

## **ODESSA SANDERS TERRY**

### **Interview 236a**

**May 20, 2001, at The Museum of East Texas, Lufkin, Texas**

**Patsy Colbert, Transcriber**

**ABSTRACT:** In this group interview long-time Lufkin residents like Woody Gann, Odessa Sanders Terry, Dr. Thames, Bob Bowman, and George Henderson reminisce about different aspects of Lufkin in Lufkin during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. R.L. Kuykendall, who attempted to interview as many members of the African American community that he could, recorded part of the panel discussion, including the segment from Mrs. Odessa Sanders Terry. Mrs. Terry discusses life as an African American girl in Lufkin, particularly attending the African American schools. She speaks of the different school campuses, the teachers and administrators, and the conditions of the schools and supplies. She talks about social and educational clubs within the community, the popularity of football, and the African American doctors that served the black community of Lufkin.

**R. L. Kuykendall (hereafter RLK):** We are at the Museum of East Texas, May 20, 2001.

**Woody:** ...and has continued to prosper and so for many, many years downtown Lufkin was the center of activity for our county. As a young lad all young lads would go downtown with my dad and on Saturday nights. It's hard to believe that downtown Lufkin on Saturday night was a very, very busy place. Hundreds and hundreds of people would be downtown on Saturday night. All the stores stayed open till nine o'clock.

**Rachael:** Everybody stayed up 'till ten.

**Woody:** What now?

**Rachael:** Everybody stayed up till ten.

**Woody:** Rachael I knew you would get into...(laughing) Most of them stayed open till nine but...okay so then it was hard to believe that all the traffic from Texarkana to Houston passed right through downtown Lufkin. One lane went south one lane went north that was it. Every car that went from Texarkana to Houston went right through downtown Lufkin and that was a sight to see also. It took a long time to get through Lufkin back in those days. I don't know if this was planned or not but Lufkin by 1940 had several buildings that were art deco buildings and again I don't know if that was planned or just happened that the architectural style at the time but if you look at the Pines Theater building and the building where Firehouse Charlie's is, those are two of the outstanding examples of art deco of that period. What is known as...the high school building which is on Raguet Street now, some businesses bought that but it was the Lufkin Junior High for many years, that school building is out and out classic art deco. I just think Lufkin is fortunate to still have some of those buildings around. I'm glad to see they are moving toward the preservation of some of those buildings.

Now I'm going to move on to...George Henderson said a few minutes ago that we were going to look at the earlier days of Lufkin. In its early days Lufkin was a wild town. In fact the passengers back on the HE&WT [Houston East & West Texas] Railroad were warned by conductors that they were taking their lives in their own hands if they got off the train at Lufkin. And maybe the Myers boys had something to do with that.

No doubt that some of the violence was fueled by Lufkin's many saloons. Five saloons are identified by 1905 and twelve by 1910. When the railroad people developed Lufkin they wisely donated several lots for churches. Two of them were the First Methodist Church where their building was and before they moved out across from Denman Avenue there, they were over on Second Street and First Baptist was over on Bremond and First Street. The Lufkin churches were organized shortly after the town became (unintelligible) and the town began to develop but the saloons got the edge on the churches from the get go and it took years for them to catch up. So we had five saloons we know of in Lufkin by 1905. We know of twelve by 1910 and the owners were the who's who of Lufkin at the time – were Newsom, Brookshire, Markus, Collins, Weaver and Chancey. I didn't name the rest of them but the who's who was listed as Newsom, Brookshire, Markus, Collins, and Weaver. They were the "who is who" of Lufkin at that time. You notice that Newsom still lives here and some Markus descendants live here but only the Brookshire's have a business identity in Lufkin today. It is far different than Tom Brookshire's Saloon which was on Lufkin Avenue. Tom Brookshire's Saloon was unique because it had a monkey inside the saloon and people wondered really who the monkey's were in that saloon. (laughter) Legend has it that at one time or another there were 14 saloons in Lufkin. I cannot identify 14 saloons all at one time but I'm not going to argue with that. A legend is just a story that has been told over and over until it sounds like the truth. That is what legends are. By 1910 the liquor prohibition movement had been steadily gaining ground in most Texas towns which were operating under state and local law but Lufkin remained solidly wet but the dry forces were closing the gap. Lufkin voted dry in 1915 and I'm glad to note George that your mother identified with me on that. What church was that?

**George Henderson (hereafter GH):** She was a Methodist for 50 something years.

**Woody:** I knew you were but I didn't know it, if I had thought about it I would have known it. Well the Methodists and Brother Poulard at the First Methodist Church were the ones that really got that ball rolling.

**GH:** When you look at that photo that they have got of all the signs and you recognize what the population was at that time it wasn't any question in my mind it was going to go dry.

**Woody:** Well it did in 1915 so Lufkin saloons closed their doors forever in 1915. All the United States went dry when the poll tax went into effect in 1919 but by the time that happened there were only 12 counties in Texas that had municipalities that were wet. All the other places except 12 counties had already gone dry by 1919. Prohibition was repealed in 1933 but it never did open up those closed saloon doors that were closed in

1915. There were some beer distributors here and there were some places in Angelina County that you could buy at least a beer after 1933 but that was shut down in Angelina County when it was voted dry again for the second time in '35 or '37. So, in every election since Lufkinites have voted dry and continues to drink wet. (laughter)

**GH:** Thank you Woody. Hopefully we are going to give some opportunities for audience participation here on some of these old saloon stories or other stories we will get to. But right now I'm going to ask Dr. Thames to tell us a little bit about the medical community.

**Dr. Thames (hereafter DT):** I would...be involved with...but practicing medicine in East Texas has evolved tremendously and I've been blessed that I got to live through the best part of it. The Lord let me come on the scene when it really began to explode and it's unreal the way it has really evolved. But in the early days Lufkin was in East Texas, I mean East Texas was always here but Lufkin wasn't here. There were a few hardy souls that lived in this area and they lived with the Indians and then the doctors did their own doctoring. They made extracts from tea and bark and fruits and everything else, salves and stuff. They got by but the life expectancy wasn't quite as good as it is today. They began to kind of...they farmed but they got through together and the doctors began to come in, how well they were trained, was kind of questionable but people said they were doctors, they would get them some medicine and stuff and they would play doctor. They would deliver to the house most of them but nobody came to see them unless it was an emergency that dragged in. But they would see them and go out on the porch and get in their horse and buggy. They delivered services the best they could. For diseases just like we have now they didn't have anything, they had about five or six different drugs they carried that maybe worked a little bit. Sometimes it made them sicker but they really thought the doctor had done some good. They would be called to deliver babies and when the family couldn't deliver it, it would always be in trouble and the doctor had a hard time delivering a lot of the babies. It is really too gruesome to kind of go into I guess but they used to have when ladies couldn't have their babies and they would have to destroy the child and take it out piece by piece. I won't go into that but they had a hard time anyway.

