

**Narrator:** Don Arril (DA)

**Company Affiliations:** Woodside Brothers Foundry

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**Interviewer:** Nancy Perozzo (NP)

**Recorder:** Nancy Perozzo (NP)

**Additional Speakers:** Tory Tronrud (TT)

**Transcriber:** Sarah Lorenowich (SL)

**Summary:** Machinist Don Arril describes his five-year period of work at Woodside Brothers Foundry and the various projects that brought him into contact with the Thunder Bay terminal grain elevators. He first describes an artifact at the Thunder Bay Museum, an automatic grain sampler, which was a Woodside Foundry invention. He details the layout of the Woodside operation, some of his tasks as an apprentice helping the journeymen, and some work offsite at the elevators and on lake boats. Arril lists some of the items Woodside Foundry created, like grain boxcar door openers, manhole covers, and oat de-hullers. Other topics discussed include his father's work as a fireman during the 1945 Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Elevator 4B explosion, the Woodside operation's fate and changing ownership, the process of using wooden patterns when pouring liquid metal, and the enjoyment of his work in the industry. In the brief follow-up audio, Arril recalls the day of the 1952 Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Elevator 4A explosion.

**Keywords:** Woodside Brothers Foundry (Port Arthur Ironworks); Machinist work; Machine shop; Foundry; Ironworks; Skilled trades; Trades apprenticeship; Equipment manufacturing; Blacksmith shop; Pattern making; Automatic grain sampler; Thunder Bay terminal grain elevators; Boxcar unloading; Iron casting; Grain elevator disasters; Grain elevator explosions; Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Elevator 4A explosion; Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Elevator 4B explosion; Manitoba Pool 6 Elevator; United Grain Growers Elevator A; Port Arthur; Current River

### Audio Part One

Time, Speaker, Narrative
NP: This interview is being conducted by Nancy Perozzo with the assistance of Tory Tronrud of the Museum. It is October 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2015, and it is being conducted at the Museum. So now I'll ask the fellow that we're interviewing to introduce himself and his connection to the grain trade. And I can just leave this here. So anytime you want to start.

DA: Okay. My name is Don Arril, A-R-R-I-L. I worked at Woodside Brothers as a machinist apprentice from 1951 to 1955, during which time they manufactured various components for grain elevators, like the grain sampler that we have here.

NP: Great. Right. And I think before I forget, I'd like to just have you comment on this item. I'm going to turn it on, and maybe you can tell us--. Well, how would that compare in size to--. Just let me--. [Machine whirs] Now, I'm thinking that will interfere with our--. So, how would that compare in size?

DA: This belt would be probably four feet wide, and this machine would--. Like I said, I've never seen one in operation, but they would stand probably about my height, about 5'7". Probably.

NP: And what are the other components of it?

DA: This belt would be a lot longer, and as they were moving the grain from the bins to the elevator or the elevator to the bins, this belt would be loaded with grain. And originally, they had to take samples of this grain as it moved along the belt. They would have a man that had a stick with a little cup on it, and he would stand there and take scoops of grain. This was an automatic sampler. When it was running, the grain would be--. Where are we?

NP: Do you want me to turn it on?

DA: Yeah. The grain would be on this thing, and as it passed under, these small aluminum cups would pick up small amounts of grain, dump them in this hopper, they'd go down the pipe and into the container which, I believe, was a metal bucket. And that way they eliminated having a man standing there taking samples.

NP: Am I correct in thinking that the sampler could also deliver it to the sampling area of the elevator? Or did it just go into a bucket to be taken out?

DA: It just went into a bucket, and I believe somebody collected it every now and then. Like I say, I never seen the actual operation, so.

NP: Did Woodside make all of the parts of it?

DA: Yeah. We had a foundry where all these sprockets would be made of cast iron, which they poured right in the foundry. The frame was made of angle iron, and the chain we purchased from a manufacturer. It wasn't quite like this. It was not quite as weight as that, but it come in big rolls, and you just hooked it together whatever length you wanted.

NP: And they would make this. What is this thing called here?

DA: That's the hopper.

NP: The hopper. Okay.

DA: It would dump little--. At random as it went along the belt, it would dump little amounts of grain in here and into a bucket which would be taken away and sampled periodically.

