

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Ken Morrison

INTERVIEWER: David Finch

DATE: September 2000

DF: Today is the 12th day of September in the year 2000 and we are with Mr. Ken Morrison at his home in Naramata in the British Columbia interior. My name is David Finch. Could you start Mr. Morrison by telling us where you were born?

KM: I was born in Brandon, Manitoba in 1930, the start of the Depression actually. My dad was a. . . .

DF: You started the Depression.

KM: No, but I was born at the start of it. My dad was an out of work accountant, actually he was a bill collector during the Depression. So we had a pretty rough go of it according to my mother, but everybody seemed to be poor so it didn't really matter that much. I lived in Brandon until. . . I went as far as grade five in Brandon, which makes you about 10 or 11 years old I think. And my dad joined up again in 1939, he was 42 years old but he wanted to get back in the service. He had been in during the First World War, never got overseas, felt really badly about that. So he joined back up again in '42 and he was in until '46, the year after the war. I say he joined. . . I'm mixed up, he joined in '39 because he was in for quite awhile. And we started following him around a bit, my mother and my sister and I. We went to Winnipeg and lived for a year, where I was in grade 6, we went to Regina for a year where I was in grade 7 and then she finally got fed up with him being transferred here and there and we moved back into Brandon. So I finished up

in Brandon, went to high school there, which was called Brandon Collegiate and mostly for monetary reasons I went right through grade 12. In those days in Manitoba, you could quit in grade 11 and go to university but I went to grade 12 and then I went right into second year university. You took what we called a three year course in Brandon at least in those days. So then I went right to college after high school. You had your choice of an arts course or a science course and I took science, mainly I was most interested in that. There were no specialties, you took maths, physics, chemistry and geology or botany if you wanted. I was very interested in the geology course, we had two excellent professors, Dr. Evans who was the President of the college and Dr. Purdue who was the Dean. The two senior men were both geology people and I enjoyed their courses very much. Dr. Stuart Purdue, a good friend of my dad's, Dr. Evans was also a friend of the family. Brandon was small, I think there were 200 students in those days and the graduating class, there were about 30 of us, 35. Surprisingly a lot of us, if you think of it now, I graduated in '51 and all through '49 and '50, we didn't know what we were going to do when we got out. If you took a science course and particularly geology, your choices were either coming west to work in the oil business, which was just starting, because Leduc had happened in '47 and '48 or went down east and worked in mining. So four of us from that class came out west to work in the geophysical part of the oil business, Ernie Shaw, Jack Muir, Martin Bruce and I. Jim Kidder, who you'll run into later because Jim was the President of. . . they called him Harold Kidder in some of the correspondence but he was Jim Kidder, he was with Mobil, he was their Chief Geophysicist. He was interviewing at Brandon in the spring of '51 looking for two people and I went to the interviews and so did Jack Muir and Martin Bruce. I did miserably, I was really . . . a few years later I took a Dale Carnegie course and got into public speaking and became fairly good at it. But in those days I was a bumbling idiot when it came to presenting myself. So Muir and Bruce got these two jobs with Mobil, it might have even been Socony Vacuum in those days but it became Mobil Oil and I didn't. George Longphee

happened along a few weeks later looking for people. He'd started up a new geophysical company in Alberta called Sub-Surface Exploration and I knew George casually. I knew his wife, through the family I knew him because he was from west of Brandon. So George hired me to come out west and work in the seismic business. I got on a train and went to Indian Head in Saskatchewan and a couple of guys on the crew met me there. I overnighted in Indian Head but then we went on up to Ituna, Saskatchewan the next day, it's a Ukranian town, heavily Ukranian, right up near Yorkton and Melfort on the eastern side of Saskatchewan. This is where there first job was, they were working for Tidewater. Longphee was the Party Chief, strongest crew I've ever been on. Everybody always says you like your first crew the best but we had Roy McKenzie, Jack Anderson. . .Longphee, Anderson, McKenzie owned the company. Dale Carey who was a rodman at the time, became quite strong in the geophysical business, Ken Carey, Dale's brother Harold Minton, Charlie Dallas who became one of the best Party Managers in the business, a very good strong crew. And we were there for seven months, which was unusual because later you were lucky if you stayed in a town for more than a month I think, and we were there right til fall. George was a good amateur baseball player. We used to say, you didn't have to play ball to work for George but it helped. So I was a fair ball player and seven of us ended up being on the town ball team. And we had a good summer there, we worked and played ball. We were right on the time line, I remember between mountain time and eastern time I guess it was. One of the local guys was like a team secretary and I remember, when we played tournaments that fall, we would forever get to the thing either an hour early or an hour late because he had misjudged the time zone. We worked for Tidewater like I said. We were shooting really basic geophysics in there because this was the technique they had been using in Alberta.

#085 DF: What year was this?

KM: This was in '51. It was quarter mile spreads and twenty holes a day sort of thing.

But it was continuous coverage. We weren't doing correlation work, which we did. . . I've done that later. . .the next year. That fall we left Saskatchewan, drove back to Alberta, this was in probably October. I'll never forget, as we. . . I was riding with Hal Minton, who was the observer. As we got past maple Creek and headed towards Alberta coming back west, and there were four or five trucks in a row, because you traveled in convoys, and we got to the Alberta border, 2 or 3 of these guys stopped and got out and kissed the ground in Alberta and made quite a production out of the fact that they were now home. That winter, the crew went to . . . I can't remember where the crew went. . . up into the Peace River country somewhere. Anyway I spent the winter in Calgary, working in the office. And so did Roy MacKenzie, Roy had been the Party Chief by then. Longphee had left earlier in the year to start up a second crew but that winter in the office in Calgary, there was Longphee and McKenzie and I and not much else. We were doing the interpretation, we had an office over in south Calgary, on 14th Street, in a house and we did the interpretation there and had lunch downtown every day at the Club Cafe, had our own table there. But through George and Roy I met all the people that were sort of running things in the seismic business in Calgary then. He was a great friend of Emmett House who was the Manager of SIE, the instrument company. We knew all the bit people because we were heavy into that. Les Libin???, who was Exploration Data Bits or something like that. I met an awful lot of people through them, George seemed to know everybody. George had come from Imperial but he was a very personable guy and he just introduced me to all these people. So I enjoyed that winter, although I would have liked to have been on the crew with the guys. McKenzie and I lived together in a house and there was . . . by then there was a guy off the second crew, Al Knight. Al was also from Brandon and Al lived with us. The three of us roomed in this house, Al got married to a girl from Drumheller and he made some deal with the landlady that she would move out and Al took over the top part of the house and Roy and I stayed down in the basement I guess. So Al became our landlord and the first thing he did was up