They began to kind of group together, closer together and Homer got to be a pretty good town. You should go to the library and check out the issues of the Homer Banner, the newspaper. The doctors all advertised in the newspaper back in those days right on the front page. Right on the side, Dr. so and so and Dr. so and so and this one did this and deliver babies, or whatever they did, fevers and various things but it's very interesting to look at. I don't know if you can look at it anymore. When I checked it some years back the paper was already so frail I shouldn't have I guess but I did, I think they put some lamination on it now. It really is interesting.

Lufkin came on the scene as a result of the railroad but the railroad did something else too. The railroad opened up this whole area into logging and little sawmill towns sprung up everywhere. They had towns called Mott, Ivy, New Door, Sulphur Springs, Emporia, Camp Nancy, there was a bunch of them. Clawson, Kelty's, Diboll, they had a big sawmill and they had accidents and first one thing and then another and each one had

doctors at these sawmills and all around the county. And then the logging began to kind of play out and around the turn of the century and people began to move to town. It became all kind of congregated in Lufkin. It was pretty loose organization then. About 1904 and 1906 it established the doctors that were there at that time got together and they created the Angelina County Medical Society. The Texas Medical Association had been established back in 1845 or so. It had been there a long time but Angelina County Medical Society established and had about eight or ten people. I can't remember right now, but they established it and one of the strong leaders of the medical community was Dr. Matt Denman and he owned the first car in Angelina County. He got killed, a train hit him up here but he built the first hospital in Lufkin. He had the first X-ray machine. His clinic was there where the first autopsy was done in East Texas.

But the next big thing was when the war came along. When they came back from World War II and they started the Angelina County Hospital, was built in 1919 I think it was, and that hospital was built on the corner of Bynum and Frank Street where it's a busy intersection now. The hospital has turned it into a nursing home. At that time and actually when I started practicing medicine here in 1948 Frank Street stopped right there, that was the end of it. It was just a field out there where Memorial is now. First Street went back up and connected with Ellis Street and Ellis Street was way out of town. You had to go out Ellis Street to go out 94. Then long about the end of 1944 when World War II was over and the men were coming back from service and I had just gotten out of school, I came here in 1948 and the only specialist in town were the three people who limited their practice to eye, ear, nose and throat. I don't know about Dr. Eastep he had been a county practitioner in Paris and he moved to Lufkin and limited his practice to eye, ear, nose and throat. Dr. Dillon was here and I think he had a little bit of training in ear, nose and throat, eye, ear, nose and throat. We had Dr. Percy here and he had a little training in eye, ear, nose and throat and that is the only specialists we had in town. Am I out of time?

**GH:** You got another four minutes doc. (unintelligible) (Laughter)

**DT:** Well, then we started having specialists, started coming to town. Dr. Shepherd came and I started in July of '48, he came in about October, November of '48. Then the next year Dr. Arnett came in urology and then Dr. Arnold came as a surgeon. Dr. Mitchell came as an Ob/Gyn. Dr. Peyton Denman came as an internist and then the flood gates...well Dr. Brooks came as a pathologist. And in the old county hospital they never kept any kind of records except temperatures and so forth. They didn't keep any history of physicals or anything or nothing like that written on the charts. In surgery if they took out something they threw it away. They didn't ever have it examined, it never was looked at. You took out the appendix, doctor had told them it was a terrible appendix and it wasn't anything wrong with it. It was pretty crude but that is the way it was. I lived this folks, I know. All these years it was developing, well I got in right when it began to change. When I started practicing medicine we didn't have a thing to use, well we had one thing, but we didn't really have a drug to treat high blood pressure. I bet nearly all of you take some kind of blood pressure medicine; there is about a hundred kinds now. We used Phenobarbital. That was the treatment for high blood pressure in 1948. And we didn't have any kind of...well penicillin started just about that same time. We had some

sulpha drugs and...well I won't tell that one. (laughter) We had...pretty soon after penicillin came out they came out with Streptomycin to treat tuberculosis particularly and they found out they were giving it like water and it would make you deaf if you took too much of it so they had to slow back on that and they came out with a drug called arumiacin [?]and the acumiacin [?] and then the miacins just the flood gates opened and there is no telling how many of them were bought. Then another one came in and another one and another one. Bugs are smarter than you think. They get to where those things don't kill them and we have used them indiscriminately, the doctors have. Patients come in demanding you give them something and most of it is not very harmful to you except if you give them too much too often, the bugs get used to it so, that is why penicillin, it is still a good drug in certain cases but it won't kill a lot of bugs it used to kill real good.

But anyway the other thing I wanted to bring out, when I came to Lufkin I think there were 14 doctors in Lufkin at the time and we all just treated everything that came in. Then the specialists began to come in and as the specialists came in we did a lot better job at the hospital. Memorial opened up in 1949 and we organized that a lot better than we had ever had any organization in the county hospital. We had to have physicals and so forth and we always had when the patient was taken out of surgery they had to go to a pathologist and the cancer center was fashioned with a cobalt machine. It was one of the few in Texas at that time. It was the latest thing in the treatment of cancer and Mr. Kurth arranged and Mr. Colwell together, arranged to have one placed at Memorial Hospital and that was the big thing for awhile. They began to find better things to treat it with and chemotherapy came in and oncologists came in and I think it is about 200 doctors now in Lufkin. They come and go, half of them come in I wouldn't recognize them.

**GH:** We are out of time.

**DT:** Oh okay. That is good, I can talk all day.

**GH:** I think you can tell W. D. has enjoyed living here. I think all of us have. Some of us have been here and never left. Odessa on my right here got to leave town and figured she didn't need to stay gone very long and it wasn't very long and it is fun for her I know to have found out how the other half lives and needed to come back home. Odessa we would love to hear from you.

