

Narrator: Jack Gurney (JG)

Narrator: Norma Gurney (NG)

Company Affiliations: J. P. Porter

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Summary: Captain Jack Gurney and his wife Norma discuss Jack's early career aboard the dredges in the Thunder Bay waterfront. They begin by discussing Jack's grandfather's work on the railway as a hostler, Jack's brief time on the railways as a boxcar repairman, and the accident that led him to change careers. The Gurneys describe Jack joining J.P. Porter to dredge the elevator slips and Kaministiquia River to Seaway depth for grain vessels. Jack describes how the dredge, tugboats, and scows worked in the dredging operation, and he shares some of the issues that would crop up, like immovable rock or papermill refuse. He lists some of the positions aboard the tug and his role as a winchman. He shares some of the shocking things unearthed by the dredge, like huge sturgeon and human bodies. The Gurneys also discuss the negative effects of the government discontinuing dredging operations, especially for the elevator operations up the Kam River.

Keywords: J. P. Porter; Dredges; Lake dredging; River dredging; St. Lawrence Seaway; Terminal grain elevators—Thunder Bay; Tugboats; Scows; Railcar repair; Boxcars; Richardson Main Elevator—Thunder Bay; SWP Pool 6; MPE Pool 1; SWP Pool 4; Canada Malt—Thunder Bay; P&H Elevator; SWP Pool 7

Time, Speaker, Narrative
NP: The interview today is taking place in Thunder Bay on Vickers Street. I'm very pleased to have the subject of our interview introduce himself.
JG: Hello, I'm Jack Gurney.

NP: And we have a special feature today because we have another person involved in the interview who will help us out during because she's been a very big part of Mr. Gurney's career.

NG: I'm Norma Gurney, his wife of 61 years.

NP: Great! And both of you were--. Your names will be absolutely no secret to people in Thunder Bay because you've spent a large part of your career, both of you, working actively on the--.

JG: *Welcome*, and on the tugs.

NP: Great! Our project, as you know, is involved with the various aspects of the grain industry. We take a very broad view of the grain industry in that things such as tugboats, railways, the elevators themselves, the harbour itself—all part of making the grain industry. If we didn't have all those pieces, it either wouldn't work, period, or work very efficiently. I'm going to ask you, Jack, about the early history of your family because it goes back quite a ways in the Thunder Bay area. I understand that your grandfather, actually, was he the first to move to the Thunder Bay area?

JG: Yes, pretty well. He was born down east. I think my dad was from--.

NG: Bellville.

JG: Yes, Bellville, Ontario. Then he moved up here, ran for council, and being an alderman.

NP: Now he worked for the railway?

JG: Yes, he did.

NP: Tell us what you can about what you remember him talking about, or your father talking about, about the early railway days.

JG: Well, I kind of remember because my grandfather was the hostler. A hostler is--. Years ago, they had the turntable with tracks on it, and his job was to bring the engine, the steam engines, out of the roundhouse, put them on the turntable, and get on the right track to a train that has already been prepared for that particular engine. Then he would go back into the roundhouse, probably an hour later, and when they were making up three, four, five trains, he would put the next steam engine out on the turntable, and that particular engine went on the next train and so on.

NP: I imagine an awful lot of boxcars in those days were empties from delivering grain to the grain elevators.

JG: Correct. And of course, some of them were in bad order. They would come into the rip track to be repaired. Like there could be holes in the deck and the grain was leaking out! So we re-deck it and there would be rivets that have loosened up and my job, one of my jobs at that time, was riveter. I was a riveter. I would rivet the--. I can't think of the name.

NP: Don't worry about it.

JG: Anyways, I would rivet on the bottom of the boxcar, and we would weld parts onto the bottom of the boxcar to prevent any more grain leakage. Most of them were wooden cars at that time.

NP: So your grandfather started as a--.

NG: Hostler

NP: And your father was a--.

JG: Was a storekeeper.

NG: He was superintendent of stores.

JG: Yes. superintendent of stores. He worked here--.

NG: He worked in Winnipeg first.