NP: And did they make the buckets as well, do you recall?

DA: These buckets, no. They bought them pre-made because it was cheaper than making them. We could have made them, but it was cheaper to buy them. The rest of the sprockets and all the framework was made in Woodside's.

NP: Tory, you have some questions?

TT: When did they make these?

DA: Well, I worked there in the '50s, and they had actually installed some in Winnipeg prior to my being there. Some of the guys from the shop went out to an elevator in Winnipeg and installed them. So I don't really know the timeframe.

TT: So they were still making them when you left?

DA: Yeah.

NP: So Woodside did business in Winnipeg? It was my understanding from the person who donated this little working model that they had salesmen that went around the country or the world marketing this automatic grain sampler. Is that anything you're familiar with?

DA: I'm not aware of that, no.

NP: No.

DA: They made other equipment for elevators. They made what they called an oat huller, which was like a big round cast iron drum with a fan in it. The oats went in the end, and it agitated them viciously in there and knocked the hull off the oats. We made parts for the car dumpers and the cleaners. The brushes that used to sweep over the screens, we made brush heads and arms. Quite a few products for the elevators.

**[0:05:44]**

TT: Who was responsible for designing it, do you know?

DA: I think Art Woodside himself, as far as I know, designed this.

NP: What can you tell us about the whole Woodside operation? Maybe I'll have you just come and sit back here so that we can be sure that you're close to the--. [Thumping sound] Whoa!

DA: Clumsy, sorry.

NP: No. This was sticking out, and it's gray, so you can't really see it. Okay. So normally how we begin these interviews is we ask how you got involved in the first place. So I should just sort of step back and ask that question.

DA: Well.

NP: So--.

DA: I wanted to learn a trade, so I quit school at 16 and went to Woodside's.

NP: And why did you pick them?

DA: They needed an apprentice.

NP: Did you know anyone there? Did your dad say, “Oh, go on down there. They’re looking for somebody”?

DA: No, my dad had worked there in the ‘20s for a short period, but he didn’t stick with it.

NP: Ah.

DA: He thought it would be a good shot for me.

NP: Where did your family come from?

DA: My father come from Scotland. My mother was born here, but her family’s from Sweden.

NP: And did your dad have a trade when he came over?

DA: No. He was 8 years old.

NP: Oh. Just a young guy.

DA: He worked on a railroad for a while, and then he became a city fireman for 40 years in Port Arthur.

NP: And so when you started Woodside, was he still a fireman?

DA: Mmhmm.

NP: So he would’ve been involved with fighting the fires, the elevator fires, then, in ‘45.

DA: Yes, he was. Yes, he was.

NP: Did he ever speak about that?

DA: Yeah. He didn’t like to because he witnessed some not very nice scenes there—people burnt—and it bothered him quite a bit, so he didn’t say too much about it.

NP: Yeah. Had he--. I'm just going to take this over here. Had your dad been in the war?

DA: No.

NP: No. So he hadn't had the experience of having to deal with people in really rough shape through--.

DA: Well, just at fires, yes.

NP: Yeah.

DA: And car accidents.

NP: Yeah. I imagine it was pretty traumatic.

DA: Yeah. He was pretty broken up when he come home that day.

NP: I imagine he might even have known some of the people because--.

DA: Possibly.

NP: The cities weren't that big. Yeah. So when you went to--. Tell me where Woodside's was. What did the operation look like when you went?

DA: It was a wooden building, and on the side it said, "Port Arthur Ironworks." I believe that had been the original name run by his father and his father's brother. When they retired or passed away, Art Woodside took over.

NP: And any idea how old Art was at the time you started?

DA: I think he was 68. I remember that number when I was working there.

NP: Ah. So the family had been here a long time?

DA: Oh, yeah. Yeah. The shop began operation in 1883, I believe, and it was torn down in the '90s. Around that time.

NP: Hm. It was an old building then by the time you started.

DA: Yeah. Well, it had burned down at least once and had been rebuilt, but I don't know how old the building was I worked in.

NP: Can you recall--. I know you've got a good memory and you like old buildings—we were talking about that before because you do some work now at the Pioneer Village—are you able to describe what it was like? If I asked you when you walked in the door, wherever you walked in, what would you see?

