BOEM DEEPWATER GULF OF MEXICO HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee:	Myron Rodrigue
Date:	September 22, 2012
Place:	Houston, Texas
Interviewer:	Tyler Priest
Ethnographic preface:	Myron Rodrigue was born and raised in Thibodaux, Louisiana, in 1947. Rodriguez earned an engineering drafting certificate and joined the U.S. Army reserves, and in 1958 joined up with McDermott. After a few promotions, Rodrigue attended night college for several years, learning cost analysis and gaining more engineering experience. Rodrigue worked as a field engineer in McDermott's fabrication yard, and then as a project engineer for the massive Shell Oil Cognac fixed platform in the 1970s. He later worked for another fabrication firm on platforms for the North Sea, but returned to McDermott in time to work on Shell's landmark Bullwinkle structure. Rodrigue later worked for Aker, building large structures for deepwater projects in the Gulf of Mexico, including Conoco's Jolliet tension-leg well platform.

TP: We're here with Myron Rodrique. The interviewer's Tyler Priest, September 22, 2012, for the OEC [Offshore Energy Center] Hall of Fame.
Welcome and congratulations on your induction.

MR: Thank you.

TP: Well deserved. Let's start off with just a little biographical background.

MR: Okay.

TP: Where are you from? Where did you grow up?

MR: I was born in Thibodaux, Louisiana, 1947, was the third of seven children.

TP: Oh, really?

MR: Yes. My daddy was from the middle of the swamp in a place called Chackbay [phonetic]. He was like eight or nine years old before he could speak English. Went to Thibodaux College, which was a Catholic school, which no longer exists. After I graduated from high school, I went to trade school.

TP: Was your dad in the oil business then?

MR: No, my dad managed the laundry for the hospital.
So I graduated from high school, it was in 1965, went to trade school in drafting, finished that in about nine months, and then went to work for a small engineering company called Carl Hecht [phonetic] Engineers. They did a various type of civil engineering, roads, locations. You know, back then when you went survey a well location in, you put a stake down, they moved the rig in, then you went back, and you had to do a Kelly elevation, so that stuff. Did that for—

TP: Like the late sixties?

MR: That would have been '67 or so. Or '66 maybe. Yes.
Went to work for McDermott in April of 1968 as an MTO draftsman person, $1.60 an hour. By that time I was married. Then I started to watch how things went along, and I started every two or three years getting a promotion. By, I guess, 1975 when Cognac came around, I was promoted to the project engineer for Shell's Cognac platform.

TP: Had you been working on platforms?

MR: I was what they called a field engineer, and I was doing, back then, the structures. We were building a lot of what we would call shallow water today. But I was

handling various clients for the jacket fabrication. McDermott was set up with separate yards for jacket fabrication, for topside fabrication, for rolling pipe.

So I had several clients that I was responsible for: Shell, Exxon. It was Humble when I first started, then Exxon, and Mobil and several other clients. If you remember, some of that time in the early seventies when there was a heavy drilling program, people were buying slots, and we were getting slots from, like, Mobil for eleven platforms at a time.

So as a field engineer, I could be ordering steel, and that was mainly the job of a field engineer back then, was to make sure that the field had everything they needed to build the work. It wasn't complicated work. If you fed the yard the material in the right sequence, the jobs got built. The craftsman level was very high.

TP: So the material would come from anywhere?

MR: Most of the steel came from the U.S. back then.

TP: But I mean from big steelyards up in the Northeast.

MR: Yes, the steel mills, U.S. Steel and—

TP: It's interesting, because people don't realize how the economic impact of the industry is well beyond the Gulf Coast. They think it's purely a Gulf Coast industry.

MR: Oh, no. Oh, no. I testified in Washington [D.C.], I forget what year it was, but on the Bullwinkle Project. It was only one state in the union had nothing to do with Bullwinkle. They had something happening or some people came from or some consultant came from every state in the union but maybe one. So, yes, our business has national implications besides producing the energy with jobs. Yes, it does. It does.

TP: So I interrupted your train of thought there. So you're ordering all sorts of jackets, feeding them in the yards.

MR: Yes. So when Cognac came around, they appointed me the project engineer from McDermott's side to handle the fabrication of the jacket, and that was an interesting thing. So I ordered all the steel for the structure and then took on the responsibility of helping the superintendents build the job. It was a step function change. If you go back and look at the water depth record before Cognac was, I think, 373 feet, and Cognac jumps up to 1,020 feet.