JG: And then worked Winnipeg. Transcona first and then went to Rainy River and then to Neebing. He retired when he was 65.

NP: You followed not exactly in his footsteps because you didn't start with stores, but you--.

JG: No. I remember when I was about 18, he came home from work and he said, "Time you got a steady job. I'm going to get you a job on the rip track as a boxcar repairman." So I did that for, what?

NG: A few years, yeah.

JG: Five or six years.

NG: Five or six years.

NP: Did they have an actual--. You know when you have a bus and it needs repairs it went into what I recalled carbarns, was there a carbarns type of thing for repairing boxcars? Or did you have to do it out on the track?

NG: You did it outside. That's what was so cold.

JG: No, no. No roof on anything. You worked outside in the winter and summer, all weather. In the winter when the frost and the snow, they would have to raise the boxcars, they had big square platforms, probably four-by-four, that would hold a big carjack and you would jack the boxcars up.

NP: Something similar to what you would do to jack up a car, for changing the oil?

JG: Similar yeah, similar.

NP: But much bigger.

JG: Much bigger, yes. There was one interesting story I had, when I was jacking up the box car--.

NG: And it was a bad order too.

JG: Bad order jack! It goes *click, click, click, click, click* and--.

NG: And then it didn't click one time.

JG: No click, and the pressure is still on.

NG: The weight of the boxcar.

JG: So I yell at Billy Novack, “Billy! This B.O. jack--.” That’s what you call a bad order, “B.O. jack.” So he said, “Hang on! Hold onto it.”

NG: But you couldn’t, could you?

JG: I’ll get either Meathead—that’s what we call one of the foremen—or Isabel to come out and see what we can do about this.
[Laughing]

NG: But you couldn’t hang onto it.

JG: I couldn’t hang onto it any longer.

NG: The weight of the boxcar.

JG: I put my head over the--. I didn’t know it was over that. I thought it was farther away. I let the boxcar go with the weight of it on and it caught me on the jaw.

NG: Broke his jaw. He had false teeth and lost all his teeth.

JG: And went right up to the end of the boxcar. All my teeth were flattened because I had false teeth, and they were all flattened. I went to the dentist after, and he told me, “You’re going to pick--.” He made me a nice set of false teeth, and he says, “You’re going to pick chunks of bone out of your lips. So have your wife get a pair of tweezers because you’re going to have to pull these things out.”

NG: Don’t go into too much of that. But that’s the kind of risk that was outside--.

NP: Couple of inches and you would’ve been dead.

NG: Oh, yeah.

JG: Oh, could’ve easily.

NG: With the weight of the boxcar came down and lifted him and then of course foreman did say, “There’s that Gurney acting up again,” because he was staggering around after he was hit. [Laughs]

JG: Actually, yes. He was a little more colourful than that, but that’s what he meant.

NG: That’s what he meant, yeah.

NP: You were saying that at some point you decided that working on the railway wasn’t for you.

JG: That’s correct, yeah.

NP: What brought you to that decision?

JG: Well, that episode and when I saw these old timers crippled from carrying the big toolboxes around, and in the winter digging holes in the frozen ground to put the pads down to raise the box cars, I figured--.

NG: And then the heat.

JG: In the summers—hot! The steel and the wooden boxcars would radiate the heat. Oh, something fierce! I came home to her and said, “I can’t do this for the rest of my life.” I said, I mentioned either—oh, I forgot his name now—one of the guys, and I said, “He’s been doing that and for Anonichuk--.”

NG: Then you decided that was not going to be for you, and I agreed with him. I said, “Well.” So then he looked for other work and that’s when he—he left there—and that’s when--. Well it was your barber, he said they’ve been wanting young men on the dredge. So he went to see Bill Lishness, the superintendent of J. P. Porter.

JG: No, Bill Lishness was cutting his hair and he said--.

NG: That’s right.

JG: “I got a job for you, Jack.” And he said, “This is Bill Lishness, your new boss.” [Laughs]

NG: So he started working for the dredging company and that's how he got involved in--. And he just loved it, right from the get go.

JG: I loved it.

NP: What did you like about it?