**[0:10:03]**

DA: Inside, there was a double door about probably five, six feet wide, and to the right just inside the door was a small office. Behind that there was a stairway going upstairs where they build sawmills. The sawmills were built in the upstairs part, and all the cast iron parts were made in the machine shops. Past the office, there was an erection area and there was a big planer and, oh, about six or seven lathes and shapers. All sorts of machine-shop equipment. All run by one motor and line shafts and belts and pulleys.

NP: Rope pulleys, I assume, initially or--?

DA: No, no.

NP: Okay.

DA: They were flat leather belts. To the back of the shop, there was a door that opened into the foundry where they made cast iron and brass castings. On the right side of the back was a fairly large blacksmith's shop, and there were several warehouses outside—storage places.

NP: How many people were working there?

DA: Oh, I think when I was there, there was probably about 14 or 15. I think they had as many as 25 at times. They worked for not just the grain elevators. They worked for all different industries and sawmills.

NP: Paper mills were going?

DA: I think some paper mill work, yes.

TT: When you first got on the job—that first day that you were hired and walked onto the job—what did they have you doing?

DA: Sweeping the floor. [Laughs]

TT: So what was--. You said you were an apprentice?

DA: Mmhmm.

TT: What sort of training did you get at Woodside?

DA: You helped the tradesmen, the journeymen on the bigger machine shop jobs. We worked outside, and we did some repair work in the elevators and on the lake boats and tugs. I was usually the helper on that job and the truck driver. Then I got more experience in the machine shop and eventually became a machinist.

NP: So what does a machinist do?

DA: He makes parts. Like if you wanted one of these made, we'd take a piece of rough steel and put it in a lathe and machine it down and make it look like that. Or gears or bushings or bearings. Any of the parts on there except the chain we would make from a piece of just round steel bar or whatever.

NP: Did you enjoy the work?

DA: Yeah, I did.

NP: What was your favourite part?

DA: I think going out on the jobs to the elevators and the lake boats. I enjoyed that.

NP: What was it about those projects that you liked?



DA: Just getting to see something I'd never seen before. Got a few short rides on the lake boats from one elevator to the other. It was interesting.

NP: Now, I'm not that familiar with what would have been the Port Arthur waterfront, but the Woodside operation, which was the closest elevator to that?

DA: Pool 6.

NP: Okay.

DA: The people at Pool 6 went by Woodside's on Manitou Street, turned right at Oscar Styffe's and went to Pool 6.

NP: Can you recall the first time you went inside a grain elevator?

DA: No, I guess. We worked in quite a few of them.

NP: What would be the kinds of things you would do when you went to the elevators?

DA: We installed some--. We made another machine there that was called a car door opener for opening the grain doors on the cars. We installed some of those. That was another Woodside invention, I believe. They had a patent on some of the parts anyway. And we had to go up over the top of the car sheds and cut keyways in the shafts and install the drums up there to operate the car door openers.

NP: It was a hard physical job, then, I would say.

DA: Cold and windy up there because it was usually wintertime.

NP: Right. They were shut down for maintenance.

DA: Yeah. And I used to go home all itchy and scratchy. But it was interesting.

NP: Did You get to go to the top of the elevator, to the other levels?

DA: No.

NP: So your work was done--.

DA: On the bottom floor. [Laughing] We did other jobs at Empire and Thunder Bay Elevator. I just can't remember what we did there actually.

**[0:15:10]**

TT: So there were a variety of ways of emptying a boxcar. I've seen film of the whole boxcar being tilted, emptied.

DA: Mmhmm.

TT: How did the door opener work on the inside and how did it empty the car?

DA: Well, I would have to give you a bit of a demonstration. Can I use this? Originally, a lot of the elevators--.

NP: Why don't you—just so that we have this on tape—why don't you use--. Let me just pause this for the time being while we find something for you to use so I can photograph you doing this.

DA: Oh, okay.

**[Audio pauses]**

NP: Okay.