If you look at the offshore industry as it was then versus now, the biggest derrick barge was 500 tons. So there was a whole lot of stuff had to be done. The jacket had to be built in three pieces. The base section had to be built vertical, the midsection on its side, the top section on its side, and the interface. Because you

had two interfaces to match, we had to learn how to measure what to us were large distances relatively accurate.

I can tell you a little anecdote on when we started building the base section, the first leg. I can remember the dimension was 172 foot 6 inches, and it's just a straight piece of pipe, 72 inch in diameter. If I didn't measure that leg 150 times, I didn't measure it once, and we couldn't duplicate measurements. And I bought everything you could think of to make accurate measurements and try to repeat them.

Make a long story short, we finally figured out the temperature corrections. We knew about temperature correction, but it's not about ambient temperature; it's about steel temperature. We figured out a way to measure the average steel temperature to give us a way to measure and duplicate the measurements. And once we did that, it worked out pretty good.

In fact, Shell hired Boeing at the time. Boeing was kind of the premier dimensional control specialist in the country, and they hired those guys. At the end of the day, they verified that what we were doing was working. Because Dan Godfrey and I, Dan mostly, developed the tables to convert, take the coefficient of expansion of steel and graph it with temperature and thickness and length, and it worked out pretty good. We ended up, it fit. [laughs] It fit.

TP: That's something you didn't have to do just with your bread-and-butter jackets there.

MR: No, no. No. Up until then, the back end of a jacket didn't matter. The top end had the piling and the leg annulus that you could move around for the decks to fit, so it was less critical, and those techniques are still used today for measuring big structures. So that was interesting.

TP: What other challenges did you face at Cognac? There were a lot of them.

MR: Well, it was the beginning of needing more labor than we were used to. You know, the way the yard ran, that was the first use of subcontract laborers in McDermott's yard when we had Cognac.

TP: Were there any labor problems with unions?

MR: We had no trouble.

TP: Did McDermott have unionized workers?

MR: No, no. It was no problems. It was just that we had never done it, and you always hired what you needed. You never subcontracted directly. And that was the first time we used them.

That jacket had a lot more unique systems. It had mud mats that were actually adjustable mud mats. That was a huge apparatus, huge hydraulic jacks at

the time. I forget what diameter they were. They're huge. The bottom it was sitting on wasn't level, so we preset the mud mats in the yard, and when they put it offshore, they never had to move them. But Shell spent an enormous amount of money on having adjustable mud mats.

TP: In case they needed to.

MR: Right. The flooding system was very sophisticated.

TP: For submerging the—

MR: Right. The closures, the leg closures, were all developed, one-off developments by the vendors. A lot of unique engineering on that project. The piling, the first time we used underwater hammers.

TP: Underwater pile drivers.

MR: Right. And the piling would float it out. They carried them. They floated them out in one piece. I remember to float them out in one piece, we had to tow them, and they wanted them to tow in a certain way. So I had to find a place that would fill up 24-inch-diameter pipe with lead to make the keels. That was a unique thing, dealing, buying lead. It was interesting.

TP: Pile drivers weren't used much after that, right, or were they?

MR: Those type of hammers, yes, they were used, yes. I mean, they still use underwater hammers today, all the deepwater stuff, so a lot of it, it was really a testing bed for further down the road, I guess.

TP: How many people did McDermott have working on that in the yard?

MR: Oh, I don't know. I don't remember. I think the yard got up to about two thousand people back then, which was a big number then. It's not big by today's standards, because you still had to do everything. Cognac was just one job. You still had all the other stuff to do.

TP: There were some other big projects in the pipeline then too.

MR: Yes. We were talking about this earlier, but the jacket, it was the first time we ever built a structure on a pile-founded foundation. The base section weighed 14,500 tons, so we ended up engineering—we engineered a foundation that was pile-founded concrete with Teflon coated. It's the first time we ever used Teflon that I know.

The structure took eighteen months to build, and nobody had ever built a structure that took that long. Shell's concern was it was sitting up on that skid for

eighteen months, and it would be a tough thing to break loose to push onto the barge or pull onto the barge. So they had a jacking system on the launch barge that was good for 3,000 or 3,500 tons.