our rent, I remember that, the bugger. But another guy from Brandon got involved. . . . by then Longphee, I think this is right, he had started up his third crew that winter, we had four by the next year anyway. He was looking for people and he had got heavily into this Brandon thing and he hired another 8 graduates from Brandon that year. I can't think of all their names, but the ones that stayed in the business were Murray Macdonald and Bruce Watson, Mac Andrews and there was a McKeller and McRae and Muirhead and Harold Moffat, who was around a long time. Harold became my best man. And Joe Garnett, I don't know if we've got 8 but that's most of them. And then Lorne Cook and Al Knight were two other senior computers. In the office in town by then, Roy McKenzie's brother, Rod had joined us as sort of an assistant to Longphee. And Roy's sister, Wilma was the Office Manager, so if you add it all up there were about 15 of us from Brandon working on that Sub-Surface crew in those days.

#137 DF: So why so many people from Brandon?

KM: I'd like to think they 8 he hired were because I had done well enough that he had gone back to get some more. Those 8 would likely tell you that he kept trying until he got a good one. So I don't know. It fell into that, I think we were cheaper too. I started working for George at \$225 a month and I stayed there for that first year. When these new guys came out at about, probably \$275, I immediately got a boost to \$300 or \$325, I got a 505 boost in the first year. But I don't know, I think it was kind of an untapped source. Other than Kidder having gone down and got these first, Bruce and Muir that I mentioned, most recruiters didn't go near Brandon. We were small, we were a three year course. It was the kind that I don't think they . they kind of ignored us. But by then we had the four crews, Ernie Pallister was a partner with Longphee by then and he had one crew, Jimmy Rae had the other, he and George had worked together at Imperial. Roy McKenzie had one crew and I guess Longphee was running one himself, I can't recall right now. Anyway, our crew, party one, got together again, these guys came back from where they'd been

in the winter and we moved into the Swift Current area. We stayed around Swift Current that year, working for Tidewater. It was kind of a system in those days, you worked in Saskatchewan in the summer, and we had a Tidewater contract and then you worked in the winter and we primarily worked for Pacific Petroleum in the winter, for a guy called Les Clark, who was the Exploration Manager of Pacific. The guys that had left Imperial to start up their own companies, like Longphee and Rabey, oh gosh I could go on and on, but nearly all these geophysical companies were ex-Imperial employees. And Imperial wouldn't hire these guys back to work for them as contractors for years. I think Wes was the first guy to get . . . [phone]

DF: So you were talking about Imperial wouldn't hire back crews.

KM: They wouldn't hire crews that had been started by . . . and I was trying to think of some more people that had started these companies from Imperial because there was Longphee's old company was Beaver Geophysical, which he had started with Greg Haynes and Stan Morrison and they were in the same boat, they couldn't get Imperial contracts. I think Rabey was the first guy to get . . . he was Accurate Geophysical, but he was the first guy to get an Imperial contract back a few years later. So the trend was you worked for someone in Saskatchewan in the summer and someone in Alberta in the winter but you didn't work for Imperial and Imperial were the biggest contractor. They had probably a dozen or more crews out each year in those days. But anyway we were back in the Swift Current area. We worked in towns called Herbert, Cabri, where Longphee's bunch had worked a couple of years before with Beaver Geophysical and then Swift Current. Herbert and Cabri were near Swift Current. We worked that whole area for five or six months. I met my wife in Swift Current, didn't get married for another year but that's. . . we had good times down there. All the guys on the crew had girlfriends and . . . good crew, again, we were together a lot, we played together and drank together and chased girls together. It was a lot of fun. That winter we went to the Peace River country and we worked a prospect north of Peace River. The crew lived in Peace River and they would fly out to. . . we were Pacific again. . . the crew would fly out

to work each day to Cadot Lake, I think it was and then come back at night. We'd fly back out, get them, we had about. . . it took two trips to bring that crew back and forth each day but we didn't have a camp and it was a temporary job and I guess they didn't think it was worth putting a camp in. Flying was fun, I had never flown much, although I had been an Air Cadet back in Brandon earlier. But we had a couple of ex-RAF pilots, I can't begin to think of their names, but I would go out in the morning with the crew, flying out, just for the ride and then I'd come back and they'd get another load of guys and take them out. These pilots were a pair of characters, they were fighter pilots I think and if you'd been partying at all the night before and weren't feeling well, they would try and make you sick and they'd do loops and they'd do rolls and they'd do the damndest things that I'm sure any air authority wouldn't let them get away with anywhere else.

#203 DF: What kind of plane?

