Narrator: Gene Onchulenko (GO)

Company Affiliations: Manitoba Pool Elevators, Lake Shippers Clearance Association (LSCA), Thunder Bay Tug Services Inc., Thunder Bay Grain Trimmers

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Interviewers: Nancy Perozzo (NP) and Ernie Epp (EE)

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Summary: Former grain handler and employee of Lake Shippers Clearance Association Gene Onchulenko discusses his varied career in Thunder Bay's grain industry. He recalls his earliest interaction with elevators as a child swimming in the Kam River near Westland D, and he describes his first job in the elevators at Pool 9 shovelling boxcars. He describes his other positions within Manitoba Pool terminals, like as a grain cleaner and annex man, before moving into Lake Shippers Clearance Association as a clerk. He shares the history of LSCA, its role in elevator warehouse receipt accounting, and its responsibility for coordinating ships in the harbour. He explains in detail how the LSCA matched elevator grain stocks with ships and their orders, as well as the various reports made out. He discusses his casual work for the Thunder Bay Grain Trimmers, and he explains the proper sequences of ship loading. Onchulenko shares many stories from his career on the waterfront, like of his interactions with ship's crews, of his childhood paper route through grain neighbourhoods, of cleaning out grain silos, of grain spills, and of interactions with elevator employees and the Canadian Grain Commission. After the closure of the LSCA, Onchulenko discusses his casual work as a linesman for Thunder Bay Tug Services and his hobby of ship photography and history. Other topics discussed include the introductions of computers to LSCA, the change to metric system and new grain grades, updates to ship communications, the Canadian Wheat Board's role in pooling grain, Keefer Terminal's operations, the build up of terminals in the West Coast, and terminals specializing in different grains.

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Time, Speaker, Narrative
NP: Just introducing an interview on July 16, 2010, with Gene Onchulenko. Nancy Perozzo and Ernie Epp with the able assistants of Ian Dew. And Gene our history goes back a fair ways. We're, as I said this morning when we were interviewing another fellow, we're grain industry groupies. But I think you're the super-groupie. GO: We're excited! NP: Thanks. [Laughs] Thanks a lot for taking time to talk to us this afternoon, and as we discussed off of tape, we'll start with just a little bit of your history with the grain trade, how you became involved and interested. Then we'll move on to a discussion of the various elevators because I know you have deep historical depth, and we'll both take a look at your collection, and then we'll delve into your varied career within the industry. GO: Sure. NP: Sound okay? So if you introduce yourself and tell us how you became the person you are today related to the grain trade. GO: Well, I grew up on East Brock Street, across to Tarbutt Street Park. We were very close to the Kam River. And we would go over to the park and play basketball and baseball in the morning. Then we'd go to the river to swim. And we swam in what we called the Indian Piers. It's where the waterline, came from Mount McKay, at the bend in the river and there was a pipeline that was laid at the river bottom. The City of Thunder Bay had a boathouse there, and they used to service, to go across the river to check the valves on each side of the river. Well one year they were towing a barge and it had one of the spuds. The spud is the stabilizing mechanism that is like an I-beam that goes on four corners of the barge down, to hold it while it's stretching. Well one of these spuds was dragging and it broke the pipeline. And Fort William was without water. Then they built a tunnel underneath and that saved the problem of the ships dragging it. While swimming on the banks of the Kam River, we were aware of all the elevators and all the ships. We used to see them go by. The Great Lakes Paper towed booms up. We used to swim out to the booms, go onto the tug, get a piece of pie, stuff like this. We knew a lot of the vessels. And while hanging around there, we befriended some people who worked at Westland Elevator D. Now we used to go in the evening and visit with the basement man and have coffee with him and one of the fellows that lived on East Frances, Art Nichols, took us upstairs and showed us the tops of the bins. It's called the annex, where the grain is binned. And in

Elevator D, there was no cement floor, on the bins, you had to walk on little catwalks, and if you ever fell in, well, that's it. But it was a busy elevator, and so that was my first exposure to the grain trade.

And later I went away to school, to Ryerson, and then came back and got married, settled down and started to work at Pool 9 elevator, which was a flax house. And you had to shovel the cars in those days. Those days, Manitoba Pool operated Pool 1, Pool 3, and Pool 2, and Pool 9. Pool 9 was actually owned by the Alberta people but operated by Manitoba Pool. So that was an exposure to working in the grain elevator. The people I worked for, the Manitoba Pool people, I found them to be very, very good people, very professional. And when you walked in there, there was a kind of a welcoming atmosphere. And they encouraged you to learn, and they were good to you. They were. Like you could see that these are good, good—every foreman, every supervisor—they're proud of what they did, and that sort of rubbed onto you. To some people an elevator job was just temporary until I find something better. But I found it very interesting, and I got interested in looking at grain and saying, "Oh yeah, that's this or that and this."

So then when you get to the elevator your entry, lower-entry, job is shoveling boxcars. And there's a whole thing about shoveling. In some elevators in Thunder Bay there was some guys that were very proficient at shoveling cars, and you're supposed to dump ten cars a day, five in the morning and five in the afternoon. It's hard work. It's a little labour intensive, and what shoveling means is that you get a wooden board that's about three and a half feet by three and a half feet. And on the bottom, there's chains that go to a cable. The cable goes outside the car, up a shiv, and there's kind of coiled thing. The idea is you take your shovel, and go to the back of the car, buried it in the grain. The shovel engages, and the cable pulls, and you ride the shovel out the door. And after a while you get quite proficient. You put your foot where the two chains meet the cable and you make a kind of cushion around the shovel to hold—hold it in, to maximize the amount of grain you're bringing.

Well, the days when I worked, there were these wooden boxcars. When they were filled with wheat, by the time the cars got to Thunder Bay, the wheat had settled a little bit, and if you could get yourself in the back corner and bury your shovel, you could get to the floor in about three or four scoops. But Pool 9 was basically a flax house, and we got a lot of the steel cars. Flax is very hard to walk in. You sink up to your ankles, or halfway to your knees. And it's very hard in the winter because you got to wear your winter boots. They have to be steel toe. I'm an eyeglass wearer. I had to wear a mask. The mask would freeze. My glasses would fog up. I didn't know where I was. It was difficult. And it was very physical and labour intensive, and the fact that if you had CN cars, they had wooden grain doors.

The bottom door was this high, and the only way you could get it out is to pry with a bar. If you couldn't with a bar, you had to chop it with an axe. So then you had to turn it on its side, so that it would slide out. The grain would start pouring. Then you'd pry the other doors off. Then you could get inside and start to shovel. So when you first started off, you couldn't do it because you're

not in shape. So the car shed foreman always encouraged you, “Come on boys, try a little harder. Get up there. Get into shape.” So when you first started off, like sometime it was just two guys, sometime it was four guys. If it was four guys, it was a lot easier.

So later on, you got these cars that were brought in by the CPR, and they had what you called paper doors. They had metal strapping that went across. So you and your partner—he would be on the other side—and you’d be on this side, and you’d have a fire axe. And then you’d say, “Okay, ready?” and you start banging. Try to take your axe and swing it with enough might to break the straps. If you hit it in unison, you go *bang, bang, bang, bang*, the car would burst, and you’d get a third of your grain out. Then you’d climb in. Well, one day, we did this, and went *bang, bang, bang, bang*. Nothing happened. We opened the doors, the flax was baked because when it was harvested this little bit of moisture--. Well, the grain has a little bit of moisture to start with, and it must have sat in the siding for days and days and days and maybe weeks, and it just baked into a solid cube of flax. So in order to get it out, we had to take grain shovels, and cut squares, as if we were Eskimos making an igloo. And finally, we got it out, and then I notice when we loaded that flax on a boat, all the chunks were coming out, like you know, big pieces of the thing.

So the guys in the elevator were very good to work with. One of my first jobs was on the cleaner deck, which was boring because inside of an elevator—it’s all--. Because I went into other fields, but I always retained my interest in the waterfront, taking boat pictures, hanging around, being around. Well, one of the elevators I had to work was at Pool 2. So I ended up in the gallery where the grain goes up to go on the ships. There’s a splitter pipe, and I got to know the grain trimmers. I knew some grain trimmers before, but this is my first introduction to the grain trimmers from Port Arthur, some of which I still know to this day. We always say, “Hi.” Go on about things. So, Pool 2 was a good elevator. Then I was assigned there to run the cleaner deck. Then I had to learn the insides of the elevator. Then the next season, I was sent up on the annex to bin grain. At our elevator, we only handled, barley, but we were running out of space. So the top of the elevator, where you see on top of the bins, that’s called the annex, that’s the floor where the grain goes into the bins, and how that is done.

There’s a belt that goes along, that services two rows of bins, and there’s a guided to go over the bin, put the brakes on, and the grain will be distributed into those bins. So as the annex man, you get your instructions from the scale floor, because they know what grade it is, and they know what bin they want to put it in.

So one time, we were running really, really short of space. But overnight, the grain would settle. Because it was the same grain, what I would do, I would switch the wheel over to the bin that was nearly full and wait and wait until the last minute, then spin the wheel, put the grain on the other side. Then I’d go in the hold and shovel it level. Then I’d to the same thing the next time to try and get all the grain we could, because we couldn’t get the boats. So that was one of the things there.

And in those days in the elevators, there was a little drinking going on. Some people would say a lot of drinking. It was the culture. But that culture is gone now. There's no such thing, there's nothing. No grain trimmers drink anymore. There's nothing going on in the--. **[*…audio skips*]** Because everything's enclosed, you're waiting and waiting and waiting. That's just one aspect that--.

