Narrator: Gene Prystay (GP)

Company Affiliations: Parrish & Heimbecker (P&H), Seafarers' International Union (SIU)

Interview Date: 16 July 2010

Interviewer: Nancy Perozzo (NP)

Recorder: Ian Dew (NP)

Transcriber: Sarah Lorenowich

Summary: Retired general manager of Parrish & Heimbecker terminal Gene Prystay discusses his varied career in Canada's grain industry. He begins with his work on lake and ocean ships in the engine room, and he shares stories of near accidents and working during the opening of the Seaway. He then discusses his move to the Seafarers' International Union as a steward, a business agent, and then vice president of the Upper Great Lakes region. He recounts the turbulent history of the SIU, its sometimes-violent interactions with competing unions, and his work handling grievances and negotiating contracts. Prystay describes his move away from shipping into Parrish & Heimbecker Elevator as a labourer in the car shed. He recalls moving up to foreman, superintendent, and then general manager, and the increasing responsibility of each role. He shares a variety of stories of his career in the elevator, like of working under Bill Parrish, a dock collapse, equipment upgrading, and cooperation with other elevators on order complications. He discusses his connection with other industry players, like farmers, the Canadian Grain Commission, Lake Shippers Clearance Association, railways, and lake ships. He describes the major changes in the elevator and industry, like automation, downsizing, the introduction of the metric system, and safety improvements. Other topics discussed include an elevator explosion in Vancouver, the use of salvaged grain car doors in the community, P&H's eastern division, alcohol use in the elevators, and the challenges of the port of Churchill and ship/rail allocations.

Keywords: Parrish & Heimbecker; Seafarers' International Union (SIU); Labour unions; Terminal grain elevators—Thunder Bay; P&H Elevator; Grain transportation—ships; Lakers; Ocean-going vessels; Ship's crew; Canadian Maritime Union; Hal C. Banks; Package freighters; Bulk carriers; Shipping accidents; St. Lawrence Seaway; Labour strikes; Grievances; Contract negotiations; Grain handling; Grain screenings; Car shed; Boxcar unloading; Grain car doors; Management; Grain elevators—equipment and supplies; Grain farmers/producers; Grain grades; Canadian Grain Commission; Automation; Downsizing; Metric system; Ship inspection; Alcohol use; Health & safety; Churchill; Lake Shippers Clearance Association; Grain transportation—rail; Canadian National Railway; Canadian Pacific Railway

Time, Speaker, Narrative

NP: Nancy Perozzo at the Canadian Grain Commission [CGC] board room on July 16, 2010, with Ian Dew at the controls, and Mr. Prystay the narrator for today. Thank you very much for coming in this morning. In a lead up to the interview, you were mentioning that you were a Saskatchewan farm boy by birth, so perhaps we can start there as how it was your introduction to the grain industry.

GP: Well, I was born there, but my father worked for the CNR [Canadian National Railway], and he was transferred to Thunder Bay—well, Fort William in those days—when I was about 4 years old. I live here off and on, well, since then. I lived other places like Toronto, Montreal, St. Catherines—that's when I was on the lake ships. I worked on the lake ships, and then I was union rep for the Seafarers, but that got to be sort of a--. I wasn't exactly totally satisfied with the representation the members were getting, so I decided to leave and pursue another occupation. Do you want me to go to when I started with the grain? Is that what you want next?

NP: Well, let me go back because there's a few things that you've mentioned that I think we're interested in as well. Your dad worked for--?

GP: CNR.

NP: CNR. What did he do with the CNR at that time, do you know? Do you remember?

GP: He worked the maintenance a way, and then when the ore trade came through from Atikokan, they loaded the ships at the ore docks here, and he worked there until he retired.

NP: Then you said you, was it then, you moved to the ships? Was that how you became--? How did you get involved in working on the ships?

GP: Well, my brother was on the lake ships, and in those days, it was sort of an adventure. I tried it out for a number of years, even out of Vancouver and the Great Lakes.

NP: And what kinds of things did you do on the ships?

GP: Oh, engine room. Engine crew, engine room mostly. Then I started with the Seafarers Union 1966, and I stayed with them until 1975.

NP: And what does a Seafarer's Union rep do?

GP: Well, they're supposed to look after the members' interests. But I think that's a fallacy. [Laughs] It wasn't. So, I got dissatisfied with that situation, so I left.

NP: So, do you feel comfortable talking about why you felt they didn't take care of the members' interests?

GP: Well, if you go back to the 1960-61, there was another union trying to get in the Great Lakes called the Canadian Maritime Union. It got to be sort of a battle, and there was a number of beatings and shootings in the US and in Canada. A lot of people got hurt, and quite a few people went to jail for life in the US for assassination attempts and that type of thing. To me, I wasn't wanting to be party of anything like that.

NP: Yeah. Did the tentacles of that make its way to Thunder Bay at all?

GP: Oh, yes. Yes. An agent here—I can't think of his name—he worked for Upper Lakes Shipping, which started the Canadian Maritime Union, and he got severely beaten here in his home. That was the beginning of things here, and there was a lot of violence here in the local pubs and so forth. There was quite a bit of animosity actually with the higher echelon of both unions. The members are the ones that suffered.

NP: So, was it the rank and file that were involved in the animosity or was it more of a--?

GP: Well, no, it was the executive of both sides. They can always get some goons to do their work for them. There's always those kind around, and that's what happened. They're both, I think, Upper Lakes Shipping still is Canadian Maritime Union and the Seafarers do have Canada Steamship Lines and a couple of others. There's nothing that I know of or have heard of happened lately. I guess they've sort of settled their differences.

NP: And they both still operate?

GP: As far as I know, yes. Yes.

NP: Ian has a great interest in history as well, so if I'm not following a line that you think I should, do you want to just pop in with a question? Is there anything? I mean this is fascinating.

ID: Right. Well, this is from the Hal Banks era?

GP: You got it. You got him. You know the name. [Laughs]

ID: Yeah!

[0:05:03]

GP: Yeah. "Hal the sailor's pal."

ID: Yes, so most of the problems were between the unions?

GP: Yeah, well what it was is the Seafarers International Union comes from the US, okay? And Hal Banks is sent over here when the head of the Canadian Seamen's Union back in the '40s after the war. I'm not sure—all this was said, but it was before my time—it was communist infiltrated. Of course, the Americans don't like that kind of connotations, so they came over here to straighten things out and get--. What's the word? Can't think of the word. It slips my mind what the word is.

NP: What's the concept? Get a grip on something or get control?

GP: Well, Canada US, what do we call ourselves?

NP: Trading partners?

GP: No, no. Oh, god. Not patriotic. I can't think of the word. We have what society we have compared to others?

NP: Democratic society?

GP: Democratic! Okay! [Laughs] It slipped my mind.

NP: Don't you hate it when that happens?

GP: Democracy, that's what Hal Banks sent up here for democracy. He ended up being a dictator. Everything was his way or that's it. You're out. He threw more people out of the union than he got in. But in those days, there was about maybe 12,000 jobs in the

Great Lakes, and the dues income was quite extravagant for people at the top. But Hal the sailor's pal left, I think, in 1963, back to the US because I think the Conservative Government was after him and so were the Mounties. So, he retired somewhere to the US. Wherever he went, I'm not sure.

Another thing that just hit my mind, in 1968 when I was a union rep, they had an honorary Man of Year in Buffalo, New York, with maritime trade. That was it. Guess who was the honoured person? Hal C. Banks. Guess who that chairman was? George Steinbrenner. [Laughs]

ID: A good combination.

GP: Yes. Just hit my mind. I remember attending that dinner. George Steinbrenner and Hal C. Banks.

NP: And George Steinbrenner--?

GP: The one that just passed away.

NP: With the New York--?

GP: Yankees.

NP: Yankees.

GP: He only owned the lake ships then. He owned lake ships, yeah. I think it was in 1949 or '50, the *Henry Steinbrenner* run aground in Isle Royale there and sank. It was one of the ships.

NP: Anything else about your time as a union rep that--?

GP: Not really, no.

NP: Well--.

GP: It wasn't exactly a pleasant time that was. [Laughs]

NP: So, going back to your time on the ships, you said you worked in the engine room. So, I interviewed a fellow who worked in the engine room a generation before you and he was shovelling coal.

GP: Yes, I did that.

NP: So, tell us a bit about the work you did, so, when you started--.

GP: Hot! Hot, dirty, sweaty. Going through the Detroit River it was 105. You wonder why you're doing this, but you did it. I mean, it was something that you did. You never worried about it. I don't know. It was one of those things. You were young. Who cared?

NP: What was life like on the boat, I mean, other than the work part?

GP: Well, back then the ships were ancient. They were only building the new ones then. I was on some ships where you're all squatted in one room, and when you went on the ship normally you got the top bunk. One of the ships we went on, I got the bottom bunk. I thought, "That's really curious," until the lights were off. You could hear the rats knocking over the garbage pails. [Laughs] That's right. We call them bilge rats. It was common. That's the way it was.

NP: Which ships do you remember?

GP: Well, I was on a few of them. Some Paterson ones, some Upper Lakes ones, Misener. That's about it. Then on the West Coast with the *Princess of Nanaimo* was on that coastal trade.

NP: Did you have a favourite ship?

GP: Yeah. I was on the *Newbrundoc* in 1959, and I was the only English-speaking person on there. Everybody else was bilingual and they were fascinated that I couldn't speak French. For a year and a half, they tried to teach me to speak French. The only thing I still remember is how to order a drink. [Laughing] But they were really nice people. I really enjoyed them.

