armstrong. So that's where he went. I don't know what he did as far as geology or palaeontology went because the years went by, I never heard from him then here he was at the University of Alberta.

SB: So when you were out at the University of Toronto, did you do any summer field work or anything like that?

MP: Dr. Coolidge used to take us out on the odd little field trip. We went down the Niagara escarpment one time, but Toronto is like Edmonton, there's not much geology right

around. So there wasn't anything too much there that we did, it was mostly lab work.

SB: Well, I guess at that time most of the emphasis of geology was on studying fossils and looking at the way the earth had been formed or something like that.

MP: Well, there was lots of stratigraphy and . . . I've forgotten even what to call this other stuff, mineralogy and so on. Also when I was in Toronto I really learned to make thin sections, we made lots of thin sections there too. There was a kind of lab down in the basement of the museum and there was an old, well, he seemed old to me anyway, his name was William Stewart, everybody called him William. And down in the basement of the Royal Ontario Museum there were crates and crates of fossils that had been there for years I think, that nobody had gotten around to unpacking them. That's where, I used to go down there with William and we made thin sections, William and I. He was a nice old fellow, William Stewart.

SB: I wonder, did most of the fossils originate through the Geological Survey do you think, through their collection?

MP: No, I think it was people in the museum. They went out and stole our dinosaur bones and took them back there. And of course, like I told you, Dr. Russell, he was in the vertebrae palaeontology. I don't know whether they ever got all those crates unpacked and set up and so on, because there sure was a pile of them down there in those days. Of course, that was a long time ago.

#188 SB: So would that have been around 1938 that you received your Master?

MP: '39, I think it was '39.

SB: And were there many more opportunities, did you look around for jobs in geology then?

MP: Yes, but it wasn't very encouraging really for a female.

SB: Even with the Geological Survey, you were saying that they didn't hire females.

MP: No. So that's when I went back home and decided to take my teachers training, decided I couldn't go on being a student forever. I told you Madeline Fritz wanted me to go on and get my PhD and I didn't want to get a PhD very badly. She was annoyed at me.

SB: I guess you hadn't really been encouraged, there weren't many employment prospects out there.

MP: I suppose maybe you had to have a PhD for a woman to get a job in those days. Maybe if you had a PhD they might look at you and consider it.

SB: So you took up teaching then for a short while?

MP: Yes, I taught for 2 years. Then I always say it was because the war came along and took the fellows away, so they let me work, they let me into the Conservation Board.

SB: How did you find out about the job?

MP: Dr. Allen, they had phoned Dr. Allen and asked him if they knew anybody who could come in. It was in June, just at the end of school year and Dr. Allen got in touch with me up in Banff. So I applied for the job and I got it.

SB: What was the job then?

MP: Just working in the lab, mostly just logging the samples that came in from the well. And as I told you, did I tell you about how we washed the samples. Ian Cook was there and when the bags of samples came in we had all these little enamel saucers and we washed

the sample and then we put the saucers on a hotplate to dry and then we had to put them in bottles and label them. We were slaves. We did that ourselves. Of course, then we had to log the samples, we had to check them with the microscope. We had big long sheets and you wrote a different colour for sandstone, a different colour. . . there was a strip like this where you put different colours for say, the limestone, sandstone, porosity and so on. then you had a little description here with different depths. That was mainly what we did there at the Conservation Board.

SB: So it was more or less continuing what you'd been doing with your graduate work, spending a lot of time examining samples.

MP: Yes, that's what it was. Pretty well. Didn't get to see many fossils either.

SB: Who were the board member then do you remember?

MP: You know I can't remember the name of the Chairman of the Board at that time, he was a lawyer.

SB: It wasn't Connode, he'd already. . . Red Goodall. . .

MP: No, I used to be able to remember. Red Goodall was there of course, he's the only one that I really remember. He was the only one I ever had anything very much to do with I guess.

SB: Were there very many other people working at the Conservation Board?

MP: I don't think so. I can remember what this one fellow looked like but what he did I can't tell you and then there was the Chairman and a couple of stenographers. Louise Charbanau??? was the Chairman's stenographer and our stenographer's name I think was Norma. I can't think of what her last name was but I know that she married a chartered accountant named Glen Tracy and I still here from them at Christmas time. They live in Edmonton somewhere.