Later on, I was in construction. Construction went flat, so I wanted to get a job into a field I was interested in. So I approached the Lake Shippers Clearance Association. So I was hired on as a clerk. I spent 23 years there where I learned a lot about the inner workings of the grain trade. But many, many things changed. But in those days, this was pre-computer, and one of the things in the grade trade is that grain is traded on what is called warehouse receipts. The grain is moved here and stored in huge complexes. Farmer can't carry grain on his shoulder, but he can carry warehouse receipts. These warehouse receipts are created.

So the purpose of Lake Shippers was to act as a clearing house, and it was formed because in the early days. Before Lake Shippers, a buyer in Winnipeg could buy seven different lots of grain. It would be at seven different elevators, and he wasn't even there. Sometime the grain wasn't ready, and many times the elevator didn't know the boat was coming, because you didn't have the communication. So the elevators, and the ship--. There's three parties that are the mainstays of the grain trade, as, as I see it—the shippers of the grain, the people that own the grain that want to sell it and move it; the grain elevator operators, the people who own and operate the terminal elevators of the Port of Thunder Bay; and the vessel owners. All three parties, stood to benefit from this forming of the Lake Shippers. And the idea was that the Lake Shippers was supposed to be non-profit. And the elevators said, "Well we don't care, if they lose money, we'll make it up because this can't go on."

So it's like this. Say I had five $20 bills, that's $100, and I went to the Royal Bank in Westfort and deposited it. Well, I got $100 in the bank. Now say I'm driving along, and I went to Current River, and I went to the RBC bank in Current River, and I rolled on in there, but it's the same thing. So the grains pool. The idea was that the Lake Shippers would take care of the stocks, like the warehouse receipts. The idea was you can't ship what you don't have. The grain has to be accounted for. So in those days, it was all done--. That was all heavy on accounting. Three copies of this, six copies of that, seven copies of that. When you went to work in the morning you'd hear one typewriter, then another typewriter, then it was just a racket of typewriters. Then 4:30, one typewriter would go down, the decibel, and then one by one, and when they finished, your eardrums almost burst from the silence, because of all this thing. And when computers came along, now, everything that you enter in results, the end result, is a bill of lading—the person who sold the grain gets paid. The person that stored the grain gets paid. The elevator gets paid for elevating. We generate it. It's all taken care of by that last computer entry. So that was a big change in the grain trade. Doing away with the stocks.

So that was very interesting. We used to get a newsletter that gave us information from all around the world, what's going on in all the different countries. Like for example, if a cocoa or palm crop went down in one country, canola in Canada would go up, and

this kind of thing. And it told us what the prospects were in United States for grain and different things. After a while, you learn that there was many, many trends. Types of grain came and went. Things changed.

The trade changed from bushels to metric tonnes, which was a good thing in metric because it was much easier to manage. For example, a 730-foot boat would have holds that would take 45, 45.5, and that was easy to manage. You're just dealing with a few numbers. Now you're getting bushels. Now it's all metric tonnes, so a full load of grain is like 25.5, 26 or 27. Much easier to manage. Then they changed the grades.

When I was a kid and worked in the elevators, it was 1 Northern, 2 Northern, 3 Northern, 4 Northern, 5, 5 wheat, feed wheat. You had your barley and other stuff. But because the trade was to Europe, the Europeans wanted their grain to be consistent, and they wanted to buy their grain on the basis of the protein level. That mattered to them. And they wanted the same consistency trip after trip after trip. They wanted a loaf of bread that when you sliced it, you would get exactly the same number of slices each time. They wanted the bread to rise to a level that would fit their packaging. So the industry had to adapt to what the consumer wanted.

And on that note, too, one of the beneficiaries of the Wheat Board is that price trends and what's going on, on the whole world--. There's detractors to the Wheat Board, but from my point I just seen kind of positive. We got mad at the Wheat Board many times. But the end result was is that they could move volumes of grain. And the thing was that the farmer, if you contracted to grow grain, the farmer—say you're going to try to grow durum—the Wheat Board would tell you when they wanted it delivered. So you brought the grain to the elevator. They say, "Okay, we don't know the end price, but here's $2 a bushel or whatever." Then when they finish selling it all, you'd get the rest. So the farmer sort of knew he was getting money. So that was a good thing.

So another thing that the Wheat Board did was that they encouraged foreign buyers, foreign countries, how to do value-added to the grain products. They would bring them over on missions and, say, "Well look, this is what you can do with this." They had a bakery in Winnipeg, and they would make the flour and they would say, "Hey taste this." **[…*audio skips*]** Grain but here's what you can do with your grain. So they changed some people's thinking on malting barley. There was 2-row barley and 6-row barely in variations. They showed people that both kinds of barley had benefits. So that helped. They would help to market the stuff.

Now, there's people are saying nowadays, in 2010, that the farmers should be given a choice whether he wants to go with Wheat Board or not because sometimes the Wheat Board can be very restrictive on what you do and how you do it. Some farmers would like to sell their grain directly to the United States. Well, I see a problem with that in the fact that if you get dependent on an independent non-governmental thing, what's to stop them guys saying well you know--. **[…*audio skips*]** This much a bushel. Then what does the farmer do? He has no recourse. But if he sells it to the Wheat Board, he knows he's going to get something. That might be an oversimplification, but I see it as a danger and the government has helped the farmers in dire states.

NP: I just have some questions based on what you've said so far but finish your thought.

GO: Just as a point of interest, the Wheat Board was formed in 1936 at the insistence of Senator Norman McCloud Paterson who said that we've got to market this grain. He was a vessel owner, a grain operator, and he was right into the thick of things. He said we need to do something. It's because of him that we have the Wheat Board. Like I say, there are detractors, but I think it has a lot of advantages. And a point of interest, somewhere in the '50s there, we had a tremendous glut of grain, and we couldn't sell it. It was hurting, Alvin Hamilton. And he went and he sold all that grain. Somehow, he did it. So I mean--

EE: How did you read to say how he sold it? Where he sold it? Sold it to Red China?

GO: Well--.

GO: But he got rid of it.

EE: Of course he did.

GO: Yeah, but--.

EE: And the west is Conservative ever since.

GO: Yeah, but then we got involved with the Russians. And the truth be known, we were subsidizing all the grain that went to Russia. And I heard some figures, or I saw something, that it said that when Russia turned democratic, they were broke, and they couldn't pay us for the grain. If they were to try to pay us for the grain, including interest, it would take 300 years. But it was an artificial economy. But it kept a lot of people working. But when it died it hurt a lot of people because it--.

NP: Can we go back to your sort of career path?

GO: Okay. Okay living in Westfort, being over at the grain trade--.

NP: Right.

GO: Working in the grain elevator, working for the Lake Shippers, then at that time, we were very busy. The curve of the shipments of grain was going up. We reached our zenith of shipping in 1983 when we shipped 17.1 million. We've been going downhill ever since. Well at that time, the Lake Shippers and the grain trimmers always kept their offices side by side, and at that time there was a few jobs in Thunder Bay, and the grain trimmers were short of men. So the head of the grain trimmers, Tommy McKinnon, looked at me and he said "Gene, would you like to go grain trimming?" And I said "Sure." He said, "Okay Pool 6, 6:30." So I went and got all the gear I needed and I went as a grain trimmer. Part time, on call, whenever needed—weekends, evenings, Sundays, Saturday, whatever.

So, our job at the Lake Shippers, part of it was we had to load the ships, but we did it on paper with consultation with a first mate, the captain. You don't load a ship starting from the front and go to the back, or vice versa. You balance it. Traditionally, the lake freighters, the ship, and if you start to load the ship correctly, you can maximize the tonnage and get the vessel to a level, where you can actually put more grain in the middle and still maintain the draft that you need to go down the St. Lawrence. This is where the grain trimmers come in. This is their job.

The head trimmer gets the order from the elevator, and he consults with the elevator saying, "Okay where's this grain?" He knows the machinery inside, where the legs are, how you can maximize the shipment to get it up to the scale floor to get it to where it's located. You might have to use this pipe because that pipe can't get the grain from over there, but this pipe can. So you have to think on that pipe, think the other pipe for the other grain. So he knows all this stuff. So then he goes and talks to the first mate. So if a ship is coming off the lake, it's empty. So sometime No. 6 hold will have ballast in it, so that ballast has to be pumped out. So the mate has to go see the Canadian Grain Commission and tell the Grain Commission "My [inaudible] in the No. 5 hold."

So he says, "We can sign the paper, so then we can load in 5 and 2." So holds 2, 3 and 5 will be filled to where the first mate wants it. You have a hatch coaming that's about this deep. So he may say, say if it's barley or oats, he'll say, "We'll bring it right up," but if it's durum or spring wheat, which is quite heavy, he'll say, "Oh, I want it a foot down from the coaming, or I want it 6 inches down. Don't go any higher because I need to think of my draft that the end." So then 1, 4, and 6 is used as trimming. So as the ship is going along, he may fill 4 or he may fill 5, or take quite a bit 5 put a bit in 2. But he'll still want, as he's going along, he'll want grain in 1 and 4, as to maintain the integrity of the ship.

You don't want the ship to drop on the ends. That's called hogging, and if you do that, no matter how much grain you put in the middle, you can't get her back up. If you put too much grain in the middle, that's called sagging. No matter how much grain you put in the ends, you can't put get the belly up. And that can matter when you're going down the Welland Canal and what not. If you get this going just right, at the very end, you can get a little more grain.