[0:10:24]

ID: I reviewed a book, it's called *Deck Hand*—that's the name of the book—and it's by an American. He describes the routine on the ships, and he uses the term—he was a deckhand, not engine room—but he uses a term *suggieing*.

GP: Suggieing!

ID: Suggieing. There!

GP: Yeah, suggieing. You call it suggieing. You're washing the ship down.

ID: That's right.

GP: You're using lye and soap, and you wash the white down. You go over the side and wash it all down that's called suggieing. Decks.

ID: And it's a never-ending job.

GP: Always, you're always--.

ID: And it's a really physical job.

GP: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Well, if you're running grain and then iron ore—which a lot of ships did both—iron ore would get all over. You had to keep it clean. That was part of your job, yeah.

ID: Can you describe your first day signing on? When did you become a sailor?

GP: I don't think I ever become a sailor. [Laughing] Yeah. Hm, I don't know. It was just something new. I was on the [inaudible], April 5, 1956, and it was a package freighter. It ran from here as a package freighter. Well, they didn't have the Keefer Terminal, they ran to the shipyards—not shipyards—but where the Marina is, they had sheds there and he ran there. I think you ran somewhere up and took [inaudible] to Ste. Marie, Sarnia, Windsor, Leamington, Port Colborne, Toronto, Montreal. You went everywhere and you carried package freight, which brought everything that came here. Instead of by truck it came here. Anything from like liquor, candies, shovels, stuff like that that would be brought by ship in those days.

NP: When you talk about all of those things that the package ships were taking, and other ships as well, folklore has it that cargos tend to be--. Some of them disappear?

GP: Oh, sure! Well, I'm not so sure about here in Thunder Bay—or Fort William or Port Arthur—but in Montreal it was so common. It was common. I guess the security was in on it or something because usually when you went into the US and you came here, the Mounties would come down and search the ship, because you had to sign a waiver you didn't buy anything. You'd take it ashore, and no one seems to have bought it. But I guess years ago, I read an article in the paper, they finally clamped down and half the longshoremen and the security are in jail. Well, they had to, I guess. So many things were disappearing.

NP: Since our project is focusing on wheat, anything about transporting wheat by ship that sticks in your mind?

GP: Not really no. I can't really think of the--.

NP: You got to know all of the elevators along the--?

GP: Here?

NP: Well here, and also along the Seaway.

GP: Well, before the Seaway opened in '59, the furthest point you could go to I think would be Prescott, Ontario—was a transfer elevator—then Kingston, and then Port Colborne. That's where the small ships took them up to the old canal to Montreal to go to foreign ports. But really nothing I can think of that.

NP: An elevator is an elevator?

GP: Yeah. I think there was about 25 here, but other than that I don't--. The only thing I maybe recall is November and December, when you were coming up this way, was quite chancy because the weather was quite bad. I can remember one year I was on a ship called the *Burlington*. The captain was an imbiber, and you get a bonus for more trips that you make in the year. We left Sault Ste. Marie in a real gale. I remember the [inaudible] **[…*audio skips*]** Hit. It turned on the side. Captain kept going and we got caught out in the middle of the lake. Thank god we made the port at shipyards. It ripped the front of the hull just about off. You could see in. We were the only ship, couple of them had the deck split. They come in here, they're all anchored waiting to get in the shipyards because they couldn't move, taking on water. But those were those days. They had to answer to no one.

NP: I was going to ask that. So, no repercussions for taking--? **[…*audio skips*]** How were you feeling that day?

[0:15:01]

GP: Well, hard to explain. Half the crew was seasick and some of them were praying. But you know, it's strange when you're young. You don't care. "Nothing's going to happen to me anyway." [Laughs] That's what you think! And I can't swim either, so. The ironic thing was on most of the ships it was a safety thing where you had to lower the lifeboats and test them to see if everything was fine--a lifeboat drill in case that happened. When we got into the shipyards here, they had a lifeboat drill. The lifeboats wouldn't lower. They were seized. So, if something would have happened, you'd have to swim to shore. I don't think you'd do that in Lake Superior. Not in those days! But the storms were quite bad. I can remember some ships coming in and just leaning over this way with ice because it just froze. I guess the heavier it got they would be sideways. That's a smaller ship. But I don't think there was any really bad ones.

NP: You were on the ships or with the Seafarers Union during when the Seaway opened?

GP: Oh, yes.

NP: What do you remember about that? Changes and--.

GP: Well, I was on the *Newbrundoc*, and we had to anchor and raise the flags because the Queen was coming through with her yacht. That was the first *Iroquois*. I remember they passed through, and we had to dip the flag for the Queen. That was, yeah, 1959. I forget what day it was, but it was sometime when--. The Seaway was open, but officially she opened it. Prior to that, with the small canal boats that took grain from Prescott to Montreal, the deckhands walked to Montreal because there was some of these small locks. When they got off to tie up, they had to get back on, you walked all the way there. That's how many of these small locks they had. I'm not sure how many there were, but that's what they did. So, how many miles that is I'm not sure, from Prescott to Montreal.

NP: Was there any anticipation on the part of the--? **[*…audio skips*]**

GP: Well, I suppose with the smaller ships that carried crews of about maybe 20 or 19 or something like that, their jobs would be gone and then the bigger ships would go through. So, I'm not sure how many went to the wall or got scrapped, but quite a few must have because that's all they had, and it was tonnes of the small ships. Well, I think a big lake carrier which would take, say, around 25,000 tonnes, it would take maybe four of those ships to bring that amount to Montreal from a transfer elevator. They carried about 10 or so. Very small. That's all they had then until they built that.

NP: What about the captains of the ships? Any differences between them? Were they one of a kind or--?

GP: Well, they're all different people. Some of them that were, I guess, in the Navy were hard to work under because they were spit-and-polish and didn't understand that you had a--. The ones who come through the ranks, I guess, on the lakes there, they understood. Other than that, I just can't recall of any that I disliked. Maybe a few, but--.

NP: Ones that you liked particularly?

GP: Hm. Hm. Hm.

NP: Admired?

GP: I just can't think of any. No. I can't recall of any that--.

ID: Would you say that there was sort of a social system on the ship whereby the engine room was one society and the deck another?

GP: Well, not really. I don't think so. Crews were pretty well the same. You're in the mess room together and ate together and all that. I don't think there was any--. Only thing that we used to tease, when you were on some of those coal ships that were pretty hardworking—sweaty and all that stuff—some of the people worked on deck we said they should wear skirts--. **[*…audio skips*]** That's about it.

ID: What was the food like?

GP: Some of them were pretty good. You know, it depended. I'm not sure in those days a cook was a cook. Some of them were darn good and fed you quite well, and some of them were just probably deckhands before. They could make bacon and eggs and they were hired or something. I don't know. Some of them were just terrible. But basically, there were some good ones.

ID: And the food was--.

GP: Oh, yeah. It was, yeah. Nowadays on some of the ships, excellent food. Like gourmet food on a lot of them. Very good chefs. Well, it's not bad money.

[0:20:07]

NP: So, what decided you to move on from the rank and file into the union?

GP: Well, I don't know. I was asked. I don't know why I was asked, so I said, "I'll give it a try." So, I stayed a few years.

NP: What was the first day like on the job with the union then? Can you recall?

GP: Yeah, horrible. **[…*audio skips*]** Ontario, it's next to St. Catherines. In the spring they have calls for all the ships like these crews. I was a dispatcher to send them all, so. I'm not sure how many jobs there were—hundreds of them—and the guy who hired me, he was my boss, he went to Montreal and left me alone. I had no concept of what was going on. I had to sleep in Union Hall. I couldn't leave it. [Laughs] That was my first day. I thought, "What a stupid move I made." But I got onto it.

NP: And that's not the job you stayed with at the union, so how did your career progress there?

GP: Well, some people left, and I was transferred to Toronto as a business agent. Then there was some moves made here. I was sent here as vice president. I got elected as vice president Upper Great Lakes, that's where I stayed until 19—what?—75.

NP: What does an agent do? A union agent?

GP: Well--. **[…*audio skips*]** You know, with people being sick and whatever. Dispatching people to jobs and whatever else. Sending grievances and so forth like that.

NP: When you think of the grievances. Can they be put in categories? Like what was the most common grievance? And can you remember what was the most unusual one?

GP: Unusual, hm. Well, unusual. [Laughs] I'm trying to think of real unusual. They had a ship called the *Silver Ile*. Most of the big ships were built where you had your own room, but this ship was built in Cork, Ireland, and there was two to a room. These two guys were dispatched out of Montreal—one was Arab one was Jewish. Wow. I didn't know how to deal with that one, but they hated each other with a passion. [Laughs] So, what happened was I talked to the captain and the chief engineer on there. **[…*audio skips*]** And "I'm not staying with an Arab that washes his feet in the sink where I have to brush my teeth." How do you settle a grievance like that? [Laughs] But I guess they hated each other, but they stayed on the same ship for a number of years.

NP: So, that was the more unusual one. What were usual?

GP: The wrong kind of soap. Palmolive or something like that, and they don't--. Then if somebody didn't like the cook, the food was terrible, that kind of thing. To me, once you got used to it, "If you don't like it, go somewhere else." Really. You were getting it for nothing, so. But normally if you had grievances that were legitimate, like a pay thing all that, you filed a grievance and meet with the company official, and he would iron it out, whatever it is. They would check it out and if it was, they'd pay. If not, they wouldn't.

NP: How did you like that part of the job?

GP: **[*…audio skips*]** Around when I got into management, I had a good concept of what to do. [Laughs] Yes or no. Most of them are bargaining issues anyway. "You give me one, I'll give you one back."

NP: So, a good learning experience.

GP: Very.