KM: I can't think what. . . it would take about 8 or 10 people, it wasn't . . . I don't know. But we were in Peace River, McKenzie was the Party Chief, like I said. He left early for some reason and I had to bring the crew out. Here I was, just 22 years old, I guess by then but I was in charge and I had to move the crew back down from Peace River to Calgary. We came out at road ban and you had to be. . . they wanted you to work in there as long as you could, but you had to get out before the bans went on. So it was always a pretty close game and I remember coming out in a convoy with our crew and a Beaver crew, I can't remember who was running the Beaver crew. And we traveled together back all the way to Edmonton and each crew. . .we broke down on the way back and we had problems but it took us a day to get there. We stayed in a motel in Edmonton that night, the two crews and there was partying going on. Halfway through the party the Edmonton Party Manager and I can't remember his name, remembered that he'd left that days records hanging on the line in whatever room they used for drying them in Peace River. He had to drive all the way back to Peace River to get these

records. In those days when you shot a record it was photographically developed but you had to hang the record on a clothes line in some room, while it dried. It came out of the fixer and needed drying and so they stayed in there for probably half an hour or so and he had hung his up for that day, so he could roll them up and not bring them back wet and here he'd forgotten, he had to drive all the way back and get these things. That spring. . . .do you want me to go through this year by year?

DF: Well, sure.

KM: That spring we were out of work. We're into '53 now and things have really slumped down. I don't know what was the highest year but things were really going badly. Sub-Surface actually went broke that next year, in '54. But the third year, in '53 I worked for Jimmy Rae on his crew and we were on a crew in central Alberta and we moved 27. . . here I've been talking about living one year for seven months and one year for five months in a couple of areas. We were in 27 different towns that year, moved every week it seemed, up and down the highway. It was really more what typical life would be like on a crew. I was going to get married at that time and with my bride to be, we discussed it and decided this wasn't the kind of life for us and it didn't matter anyway because that year, I think Sub-Surface went under. George had taken a poor contract with Sun Petroleum, where he had a bush job and he was on a turnkey rate. He'd bid the thing too low, we lost a ton of money and I think that's what put us under. Exploration Data Bit or Exploration Bit, anyway, Les Libin's company had backed George, they went under. There was other companies went broke that year but I remember Exploration Bit coming under with us because George must have owed them so much money. We had a contract to go to work somewhere but couldn't get out because the dynamite company wouldn't advance him the money for the dynamite. Anyway it folded. We all went to work at various places. I went to Maritime Geophysical, there were I think, 8 of us went over there to work for Maritime. Mickey McCallum was the manager, the President of Maritime. Mickey was another ex-Imperial guy who had worked for

Rabey at one time and bought one of Wes' crews and renamed it Maritime. Mickey had an interesting brother, Jim McCallum, the Colonel, who was an ex-army colonel. He thought he would install discipline into all these geophysical guys. I remember coming in in the morning, I worked in the office, but I'd come in and he'd say Morrison your shoes aren't shone or you need a haircut or something like this. He was all spit and polish. Mac McGuire was one of their interpreter geophysicists and one of the best geophysicists I'd worked with. I worked with them for a year and half, in the Calgary office, a little office over in Hillhurst. I went up to the crew a lot though, for a week or so at a time. And the crews were run by then, by Party Managers, most Party Chiefs stayed in town and did the interpretation in town and you only went out to see the crew to collect data or to do some supervising, something like that. Mickey would send you out to the crew and Jim would draw up a great logistic record of how you went and you had to phone back at a certain time and you rendezvoused with the crew at a certain time, which never worked. But it was all part of his army training system. Actually Maritime went under about a year or so later and Mickey ended up. . I'm getting ahead of myself again, but Mickey ended up over at Amoco or Pan American, where I was.

#284 DF: What was happening in the mid 50's that shut down all these companies?

KM: I guess it must have been the Leduc boom was certainly over. Too many companies had started up, I think that's probably it. There were literally dozens of contract companies out there and there were just far too many. Some of the ones who didn't have steady contracts just couldn't make it. They'd allyou could put a crew out in the field in those days for a couple hundred thousand dollars, which you can't even buy a couple of trucks for now, let alone the instruments. But I think these guys were just heavily into it. I know the first crew that Longphee put out, he got the money from, I think, his brother in law. A few thousand dollars and McKenzie and Anderson came in. They each sold their cars to buy their share to get in and the rest was financing. So I think it was just they were poorly financed

or weakly financed. Anyway I was sitting at Maritime one day and we were down to very few people, McGuire and I were doing contract interpretation, the crews weren't working, and I happened to be. . .there were so few that I was answering the phone and I got a call from Staniland inquiring about one of the other computers we had, John Miekle, who was looking for a job with Staniland. They phoned up to say they wanted to talk to him and I said, by the way I'm looking for a job also, could I come over and talk to you. So I went over and interviewed at Staniland and I had a job the next day there. I told Mickey this and Mickey said, hang in a little longer, things are going to get better, I've got a contract coming. I debated about that quite a bit but finally I went to work for Staniland, not finally, the next day I went to work for Staniland and I would say a month later Mickey didn't get the contract he wanted and he was over at Staniland as Field Supervisor. But I went to Staniland and that was the best thing I ever did to that point because they trained me. They didn't care really what you knew, they assumed you knew very little and I went to work for a guy. . . Bill Allison took charge of us. He was the staff geophysicist, a guy up from the States and a real hard nosed disciplinarian and teacher, considered that the rest of us knew nothing. I think there were about four others in my circumstance, guys who had been hired away, who had some seismic experience but had been out of university 2 or 3 years. The next year they hired guys directly out of university and within I'd say a year, we were the biggest exploration company. We had 16 crews out at one time and Imperial likely had 16 but none of the other companies, the Gulf's and Shell's and that were down around 8 or 10. Big effort, big effort. And well trained. After I went on my own and with other companies later, I kept bumping into . . . Staniland became Pan American and then became Amoco, so you go through name changes but Pan American was the name we used most. And I would meet ex-Pan American guys in meetings, I'd be across the table from another Chief Geophysicist, say when I was with Can-Oxy or Ashland and invariably the other geophysicists who I thought were the best were the Pan American ex trained guys. Because we learned the basics, we did