#261 SB: Gauvier wouldn't have been there was he?

MP: No. I can't think of the name of that other person. It wasn't a very big staff in those days. We were up in the 2nd floor of the old telephone building. The lab windows looked out like this and we used to have a wide window ledge and we used to put the microscope on there so we had daylight for it, we could get the colours and everything right for it. It was much better if we could examine a sample in daylight than artificial light so we used to stand there and run samples through.

SB: When people from the different companies would phone you up, what would they mainly be concerned with?

MP: They would phone about the wells that were currently drilling, because we had samples coming in from them you see. That's what. . .we had the dope on all the, what formations they were in and so we'd get phone calls. Not a lot but occasionally. Because of course, they all had their own geologists too. But we'd get a phone call, they'd want to know a certain well, what depth it was at and what formation they were in or something like that. Sometimes, of course, some wells we weren't supposed to give out the information.

SB: To the people drilling them or other people?

MP: Well, other companies. So we had to kind of try to stall people off sometimes.

SB: Did you get much experience out in the field when you were at the Board?

MP: No. I didn't. Except for, I told you about Red Goodall, he was horrified when he discovered that I had never been on a derrick floor or I didn't know where these samples came from or how they were made or anything. So he took me on one of his inspection trips out to Turner Valley and got me standing on a derrick floor and I was really fascinated and amazed at the think that they called a kelly and found out what these different parts of the drilling rig were. And another time we went down into southern Alberta, to Oyen around there, and saw some of the wells out on the plain. But apart from that I just had my nose stuck to the microscope.

SB: I guess Turner Valley was still the only major production then?

MP: Yes, it was at that time. And it was just after I left, I think it was about 1946 that the first well was drilled in Leduc. Because after that I remember, I was back in Calgary, I must have stopped at the Board maybe to see who was there and it was Red Goodall or someone said to me, you just left too soon, just before Leduc came in. I just missed all that excitement.

#323 SB: So the main activity of the Board then was to monitor production and to try . . . were they trying to establish conservation guidelines then?

MP: Well, I suppose they were but I didn't have anything to do with that. I think they did set how much oil the wells were supposed to produce or something like that, but I never did have anything to do with that, I was just in the geology lab down below. So I didn't really have anything to do with the production at all.

SB: Was Red Goodall your supervisor?

MP: No, he was just the engineer on the staff.

SB: Did you have any immediate supervisor that you had to report to or were you more or less independent?

MP: No. Well, as I say, Ian was there before I was there and we just worked away at our. . . no one worried about what we were doing very much, that was our job to keep track of what was going on in the wells that were being drilled. As far as the actual drilling goes, that was about it.

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Side 2

MP: We had certain zones you know, that we used to watch for. The oil companies were always interested when we got to that, there was one, it had a green mineral in it, I can't even think of the name of it now but when we got to the green speckled zone. I don't even remember where it was now, in Turner Valley.

SB: Would it be Mississippian lime or something like that?

MP: Yes, that's right. But that's when we got down to the. . . gee, I can't remember the names anymore, of the formations. But once a few wells were drilled then you got to know what to look for and you just watched, to get the depth that it was at. Then from that, that's what we or they, made our subsurface maps from, looking for a hump or a hollow or something where there might be some oil, a dome or some kind of a structure to put the

oil or gas reservoir.

SB: Were you very much involved in other activities in the industry, were there any formal organizations or associations that you remember that the oil companies could belong to?

MP: I think just about around that time there was an organization formed. It seems to me I can recall going to meetings, they'd have a lecture or slides or something like that. We had a dinner meeting occasionally too I think.

SB: Probably the beginning of the Alberta Society of Petroleum Geologists would it be?

MP: Yes, probably. I don't remember exactly what it was called but I remember there was something going on like that.

SB: Were there very many other women employed in the field in a professional capacity at that time, that you ran across?

MP: No, not very many. There were 2 girls, Standard Oil of California brought 2 girls up from the States. They were there for, I couldn't tell you how long but they were there for awhile. One was called Lucille, I don't remember what the other ones name was. One was blonde and the other was dark but I don't remember what their names were.

#044 SB: And were they geologists?