I watched how this--. It's done in a variation of ways, but one vessel I saw, it was a French-Canadian fellow. He came from Isle-aux-Coudres, which is not far from Quebec City. This guy was really terrific. He would take his ship, and when he was going near the end, he'd--. You're supposed to load to 26.3 in those days. He'd tip the ship in the bow to 27 feet. Then he'd say, "Okay I don't want any more up number 1."

So he'd go aft, and he'd look at his draft, and he'd say, "Okay." You'd always leave number 4. You fill number 4 from the back of the ship, and you'd go forward because usually the last hatch is sort of on a slant. That's where your space is. So he'd say, "Okay, give me a little bit there." And he'd say, "Okay now I want to go to 6." And then he'd go to 6 and say, "Okay go back and forth." So he'd watch us after--. He'd get it to where he'd get 26.3 in the front, then if- if you had any more room in the back, he'd put it in 4 and 6, and then he'd look and say, "Finish." So I ended up doing the statistics, trip, after trip, after trip. It was within five or ten tonnes—24126, 24120, 241- No computer, just up here. He knew his ship.

And the thing about the grain trimmers, which I really like, is really cool, is that the minute the grain trimmer goes on the ship, the first mate is there sticking his hand out. That's the universal greeting, shaking hands. "How are you?" All the trimmers know these guys. They know their kids, where they're from and everything. And we have these cubicles and offices and ergonomically correct things, and these guys, their office is on the deck of the ship. And that's where it's done. They put their arms around each other. They walk down the deck, "Okay mate," and "When do you have to pump?" and "When do you have to ship?" And they get it all set up.

When a laker ships, there is only minimal loss of time, maybe ten minutes. Salties take an hour or two hours because it's a different culture. So then these guys work together, and it's really nice to see. And you go back to the galley and the cook waves, "Hey, sit down. Put a coffee on for you. Hey, there's some leftovers there. Go help yourself." And this is how it was, you know? Just a nice atmosphere.

And even as a hourly man, you'd go on and the guys would come up to you, "Hi how are you? How you doing?" Everything else. When the ship came in, if the captain had to go ashore, or the mate, the grain trimmer was assigned to drive. Had to go here, had to go there, pick this up, has to do some banking, get some stuff for whatever, newspaper, whatever they need, because it's like a brotherhood, you know?

And I find that today, with the grain trimmers, because you stood a watch with the grain trimmer and you were one, people walk across the street to shake hands because that's just the way it is, you know? And that's just a nice thing. You don't buy that, but it's a nice feeling. After a while, money and all this stuff don't matter, but a nice time meeting with someone you worked with and you share something, that's kind of your badge of honour—your recognition—and it's really good.

And I see that still today. We still shake hands, and I go down like--. Now I work for a tug company tying up saltwater ships, so I'm retired from the Lake Shippers. The grain trimmers now, there's not enough work for them. So there's no more extra grain trimming. I did a little bit a few years ago. I went into the office just to say hello and the guy looked at me, says, "Do you still got your gear?" I said, "Yeah." "Well, Pool 7 in the morning." [Laughing] So away you go. You suffer. You suffer out there, believe me. There is no colder place than on the deck of a ship in winter. The wind blows and sometime there is no protection. You turn that way. It don't matter where you go. It just blows in your face.

We were doing a ship there, the *Algomarine*, Pool 7. We were doing a full load of oats. Oats is bad. It's very dusty. And it was just killing us. We got to the end of the ship and there was a pocket left. We finished up the No. 1 hold and I said to Ernie, the head trimmer, I said, "Ernie, we'll get a few tonnes in there." And he said, "Yeah you're right." And he called the mate over, and he says, "Mate," and he says, "Never mind, I want to get the hell out of here, shut 'er off" [Laughing] "We've had it."

Another day I went to Pool 6. It was bitter, bitter, bitter cold. The *Risley* was out there breaking ice. I brought my camera bag aboard to take pictures. There was nowhere to hide from the cold. Grain trimmers know how to dress. You dress in layers, long johns, wool pants, coveralls, a sweater, a dickie, sweatshirt with a hoodie, warm gloves, like another extra sweater, and a parka or a skidoo suit. Well, you have a skidoo suit anyway. But there's times that even Carhartt can't stop the wind. It just goes through you. We had the *Frankcliffe Hall*, and she just came off the lake, so there was nothing to do because it took a while for the hold to come up. When you start to make up holds, you get really busy and you're warm and you warm up, and it's really good.

So we went to the galley, and there was a coloured chap from the Caribbean there and he says, "Hey boys just sit down, and I'm going to make you a fresh pot of coffee." Well, we sat down. That is the best cup of coffee I ever had in my whole life. Like how could a cup of coffee be so wonderful? But it was, you know. These are the kinds of things you remember.

Another time I went to Cargill. It wasn't trimming. I had some boat pictures to bring on a ship. And the head trimmer there was having coffee. It was a hot, hot, hot day. And I came into the trimmer shack to wait until the boat tied up. And Harry looked at me and says, "Hey, son." He says, "How would you like a pop?" He gave me a Pepsi. Wow. Another fantastic drink. Just a can of Pepsi, but you know?

Some of the people on the boats were really, really nice, some of the captains. I correspond with some of them, and you keep up. You wonder how they're doing, stuff like that. And I seen a lot of really nice things with the boat guys over the years. A lot of funny stories and, you know, happy memories, and that was part of it. I'm so glad to be part of it. But there's not much interplay with the

guys on the salties because you don't go on ship. You just tie it up. But I'm around the tug guys and sometimes we get the trimmers to help, so when the ILA guys get busy with general cargo at the Keefer.

NP: What are ILA guys?

GO: International Longshoremen's Association. There's two locals in Thunder Bay. One is to do with just the guys who work on the grain ships, and the other is the people that work at the Keefer unloading general cargo, or any cars or trucks that are coming in that have to be handled there. There's still a group of them. It used to be much busier in the old days, when CSL ran the package freighters and this kind of stuff.

Now the general cargo has sort of dropped off quite a bit, but now it's come back to the point where we're doing windmill boats, general cargo ships, a lot of stuff for the oil fields, like big condensers and boilers and big things. In fact, there's a stack of them there over at Keefer, waiting to be put on rail cars to go out west. And we're having a general cargo ship come on Monday. It has parts of bridges. We don't know where the bridges are, and what actually that means. The last boat carried a bunch of huge rings that were 14 tonnes and 16 tonnes. These were the bases for the windmills. In August we're getting another ship that's coming in with general cargo. We don't know exactly what these pieces are. When a windmill ship comes in, the blades are on a special rack and the ILA guys have to scamper up there, put the hooks on there. They have special railcars. And there's a number of containers that come with it. Some of these containers are a fully equipped office to go with all this stuff. Some of the containers are fully equipped tool shop that goes with it.

So we would've got more of these general cargo ships except we had a few glitches in our infrastructure, rail line, and highway system. There was a bridge in Kenora that restricted the loads and a couple of rock cuts that had to be widened to take some of this heavy stuff. So hopefully we'll get more of that.

But the grain trade has sort of fallen on hard times. The catch 22 of the whole thing is the high dollar, and the folks that could use our grain can't pay for it, and the rural recession. Now, we're going to have a bad harvest, because of the rain. That could really impact on next year, and variation of prices. Now Europe is jerking us around with GMO. Do you know what that is?

NP: Just explain more for the benefit of our listeners

GO: Gen--.

EE: Genetically modified

NP: Genetically modified.

GO: Right, okay, so these crops exist, through the courtesy of a certain chemical company and other factors. So the Europeans are saying, "No, you got GMO crops in Canada." "Yeah?" "Well, the stuff I'm buying, can you guarantee there's no GMO in it?" "Well, it might've been 60, 90, 112 miles away." "Well, it came from Canada" So they're just jerking us to get the price down.

NP: So you're saying they will take it?

GO: Well, it's used for industrial purposes, so tell me what is the problem? It's politics.

NP: Yes.

GO: Don't get me started on politics because I'm not going there.

NP: We'll leave that for a little later in the interview.

GO: [Laughs]

EE: You had a few dates for your career. I'm a historian. Of course, I really like to put things into their slots. When did you start working for Manitoba Pool? If I may ask.

GO: 1971.

EE: '71. And the Lake Shippers?

GO: 1980

EE: Okay, so you were a part of the Pool through part of that last great era, through the '70s.

GO: Yeah.

EE: And then with the Lake Shippers until?

GO: From 1980 until 2003.

EE: Okay

GO: I was there for 20 years. It was more like 46.

EE: [Laughs] So a few great years and then the years of decline.

GO: Yeah. I did a lot with statistics, and I could see the trends coming and going. One of the huge things that really impacted on the grain trade on the port of Thunder Bay was the double tracking of the rail lines from the west to the West Coast and the building of the high-tech, high-throughput elevator in Prince Rupert. That forever changed the grain map of Canada. And it caused Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, which was the largest company at that time, to go from six elevators to two. And from my perspective, I thought--.

EE: Here at the Lakehead?

GO: Yeah.

EE: From six down to two?

GO: From my perspective, I thought that the grain trade would go to half of what it was. It went to a third.

EE: Here in Thunder Bay?

GO: Yeah. And when I started to work in the grain elevators—no, actually when I started working at Lake Shippers—there was 1,750 grain handlers. Now I don't think there are 300. But then the grain handling has changed a lot. It's a lot more automated. It's all computerized.

NP: I'd like to actually step way back, veer off into the various elevators. But there's so much in what you said in your career that we would also like to come back to and ask questions about. So when you talked about visiting those fellows at Westland D--.

GO: D, right.

NP: That would've been in the '50s, I would take it. '50s, '60s?

