PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Wilf Baillie

INTERVIEWER: David Finch

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Wilf: [in mid-sentence]. . . . Columbia, up the Magdalena River. The nearest town was Baranca Bermega.
David: And you said they just threw you in there.
Wilf: Well, when I got there they gave me. . . first of all they wanted to see if I could survey and things like that so they told me ??? these wells around that they had drilled but they. . . .I'm trying to think of the original finders of this field after the Indians. It was about 1918 when it was discovered and he came up the river with a barge with a rig on it and he wandered up as far as he could up the side creeks with this barge and he off loaded it and drilled a well and it was a discovery well. And then he followed it by another well and strangely enough he hit oil again and when it works out, both of those wells were just one location off being dry holes. Now that's luck.

#017 David: And it was based on what kind of geology, just surface seeps or what?
Wilf: Surface seeps, that's how it was originally drilled yes. There was no geology done at all. He was a driller, that's all. He had done work in Mexico and things like that and he just heard about it.
David: What was his name?
Wilf: I'm trying to think, it was a long time ago.
David: Okay, let me start where I usually start by saying who we are and what we're doing just so that's all on the record and then I'll get you to start with where you were born and things like that.
Wilf: My name is Wilfred Baillie and I was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in 1919, January 10th.
David: And just for the record, today is November 23rd, 1999, and we are with Mr. Baillie at his home at 2401, 2829 Arbutus Road in Victoria and my name is David Finch. Now what were your folks doing in Saskatoon?
Wilf: Well, they had immigrated from England. My father came over in 1911 I think, and he left my mother, they weren't married at that time but they were engaged. And he didn't know, he went back to England in 1915 with the 5th Canadian Battalion and they were married in, he was wounded and he was let out of the service and they were married in 1917 and they came right over to Saskatoon again.

#033 David: And his name?
Wilf: William Frederick Baillie.
David: And your mother's name?

Wilf: Martha Mills.
David: What kind of work did he do in Saskatoon?
Wilf: Well, believe it or not, in England he had apprenticed as a grocer. In those days you had to know everything about meat cutting and everything. But he really didn't like that and he originally came and worked on farms and did all kinds of things just as a young man liked to do. And then when he came back he worked for the City of Saskatoon all his life. Mainly in administration and light and water department.
David: How many brothers and sisters do you have?
Wilf: I have one brother.
David: And his name?
Wilf: Richard Mayne Baillie. One sister Dorothea Hayley, she's the next in line to me and then I have a sister Audrey Lewis and she lives in Comox. My sister lives here in Victoria. Her husband was a professional sailor, Navy man, I mean the first one and the other one Audrey, her husband was an Air Force pilot. And he transferred from New Brunswick out to Comox and thought he was in heaven. He loved the fishing and game hunting up there.

#052 David: So tell me about your education, how did you get interested in the sciences?
Wilf: Well, I wanted to go to university and that was during the Depression time you see. I heard, well, if you studied geology you could probably get a job in a mine mucking. Of course, there was no oil business in Western Canada at all. We studied hard rock geology, mining geology, but geology is geology, it works out to the same damn thing.
David: So you hadn't heard of Turner Valley or anything?
Wilf: Turner Valley, I'm trying to remember when the hell that came in.
David: Well, they had one discovery in '14, another in '24, another in '36.
Wilf: That's right. No I wasn't knowledgeable about that at the time. No one ever thought about oil geology where I was, it was just all strict mining geology. Of course, I worked for the Geological Survey in the summers.
David: What did you do?
Wilf: As a young geologist. In '39 I was up in the Northwest Territories north of Yellowknife, in the Gordon Lake area. It was great country for doing geology because the glaciers had receded and there was all this bare rock. And the muskegs and things in the hollows but there was a lot of Cambrian sediments. But they were so contorted that they were standing up on end, but you wouldn't know which way they were really going and the only you could tell. We used to carry a nail with us and we would scratch each of the layers and you could tell, the coarser sediments were at the bottom of these layers or the finer ones, then you could figure out whether it had been overturned or. . . but it was really good geology to see, beautiful geology.