DA: When they pulled the boxcar in, they had what they called a car-haul. There was different methods. Inside the boxcar door, there was horizontal boards in there that held the grain in the car, and they blew it in through the top. Those doors had to be removed. In the original system, they had a ram. As they pulled the car in, they would dig this ram into the door, which would slide these boards up on top of the grain. But sometimes they missed, and they hit the side of the boxcar. Well, that didn't stop it, it would go through the boxcars. The machine that Woodside's made, the car was stationary, and the ram was put in, and there was no chance of putting it through the side of the car. We installed that at I can't remember what elevator. Grain Growers for one, and four for B. I can't remember. We did several of them.

TT: And it was effective?

DA: Yeah. There was a piece of angle iron like this, and there was a winch that just pulled it up and just slid the doors up on top of the grain, and they had the shovels to--. Some of them—Pool 6 and the Grain Growers—they had the car dumpers that you were describing, and they tipped the car both ways. We made a lot of shafting and parts, big parts for them.

TT: And it was Art Woodside that was the genius behind these inventions?

DA: Yeah.

NP: He must have been quite a person, I would think.

DA: He was. He was a nice man to work for.

NP: What did you like about him? What made him a good man to work for?

DA: Oh, he was considerate. If you had a problem, you'd go talk to Mr. Woodside, and he'd help you straighten it out. Everybody liked him.

NP: Very approachable.

DA: Yeah. He was.

NP: But he--. I guess what amazes me about a lot of these people, and he seems to be one of them, is some people would see a problem, like smashing the door—or not just the door, the boxcar as well—and just say, “Oh, well,” and leave it at that. But he had that talent of seeing a problem and wanting to fix it.

DA: Yeah. They also made sawmills for the local woodlot owners. When I left there in '55, they were working on, I think, number 840 something. So they made a lot of them.

NP: Um--.

DA: He didn't design the sawmill. There was a chap by the name of Oliver Smedburg who designed these, and they used to come to Woodside's to buy parts. And he was coming in there time after time buying parts and building these sawmills. Well, they had the whole upstairs vacant in the shop, so they got him to come in there and build them there. Everything was done in one place.

NP: You said you also got on the ships. What kind of work would you be doing on the--?

DA: Small maintenance jobs. Fixing pumps and removing broken bolts. All different sorts of things.

NP: So they had sort of a maintenance operations as well as a manufacturing operation?

DA: Yeah. And we had equipment for re-boring steam engines on the tugs. We worked all one winter on the tug *Rogers* at Canada Dredge. The low-pressure cylinder, I believe, was 42 inches or something, that cylinder, and we had a portable boring machine that you set up in there, and you machined the inside of this. It took days and days to do it, and then we cast a new piston in the shop and made piston rings. So it was a good winter's work.

**[0:20:06]**

NP: Was it a really hopping place at that time between when you were there? Did you say '51 to '55?

DA: At times. At times we worked a lot of overtime, and other times it was quiet.

NP: Now, they would have had--. Actually, I was just looking at some files, and they had a 1952 explosion in the elevator. So you would've been on the waterfront there yourself. And then there was a 1956 at Pool 6.

DA: I'm not aware of that one.

NP: Yeah.

DA: There was two of them at--. Well, there's Pool 4. What was it? Pool 4 and Pool 4B or something like that.

NP: Yes. Yes, A and B.

DA: I think they both had there--. Or was it two explosions? There was one in the '40s.

NP: '45.

DA: Yeah. That's the one my dad was at. And then there was one in the '50s because I was working at Woodside's when that happened.

NP: Were you actually there?

DA: No, no.

NP: But they did some rebuilding too, so was Woodside's involved at all in--?

DA: No. No, that would be bigger contractors.

NP: Okay. And where would the bigger contractors come from?

DA: Oh, I don't know really. I was just in my teens then. I wasn't much interested in that.

NP: [Laughs]

TT: Did Woodside have any competition?

DA: Well, there was Dingwell's and Northern Engineering, Port Arthur Shipyard. They were all pretty busy. Cross, Ernie Cross had a machine shop.

TT: Did Woodside's pay well?

DA: Well, not me. [Laughing] I was working on construction, and I went from \$1.05 an hour to 50 cents an hour at Woodside's. But I learned a trade too, so.

NP: Where did your career take you after that?

DA: December '55, I went to Red Rock—which was St. Lawrence Corporation in those days—as a machinist. Millwright they called me. I worked there for 13 years. I went to Ontario Hydro at Cameron Falls for almost 25 years, and then I retired.