**Odessa Sanders Terry (hereafter OST)** Thank you so very much. I guess I start off at the very beginning. I know Sister (unintelligible) she will talk about education and I looked at my notes and I thought my lord I have drove all over Lufkin to talk about the black history. I am going to turn my paper around and talk on education first and then I do want to mention some of the things that I know about Lufkin. My parents moved here when I was a baby and that was in 1924. So, I should know quite a bit about the community. The first school for blacks was the Lucky Ward School and that was before 1923. That school was located on Chestnut Street. The principal was N. C. Brannon who lived here and they had four teachers. Annie Penson's father was Henry Parson Penson who was the dispatcher for Southern Pacific Railroad. They didn't have any phones so he walked and notified the brakeman as to the times they were to carry trains from Lufkin to

Shreveport, I mean from Lufkin to Houston. Annie Penson was an early teacher. Melinda Garrett – and I'll talk more in detail about her, and also Mrs. Viola Williams was a teacher. Now after 1923, in fact Dunbar was built in 1924 on Leach Street. This land was given to the school district by Melinda Garrett and her husband Mark Garrett. She was a dear person who believed in caring for and seeing that children would have an opportunity. I was told and read something about this that Keltys went to sixth grade and she would let girls come in and live in her home during the week in order to go to Lucky Ward to school. They would come in and stay Monday through Friday and go back to Keltys to be with their families on the weekend. So she wanted the black children in Lufkin to have a real chance for education. She and her husband donated the land that Dunbar on Leach Street, the first one, was built. 1924 W. H. Brandon, and I was fortunate to go to school under him all the way through grade school to high school. In those days, well you all so young, it started off with what we called the Primer and then you went on up to the eleventh grade and finally the twelfth. Dunbar started off with the Primer and went to tenth grade until 1924. Then in 1930 the eleventh grade was added. I did a study of all the classes of Dunbar from the first graduating class which was 1929 up to 1944. There was no graduating class at Dunbar in '30 because the eleventh grade was added. All the students in the class of 1929 came back to school after graduation and completed their work in the eleventh grade. In the fall of 1941 the twelfth grade was added. When I finished high school it was the eleventh grade but the class behind me went to the twelfth grade. A grade was not added they deleted primer, and started with the first grade through twelfth grade. Let me just mention W. H. Brandon because he was one of my school teachers that demanded, he was a dynamic educator. He believed in educating the whole town. Courses that were not offered in the curriculum he taught. He taught geometry and I have a copy of one of the books that he required earlier students, this would have been in the class of 1934 to buy on higher mathematics. He wanted them to be exposed to all of our learning. Another student in the class of 1931 said he taught them science from sticks, rocks or whatever he could find to really give them the knowledge of science.

We also had, and I would like to mention that, what we called literary society on every other Friday afternoon. At this time you had a chance to see the talent and ability of students. There were singings, there were speeches and there would be a very good debate on a particular subject. The affirmative and negative side so you would know the pros and cons of various topics. I could go on and on. He also taught grammar to the students that was not in the curriculum.

Now, with it the popularity of football came in. Well it was...I started school in 1929 so most of this I can remember. We had our first football team at Dunbar in the fall of 1932. Well there were no lighted fields so the boys played football on Friday afternoons. We would walk from Dunbar on Leach Street across what was Highway 35 then, but it was 59 across from Jack Stroud's mill. Any of you ever know about that? And he had a baseball field over there, so that is where the football games were first played for Dunbar. The first coach was Develous Johnson from Houston. He graduated from Tuskegee Institute [Tuskegee, Alabama] and he stayed with Dunbar from 1932 to 1935. Then a George Spencer came to coach from 1935 to 1936. Following that coach came C. L. Franklin and some of you may remember and finally he became principal of Garrett

School. C. L. Franklin came here in 1936 and in 1942 he was drafted into World War II. So, he went to war and stayed until '45 and he came back and finished coaching until 1953 then he was made principal of Garrett School. While he was away a Willie Ray Smith served as principal, some of you might recall his son went into pro football, Bubba Smith. That was Willie Ray Smith's son and he served as coach from 1942 to 1945. Then after Franklin came back and worked until '53 the next coach was Elmer G. Redd. You remember him I know, 1953 to 1970. There were some win and lose times, most of the winning times, you know, came under Elmer G. Redd.

Other principals that have served, let me just mention the first grade primer teacher was Mrs. W. H. Brandon. Her name was Mrs. Olivia Brandon and she taught me at the primer. I was left handed and she, I probably would not have but she made me learn to write with my right hand but just as soon as I got out of her room I went back to my left hand. I write on the blackboard now with my right hand and I write with my left hand. But, Mrs. Brandon died that summer of June 1930. Olivia Hackney replaced her in 1930 and worked in the elementary department of Dunbar School also, she was my basketball coach at Dunbar. Then later she became a principal and as you know Carver School was the first elementary black school built for blacks coming out of Dunbar. Carver was located on Groesbeck across from Lufkin Ice Company down in that area. After Carver was rebuilt however the school was named for Olivia Hackney and that school is located at Lufkin Land. Some other principals are here, Frank Harris served as a principal, Lacy Chimney, C. L. Franklin as I mentioned, Odis Rhodes, Lacy Simms and of course R. L. Kuykendall served as a principal. So we go all down the line. Dunbar there were seven men who served as principal at Dunbar and of course I won't go into their leadership but, there were seven from Brandon all the way down to Travis Carter. You might also remember Mr. E. E. Clever who was a community minded man. He came and really got the school involved in community activities. F. W. Thomas who became principal in 1940, let me go back just a little bit, Professor Bradley was promoted to the eleventh grade in May 1940 and he died in June 1940. Ten years difference in the time his wife died and the time he died. The list goes on from 1924 to 1970.

Now, let me just mention a few other things in my notes and as we come back you might ask me some other things I might know. When we were talking about horse and buggy and getting around in wagons and all of that it came to my mind who the first, maybe not the first but, in the twenties a blacksmith was a black man. His name was Finis Price. He was located on Third Street and just behind the present day city hall was Finis Price's blacksmith shop. Because the horses had to have shoes so he began to work for that.

I would also like to mention the doctor pointed out, we had a few black doctors too. I'll point that out if you don't mind me sharing.