#073 David: So you're doing surface geology, how did you get around?
Wilf: Canoe. First of all we went by train as far as Waterways and then we took the paddle wheel steamer up to the rapids, just before you get to Fort Smith and then we trekked over to fort Smith and then we flew into Gordon Lake with a canoe tied to each pontoon.
David: What kind of plane?

Wilf: It was a Norseman? Those pilots were really good, they can do anything. But we were so low to try to get off from Fort Smith we used up a tank of gas and we couldn't get the damn plane off so we had to leave one of the guys back there to come up later.
David: So these were survey crews of how many weeks?
Wilf: We were there from May and came back in September.
David: Did you find anything?
Wilf: Of course, this was the Geological Survey of Canada, when you were mapping geology for the good of everyone, as far as mining was concerned, no we didn't find any. . . but we examined a lot of quartz veins and things like that but never saw anything worth while. It was just part of the ongoing program. They're still doing it, still working at it.
David: So you did that all your summers working through university?
Wilf: Yes.

#091 David: So you're still a geologist at this point?
Wilf: I was still a geologist, that's right. And then I went to South America.
David: With who?
Wilf: With Tropical Oil. I graduated in 1940.
David: From what university?
Wilf: The University of Saskatchewan. And I was working with the government again, but this time it was in the southern part of Saskatchewan, almost on the Alberta border. And then I got the call because I had applied for a job in South America because a friend had come back from South America and talked to us about it. He said, you should see if you can get a job. So I put in an application and I got a telegram during the latter part of the summer to offer me a job at $190 a month. And Dr. Furnival, who had been with the Survey for a number of years with a Ph.D. and all that, he said, my god that's a fortune. He was only making, after all those years, $150 a month. And I was getting $190 American at that time.

#106 David: Now Tropical Oil was based where, I've never heard of this.
Wilf: Tropical Oil is a subsidiary of International Petroleum, which is a subsidiary of Standard in New Jersey. The operation at Columbia was Tropical Oil and it was International Petroleum in Ecuador. I spent a field season in Ecuador as well but most of the time in Columbia. But talking about Spanish, I was thrown into it because they said, get a gang of men together now get off. .. . .I'd been there a week, I though, how the hell am I going to get a gang of men together and one of the field guys said, I'll pick up some men for you, I'll start you off, show you some. . . . And that was it. In those days you weren't expected to have any holiday, you worked seven days a week and so long as they didn't hear from you they were happy.
David: So what exactly did you do in Columbia those first. . .?
Wilf: Well, what I had to do was survey, because there were no maps, so I had to survey everything I did, study the surface geology, put in elevations for gravity meter stations and things like that. Most of the time it was a big gang of men. You followed jungle trails you know, but to survey you have to straighten them out so I would have a big gang of

men just chopping with their machetes, just straightening out so I could take a shot. It was slow going and it was kind of a lonely life. I was with the gang of men. . .and none of them could read or write. When newspaper came in, we'd get supplies by running. . . we had mule trains, they'd go back and forth. They'd go get supplies so that we could go on and also they had to bring in the corn for the mules to feed on and we'd get an occasional newspaper and then I'd read it to the fellows and they were quite interested in what was going on.

#132 David: Now you mentioned gravity meters, so by this point you're doing some geophysical work as well.

Wilf: Yes but I wasn't doing that at that time.

David: Can you explain to us how a gravity meter works?

Wilf: Well, first of all you have to have precise elevation. And it's just a question of a spring balance and it gives you these readings, and it's just a simple thing, well I guess they could be all shapes but it's mainly like a drum or some darn thing and you sit down and you look through it and it's automatic. It just takes a reading, you just have to have the elevation and then all this information is plotted up and mapped.

David: And it's reacting to what in the earth.

Wilf: The pull of gravity.

David: And then you can map an area based on that?

Wilf: You can do that, yes.

David: And that's what you were doing?