Shell wasn't sure, they wanted some insurance, so I designed a cassette to put in the back to put some jacks that could develop another 1,600 tons of push. It turned into an R&D project. Shell wanted to get the static coefficient of friction and the breakaway coefficient of friction, you know. So they didn't particularly trust the rigging department, so they posted guards on the barge the night we were getting ready to load out the base. They had guards on the barge. I was in the yard watching what was going on, and we were putting the jacks in the cassettes. These were 200-ton jacks horizontally so they could push.

So the rigging, Dan Godfrey was my counterpart. He went to dinner offsite. So when we were putting the last jacks in, the rigging superintendent came find me. He says, "Myron, I think we moved the jacket."

I says, "No. No, you didn't do that."

He says, "Yeah. Come see."

So I walked up to the base section. And the Teflon was yellow, right, covered in grease. So I walked up to base section, I looked down, and there's about that much clean Teflon. What had happened is when they were putting the jacks in, as they put a jack in, they tightened up on it so it would hold in place, and they kept adding. Every time they added load, we actually moved the jacket in with just the back jacks, with less than—we think it was less than 800 tons of push.

So when I was looking at this clean Teflon, and I've got about thirty riggers around me in the yards, and the rigging superintendent, and somebody said, "Here comes Dan Godfrey." And, boy, all of a sudden, I'm standing by myself. [laughter]

Dan walks up to me and he looks at me and he says, "I guess you can't trust anybody." [laughter] I had to write a letter to explain what had happened. It was interesting. It was funny. It's funny now. [laughter] Because Dan had knew. By the time he got back to the yard, the guards on the barge had heard and they had radioed to him.

TP: Did that cause any concern? Was there big cause for concern?

MR: No, they was just mad because they didn't get the number. We didn't have it. They wanted it to mesh, because they were going to read the jack pressures off the barge when we started pulling and calculate the breakaway coefficient of friction. It wasn't big. That Teflon works. [laughs]

TP: I remember the photos of the base section being floated. I forget which bayou it is.

MR: Bayou Chene.

TP: That's an impressive-looking—

MR: That was the first time we ever—you know, eagles was just coming back to south Louisiana then, and there was a big deal about cutting the right-of-way or cutting the trees back off of Bayou Chene so the base section could go out, and then they found an eagle's nest. I don't remember the details, but we ended up the base went out. But that was when eagles started coming back to Louisiana, at least because I never saw them when I was a kid. I never saw eagles when I was a little boy. Now they're loaded; the marsh is loaded with them.

TP: Were there weather delays?

MR: No. I mean, in terms of weather—

TP: No, I'm thinking about something else there were delays on. Wasn't there a Heerema barge involved in installing that?

MR: Not Cognac. That was an Oceanic 650, I think.

TP: Okay. I'm thinking of a different project, then. So it must have been kind of nerve-wracking to wait for these sections to be mated.

MR: Well, I wasn't too—

TP: That was gone. It was out of the yard by then.

MR: No, it was out the yard and offshore. I know when the base left, there was some concerns about some pull tube measurements, so me and a Shell inspector had to go offshore, get on the launch barge, climb up the top of the base. I had to walk up on a brace and measure the pull tube, 170 feet up in the air on a barge, but we didn't think much of it. I mean, at the beginning of Cognac, that was a height that we hadn't worked at before, you know, 170. The midsection was taller. I think that was 350 feet on the back, maybe. Well, the back end of the base of the midsection was the same dimensions as the top of the base.

We had some issues with some of the labor in the yard. We never had many labor issues at McDermott at all, but there was some scuttlebutt about nobody wanted to go up and work that high, so Dan Godfrey and I were the first people to get in the crane, go up, do what we got to do, and then come back down and said, "Okay, everybody, it's no big deal." Then we never had an issue.

TP: That's great.

MR: So those are the little things that—there's probably a lot of things I'm not remembering.

TP: And you also worked on Boxer, which was another pretty big platform.

MR: Yes. I was the Boxer project manager when I was being recruited to go to work for Kiewit. That was an interesting time in my life, because I had somebody wanting me to move back overseas, somebody wanted me to go to Texas, and then the Morgan City yard didn't want me to leave. So it was an interesting time. I didn't want to move to Texas. I'd just come back from overseas for McDermott in Belize and Scotland.