**DT:** Sure.

**OST:** I have a scar on my arm right now from that vaccination; you know that you had to have when we started to school. Well the little doctor that did that was Dr. D. S. Simmons, he was a very tiny man and he was old then and I don't know how old but he

was old, and I can always remember we had our opening of school in the First Baptist Church across from Dunbar School and he would always say, he would talk, talk, talk, and he would always say “September feels like school.” (laughter) I always remember that, but he was an early doctor or here back in the early twenties and he was located on Chestnut Street. The next doctor was Dr. C. M. Stewart. Dr. Stewart was a native of Nigton and he grew up and went off to Meharry Medical School and he returned and started practicing in 1928 on Townsend. Townsend then was more or less the outskirts, but he was there on Townsend and Angelina Street. He passed away in 1944 and then of course he was replaced by Dr. Ed. E. Packard. Dr. Packard was with us from 1945 to 1958. His office was located on what is now Martin Luther King. I grew up on that street and that is Lake Street but nevertheless he was there in a building that Mr. E. H. Finis had built for us to have in the community. The next doctor was...following Dr. Packard the Citizen Chamber of Commerce got busy to get us a doctor after Dr. Packard died and we worked very hard to get one and Dr. Allen answered our request and came to Lufkin to serve as doctor. He came in 1959 and stayed with us I guess until 1994. I see him so much now it seems like he is still a doctor, but you know Dr. Allen. His first office was on Lake Street, Martin Luther King then on Lakeview and finally on Ellis Street. We only had one other black dentist other than Dr. Pierre and that was Dr. J. M. Martin. He started practicing in 1922 and practiced until 1964. One other statement, Mrs. Garrett was 72 years old when she stopped teaching and she didn't want to retire then. I wanted to add that and you will find that teachers were real dedicated, they were mommas and papas for the black children and certainly it was a joy to have gone to school under them and then later come out and serve as a teacher myself.

**(Clapping)**

**GH:** I thank you very much. I'm particularly pleased that you mentioned Professor Clever. Professor Clever was the quintessential educator and he just looked like it when he walked in. I thought very highly of him. We appreciate you recalling some of those folks. I warned you about Bob Bowman and here he is.

**Bob Bowman (hereafter BB):** I, George Henderson gave me a challenge he said talk about all the industries of Angelina County and that is an enormous challenge knowing full well that I would probably exceed the time. He has promised a portion of...and he is going to do that only because I'm the smallest and the youngest of the panelist. I think he's doing it as a practical joke. To really understand the history of the evolution of industry in Angelina County you really have to go back to 1882. That is when during the summer of that year a whistle blew on top a locomotive for the very first time in Angelina County. It was heard for the very first time in the woods in a place called Lufkin. Lufkin at that time was not known as Lufkin and the whistle of course was at that time the Houston East and West Texas Railroad and arrived here at Denman Springs. Denman Springs was named for two people, two families, Colonel Lafayette Denman. He was an old Civil War veteran who owned a lot of land and his son Dr. A. M. Denman who of course owned the telephone company and did all the other things that W. D. talked about. The ride on the railroad led to the establishment of this little town that we now call Lufkin which is named for a Galveston merchant named Abraham Lufkin. He

was a close friend and business partner with railroad owner Paul Bremond of Galveston. Mr. Lufkin somewhere in our history we have always assumed that Lufkin was named for A. P. Lufkin who was a railroad engineer. Back in 1976 when we celebrated our centennial or 1986, I'm sorry in 1982 when we celebrated our centennial we found there was no such individual named Lufkin. We went to the Rosenberg Library in Galveston and looked all through the microfilm and looked at railroad records and everything and surely there was no such so the only conclusion we made was that Lufkin was named for Abraham Lufkin who incidentally died in Paul Bremond's house in Galveston. When Mr. Bremond finished his Houston to Shreveport line in 1885 Angelina County had a lot of other whistles, primarily sawmill whistles built on top of sawmills here to take advantage of all the lumber and all the timber that grew along the railroad. And the railroad really gave us the opportunity to ship out for the very first time lumber to places like Houston, Galveston and Shreveport and other towns. Sawmills just began to blossom out, mushroomed all over East Texas. There were hundreds, and hundreds of small sawmills including a number of them in this county. One of the earliest major sawmills was Angelina County Lumber Company founded in 1888 by three uniquely different families. There was Joseph Kurth, a German immigrant, Simon Henderson who was an Irish bookkeeper and Samuel Weiner who was a purchasing agent. You can't imagine three more different kinds of people that got together to put in that sawmill. Of all the three people probably Mr. Kurth was the most interesting of all. He had been a resident of Germany for a number of years and as a young man he grew up at a questionable age and a bunch of students and he threw some blocks through the local police station window and decided he needed to get out of town. Well, his family put him in a pickle barrel, loaded a dock and put him on a ship bound for England. When he got to England he took another ship and came to Galveston and worked at the sawmill for a number of years and finally wound up after his children were born finally got up to Lufkin. He bought in Lufkin or in Kelty's a very small sawmill from two individual names that are kind of intertwine with our history. One is called Charles Lewis Kelty and the other was James A. Ewing. They had a little sawmill on the Cotton Belt Railroad and the two men had built the mill to produce cross ties for the railroad and it was not a very successful sawmill and even after they sold out to Mr. Kurth, Mr. Ewing stayed on as foreman. Before selling Ewing and Kelty had what was apparently Lufkin's very first railroad. It wasn't a railroad that we think of in the traditional sense. It was a crude log tram that consisted of 4x4 wooden rails, not iron rails, not steel rails but wood rails that were cut from pine trees and the railroad cars were hauled over the rails using an oxen and used later by little Shay engine or what they call a Dinky engine.