Wilf: That's one of the things I was doing. I had to put metal plates at stations at certain intervals all the way along and then later the gravity crew would come along and set up at these station. Sometimes it would be months after I'd finished an area. But once in a while we'd get together, the Party Chief's of various crews and say let's go up to Bogota and have a little bit of fun for 2 or 3 days. That was about the only breaks we got. The company didn't tell us we couldn't or anything like that but they weren't for it. But we had to do some damn thing, it would get pretty lonely out there by yourself all the time. And as you can understand, I learned to speak a bastard type of Spanish to begin with and then one time, I had a nice job to do and the company was in a hurry to get some work down to this area because they were looking for some leases on it. So there happened to be 3 parties, we all had our own cooks and things and we rented a place in the city of Giradot, it was a nice city on the upper Magdalena River, a little city. There was a swimming club just across from our house so we all joined the swimming club for awhile. Then we met some girls. The girls, of course, first of all, they had to have their mothers with them. In those days a single girl never got out. . . you probably know from living in. . . .they had to have . . . . So we would have a party, all the mothers would come. So I would talking to this one lady and she said, I spoke well or something and then I said one word and I think her hair stood on end. She said, "No habla esta palabra." and I didn't know what the heck it meant, it was the word for scabbard but in certain areas it was . . . ."vaina" it was just a popular expression, what a bother or something like that, but there apparently it had something to do with the sexual organ of the female, you

know what I mean. So then I decided by god, I am going to study Spanish. I want to learn the Spanish. So I never took any more reading material in English with me, it was all Spanish books. I even read that famous book by Cervantes, Don Quixote. And then after doing that for awhile, I'd get to people in Bogota and they'd say, where did you learn that antique Spanish. I had expression that. . . .

#183 David: Because you'd been reading Cervantes. That's great. So you were in your twenties when you were doing this right. That must have been a different world for you, from Saskatoon to the jungle. So you're still doing primarily surface geology. . ?

Wilf: Then the first seismograph crew came in and I was to work along with this seismograph crew and I would log all the drilling shotholes and things like that. And I thought my god, that's very interesting looking at this stuff. Every geologist should know something about it. Anyway I came back in 1943 and I was supposed to go back but I thought oh, hell, I better get into the Armed Services, which was a big mistake but. . . . .

David: Why's that?

Wilf: Well, I wasted a lot of time.

David: How long were you in the army?

Wilf: Well, I got so fed up waiting to get through officer's school, although I was being paid as an officer's cadet at $3 a day whereas everyone else was getting $1.20, I said to hell with it, I'm just going to see if I can get into the Air Force. So then I had to go back to Acey Deucey which was a buck private in the Air Force. And by the time I got through training the war was practically over. To tell the truth I was finally stationed on an operational station here at Pat Bay. And at that time I said, by god, some day I'm going to come back here and live here, this is wonderful.

#205 David: So that was from '43-'45?

Wilf: '43-'45. And I got out and I had often, when I was working for Tropical Oil, often I'd come across a Shell Oil camp in Columbia and boy, they really lived it up. I thought I wouldn't mind working for Shell. So I had a telegram saying that I was going to be discharged from the service because I was no longer needed. And I got a job offer through Shell as a geologist and then I was told to proceed to a certain station to get out of there and then I got another telegram, cancel orders, you're going out to Pat Bay for operational training for the Pacific war. Anyway I got married in 1944 and we lived in the little town of Sidney and in July I was finished with the Air Force and at that time, Shell Oil didn't have room for a geologist and said, how would you like to go into geophysics. I said, I haven't the slightest idea, I don't know anything about it. So this was 1945, and one of the jobs I was given, after starting with seismic work, they gave me a job to interpret the gravity. I didn't have the slightest idea of how to interpret gravity. However I got a book on it, I'm trying to think of the author of that book, but anyway at the time, he was the great authority. So I burned the midnight oil studying this darned thing and people came up from Houston and they were impressed with what I had done for them and for some reason or other, I guess I was sort of favoured by the brass in Houston. So then. . .

#236 David: Where were you working?
Wilf: I was in Calgary.
David: You were in Calgary. And how successful was this gravity work?
Wilf: It wasn't successful at all.
David: You could map things and show that . . . . .
Wilf: You could show thing but as far delineating fields and things like that, we couldn't do it at that time anyway. I wouldn't say that it can't be done now. But it gives you a general idea of things.
David: Who were you working for in Calgary?
Wilf: Shell Oil Company.
David: And who was your boss?
Wilf: Clark, Les Clark.
David: Is this about the time period you got to know Ted Rozsa or was that later?
Wilf: That's later now.