GO: Yes, that was between 1951 and 1960.

NP: If you have a good memory—but this might be pressing it a little bit—if you think back to those days when you visited those men, do you remember any of their stories?

GO: Oh yeah.

NP: Can you tell us some of those?

GO: Well, this one particular gentleman, his name was Jimmy Noonan, and he worked at Westland D, which is in Westfort. He lived on Government Road. Every once in a while in the police file, there was a lady called Jenny Noonan, who was up for a little bit of misbehaviour and what have you. She was a bootlegger, and that was his wife, I think. [Laughs] Same name, but that's not a common name. But they were very nice to us. We had coffee with them and everything.

EE: Not spiked?

GO: No, no. When they were building that tunnel, we went there one Saturday afternoon and the guys had gone uptown, and they left their scotch on the table. That's how we got our first taste of scotch. We were just young kids, and we just guzzled it. It's just one of those things, eh? But at that time, well, this might be an interest if you want to do this now?

NP: Yes.

GO: Okay. Well, I took over a paper route. It was route 51. And I learned a lot from this paper route. It was the 300 blocks of East Brock Street, Francis, Amelia, and Tarbutt Street. Now, in that area there were six grain elevators that were in walking distance. Now, just when you mention this project I said, "Wow." Okay and I start--. **[*…audio skips*]**

Francis Charlebois and his son Bill. Francis was the superintendent of Pool 1. His son Bill became superintendent. There was Dennis and Wayne Orr. They worked at Pool 1. Dennis became a foreman. There was Gordon Begin and Tommy Begin, brothers. Tommy Begin became a foreman, Gordon was a millwright.

Then there was Jimmy Dolce. They all lived in a very close circle, West Francis and East Amelia. Also on my paper route was a Mr. Otway. He was the superintendent of the Northwest elevator. Across the lane from me was a Mr. Glover. He was the manager of the Elevator E or F, which was at the foot of—still standing—at the foot of Ford Street. When he went to work, he had a tie on every day—blazer, tweed jacket, hat, brown slacks, brown shoes, or a suit. He went to work at the elevators--. **[*…audio skips*]**

Her, she lived with her grandfather when she went to school. She came from Dryden. Her grandfather was the electrician at the Lakehead elevator, the Electric Elevator. That's just in the grain industry. Grain trimmers, there was three grain trimmers on my paper route. One grain trimmer, I trimmed with his sons. I went to school with grain trimmer kids. I actually got to work with the one Bobby Stewart—Pool 8. I worked with the Alex Stevenson family. Wayne Stevenson became a trimmer. He retired, I worked with Wayne. I went to school with their kids. Then just in the neighbourhood was--.

Okay, grain inspectors. There was four grain inspectors on my paper route. One gentleman, Tommy Gibson, became the head inspector. And he just started off from the very beginning and went right to the top. One man, Mr. Henderson, he lived right next door to the Orr's. **[*…audio skips*]** That son became a doctor. In the Orr house, Louis Roberts moved in there. He was a grain trimmer. I worked with his kids—the same darn house.

Railroaders, there was one man, Monty Plater, came from Wales. Him and Tony Depiero lived across the back lane. They ran the hump. Do you know what the hump was? The hump was a elevated piece of ground at the foot of Tarbutt Street on the railway tracks, where they shunted up the trains, and the cars were distributed. Each track was for a different elevator. That's how they were lined up by grain or by the elevator. Now that hump is gone, but they worked on there.

On my route was Stewart Nesbitt, a CPR policeman, who told me my name appeared in the book for trespassing more than anybody because we used to get caught by the CPR police. And for sailors, there was a Doug Hay, Marvin McGuiness, and Russ Spaulin. They were all on my route, and they all sailed. Near the elevator where other people. I chummed around with their kids. Mr. Cuff was a millwright, and at Pool 8, Bobby Stewart was the head trimmer—got to work with him.

Also on my route lived Jack Snyder. He wrote a column, a weekly column about happenings on the ships. It was in his house that I first saw television. I have some of his articles. He wrote a few stories on me and stuff like that. There's another person on my paper route called Milton Moran, he had something to do with the ships, that he brought supplies. Then also on my route was a fellow called Tony Kaplanis. He had a younger brother that was a car knocker, but Tony became one of the top guys in what was called--.

EE: Grain Transportation Agency

GO: Yeah, Grain, that was exactly it.

NP: Grain Transportation Agency?

GO: Yeah, they distributed the cars. They had a lot of influence on where the cars went. But they were good to work with. Like some people had their detractors, but the thing about those guys was, they say, “Look, we got a train at this grade, we’ve a train at that grade, or we got a train of durum.” They’d say, “What elevator would be most advantageous to you to load ships on the weekend?” And we’d say, “Oh, well Cargill’s got all the durum, send all the durum there. Grain Growers, they’ve got the protein wheat, send the protein there. Send this stuff to Pool 7.” So that we had the grain to work with on the ships. So that was a good thing. And that’s just off the top of my head after you mentioned the project.

NP: Going back to the grain inspectors, because just a few blocks away was my dad, a grain inspector. Do you remember the names of the other grain inspectors? You mentioned Tommy Gibson and--.

GO: Yeah, and Sam Sheets and Mr. Henderson. I didn’t know Mr. Henderson's first name. And another guy called George Adams. He was on my route.

EE: Was this particular area, that your paper route, unusual do you think? Or would this have been true across Westfort? That there was a--. **[*…audio skips*]**

GO: I mentioned just to show the impact that the grain trade had.

EE: Yeah, do you want to go ahead?

NP: And in those days, too, it would be true as with my father. He walked to work most of the time, so that these people would be set up near the elevators. So you’d have a pocket of them in Westfort, where there were lots of elevators.

GO: Yeah. Right.

NP: And then a pocket likely in the Current River area. And also, as we were talking this morning with Mr. Prystay--

GO: Gene Prystay, from P&H Elevator.

NP: That there was a lump of probably grain workers in the Intercity area, too.

GO: Well, you mentioned Gene Prystay. Well, what comes to mind with him is that when I was going to high school, Gene sailed, and there was a number of guys—there's still a few of them around—we called them sea dogs. That's what they called themselves. They all sailed, and they were proud of it. But now in the early history the records indicate that one time there was 300 people that were--. **[*…audio skips*]** Three that are still, three or four or five or ten. I only know the few guys in town that sail.

EE: The names of those men would be very useful for this project. The ones that are retired, still in good health, and could give us interviews.

GO: Well, unfortunately, there's not many left. Like Billy Cole passed away. There's one guy, Gerald Spear, still around. He was a retired superintendent of a Manitoba Pool, and he sailed. He knew a lot of sailors and I think he knew all the sea dogs. Some of the names slip my mind, but I remember these guys because they were kind of cool, eh? [Laughs] I had a friend that went away sailing, but I knew in our household, that I was destined to go to school. I played hockey, and I wanted to keep playing hockey. I didn't even ask my dad when I got into high school. I just took my skates and hung them up. There was no discussion. [Laughing]

NP: So just for the record, you said--. **[*…audio skips*]** Did that come in handy in anything you did?

GO: It came in handy in other things in the fact that I had extremely good teachers in English, correspondence, and letter writing, and report writing, and stuff like that. One of my teachers was David Crombie, political science. He was just a wonderful guy. I had really good teachers in accounting. They were really good. Ryerson was terrific. They were just starting off then. They were in the throws of building the school, the start of the school.

NP: When you came back to Thunder Bay then, were you looking for something in your field?

GO: No.

NP: Or you just decided you were going to do what you wanted to do?

GO: After school I was so burned out. I didn't want any part of anything that was organized, and I stayed in the restaurant business. But I still retained my interest.

EE: Through the ‘60s, then, you were in a restaurant working?

GO: Yeah, I worked in a restaurant in Toronto at the time.

EE: So this would be the French--?

GO: Yes, these people. They were owned by a man from the south of France and a man from Spain, and they were partners. It was a really fine place. It was a good experience. I learned a lot of things. I got to serve Rudolph Nureyev, Margot Fonteyn, our Premier of Ontario John Robarts, William Davis when he was with education, Larry Zolf, Patrick Watson, all the CBC types, Pierre Berton, Betty Kennedy. All that. They always came there. And I met some other fabulous, fabulous people that were just wonderful to serve. It was a good, good, good experience.

NP: And you came back home because?

GO: Well, I left Toronto to go to Alberta to work in a hunting lodge and trading post, and I got racked up trying to be a rodeo rider. I came back to Thunder Bay to just recover. I was going to go back to Revelstoke BC--. **[*…audio skips*]**

EE: Where were you in Alberta?

GO: I was at a place called Grande Cache, where the mine is. But I was in a place called Muskeg River, and we had a store there. We supplied the people there. There was 150 Indian families, Cree, and they had been moved out of Jasper to make the park. They came on pack trains. That was good experience.

EE: Was that along the northern, Yellowhead Highway?

GO: The Yellowhead Highway. We were I guess a part of it.

EE: Were you on the Yellowhead?

GO: No, no, we were north of Hinton. We were between Hinton and Grande Prairie. Right in the middle of the bush.

EE: There’s a place--. Well, I’ll let you talk.

NP: But we digress.

EE: Yeah, we digress. [Laughing] Let's get back to the grains.

NP: I would love to digress, and we can digress off tape, but what I would like to do now, is I'd like to talk about those elevators.

GO: Sure.

NP: I think, Ernie, I have a responsibility to pick somebody up at 4:00. Yes, Ian?

EE: I was going to suggest, that would be a very good--. **[Audio pauses]** I've got a question or two.