For decades the Kurth's and Henderson's and the Weiner families exerted an enormous influence over this community. They built other sawmills, not just the Angelina County Lumber Company sawmill. They had sawmills reaching all the way up to Red River County. All the way up into Louisiana. They built foundries, they built a railroad, they built insurance companies, they built banks, movie theaters, radio stations, a hospital, our first hotel and much, much more. They really ran, if you've been around a long time you can look and see just how much influence those three families had. Other sawmills were built about the same time, of course there was Southern Pine Lumber Company which was founded in Diboll in 1894 by T. L. L. Temple of Texarkana and there was also

another mill that the Temple family had a large interest in and that was Lufkin Land and Lumber Company and it was founded in 1897 by George Kelly, E. A. Frost and T. L. L. Temple. The Lufkin Land Sawmill went out of business around 1930 and Southern Pine Lumber Company in Diboll began to expand because Mr. Temple had pulled most of his interest back to Diboll and it widened far beyond Diboll in today we know it as Temple Inland. Southern Pine Lumber Company owes its existence really to the purchase of timberlands that were bought in 1890's from the heirs of Joseph Copes Diboll. Now if you go to New Orleans today you will look about in that area you will find the town square there called Diboll Square. In New Orleans they pronounce this Diboll. As a result of our early sawmills Angelina County during the peak of the great sawmill lumber boom shipped out more lumber than any county in East Texas and in any county in Texas for that matter. That was around the turn of the century. It's been said that lumber originated from Lufkin built much of Houston between 1890 and 1920. In 1902 another major industry had its start. In that year the Kurth, Henderson and Weiner families began through their resources and decided that East Texas needed a shop to repair sawmill machinery and logging locomotives and Lufkin Foundry and Machine Company was of course founded in 1902 and incidentally will celebrate its centennial next year. The company did very well with very remarkable resources and reasonable prices. In 1905 W. C. Trout who was a creative sawmill machinery salesman from Wisconsin moved to Lufkin, took a position with the foundry and began inventing new products for sawmills and new products for oil fields. Mr. Trout's invention of the counter balance pumping unit in the 1920 set a standard for oil industry and led to the days that modern Lufkin Industries which now sells products and pumping units and gears and trailers all around the world. Between the late 1830's and early '40's a period of aggressive industrial effort gave us additional employers and hundreds of new jobs. It has been said that Lufkin probably had about three great places in history where it really boomed and became what it is today. One was that instance where the ladies marched in the streets and closed down the sawmills [saloons]. That changed the city back to the public. We began to build churches and began to be build schools, better schools, saloons were not there anymore and so we began to be involved in a more creative imaginative fine tuned community with all the immunities we did not have before the saloons. The other era was that era between the late 1930's or early 1940's when we created a bunch of new industries. At that time we created about 2000 new jobs in that one era. That has been called our golden era in industrial expansion. During that era Martin Wagon Company was acquired by Lufkin Foundry and became the Trailer Plant. Texas Foundries moved here from St. Louis and became the first knowledgeable iron foundry west of the Mississippi River. Southland Papermill of course built a pioneer newsprint mill at what is now called Herty and changed the whole complexion of the South's paper industry. Until then nobody had ever made white paper from southern pines in the South. We made what is called brown paper, kraft paper for shopping bags but nobody had ever made white paper that you print a newspaper on or that you could print a book on or anything such as that. Southland changed all that in the 1940's when they made their first paper here. It led to the enormous diversification to the paper industry throughout the South. An interesting story is that we always give credit to Southland and to those Lufkin families that built the right facility. But a lot of credit goes to some foreigners. One was the Canadians who came here in the late 1930's to run the Papermill. In the 1930's when they built Southland they

could not find any experienced paper makers anywhere in the south. First of all nobody had ever made white paper from the south so all the paper makers were only experienced in making brown or Kraft paper. Second at that time in the 1930's there was only one Papermill in Texas and that was in Pasadena and again they were making brown paper so Mr. Kurth had to hire a bunch of Canadians from Canada. There are dozens of them that moved here with their families, they came to Lufkin and they started up the Lufkin Mill and they stayed there. Those families are still intertwined in our community. Most of them are French Canadians so they brought a unique culture to this community.

The second group of people, again foreigners that probably saved the mills here was during the war years. During those years the mill had a mulch problem trying to get labor to cut trees in the woods. All the young men had been taken away by war and nobody to cut trees and haul them to the mills. Of course women couldn't do those jobs, it was too tough. Mr. Kurth went to the War Production Board and he worked out a deal to hire prisoners of war, those prisoners of war who were in various camps throughout East Texas including here in Lufkin. Those prisoners of war hauled all the pulp wood for the Papermill during the war years and probably kept them from shutting down.

Again during that era there was another important plant built and that was the Temple White Plant in Diboll which made brooms and handles for different purposes.

In our industrial community of the past we also had some industries that we have forgotten about. Tom Henderson made cigars in the early 1900's including the Texador, the Commercial Club, the Angelina and the little Doris which my wife is fond of which was the leading five cent cigar of that day.

We also had a fruit farm and canning practice which went out of business right after its manager was shot to death in the bank vault of Lufkin National Bank. A whole other story!

Norris Fence Company, that was an unusual company, they used sawmill waste to make picket fences and it became the country's leading producer of snow fences in the north. For some reason people in the north liked the Norris fences for snow fences so they used a lot of them from this area. And, we built at Diboll the south's very first plant to make plywood from Southern pine trees, a company that was owned jointly by the Temple family and U. S. Plywood. Like today most industries were owned by large...

## **TAPE STOPPED END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE**

**BB:** ...Brookshire Brothers which founded a downtown store on Spit and Whittle Street as we called it in 1921. We have Atkinson Candy which started operating in 1932 when B. E. Atkinson began selling candy out of the back seat of his car. We also had Red Ball Motor Freight Company which is a nationally known freight line which originated here in the twenties. We had Land O'Pines Dairy Products which originated in 1946 by five druggist and two other business men. We had Angelina Plywood which was founded by

Angelina County Lumber Company and the Papermill. We also had some enterprises that we were not so proud of. We had a horse race track where George Henderson has his office now. I think that will probably tell you something, I'm not sure what. (laughter)

**GH:** Your time is just about up. (laughter)

**BB:** They did bet on the horses at that time, in fact this racetrack is another interesting story. It was promoted by the Chamber of Commerce and for awhile the Chamber thought about building a railroad track directly to the railroad station in downtown Lufkin to the horse track where George has his office but they decided not to when a Louisiana gambler came to town and bid on the horse racing and made big money.