TP: Really? How much time did you spend there?

MR: It was a couple of years in the fab yard in Dubai, and I was the estimating manager for the North Sea group in [unclear].

TP: This was after Cognac, right?

MR: Oh, yeah, this was after Cognac.

TP: Were you still with McDermott when you worked on Bullwinkle?

MR: No. That's when I got recruited to—that's when Kiewit recruited me to go build Bullwinkle and run their offshore business.

TP: I was confused there.

MR: No. That was in spring of—well, I started getting phone calls in the spring of '85, in 1985, somewheres around April. In fact, you know Mr. Bailey [phonetic]? He's one of the pioneers. He started calling me because he was dealing with Kiewit because he had the ETPM. I can go into a lot of detail, but, anyway, he was tied in with Kiewit some kind of way, and he started calling me and asking me if I wanted to run Bullwinkle and Kiewit's offshore group.

I'd keep telling him, "Thank you for calling. I'll think about it." They kept calling, and it was September when I made up my mind and decided to move to Texas and build Bullwinkle. In fact, I called Gordon Sterling one day. I said, "Gordon, I'm getting these calls. Who's these Kiewit guys?" [laughs]

TP: [unclear].

MR: Yes. "Who are they?" And I said, "Where do you want me to be?" I asked Gordon, I said, "Where do you want me to be?"

He basically just told me, he says, "Kiewit are good people."

And I said, "Okay."

Like I said, McDermott at that time, I thought—and I don't want to talk about—but there were things different. It was different. It was changing. So I accepted the offer and ended up moving to Texas in September of 1985.

TP: That's where all the big yards were created, Port Aransas, near Corpus.

MR: Well, that's the beginning. See, Kiewit's thought was that the deepwater was coming, and Bullwinkle's really not deepwater anymore.

TP: But you needed big yards to put—

MR: You needed deepwater access, and that was where the forethought was. The Bullwinkle yard where we built Bullwinkle, see, at the beginning, Kiewit went into business as Gulf Marine Fabricators. Then they had a joint venture called Bullwinkle Constructors. Bullwinkle Constructors' yard was on the intersection of the Corpus Christi ship channel and Intracoastal Waterway. Gulf Marine Fabricators' yard was 3 miles up the Intracoastal. It wasn't on deepwater. The Intracoastal is only 12.5 foot deep down there. They had them set up as two separate entities. Gulf Marine Fabricators was an entity and Bullwinkle Constructors was a joint venture, initially with Kaiser, if you remember Kaiser from the West Coast.

TP: Kaiser Steel, yes.

MR: They no longer exist, and we actually bought them out of the joint venture quite early because they couldn't handle their financial end of the deal. So we bought them out of the joint venture, so it ended up being 100 percent Kiewit deal, Bullwinkle.

Then in the first year of Bullwinkle, we ended up merging Gulf Marine and Bullwinkle together as one, and that's when I took over the whole operation. We started Bullwinkle in '85 and finished it in '88. To this day, that's the easiest project I've ever run, was Bullwinkle. It was well set up. We had good people. I recruited about ten people from south Louisiana that were really critical to the success of Bullwinkle: a guy named Larry Revere [phonetic], a guy named Snow Westiman [phonetic], and several other people, Tony Gagliano [phonetic], all people from—

TP: Were they all from McDermott originally?

MR: Pretty much. That's the people I knew. [laughter] But they were top of the line. It wasn't easy to recruit them, but they all understood where the future was, I think.

TP: It's tough to get the Louisianans out of Louisiana.

MR: Oh, it's hard to move Cajuns. I didn't want to move. In fact, the last conversation I had with the Kiewit people and Mr. Bailey—it wasn't the last, but

when I came home one day and I told my wife, I said, "I don't think they're going to call back." [laughter] They did.

But, no, Bullwinkle was a very successful project, very well done. But the deepwater didn't really hit right away.

TP: That was really on the edge of the shelf, yes.

MR: Yes. But it finally came around, and Kiewit's very successful in the offshore construction business now.

TP: So Gulf Marine went to a joint venture with Aker Maritime.

MR: Right. That was post Bullwinkle.

TP: Yes, right after Bullwinkle.