JG: Bill, the boss, was a humanitarian. He loved people. He loved men, animals. There was all kinds of deer on the island at that time, and he heard they were going to shoot some. Oh, he made such a fuss about it, "You can't shoot those animals. They're born and raised there. They don't harm anything. They eat the brush." On and on.

NG: Bill was a prince of a man. He was a man that was easy for all of us. He had had polio, and he had one arm in a sling, but he was able to beat that. The boys on the dredge, they made him something so he could improve.

JG: They made a wheel, had an old steering wheel and they had a brake on it, and he would stand with his good right arm—well it wasn't too good—and he would turn that wheel over and over and over.

NG: To get strength in his arm.

JG: To strengthen that arm.

NG: Oh, but he was just a wonderful man.

JG: He was, and he had a wonderful family.

NG: As a result, it was a nice place to work. He really liked it because you're outdoors and nothing like the railway.

JG: Not at all.

NG: The only disadvantage was that it was seasonal. So when the contract ended, you could only work so long, and then it would be finished.

JG: Then I'd have to get a job at a shipyard.

NP: What did you do at the shipyards? Just seasonal labour?

NG: Seasonal labour, yes.

JG: Labourer. Three months at the shipyards, or four months, something like that. Then we would phone Bill—she would phone Bill—constantly to see when we were getting a contract, and he'd say, "Well, they're working on them. They're working on them."

NG: Now the history of this is, the fact that when you went to work at Porter's, that was when they were making the Seaway so that they were--. They were building the Canadian and American, the Seaway, from the Atlantic Ocean right to the Mile Zero, was the Great Lakes Paper, that's Mile Zero.

JG: They call it Mile Zero by the Pagoda, which has Mile Zero on the Seaway. Right there.

NP: So have they taken the zero from where it used to be and put it in a new place?

NG: They pretty well have to now because they've closed some of the--. Well, no, they can still get up there going through the Mission River.

JG: Oh, yes.

NG: But the idea was when you went there, there was contracts galore because--. That's why you were there so long, and when we get past that point, when we got past the point when you were no longer at Porter's, that's when the Seaway was complete and all.

JG: The Seaway, at first, was dug to 25 feet and then it was 26 feet.

NG: 27.

JG: And then they decided, "Deep-sea ships are starting to come in, we've got to go 27 feet." When they're empty, they can come in. When they're loaded, they just touch the bottom on the way out.

NG: That meant that it had to be a--.

[Audio pauses]

NP: I meant to ask you a question about dredging, okay? We took a little pause there. I think, if my memory serves me, that we were talking about the dredging company. The name of it was J.P. Porter, and I know there was a discussion we were having about Mile Zero, of where it was, and the fact that when you started with J.P. they were doing dredging for the Seaway.

JG: That's correct.

NP: Now, you're the first person that we've talked to that's had any experience with dredging.

JG: Oh, I see.

NP: What is it? Why is it? And anything you would like to add, given--.

JG: Okay, the--. At one time, like I said, the Seaway was dredged to 25 feet, and then it went to 26 feet, and then the big deep-sea ships started coming to Thunder Bay, and it had to go to 27 feet. We actually dredged a foot deeper, and it's called something. It's called--. Anyway, all the dredge operators—there were four of them—they dredged to a little over 27 feet. 26-5, 26-7, something like that.

NP: What area was dredged in those days?

JG: The area, there's a good idea--. First of all, my first job on the [inaudible] was changing crews, and they dredged--. The dredge was working at Pool 1 first. It had to be dredged down to 27 feet. Then the dredge--. We did that. They had a big chart in the office on the dredge, and it showed the progress of the dredge. They would do 300 feet in one night, then another operator would come on, and maybe he would run into hard digging, so he'd only do 200 yards. And the next operator would run into almost nothing, so they would move the dredge back and start over again. These charts were all like this for the area we were dredging.