MP: Yes, they were in the geology field. And then Diane Loring, you mentioned her to me, she came along. It she still around. I was going to tell you a story about her but I better not. It's kind of amusing though, I don't think she'd mind. I had been down on a field trip with Norville Nickels down into Montana and as I told you he was a great big tall fellow and he just walked and I just about had to trot to keep up to him. But I didn't find it all that strenuous, the worst thing about that trip was there were rattlesnakes around and thank goodness, he was just as scared of them as I was. He didn't pretend to be any braver than I was where there were snakes concerned. Sometime after that when I was back in Calgary where I met Diane Loring on the street and she'd been out on a field trip with someone, I think it was Imperial she was with wasn't it. I can't remember. Anyway she'd been out on a field trip with some of the fellows and I knew she'd been on this field trip. I said to her, how did you make out, how did you get along. Oh gee, Mary she said, it nearly killed me but you're the only person I'd admit it to.

SB: I guess that was sort of the stigma against bringing women into the field, they were worried that they'd have to provide special comforts for you or something.

MP: When Nick and I were out together we slept in the same tent. I knew his wife and kids, jeepers, we each had our own sleeping bag. I wasn't interested in him anyway. So there was no problem that way. It all depends on the individual I guess. If you're out looking for a man, look out man. But I wasn't. So we had no problem that way at all. We went up to Banff and it seems to me we measured some sections on the limestone beds up there or something, I've forgotten what it was now. And we stayed in a hotel then. But when we were down in Montana. Oh, we stayed at a ranch for awhile too, in Montana but I think we took our meals there but there wasn't room in the house so we just had out tent pitched. It was just an ordinary little tent, nothing fancy and we just had our sleeping bags, no problem at all.

SB: Did they have the beginnings of the Petroleum Club or was that started a little later?

Well, I guess it started officially in '48 or something like that.

MP: No, I don't recall very much along those lines really.

SB: I guess at that time everybody was sort of at the same stage or the same level. It seems like the oil industry hadn't really started booming yet.

MP: No, everybody was still searching. Maybe putting down the odd test hole, very hush, hush. I remember, I think it was when I was out with Red Goodall on one trip, you know, you couldn't even go near the actual drilling site. I remember there was fence or gate or something and we just couldn't go through, we weren't allowed.

SB: Really, even the Conservation Board?

MP: Yes. I suppose it was a form of competition, who was going to find that big pool first.

SB: You mentioned Dave Penner came along and worked with you at the Board. Where had he graduated from do you remember, or how had he got into the Board?

MP: I really couldn't say for sure. I don't think he was an Alberta fellow, I think he might have come from Saskatchewan but I couldn't be sure. I'm quite sure that he wasn't an Alberta graduate. It wasn't too long after he came to the Board that I went to work for Superior, with Art Feldmeyer and Norville Nickels, so I wasn't around with Dave too long. I remember his wife and they had a little son I think, but I don't think we were there together so very long, I don't remember exactly though.

#098 SB: How did you come to be involved with Canadian Superior, how did you get hired by them?

MP: I guess they needed somebody and they felt probably I knew lots about all the wells. They wanted somebody to do what I was doing, to log the samples of the old wells, anything they could get access to. I don't know, I think maybe Art Feldmeyer maybe invited me out to lunch one day and asked if I'd like to go and work for him, it was very simple, nothing very dramatic. Then of course, it was the following winter I guess, that I went down to Ottawa and logged a lot of the real old wells from way back. That's the only place where the samples were. That must have been before there was a petroleum natural gas conservation board here and there wasn't any place in Alberta so all the samples got. . . Perhaps, I don't really know what the story is there, probably the Geological Survey of Canada had somebody out collecting samples at wells, I don't really know but there were lots of samples down there if anybody wants to go down and run through them.

SB: And they were I guess, just getting started in Canada then?

MP: Yes, they were.

SB: It was Rio Bravo?

MP: Yes, they called it the Rio Bravo Oil Company in Calgary.

SB: Were there very many people working for them at that time?

MP: No, there was just the 3 of us and we had a stenographer. That was it.

SB: So they were looking for some fields that there were some traces of oil in or something like that?

MP: They were trying to get some information yes. I think about the time that I left I think they did. . . I don't know whether they ever did very much drilling. It seems to me they did after I. . . I don't know whether they got involved in Leduc or not.