MR: Yes. Well, I could tell you, in 1988 we asked Shell if they wanted Bullwinkle six months early. That's the only time in my entire history we could ask the client if they wanted it. They couldn't take it early because the launch barge wasn't going to be available, so, actually, we slowed down to finish Bullwinkle. It sounds weird. We cut the yard back to forty hours a week. We were trying to keep people on. You've got to keep a critical mass of people in the fab yard business, big fab yards, if you want to stay in business.

I can tell you, in April of 1988 I had to go to a board meeting, a Kiewit board meeting, and the discussion was whether we stay in business or not after Bullwinkle, because—it's a complicated story, but it was—

TP: Whether Gulf Marine stayed in business?

MR: Gulf Marine was not a good—until we merged the thing, it was a bad experience for Kiewit until we got it under control. Bullwinkle was a very successful project. Gulf Marine, we ended up firing a whole lot of people to clean it up. I don't know how else to say it.

But, anyway, so the board meeting in April of '88 was to decide whether we shut the business down or not, because we didn't have any backlog. There was no backlog at all. All we had left to do was load out Bullwinkle.

TP: That's right, because you're in the depths of the oilfield depression.

MR: Oh, yes. So I'm at this board meeting and I'm making a case for Gulf Marine, what was our name at that time. So thanks to two board members on the board, Mr. Bill Grucock [phonetic], who was the vice chairman of the board, and his son Bruce Grucock, who had just been appointed to the board. Mr. Grucock knew how tough it was to recruit and get us to leave our careers in south Louisiana, and I think they made a people decision rather than a business decision, is my

feelings. I owe a lot to Mr. Grucock because he convinced Walter Scott—you may have heard his name. Walter Scott is our chairman, was our chairman at the time. Walter Scott's on the board of Berkshire Hathaway and he's a pretty prominent businessman. I think between those two guys they gave us a year, a year to stay, and it was a people decision. That's what I believe, and I'm very grateful for that. It proved out to be the right decision and ended up making a success.

What happened, though, I think because Kiewit was a little nervous, and, Kiewit, you remember, we started as a joint venture, they liked to spread risk on big stuff, and they weren't used to owning primary facilities like we were.

TP: The construction business was Kiewit [unclear].

MR: Kiewit was a national contractor, the largest builder of interstate highway in the United States. They built bridges, dams, but at that time the company was 75 percent what I'd call rip 'em and read 'em bidding, where they'd bid public works jobs and things, and they'd show up, go build the job, and then they'd leave. Right? We were odd man out. We were more like a coal mine where you mined coal every day. We owned coal mines too.

TP: But they wanted to diversify?

MR: They thought the offshore oil construction business—you know, Kiewit's always been a company that's had a lot of cash that they had to put to work, so they're always looking for businesses to invest their cash. So offshore was one of the things they wanted to do.

That was 1988, '89, and '90. What happened, we got together with Aker. Gulf Marine Fabricators became Aker Gulf Marine, and the way that happened was Aker was in the deepwater concrete business. We were partners with Aker to bid Hibernia in the east of Canada, and we lost that job. Then the French got it, but then Mobil kicked off the French, kicked out the French, because they were a year behind schedule and a billion dollars over budget. They hired Kiewit and Aker to go finish it, so we became partners again up in Newfoundland.

Then Aker wanted to become international. Aker was locked into Norway, and they were into concrete, and they wanted to peddle their concrete products to the Gulf of Mexico, floating structures and things like that. So Kiewit decided, and Aker asked Kiewit, and we became a partnership.

TP: Aker Gulf Marine.

MR: Aker Gulf Marine. We still ran it. We had one Norwegian on the payroll all the time we were partners, and that was from 1991 to 2000.

TP: But then that's when you started doing some work on the tension leg platform.

MR: Yes, we started. For the ten years we did all the tension legs, all the tendons for the TLPs. We were exclusive tendon fabricators in the Gulf of Mexico from the first TLP. Conoco's Markhead Joliet, that was the first TLP tendons. We did those. Once we set up to do the first ones, we did them all.

TP: Yes, because I guess the hulls were built overseas.

MR: All the hulls were built [unclear].

TP: McDermott built all the topsides, right?

MR: The topsides, McDermott, yes, we did.

TP: But you did all the tendons.