NP: Okay, ready to go? I just want to be sure that we don't miss any of those stories that you have about those old guys at Elevator D, or even along the Westfort stretch, because with you goes a lot of history, and if we don't get what you remember about what they said--.

GO: That's pretty well all I remember about Jimmy and them is that we got to know them. They showed us around in the elevator, and they were very nice, and we had coffees with them. But they always got mad whenever they had to go to work because the guy upstairs would say, "Oh, I got to bin this grain." So they'd have to go and open a bin or something, and then that would be the end. Conversation would end and we would have to go home because they were working. But we lived very close by, and we used to like to go there because it was something. We used to hang around the elevator. We got to know stuff. So we were there quite a bit.

NP: The working conditions there, at the time, compared to when you came back and started working there, were they pretty much the same or had things changed from what you could see?

GO: Today there's much more emphasis on safety. You can't go into an elevator with a cloth hat on anymore. You have to have a hard hat, and it's a good reason because I swear that Pool 2 is built by pygmies [laughs] because I used to work and I hit my head all the time. It was wet down there, and you had to use boards to step on because it was wet, and you had to whistle so the rats would go away. It was cold down there, cold and damp.

One day at Pool 9—we're not on tape, I hope. Oh okay. One day at Pool 9, I was at a crossover belt, coming from the one annex that takes the belt over to the legs that go over to the scale, and I was cold, and I was jumping around. I hit the button and turned the

off button just went *splat.* You will not believe how fast grain can pile up. Foreman says, “What happened?” “I don’t know!” [Laughing] “Get the shovel.” [Laughs]

Pool 9, what happened there was that they had these--. I don’t remember exactly how many, might have been 9, might have been more—but they had these, I think they’re called 50,000-bushel bins, but they had a flat bottom. How grain exits the bin to go onto the belt is through a valve. This valve was either opened by a handle or a wheel. So they would store the dirty flax in there. As they needed it, they would draw out the dirty flax and run it through the cleaners, which were called babies. They’re small machines, and it took a long time to clean flax because the skin on the flax was so fine.

Every once in a while, they had to turn that bin over. They had to get the last of the flax out of it. So the valve was on the one end, but on the other side there would be a stack of grain like that, heaped up, that was the equivalent of two box cars of grain. What you had to do is from the annex, they would lower a shovel— the same kind of shovel we would use to do the boxcars—then they would send five or six of us up. What they would do was they would shut the belt off and put a pin in it so nobody could start it. You laid on the belt and you got your body up and your hands up through this valve, that’s like this--.

NP: Like a box?

GO: Yeah. You get your hands up, and the guy puts shovel under your feet and shoves you out. For a few seconds you are nowhere because it’s dark. The flax is falling in your face, and you don’t know where you are. You’re kind of claustrophobic. Then you get up in there and you stand on your feet. They’ve lowered a light down. So you got five or six guys. You’ve got to get that grain from one side of the bin to the other to get into the valve, to put on the belt, then the elevator. You use the shovel, and you got brooms and steel shovels to clean it right up. You sweep it right out to clean. That was one job. Usually, more than once, a flask of whiskey accompanied us. Somehow it got into the bin. That’s just the way it was.

Another job was, when grain is cleaned, one of the byproducts is called screenings, refuse screenings. Refuse screenings is used to make pellets, but it’s stored until there’s enough to load out two cars. Because of the construction of the elevators, sometimes dampness gets in, rainwater trickles in, and sometimes the grain bunches up on the side and packs up and won’t drop, or sometimes it just clogs and sticks together. It’s just an awful mess. What they do is they lower you in a chair, and they give you a long scraper. The idea is you get to this hung-up part, and the idea is you try and carve a little river, but you have no traction because you’re hanging. You’re in the middle of this bin.

NP: You’re like on this swing?

GO: Yeah, you're on a swing, like a bosun's chair they lower off a ship. It's very nerve wracking because you know what you want to do, but you can't do it! You don't have the wherewith all, the power, to get this thing going. I was sent down once, and I was lucky. My thing went down with a big poof, and I was done. What happened at Saskatchewan Pool 6 is that they lowered a guy down and when quitting time came, 5:00 on a Friday, they forgot this guy. And he went nuts. They didn't find him until Monday morning. Well, you can imagine. There's no one there to hear you. These things happen.

Other things happened was that trip that I was talking about that's used to bin the grain, well, one has to be very, very careful to set the brakes. Usually what you did is you had a piece of grain door, like a board. You put it under the wheel because the force of the grain coming would sometime move the trip off the brake, and if you weren't watching, you'd have grain all over the place. On one occasion at one of the elevators, contents of a couple of cars went out the window and down below, and they had to be recovered. Those kind of things happened.

NP: How did it get out the window?

GO: It was at the end of the annex and there's a doorway there that they used to hoist up engines, like motors and different things. There was a steel I-beam that goes out and they put a shiv on there, and they hoist up things that they need, like belting. There's a way they can do a takeoff on the belt to haul this stuff up, or chain falls or whatever. And it just went out the window and down below. There were these accidents.

One of the jobs we had to do—this was before mechanization where they installed automatic samplers for the grain going on the ship—was sample inside the elevator. In the old days they sent a guy out on the deck with a stick, which was a golf club with a little cup. After certain intervals, you scooped this grain and put it in a bucket, and then you mixed it all up, put it in a bag, threw it to the inspectors. That's how they monitored the grade of the grain. The grain inspectors did that and the elevator did that. The elevator would check their sample and the grain inspectors would check. There was always a check between the weight of the grain and the grade of the grain. In the old days, there used to be a fight over every car, and then that sort of went by the board. There was kind of a lot of friction between the elevator inspectors and the Grain Commission and the elevators. Kind of an ongoing battle.

Then we got a general, the head of the Grain Commission, a fellow came in, and he was completely different. His idea was we got the grain. We're going to move it. He had such a good brain that he could figure out that if there's something wrong that in the end this could be righted by doing this or that. He was a positive guy. They called when that stuff went out the window. I admired this guy so much.

EE: Do you remember his name?

GO: His name was Jack Robertson. He was just a tremendous fellow. Truth be known, he had the smarts. He could've been Prime Minister of Canada. He could've been transferred all over the place, but he was a family man. He had his kids in all the sports because I saw him at all the sports fields. His focus was family. It wasn't about Jack. It was about his kids. I just admire this guy so much.

EE: So he was in charge of the Grain Commission here, the Lakehead?

GO: Yeah.

EE: A political appointee? Or was he within the organization?

GO: No, within the organization. He earned his stripes.

EE: The head of the Commission is a federal appointee. In fact, I think I saw an ad for the commissioner in the paper the other day.

GO: Yeah. You ran into some of these guys that were really terrific people. The Sask Pool foreman. I liked Manitoba Pool. There were some other people and some of the other companies. But there seemed to be a certain level of discipline and really good foremen from Sask Pool. These guys were good. And some of them are still around. Some of them are working, and I see them from time to time. We always talk about them among the trimmers, mention this guy, and mention that guy, because it's part of your culture. Some of these guys were top drawer, really good. For example, when I started at the Lake Shippers, there was a little bit of sarcasm. Lake Shippers to the grain trade is like the referee in hockey—nobody likes us. That's just the way it is. It's about me, me, me.

I encountered a couple of gentlemen in the grain trade that were so nice to me. One of them was Ray Cousineau from United Grain Growers. He was a superb gentleman. He was really nice. Another fellow was Jim Gibbon. He was the head fellow at Saskatchewan Wheat Pool 4. I see him from time to time. Usually, I see him at Branch 6 or Branch 5, and I make sure I say hi to him because he was really nice to me.

I'd have to phone in the morning to get the figures of what was loaded on the ship the previous night, and some guys would say, "Oh what do you want to know that for?" And I'd say, "Do you want to get paid for the grain?" "Oh, okay." And I'd ask stuff I have to ask, that's my job. "Oh, you're such a pain." Well, if you don't like it—go home. [Laughs]

EE: Did you find the nature, the character, the qualities of the different Sask Pool elevators varying—some were better than the others?

GO: No, they're pretty consistent.

EE: No, the complaints you're just mentioning, was that at any particular company?

GO: That was another company. That wasn't Sask Pool or Man Pool.

EE: Oh, I see. Oh, Richardson's, eh?

NP: [Laughs] No, there are others.

GO: That same company had also good people, but when that guy left--. There were some people were impossible to work with. For example, in my day at the Lake Shippers, there were six grain companies, and these six grain companies bought grain off the Prairie. Whatever percentage per month that particular company bought, that was his entitlement to ship out of the Port of Thunder Bay.

Now, different grains got stored into different elevators. Some elevators did not handle loads. Some won't handle barley. Some didn't handle any barley. Some elevators did not handle durum. Some elevators handled canola—others didn't. Some elevators handled flax, others didn't. In those days a lot of the grain was controlled by the Wheat Board. Later on, the Wheat Board relinquished some of these grades and just kept durum and red spring wheat. The grain was sold in Winnipeg. That's where the Grain Exchange was. That's where the deals were made. That's where the trades were made. The grains were bought for specific purposes. We had a milling company called Ogilvie. We had a milling company called Robin Hood, and we had the Wheat Board that was shipping grain for export. There was also Maple Leaf Mills. Some of these cargoes were combined on one ship because they were going to Montreal. Those were interesting loads.