We dredged next, I think--. Even now at Richardson's Elevator, they have tanks on the outside of the elevator, and they're still there. That's because when we were dredging there we ran into rock. We we're going to drill it, and we were going to do all kinds of things, and divers went down and said, "It's almost solid rock." The pilings come right down from the top of the rock, and they

stop and they're all in different--. The rock is like this so it's all different edges. They said, "We just can't go anymore." The operators said, "So that's, that. We're finished there and going to another elevator."

So we did. Pool 7 was mud. Malt Plant was none. It's all mud, mud, mud. Then we ran into a rock in front of Pool 6, where the ships come in, a big one, massive, big rock. Bill Lishness hired a diver to go down and lay these charges on the rock around all. Then we all sat out on the dredge—the work boats—everybody sat around. Bill notified some of the people that, "Don't go near there because we're blasting." So the fishermen would stay away. Anyway, they blew the rock and then they put the dredge in to pick the rock up. There was nothing left. We dredged right down to 27 feet. There's nothing left. They blew a hole in the harbour. So that was done. Where did we go next?

I think it was Pool 1. Pool 1 is easy, and Parrish and Heimbecker was easy, and--.

NP: There's not many left. There's Pool 4--.

JG: That's right, Pool 4 and--.

NP: Even Pool 2.

JG: Pool 2, yeah, the old one is still standing. Built in 1883. I could be--. And I know P&H, Parrish & Heimbecker, still standing. I don't know if they're in use or not. I'd have to ask my son Dave because he worked for the deep sea ships right now. That's about what we did.

NP: Did you dredge in the river at all?

JG: Yes, we did. We dredged the Kaministiquia River.

NG: And the Mission.

JG: Right up to—on the Kaministiquia—right up to the Jackknife Bridge, under the bridge, around to Elevator D, and well right up until the turning basin. That's right by the Great Lakes papermill. Yes, we dredged all of that to 27 feet.

NP: We have, just for your information, one of the artifacts that somebody has given us, are pictures of the initial dredging of the turning basin.

JG: Really? Did you talk to Mary Steck?

NP: No.

JG: Her husband was Tommy Steck. He was engineer on our dredge, and Curtain, his buddy, was the skipper—not on the dredge, they were on the tugs. Our dredge did right up into the turning basin, and it was all wood pulp. We'd put the scows—we had two scows—and we would load them with the dredgings from the paper mill, and before we could take the scows out to the dump, the paper--. It had dried and turned into paper. It was all paper the whole--.

NG: Turning basin.

JG: Yes. Even the scows were filled with paper! We had a heck of a time dumping them. It wouldn't dump. The operators got the word to pit, we would go pick up the dredge, tow it to where there was mud, bring it back to turning basin, and they would put in a couple of buckets of mud into each one to get rid of all the pulp from the mill. It was right full. At one time it was only 12 feet deep.

The current runs in a circle, and it would take all the mud and pile it, but the Great Lakes tugs, the *Crusam*, *Glen G*, they're all in right up close to it. And Great Lakes said, "You have to do the turning basin. It has to be done because you can't get ships in anymore." So we did that. At that time, there was two elevators there.

NP: Yes, they were! And they were called--.

JG: Northwest?

NP: Very good. And the Electric.

JG: Electric, right!

NP: You know, I don't have too many people who remember the name of those two elevators. Why do they stick in your mind?

JG: Because we rode by them everyday. I ran, at that time, mostly I was running the tugs. We used to run aground with the scows and lift them up—there was a big hill by the two elevators—run the scows up, and they would sit there for a minute and then slide off. We'd take two at a time, *whoosh*, and do that.

NP: Why would you do that?

JG: To get all that crap out of the--. From the mill, all the pulp and everything out.

NP: Now, this may seem like a silly question, but, you know, very few people know what a scow is, including me. What is a scow?

JG: Oh, a scow! Actually, we had four scows. One is still in the river at J.P. Porter, the original dock, It's part of the dock. They made a concrete slab, filled the scow, sunk it, and made a big dock there.

NP: Where is the J.P. dock?

JG: J.P. Porter? On the island. Island #1.

NP: Okay, I'll have to look for that.

JG: Oh yes.

NP: But what is a scow?

JG: A scow is a metal--.

NP: Here it is.