NP: Did you follow the fortunes of Woodside Company? What happened to them?

DA: They downsized somewhat. Art Woodside retired, and he moved to, I think, Madison or Red Lake with his daughter. Woodside's downsized somewhat and eventually--. I'm not sure. In the '90s or '80s, I guess, they closed down and eventually tore the building down.

NP: What's there now?

DA: Nothing, I don't think.

NP: Is it part of the Prince Arthur--?

TT: It's part of that whole development area, but they haven't worked at it yet.

DA: Well, I don't know the details, but apparently it was land that was leased from the railroad where the shop was. They had like a 99-year lease. I don't know the details. And I think the railroad wanted it back.

NP: Ah. Because you said it was close to Pool 6, right?

DA: Yeah.

NP: And they probably owned that land heading from the railway to the elevator.

DA: It could be, yeah.

NP: Yeah.

DA: The shop was right beside the tracks, and it was just a short block from Cumberland Street behind--. What lumber? I forget. There was a lumber company--Laskin's store and a lumber company on the corner, and Woodside's was just across the tracks from the lumber company.

NP: Would that have been Pigeon River, or am I in the wrong place?

TT: In the early days, probably, yes. But at this time, I'm not sure.

DA: I can't remember the name.

NP: Where would Woodside's get their supplies from? We were talking about coal earlier.

DA: Yeah. I don't know where they got that. The foundry, where they made the iron castings, they used coke, and they would buy that from someplace by the carload. It was much cheaper. About every couple of years, they'd get a boxcar full of coke and unload it into the shed behind the shop.

NP: And what else? I'm not very--.

DA: Steel and that?

NP: Yeah, where would this--?

DA: Most of it come from the Marshall Wells and Cochrane Hardware, local hardware retailer or dealers.

NP: Come up from the States mostly would you think?

**[0:25:02]**

DA: Most of it we got locally. They did order like big steel shafting. I don't know where they got that from.

NP: Any connection with iron ore, or that's too early on in the chain?

TT: No, they didn't. I mean, they were shipping iron ore out from the Second World War on, but they weren't doing much smelting of it here.

DA: Before my time, they did make a lot of mining equipment, and you have pictures of it over here—the tram cars and wheels and everything. There was nothing like that when I was there.

TT: You see lots of manhole covers still in the city.

DA: Oh, yeah. Pretty steady.

TT: Were you involved in the actual smelting part and the foundry part?

DA: Yeah, yeah. They poured iron about once a week. And I didn't work in the foundry, but all the apprentices on iron pouring days, that's where we rounded up. You had to go help in the foundry. Everybody who was available had to work on that.

TT: We have a number of wooden forms.

DA: Mmhmm, patterns.

TT: Patterns, yes. Can you explain the process of how those would have been used?

DA: Well--.

[Woman]: Hello?

DA: An iron casting this shape, you would make a wooden pattern. It was usually made of white pine. It would be split in half, and they would put it upside down on a piece of flat board with a box around it, pack sand in it, and then turn it over and take that pattern out. There'd be an indentation. They'd do the same with the other side and put the two molds together and two holes coming up—one for the iron to go in, another one for the air to come out. Basically, that was it. The patterns usually had to be in two pieces to get the mold apart to take the pattern out.

TT: And you'd pour inside and--.

DA: Yeah.

TT: Okay.



NP: So was the mold just--. You said you had molds that were wood. The wood wouldn't burn?

DA: The wood is the pattern.

NP: Oh, okay.

DA: You pack sand all around it, and then you take the pattern out and it would leave a hole the size and shape of the pattern. The wooden pattern had to be a little bit bigger than the piece you wanted because if you poured a two-foot-long piece of iron, it would shrink a quarter of an inch or an eighth of an inch or quarter of an inch to the foot shrinkage. So the pattern always had to be bigger than the finished product.

TT: Pretty precise measuring then.

DA: Some of the castings were quite intricate, and I think the biggest ones we made were around 1,800 pounds. Piece of iron, eh? We made the big car haul drum for, I think, Pool 6 elevator. If I remember right, it come in around 1,800 pounds.