homework, Allison and guys like Allison really taught us well. It was best place, I think to go to school in the business. I stayed there for 11 years, at the Staniland, Pan American, Amoco system. Longphee ended up coming there. I progressed fairly well to a point where I got caught up in this inability to present myself. You started to take maps into management and that and I didn't know it but I was doing a poor job of presenting the data that I interpreted or mapped. Jack Mataya, my supervisor, an American, most of the Amoco District Geophysicists were Americans. But Jack said, this is my problem, you don't present yourself, I guess is the expression he used. He suggested I take a Dale Carnegie course, he said it had helped him a lot. So I took a Carnegie course and that was just fantastic, I ate that up. I had Frank McCool and Frank McCool, he was the old hockey player, Frank "Ulcers" McCool, he played for the Maple Leafs during the war and at that time he was Publisher of the Calgary Albertan. As a hobby Frank was teaching this Dale Carnegie course in the evenings. You took it one evening a week for two months and I just ate that up, I really enjoyed it. I won the award for the best, highest achievement or something like that. I found out I enjoyed speaking, I had a good memory and I was able to develop it more, they taught you how to do these things. The next year Frank asked me to. . . they had what the called. . . something, assistant, but the class called them guardian angels. I assisted him the next year in this course, it's really not assisting in the teaching but you prepared assignments, you checked assignments, you did things like that. I think that did more for my career than any other thing I'd done. Gaining confidence in my ability to sell myself. But about that time, I'm not sure of the years, I got transferred to New Orleans, with Amoco and I was really excited. They picked the top man, experience wise, in each category and I was the geophysicist senior grade they had. They had a geophysicist senior grade and an intermediate and a geophysicist junior grade and They needed four guys in New Orleans anyway and we were the four picked to go I was really excited, I'd never been anywhere, I put my house up for sale, I'd been all through whatever you needed to do to get out of the Calgary office, in terms of cleaning up

your assignments and that.

#400 DF: What year?

KM: I'm going to say in the early 60's. It'll work out in a minute when I put it together. But anyway then I got word they didn't want me, they wanted the other three, they didn't want me. A guy called Norm Domenico, who had been our Chief Technical Geophysicist, and then had got transferred to New Orleans and became District Geophysicist there or Division Geophysicist, whatever. He'd been away on vacation when this assignment had been made and when he came back from vacation he looked and saw the four guys that were coming down and he said, I want these three but I don't want Morrison. Norm and I had never hit it off very well together. He was a brilliant technical man and I'll give him that but I don't think he ever found a barrel of oil in his life and I don't think he ever cared. We kind of rubbed each other the wrong way. I had a different attitude towards exploration than he did. Anyway I didn't get to go, Joe Werner went in my place. There was arguing back and forth between our office and their office. The upshot was I didn't get to go. I think I realized then, if Domenico was going to be in the company and I was going to be in the company, I wasn't going to get anywhere. That fall though. . .I think maybe the Calgary people felt that I had been treated badly. They sent me up to Alaska, to Anchorage and the words were, go up there and have a look around, help them up there for a month and we're looking at sending somebody up there in the spring and you can have it if you want. So I went to Anchorage and I went up there right at. . .well, I was in Anchorage, everybody says where were you when Kennedy was shot, I was in Anchorage. We worked in the office there, doing interpretation. He had an office of about five people. I'll never forget the day that we were in the office, late in the afternoon, and we got word that Kennedy had been shot and we all quit work and Mike, who was the District Geophysicist, said, let's go to the bar. We went across the street to the bar, 4 or 5 of us and we got

in and they had a TV in there and the announcement came over that Kennedy had been shot and people cheered and I was really amazed. They were very Republican in Anchorage but to cheer when a guy gets killed. The only other time I saw that happen was years later, I was in Abu Dhabi when Anwar Sadat got killed and he was the President of Egypt and the people there all cheered because they felt Sadat had made a deal with the Israelis that they didn't like and it was the same kind of reaction. But anyway I was in Anchorage. We did a lot of . . . I was boarding up there or living in a hotel I guess, Dick Coburn was up there at the time, Dick was our field man. Dick and I ran around a bit together. I had been told when I left Calgary, when you get to Anchorage, go anywhere you want but don't go into, I think it was the Montana Club, but for gods sake don't go into the Montana Club. So the first night of course, Dick and I went to the Montana Club. I remember standing at the bar and buying whatever drink Dick and I had and giving the guys \$10, he came back and he gave me my change and Dick says, where's the rest of his change. The bartender says, what do you mean, Dick says, my buddy gave you a \$20 and the bartender said, he gave me \$10 and Dick said, are you calling my buddy a liar. He was just trying to get something going, we got out of that one okay. But we went there that night and it was the wildest bar I've ever been in and there was fighting, just a typical wild western bar. We went there the next night I remember and the third night, we stayed away and that night someone got knifed in there, there was actually a murder in the bar. I thought somebody is trying to tell you Ken, don't go there again, so I don't recall going back to the Montana bar. But I came back at Christmas that year and we had a big Christmas party, the company did and everybody said, how did you like it, get ready to go there, you're going to go there in the spring. The first of the year Amoco reorganized and they took Anchorage away from the Canadian Division and assigned it to the one out of Denver. So that fell apart, I never got to go to Anchorage, which didn't matter a lot. But the next spring, this was one of the best things that happened, we put crews in Newfoundland. Longphee was in charge of

that one and I got to go on that. Hopefully I was chosen because I was the right person but I think a little of it might have been they were trying to make up for these two disappointments I'd had. George was the boss and I'd always liked working with George. Harold Evans and I were the two senior geophysicists and we each had. . . I had Allan James and Bob McKee were the two juniors and Emmett Flynn, he'd been with Amoco for years, he was the Expediter. So the five of us went down, we took our wives. At that time Carol and I had three kids, we drove down, took a week or so to drive down there. Went down in May and I came back in November, the rest of them came back a little earlier. Lived in St. John's, we were out all day working on the ships. . . .