JG: Oh yes, you draw it, hon. You deal with it. That's right. And on the end, there was a winch, that would lift the scow when you dumped it. And the scowman, Mike his name was—he committed suicide, by the way, in Lake Ontario.

NP: So let's talk about a scow. I've got a little picture here and what it looks like is--.

JG: Pockets. It's actually six pockets.

NP: It's a flat, platform essentially?

JG: No, it's a floating, steel vessel that had pockets in it and on each scow--.

NG: They would be closed.

JG: They would close.

NG: And then you would fill them.

NP: Are they like holds? Little holds on the ship?

JG: Not little holds, they were big. The scow was 140 feet long, and you would fill that with mud or anything. Then a scowman would ride--. There was a little house on the end, had a machine on it, usually right in the middle.

NP: Right in the middle. On one end there's a--.

JG: On one end there's a winch, big engine winch. It was usually a big 6 GM engine and each scow had—like she has here—this V shape. They had pockets in them, then the scowman would walk along, hit the dogs—there was two dogs on each—they hit the dog, and the mud would--. The doors would open up, big wooden doors. They were made up--.

NG: At the bottom.

JG: Made up of BC fir, and it doesn't rot in the water. They drop the mud out and they were--. And like I said, my job was towing that scow out by the Welcome Islands. Then the government said, "That place is full, you can no longer dump on this side of the Welcomes, you've got to go on the outside." So we did, and the water was deep there. And then they stopped it all. No more dredging.

NP: Why did they stop it all, do you think?

JG: Pollution.

NP: I was going to ask, what kinds of stuff was in there?

JG: Oh, everything. It was mud from the bottom. I'll tell you, when the grain inspectors came onboard—we dug by Richardson's—and when the grain inspectors come onboard, they bring booze in bottles. They would drink them and throw them in the water all the way along every elevator. So the first thing when we were dredging, we would dredge up glass. A scow load of glass, or almost a scow load. Then we'd put mud on top of it, so it'd sink when we get out there. So that's what we did.

NP: Now again, this is probably a brainless question from your perspective, but you have the tug that tows the scow, what loads the stuff onto the scow?

JG: The dredge.

NP: Okay, and what does the dredge look like?

JG: We've got pictures. Think of--. The guy that just died, Norm. His models of the dredge are perfect.

NP: He actually had models? Little models?

JG: His name is Joe Mogus, but he died.

NP: And what happened to his models?

JG: His wife has them.

NG: Mmhmm.

JG: She's a redhead. Nice little lady. [Laughing]

NP: Remember this is being taped. [Laughing]

JG: She's very friendly.

NG: Explain that.

JG: Okay. The dredge would--. This is on the--. Here, there's a circle. Make a circle Norm. The dredge would spin on the circle. There's wires that ran from here to the--. All along the inside of the dredge and on the outside, these things ran on the deck. When the operator, who is sitting here--. Actually the operator sat out here, he was out in front of that.

NP: So sitting over the edge so he could watch the bucket.

JG: He could see the bucket at all times, yes.

NP: Just to clarify things because we are listening to it--. Although, when we use a piece of tape like this, we'll have a picture of a dredge, we'll have a picture of a scow--.

JG: I hope.

NP: We've got, again, a flat vessel, with a little house that the operator sits in.

JG: This had windows all along the outside so the inspectors could see. There was a bed on each side so the inspectors—it was always a government inspector—he would check to see how--. He would have a sounding chain with a big lead on it, and he would put that in, find out, “You're digging too deep, you got to take less off.” So we would take less off. Then at the end of our dredging, they had the big scow with a railway boxcar, 40 feet long. After we were dredging, the government inspectors would say, “You better get the--.” Oh, I've forgotten the name. Anyway, we towed that overtop of where the dredge was and that smoothed it out to 27 feet, 27-6, 27, and 28. We have one. Well, it's hard to see but have a look here, honey, see this?

[Audio pauses]

NP: Good answer?

JG: Yes.

NP: Just wait until I turn this on. We just took a pause to take a look at some artwork that improved my education about dredges and scows. We know that there was scowman, was that what he was called?