ID: Can you tell us about strike situations?

GP: Oh. Which ones?

ID: Exactly. Can you give us a history of--?

GP: You mean the seamen's strikes or elevator strikes or which--?

ID: Yes, well both, but seamen particularly.

GP: Well, a lot of them are pretty violent ones. You know, some people decided they didn't want to belong to the union. They wanted to go to work, and they would get beaten and so forth like that. That type of thing. I seemed to think that way back when I got into the executive--. **[*…audio skips*]** Executive vice president knew ahead of time what the contract was going to be, what it was going to be signed as, but they decided to let the seamen blow some air and let them sit on the picket line for three or four weeks, and say, "Look at what we got you." They knew ahead of time what it was going to be signed, so the members lost a few weeks' pay for nothing. That was the system.

[0:25:15]

NP: Were you part of the negotiating team?

GP: Yeah.

NP: So, who would have been other members of that team and who would have been, that you recall, negotiating with?

GP: Well, most of the bargaining committee members were yes-men, in the way of whatever you said they say "Okay." Handpicked.

NP: By the executive of the union?

GP: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, of course.

NP: And do you remember people on the other side of the table? Like personalities and--?

GP: Yeah, God, they're all gone now. Johnny F. Misener, who else? God, I can't think of some. Papachristidis—I can't think of the name—he had a few lake ships. I can't remember them. Hall Corporation, yeah.

NP: So, where would they fit into their company structure? Were they like lawyers or just a negotiating team or the owners?

GP: Some of them were--. Well, they had stocks in the company, I'm not sure. Some of them, they weren't exactly the top echelon, but they had the power to do it. I'm not sure if Paul Martin was--. No, he wasn't. He was just a rookie in those days, I believe. But, yeah, they had the authority to decide.

NP: Are we ready, Ian, to move onto the real grain area? Although shipping was one of the areas we're very interested in as well--.

ID: **[*…audio skips*]** Yes.

GP: Not very interesting, is it? [Laughs]

NP: Oh, it's fascinating!

GP: Not to me it isn't! [Laughing]

NP: That's what I find, most people who live the life don't realize just how fascinating it was, is, still. So, let's see. We've left you, you were with the union, and then you decided to leave there. So, where did you go from there?

GP: I started with Parrish & Heimbecker [P&H], August 31, 1976.

NP: And how did it come about that you started with them?

GP: What happened was that prior manager there, Jake Burnett, died of cancer. I knew him through—I don't know—I just knew him from, I guess, from being a union rep. He died, and a guy I curled with when I was in Thunder Bay, Larry Carrol, he was working for Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. Bill Parrish came down here, him and John Fields, looking for Larry—of course they were all members of the Elks. Things were so busy he said, "If you want a job," he said, "we're hiring." I said, "Well, I'll give it a try." I stayed. Started as a labourer.

NP: Who was the Mr. Fields that you mentioned?

GP: John Fields, the general manager, yeah. He retired in 1993.

NP: Is he still--?

GP: No, he passed away two years ago.

NP: So, you started as a labourer. So, we'll go back to our repetitive question, what was the first day on the job as a labourer like? Do you recall?

GP: Dusty and dirty. That's what you did. You were a sweeper, you loaded refuse into boxcars. Those days they had no—well they still don't—have a pellet mill at P&H. They had one at Cargill and Manitoba Pool and Sask Pool. So, your refuse that you had you couldn't keep it on hand because you'd have no room for actual grain, so you had to ship it somewhere to be pelletized. We shipped by, in those days, boxcars. The stuff was just like feathers, which you had all the way down had to load into boxcars, trim it. You come out of there looking like a ghost. That was your job that you did.

NP: Any safety precautions in those days when you started?

GP: You had a mask. That's it. Goggles. That was prior to all the systems they have now to suck all the air out. They just had what they called cyclones. That's just a little bit, but then everything got updated after that explosion in Vancouver. That changed everything.

NP: Tell us a little bit about that explosion.

GP: I was not in Vancouver, but there was a--. I'm not sure. Federal government safety inspectors here have a film of it. They showed it to all of us. It's about an hour long and it starts out with how it happened. It was narrated by someone on CTV I do believe because they brought it to all the elevators. In the lunchroom we had the time off and it showed how this came about for safety reasons. I'm sure it was, yeah, it's the federal government safety guys. I'm not sure if they still--. It must be still here somewhere. I don't know what happened to the film, but it was quite an interesting film to watch how that could happen.

[0:30:30]

NP: Do you recall which elevator was involved?

GP: Oh, god. I'm going to say the Pacific Elevator, but I'm not sure. I think I'm not really sure if it is or not. But what happened was they were loading on a Russian saltwater ship, and it was some type of pellets. They tended to stick. It was in the legs, and they had someone on the top of the floor, and the legs started to plug. There was a safety precaution—all he had to do was shut it off. He didn't. They kept on going and the friction started, and it blew the top of the elevator off. I forget how many it killed. And I still remember the one part, the top of the elevator was seven or eight blocks away. It blew that hard. Bran pellets they were. All the guy had to do was hit a switch, and it would have stopped everything fine. He didn't. He died, so no one know whatever happened, why he didn't. That was, what he is supposed to do? He just didn't.

Yeah, I'm sure that that's what it was. The safety guys that do the safety for the elevators, I'm sure they brought the film down. It's quite an interesting thing to watch. I think it's about an hour long. It goes through all the precautions of what happened, what they didn't do, and what they were supposed to do. So, if you got a hold of that you'd get some interesting stuff with that.

NP: What were politics like in the elevator when you started?

GP: Hm. I'm not sure there was any politics at all to get. [Laughs]. Really.

NP: No cliques or--?

GP: No, I don't think so. In the bigger places. P&H elevator, at one time you had 20 people, and when it got really busy, we got up to 45 with three shifts, but I don't really recall any like that, no, not really, no. You know, you get lots of times on payday if we had no work the next day, we'd all go to the Labour Centre and down a few beers together. That would be the whole gang. Even the foremen would come with us, you know. That's when we were [inaudible] and washed. But, you know, there was nothing that I can recall something like that, no.

NP: Anything that sticks in your memory about your time as a labourer? Other than coming out looking like a ghost?

GP: No, no.

NP: It was pretty routine?

GP: Yeah, oh yes. Oh, yes. You did it all. That's how you learned the job.

ID: That was round about when they were introducing the sort of tank cars but previously that was boxcars.

GP: Hopper cars, yeah. Boxcars.

ID: So, would you be unloading boxcars?

GP: Oh, they had augers to unload them. They run in and took the grain out on both sides, and it was very common for them to break down about 20 times a shift. [Laughs] A terrible situation, but that's what they had. Then, took them out, and used just hopper cars and that's just fine because you had no problem then. The grain would run down in your hopper, and all you had to do was open it. The boxcar thing was terrible. Nobody wanted them. They were so hard to unload. You had doors to open and so forth and so on. Sometimes you couldn't open them. Sometimes they'd break, the whole thing would go all over the tracks. So, it was something that was old, and nobody wanted them anymore.

NP: I have a particular interest—because I'm that way—about boxcar doors.

GP: What about them?

NP: What about boxcar doors? Who used them, were they tossed out?

GP: What? Boxcar doors? Oh, the grain doors you mean?

NP: The grain doors, yeah!

GP: Well, if you take a drive from—let's see—Central Avenue, look to your left going to Port Arthur, or go in, and you'll see all the houses built with grain doors. [Laughs] Really! They took them all home! They had no money. Their sheds, everything. Grain doors, that's what they did with them. They might be torn down now, but that's basically that part of—what do you call it?—the South End, that what it is? First Avenue, Second Avenue, the houses inside there mostly all grain--.

NP: Ontario, I think, Ontario is up there--.

GP: No, maybe not up that far. That's what they did with them because they were good wood.

[0:35:06]

NP: Was that problematic for the elevator, or they were glad to have one less thing to get rid of?

GP: I'm not sure. That's way before my time. Something like that, I don't--. When I came, they used cardboard sheets after that. They didn't use wood, so.

NP: So, after the labourer stint, how did your career unfold?

GP: Well, funny thing happened when I was a labourer there. There was an old acquaintance of mine by the name of Frank Mazur asked me would I like to come be shop steward. I thought to myself, "Oh, here we go again." [Laughs] I said, "Oh, well, I'll try it." So, there I go into that thing again, along to the trades and labour councils and this kind of councils and that kind of grievances kind of--. Oh, boy, oh, boy. So, anyways, I did that for about maybe, I think, it was about 12 months, then I got offered the job as general foreman there. I took it. That was the end of my union stuff.

NP: Was it difficult to move from union to management?

GP: No, no. Not for me it wasn't, no. You had a relationship with all the guys anyways. You had a job to do. You had to do it. That's all. What's the big deal here? Only thing, in the summer--. Well, when you're really busy seven days a week, 24 hours a day, the money was great. But a lot of them would think up all these illnesses they had on the long weekends, and that was kind of tough to fill in for them and whatever, but you tried your best. Then you understood that people do want time off, but there wasn't any.

You know because when you started in the spring, you got maybe some relief around Christmastime. Then about the first week of January, any of the grain that wasn't gone by vessel you shipped by rail to Montreal and to Quebec City. A guy could be up top of his hopper about 10 minutes, come down, send another guy up. You'd have to do it that way, or otherwise he'd freeze solid. It was that cold. I don't know what happens in the winters now, but it was definitely cold when I went to work. Why is it not cold now that I don't have to work? [Laughing]

NP: There's cold and then there's cold at the top of an elevator on Lake Superior.