End of tape.

Side 2

KM: We had two ships, we had one called the White Coat, which was a revamped sealing vessel and one called the Arctic Endeavour and we were doing a seismic survey out on the Grand Banks. Evans had the Endeavour and I had the White Coat, it was what they call a small seal, a seal pup, because they have a white coat. And this thing had been a sealing vessel and it just stunk because they'd had the pelts down in the hold all spring. This was in May and they just had got it, and they took it over to Halifax to outfit it. This thing was I think 60 some feet long but they put a 90' antenna on the back, so if you can imagine, this just looked like it was going to turn over any minute. We had two guns, we had a GSI crew and we had these two big guns hanging over the stern, we were using a mixture of oxygen and propane and we would go along popping this thing and doing recording. The Arctic Endeavour, which Evans had was using dynamite and they had a lot of trouble getting permission to use dynamite but we had less permission that way, but we were harder to outfit because of this awkward system we were using. I think they might have had a gas exploder on there too, but. . . Anyway, it doesn't matter. Someone in their wisdom, decided that they Arctic Endeavour should work closer to shore and the white coat should work the perimeter of the area. We could go 8 knots an hour wide open, so we would get out there and it would storm and

this was. . hurricane season came later, but it would take you 2 or 3 days to get back into port if you heard a hurricane was coming and they only gave 24 hour warning, something like that. So we ended up spending a lot of time going back and forth or working near shore. But it was a good summer, we got great data. It turned out there was no oil under any of it but beautiful data, we were in charge of the ships, Harold had his and I had mine. I spent most of the summer on a ship. My wife didn't like that because she had these three little kids, living in a boarding house in St. John's. Our daughter was in grade two I think and the oldest boy was in kindergarten. If you can believe this, in kindergarten, here was this five year old kid and he had to wear a flannel and blazer to go to kindergarten in this. . .it was a church school. But we did a lot of good work. There was a 4 ½ hour time difference I think, between Newfoundland and Calgary and they could never figure that out, so nobody from head office bothered you hardly, unless they came down to look at you. But there was no phone calls during the day, none of that. I thoroughly enjoyed it and I thought we did a good job. Like I say, George was there with his wife and family and they had five kids I believe, down there. So a lot of interacting between the group of us, socially, and that was fun. That winter we worked on it in Calgary. The navigation system we used was called a Deca Lambda and it was very repeatable but not terribly accurate. So I spent most of the winter reworking the navigation so we knew where all these things we had found were. All these anomalies, we found a lot of anomalies. The next year they put a more precise system in which involved concentric signals that the beams were. . .this was in the days before they had G.P.S., any of those satellite surveys, these were off beacons, and they had concentric circles, that system. And it was far more precise unless you lost track of what circle you were in, they had a counting mechanism. So it was accurate but not as repetitive, so it was trying to mesh these two systems together. That year I went down and spent a lot of the year just putting buoys out on these various anomalies that we'd found the year before. Had a sparker survey, which is an electrical popper type thing, it shows you the shallow

section and we used that. We were based in Sydney, Nova Scotia and we had this sparker thing and we did a survey with it. I went back again a third year partly and I think we had a gas exploder then. Basically the same, by then they're starting to drill. We drilled shallow holes to test the surface parties anomalies and how valid they were. I spent parts of three years down there. But in essence we found nothing, there was no source rock. We had beautiful reservoirs, beautiful traps but no source rock. Came back to Calgary again. About that time the Rainbow play had come along. Everybody's making moves. I know that I'm not going to go anywhere with Amoco, I started looking around. I got offered a job at Jefferson Lake, which ultimately became Can-Oxy, Canadian Occidental. I got interviewed by Johnny Legge, he was probably the premier geophysical consultant in Calgary. He was on his own then but lately. . . oh Jack Wilson worked with him and then lately, Bob Comer came in and they became Comer and Wilson. . . I think they are out of the business now but they were, I guess one of the top consulting pair for a few years. I went over to Jefferson Lake to start up their geophysical department. I was not Chief geophysicist, I forget what I was called, but I became Chief in essence. That was good, we had a good new team there. I worked there for about seven years. But it was kind of a funny deal, I found out later, a lot of the work we did was never going to get drilled. They were making so much money out of sulphur that they were spending it as a tax write off on some of these exploration programs but we didn't drill. We hardly ever drilled any holes and . . . that's not fair, we did some but we didn't drill a lot. The main reason I left them to go to Ashland was Ashland, we drilled 40 holes a years, 40 wells, Jeff Lake was drilling 4, something like that, it was quite a difference.

#080 DF: So this was the 70's then?

KM: I went to Jefferson in '64 I think and I was there til about '72, '65 to '72, something like that. But enjoyed working there. That's the year. . . I don't know when you want to get into this but that's when I became involved in the CSEG, in

those years with them.

DF: Okay, how did that happen, what got you interested in the CSEG.

KM: Well, again, Longphee. George was President in '68 I think and I asked him, was there something I could do to help and he got me on a committee, an education committee with Dick Clawson. I worked with Dick on that committee and then the next year I chaired that committee. It wasn't the Continuing Education Committee, I think it was just called Education. And we went around to schools and gave demonstrations. We organized instruction at SAIT, we were trying to further the knowledge of geophysics into the high school group I guess. So that was how I got started and that's in. . . .when I say it was the next year, it was in '69 and then in '70, I got asked to run for Vice-President. So I ran for Vice-President in '70 and won. I was the incoming Vice-President in '70 and sat at the head table, then '71 I was the outgoing Vice-President, sat at the head table. I became President in '72, sat up there again, then I was past President and prior past President, I think I had five or six years in a row I sat at the head table at the Annual Dinner, became a fixture there. In '70 I was Vice-President, Baxendale was the President, John Baxendale. Vice-Presidents are sort of like the Vice-President in American politics, you don't do a lot. You're there in case something happens to the President. Although now, under the new system, with the first Vice-President, I'm sure you get a lot more to do. But it was good and you're in charge of lecturers. The best thing I did as Vice-President was I put a forestry conference together. We got six visiting. . . six or more than six. . . twelve forestry professors. Professors who knew about forestry, all the way from Newfoundland to B.C. and we had a big meeting in Calgary and they discussed conservation and line cutting and all the impacts. Regulations were starting to come in, pretty big in those days. But that's what I remember most of what I was involved in.

