

This recording is an interview with Ron Basran, co-owner (with his brothers) of a wood recycling and trucking firm and co-owner of Frankie G's Boilerhouse Pub in Queensborough. Basran was born and raised in Queensborough, and is a third generation trucker. Basran has maintained the family trucking business, but opened the pub in 2000. Frankie G's Boilerhouse Pub, which was intentionally built to preserve some of the history of New Westminster, is decorated with artifacts and photographs of industrial Queensborough, including a steam boiler. Major themes in this interview include family history, changes in the wood products industry, and changes in New Westminster, especially Queensborough

The interview was conducted at the pub.

Interviewer (s): Peter Hall and Annika Airas

Date: 26 March 2014

Date Range: 1948-present

Sound Recording Length: 47:39

Ron Basran's family first arrived in Queensborough in the early 1900s, and he remains a resident. Both of Basran's grandfathers were in the trucking business, delivering firewood and coal. His father expanded the business to supply fuel for the steam boilers at various sawmills. Basran, his two brothers, and son all worked in the family trucking firm though at the time of the interview his son was the manager of the pub. His trucking firm has worked with companies including MacMillan Bloedel, Canadian Forest Products, Doman Industries, and Interfor Group. As proprietor of the pub, Basran was also involved in its creation, building on his vision for the changes that would- and did- come to the New Westminster waterfront. Basran has fond memories of growing up in Queensborough, of fishing off log booms and playing hockey on frozen flooded fields.

Section 00:00- 5:40

In this introduction Basran explains the origin of the name Frankie G's Boilerhouse Pub. He briefly describes his family history in Queensborough, mentioning that his mother, who was born in Queensborough is the oldest continuous resident. Basran describes his grandfathers' work in trucking, and explains his own decision to join the family business around 1970. He dates his parents' marriage to 1946, and asked about the 1948 flood, points to a photograph on the wall.

Section 5:41-9:26

This section is focused on the wood products industry, especially the transition from barges to trucking in the 1960s along with the development of packaged lumber, and then containerization. He lists some of the products that were handled at the New Westminster Harbour, noting that lumber was the major commodity.

Section 9:27- 21:01

Basran describes his normal day's work as a truck driver in 1969 hauling hogfuel and wood chips. He explains the difference between these two "waste" products and their uses. He later (1981) began hauling lumber, describing the relationship between the

trucking and saw milling industries. Companies included MacMillan Bloedel, Canadian Forest Products, Doman Industries, and Interfor. The high point for his firm was in the mid-1980s when he employed c. 20 company drivers and c. 30 owner-operators. At the time of the interview, the firm was collecting waste-wood – diverting from landfills – and producing its own hogfuel for sale to firms, and using barges rather than trucks for most of its hauling. Basran describes the steps in recycling waste wood prior to 1990 for Japanese automobile dashboards.

Section 21:01- 31:10

In this section Basran explains the relocating the transport/recycling firm move from Queensborough to River Road Delta in 1992 due to deindustrialization and redevelopment in Queensborough. He describes a “mountain of hogfuel” that was allowed to accumulate at the current site of Queensborough Landing (the MacMillan Bloedel mill) and the need to remove it for the site to be redeveloped. He describes the physical properties of hogfuel and its uses. Along with the changes to his business, Basran describes some of the redevelopment of the Queensborough waterfront. He mentions the Alaska Pine fire (1967), its rebuilding, the redevelopment of the site which he attributes to changing land values and concerns with pollution.

Section 31:11- 38:49

Basran comments on his mixed feelings about the deindustrialization and redevelopment of Queensborough. He is troubled by the loss of employment this represents, but again he attributes the changes to revaluation of waterfront land, so that now people want to live next to water. His 2 children live in the Queens Park area of New Westminster, but he does not want to leave Queensborough, noting his brothers, who are also his business partners, and mother still live there.

Section 38:50- 43:56

Basran discusses the relationship of waterfront industrial work and bars in New Westminster. He speaks positively about contemporary New Westminster, but expresses concern about the loss of employment. He describes building the pub, and the selections of the recycled and heritage elements in the building.

Section 43:57-47:39

As the interview concludes, Basran returns again to the changes in the community due to redevelopment and population growth, focusing on the fact that he no longer knows the majority of the pub's patrons. He concludes by reminiscing his childhood mentioning fishing from the log booms which would move with the tide, ice skating on the Fraser River, and playing hockey on frozen fields.