We also had a tobacco farm which was located north of Lufkin. That was a creation from a man named Italio, a lawyer who married the son of the present Dr. Taylor. In 1899 he bought five hundred acres of land beside the St. Louis and Southwestern Railroad and planted fifty acres in tobacco and began to build curage sheds and other amenities that were needed to farm tobacco. But, the pine lands of East Texas were not especially suited for tobacco. The tobacco had the wrong color and it didn't taste right and it didn't cure properly so he abandoned his endeavor and moved away.

What has our industrial community given us over the past couple of years or so? Well, the answer includes a list of things. One a thousand good jobs and an economic engine for our growth and the creation of some of our largest foundations, a strong tax base, Angelina College, Crown Colony Country Club, a regional medical community and some of the most generous and caring people in the world.

A less appreciated part of our industrialization lies in places that we've seldom seen they are called ghost towns and they are a remembrance of those industries we left behind. Manning was a sawmill town which at one time was our second largest town in Angelina County, south Angelina County. It was owned by the Carter Kelly Lumber Company. It was the home of many Lufkinites who are still here today. In fact one of those Bob Bowman once wrote a book about it. Ewing was a sawmill town and was on the west side of Rayburn Lake named Ewing and other than being the town of which George Henderson is made of today is known for the tragic death of one of its owners John Henderson who fell into a sawdust pile, a burning sawdust pile as he walked over his dying town. Ewing's existence was also popular by a book by Lamar Hensley who used to live there. We also saw the disappearance of the sawmill of Lufkin Land which was the only sawmill incidentally ever founded inside the corporate city limits of Lufkin.

Aldridge was a sawmill town which was owned by Aldridge Lumber Company left behind in the most famous sawmill ruins in Texas and at one time operated a little railroad called the Burr's Ferry, Browndale and Chester Railroad which everybody called the bump, the falter, the bang and collapse.

We also had a sawmill at Hoshall where the commissary owner was killed by a man who became the first Angelina County man to receive the death sentence and died by the electric chair and only the seventh in Texas to die from that method.

All of this underscores an old old axiom that we have in history where you have growth and we have ghost too. Thank you!

**GH:** Good job Bob. I do appreciate you calling to our attention the watershed events of our times and certainly we can't name all the individuals who contributed to all this stuff, but one of the things I thought you might cover and I see you left the grim out here was the Lufkin Daily News. W. R. Beaumier in addition to having given Bob Bowman his first job is probably unique in the fact that he made a little old Jake leg town newspaper like Lufkin News come alive and was the mouth piece for all of East Texas and I do think that is a part of Lufkin's watershed events is the Lufkin News and the contributions of Bob Beaumier. In the 66 years that I have been here Lufkin has had great leadership and it's obvious they had tremendous leadership prior to that. But the truth is as I see it I think we have made a quantum leap in the last fifteen years, fifteen to twenty years in Lufkin and I think that has been because we have had two outstanding city managers run back to back. Harvey Westerholm who is sitting out here and being obviously one of them and I mentioned C. G. Maclin who is going to take the mike here in just a minute and talk about the future but we have had some vision in our city government and as I say I think the quantum leap. To tell us what we have to look forward to is our city manager C. G. MacLin.

**C. G. Maclin (hereafter CGM)** Thank you. Talking about the Lufkin Daily News a moment ago in today's editorial page it quotes a portion of the study from the Texas Water Development board. Over the last two years all of Texas as a result of Senate Bill One and the State legislature two years ago has been performing a study to determine the water needs in the State of Texas for the next fifty years so we would have a blueprint or a game plan if you will of how we are going to meet the needs of water for our citizens for the next fifty years. In that report it notes that it is anticipated that the growth of the Lufkin-Nacogdoches area over the next fifty years will be 112% and that in the same time period Tyler will be about 87% and by 2050 Lufkin-Nacogdoches will surpass Tyler, Smith County area in terms of total population. So that is kind of something to think about for the next fifty years. I don't know if I'll be around fifty years from now to see if that was true or not, but it is something to indicate that Lufkin, as indicated in the census of 2000, is one of the fastest growing areas in East Texas and we have many things to be prepared for as a result of that. One of the ways to be prepared for that is our city council last year adopted a five year capital improvements plan and as we mentioned we have two council members here, Mr. Bowman and Mr. Kuykendall. And the council embraced this five year capital improvements plan and it is a work in progress and each year we update that to meet the needs of our city and to adjust our plans so that we can wisely and efficiently place the city's monetary funds in the best possible utilization so we get the most for your tax dollars that we possibly can. So in that five year capital improvement plan there is several things that you will be seeing become a reality over the next five years. At our next city council meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup> the council will have a

couple of bids to award relating to the replacement of our water lines. We will be replacing what is known as asbestos cement water lines with pvc lines and this will involve about sixty-five miles of pipe or about 25% of our distribution system. So a little better than 25% of the city's distribution system for water will be replaced over the next four years. In addition to that in the area of water the city has begun a study and a plan implementing phase one of that plan to go to Sam Rayburn for some surface water and our projections of growth for the city in Angelina County it would appear that at our current rate of growth by the year 2010 we will have reached a maximum pumping capacity of our ground water. Right now a hundred percent of the water supply in Angelina County comes from ground water most of which is from the Carrizo Wilcox Aquifer. There is a little bit at Diboll that is in a smaller less quality aquifer but most of the north half of Angelina County and most all of the communities, cities and rural water districts are served by ground water from the Wilcox Aquifer. Well if we reach the peak pumping capacity in 2010 as projected then in essence we would have capped out on our ability to provide water to our systems. In other words we would just have to quite growing. Well obviously that is not an acceptable alternative and fortunately for us in 1967 our city forefathers were visionary enough to have participated and achieved water rights in Sam Rayburn reservoir. We are the only entity who has the legal authority to take water out of Sam Rayburn from the surface water. Now the lower Neches Valley Authority gets water but they get it after it goes down the Neches River and Angelina River and then on down to Beaumont. But, the city of Lufkin is the only entity that has surface water rights on Rayburn and we will begin the process of moving towards going to the lake to supplement our ground water supply with surface water supply. We will continue to use our ground water but over a period of time we will become more and more dependent on the surface water up to approximately twenty six million gallons a day of surface water is what our capacity is and LMMA had indicated we could get even more surface water if we desire. But, the council authorized a plan that will allow us to begin a process of acquiring the land for a water treatment plant, a surface water treatment plant near Rayburn and to acquire a right of way necessary for the pipe line that would run from Rayburn back to Lufkin. That is something we will be doing along with the permitting and what we call an analysis over the next four or five years we hope to accomplish all those items so that around 2005 or 2006 then we would be ready to start construction if our growth rate continues at its present level. If it doesn't then we can delay that and delay our expense. If we go faster we have built in the ability to fast track it so that we would never get into a position where we would have to turn industry away or tell our existing industry they have to cut back by expediting our option to go to Sam Rayburn for surface water.