NP: Were they--. Now, I've seen some pictures of elevator construction around the time you were working, and they were still using horses for delivering. When they got these big pieces you were talking about, how were they delivered?

DA: By truck. Yeah.

NP: So a modern operation?

DA: Yeah. Yeah, we had a hand-operated crane in front of the shop for loading and unloading stuff. That was the apprentice's job to crank the crane to load and unload parts as they come in.

NP: Now, I saw the chimney, the great big chimney for the powerhouse at the Fort William Elevator, which was built in 1913. What would it be, the clean-out door?

DA: At the bottom?

NP: The big--. Yeah.

DA: Yeah. I guess it would be, yeah.

NP: So Woodside made that one there.

DA: Did they?

NP: Yeah. Their name was on it. So how would they do that? Like a lot of these, it was almost ornate. So how did they get the name on it?

DA: Well, the pattern would be made of wood, and they'd make wooden numbers and fasten them on. Then when they took the pattern out, the indentation of the letters and the numbers would be there, and the iron would flow into them.

**[0:30:10]**

NP: So, did they have like an artist on staff who was--.

DA: No.

NP: Because they're quite, quite lovely.

DA: No, they had what they called a pattern maker. He made all the patterns.

NP: Do you remember what the fellow's name was when you were there?

DA: The pattern maker was Jack Toole. There were probably three molders, they called them. The men that set these sand molds up. There was a Henry Gibson, I remember. He was an older man. He was about the same age as Art Woodside. Ed Faucet. I guess they were the two main ones when I was there.

NP: Who took over for Mr. Woodside when he retired?

DA: When Art Woodside retired, his nephew Bob Newsom—who also was a foreman for Art—and the other foreman, Stuart Barron, they bought the shop from Art Woodside. They operated it until-- Well, Stuart passed away—I can't remember when—and Bob Newsom operated it until it closed.

NP: Did they operate it under Woodside name? Continued with the name, as far as you know?

DA: Yeah. It was still-- They changed the name a little bit to Woodside Machinist and Foundry Company, but it was still under the Woodside name.

NP: You were talking earlier about the foundry. That was a nice cool place, right? [Laughs]

DA: Well, not when they were pouring iron. It was a very hot place. [Laughing] The foundry had a sand floor because they used the sand to make the molds. Once the castings were done and the castings hardened, you took them out of the boxes, and the sand went back on the floor and was used over and over again.

NP: Did people have trouble with that heat? I was thinking it's like an enclosed blacksmith's shop. Was it hot--.

DA: No, it was usually one day a week, or if it was really busy, maybe two days a week. But you would start probably around noon it would start getting hot in there. But you were through by 4:00 usually.

NP: Was it a dangerous place to work or not so?

DA: Not by the standards then, I don't think so. We had one serious injury. A man got burnt, but on average, I would say it was comparable to any other industry. But they also made brass and aluminum castings, but iron was the main one. We made brass bushings and bearings and boat propellers. All different things.

NP: How would they get the specs for boat propellers?

DA: Usually take it from the original one. You'd have a fellow come in with the blade broken off it, and they would take the measurements off that and-- I'm guessing at that. I don't really know.

NP: How do they attach a broken piece?

DA: Well, we used to usually make a new one.

NP: A whole new propeller?

DA: Yeah. I guess they could have been welded on, but it's not too good a job. We made none very big, I think, up to a couple of feet maybe in diameter. I can't think of anything else right now. [Laughs]

NP: No.

TT: You must have worked some pretty odd hours. I mean, the elevators tended to work around the clock. Were you sort of on-call if things went wrong suddenly?

DA: Well, we normally worked, I think, we worked a 48-hour week when I went there. We worked nine hours a day and then half a day Saturday. When things got busy, we worked weekends and nights.

TT: So you'd wait for the call and if need to be--.

DA: Well, yeah. And sometimes the boats would come into one of the elevators, and we'd have some small repair work to do on it. We'd go right on the boat and fix the pump or whatever needed fixing.

NP: As you look back on it now, those five years, are you glad you had those five years?

**[0:35:03]**

DA: Yes. Yes. They gave me a trade that kept me going all my life. And after I retired, I still do that at the Founders. I had a little shop in my basement before I moved to town.

NP: What did you do in the basement?