GP: Oh, *pshht,* it was just dreadful. You know, I did it myself, but I felt sorry for the guys. I said, "Hey, come down every 10 minutes. Don't stay up that long." They had balaclavas, coats on, everything, and you couldn't--. There'd be steam coming off them, and it froze to them. But that was it, and that was work, and that was the wintertime.

NP: From foreman, we're not all that interested—unless you can remember the years that you were in that job—and then where you moved on to from there.

GP: Well, in '78 I got the foreman job, and then in '89--. **[*…audio skips*]**

NP: Superintendents there during your time?

GP: When I got there, Davey Phillips was. In fact, I think he was born on the property, I was told. Thunder Bay harbour, there was an old house there, and that's where the family was raised. I guess he got a job in the elevator, I don't know, as a teenager or something like that, and he stayed there. So, how many years he was there? I'm not really sure. I think he's still alive, yeah. He retired in '89. I took his place.

NP: Still in Thunder Bay?

GP: Is he still in Thunder Bay? I think he is, yeah. The anecdote was he was, I'm not really sure. There was an older house there anyways, so he could have been. He was born into the grain trade right on the property. Then, I guess, a bit of information just in

there when the city—I guess it was the city and the province—decided the taxes should be raised. We had to go to an appeal and $2 million per year. The company—well we all met together—and the company said, "You know, there's about 150 jobs here. If we get a tax relief," because it would not generate that kind of income to keep everything going. The city said no, so they closed the elevator. That's it. The city was responsible for that. Behind us was Thunder Bay Harbour. They paid $5,000 a year, taxes, with a larger property. At P&H Elevator, we were paying $650,000 for the smaller property. I couldn't figure that one out. Why? We went to appeal with all these different people, consultants, and all that. We won, but it cost us more money than the taxes would have been. [Laughs] So, whatever.

[0:40:25]

NP: Over time with getting the reduction, you eventually--?

GP: Yeah, it took many years. Yeah. I think it has dropped quite a bit now. Another anecdote I thought was really funny was Thunder Bay Hydro—not Thunder Bay Hydro, Ontario Hydro I think it was—worked 12:00 to 8:00 in the wintertime loading your cars, and I thought to myself, "You know what, you come here at 11:30 tonight with me. I'll meet you here. I'll send you on top of the car and then let me know if it's a hell of a good idea." He never came back. [Laughs] Well, think about it. At midnight? *Brr*. God. But.

NP: So, Davey Phillips was one of the superintendents that you worked under?

GP: Yeah, he started out as a labourer too.

NP: Yeah. And then--?

GP: And then myself.

NP: And then you, okay.

GP: That was '89, and then in '91 my boss retired, and I got the job of manager till 1999. I retired.

NP: And your boss was?

GP: Bill Parrish out of Winnipeg.

NP: Oh, okay!

GP: Out of Winnipeg, yeah. You mean when I was superintendent? The manager was Larry Carrol.

NP: Okay, still.

GP: Yeah, he was, yeah.

NP: And then you went from superintendent to manager, so that's the--. **[*…audio skips*]** [Laughs] So, what years were you the manager?

GP: '91 to '99.

NP: And you started in the grain--?

GP: '76.

NP: '76. So, you were active through the real boom years?

GP: Mmhmm.

NP: And then also, then, into the--.

GP: I think 1988 was a drought year. I can't think if that was the year or not, or '89 or something. It was a real bad year. There was nothing here. I think it was '88. Now another anecdote was maybe the guys worked about maybe a month in a spring for shipping whatever grain we had, and then it was the drought. They were all laid off except for, well, management. A lot of them were in financial difficulties, and I guess a couple of them—never said anything to me—but one or two of them phoned Winnipeg and said their mortgages were due and they were going to get kicked out. Bill Parrish phoned me, he said, "Hire them all back." I said, "Well, we've got nothing to do." He said, "Hire everyone back. Let them pick dandelions off the tracks." He was that kind of boss.

It was contract negotiating time. They went on strike that October, and he was kind of upset about that. He said, "Here." They came to work in July, they did just pick dandelions. Now they go on strike. Of course, they had no choice I don't think, but still, he didn't

feel very good about it. And him being quite a guy—I mean I still admire him for that—I mean, what other company would do that? Get paid for--? There was no income from the elevator, but he paid it out.

NP: Any other Bill Parrish stories? That you can tell. [Laughs]

GP: Yeah, okay! Yeah, I have a good one. When Pool 3 closed, and a guy by the name of Jimmy Black took it over. I guess I forget how that worked, but he had equipment for sale, you know, to sell that you might use. P&H had quite a few elevators out west, I think in Medicine Hat and Moose Jaw and places like that, and they could use some of the equipment. Pool 3, you know, went up and we were on the rooftop of the elevator looking for something up there. I can't remember what it was. There happened to be a seagull's nest. You know what they're like when there's a seagull's nest? Well, first they fly at you at your head to stop you. This one didn't. It crapped all over his suit, nice Italian silk suit. [Laughs]

He said, "You can go ahead and laugh. I've been shit on by better people." [Laughs] That's what he said! From head to foot, so we had to go back to the elevator to clean him off because he can't fly back like that! [Laughs] But, you know, he was that kind of a guy. Nothing seemed to bother him. I don't know. He said, "Every dark cloud has a silver lining." So. His attitude was that way.

NP: You would probably appreciate listening to his interview, which we have. And he's released, so it's available if you would like to hear it.

[0:45:05]

GP: Yeah. One of our ships—we owned some lake ships—I forget which one it was, it tied up overnight for some reason, and as it pulled out, the dock collapsed, which was behind the elevator. So, the warehouse, everything, went in. Half the tracks. I come there in the morning. I couldn't believe it. So, we thought maybe the dock towards the elevator something would be wrong with it, too, and it would make the thing collapse. We had to call engineering outfit and some divers to go look and be sure, just in case there was a big problem there. Bill Parrish came down to look to see what could be done about it, and the tenders put out by the engineering firm were that high. He said, "I think that's the end of it. We'll have to close the place. It's just too much money to fix it."

Lo and behold, I can't think of his name—Pierre Gagne I think it was—he did. The place is running. Because we were all looking for a job the day after because he said, "We're going to close." You couldn't generate enough income to pay for that, for what they wanted, what the construction companies wanted. Well, this guy did. Yeah, Pierre Gagne was his name. Small time operator. I think he was from Geraldton originally or something like that. He did it. Still there, just as good as ever.

ID: What exactly caused the problem?

GP: Well, I think when they--. I'm not an engineer, but I found out after. The draft at the elevator, we couldn't finish it. I think we had 21.9 feet there. So, what the boss in Winnipeg or whoever it was, wanted to dredge it so we could finish a ship, you know? So, I think that Seaway depth now, Seaway depth is, what, 25, 26? I forget now. Okay. So, we dredged it, okay. Built the dock there, and they had big cables holding it on the underside of the tracks. The tracks went sort of on a slope so the cars would run, and I guess they rotted. Under the strain and the pressure, the cables broke, the dock went over.

I kind of thought, "Jeez, it must be our fault. What did we do wrong?" Then I found out we did nothing wrong. Someone in the engineering department in Winnipeg decided to do that, and that's what killed it. You can never know. Just like having something you dug underneath, it's going to tip. And that's what happened.

NP: Anything surprise you about the job as the head guy in Thunder Bay? Any surprises? Pleasant, unpleasant?

GP: No. If you're a politician, or tried to be, with the--. When you've got equipment, ongoing things have got to be repaired--. **[*…audio skips*]** And I said, "Why do you want Cadillac equipment for a Volkswagen elevator?" That was his [inaudible]**.** "Well," I said, "you know, if you don't fix things, they break down, and then you're going to have nothing to work with." When you have something done, it's not a couple dollars. It's thousands of dollars. Nothing is cheap. First year I was there, I think I spent a million and a half dollars. That sounded paltry, but to them it was quite a bit, but you have to fix things, you know? So, that was par with usually those types of things. We'd always have sort of a tete-a-tete on the telephone all the time. But I got my way.

Well, for instance, if things with loading ships, if you held up a ship for demurrage it's $25,000 a day. Okay? That's a bit of money. So, I told him, I said, "Okay. We'll leave it at--." **[*…audio skips*]** It'll take about a week to fix those scales, so that's about--. Hm, 7 times 25. I got it done right away that day. "Fix it!" I was lying a bit. [Laughs] But you had to. Things go, cleaners and that type of thing. If you had different grain, then you had to have those things done because you had a small turnover and a small elevator. You had to put it through as fast as you can.

NP: We got a couple of questions here, and then I'd like to take a break and give you a chance to stretch your legs for five minutes or so. You've talked a lot about your career, and you've probably already answered this in a different form, but the question reads, "What might interest or surprise people most about the work you did?"

[0:50:22]

GP: Gee, I don't think I have an answer for that. I don't know.

NP: Okay! That's not an unusual answer to that question. What are you most proud of?

GP: Gee.

NP: Take a while to think about it. There's no hurry.

GP: [Laughs] I'm not really sure. What the heck would I be--? I think my relationship with the employees, I would think, and I guess with the owners. That type of thing, I guess. I just can't think of anything that--. The relationship with the other terminal elevators, with the managers there. Any problem that we would have amongst each other with loading grain, you know, we were quite up to it. We'd help each other out. Those type of things.

NP: What kind of problems occur that requires that cooperation?

GP: Well, a lot of times when you load grain, there's a tolerance for it, okay? And mistakes are made sometimes, and you're over your tolerance. For instance, you're shipping a 1-Red 13.5, and they're level. If another elevator can put enough on to bring the standard up to it, well, you'd call them and say, "Can you help me?" Basically, "Yeah, sure."

NP: Was it always a cooperative relationship, one company to another?