#245 David: Okay, we won't jump ahead to that. So you're doing gravity work and then what?
Wilf: Being a geologist they gave me all the work on. . . . .well most of our work was in the foothills. Now we're talking about the mountain faulting and thrust faults and this type of thing and I really got my teeth into that and an old time geophysicist was sent up to take over because the fellow in charge really didn't stay more than a month by the time I started and he wanted to start his own company. So he'd left Shell, so there was only Gordie Hess, have you heard of Gordie Hess, I think he's dead now. He had taught me some of the fundamentals of it and again, Shell Oil Company had a bible of all the mathematics of it, everything like that, which I studied religiously, to try and figure things out. And we just mainly concentrated on foothills.
David: What field, Jumping Pound?
Wilf: Well, Jumping Pound was the first one and I did a lot of work there. When I say go north, I was talking about going as far as Didsbury and then back into . . . . Imperial Oil were about to pull out when they hit at Leduc. Now this is early 1947 and Shell Oil had decided that they were wasting their time on the plains of Alberta. Of course, one of the great geologists from the Royal Dutch Shell came over and they decided. . . and they made a smart decision because even if they made some finds, it's land locked. They thought things should be at sea level where you could move it. And so they closed down their operation in Western Canada and I was sent down to Mississippi as a geophysicist by this time. And given a party to run. And that's when I met Ted Rozsa, he was there in Jackson and he was the first one I met in Jackson, Mississippi and this was in March 1947.

#284 David: So the discovery at Leduc didn't send you back there?
Wilf: No because the Shell operation, they spent a hell of a lot of money in Venezuela and they made money, they found it very rich. And some of the fellows were sent down to Eastern Canada because there had been oil wells drilled back in the 1800's in New Brunswick. They had one gas field that supplied part of Moncton, New Brunswick but I think it made

about one barrel a month of oil. It was just a small field. And Dr. Gussow was the man in charge, have you ever heard of him? He was in charge of the operation for Shell Oil of Canada. Now I was with Shell Oil at that time and then I was in Mississippi for just two years and that's when they decided, we're going to go back into Canada. And I knew there was something up and the next thing I know I was told I was going to New Brunswick to put all the geology and geophysics together. I'd been working on a project, the Jackson Uplift, there was a lot of geology to straighten out on it. So I was sent up to New Brunswick to coordinate the geophysics, the geology and the seismology and the gravity and things like that. We had a great time because the Director of Exploration said, well you're going to Oklahoma City for another job after you finish up there but Shell Oil of Canada wants you to come up. I told them, you'll have to put him on full expenses and a living allowance and he told me to put my furniture in storage. So I had a great time, it ended up I was a whole year on full expenses.

#317 David: Where did you stay?

Wilf: Well, we had a cottage on the shore in Shediac. It didn't have a shower or anything like that but it did have an inside toilet. You had a washtub we put in front of the stove to have a bath. And then there was a yacht club, they called it a yacht club but they did have a shower there and for $1 a month we could go down to the yacht club and have a shower. But that was very exciting geology. I really enjoyed doing that geology. I ended up by the time I finished I was there just over a year.

David: What was so exciting about it?

Wilf: Well, it's the structures and things that you found. And the mixture with salt, salt floes in it and salt domes. In fact, we drilled a well in New Brunswick all the way down through a core of salt. Now we didn't know, it was one of these things, doing the seismic, this was on the flats in this river, Petikodiak River and we couldn't get our equipment right close to it. It was blanking out all the time and we thought it was just because of the soft conditions and the muck you weren't getting the right kind of recordings. So anyway, from working on all angles I figured out where exactly the crest of the structure at depth was because it was below the salt.

#348 David: Were you doing seismic here?

Wilf: Yes, we're doing seismic.

David: You're not doing gravity?