#120 DF: How about when you were President, what do you remember that year?

KM: This is not in order of importance but we started the Doodlespiel that year. Joe

Pendergast came to me with the idea of it and he took it and ran. He had a committee of Bob Page and Somerville and Rutledge and Carey and Ben Berg I think and we had it at Banff. It was a lot of fun, we had hoped it would rival the Doodlebug some day, in those days it was called the Bonspiel. I'm not sure what year they called it the Doodlespiel but it's gone ever since. And they had rooms up at the Timberline Hotel in Banff and the second year we were there we all got kicked out of the Timberline and told never to come back. It was a lot of . . . like I told you, it was a combination, drinking, curling and shouting thing. But that was the Doodlespiel.

DF: What specifically happened that got you kicked out?

KM: I think stupidly the Timberline people thought they could quiet these guys down by interspersing our rooms in with their regular guests, which was foolish. They should have put us all on one floor or not let us in. But it was just noise in the hotel. The first year was the banquet and I think we only had the banquet the one year. I remember sitting at the head table, because I was President, with Pendergast and one of the guys, I think it was Roy Millice, threw a bun at Joe at the head table and Joe turned around and fired one back of course, and it just degenerated into a brawl literally. I think it was our attitude, we were a bunch of guys who were out to have fun and the hotel didn't want that. The biggest thing I guess we did in '72. . . Lindseth's group had come up with the idea of a convention but we put it together and I formed a committee. Ernie Pallister. . . I'd worked with Ernie . . . he worked with Longphee at Sub-Surface. I thought we needed a big name and Ernie had been Oilman of the Year, he had been President of the Geological Society, which was the first geophysicist ever to be that I think, a lecturer, an expert on the north. Anyway Ernie became the Chairman. It was not an exhibit type convention, sort of a poster paper convention, and even though it happened in the next year, it happened in the spring of '73, it was really run by the '72 executive. I think it was successful. One hitch, when the thing happened in the spring, the speaker was to

be Alastair Gillespie, who was Minister of Industry or something, I forget. The last afternoon we got work that Gillespie wasn't coming, he was the featured head speaker, that he'd taken sick or something, so Jim Jerome who came and became his representative. Jerome at that time, was unknown, Jerome actually went on to be Cabinet Minister under Trudeau and became finally, in the Supreme Court. But at the time, no one had ever heard of Jerome and he got up at the convention I remember and his opening line was, who the hell is Jim Jerome and then he went on to give Gillespie's speech. I was upset. . . .I wrote to Trudeau about this and in fairness I got an answer but I complained about substituting an unknown for a cabinet minister. In those days the energy policy was just being formulated and we in the west felt we were being ignored by the Liberals. We'd had . . .I can't remember the Premier of Ontario, Robards or someone had just been in Calgary and Lougheed was strong at that time. It looked like we were being ignored and I'd written Trudeau complaining about not sending a cabinet minister. Here Pallister was in charge, he was our first Chairman, Lindseth had put the idea together and Roy at that time was President of the Geo-Science Council. Anyway Trudeau wrote back and . . . it looks to me like he signed it anyway. He acknowledged all this but he said, cabinet ministers just can't be at your beck and call, if something happens, they have a heavy schedule and we have to bring in somebody else. . . he said, I think Mr. Morrison you should be a little bit more understanding of the situation. My wife read it and she said, see, even he knows you don't understand things. So if I'm going to be remembered for anything in the CSEG, I think it would be the education, the scholarship part. Roy's group had changed the constitution to allow for raising money for scholarships through corporate memberships. They had done that in '71. The Scholarship Committee previously. . .Rutledge was the Chairman of the committee but before that it had been Lou Stephens and typically in those days, the Chairman served a 1 or 2 year term. They both recommended that money be raised other than through donations. The donations were coming mainly from the service and the supply people, the contractors and the suppliers. I always felt we

were leaning too heavily on them. '72 wasn't as bad as it got but it was a slump and we were taking too much money from the contractors I thought. They weren't making any money, there was too many crews still, the wages were down. Anyway we took that corporate thing and raised money and at that time. . and I'm going to go ahead one more year, to '73, I got on the scholarship committee of the SEG. I was the only Canadian ever to be on that thing, to my knowledge, certainly the first, there's been none since. One of the complaints they made to me, and that's a seven man committee and you go on that thing, it's literally nine years, you work your way up through the committee and then you go on the Board of Trustees for three years. So it's quite an appointment and quite a lengthy thing and one of the comments that I kept having thrown at me was the Canadians aren't contributing to this scholarship fund, why not. Well, the reason why not was we weren't getting any tax write offs. It was not called a charitable donation if you donated to the international fund. So I talked to Rabey about that, Wes Rabey followed me. We or I applied for and got permission to set up the Scholarship Trust Fund, which was a charitable donation and then you could. . these corporate memberships could go towards it, they could be private donations, there could be people donating whole scholarships to it. So when I say most people head that Scholarship Committee, the Canadian one, for a year or two, I stayed with it for 5 years. So from '73 to '78, I guess I was Chairman of the Canadian Committee. We developed the corporate scholarships and got a lot of money from that. We started giving more scholarships to students and it's taken off ever since. I don't know how many they give out each year but at one time we had well over thirty. And they're big scholarships now, they can literally take a guy through two or three years of university. With the SEG, I stayed with that committee right up until about. .from '73 to '81 I think. Went through the committee and they through the Board of Trustees. I became Chairman of the Board of Trustees. This is all progressive, you do this. It's a lot of work but a lot of interest and you feel you're doing something. So that's probably the best thing I did. Going back to '72, that was the year they formed the Geo-Science

Council. There were six societies initially. Roy and I were the Canadian reps or the CSEG reps. By the end of the year there were twelve societies and Roy became President the next year I believe. One thing that kind of triggered this was the Regina. . . I'm not sure if exactly Regina fits in, but the Edmonton societies both folded up at that time, in '72. I remember Edmonton sending their monies on down to us.