In the area of streets we have numerous street projects that I think are the bread and butter, if you will, of infrastructure projects in the city. A lot of people judge the quality of a city by the quality of the streets and so the city council has placed a high emphasis and priority on street improvements and street projects. We have a capitol improvements project that will make significant improvements to numerous major streets in our community through what we call reconstruction. Through reconstruction that is where we basically will rebuild the street. We will actually mill it, cut it all the way back down to the original ground level and go back in with new base materials, new

foundation and actually build a brand new street from the bottom up and by doing so we will prolong the life and get better value out of our dollar. In recent years we have done a lot of overlays and the overlays have been a good way to provide a nice new surface for a short period of time but if the base is bad and you put an overlay on it eventually that overlay will fail also. So, we have taken a more long term approach to our street grounds by doing reconstructions which we feel like in the long term will save our citizens and tax payers many dollars. Within that though we have got numerous streets that we will begin on this summer and next summer you are going to see a lot of street improvements and unfortunately you are going to see a lot of torn up ground where we are putting in these new water lines. The good news is we have budgeted large amounts of sod to go back and replace the sod where those new water lines are going to be put in the ground. So, it is kind of one of those issues it's going to feel real good when it quits hurting, but right now it's going to be hurting for awhile and it will be a little bit of a visual eye sore to the city during this construction period but when once it is completed it will meet the needs of the city for many, many years to come in the future. On May 5<sup>th</sup> our citizens have approved a second bond election in the last ten years. The first one was in 1994 and on May 5<sup>th</sup> by a whooping margin of 26 votes the citizens approved a second bond election for four streets. These four streets include Lotus Lane, Abney, Angelina and Whitehouse Streets. Basically we will be going in and widening these streets to the three lane curb and gutter in the case of Lotus Lane which has no drainage, it's a very narrow somewhat dangerous street. It will be widened to three lanes, it will have storm sewer curb and gutter that it currently doesn't have and the same is true of Whitehouse. What is unique about Whitehouse is we have already secured from the Texas Department of Transportation a grant to cover most of the cost to improve Whitehouse from US 59 there by the current Wal-Mart, east over to the new Tulane Street that was part of the 1994 bond election. The bond election that was passed on May 5<sup>th</sup> will continue those improvements from Tulane east all the way over to FM 58 so the net product then after both projects are completed will be a widened three lane curb and gutter street from US 59 all the way over to FM 58 or Chestnut. So this is going to enhance the transportation flow. We feel confident that when the new super Wal-Mart goes in next door to Dr. Thames we will have a lot more traffic in that neighborhood. So, we need a way to help that traffic flow a little freer so, by making these improvements with both Tulane and Whitehouse it will help meet those needs. There are some other improvements that TxDot will be doing that will also provide some temporary construction problem issues in Lufkin and that is on US 59 south on the loop on the east side and on the loop on the north side. In the next five years you will see improvements made on US 59 from the loop south to 819 hopefully. Initially it will be to Brentwood and then eventually from Brentwood on down to 819 so that it will create what is called a closed access freeway. A six lane freeway with two feeder lane feeder roads on each side or frontage roads and so, in front of where Outback and Wal-Mart and Day's Inn and LaQuinta and all in there that will become a closed access freeway. Where right now if you go to Day's Inn you are kind of take your life in your own hands when you pull out of Day's Inn from the Lion's Club or Kiwanis Club or the Rotary Club or whatever, when you pull out there it is kind of dangerous to get up to speed real quick because of the traffic on the freeway. You won't have to deal with that after this is completed because you will have frontage roads and the freeway traffic will be separate. The only way you can get on the freeway is either at Brentwood 819 or the

crossing at the loop on 59. The fact is the traffic flow at the intersection of 59 and the loop in front of the mall is the highest traffic count of any site between Houston and Tyler. As a result of that they are going to be investing the dollars to build a north bound overpass. Right now we have a south bound overpass that was build in 1988 or '89. This will add a north bound lane so that all that traffic of big eighteen-wheelers that go flying through there, they will basically have their own freeway and we as citizens will have frontage roads. If we want to get on the freeway we can. If we don't want to we don't have to. We will have a little less risk, so to speak, in terms of the traffic. Likewise TxDot's goal then is to continue that around the east loop so that the east loop becomes the short term bypass for the city. By making a short term bypass it will likewise be closed access, meaning you don't just pull on and off the freeway like you do now. You will only be able to get on the freeway at crossovers like at the Ford Chapel and 103 or at the loop. There will be a new crossover built at Hall Street. Remember when we closed the crossover there at Hall Street due to a large number of accidents, TxDot put in the plans to put a crossover there what they call a grave crossing or a bridge so that the freeway traffic can go over and the local traffic can go underneath. First you will see that area from the high school there at Lufkin Avenue up to 103 become a closed access freeway feeder road. Then you will see it happen again on the north loop from just where you turn to go to Kit McConico from the northeast corner of the loop from there all the way to US 59 where it turns to go to Nacogdoches, that will become a closed access Freeway because of all the accidents that have happened in front of Charlie's with the eighteen-wheelers and first one thing and then another. You will have a Freeway with feeder roads the same as I've mentioned on 59 South in an effort to help make it safer and improve the traffic flow. Then at US 59 they will be doubling the size of the radius of the clover leaf. You have a cloverleaf there where you make that big turn and go around if you are coming from Nacogdoches and you want to go to downtown Lufkin you make the circle turn and come back in and go underneath and go back into Lufkin, well they are going to actually double the radius or the size of those cloverleaf's in an effort to improve the safety there also. So, these are all projects that are projected to be done over the next five years so you can see that is what we are talking about over a hundred million dollars in projects to be done here inside the city limits of Lufkin. That is an awful lot of work. I think I'm about out of time or I'm afraid the whip is fixing to come so I'll turn it back over to George before the whip comes alive here.