The shipper, or the buyer, wanted a certain amount of grain of a certain grade because he had a certain reason for it. It had a purpose—Ecclesiastes 3.1. There's a purpose unto everything. A thing lost on a lot of people. Then, we start to get these orders, and we'd get a stock sheet from every elevator, who has the stocks. We'd add them all up and look at that. These orders would come to us from Winnipeg. We had a heads up from the ships that are coming. We're working for the shippers, so we had to fulfill the order. Sometimes they'd want it in exact amount. Sometimes they'd say, not less than. Sometimes they'd say, about, or not to exceed, because they're filling their--.

EE: Their bins.

GO: Right! So we're keeping all this in mind. At the same time, we have to fit this on ship. What we did is we kept the ledger of every load we ever made on every ship. We had a ledger that had the number of holds that, that ship had. They were long sheets like this. I've got them downstairs—loading records.

We also kept the draft, the port, and the season. There's three seasons in shipping—spring, fall, and summer. In the fall and winter, you can't load, insurance purposes. It's not just a straight thing. You have to think on several levels. You have to think on time, and in Thunder Bay you have to think on the various depths at the elevators. There are some elevators you can't finish a ship, but you've got to start a ship there. Some elevators are dreadfully slow, others are fast, but you've got to get the grain out. Sometimes you need that grain and so you got to weigh now. "If I go to this elevator, I've got to shift the boat from 12. He's going to get there at 1, they'll only work--. **[*…audio skips*]**

If I get that grain then, I can do this. You're always thinking on these different levels. What happens is that you are loading the grain that is ordered. So one elevator is sitting there, "Well, how come I'm not getting any shipments?" You say, "Well, you don't have the grades." "What? I don't care." They come up to the office, and they're screaming, and they're ranting, and they're raving. What can you do? Then there's no ships. Nothing. The guy says, "I'm plugged." What can I do? I don't have--. "I don't care. I'm plugged!"

One guy's operating two elevators. He's got a boat at this dock. He's got a boat at that dock. We've got one waiting to come in there, one waiting to come in there. And we know of two that we haven't told him. He's screaming that he's still not getting enough. So another guy's screaming and hollering, and he is ranting, and he is raving.

See what happens, these guys come to work, 8:00 in the morning, at 9:00, and give us hell. Not much we can do. We say, "Okay, let's hit that elevator." So we go there Monday, and we get a bunch of grain out of there, and we keep hitting them all week, all week. Friday comes, we've got Saturday and Sunday. We've got boats coming. The other elevator guy, he's got the grain. We go there. Then on Monday morning, the first guy says, "That guy's ahead of me." And I say, "Well, you didn't have the grain for the--." "I don't care!" And it goes on. After a while, the tension in that office was such that you could take a snow shovel and take the tension from one corner and stack it up in the other. It was just all-pervasive. If you go out and it's raining, you're going to get wet, but if you're in the office and all this is going on, you can't avoid it. It just crushes you!

NP: This goes back to a question I had, and that was about your job at the Lake Shippers as being 23 years of sort of keeping records, and I thought, you're not--. **[*…audio skips*]**

GO: Well, you got moved around. You did different jobs. The statistics came at the end of the year. You had to do these duties. In the wintertime we loaded railcars and then I got switched from rails to this and that and different things. So I got to see the whole thing, eh?

EE: How many of you were working with the Lake Shippers Clearance Association in that office?

GO: When I started there was 16 people.

EE: 16.

GO: When I left, there was 1.

EE: So computers took over--.

GO: The computers took over, because all this record keeping was done on the computer. All the stocks, all the facets, all the other extra paperwork was done away with and there was a lot of streamlining. You had the three millers, Maple Leaf Mills, Ogilvie, and Robin Hood. They all wanted different numbers of copies of the bill of lading. And after a while we said, "No, this is what you get." They just standardized. The Wheat Board was the best. They had a standard form. We only ended up making 5 copies—one for us, one for them, one for the ship owner, and one for someplace else. One had to go to Montreal or something. The bill of lading matched the Canadian Grain Commission certificate as per weight and as per grade. The certificate accompanied the bill of lading, and it went to the shipper. He took that to the bank, and that's how he got paid. We had to have the captain's name, we had to have the holds, we had to have the grade. For example, say you had a full load of, say, Pool 7, 25,650.478 or something. That had to be typed out in long hand. It had to be typed out in such a manner that it couldn't be altered, and the bill of lading was addressograph. There was one point that my job was to check all the bills of lading. I had to read them all and sign them. At the beginning of the year, I was handed a form that came from the banks in Winnipeg where I had to sign my name 100 times.

NP: What was the connection there with the banks?

GO: There's where they got the money when they turned in the bills of lading.

EE: So the warehouse receipt is something that we understand in terms of the trade but if you're looking at it, financing it, and I've done some reading about banking through the 19th century. The Bank Act could be revised every 10 years or so back in those days and as receipts from various things are added to the list of things in which banks could extend credit—you could see Canada's business was growing—so warehouse receipt of whatever sort would be the paper on the basis of which the bank could advance money to the business, whatever it was, the grain company or the cotton mill.

NP: Was it a particular bank or did you deal with all the banks?

GO: I'm not sure what bank. There was some information that we were never given that we didn't need to know, so we didn't know it. Like we never knew what does the ship get paid for hauling and what was the rate of pay. The only time we got to know what the value of a particular grain was is that we had to make out evaluation for what the price of wheat was. We got this newsletter, like I was saying, that came from Winnipeg, that spelled a lot of things out and give us a worldwide perspective on the shortages in this country and the trends, and what was going on, and what the Wheat Board was calling these different grains, and what the protein levels were. But our company went into an austerity program and that was cut out.

NP: So they actually published that?

GO: No, it was an independent person who didn't like the Wheat Board.

EE: Oh really? Do you remember who did it?

GO: Morris Dorosh.

EE: G-O-R-A-S-H?

GO: No, D-O-R-O-S-H.

EE: Dorosh?

GO: Yeah, Dorosh. Forget the name of it, what that thing was called. It's on the internet but you got to pay for it. It's still on there.

NP: So he's still doing it?

GO: Yeah, but I don't know if he's still around. He was getting on in years by that time. I found it very--.

EE: Repeat that name again?

GO: I'll get you the name of the publication. Something to do with the grain trade or something but it was entrapped.

NP: When you started out with Lake Shippers, what technology were they using to get thing's back and forth?

GO: Carbon paper. [Laughs] Phone. They had a telex.

EE: Teletype machine?

GO: Yeah, teletype machine. Oh, what a racket that made. And you'd get these messages. Downstairs I have a code book. In the old days they had codes for all the grains and all the activities and what you're supposed to do. The location of the Empire Elevator is a little tower, and a guy would go out there with flags to tell the ship where to go to, which elevator.

Now we have radios and GPS. Now it's all done with cell phone. You don't hear much on the marine radio anymore, but we used to have to do a lot of the marine radio, like contact ships and tell them which elevators and give the loads and whatnot. It's nice talking to some of the captains and some of the mates were really good.

We had so many ships at one time and so much going on. It was hard to keep track of. There was a right way to load a boat, and then there's a way that maybe you can stretch it or pull it a little bit. Sometimes you had maybe a load the boat, not the way you would want to, but because where the grain was located, and what the grades were, and what was coming, that was the only way to get the boat started. Usually, it was okay for most mates. Their main concern was making sure they got a little bit for No. 4 hold. They didn't want to go very far in the program, leaving one hold empty, for too long because they didn't want to lose the ship, like hog or sag.

EE: Would it actually wrench the ship, the hull, to load it improperly?

GO: Oh yeah.

EE: So the ends would actually, literally, the steal would sag a bit and you just couldn't get it--.

GO: Yeah. Well for example, the other day, Friday, we had the *Orsula*, and he had a load plan which called for No. 4 hold to be empty. They were loading this potash, but because of the heat, the ends of the ship sagged 12.5cm. He didn't want to load anymore grain, not to accelerate the hog. So he had to leave street cars behind. The shipper, Pottercan, had to get the vessel—the charter's FedNav—to sign off that they would accept responsibility for those three cars because they were chartered to take the cars, but they physically couldn't take it.

Last week, we had the *Pineland* had to leave 600 tonnes light because he was afraid of the heat down below, that he would bend too much. We couldn't put water on this ship because the dust of the product was on the deck, and you can't hose it into the river. They are equipped with sprinklers. When they're going down the St. Lawrence Seaway or the Welland Canal in summer, they spray the deck, to keep the ship stiff so it doesn't drop. It has happened where a ship got too deep in one end, so they merely picked up the hatches and put it on the other end to lift to, you know, move the hatches along.

EE: The ship that hooked the bottom would've lost some oil the other day.

NP: The *Richelieu*?

GO: It was the *Richelieu*, but her problem was the weather. She lost power, and in order to stabilize the ship, the skipper dropped the anchors. He was in a very narrow and confined place, and he didn't want to hit the lock out of control. A squall came up, blew the ship over. One of the anchors, which punctured the bottom, caused water, well punctured the--.

EE: The fuel tank.

GO: The fuel tank as well. So the water came in, just a string of unfortunate incidents.

EE: Yes, indeed.

NP: You had mentioned in passing that sometimes you would get mad at the WCB. What would make you angry with the WCB?

GO: Well, we'd have a ship in the bay, and we'd have no orders. Our mandate was to get the ship in and out as quick as possible.

EE: You mean the CWB.

NP: Oh yes, sorry. CWB. Canadian Wheat Board.

EE: Lots of reasons to be angry with the Workers Compensation Board.

NP: Yeah, sorry. Thank you for bringing that up.