#242 DF: What kind of societies?

KM: The Geophysical Societies. What year did ours start, '49. . . they were in the 50's and they never got as big or strong because there weren't that many head office people there. But they folded because people had been leaving those two places. So we became. . . luckily our name. . . I read where our name got chosen, they tried to get the Western Canada Society name but they got the Canadian SEG was the name, which was better than the Calgary SEG. But we became really a national society in the way we thought then, we were the only one in Canada. And I think then we became more involved in things like the Geo-Science Council and the NRC, the National Research Council had a sub-committee on geophysics, the CPA had a committee on geophysics. We all took turns either being representatives or. . . So I think that's maybe the year we got the feeling we were national and got more involved in things political and economical other than just straight seismic or geophysics. One thing, in '72, we had a heavy . . . it comes back to, we were talking earlier, a lot of Gulf geophysicists had been involved in the CSEG, Copeland, Carlyle, Bill Blair, Mahaffy was my Vice-President. I take it back when I said Vice-President, it's partly because the President doesn't give him much to do. Earl did, Earl was just an excellent guy to work with. I've always been good friends with Mahaffy, to me he's the best consultant. . .this is nothing to do with the CSEG, but the best consultant in Calgary. When I went consulting I patterned myself after Mahaffy. He wrote excellent reports, he told it like it was, he detailed things. I think he was good in that way. But we'd been heavily Gulf oriented and

very little Imperial representation. Imperial kind of stayed in the background from the CSEG for awhile. The only other one from Imperial would be Carl Chapman I think was Imperial. So when the year. . . I'm not sure what year it was but I know I went out and got Bill Evans from Imperial. . . I looked at the membership list and we were very under-represented from three of the majors, Imperial, Shell and Texaco. It was partly because none of them paid for memberships. Most companies, Amoco where I worked and then Can-Oxy paid, if you joined the CSEG, the company paid your membership. It encouraged you to go to their lunches. Imperial didn't. Imperial did little to encourage exchange of papers, none of them ever gave papers. So I got Bill Evans and Bob Spinney, Bob's from Shell and Jim Merkley and Jim was from Texaco, to be on the Membership Committee. And said, you guys go out and solicit from each of your companies and they all did and they did a good job. And then they really got involved, Evans became Vice-President and then President. Spinney was on the executive later and we started to really pick up and I think that's the. . . maybe what turned Imperial back into it and we started to get a lot of participation from Imperial from then on. Ernie Shaw, who I'd gone to university with got working a lot on the CSEG. Wes Rabey gets most of the credit for the Chair in geophysics but Ernie Shaw did a lot of that with Wes and it was a strong committee.

#301 DF: What are you most proud of, from the time you were on the executive, how do you think you made a contribution? Don't be shy.

KM: I think probably through revamping the scholarship business, I think that. I spent a lot of time on that and I think probably that. I was in a unique position, I was between Lindseth and Rabey and you spend a lot of time with those guys. You go to meetings together and I learned a lot from both. They are both very strong people. Roy, probably the best geophysicist we've ever turned out and Rabey, a strong business person. I phoned you earlier I think about the nominating process, which is the President of the Nominating Committee and you get the past President

and the prior past President and you put the slate together for the next year. In effect, what you do is you meet for lunch and they tell you to go ahead and do it. That's what I did with the guys behind me. But the committee I chose was Rabey . . .to run against Bill Black. I think up til then we'd been heavily involved with oil company people and a few consultants but not too many field oriented people. I felt that the oil companies were not treating the contractors properly. We weren't paying them enough. We were accepting the lowest bids and asking for even lower bids. In my opening speech and I spoke in front of. . . .Lougheed was at the head table and it kind of pumps you up when you see someone like that. He was in the opposition then I think. But I tore a strip off the oil companies at that, I got written up quite a bit about it. I was pro contractor. I'd never been a contractor other than work for one, I'd never owned a crew or anything like that. But I felt that they oil companies were doing them a disservice and by that we weren't letting them hire strong enough people, we weren't letting them pay them enough. A lot of the guys in the Doodlebug were making like \$1.75 an hour and I think you could get \$2.00 an hour if you were on welfare. We weren't getting. . . .we got all the Saskatchewan farm boys and they came every year and they're the bulk of who works for us in the winter. But we had people coming in and out and there was no pride in working in the oil business. When I started there was, you were proud to be a doodlebug. So I criticized the oil companies, myself included, because I was a Chief Geophysicist at Can-Oxy then. I thought we weren't being good enough with our contracts. I had a thing at Can-Oxy that when the billing came in, we paid it right away or we paid within 30 days, or we paid 75% within 30 days or something like that. Dome Petroleum, to their discredit, later on, were paying 90 days, something like that. By the time you pay the contractor in 90 days, then he takes 30 or 60 to pay his drillers and his contract surveyors, it goes on down the line and everybody using their own money and they're broke. That's maybe a little bit of an aside but I took that position anyway and whether it helped or not, I don't know.