**GH:** Boy a hundred million dollars, it is not much to see past is C.G? That is amazing. I've got one twenty and you have been very patient and I appreciate that. Nobody has left and I don't think anybody has gone to sleep.

**Unknown:** Three twenty.

**GH:** Three twenty, well we have been here an hour and twenty minutes. What I want to do is give you an opportunity to ask any questions or tell any stories that you might have. Now, I want to temper this, J. P. has arranged for some refreshments down the hall here. Is that right? It will give you an opportunity when we shut this down to take advantage of that and if you want to visit with any of these folks individually that is fine. Right now I think we have got a few minutes and I'd be glad to field questions or hear a story.

**Unknown:** I do not have a story about history of Lufkin. I am not from here but we lived from '77 to '82 in Singapore. I am standing waiting for traffic to go past and I see a big crane go by, slowly, big thing, Lufkin, never heard of Lufkin. You didn't see that often because the traffic in Singapore is very regulated and big things are not suppose to go through the inner city. So, I think I saw it one more time, at that time I had no idea I would end up living in Lufkin. I had no idea where the name came from because to me as a European coming into the States, Lufkin doesn't mean anything. Most of the names mean something so, that is why it is so interesting that you told where the name Lufkin came from. Because I heard about two possibilities and we had something to do with the lumber in the discover room a few years ago and there it was that there was two possibilities that Lufkin was named for the man from Galveston and what was the other one?

**GH:** Well welcome to Lufkin.

**Unknown:** Oh yes, I love it here!

**GH:** It is a small world and Doug Smith, sitting in the back of the room, President of Lufkin Industries, has a plant at Pecan Island, just off the edge there of Singapore, which I'm sure you are familiar with, which is part of Indonesia I guess but within a rocks throw of Singapore but it is a small world. Thank you for that observation. Anybody else? It is hard for me to believe that Ruth Grant is not going to tell us a story or two. She has got a million of them. She called me the other night and W. D. got to talking about the doctors, my grandfather was a physician in Lufkin around the turn of the century and he...I've heard a lot of people that knew him; I never heard anybody tell any great life saving stories about my grandfather. So Ruth tells me and those of you who recall or probably have read the Angelina County Historical book that Bob edited, put out sometime back, if you remember Audie, and Audie was the old mare that Mr. Kitchens had. Mr. Kitchens had an ice cream factory and Audie was his mule that he had around at the turn of the century. He was probably one of the most famous residents of Lufkin. Audie lived to be 44 years old and led most every parade, funeral procession, fire trucks and at age 44 the last several months I guess of Audie's life they were concerned about him and didn't want him to suffer so they had him put down and Ruth tells me it was my grandfather that they called to put old Audie down and he is buried right off the edge of Glendale or Hillcrest Cemetery one right out here. So, Ruth if you have got any stories I'm sure this crowd would love to hear one or two of them.

**Ruth Grant:** Well one I just thought about telling, it doesn't have anything to do with Lufkin much, well yes it does. The first time we went to England we had to go to the bank and get us some money the first morning and when we stepped out of the bank the traffic was backed up and I had my camera with me and when we stepped out of the bank they stopped traffic right in front of us and there was this huge red truck and on the side of it it said Arthur Temple Cattle Company and I took a picture of it, in England and I was so surprised. Somebody said well that is where his cattle are going.

**GH:** Joan?

**Joan:** This is kind of reminiscent of what Ruth was saying, if you remember Chester Moore, he never met a stranger. We were on a ship in the Greek Islands and Chester went back and started visiting with a guy on the back deck. He came in and said, “well he is from Germany and I told him I was from a little town in East Texas called Lufkin” he said “you won’t know it” and he said “yes, I really was, I was in a prisoner of war camp there in Lufkin.”

**GH:** That is a good point that is one we have left out because we did have a huge POW camp here and it worked the woods for the Papermill.

**BB:** (unintelligible)

**Joan:** He was really, really complimentary.

**BB:** They were treated real well here. They fed them well and they had a theory that if they fed them well (unintelligible). They never had any escapes because of their good treatment and the fences around it at that POW camp out there on Raguet left a lot to be desired for security reasons.

**GH:** Rachael?

**Rachael:** Okay, one Sunday afternoon I was out in the yard and my husband was standing close to the road and this man walked up to the driveway and asked Bonnie if he had lived there and he said, “no but my wife has” and so he came on around in the back yard and mother and I were sitting out there and he was a prisoner of war and stationed out at Kelty’s and he said that he had spent two years here and he had come back to see what the town had done since his two years here. But one of the questions he asked was “do you still have to go across the river?” (Laughter) And that was one of his jobs, that he went across and got their beer rations. (laughing)

**GH:** Now you know we are building, they are about to open up in the fall the arts center out at Angelina College which is going to seat somewhere around 900. Is that number about right? And we think about how great that thing is but the truth is and Woody and Bob both probably, well Woody was probably there at the time, a little before mine but, did we not have an opera house here that seated a thousand?

**BB:** Well, not a thousand.

**GH:** Well that is a good story! (laughter)

**Unknown:** Chamber of Commerce...it burned in one of the great fires in 1912. It was called the Lufkin Opera House. I have one of the stock certificates.

**GH:** Hey Bob just how many did it seat?

**BB:** It seated about 300. (laughter)

**Unknown:** What caused it to burn, the Angelina Hotel burned that night and when it did it was next to the Opera House.

**GH:** I think that was one of Bob Bowman's books I read it was a thousand. (Laughter)

**Unknown:** Also at the point where the Lufkin News office is, right behind it is the hotel but in front of it there on Herndon and Elm Street was a service station type business and the Dewberry's run a taxi cab stand there. They hired cars and they rented cars and July 4, 1936 we had a shoot out there that killed more people than died at the Okay Corral right there in Lufkin and five people lost their lives in that shoot out. That is quit a story. We will tell that another time.

**GH:** Any other comments or stories?

**J. P. McDonald:** I have a comment. I would like to thank all of you while we have a president's best friend Bob Beaumier's granddaughter, Jill Hershland. We often hear people in Lufkin say Nancy Cromwell is still referred to as Guy Grooms' little girl. We have that one and many, many, more. We thank you so much. This has been wonderful. We could all stay here for a week listening to all the stories. We thank you so much! (clapping)

**END OF INTERVIEW**