GO: We always felt in Thunder Bay that the folks in Winnipeg did not share our sense of urgency. Because on our call, the labourers were called out—the elevator was called out. Say on a weekend or after hours, it's all overtime, and you know that adds up. So they seem to say, "Oh so you got a boat. So? So? Tell someone who cares." Then we'd get the same thing. Ship owners would call us. We can see the ship. It's out there. We know the name. We've got binoculars. We know what it is, and the ship owner would say, "When's my ship getting out?" And we'd say, "We don't know." "Well, where's it at?" "It's out in the bay." "Why?" "We don't have any orders." "Oh? You need that?"

EE: [Laughs] We can just pump her full of water, send her back to you!

GO: You had this. Then the grain companies in Winnipeg were fond of hiring people that, no knowledge of the industry or care or whatever. We had to make the bills of lading for saltwater ships going overseas. Some of these ships would have maybe 19 or 20 different grades. They'd make separations. They'd have flax screenings, canola screenings, mustard, yellow mustard, brown--. **[*…audio skips*]** All different grains. They all went to different places in Europe. My supervisor, Nick, would call up Winnipeg and say, "Well, I need some information. I got to make these bills of lading and I need to know where the boat's going." "Well, it's going overseas." "Okay, which country?" "Oh, just a minute." Send a message. "Holland" "Which port?" He'd have to ask a question to get a name and address of the consignee. Like why? If you know the boat's going there, why not be prepared? They didn't care! They just did not care. We had all this pulling hen's teeth. All this trouble.

Then we had a ship once that was converted from a straight-deck vessel to a self-unloader. Well, when you do that, you lose about 1500 tonnes of cargo because of the boom, the dog inside, you got to reconfigure the hull and everything.

EE: Sure, the weight of all that and everything

GO: Right, so it changes the stowage quite a bit. This guy in Winnipeg is insisting that this ship is going to take 5,000 tonnes in No. 1 hold. "It always took 5,000 tonnes. It's going to!" And my boss would say "No. It takes 22--." "What do you know?" All it could take 22.5 because the ship was altered.

Then we had this problem with some of the elevator supers here that their only concern with their elevator, their percentage, and they wanted to ship. We had a list of ships coming, and we know the stocks, and we know sort of what that ship's going to take. Our thinking is based on, well, you got to start a ship and you got to finish it. But you're going on the premise that you're filling 2, 3, and 5. You've got to trim 1, 4, and 6. You've got to have the trimming cargo at the last elevator.

And I got that ship coming. Well, if I take all of this, I'm going to follow that ship up. But if I do it this way, and go to the next elevator, then that guy can follow this, and we'll just keep on going. We're looking two to three ships ahead to keep it going, to keep it moving, to keep it going. The first ship in is supposed to be the first ship out.

This one guy's calling us up, and we're loading. We placed an order at this elevator, and we only want these amounts. We don't want any more because we need that loading time for the next ship. We need to take that ship we have there to go to the next elevator to finish because that's where his finishing grain is. We can't go any place else that's the only elevator that has--. So that goes into our planning. We only want 1,000 tonnes for No. 1 hold. This guy's calling us up, he says, "I've got 10,000 tonnes I'm putting--." "No, you're not. You can't because you'll break--" "I don't care!" This is the kind of, the stupid--. But you put up with it, and you say, "Well, you know--."

EE: So Lake Shippers Clearance Association served ultimately the purpose of facilitating, expediting, making the loading of grain into ships in Thunder Bay far more efficient than it would have been before?

GO: Oh yes, yeah. That was the idea.

EE: By guess or by golly earlier, I guess, eh?

GO: Earlier it was. But like I say, they kept records. I have records downstairs from 1911. Lake Shippers was formed in 1909.

EE: So as early as 1909, okay. I didn't want to ask you that if you didn't know. So it's very early in the trade in a sense.

GO: Yeah, they kept the records, and it evolved. Things went along and they applied all these principles, you know. The first ship in has got to be the first ship out. For example, if you had a saltwater ship at an elevator loading during the day, you told the folks, "Look it, we've got a boat that's got to go in tonight, and you don't pay overtime tonight. Then you've got to take the ship off because we got a ship that'll come in and pay the overtime." So we always had to tell them that. Look ahead and work all these things out. We would try to do it so we wouldn't have to take the ship off. We didn't want to, because it costs the shipper more

money tugging—the whole thing the tug, the linesman. Then you've got to bring the ship back, but sometimes we had no choice. We had to do it. Just to keep everything going.

NP: Another clarification of something you said earlier about one of the elevators. I don't know if it was 2? It a barley house. How did elevators decide that they would specialize? And did that specialty change over time, or once you took oats you always took oats?

GO: Yeah, the idea was is that you're trying to manage your facilities so that you're maximizing the output. Rather than having 15 grades, you're better off with 7 grades. Let the other guys build enough stocks up so that you could load a boat because it would take a long time sometime to accumulate enough stocks to get a boat to load the stuff out. That's how you did it.

NP: Did companies cooperate on that? Or did it just--.

GO: That was a company choice.

NP: You noticed what the other person was doing and so you said, "Okay, here's a niche for us"?

GO: That was mainly corporate decision by that particular company. Say for example, Sask Wheat Pool. Pool 8, on the river, only handled wheat. Pool 6 had barley, but no durum. Pool 15, I think they had oats and barley. Later on, say Pool 7B, would only take flax, peas, the non-board grains. Today, between say the former Sask Pool, which is now called Viterra, well Viterra C, which is the elevator formerly known as United Grain Growers A, that's where they keep the canola and the flax. They don't keep it in Pool 7. They have a little bit, maybe canary or maybe this or that, just to put all that product in that elevator. That's how it went.

EE: Sask Pool had so many elevators, in fact, that they could quite easily have each of them specialized.

GO: Yeah, they had the flexibility to do that. With Manitoba Pool, Pool 1 would handle wheat and canola, but Pool 3 would only handle wheat, barley, and oats. They wouldn't handle the other stuff.

EE: So I guess their contamination problems, or intermixture of grains problems, would only be one of them.

GO: That matters because what happens--. Say that you're loading canola, then you switch to wheat. Well, the wheat can get contaminated with canola from the leg, the pit, because there's always an accumulation of it.

EE: If you get minor variations in wheat grade mixed up you pass over that I suppose--.

GO: You could fix that, but it's pretty hard to get canola out of durum and durum out of wheat.

EE: [Laughs] But not another seed.

GO: See here's another thing that would happen in the elevator. I worked as a basement man, and there was a real discipline with that. I would be visited by the foreman, and I was given a list of which bins to open and when that bin went empty, you open this one. They wouldn't let you leave after the boat was finished until you went and physically checked that every valve was closed. They'd say, "Okay, now you can come up." You'd go up to the office and say, "Okay did you close 601? Did you close this one?" "Yes, yes, yes." What has happened over the years--. You know how long the annexes are?

NP: Mmhmm.

GO: So this is what could happen. You could have a bin with grain, and they send the guy down to the basement, and they drain that bin to put in cleaners, and the guy forgets to close it, okay? So then, you're loading a boat with wheat. It's spring wheat, but the wheat you're pulling from are the bins at the other end. Meanwhile, they drop a car of canola in the empty bin and it goes right through, onto the belt, up to the scale floor, distributing floor, the shipping bin, and all the--. And the first guy to see it is the grain trimmer, and he says, "Stop!" And then they have to go and evacuate that grain to get it off because it's contaminated.

NP: We have some questions that we'd like to ask everybody, and I know we're going to continue our conversation with you, so I just want to be sure we get these asked because we'll go more wide ranging. When you think back on your career, what are you most proud of? That's probably a hard one for you.

GO: The Lake Shipper thing was a bit bittersweet. I worked so hard, for so long, such long hours, under trying conditions. There was a time in the office where they took 45 minutes to save an entry.

EE: On the computer?

GO: On the computer. Can you believe that?

EE: You weren't working with Apple.

GO: And I had to work on two computers and watch the other one, so that when it saved, I can go make another--. That shouldn't be in this day and age. Like I mean--.

EE: What kind of computers did you have?

GO: Don't ask me. I don't want to know. But I think I was a faithful, loyal, hardworking employee, and I put my time in. I guess the only benefit I could say was I got paid. It opened up a lot of things, seeing the whole thing. And because of my association with Lake Shippers, I got a few sidebars, like a few trips on the ships because I knew people. I did some favours in the grain trade for people, and rather than ask for money I asked for a boat trip. My wife and I were very lucky—to be ordinary citizens, not being grain magnates, or captains of industry. We're ordinary down the street people. We got seven boat rides, which is phenomenal, and some of them were really memorable.

To see the whole Seaway from one end to the other on a ship is just fantastic. Especially the Thousand Islands. There's nothing like it. It's just incredible. It's just a dreamland, just sitting there in the sun, and you're going by, and there's ships, and there's castles, and there's houses on islands, and some beautiful scenery. To go down the St. Lawrence River and the mountains go like this, and you're sitting back, and you can sneak back to your room and have a restorative. Hey, there's nothing like it. To see all these places and to see Canada from a ship, rather than a highway, is really something. You take your licks in small, small doses and be grateful.

EE: How far did you sail down the St. Lawrence?

GO: Up to Sept-Iles. We were lucky enough to get into Baie-Comeau, Port Cartier—hit some really neat places. Cardinal, Ontario, Cleveland, Ohio, Contre Coeur, Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Toronto.

EE: How much elevator capacity is there in the city of Baie-Comeau and so on?

GO: Baie-Comeau is a huge, huge elevator. I don't know the capacity.

EE: It's one grain elevator then?

GO: It's actually kind of two elevators, and it's stepped up into the rocks. It's the only elevator in Canada where you go upstairs to get into the basement. It's a huge facility.