GP: I found it was, yeah. Well, you're competing with each other. That type of situation, everyone has them, so you never say no. You have them.

NP: Because it might be you next week, if you say no this week.

GP: That's true, that could happen to anyone. So, that type of thing just a phone call and be fine. Then you would get, too, with the grain inspection up here, the people that were in charge there were pretty darn good about it too. They didn't penalize you unless you really, extremely flaunted them. But they tried to help you out too, because most of the old staff of the grain inspection said, "We work for the elevator company. They don't work for us." That was lost on the younger people because without a grain trade they wouldn't have a job.

NP: **[*…audio skips*]** Things we'll come back to after we take a short break.

GP: Yeah.

[Audio pauses]

NP: The next question on the list is a more general, philosophical question. How do you feel that the work you did in the grain trade contributed to Canada's success as an international grain trader?

GP: Don't know how to answer that one. Hm. How would I answer that? Productivity? I'm not really sure how to answer something like that. Just part of a small spoke in the wheel with productivity and maintaining the throughput of grain to Thunder Bay.

NP: And how does that--? **[*…audio skips*]**

GP: Filtered down of all the salary or the wages of the people that work there, you know, it's contributed to--.

NP: Makes it a viable industry.

GP: Yeah, yeah.

NP: And what about on the other side? On the customer side?

GP: I never had any dealings with them. The only ones I would have dealings with would be the US ones. If we ship something to the US, if they had any complaints with it, you know, you dealt with them directly. As far as going overseas, nothing whatsoever that. I never have.

NP: Did you know who you were shipping to?

GP: No, I'm just trying to recall. We have salties in there loading types of grain. I'm not really sure where it was going. I can't really recall. No, I'm not really sure it had a destination on it. We knew we'd have orders for the grain, but I'm not sure if they had a destination or not. Because they would go to different elevators, so you had your share and whatever you put on whatever you had. I'm not aware of--.

NP: The producers, any connections that way?

GP: Well, yeah, because P&H had country elevators, and you got your grain from them, but the producers--. Well, apparently there was a bit of a misunderstanding with the producers. They would seem to think they're sending you top grain. No. [Laughs] We'd always say, "Look, you're not going to fool anybody up here. We've got grain inspection. We have ourselves. What are you trying to tell us?" They complain to the people in Winnipeg. The people in Winnipeg would call us. "It is what it is. We can't change it. We've got no magic wand here." However, which is one of the things the trade always did, if--. Bill Parrish always had a poor farmer with 10 children and his cow was dying, "Will you take his grain? It's not really a good [inaudible] of grain, but would you blend it and make sure he gets top dollar for it?"

[0:55:41]

We'd unload the cars, and we'd phone up Bill and say, "Bill, I don't know about that poor farmer, but I'll tell you what, what he sent us is awful." But we get rid of it. So, he'd have maybe a 3-Red, which is bottom or utility, he wanted a price of 1-Red for it, which is quite a bit of an upgrade. But we did that. It's called blending and we tried our best. We did that. But that's one of those anecdotes. Bill and this poor farmer with the 10 children, "He'll be thrown off his property." And he sent us these cars. Oh god! It was laughable. Joke in the trade, everyone knew about him just doing that. But being the man he is, he always tried for him.

NP: Was blending ever not successful or did you have--? It seems to me that that is--.

GP: It's illegal. The Grain Commission doesn't allow that.

NP: Tell us more about that.

GP: Well, for instance if you had, say, 2,000 tonnes of 2-Red grain came down here. The producer sent that as a 1-Red. If you had maybe 10,000 tonnes of 1-Red, you'd run it together to make the grade. It was one of those things that you weren't supposed to do, but everyone knew if it was an exceptional situation, you did it. Because the Grain Commission too understands, they're looking out for the farmers interests too also, not in a sense ours. So, it was something we did.

NP: I have a question of how did that car get to you listed as Number 1, when at the primary elevators it has to be graded?

GP: Poor grading there. [Laughs] Everything's a Number 1 to them. Well, I guess when they unloaded it, they come by truck, okay? So, they catch a sample, whatever it was. Maybe the farmer is pretty smart—he makes sure the good part comes out first and the rest of the garbage comes behind it. They have a bag, and they send it in. "Okay. That's 1-Red." The rest of it isn't. So, I suppose it is that way. I never spent that much time out that way.

NP: So, I guess that's how they designed the system when they sampled cars that the scoops went down through the whole car, so that you couldn't--.

GP: Yes, yes. Yeah, you got it all. Yeah. It came off the belt and you got your whole car, your samplers. But that kind of system was beaten by a few people way back then too.

NP: How do these things--?

GP: Well, what they do is they put in more dockage than it was. They have a guy stand on the belt and throw more dockage in, that way the elevator, we get more money.

NP: I don't understand that.

GP: Well, you've got to clean the dockage out of it.

NP: Ah. So, they can claim then that it was--.

GP: Yeah.

NP: So, who makes those decisions?

GP: Well, those days with the elevators, they all did, I guess. I'm not sure what they did. At our place you couldn't do it. It was too small of a place, but they did, I guess. Yeah, so.

NP: Interesting!

GP: It is!

NP: Any other interesting stories you have?

GP: Well, when they had weigh-overs—I've never seen it—but they used to have, if it was in the summertime I guess, somebody's high school son had to sit on the bar of the scale, the old scales, to make more weight. That way the audit would be okay. There were bars in there, and when you weighed the grain, it would show something, but it really wasn't. But I never seen it either. It was just one of anecdotes you heard passed on and on.

NP: Digital scales do away with that?

GP: The old hand ones.

NP: Yeah, so digital scales might have dealt with that.

GP: They could, they could. They can be fooled with, too. Oh, yeah.

NP: Hm. Canadian Grain Commission [CGC], how did that feature into your career?

GP: Pretty well quite a bit. I learned a lot from them, the people that were in the trade. They were pretty helpful because if you walk in off the street, you know, you haven't been in the grain trade like some people--. Nepotism was predominant in the harbour here, you know—father, son, and grandfather—they all worked in the trade, so they knew it. But they were pretty good. I had a good relationship with them. All of them. You know, even the grain inspectors, I found them very helpful. There were a few oddballs. They were sent somewhere else in purgatory because they couldn't get along with anybody, but otherwise it was darn good.

[1:00:43]

NP: What kinds of things would you do that would indicate you couldn't get along with people?

GP: Well, a lot of them just didn't know how to grade grain. [Laughs] So, they made everything one payment, and you'd be stuck with all this stuff. You'd have to bring it up here and say, "Oh, they didn't--." Whatever, then they'd do it. They'd reinspect all the cars. It was more work for them up here. That's what they did.

NP: So, incompetence in other words, which shows its head in every organization.

GP: Yeah, it was, yeah. It was. Well, what happened was, like I said, nepotism was predominant here, and they hired people. When things were busy, a lot of people were afraid to walk down the street. They might get hired! [Laughs] There was a lot of work everywhere. I guess they just hired people they shouldn't have hired, and it happens to everybody I guess, you know? So, there were grain inspectors and whatever you call them.

NP: What was the relationship like between the grain inspectors and samplers that were through the Grain Commission and the P&H's--? Did you have your own, on staff?

GP: In grain inspection? No, never had anybody. Tried our best to do our own, but then the grain inspector was helpful in case there was something you were stuck with. People down here they reinspect the cars to make sure everything was fine. It would happen. Then with reinspection, there was always someone up here—how that worked, I'm not really sure—but if a producer thought he was getting a bad deal on a certain car, he'd call the grain inspection here and they would reinspect the car, but he'd have to pay whatever—I'm not sure how much it is—but to make sure we weren't doing it to him. Because he always felt that we were always cheating him out of his rightful grade of grain. But grain inspection here would be in between and say, "Yeah, they're right." So.

NP: That relationship has been around for a long time—the farmer/producer versus the grain company. That's since the trade began, from my reading of the history books.

GP: Well, the chairman of P&H, Mr. Heimbecker, he was the eastern part of the company. He always called us crooks. [Laughs]

NP: With a smile on his face, no doubt.

GP: Oh! I don't know if he had a smile. He fooled me a few times. "You're cheating me again!" I said, "Not me!"

NP: How does that work? Within the same company, [laughs] how does this occur?

GP: Well, for instance, P&H owned an Owen Sound elevator and had parts in Goderich elevator, and where else did they have? Certain grains were shipped, and they passed inspection, you know. I guess when they unloaded them, say for instance, oats for the horses and all that, and they say, "There's too much of that, too much of this in it." I say, "Hey, once you issue the certificate, it is what it is." But he called us crooks anyways. "You cheated me again!" I had the pleasure of going to annual meetings with him. Really strange. You'd have a few cocktails, and everybody would be seated, and if you were last you had to sit next to him. Oh, boy! [Laughs]

NP: What was he like as a--? His name comes up very often.

GP: Grumpy as hell, but a hell of a nice guy. Hell of a nice guy.

NP: So, is he actually stationed not in Winnipeg then? He was--?

GP: In Toronto, yeah.

NP: Oh!

GP: Yeah, and I guess they're pretty big in the flour trade, and I guess whatever else--.

NP: Butterball Turkeys!

GP: Oh, yeah! They're into that, too, Canadian. Yeah, they got that. They're not small as everyone thinks. They've got a few elevators out there, I think, around Sarnia and some places like that. They look after that. But he passed away, I think, the year after I retired. The strangest thing with that company that I noticed, when I mentioned I wanted to retire—my wife was ill—and they asked me how old I was, and they all looked at me like I was crazy. I said, "Well, what's wrong?" Well, most of the people that were working there, they were in their seventies and eighties, they'd die in the chair. So, they said, "What do you want to retire for? Take some time off." They just stayed until they died. They don't quit. They don't retire! [Laughs] But nice people.