Wilf: No, we did some gravity after that. That came after. And as soon as I saw the gravity I said, holy, yes, we're right on a salt bowl. And so although they decided they were going to drill ahead anyway and we went through the salt and hit the objectives where they were supposed to be. But the problem there, there's no porosity and permeability. They had the indications of oil. I read a report by a consulting geologist from Boston and this was in the 1880's and he wrote this report about the oil there saying, it was so sweet, beautiful oil, no sulphur in it and it burned so beautifully in the lamps. And actually, they had drilled there before the Drake Well discovery in the States. And some of these wells had oak casing, you know, they drilled with a cable tool and they had octagonal oak casing in

the wells that had been drilled.

#369 David: Really old wells then.

Wilf: They were in the 1800's.

David: And they were just going for lamp oil?

Wilf: Not really, they were looking for oil too but you couldn't squeeze out more than a barrel a month or something like that. But it was very interesting, I enjoyed that job. But then, I thought I was going back to Oklahoma City but they twisted things around. In the meantime Ted Rozsa had been sent up to Alberta. I know it was the 1st of April, 1950 when we arrived and Lola Rozsa met us at the airport. Of course, we had been friends down there.

David: So what was your new job?

Wilf: As a District Geophysicist with Shell. Ted was the top man there then. So I looked after all the northern districts for Shell.

#387 David: And northern meant what, how far north?

Wilf: We went of course, all through the reef trends, doing work as far up as Wabasca Lake, way up there. An interesting thing that I should have told you. You know, Redwater. . . we had done seismic work starting around well west of Edmonton, on the highway and it wasn't a continuous profile, it was a semi-continuous profiling and then it turned north and up the road all the way up to Athabasca and went right over this field. And everything was plotted in those days. . this was before you had the automatic stuff, we had plotted all this stuff on rolls and rolls of paper. Later looking at it, we found this thing, it came up like that, like a structure and it went straight along through the longest part of it and 20 or 30 miles it dropped down the other side. And that was the Redwater thing. And no one could understand what such an anomaly that long and just dropped off of both sides.

David: So you did that geophysical work before the discovery at Redwater?

Wilf: Yes, that was done around '45. That work had been done around '45.

#418 David: Describe what a field crew did in those days, you were using dynamite, what kind of recording equipment, just review that for us.

Wilf: Well, you used 24 traces of seismic equipment but basically just shooting continuous profiling.

David: And you're doing the ditches here just because it's easy? You said you were shooting along the ditches alongside the road, is that true?

Wilf: Well most of the shotholes would be following a road, they would be in the ditches yes.

David: But you're not going cross country?

Wilf: Of course in the foothills it was all bulldozed trails. But that was just a reconnaissance survey, that one survey was done. Practically everything was flat and then you see sort of a step up and you're not sure but that's flat, flat, flat for so long and then it drops off. But looking back at it. . . now Shell did have a good bunch of acreage all over that and they let it go when they pulled out of Western Canada.

David: Did you manage to get some land in there later?

Wilf: I don't think they had anything right in the field there no. Shell did quite well but of

course, they were still developing Jumping Pound. They found a few things. I only stayed with them. . . well, Ted left almost right away. And I was supposed to go with him but then Shell. . . .there wouldn't be anyone to look after the thing. So I stayed there and then I joined him in the end of '51. And we were partners until 1960. And for personal reasons I wanted to get back to something more. . . I loved the technical stuff and I was so damn interested in operations

#462 David: So just explain to me, when you were partners with Ted, you were running a company.

Wilf: Yes, we had a geophysical company.

David: But what you're saying is you weren't doing straight geophysical work anymore, you were busy managing a company?

Wilf: Yes there was that. We pioneered a lot of things there. We were the first ones to bring in a machine that would make the cross sections. And this was a machine on a metal lathe but rather than electronic, it was mechanical. We could put in all kinds of things in there. We had to change the photographing of the records in the field. Everything then was not on tape, it was just on paper. And so you had to set up your camera so that you could take every other trace because it had to be separated so you could move these individual lines for surface corrections and things like that. And it worked very well.

#490 David: What was the name of this machine?

Wilf: It's the name of a guy down there in Houston.