SB: I think they did eventually.

MP: Yes, probably.

SB: Well, probably most of the things that you were looking at would have been around southern Alberta were they, or can you remember the locations of any of the wells?

MP: Not necessarily. Although, there were wells in the foothills, there was quite an interest in those, other than Turner Valley. So we tried to get information on those and whatever there was out on the plains but there weren't too many I don't think.

SB: Was the secretary Shirley Latch, was that her name, do you remember. I have that written down but I don't know whether that would have been her name?

MP: At...?

SB: At Rio Bravo.

MP: It was Shirley.

SB: Yes, so that must have been the right one. So you were their first subsurface geologist I guess, that was your position?

MP: Yes, I suppose. That was my job, yes.

SB: They were doing some field work, mapping the structural belt north from Turner Valley. Do you think that would have been what your samples helped them to do?

MP: Yes, as I say, there were a few holes going down in the foothills away from Turner Valley and of course, everybody was very interested in those. I am trying to remember what I did when I was in Ottawa, what they were interested in there. I don't remember where they were actually.

#148 SB: Do you remember some of the summer students, John Braxendale, did he come around? I guess that might have been a little later too, or John Andrechuk?

MP: No.

SB: Gordon Hargraves?

MP: No, they must have been after my time. Were they at the Board or...?

SB: No, they were with Rio Bravo. But I'm not really sure, I think they were with Nick Nickels maybe, going out in the field with him or something like that. So were you involved very much in the social activities of the oil patch, did they organize...?

MP: Not very much, no. I don't recall that there was too much social activity at that time.

SB: I guess at that time a lot of people would go to bars, say the drilling crews or something like that would probably hang out in bars.

MP: I don't know but I never went to a bar in those days, it wasn't done. Not much anyway. I didn't really make any good friends. I knew all these people but I didn't really make friends with them very much. I was in love with the Alpine Club and I used to go to all their meetings and hikes and I was really very active there. Wanted to climb mountains, that's all I wanted to do. So I didn't really mix around very much with the oil people or what not. I just met them in connection with my work. There were one or two of them. There was a fellow from the States, did he work for Shell, Rex McGhehee???

SB: Oh yes, I've heard his name.

MP: I got to know Rex and his wife quite well, he was a nice fellow. I was at their home different time, she had a little baby or something while they were in Calgary. Another

fellow that worked with Shell, I can't think of his name. But I don't know, I sort of had my own life away from the oil patch. I didn't mix the two very much.

SB: It seems like most of the oil industry people, well, there wasn't a very big group of them at that time so a lot of the things that came later hadn't really started I guess, clubs and associations. Do you remember very much about the feeling, was there much optimism about finding a big pool of oil somewhere, did you ever get that feeling?

MP: Not really, no. everybody was just working at it, hoping I guess, that they'd find something. And then you see, the war came along too. That kind of had an effect, some of the fellows disappeared, they went and joined up. Then another thing that happened at that time, people who had been working overseas, like Nickels, he'd been in New Zealand. And when the war came along they brought those fellows back home. Nick was married to a New Zealand girl, she was about half as tall as he was I think, she was very nice. So that brought in fellows that had sort of wider experience than we locals had had you know. I don't know whether Art Feldmeyer had been overseas or not but I remember that Nickels had been. So it was kind of interesting, these people coming in that had worked abroad.

#212 SB: How about Art Feldmeyer, he was the manager of Rio Bravo at that time?

MP: Yes.

SB: I guess they were trying to expand the company or get a foothold in Canada.

MP: I suppose, I wasn't really involved in that at all. I was just running my samples, making my logs, making my subsurface maps. I wasn't involved in the actual decision about when or where to drill a well or anything like that. I never did have anything to do with that.

SB: So he and Nick Nickels would probably sit down and look at all the information.

MP: Yes.

SB: Did the Kecks ever come to visit?

MP: No, I never met any of the Kecks. They didn't come up while I was around anyway, that I remember. I was trying to remember that name the other day too, Bill Keck, but I never met them.

SB: Bill Keck was the one in charge at that time?

MP: Well, he's the name that I remember. I think they were brothers weren't there, 2 brothers?

SB: Yes.

MP: Yes, that was quite a story about the Kecks in California but I never did meet them.