[1:05:40]

NP: Good place to work.

GP: Oh, it is. It is. Yeah, very fine company. I think it's very good.

NP: Changes over the years within the industry?

GP: Changes? Everything's automated. Everything!

NP: What kind of impact did that have on you, personally?

GP: Less people. Less people. That's what happened, less people. Not too much grunt work. You know, you have to clean and sweep the elevator and all that, but then with everything automated you don't need nothing. Scales are automated. You've got automatic samplers. What else would you need?

NP: Is this a good thing?

GP: Yeah, for the company I guess it is, yeah. Not for the people who work. But I mean it's a common thing. What are you going to do? Everything's automated now. You don't do anything by hand. You have everything doc--. **[*…audio skips*]**

NP: Did it have a personal impact on you in the work that you had to do? I'm assuming that you would have had to be part of the downsizing.

GP: Not really. Well, yeah, in a sense. We had quite a few management staff for the size of the working staff. Had to let a couple of foremen go, and they didn't like that, but what can I do? It's one of those things. You had to choose. It was a pretty difficult thing to do with someone's life, but you've got to do it.

NP: How do you choose?

GP: Well, by age, I guess. Person pretty close to getting pension time. What the company would do is top it up to put in his time that he could receive his pension at 60. So, if he went elsewhere, he'd have that to look forward to. At that time, he wouldn't lose anything by that, you know. So, that's why I think P&H was good that way. They're getting a little too old to do some of the heavy work that had to be done. They're getting a little too old for it, so you'd buy them out and give them their pension, and goodbye. Have a little party for them, and "See you!" Give them a turkey or ham every Christmas while they're alive, and that's it.

NP: Still do that, the turkey and ham?

GP: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Everyone gets it. It's one of the traditions started by Bill Parrish. Oh, I have another anecdote about Bill Parrish. Way back when the harbour was really going full tilt, a lot of the employees at different companies got jackets with their logo on them. You know, nice jackets. We didn't have any. Anyhow, he came down to visit and he wanted to talk to all the gang in the lunchroom and all that. He said, "Write out something for me I can say in case I forget." [Laughs] End of the statement said, "I'm happy to announce you're all going to get jackets." He left the room, he said, "You finally--." **[*…audio skips*]** We got 'em! [Laughs]

NP: So, he read it out before he knew what he was getting into? [Laughing]

GP: That's right! I put it at the end. [Laughing] He was a good sport.

NP: The changes in technology that occurred over the time, were they seamlessly implemented from what you recall?

GP: Pretty well, yeah. With the new scales and new technology with samplers and all that, they broke down and no one knew what the hell to do. The people putting it in were, I think, actually didn't know what they were doing. It took a lot of time. We lost a lot of time unloading and loading ships because of that. But, no, they got it down to a science where when they program something, they have an idea of where it is. Then you didn't. You had to go through the whole system again and reboot everything and this, that, and you sit and tear your hair out. But now they can find out everything.

NP: Change over to metric occurred before you got in there?

GP: Just when I got there. It was bushels. Don't ask me how much bushels is. I don't even know. Just got there when they--. How many bushels it is, I don't know, to a tonne. Don't know why we went metric for in North America.

NP: Actually, you might be interested in the tape that was made by the guy who headed up the metric conversion for the CGC.

GP: Who's that?

NP: Oh, it's--. Do you remember the name Ian? In Winnipeg, he was the head of the weights and measures. And also, Frank Rowan, I don't know if you came across him in your career? He was with Canadian Wheat Board [CWB]. The amount of paperwork that going metric took out of the system was phenomenal.

[1:20:21]

GP: That right?

NP: I was really surprised. So, if you're interested someday, I'll pull out that. Speaking of that, what was your relationship with the Wheat Board? Did you have anything to do with it locally or was that handled in Winnipeg?

GP: Yes, we did. There was a liaison with the Wheat Board. He'd come down here maybe two or three times a year, while we had the grain processing meeting, GEAPS. Basically, he'd try to get here before the crop year to give us an indication what the fall was going to be like. So, that was pretty good. Then they came in the fall too, late fall too, and let us know how the winter was going to be and whatever we're going to have in the spring. But that's really the only thing that I had with them.

NP: No hassles occurred that had to be smoothed out?

GP: Not that I can think of. No. The Winnipeg people looked after that. I didn't bother.

NP: This is sort of coming back to the beginning of your career because another side of it is your involvement with the shipping from the perspective of being a manager, and now you're dealing with the ships that come in. Tell us a bit about what a manager does in relationship to the ships.

GP: Well, you get your orders to load, and you know what you're going to put on. The only difficulty that we had here in the harbour—and it wasn't just us—was the ships--. **[*…audio skips*]** At noon. The agent for the ship said, "Well, I'm not paying the overtime." I said, "We're not." You know, it's like on a Sunday or a holiday it's triple time. We're not going to eat that. So, those are disputes we had, and all the companies would say, "Oh, that's fine. Let the ship sit for the next day." Then we'd get in a fury. Well, we didn't want to do that either! But a few of them were like that, and a few of them understood. If we're not there. We're not there. But like I say, "Don't you have telephones or fax machines to let us know that you're going to be late?" I mean, technology on the ships, they've got everything. Didn't bother, so they had to pay.

But then again, P&H had lake ships, and I send the bill in with our overtime and all our wages for loading the ship into Winnipeg and find out that they didn't charge them anyway. Then when I got my quarterly statement—profit and loss—I used to notice that all the time. Yeah. **[*…audio skips*]** Bottom line's your bottom line.

NP: Yeah. There's no little asterisk saying, "Oh, by the way, we know that--." [Laughs]

GP: Yeah, that's right. [Laughs]

NP: Shifting the liability between elements of the system.

GP: Yeah.

NP: Did ships ever bash into you? You had a good safety record from a--?

GP: Oh, sure. Oh, sure. Well, you know when the capstans**,** you put the lines on, couple of ships came in a ripped them right off. Took the concrete and everything out and then denied it. Like, we could see it sitting on the deck! [Laughing] Then one of the saltwater boats come in, and we told the agent they had to pump water, and usually you put something on so it'll go straight down. Being a foreign ship—I forget who the agent was there, Willy Hryb—I said, "Hey, look. The ship is pretty high. We've got to pump water to make sure it goes down into the slip, not on our dock." He didn't listen either and filled our electrical room, cut the power out. I said--. **[*…audio skips*]** Do everything. Our powerhouse shut down, so. Those things do happen. But that agent here, that's supposed to look after things like that. But other than that, no. A few of the ships, it gets windy, they'll bounce off your dock, tear a piece off, but we fix it and send them the bill.

NP: It was Bill Hryb, was that the name you mentioned?

GP: Bill Hryb was the agent for most of them, I believe. I'm not sure if--. There was a few other ones, but I'm not sure how many there is left here. I mean, we pretty well knew them all. They'd call you and let you know when the ship's coming in. Of course, they had to be pre-inspected to make sure the cargo holds were clean—no bugs and all that, whatever. They always do that at anchor. They used to do it anyway. Entomology and all that.

NP: We interviewed Victor Bel, Vic Bel.

GP: Oh, Vic Bel, yeah. He used to do all that, yeah.

[1:15:03]

NP: His interview is very interesting as well.

GP: Well, you know, a lot of the ships they'd come in pretty darn dirty, you know. We got accused of loading a ship with bugs in it, and I don't know what happened or he missed it, but in the top of the--. **[*…audio skips*]** They wanted us to pay, but it wasn't ours to pay. If it's infested, it's infested. It's not our problem. But it was, yeah.

NP: When you're talking about infestation—and we're on the topic of changes here—how were infestations dealt with in the industry?

GP: Malathion, we used, malathion. With the bins, I forget what kind of--. We'd close off the bins and seal them off. If the bin was--. I forget what product we used. We tried to train our own people, but it got to be a hassle, so we just called another firm in that did it. Taped everything off to make sure it wouldn't get into the elevators, and all that. Malathion was sprayed on the perimeters for mites or something like that that could get in there. Same thing with pest control with rats and mice, you'd call a private firm in.

NP: How do you ensure the safety of the product?

GP: Malathion?

NP: Yeah, how do you--?

GP: Well, malathion--. **[*…audio skips*]**

NP: I lived in Winnipeg for 30 years.

GP: You know the spray they spray all after dark? Well, if you do it in the grain elevator, you have to have like a space suit on just to protect yourself. You could get ill from it. But anything you did in the elevator, everything was sealed off and you could still operate, you know.

NP: And what about residue in the product?

GP: Well, from what I gather, I forget how many days it has to be in there—five, six days a week, whatever it is—it would all disappear anyway. What you would do when the period of time--. You'd have a date on the bottom of the bin so you couldn't open it and be sealed off. Then you'd have a date then you'd do it. You turn over the grain and send a sample here to entomology to make sure it's fine before you ship it anywhere.

NP: Ian, did you have some questions that you wanted to--? You were sort of leaning forward there, so I don't know if there was--.

ID: Just jumping back, what does--? **[*…audio skips*]**

GP: Well, they're supposed to allot all the work for everybody in the elevator including the foremen. Cleaning the grain, cleaning the elevator, that's what he's supposed to do. The managers make sure that he does that. [Laughs] That's basically that's what he does, yeah.

NP: Plus, the manager, then, is also responsible for the liaison with head office, which the superintendent wouldn't be.

GP: Yeah, everything, yeah. All the expenditures and all that stuff, yeah. Payroll, but I mean, they just sign the payroll anyway. They can't change that much. What you get is what you get.