David: Oh it might come to you in a minute.

Wilf: I can see him but I can't think of his name. Anyway we brought this in and the other oil companies were very interested. Then . . . .

David: Well you were a consulting company right?

Wilf: No, we were a contracting company. We were contractors to oil companies. And we did all the interpretation for them as well. In those days, each party had 3 university graduates there working in the field, working out the data. And then Ted and I reviewed everything and corrected their reports and that type of thing and supervised the operations. But as I say we brought in that first Reynolds machine and then Southwestern Industrial Electronics, SIE, they came up with the first magnetic machine or electronic machine for making cross sections.

#521 David: So this is using tape then?

Wilf: Now they're using tape, we started using tape.

David: What year is this?

Wilf: We started using tape in the late 50's. GSI brought in the first computer in Calgary and that computer . . .first of all they had to have a very stable foundation.

David: GSI, what is that?

Wilf: Geophysical Services Incorporated, from Houston. And that computer had several thousand vacuum tubes in it and probably couldn't do more than a little hand held computer today. And it had to be in an air-conditioned room because of all the heat

generated. You get several thousand vacuum tubes going. . . . so it's amazing the progress that's been made. Absolutely amazing. Anyway I wanted time off. . . .and this is kind of crazy, I wanted to study music. You don't have to put that down.

End of tape.

Side 2

Wilf: So I basically started a consulting practice doing interpretation for the oil companies. At the same time I had lots of time to study music.

David: So what kind of music were you studying?

Wilf: The organ. And then with my consulting I started back doing work all over the world. I'd do work interpreting their seismic for them and the geology. I did a lot of work for Tenneco, back in Columbia again. I went back there in '63, exactly 20 years after I had left and it almost seemed I'd been away for the weekend, nothing had really changed. It was very interesting. But I did work for them in Nigeria and Turkey and all kinds of work in Canada, some in the United States. And that's the way I spent my time mostly.

David: So you're consulting at this point, just yourself?

Wilf: On my own yes. Ted had bought me out and he continued and he sold the company to my brother, Dick Baillie and to the other Party Chief's we had. Finally it was taken over by a geophysical company from Houston bought them out. Then my brother started a company which was very successful, he had Norcana and he did . . . .well, I don't know, he made a lot of money I know that. He was smarter than I. I was more interested in doing the technical work. Anyway we're great friends.

#024 David: I'm going to interview him too back in Calgary. I'm really looking forward to it. So you really were intrigued with the technical end eh. Now when you first got started you were saying things like the gravity work was pretty unreliable. When did the technology get tot he place where you were actually finding oil instead of just mapping things? What would be the first field you were involved in finding, tell me about that process?

Wilf: I can't honestly say that I individually found a field.

David: No, but I mean in the early days, geologists didn't think very much of the geophysics but by the late 50's. . . .

Wilf: Oh it was all geophysics then. You couldn't get along without it. We mapped so many things that were excellent but it was a question of getting the land on them. I can't honestly say. . . oh, I found fields in South America. Some had been discovered at different levels but by interpreting the seismic you could see a depth, another place all together.

David: Well, how about Waterton, that's a Shell field isn't it?

Wilf: That's a big gas field. That was after my time. You've got to remember I left Shell in

1960.

#040 David: That's right. Waterton was after that. Okay, so you were consulting, how did the music business go?

Wilf: Well, I enjoyed it. Now I have so much trouble, I can't even stretch my hands an octave.

David: Is it arthritis.

Wilf: Yes arthritis.

David: Did you have a pipe organ of your own or something.

Wilf: No. Just a nice organ.

David: A friend of mine has a small pipe organ so I though maybe you'd gone whole hog.

Wilf: No I didn't have a pipe organ, it's an electronic organ.

David: So then what did you do next?