SB: Then you mentioned that your husband-to-be come back from the war.

MP: Yes, came back. He'd been overseas for 6 years and came down to Calgary to see me. Like I told you, he said, let's get married, go back to Elmworth, live in Elmworth together. So we did. Lived happily ever after, we've got 3 sons and a daughter.

SB: What was the attitude towards women getting married, at that time in the industry, were you allowed to stay on do you know, if you got married?

MP: I don't know, I didn't ever run up against that. None of the other girls that I knew of, like Diane, did she ever get married?

SB: No.

MP: She didn't eh. Well, one of them, Lucille, the blonde girl, I think I told you, I'm pretty sure she married Hugh Beech. Then the other girl, I have an idea her name was Eleanor somebody. She was pretty, they were both pretty. She went back to the States, I don't know what happened to her. I didn't really know any of the others. There were some others that came after my time but I didn't know any of them. I don't think they would have cared if I'd been married and continuing to live in Calgary, I think I would have kept on. I don't think there would have been any problem there. It wasn't one that I had to think about anyway.

SB: Did you feel that there was any kind of stigma against being a woman in the industry at that time?

MP: No. Except for the field work, that angle of it, I never felt any . . . maybe I was too dumb to notice if it was there, I don't know. I grew up with 2 brothers, I don't know if that had anything to do with it, and I always liked men and nothing to do with sex or anything like that, I just liked men. I enjoyed working with them and was quite at ease with them. So I don't think I bothered them any more than they bothered me. I was just one of the guys.

SB: So what was the part of your career that you enjoyed the most do you think, in the industry end of it?

MP: My pay cheque. It was not very big.

#279 SB: Was it a well paying job at that time, to be in the industry, compared to other fields?

MP: Compared to school teaching it was.

SB: Is that right?

MP: Oh yes, I thought I was really rich. Because school teachers didn't get much in the way of pay in those days. So I really thought I was in clover when I got the job at the Conservation Board as far as money went. Well, of course, I taught, my year of teaching in Banff was another one of those things. There used to be a little private school in Banff called the Mountain School, I think that's what it was called, and it was run by an elderly English couple and they were the real old English boarding school products you know. Mr. & Mrs. Greenham, Harry Greenham. I hadn't been well that summer and I wasn't planning to teach, I didn't know what I was going to do. Well, there was something else but we won't mention that. I thought I was going to get married but I changed my mind. So anyway, I saw this job advertised in the paper and I said to my mother, I think that will be just great, I'll be out in Banff for a year in my beloved mountains and it won't be a very strenuous job, I'll get back on my feet again. So I guess I wrote to them and I got the job. It was one of the nicest experiences of my life. They just had 2 little cottages that they had this school in. There couldn't have been more than 20 children in it I don't think, and some of them boarded there. Children came from the coast and there were 2 little English boys, they'd been sent out by their parents, there were afraid of the war. I really enjoyed that year in Banff with the Greenham's, they were just lovely people. He was just a pet. How did I get off on to that, what did you ask me?

SB: What you enjoyed most about your career?

MP: Oh yes. That's where I was then, when Dr. Allen phoned or wrote to me or something, he

told me about the job in Calgary, he figured I could have it if I wanted. But actually, I really enjoyed teaching. I don't know why. But I went back to it afterwards, I don't know if I told you, they were so short of teachers and what not. I don't know whether I enjoyed my work in the Conservation Board or not, it was just a job. You know, when you're not involved in anything, really being involved in making decision, where you're going to drill or what . . .it didn't concern me, I really wasn't interested in that part of it I guess. I was having too much fun outside of it.

SB: Probably when you first got the notice from Dr. Allen, did you have greater expectations of what it would lead to?

MP: No, not really. I was pleased though, to think that I was finally going to get a job when I'd spent a lot of years at university. But I don't remember being particularly excited about it. As I say there were other things that I'd done that I enjoyed more. It was a job and I guess I enjoyed it but it wasn't very exciting really. Because you know, I wasn't really involved you see. Especially at the Board, which is where. . . I never did see a sample of a well that Rio Bravo drilled, so it was always just getting information that's all, it was just building up information. We weren't doing anything, nothing had been done with it up to that point.

SB: Is there anything else you'd like to add about the industry or your. . .