JG: Scowman, yes.

NP: Now, who were the crew on a dredge?

JG: Herbie Roads, best operator in the world. He could always leave his—after he had dug it, say he was working midnights—he would leave his just flat, almost flat. He would whip the bucket back and forth. He had the patience of a Job, and he was fast.

NG: They had cooks onboard.

JG: Oh yes, they had cooks onboard *Digby*. We haven't discussed *Digby*. *Digby* came up from Whitby?

NG: Yes, I think so. That was another dredge. They had two rigs up here.

JG: Their dredge was bigger. It had quarters on it—living quarters. The crew used to live onboard. They had a cook on the—first while on the dredge—our dredge. Feaver?

NG: Feaver.

JG: Oh, I forgot his name. Feaver was the husband's name, and he was a boilerman. He watched the boilers because it was steam operated. His wife was, at one time, a cook on the *Whalen* and a cook on the--. Oh, I've forgotten the name. Gone. Anyways, she was a cook, and a good one.

NP: So we had the--. Starting at the head of the hierarchy, who was the boss?

JG: The boss was Joe Paxton. No, he was--. The superintendent was Bill Liset. The foreman on the dredge was Joe Paxton. He hated me, by the way.

NP: I couldn't imagine.

JG: Because I wore moccasins to work, and he wore big boots, overalls, all kinds of--. Anyway, he had a hate on for me, and I would terrorize him, myself. They moved the dredge, by the way, when they moved the dredge there are markers, and I told you about the plan inside the office in the dredge, and they would say, "We're moving the dredge." Herbie would have no problem. He'd put the boom down, put the bucket way out, and then he would close the bucket and just with the mud that was in the

bucket, he would move the dredge. He would just slowly lift the boom, almost straight up, and the dredge would just, *whoosh*, scoot along. Really neat. Like Glen Ward was good, but not as good as Herbie was. They had, like I said, good operators like Joe Mogus—compared to Herbie, a fair operator—Debair was rotten, Glen Ward was better. Those were all the guys. They changed shifts all the time.

NP: If we're just talking about positions, we have the superintendent--.

NG: That's what I was trying to get you to.

NP: The foreman, the operator, the--.

NG: There would be a deckhand or a winchman. Was there a winchman on the dredge?

JG: Yes, me. I was a winchman for most of the time. A lot of times.

NP: So was that the winch that dealt with the scow?

JG: Yes. The scow was alongside the dredge, and you moved it back and forth.

NP: And the boiler? Boilerman?

JG: Back of the dredge. Feaver, his name was.

NP: Then a cook.

JG: At one time.

NP: Anybody else?

JG: Only the dredge, *Digby*—that was the one that was brought up from down East—had a cook on it. Their crew slept onboard, and they worked seven days a week. But *Digby* was taken away. The foreman on the *Digby* was--. I just had it.

NG: If you want me to interject here for the staffing, the superintendent and the foreman, and there was operator and a winchman, and there was usually a deckhand also on the dredge, and then there was the cook, and then there was--.

JG: This is the dredge *Digby McKellar* never had a cook.

NG: But then when you got to the tug, there was the tug captain, and then there was a wheelsman on the tug, and there was a deckhand. Then there was a scowman.

JG: Two deckhands.

NG: Two deckhands, okay. And then there was a scowman on the scow that would--. When they got to the dumpsite, then they would knock the dogs out and all the of the wood, the bottom of the scows would open, everything would go into the lake, and then they would close again, and they'd have to winch them all back up, and then they would tow it back.

JG: By the way, the scowman on the way back would be washing all the mud off.

NG: Getting it all cleaned up, reading to be filled again. [Phone rings] **[Audio pauses]** We'll start again with, what was the strangest thing you ever pulled out of the water dredging?

JG: Dead bodies, a couple of them. One guy was almost cut in half by the bucket when they closed it and, well, he wouldn't feel it. [Laughing] The other guy--.

NP: Gallows humour.

JG: I think was in the turning basin, if I remember correctly.

NP: Now what about non-human remains? Was there ever any interesting artifacts pulled out? You didn't make your fortune from finding a big nugget of gold or anything?

