

**Athabasca Area Seniors' Memory Project
Transcription of Leroy Overacker-001.mp3**

http://digiport.athabascau.ca/aasmp/people/l_overacker.htm

Narrator: Leroy Overacker
Interviewer: Brenda Gilboe
April 25, 2018

[Start of Interview]

Brenda This is Brenda Gilboe interviewing Leroy Overacker on April 25th, 2018.

Leroy I took my high school in Athabasca and worked for Revelstoke. In the fall of 1960, I went to Fort St. John and worked there till '64 and then went to St. Paul for the Co-Op in '66.

Leroy I moved to Spirit River where I met my first wife, Charlotte. We were married after a short while and my first son was born in the Fairview Hospital in 1971. In February 1972, we moved to Bonnyville. We were there for only 14 months and we then moved to Boyle. My second son was born in 1974 at the University Hospital in Edmonton.

Leroy We raised the two boys. We were in Linden for three years from '76 to '80, and the oldest son had taken his kindergarten in Boyle and then he started grade one in Linden, which was a Mennonite community. The youngest one started kindergarten in Linden and then we moved in August of 1980 to Stettler, where we decided not to move again while the boys went to school. The youngest one took all his grade school there and the oldest one finished his high school there.

Leroy The oldest one went to work for an oil company for a year before going to Red Deer College. He took a biotech degree one year in Red Deer and one year at NAIT. His name is Travis, and when he graduated he couldn't find a job, so he worked for the department of highways during the in-between years. When he graduated, he worked for them in the summer right up to November. They wanted him to come back in March, but he wasn't one to sit around so he went to work for an electrician in Stettler and worked for him and apprenticed for two years. He finished the second year, and I said, "Do you want to keep doing that?" He said, "No." So we started a recycling business, him, his mother and me. He lost his mother about three months after starting the new company, but he still runs it and lives in Blackfalds. He also runs our business in Lacombe, along with his younger brother, who took his schooling in Stettler.

Leroy My younger son went to Red Deer College for about four months, didn't like it, came home and went to work for his uncle in the carpet business in Edmonton. Then when his mother got sick, he came home and lived with us to help me look after his mother. She had cancer and never went to the hospital. She was at home until two days before she passed away. We looked after her at home. Then he got involved in a weatherstripping business that I had at that time that was covering the four western

provinces. He tried it for about three months and said, "That's not for me, Dad." So I went back on the road and they ran the recycling business.

Leroy A year and a half later, Jan and I got married and lived in Stettler for about a year. Then we built our house in Lacombe and lived there until we sold the weatherstripping business. My sons stayed in the recycling business. We lived there until 2003, and then the boys took over the business and we moved to Athabasca. The boys ran the business as it was, a recycling business for all of Alberta and also into the other provinces a bit.

Leroy Then in 2016, they weren't making any money. We were doing plastics and filters. So they got out of the filter business and the oil business, and were just doing plastics. We had a 50 x 100 building that was usually being used for storage. My oldest son decided to go into baseball, and they built a batting cage and a pitching mound in the warehouse and really got into it during the fall of 2017. They both work at that. We have plastics in a 72 x 100 building. They've built rooms because we had a 74 x 174 building to work in, and part of it is still recycling. They built a two-story room in the building and they make baseball bats. Well, they don't make the bats. It's a fellow they rent the space to and he sells them all over the world. The boys are booked up from ten o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock at night, seven days a week for people to come there and practice hitting and pitching. They sell baseball bats. They sell baseball shoes, Gatorade and water. They don't sell pop.

Brenda Isn't that interesting?

Leroy People come from Rocky Mountain House, Wetaskiwin, Red Deer, Olds, all over the country, and they've been fairly fortunate. We don't know how the summer will be, but so far, they're booked up to be into May right now.

Brenda Are they married? Do you have grandchildren?

Leroy Yes. The oldest son has been married for 19 years. He has twins, a boy and a girl, who just turned 16 and they started grade 10 in Lacombe because Blackfalds doesn't have a high school. My youngest son, when we got moved to Lacombe, I said to him, "Don't stop your education, you guys." So my youngest son went to DeVry for two and a half years and got a degree in computers and bookkeeping. So they share the businesses quite well. The youngest one, Chris, is the bookkeeper/accountant and Travis is the dreamer and manager. He does all his own advertising logos and so on and so forth. He draws them himself and business has picked up since we started this 'compound', they call it, and you can see that on the Internet if you want to look at it. Some guy asked him to refurbish his glove and I was talking to him yesterday and he said, "I just started the middle of March and I've done 30 already." He re-laces them, too. He said, "I had a fellow just Monday who brought in a glove that was from the 1920s. And the fellow told him, "I want you to fix it up but I'm not going to play with it". So yeah, they're doing quite well in that. And with the plastics, they have one truck and are putting a second one on the road.

Brenda So things are going well.

Leroy It was quiet for a year or so.

Brenda Is your younger son married?

Leroy Yes, he's married and has a son who will be 13 years old this year and his daughter is 10 years old. His wife works for the City of Red Deer in the planning department. My oldest son's wife does not work out of the home. She was a health care nurse and looked after seniors, but she quit the year before they had children. And her husband, my oldest son, is like myself. Somebody is going to look after the children, preferably the mother, because I did the same thing . My wife was a schoolteacher and made more money than I did. But when she had children, we decided she wouldn't teach. So for 10 years, she stayed home and then she subbed in schools.

Brenda Yeah, well, you know, I think we've covered things pretty well here.

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