MR: Yes, and we built some topsides, and we built a lifting device to integrate the TLPs at dockside. That was another thing we did as Aker Gulf Marine. We built a small machine. It was only 4,000-ton lifting capacity. The one we have now at Kiewit Offshore—we were Aker Gulf Marine and we ended up having to sell our interest in Aker Gulf Marine to the Norwegians because they wanted us out. They sold to the French. They had already sold. That's another story. That's a sideline. But, anyway, now we're Kiewit Offshore in a brand-new yard. It was built as a fab yard to handle the deepwater, and we had what we called a HLD, heavy lifting device, good for 13,500 tons. Then we still do, and now we're building topsides and integrating.

TP: Building topsides and integrating for all—

MR: All the big ones.

TP: You said you did Perdido?

MR: Perdido we did the topside, but you can't integrate the spar at the dockside. But all the semis, the Thunder Horses, Atlantises, all of those, Magnolia, you name it, we've been part of it.

TP: Yes, it's a good thing you didn't see the topside at Thunder Horse go under. [laughs]

MR: I got all the [unclear].

[interruption]

TP: So you were talking about Thunder Horse.

MR: Yes, Thunder Horse. We built all the tops. We integrated the Thunder Horse. We didn't build the [unclear]. And I could tell you a story about that, too, because in the middle of the splitting of Gulf Marine where we were in the middle of selling, we had already made the arrangement. We were going to get the contract to do all the topsides for BP, and when BP found out we were being sold, it's a whole 'nother story. You don't want to take time to talk about that, but that—

TP: So Kiewit Offshore emerged from the sale?

MR: Yes.

TP: It sold most of it?

MR: We sold our interest in Aker Gulf Marine back to—

TP: Kiewit did.

MR: Kiewit did. And we were left with a whole bunch of money and some employees and the whole management team, and we didn't have a non-compete. We didn't sign a non-compete agreement. So we sold on September 27th of 2000, and we cut ground on the new yard in March of 2001. We had our first job already. We bought some land around the corner, and the rest is history.

TP: But you might have had the topsides if it stayed Aker Gulf.

MR: If it had stayed Aker Gulf Marine, all the topsides for BP would have been built at Aker Gulf Marine, yes. That's what I [unclear].

TP: Instead they went to McDermott.

MR: Yes, because they wasn't sure what was going to happen with Aker Gulf Marine after all the management left. Yes. Like I say, that's a whole separate—we could spend a couple hours talking about that. That was interesting.

TP: Yes, it's a whole big piece of business. But now you are building topsides.

MR: Oh, yes. We got what was Mars B's [phonetic] op, is Olympus.

TP: Olympus. That's Kiewit.

MR: That's in our yard. That's in our yard. Lucius is in our yard.

TP: Lucius is what?

MR: Is Anadarko.

TP: Is that a TLP?

MR: Yes, it's a floater. And we have Jack St. Malo for Chevron. We're going to integrate those at the dock. We're going to integrate Bigfoot.

TP: Those are semi-submersible floating productions?

MR: Yes.

TP: Do you have work for Petrobras on their FPSO?

MR: No, we don't have any Petrobras, but we have a platform leaving the yard shortly going to Israel, Tomar for Noble Energy. That's probably the most schedule-critical job ever in the industry going to Israel, because Israel's fixing to run out of gas. They don't have any—

TP: This is in the eastern Mediterranean?

MR: In the Mediterranean, right. So, yes, the yard is busy.

TP: That's a pretty big gas discovery there.

MR: Yes, it is. That's the one that's got the 1.2 billion gas-processing facility now. The yard is very busy. It's rewarding to see how busy the yard is right now.

TP: Amazing. I mean, there's been some real ups and downs in the construction market.

MR: Oh, yeah. Been through it for forty-something years. [laughter]

TP: Every time you think it's the end and it somehow revives.

MR: I remember when I first started working. Do you remember the seventies, the bumper stickers said, "If you're the last one out, turn out the lights." Then when they put the moratorium on when Hickel was in, Secretary of Interior.

TP: Seventies, yes, after Santa Barbara.

MR: Yes. That's the most overblown—they wasted more money on Macondo spill. That's another story. That's another—we could talk a long time.

TP: I'm sure people will be here tonight.

MR: Well, when I was a kid, there were blowouts all the time, and it's more in the marsh than offshore, but at least they had them offshore. But when we had them in the marsh, they got the well under control, they burned the marsh, and everything came back twice as strong. That's what I remember.