Wilf: I was contacted by Tom Brooks, he had Asamera Oil. He was President of the Stampeders Football Team at one time. But he was a promoter and he had started a company called Asamera and they had . . . .this would be back in the 60's sometime, I haven't got the right date but anyway, they wanted me to do a consulting job for them. And I said, sure I'd be happy to look at this stuff. So I worked it up. He had partners with other small companies in the States but he didn't have any technical staff up in Canada. I guess the only technical man if you want to call him that, he's more of an operational engineer was Stu King. Anyway Stu King had been with Tenneco way down there in the southern tip of South America in Argentina, Tierra del Fuego. And they had a field down there. But when Stu came back he worked with various things and he was more of a drilling man and production man and he offered to do some work and look at some things for Tom Brooks and then the next thing, he went to work full time with Tom. I guess Stu King called me one day and said, how would you like to look at some work for us. This is how I got started with Indonesia.

#071 David: But this is still in Canada?

Wilf: I'm still in Canada yes, out of Calgary. So at the partners meeting. . .they said, well you come down and run the partners meeting for us because we don't have any technical people. So I went down there and after the meeting and things like that, he said, well are you going to be part of this or not. I said, what are you talking about Tom, I've been working on my own for so long. He said, I want you to take over all exploration for us. I thought about it and I said, god I don't know whether I want to work for anyone anymore. And my wife said, well, you know, at one time you were the golden haired boy of the Shell Oil Company and they begged you not to leave and you could have gone places. So I said, well, I'll give it a try, see what it's like. Anyway, we got going and we're doing seismic work. We started seismic work then and we had several Australian geologists working for us. So I was in charge of all exploration.

#084 David: This is all in Indonesia?

Wilf: This is all in Indonesia. And we found oil. We finally got our production started up and someone really had to get down there so they made me President of Asamera Indonesia Ltd. and I moved down to Singapore so I could be on hand there. And I spent five years

down there in Singapore. It's a lovely place to live. I didn't want to live over there in Indonesia. I wasn't too keen on the Indonesians personally but that's beside the point. We had our production up about 24,000 barrels a day, which wasn't bad. And we had lots of things going, it looked like it was a winner. But I'd had enough, once things got going like that I was ready to come back and take it easy.

David: What year did you come back to Canada?

Wilf: 1978.

David: And after that.

Wilf: I didn't do a hell of a lot. I was on the retainer for Asamera for several years and did a lot of . . .not too much technical work, the Japanese and various things like that, I'd go over and talk to them. And then I just decided I was going to retire. I was talked into running a small resource company in Vancouver but I found that it was all promotion for the most part. They wanted me to tell them all kinds of stories about what we had and all we had was a bunch of junk, really, most of it, for the most part was junk. Although one deal that they'd gotten into, it was in Texas. They found oil but it was one of these things, it depletes in a hurry. Fortunately another company wanted a big chunk of it and paid big money for it. And actually we had about $3 million in the bank and about $1 million coming in annually. I shouldn't be saying these things on tape. The promoters. . . when I say it was a promotion . . .but the stockbrokers, I would say they were being a little less than being true stockbrokers. They wanted real promotion all the damn time and you just couldn't give it to them. Anyway they managed to get rid of me and I was happy to go. I only worked over there 3 days a week and lived over here. I better not mention any names. Boy I never want to get caught with people like that again.

#132 David: What did you enjoy most about your career, what excited you the most?

Wilf: Hell, I couldn't wait to get to work in the morning, I loved every minute of it, I really did.

David: Well, it certainly wasn't the paper pushing, what was the. . . .

Wilf: Oh there was always the excitement of doing something. No the paper pushing was boring you have to do that. I just enjoyed. I guess it's exploration that's all, you're doing something.

David: Anything else you'd like to tell us about your career.

Wilf: I don't have anything else to tell you. I had a nice boat I brought back from Singapore with me.

David: A sail boat.

Wilf: No. It's a Grand Banks trawler design type of boat. So I enjoy that and I enjoy fishing.

David: Do you still have the boat?

Wilf: No I sold it. I'm not capable of getting around those engines and getting in behind them now. I get down on my knees it hurts.

#146 David: Did you do anything else with your music over the years?

Wilf: No I just wanted it for myself. I thought once I'd be good enough to pay professionally but I really didn't do that. It was really just enjoyment like other things I do.

David: And you say you still play a game of golf once in awhile?