DA: Oh, I made parts. I collect old engines, antique engines. I made most of my own parts. I made a complete engine one time—a little model gasoline engine that runs. It keeps me busy.

NP: Somebody once said that someone in town had built a model elevator, a model working elevator. That's not ever anything you've heard about?

DA: No.

NP: Somewhere, someplace there's--. [Laughs]

DA: Yeah. That'd be interesting.

NP: Mmhmm. A lot of work even just for an engine.

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DA: Yeah.

NP: And what are you doing at the Founders? What are they up to there that--?

DA: I went there to help them get their old tractors and engines running. We do a little bit of everything, building maintenance. I told you as well back there that somebody donated a couple of tonnes of coal. Rather than have it go to the dump, we hauled that to Founders and stored it in a corner. We've got enough to keep our blacksmith shop going for 100 years. [Laughing]

NP: As long as there's some people around who know the trade that you know.

DA: Yeah, well. There's a few blacksmiths around. It's actually a trade that's coming back. People are learning blacksmithing and shoeing horses. For a while, there was nobody to do that.

NP: So when you think back on that time at Woodside's—and I'm amazed that you can even think back on that time with such clarity—what were you most proud of?

DA: I can't really say. I think I enjoyed working on the boats. To me, they're so big and huge engines and everything. I got quite a kick out of that.

NP: It was good to work with--. I imagine you worked with the engineers on the boats.

DA: Yeah. The chief engineer would show us what he wanted done, and some of them were regular customers that the journeymen that I worked with all knew them. So we had a good relationship with them.

NP: Anything else Tory?

TT: No.

NP: Now, I'm going to ask you this question—and you may have an answer, you may not—but the reason that we interviewed you is because we feel that your work is a part of the grain industry. So here's my question. Canada, in spite of its geography and its climate, has become one of the world's greatest grain traders.

DA: Mmhmm.

NP: How do you think the work that you do—did—and the work that the foundry or the Woodside's did contributed to Canada being successful?

DA: Well, I would say it's a small part, but they helped keep the machines running, and they designed some equipment that nobody else made at that time anyway.

NP: Leaders.

DA: Yeah, I think they made a small contribution to the success of the industry.

NP: I agree. I agree. Well, thank you very much. I'm--.

DA: Now I live an apartment in Current River, and I supervise all the boats out in the harbour. [Laughing]

NP: You've noticed a few of them hanging around, have you?

DA: Yes. Yeah. I often wonder about that. Some of the salties sit there for a week or two.

NP: Yeah.

DA: They must lose a little money.

TT: Yes. They're waiting for a shipment.

NP: Yeah. Yeah. Somebody's paying, because they don't sit there with the crew without the costs going up quite quickly. So thank you very much.

DA: Oh, well--.

NP: I enjoyed the interview.

DA: I'm sure you'll edit some of that out.

NP: Oh, no.

**End of audio part one**

## Audio Part Two

Time, Speaker, Narrative

NP: This is Nancy Perozzo, and I'm just adding to the previous interview with Don Arril. He'd just like to add something about the 1952 explosion.

DA: I was working at Woodside's, and that day we had been working at the grain elevator across the slip from the one that blew up. Something went wrong on our job. We had to return to the shop to fix some parts. And we were sitting out in front of Woodside's having our lunch, and one of the guys said, "Look! The roof just lifted on the elevator!" And in just a couple of seconds, we heard an explosion. We drove down there with Woodside's truck, but they had it cordoned off. We couldn't get near it. We didn't see too much.

NP: You were the lucky ones then.

DA: Yeah.

NP: So might that have been--. Was it between UGG [United Grain Growers] and that elevator? There was an Alberta Pool.

DA: Yeah, I can't remember.

NP: A smaller elevator.

DA: Yeah, it was. And there was a big chunk of cement on the deck where--. Not where we were sitting, but it could have been.

NP: Close enough.

DA: And there was one piece of cement fell on a ship that was loading and killed two people, I believe.

NP: Well, it was your lucky day.

DA: I think so.

NP: Yeah. Well, thank you very much.

DA: Okay.

NP: I'm glad that you stopped by to talk to me after the presentation at the Museum.

DA: Yeah.

**End of interview**