#361 DF: We've got about 10 minutes here, why don't you tell us what you did after

'72 then, where did your career go?

KM: Partly because of this talk I gave at the CSEG I got hired. . . Joe Irwin at Ashland, through Baxendale's recommendation I think, hired me. Again, I got interviewed by Johnny Legge, because they were vetting people through him. I worked there about 7 years and enjoyed that and got a little taste of international with Ashland. Worked in Iran on a job, we looked at things in. . . I went on a spot job in Taiwan, that sort of thing. Ashland got bought by Keyser, Edgar Keyser, who is the grandson of Henry Keyser and Edgar was a dynamic person and all that but a miserable son-of-a-gun to work for and with. I think I'll take one minute to tell you about him, what typifies him. One time I was at a meeting, I was a manager and we were sitting around waiting for him to come in from Vancouver for the meeting. We were sitting in our shirt sleeves and sitting around the table in the Vice-Presidents office, drinking coffee. Edgar came in, we met him, he sat down, and he left his jacket on, we were all in shirt sleeves, he left his jacket on, ordered a drink because they had a bar at the office and sat at the meeting. When we folded the company up, Keyser sold it to Dome, there was a lot of ill feeling in Calgary about that, particularly around the Calgary office. So when we met him, we were going to form another little company under him. We met him at the Calgary Airport, Joe Irwin. . . a secret meeting so the people downtown wouldn't see him. And he flew in and we were sitting in the airport restaurant there, all in our suits, having a drink because it was in a lounge. He came in, took off his jacket, sat in his shirt sleeves and drank orange juice or something like that. It was that one upmanship which he learned, you're never one of the boys, you're always different. You're different and you're in charge. An interesting man. But I worked for Keyser until that and then there was no meaningful room for me that I could see at Dome. So I didn't go to Dome. Went on my own with a chief landman called Dave Weddell and we formed another Keyser company and had it going for a month or two and Edgar sold that from out under us. He'd given us \$12 million to go out and look for prospects, \$6 million this year and 6 next, go out and look for deals and we were looking for deals. Had an

office staff and all that. But in the middle of one meeting one day, we got called out of the meeting and told that we'd been sold to B.C. Resources and there was no room for me there. By then Joe, Irwin, who I said, hired me at Ashland, Joe was at Sceptre and they'd had a big concession in Abu Dhabi. They needed someone to run the operation, the geophysical part, would I go over and look at it. I did and I came back and I told Joe that I thought, if you're going to do it, you'd have to do it on the ground there. So I went to Abu Dhabi, took my wife and my youngest son there, stayed in a big fancy hotel. I was there pretty well for 2 ½ years but Carol was only there for about 1 of those years. A little aside, while we were there, in this hotel, another couple came in from Australia. He'd been a politician in Australia and lost his seat and his new job was PR manager for the Intercontinental Hotels in that area. Anyway we became quite good friends, the women did, there wasn't much for women to do there. Years later, I became a widower in early '91 and Dorothy and Ray. . . Dorothy became a widow in '89 and then I met her later and we got married in '92 and here we are. So things sort of work out funnily.

#452 DF: What years were you in Abu Dhabi?

KM: '80-'83 I think. Maybe '80-'82. A lot of good times there. I wrote it up for the CSEG in an article. But I enjoyed it very much. I was away again, from head office, I didn't have to worry about, again, time difference was 11 hours and they took Friday off instead of Saturday, Sunday, so head office left you alone. Sceptre's problem there was, I reported to Joe Irwin, the Manager reported to Angus Mackenzie who was the President, the Chief Geologist reported to a guy in London, the Drilling Manager reported to a guy in Dubai. It was really a poorly configured operation and we didn't . . . and we were trying to run a joint venture with four other companies. So we had a lot of internal turmoil and didn't find anything.

DF: So what did you do after Abu Dhabi?

KM: I came back from Abu Dhabi, oh they sent me to Indonesia. . . I ended up being General Manager in Abu Dhabi. We had an accident on the rig, a couple of guys got killed, a couple of Haliburton types got killed on the rig. There was a

reconfiguration of the company and I ended up being General Manager but I closed it down the next year because our concession had run out, we walked away from it. I went briefly to Indonesia to set up a concession for Sceptre and I was going to live in Indonesia but we ended up losing half the contracts and rather than send a full team down there, we only sent two. So I came back to Calgary, with Sceptre still, decided to go consulting, consulted back to Sceptre for awhile, on Abu Dhabi mainly.

DF: What year did you go consulting?

KM: The end of '84, right on December. Got a contract with Baxendale to do a big project in offshore Ghana for Petro Canada. John and I worked on that pretty well for a couple of years. By then I'm back at Can-Oxy, where I had been before as their Chief Geophysicist and I started to get involved with them again. They were looking for someone to run their operation in Yemen and I think because I had been in Abu Dhabi, they figured I knew where Yemen was. No one else knew. Then I went to Yemen and I was there off and on for a few years. Finally found oil, found a giant field. If I can take credit for anything on the ground, that was probably it because I laid out the program, saw the first anomaly. I felt really proud about that. I went back to Yemen on a couple of more occasions. In fairness to my wife who died in '91 like I said, I spent too much time. I got caught up in the chase. I've been back to Yemen twice since on small jobs but I'm out of the loop now. Technology has sort of passed me by. So I retired in '97 I suppose.

DF: Really, that recently.

KM: Well, the last job I had was in '97, I went over for a month to run an operation for a company called Capa and I'd had one before that in '95. I still read all the technical literature and that but now I'm dabbling in other things. I'm in a little capital pool company and a little bit of real estate and a little bit of retirement I suppose.

DF: Good for you. I'd like to take the opportunity at this time, on behalf of the CSEG and the Petroleum Industry Oral History Project to thank you so much for spending

this time with us today. Thank you very much, it's been a pleasure to interview you.
Thank you.