NP: Labour relations stay pretty much steady over your time or were there changes there?

GP: Well, Frank Mazur, it was fine. You always had these things before negotiations. You throw all these darts. "You're going to do this," and all that.

NP: Theatre?

GP: Theatre, yeah. They didn't have to do all that stuff, and "What part of 'No' don't you understand?" And those kind of things, you have to go through all that stuff, and everybody jokes. The only one that we had was he was sort of a funny person. One day everything was fine, and the next day it wasn't, and he couldn't make up his mind. He would have some severe consequences. There was a chap that was told, "Look, you come to work drunk, you're fired." We wouldn't bend over backwards for the guy that came to work--. He wasn't even supposed to be. He was on vacation. Come to work drunk. Finally, I said, "Enough is enough," and I fired him.

Well, the union rep had agreed. Six months later, he wants to go to arbitration. We went through arbitration. I think it cost us about $10,000. The guy came back to work, and I said, "Here's what's going to happen. You lose all your seniority. The next time you come to work drunk, that's it. You're done." I'm happy to say that he joined Smith Clinic, and he's a counsellor there. Hasn't had a drink since. [Laughs]

NP: So, a second chance worked.

GP: It did for him.

NP: **[*…audio skips*]** You know, in listening to the interviews, drinking really did seem to be an issue.

GP: It was, yes.

NP: Give us your thoughts on why was it in that industry, or was it in all industries?

GP: I have no idea. No idea.

NP: How was it tolerated?

GP: Well, the only time that I know that people would have a drink would be Christmas. You'd shut down, say at noon on the 24th. We'd get some food in, a couple cases of beer. Everybody would have something to eat and go home. That's about at P&H anyway, but other places I guess they might have extended it or something, I don't know. Bigger place might have, but that was it. That was the end of it.

[1:20:23]

But as far as bringing liquor into the elevator, I don't think that I've ever, ever seen anybody in my time there drinking on the job--brought something there to drink. I don't think I've ever seen it. Not there. They might come to work in the morning with a bit of last night's in them, but nothing like that, no. They have a pop cooler, the old ones, they have a keg of beer in it, but that was way before my time. I just wonder how they did it. Bu that was the system in those days, I guess.

NP: Safety in the elevator?

GP: Well, you tried to do the best you can with safety. Like, I belong to the safety committee and all this, chairman and IAPA [Industrial Accident Prevention Association] here, and whatever. The thing is, if the employees don't care about it, there's nothing you are ever going to do for them. You try to explain to them of everything. Give you an example. Say for instance, you have an entranceway right behind you. If someone drops a shovel there, doesn't pick it up, but if he trips over it, you're at fault. That used to drive me insane. I'd go around picking stuff up because of that. [Laughs] I'd say to them, "I'd hate to see what your home is like if that's the way you do things here!" But some of them pick up on it and they change. It's got to take an accident for them to realize, and fortunately we didn't have anything that bad there. But prior to me being there, a guy got his legs cut off, fell off a boxcar, so.

NP: He fell off?

GP: He didn't have his safety belt hooked on. He just fell underneath, and it cut his legs off. That was prior to my time anyway. I was told that. Other than that, you tried your best with it. Then you had the federal government safety guys would come down.

You'd have everything to a T, everything that's supposed to be under regulations. The only citation you got the garbage can cover wasn't on. [Laughing] I grit my teeth. [Laughs] Can you believe this?

NP: Changes in the overall industry during your time? And even comments that you might have on recent changes, if you sort of keep up with what's going on.

GP: Just the automation's all I can think of really. That's all I can really think of.

NP: In Thunder Bay there certainly was a big change in--.

GP: Oh, yeah. The change to the industry altogether?

NP: Yeah.

GP: Well, the downturn is here. If they got rid of Churchill that might help, but the federal government keeps funding that place, and I don't know what for. They only operate three or four months a year, and apparently, from the people that go up there, it's quite a mess.

NP: A mess in what way?

GP: Well, the place is just--. Well, I guess when you go in the spring--. One guy told me they have windows up there that are all busted, it's full of pigeons, all the droppings that are in there need to be cleaned up, and you've got grain that's supposed to be going somewhere! Do they do it? I don't know. I've never seen the place, but--. And the tracks going up is all muskeg, so the grain might arrive or might not arrive or whatever. I'm not really sure--. **[*…audio skips*]** I think it would be positive. I'm sure Bill Parrish told you that. He just hates that place. He doesn't think that it's proper for the federal government to spend money on there and not send nothing here for this harbour, which I agree. A lot of things can be done here.

NP: If you had the magic wand and could make things happen that you wanted to happen, what would you like to see happen? Besides the Churchill situation.

GP: It would be very costly. You would have to make the Seaway big enough for the saltwater ships to come directly here. To heck with Montreal and Quebec City. Then you'd have a good trade. But otherwise than that, I guess to dredge the harbour to make sure that you can load the ships to whatever depth they are. Yeah, that's about it, I guess.

NP: Was P&H fairly fortunate with where they're located as far as depth of the slip? Or were--?

GP: No, it was only a smaller one because some of the smaller ships used to come in there that's why. They had their own ships for quite a while. It didn't matter. When you couldn't finish boats, and you lost so much cargo when you couldn't load a boat to a certain depth, so that's when they dredged it and the dock fell down. That's the end of that tune. But the changes, I really can't comment on them. [Laughs] Just the automation, I guess. That's about it, I guess. I don't know. The only other thing I'm hearing quite often now is the Wheat Board is playing games with the elevator companies. Here they've got that Mission Terminal up there, and they're undercutting all the guys, all the elevators here. I don't know how they're doing it. Must be some kind of a kickback because the grain is supposed to be spread around to everyone, but it's not. They're getting all the work and the other guys here are getting laid off. But that's another thing.

[1:25:54]

NP: What would you say was the major challenge of your career? Or challenges if you have.

GP: Hm. Staying alive, I guess. [Laughing] I don't know! I don't have an idea.

NP: Well, from the early stories, I can see where that's very true!

GP: I really don't know. I can't tell you.

NP: So, if you look at your time as manager, then—let's keep to that—what was the major challenge? If there was one.

GP: Well, the major challenge was, back then, you're allotted so many percentage-wise of grain coming into the harbour, you know. The terminal we had was much too small to unload it all. So, we were always behind. We owned lake ships, and I always bug Bill Parrish, I say, "Put the lake ships in here. It's a money maker. I mean if we can unload all these cars and load all this grain, you'll double your profit." But the Lake Shippers had a hint on that. They say that you're only allowed so much as your percentage. If you had one ship for 25,000, you had to wait until that or whatever. That was a challenge to do that. Now, apparently, with the Mission Terminal in there, they get all the ships they want, and no one seems to worry about it.

NP: So, the Lake Shippers is trying to balance, or at least previously was trying to balance it.

GP: Yeah, balance your percentage, yeah. Your percentage, yeah. But then when all the grain was coming, it was coming out of your ears. You tried to, and that was the biggest challenge, to do it. Your small capacity just killed you if you didn't get a boat every third day. That way you know you could do it. There was a lot of lake ships in those days. A lot of them. That was a challenge.

NP: One area we didn't talk about—and makes me think of it because we're talking about the challenge of getting things out, but then stuff is coming in—so we didn't talk about your interaction with the railways.

GP: [Inaudible] said it was super. CNR was *Certainly Not Responsible*, that's what we'd call them. It was just horrid. Any contract that was sent out by the Winnipeg people for grain coming down here, "Don't use CNR." We just didn't want that. It just was awful.

NP: What describes awful in comparison?

GP: Well, I'll give you some examples. For instance, some grain would be, in the fall, chartered to ocean ships, okay? So, for instance, there's 20,000 tonnes of barley going on a certain ship, say, on November the 5th. CNR's going to bring them. They had to give us maybe two weeks' leeway to unload it. Well, the ship is here, and the grain is still there. Who's paying the demurrage? Is it the railroad or the elevator company? There would be a big fight over that. Like, "It's not here!" With CPR [Canadian Pacific Railway], if it isn't coming, at least they'd tell you. "Hey, we've got a problem. Derailment," so far and so forth. CNR? Nothing. I know we used to have weekly grain meeting with all the managers. Every week we'd have one. Every Thursday morning.

NP: **[*…audio skips*]** The elevator managers?

GP: Yeah, we'd meet. What we're doing, shifts going on, whatever. Bob McKinnon from there, with all of us there, phoned the president of CN. We still haven't got a call back yet. That was in 1992. Just don't seem to care. The whole harbour was just stuck with--. And Sask Wheat Pool then was a CN house. We were CP, thank God, but some of the cargos were shipped with CN, and they had to bring the grain down.

NP: How do you get to be one house or the other?

GP: I think they signed contracts. It goes back, way back, to whatever it is. But the thing is if you don't unload cars, you're charged a demurrage, okay? A daily demurrage. But if the railroad doesn't bring them, tough luck. I always ask that question. I said, "When you sign a contract," they're sort of a five-year period or whatever they sign, "why don't you put that in there?" "Well, we have such a good relationship with the railroads. We don't want to do that." I said, "When you get demurrage things for things you can't

unload and not here, don't you complain to somebody?" "Yeah, we call you." [Laughing] There you go. That was my answer. "Why haven't you unloaded?" I said, "We can't. We can't stretch out to Moose Jaw from here. Our pipes aren't long enough." Other than that, that was it with CN. I don't know what they do now or how they work it, but that was always a--. They still make money, I suppose. I don't know.

[1:30:55]

NP: What do you think of elevators? Do you think of them fondly? Do you think of them--?