TP: And the effects are not even close to being as dire as they predicted.

MR: No, no. And the well could have been capped a lot faster. It could have been. So it's a whole lot of coulda, woulda, shouldas.

TP: However, I guess they were worried about the integrity of the well right below the surface.

MR: It's a little different—if you would have transposed Macondo back to 1975 when we're doing Cognac, it would have happened faster. It would have been handled quicker. It's just things are different.

TP: Yes. It's a different world.

MR: Yes, it is.

TP: So your position with Kiewit is you're the yard manager?

MR: I was the president of Kiewit Offshore. Now I got promoted up to division manager and now I'm more of a consultant. I'm pretty much retired now. I still go to the office.

TP: How many people still work in the—

MR: In the yard right now is about 3,500.

TP: It's a great story.

MR: Plus we have people in the eastern Canada right now. Kiewit Offshore has people in eastern Canada working on the Outer Banks projects up there. So it's expanded.

Plus Kiewit's oil and gas exposure. I think the fact that Kiewit had exposure with us at Kiewit Offshore, I think it's grown their oil and gas business tremendously. When I was telling you we were 70 percent civil, now we're 60 percent private work, energy, for the power and energy. It's pretty interesting.

TP: Kiewit Offshore only has the two yards in Ingleside and Newfoundland.

MR: In Newfoundland. But I think because of us, we have a module yard up in Edmonton, serves just Fort McMurray. It's not Kiewit Offshore, but it's a Kiewit yard. And a lot of our people have gone up there and helped set it up.

TP: Have there been discussions about opening new yards in other regions of the world?

MR: No, no. Sooner or later, the East Coast is going to be something we might have to consider, but I think you can handle it from the Gulf. There may be some kind of local content rules come into play, but the East Coast, sooner or later they ought to explore the East Coast and produce it.

TP: You can do it.

MR: Yes, I think so.

TP: The West Coast would be a different story.

MR: West Coast, yes, although we were the last yard. Gulf Marine was the last. We installed and hooked up the last platforms installed offshore California. The Harmony and Heritage topsides were built by us. We made over a thousand roundtrips from Corpus Christi sending people to commission it. That was a major deal for us at Exxon.

That's another thing. In '89 we were going through another slow period. I kept 350 people on the payroll with nothing to do, waiting to get the contract for SYU [phonetic] from Exxon. We were painting. We were cutting grass. But we couldn't afford to—I mean, it was a risk, cost us some money, but it paid off.

TP: How about the Arctic? I mean, are you keeping an eye on that?

MR: Yes. We occasionally look at stuff. We've built stuff in south Texas and shipped it to Russia, into Siberia, and we've built some stuff for Conoco that went to Russia. We've looked at stuff. We've sent some stuff to Alaska. Those are kind of little specialty things, though. But we could move to the West Coast if we needed to.

TP: How about Brazil?

MR: That's a buy-Brazilian deal, you know.

TP: Yes. They need some work. They're trying to—

MR: We've built some platforms, and we built a platform for Devon that shipped to Brazil.

TP: Was it Samsung just pulled out of a big consortium at a yard in northeast Brazil recently? That was a big deal.

MR: You've got to be careful, there and Mexico. If you're going to go to Mexico or Brazil, you'd better have somebody, you better have cash, somebody can pay you in dollars and has money in the U.S. [laughter]

TP: Any other topic you want to share with us?

MR: No.

TP: We have the other interview with you, but it's good to get you to sit down in front of the camera. We appreciate your time.

MR: I just know like last night we had a small dinner for me and had a lot of my friends. That's one thing, we grew up in the business where our business and our social life was the same, so all of my friends happen to be mostly in the industry. When I moved to Texas, I lost a little bit of connection. I had relatives in south Louisiana. When I moved to Texas, I was ten years with no social life. It was all work.

TP: But you're still there?

MR: Oh, yeah. Yeah, it's interesting, but, I mean, took me ten years to get my head out the business and to make some friends. Got some very good friends down there now, I was thinking about that last night, that was surrounding you. The industry has some good people you can be friends with, client side and contractor side.

TP: Let's stop it here. We appreciate you coming. Thank you for your time, Myron.

[End of interview]