JG: No, no. But in the river that goes right by the Great Lakes Paper Mill they—like we said one time—the mill put out this purple dye, and fish by the thousands died. One was a sturgeon, sat beside the dredge, floated to the top beside the dredge, and so help me, it had to be nine, ten feet long. That big around. And you know a sturgeon has a mouth on it like that. They're bottom feeders so--.

NP: Like a catfish, sort of like a sucker mouth.

JG: Well, yeah, a suckermouth. Like a catfish but much, much bigger. This thing floated up beside the dredge, and I couldn't believe it. I said, "Herbie, look at this!" And he came down, "Holy Jeez!" A little more colourful. So we had the whole crew looking at this and I asked, "Anybody have a camera?" Oh yeah, one guy had a camera, so he took some pictures. I don't know where they went, but anyway, I said, "Well we're not going to tow this around." So I got in the workboat, threw a line on it, and took it—oh, where'd I put it—up against the shore by the two old elevators.

After that, I suppose seagulls and everything else ate it, hawks or whatever. We didn't have too many bodies or anything, but a couple. We were dredging in the river and the bucket disturbed something, and someone jumped in the river in the winter—we read about that once and a while now—and they float to the top with oxygen and everything, whatever happens. Then they call the harbour police and make a big investigation and find out this person was living in a place in Port Arthur, and he walked down the docks and jumped in—committed suicide.

NP: That must have been very disturbing for the crew.

JG: Oh yes, it is. It is. First of all, they have to call the coastguard, and they spent hours checking it to see if there's any identification, wallet, if he has this, if he has that. Then they put it in the paper a couple of weeks later, or a week later: unidentified body floated to the top of the river and, like I said, unidentified. They never mentioned the dredge or anything. It was different.

NP: Now, dredging the harbour is a federal responsibility, is it not?

JG: Yes.

NP: One of the things that the elevator operators have mentioned along the Kam was that their business really--. They were no longer able to carry out their business to the extent they were before when dredging stopped.

JG: That's right, yes.

NP: Do you have any comments to make about that?

JG: No. We used to see, when I first started working there, the old elevator where Pete was—they demolished that one—Pete demolished it—he's my brother-in-law—and they—

NG: Can I just—?

NP: Yes. You want to insert something here?

NG: No, this is what the question was that because when dredging stopped, the elevators along the river couldn't function because it wasn't dredged to 27 feet anymore. So once dredging ceased, it started dredging in, and as soon as it started filling in, they could no longer get the boats tied up against their docks. So what happened was—it was great when it happened with all dredged out—but once it started filling in and there were no more dredging contracts, these elevators along the river could not function like they had been before.

JG: You've seen pictures of the harbour that are at—what's his name—of the *Whalen*, tug *Whalen*?

NP: Yes, oh yes.

JG: Where the elevators are, they were demolished, some of them were demolished.

NP: The old, old elevators. The CP Elevators.

JG: Correct. CP Elevators. They were demolished and--.

NP: You still see parts of your piers there, don't you?

JG: Yes. That's what I was going to tell you. That's what it was. All along the riverbank for an area, almost to the East End, there were these holes in the concrete.

NG: You used to describe those on the narration.

JG: Unfortunate people, homeless people, would throw mattress in there and sleep there.

NP: I have seen those myself. Those were probably the basement or the tunnels of the elevators.

JG: That's right.

NP: What a place to find yourself living.

JG: I know, but it happened. That's life.

NP: That's life.

NG: You're getting a bit tired.

JG: No, I'm fine.

NP: I think it's quarter after 5:00. I'm starting to get hungry.

JG: I'll feed you if you want. [Laughing]

NP: It's my husband's birthday. I have to go.

JG: Oh, you have to go, yes.

NP: Anyway, I'm just going to officially sign off this one and thank you very much, both of you. Now I need your picture as well Norma. We'll resume again, and we'll talk about your tours along the waterfront because you were instrumental, both of you, in making sure that people in the city and visitors learned about our elevators. I'm really pleased about that.

End of interview.