GP: Do I think of them fondly? What a question that is. I don't know. [Laughs] What do I think of them looking at them you mean?

NP: Well, whatever. How they feel to you, just--.

GP: Well, I guess, in a sense, I miss it. Working there, yeah. But otherwise, I don't know what I would say about them. [Laughs] I'm so used to them, you know. You spend half your life here, you see them, so what. Sad to see them go down, you know. Don't want to see that, but apparently it has to happen.

NP: Were you here when Pool 6 was demolished?

GP: Yes, oh, yes.

NP: What were you doing that day?

GP: I'm not sure. I can't recall.

NP: You weren't watching?

GP: I don't think so. Not really sure. You know the date of it, when it went down, by any chance?

NP: Was in 1999? 2000? Early 2000, I think. It was before we moved back here.

GP: No, I--.

NP: They had the big explosion and some people toasting it with champagne glasses.

GP: No, I just can't recall where I was, if I was in town or not.

NP: There were others crying over it.

GP: Yeah, I can't recall. Nope. Other than that.

NP: Any questions along that line before I sort of ask the last question?

ID: Yeah, as you know, Nancy and a bunch of other folks are trying to rehabilitate an elevator or make it into something that the public can go to. Just off the top of your head, what's the best candidate?

GP: Of the ones left empty here?

ID: Yeah!

GP: How much space would you want?

ID: Well, that's a whole question in itself, but--.

NP: Probably—just to say a little bit more about what Ian is asking—we had a consultant's report done on the feasibility of having an International Grain Industry Historic and Activity Centre. Their recommendation was, "You don't want to get an elevator because the cost," as you well know "of maintaining that, even if it's not functioning, is horrendous." But featuring an elevator, so looking for something that has an attractive surrounding that you could actually bring people in and around the elevator, and perhaps isolate maybe part of the workhouse.

GP: I'm not sure how the structure of that old Pool 2—you know where it is by the Marina?

ID: Yes, indeed.

GP: That would be an ideal one, close to the Marina like that, wouldn't it?

ID: I would say so. It's a beautiful historic building apart from anything else.

GP: It's one of the oldest, I think. But who owns it? I'm not sure.

NP: Buchannan.

GP: Oh, does he? Well, he's a nice man, isn't he? Does he own that? Of course, he said no. Ah.

NP: He also owns Pool 3, I understand.

GP: Oh, he bought that did he? What happened to Jimmy Black, did he die, then?

NP: He sold it to him.

GP: Oh, did he? Oh, well! I haven't seen Jimmy in a few years. I didn't know what he was doing. Okay. So, that would be the ideal thing, I think. It's small. Did they mention to you that Canada Malting elevator in Toronto? You know what happened to it? It's condos, the elevator. Round condos. I haven't seen it—I haven't been to Toronto for a few years—but that's what they did with it. Some architect did that. It's on the waterfront. I think it was the size of P&H elevator. It wasn't that big. But that's what it is. But with this place, you'd have a lot of renovating to do. Oh, boy!

[1:35:04]

NP: Pool 4?

GP: That's too big. You don't want something that size.

NP: Beautiful location. Nice, big surroundings.

GP: What about the place across from Pool 7? What's happened there, do you know? I think, I don't know what the word was--.

NP: UGG M?

GP: Dawson owns the tugs here. I think he bought that property.

NP: Port Authority?

GP: Oh, Port Authority got it? Why would they--? **[*…audio skips*]** Otherwise, I don't know what you could use.

NP: Pool 8?

GP: That's still standing is it? Bad location though.

NP: Say more about that bad location.

GP: Well, how are you going to get in there? People wouldn't go there, would they? At Pool 6, they had an office building there. Is that gone?

NP: No, Tourism is using it.

GP: Oh, they took it over?

NP: And so is the Marina development group.

GP: The only place I can think of is at that old Pool 2, but it would be very costly to fix that place up. Whew! It's been down for many years. What's-his-name, Freddy Broennle, he was going to build condos there, but whatever happened to him I don't know. Is he still alive or not?

NP: And who was Freddy Murell?

GP: Broennle.

NP: Broennle.

GP: You didn't know him?

NP: No. What was his--?

GP: An entrepreneur.

ID: I think I know this guy. He's a diver extraordinaire.

GP: Diver, he had everything--. **[*…audio skips*]** He was. Had tugboats, divers, dredgers. Money went to good times. They had an uncle somewhere in Germany that sent them all the money until they came over here and found out where the money went. I think Freddy is staying in a motel now. That's what I heard.

NP: If we do manage to get a centre set up—and we're looking at the possibility of trying to involve Parks Canada because we feel very strongly that the contribution of Thunder Bay's grain elevators to Canada's prosperity is quite great and, up to now, not recognized—what parts of the elevator industry do you think should be featured, preserved?

GP: All of it, I guess. Unloading of the cars, all that type of thing. We used to have--. **[*…audio skips*]** I don't know, Sask Pool, I think, was in charge of it. I don't know what happened to it. Have you ever talked to them about it?

NP: Actually, we haven't. With all the changes that--.

GP: It shows a boxcar tipping and all that and unloading grain.

NP: So, that would be--?

GP: I think Sask Pool had it. What you'd do is bring some different types of grains, all different things. I don't think they had a ship there or not, but they had the old boxcar tipping back and forth with the grain coming out it. That sort of thing.

NP: Where was the trade show? Here in Thunder Bay?

GP: Yeah, here at the exhibition grounds. But they stopped doing it. I'm not really sure. I was part of it a couple of years. Well, that's the part of the grain trade. I guess you could say that part of it, yeah. Well, then you'd have to look at the people that worked in it too. You'd have to have them going back how many years, how they started. It must have been horrific then. Oh, what about Keefer Terminal towards grain?

NP: There likely are spots available that are non-grain elevator spots. But one of the things that our committee is trying to do is to actually salvage an elevator so that eventually they aren't all taken down.

GP: Oof.

NP: So that you make sure. You don't necessarily have to maintain it because they're pretty—like that Pool 2—it's pretty solid and it's going to be there for a long time unless somebody blows it up. So, the external structure can be maintained, and the actual facility that welcomes people can be off the elevator. You would feature an elevator, but not be in it. But we want to save an elevator because people say, "Well, we've got a lot of them. Do you need to worry about it?" Well, you mentioned when we started talking, about there used to be 25 to 29.

GP: Close to 25, yeah. Something like that.

NP: We're now down to, what, five operating? Five or six operating? Probably there goes another one.

[1:40:03]

GP: That Pool 2 would be nice. I'm not sure what the shape it's in or if Buchannan owns it, but there should be space around there for parking and that type of thing. It's close to the Marina.

NP: And it is, from a grain elevator groupie's perspective, very beautiful.

ID: Historic.

NP: Historic and beautiful, and P&H is another one that--.

GP: Have you looked at--. How's the docking space there?

NP: That's actually the reason that Buchannan took it, was for the dock. Certainly, didn't need the elevator. That's my understanding anyway. Anything that we haven't asked you that you would like to pour out to us?

GP: Not that I can think of no. Not really. No, no.

NP: Ian, anything that you have to ask?

ID: Not ask, just you seem to have had a really wonderful sort of progression from the bottom to the top! [Laughing]

NP: Well, thank you so much!

GP: You're welcome!

NP: It has been a wonderful experience for me, and I'm sure for Ian, and I hope it's been a good experience for you too.

GP: Yes, yeah sure. I was curious about it. I'm glad you interviewed Bill Parrish because I'm sure you got a lot of good things from him. Who else have you got in Winnipeg from the grain trade?

NP: We did George Richardson.

GP: Oh, yes? Okay.

NP: Yes. Oh--.

ID: My favourite is Bushuk, who I don't know if you'd know.

NP: Ted.

ID: He's a chemist, and his specialty was bread dough.

GP: Okay.

ID: He spoke—I think we've got two or three interviews with this guy—he waxes poetic. He tells you everything about this fantastic process of breadmaking. He's the one that sticks in my mind, but there were all kinds of people.

GP: Falling numbers, I don't know if they mentioned anything about that. They ever mention that to you? Falling numbers in grain?

NP: No.

GP: When you put it through a test. If you buy a loaf of bread and there's any holes in it, they're using the wrong kind of grain for it. They're cheaper. It's not the good grain. [Laughs] It's called falling numbers--. **[*…audio skips*]** It's not up to standard.

NP: The names, sort of, some of them pass me by, but we've interviewed people with malting industry--.

GP: Howard Haglund**,** I don't know, you didn't get him, did you?

NP: No, who's he?

GP: I think he's gone. He used to be their rep for Canada Malt down here. Yeah.

NP: Any other names that you can think of, even within your own old group here, that would be interesting to interview?

GP: Well, you must have got the local managers, did you?

NP: See, we're not getting the--. We're trying to get the people who have retired, so--.

GP: Okay, then Bob McKinnon.

NP: Bob McKinnon we've done.

ID: McKinnon we've got.

GP: Gerald Spears?

NP: No, but I think his name is on our list.

ID: You know, the place that we're really liked, as far as I'm concerned is labourers. You know? The folks who worked.

GP: Worked. Names?

ID: So, if you can think of a slew of them, we'd really appreciate it.

GP: I just run negotiating committees and all the strikes, and they work different places. Everyone I know, they're pretty well dead. Just trying to think of some that--.

ID: That's okay, you don't have to now. But if you can--.

NP: You have my email address, just pop a note to me. Because you may come across somebody in the street that, "Oh, yeah! Here's somebody!"

GP: Yeah, yeah, sure.

NP: Well, thanks. I think we'll shut off the official end of the--.

End of Interview.