EE: Belongs to who?

GO: Cargill. Cargill Grain. It's a big shipper, one of those top seven companies in the world. Another place I went to was the Dreyfus elevator, I believe, in Port Cartier. Went there in the *Quebecois* and got taken ashore by the elevator foreman. It was midnight, but we went and took night shots. When I got ashore—this was July 25th and all the tugs had Christmas lights on them—and I said to the superintendent, "What's that about?" He says, "Oh just a joke here, just to pass the time." He says, "We make another Christmas on July 25. The storefronts light up and all the camps. It's just for the hell of it." And I says, "Well, what's your climate here like?" And he says "Oh, we have two." And I said, "What's that?" And he said, "Last winter and this winter." [Laughing]

Lot of funny things happened on some of those trips. As a photographer, the best place to be to take a boat picture is on another ship, passing another ship, the reason being, when you're out on a river or an open waterway like the St. Lawrence River or the St. Clair River or Detroit River, the ships are going a little faster. What you get for a photographic effect is you get this bow wave, this tremendous bow wave. Sometimes, depending on the wind and how the ship is loaded, you get this mustache. The ship is pushing white water. If you're passing a loaded ship while he's down there, and he's just giving 'er, and he's really drawing a lot of water, and say you're on a light ship, you have the aerial perspective. You get out on the bow deck, and you can just nail it. It's just tremendous.

Sometimes you have some bad luck is that, depending when you leave where you leave and where you leave from, if you leave Thunder Bay at 4:00 in the afternoon, that means you're going to catch the rivers in daylight. You want the Saint Mary's River in daylight. St. Clair River, Detroit River you want those in daylight, and the Welland Canal because that's where all the scenery is. That's where you see the ships. If you get caught on the night shift, like we have a few times, well you're out of luck. You see everything in the dark. You take your chances, it all works out.

EE: How many images do you have?

GO: I don't know.

EE: Thousands?

GO: Oh yeah.

NP: We have 10 minutes left. There's actually two more pieces to your career, and you've started talking with Ernie about it and that's the photography, but there's also your latest career, which is the tugboat. So let's go to the photography. How did you get involved in ship photography?

GO: I was always interested in photography, right from the--. And then from the pictures, ran into the books and the data. Then I joined some associations, made some friendships that I still have today. I collaborated with other people, helping them do books by supplying photographs or data, going to the museum for them or the library or gathering stuff. It just grew from there and just kept on going. That was all good too. For digital I got lots, but for--. I still shoot a little bit of coloured print. I'm up to roll 1000. I'll show you downstairs.

EE: 24 exposure?

GO: 36.

EE: 36. So that's 3,600 there.

GO: 450 rolls of black and white, 400 boxes of slides. I bought two collections, and I'm negotiating on a third, and I was given a lot of stuff, and I have--.

EE: These are ships, aren't they?

GO: Ships and tugs, things like that. Not too crazy on salties because other people have that covered. There's some people that, that's their passion, and they do quite well at it, and they produce books on it. Let them do that part.

EE: Sure.

GO: Then there's other people that are into shipwrecks. I don't like shipwrecks. I learn what I have to learn because a lot of people I know work on the ships. I want to see that ship come back. I don't want to know about shipwrecks. [Laughs] Other guys got that covered, good for them. The only thing I had to learn, because people ask all the time, is the *Fitzgerald*. I bought every book I can on it, and there's still books coming on it. There's still more theories coming on it, so I've studied it to death. We've talked back and forth, and it's still never resolved. There's a number of factors to it, and I think it boils down to the wrong place at the wrong time.

NP: So the tugboat career, and it's not been a long time--.

GO: This is the Dawsons? If I would come and worked for them as a company rep. What that means is when a saltwater vessel comes to the port, it has to be tied up. I'm sent on behalf of the company. Some elevators require a total of four men, some require six men depending on the circumstance in the elevator. For example, Richardson's, you need six men because those tanks. It makes the lines much heavier. You got to get the lines over those tanks. If you go to Pool 7 and it's going to be a full load, you need six guys because you have to stretch the headlines way down the dock because the elevator uses those lines to shift. The same thing with Mission Terminals, because our elevators, except for Grain Growers and Pool 1--. Grain Growers, the pipes are all spread out, but at Pool 7, Richardson, Cargill to a point, and Mission Terminals, the pipes are close--. **[*…audio skips*]**

So the ship has to be shifted, so you need the long lines. The other guys that come are from the ILA, all of which I know, most of which are grain trimmers. We know them from before. We go there, and we wait, and two guys go to the stern, two guys go to the bow, and as the ship's approaching, they throw you the heaving line. The heaving line is attached to the ship's line. The way it works is that where the bins are in the middle of the elevator is where you attach a line called a spring line. You take it from the bow backwards, and as the ship's going forward, he's slackening on that, and slackening on that. When he gets that into position, you go forward. They keep this line—there's other line called the messenger line—they go and tie it to one of the lines that you have to stretch forward. Sometimes, depending on the shape of the ship, you can catch this right away quick, without it dropping in the water. But usually, you have to drop it in the water. Three guys, two of us haul the eye up, and third guy unties it.

NP: Because I know nothing about tugs, are you on the tug when this is being done?

GO: No, no.

NP: You've gone onto the dock then.

GO: We go there by car. I'm hired by the tug company that has the contract to do the lines. I've never worked on the tug yet, but I'm employed.

NP: This is a whole new aspect of tugs that I didn't realize.

EE: And the tug is with the saltie? Is it actually pushing it or just sort of watching it?

GO: No, it's pushing it. They have a line up forward and they have a line stern. The idea is to get it close to where they want to go and then they push it in. But they hang onto it until we got it tied up. Once we got it secured, the pilot is the one who's governing it. Once he feels the ship is secured, he let's the tugs go.

EE: Because the ships are not under power at all.

GO: Sometimes they are, but mostly not.

NP: My question--.

GO: Going out, we arrive. After the [inaudible] down, and we assist by pulling it away from the ship, so that it lands in a safe place on the dock. Once that is done, I can let that guys go, unless I have instruction to keep them there if we have another call. Then, I have to call my boss and give her the time that operation was done, and she writes that down. Then I have to wait for the pilot. Those guys are gone. I might have to wait 5, 10, 15, however long it takes. The pilot comes down. I help him with his bag. I take him to the Prince Arthur. That's where he stays. Now, if he's a Canadian pilot, that's good. If he's an American pilot, I've got to go to the desk and get his room number because I have to keep track of the pilots because I have to pick them up to take them back to the ship. I want to know where they are to make sure I get this done right. If you call the Prince Arthur, half the time they're on a recording, but if you know the room number, you can get the pilot. So if I don't get the room number at that time, I call them back. **[*…audio skips*]**

EE: So down the St. Lawrence and rides through the system all the way or no?

GO: Not quite. That whole Seaway is divided up into districts. The pilot would get on at a place called Escoumins, and he would ride so far. He might get off at Trois-Rivières, and then another guy goes to Quebec City, and the next guy goes to Montreal. Then there's the Seaway. Then there's Lake Ontario. Then there's the Canal, and then certain pilots take it to Port Huron, which is across from Sarnia. Anybody that's going to bring a ship would either get on in Port Huron or the Soo. Some of our ships that we get here come from Burn's Harbour, Indiana, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, or Chicago, Illinois. They don't go to Port Huron. They come up the St. Mary's River. So there's a pilot station in St. Mary's River. Usually, a Canadian pilot would bring it in here. What happens if you get a Canadian pilot, then he stays here. There's a number of ships coming in--. **[*…audio skips*]**

He would be taken out to do the ship, wherever it has to go. Sometimes we go to two elevators or three elevators. Sometime some of these moveable-bulkhead ships go into the Keefer first, get their bulkheads all sorted out. Then they go to an elevator, and then they get loaded. The harbour pilot would do those moves.

EE: There's no organization in town of these pilots, I don't suppose. There's no pilots retired in the city that you know of?

GO: No, not here. But the Americans get their orders from either Superior or Port Huron and the Canadians, usually, their head office is in Cornwall. They're in touch with their dispatchers at all times.

NP: Last question that relates to the project and that is, as you know being one of our advisors, we are trying to get a grain elevator designated as a national historic site and an activity centre museum set up. Just off the top of your head, what kind of things do you think are most important to preserve to put into it?

GO: You might want to consider is that the Harbour Commission has a model of Pool 1. Did you know that?

NP: No.

GO: It's a beautiful thing.

EE: I've seen it.

GO: That would be a start if you could.

EE: Is it a working model?

ID: I don't think it's working, but it's quite a lovely piece

GO: It is lovely

ID: A big scale model?

GO: Yeah.

ID: He's quite, Tim Heney, he's very enthusiastic about our project and of course they have some wonderful photos. In fact, you were talking about the kind of problems that they would encounter. He's got one photo where there's a boxcar sort of hanging over, and then if you look in the background there's another one! [Laughs]

GO: Yeah, that doesn't happen anymore, but it used to happen quite often.

ID: It's a game of mistakes.

GO: Not being--.

NP: Not being too careful. Maybe the drink had something to do with it.

GO: Not knowing how many cars the track can hold. But that is a starting point, that model is really nice and of course a lot of these structures are gone.

NP: And I think that is a really good place to officially end this interview because we're going to start up again next time, talking about each of these structures. I know you have a great wealth of knowledge on that. So thanks again.

GO: I know some, yeah. Don't know them all, but I know some of them. Like these pictures here, starts up the river and comes down to the Current River.

NP: So can we officially sign off for today?

End of interview.