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side # 4

This is June 24, 1983 and I am talking to Conrad C. Boette, born in South Carolina in 1899. I moved to Gulfport in 1961 but I've been in St. Pete since '39. I understand you had a business on 49th Street, wasn't it called the Peanut Bar-it may have been called that by some people-do you remember the address of the bar-4830 on Lakeview address- I sold the building and land to (?), then I moved in back of the gas station on 49th Street and how far up on 49th Street was that-right next to the first place on 49th Street on the east side of the street. Was this a tavern you had over there rather than a bar-no, it was a bar all the time-so ladies were admitted all the time also-yes. Did you put in a peanut vending machine-yes, I did. Was there any particular reason that you put that in-it was a come on- I roasted my own peanuts there-did you give them to the customers free-yes, I did. How did they begin to throw peanut shells on the floor-that was the only place for them-were they swept out every night-yes, they were swept out every night-I understood that at times they got fairly heavy and that's why it was called the Peanut Bar because you gave free peanuts along with the drinks. Is there anything with regards to the business that would be of any interest to Gulfport-what was there before you took it over as a bar-it was a bar when I took it over-do you know who owned it then-(?) and then you bought the building-yes ma'am. Are there any particular customers you remember or any incidents of any kind that would be of interest-did you have mostly fishermen-yes ma'am. Is it true that most of the fishermen rarely wore shoes-some did and some didn't-do you know why-no, I didn't bother to ask. Did they come in on a regular basis, say every Saturday night or just when the fishing boats came in. These were commercial fishermen weren't they-yes, ma'am-when they went out on a fishing trip, were they gone for a week, or a day-sometimes for a week. The ones that went for a week do you know where they went fishing-I don't know that.

Well, in 1961 everything was pretty well modernized, can you tell of any changes that occurred say in the ten or fifteen years-a bank over there, the Gulfport Bank. Was it built while you were in business-yes ma'am-there were 4 gas stations on the corner of 49th Street and Lakeview-there must have been a lot of traffic around there to take care of that many gas stations-the city was pretty well built up by then, wasn't it-yes. 7. Where did you and your family live in Gulfport-on 22nd Avenue, 5032 27th Avenue. Do you know who owned the house prior to you or who built the house-I don't remember-did he build it for you or did he build it for himself-he built it to sell, he was asking \$ 15,500 for it and right next door (a lot of background noise at this point). You thought the neighborhood would build up and there was potential there. It was offered to a man by the name of Les Morrison (?) and he didn't want it and my wife asked him how much he wanted for it and he said \$ 10,500 and she went over and looked at it and she said it didn't look bad. I walked in the house, looked it over and I said I'll take it, just like that. Was this through a real estate agent. Yes ma'am. Who was the real estate agent. I can't remember. How many rooms did the house have-one bedroom, one living room, kitchen and bathroom. It apparently was a very small house. Did you expand it or make the house larger. I assume by that time your family had all grown up and gone their own way. My grandson is living in it now. What was your wife's name. It was Lois. Did she come from the same area that you did. She came from Norfolk, Virginia. I met her in Brooklyn, March of '28. We got married 60 days after we met. That must have been a whirlwind courtship. How many children did you have. We had 5, one of them died 3 years. 3 months and 15 days old. You weren't living in Florida at that time though. No. Did you ever hear of the Toury brothers, the Toury family (?). No. In regards to the paving of the streets, the utilities, everything like that, all that had been done when you came in '61 hadn't it-yes. Were there very many tourists that came into town then. I don't think so-most of the people who came into the Blinker bar were people who lived here locally-yes, around the neighborhood. Do you remember any of the fishermen in particular-Barney Whie (?). It was long before your time the Abbot Whitted family-who, the - - family-that was before your time-no, I don't know them. Is there any other thing that you could think of that Gulfport would be interested in historically, any major changes-when was the Sunshine bridge built, that was before '61, the Skyway bridge-I don't remember that. I really don't think that there was that much that happened that you could remember and tell

us about is there-no. Your family does run the Blinker cafe. My daughter, yes. When you had the original bar, who worked for you. I had so many who worked for me-I'll tell you what you can do, Monday morning you go around and ask for Lois, she opens up Monday morning, maybe Tuesday morning and ask her if she has some pictures of the (?* place-and would you like to give some of those to the Historical Society or what. Its up to Lois. I thank you very much for taking the time to want to talk to me. I paid \$ 7 a bag for the peanuts-and what year was that - I don't remember-and then it jumped to \$ 50 a bag, just one jump, well, it kept going up every time I went down there and finally they said it would cost \$ 50 a bag. I said if you ordered a bag for me, I'll take it but I don't want any more-and you never bought it again-no, I put a popcorn machine in there. Were they free to the customers also. Yes ma'am-from what I heard it drew a lot of people into the place, from what you said it was a gimmick, but it was a big gimmick wasn't it. It was the only gimmick, I remember. What year was it that you turned the business over to your daughter. In '69-within that 8 year period did you see a big change in the cost of beer. Yes ma'am I sure did, I used to sell a 12 ounce glass of beer for 10¢, today its between 40¢ and 50¢ and they also cut the size of the glass to 10 oz.. Did you buy your beer from Busch Gardens or did you buy it from a dealer-you always had to buy it from a dealer-was it someone locally-for a long time I had (?), now I have Pabst, Michelob and light beer, Budweiser all on draft. Do you serve cocktails also-yes ma'am. Were you the bartender or did you always hire a bartender. We hired a bartender. Did you have food-I tried food but it didn't work. I didn't have the trade for it. These were mostly men who were accustomed to the outdoors, as you said most of them were fishermen. When did the fishing industry stop. They don't do much commercial fishing in Gulfport anymore, do they. No, I don't know-do you know why it stoped. When they put that (he struggled for a name but couldn't recollect) Tierra Verde-it killed all the fishing banks and made a different thing out of it. It doesn't seem to have the tides and the flow like it used to have. Did any of the people in this area object when that was being done. I don't remember.

end of the interview on side #4 with Mr. Boette