Wilf: Yes, usually 3 times a week. We play at 7:00 a.m.
David: Where do you play?
Wilf: Uplands Golf Course. I used to play more than that but now I find that. . . . The group I'm with, we're either off first or second. Although they say, how come you always get that draw. I say, you just have to know these boys, they automatically give you the time. But in the summertime it's great. Well right now we're not at 7:00 because 7:25 is the first teeing time and then it's pretty dark still.
David: One thing we didn't get was your wife's name?
Wilf: Geraldine. Gerry.

#161 David: Well Mr. Baillie on behalf of the Petroleum Industry Oral History Project I would like to thank you so much for taking the time to tell us these stories.
Wilf: I don't think I really have much to say. I do remember though. You know, the oil community was a small community and when Leduc came in they just couldn't wait. We were all invited. We rushed over to Imperial's office and Ted Link was the man there at the time and we all had to have a look at this core and stuff. It was just like a family gathering, it was a small group in those days.
David: Do you have any stories to tell about Ted, did you ever work with him?
Wilf: Well, his brother was the head of International Petroleum. I worked under him and I knew Ted quite well. He was a very interesting person, funny.
David: How so?
Wilf: Everything was a joke. The oil man's tournament, things like that, golf tournaments, he'd be the guy that would . . . you'd want to watch him at the first tee, he'd put one of the old cap guns, he'd put one of those things on his thing and drive and go BANG! He had jokes for everything. And he had a beautiful place out here. He lived here for years before he died.

#178 David: And his brother, what was his name?
Wilf: Walter Link. Walter Link, I think he was the head of New Jersey too finally, in exploration anyway.
David: Wasn't Walter also a great hiker and loved the mountains?
Wilf: Oh yes. And I think there was another brother that was a priest. They used to come up to, oh what's the name of that lodge. . . every year. It belonged to. . . .it's in the mountains, people used to come up and spend. . .his brother would come up and spend months. Ted Link you know, he was up there in the Great Slave Lake in 1922 I think. Phyllis Ford, O'Hara Lodge, that's where his brother used to come up for about a month at least. She has just had her 90th birthday and has moved into a retirement home.
David: And so who is she?
Wilf: Well her husband and she bought that lodge and they ran it for years. I don't know who has it now.
David: And where does she live now?
Wilf: She lives in Calgary, she could tell you a lot about that.
David: Did you do things in the mountains too, hiking and so on?

Wilf: I did a lot of skiing.
David: Where?
Wilf: I skied every place I could think of.

#210 David: Back in the days when you had to climb up?
Wilf: Yes. When I first took the kids up to Sunshine it was just the one log cabin lodge there. We would go up on a Friday night and spend Saturday and Sunday. We had 3 meals on Saturday and 2 meals on Sunday and all your skiing and with my wife and I would get one of the rooms that had a shower in it and the kids, they had sort of an annex for the young kids, but with all those meals and the skiing and ski lessons and things like that, I'd say gosh there goes another hundred bucks. For a weekend. It's different now.
David: I don't think you could do it for $1,000 now.
Wilf: No I couldn't afford those things now. But that was a great place for kids skiing. I liked Norquay though. And then when they came out with Lake Louise, it got better and better. Todd Mountain in B.C. was a great place to ski, have you ever been out there? There are a lot of good skiing places. We skied west of Denver. But not much skiing in Singapore.
David: Or on Vancouver Island either eh?
Wilf: Yes there is.
David: Some up island.
Wilf: Up island yes, there's good skiing up there. Lots of snow.
David: But you don't do that much anymore.
Wilf: I don't ski anymore. Getting around the golf course is enough for me these days. My wife walks an awful lot but unfortunately she had a stroke a year ago and she's forgotten practically everything. Bad stroke. Although she can still walk. But here memory loss. She doesn't know how to cook anymore, she can't remember a thing, she can't read the recipes. She lost the right hemisphere of each eye and that makes it difficult. When she tries to read the letter keep flipping around as if she was dyslexic. But she's healthy and fine so I do the cooking now and the shopping and look after her so it's fine.
David: Well, thank you so much for letting us come and talk to you and we'll end the interview at this time. Thanks a lot.