

**Joe Darenbourg**  
**New Orleans, LA**

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Date: 2015

Location: Mr. Darenbourg's home, New Orleans, LA

Interviewer: Joseph Darenbourg (Mr. Darenbourg's son)

Transcription: Lori Lawton

Length: Thirty-three minutes

Project: The Lives and Loaves of New Orleans

**[Begin Joe Darensbourg Interview]**

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So how long did you work at the bakery?

[0:00:03]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Forty years.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright. How long did your dad work at the bakery?

[0:00:20]

**Joe Darensbourg:** About thirty or forty years.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay and then how long did Pop [*Gervais Clarence Darensbourg, Joe's grandfather and Joseph's great-grandfather*] work at the bakery?

[0:00:26]

**Joe Darensbourg:** All of his life.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** All his life.

[0:00:27]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah, he only missed two days.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Say that again, “He only missed two days.” What two days?

[0:00:31]

**Joe Darensbourg:** The day my uncle came home from the service and the day my grandmother died.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** It says [*questions prepared by Dana Logsdon*], “When did he begin?” You answered that. When did your father retire?

[0:00:44]

**Joe Darensbourg:** He didn’t retire.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** No, you. You’re my father, so when did my father retire? When did you retire?

[0:00:49]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Eight years ago.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay and Pop worked until he died?

[0:01:00]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What was your schedule when you worked at the bakery in Dillard [*University*], from what to what? You would wake up at what time?

[0:01:35]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I had to be to work for 8:00 am or 9:00 am.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** At Dillard?

[0:01:38]

**Joe Darensbourg:** At the bakery and then I worked at Dillard in the daytime.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Oh, so 8:00 am until the nightshift? What was the nightshift until?

[0:01:48]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Six hours and forty minutes. Bakers didn't work eight hours.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So six hours, forty minutes was your baking time?

[0:01:55]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah, you were guaranteed forty hours working six hours and forty minutes at night.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Guaranteed? Okay.

[0:02:11]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Guaranteed with a three-year contract.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** How did Pop get involved in the bakery? How did he find that job?

[0:02:18]

**Joe Darensbourg:** His brother [*inaudible*] got electrocuted with a light bulb. His hand was wet.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Where?

[0:02:27]

**Joe Darensbourg:** At EG Reese.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** In?

[0:02:31]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Here! At Marigny and Saint Claude.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Now who was baking in Baton Rouge?

[0:02:37]

**Joe Darensbourg:** My uncle [*inaudible*]. He worked for Tasty.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So that was [*inaudible*].

[0:02:42]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** [*inaudible*] worked for Tasty in Baton Rouge. What street was the bakery? If you don't remember, it doesn't matter. I'm just curious.

[0:02:53]

**Joe Darensbourg:** South 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And where was the shoe shop?

[0:02:56]

**Joe Darensbourg:** In my grandmother's front room.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So they fixed shoes in your grandmother's –

[0:03:02]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Front room.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay and where was that place?

[0:03:05]

**Joe Darensbourg:** It was [*inaudible*] right where the I-10 [*Interstate 10*] came through.  
I-10 took the house.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So she would come from Baton Rouge and stay on Urgwa [sp?]  
and Saint Bernard?

[0:03:18]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** How do you pronounce it?

[0:03:19]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Urgwa [sp?]

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Urgwa [sp?]

[0:03:21]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah, it's 1377 Saint Bernard.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Yes.

[0:03:25]

**Joe Darensbourg:** It's next door to Harry's Hotel.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay, yeah. You told me that. Now what did she buy at the Saint Rock Market?

[0:03:35]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Chicken.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And with the chicken, what did they do?



[0:03:39]

**Joe Darensbourg:** They'd hang it on the door and spin it and then break its neck and then they'd bring it in the back and clean it.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So spin it on the door and they didn't crack its head with the door? They didn't break it with the door like put its head through it and then close it? They didn't do that?

[0:03:55]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Tied it on the door and slam the door, yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** The door on its neck.

[0:04:00]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Now did they sell possum and raccoon and all that?

[0:04:04]

**Joe Darensbourg:** That part I don't know.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** See, they use to sell that at Bode's Venus Garden at Circle.

[0:04:09]

**Joe Darensbourg:** That part I don't know.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** I remember seeing that, so I was just curious if that's what they sold, so live chicken, right? Live chicken?

[0:04:14]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah. I went there. I used to go there in 1948.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay and you were only four or what?

[0:04:22]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Whatever '48 [1948] is.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** But you were born in –

[0:04:26]

**Joe Darensbourg:** '41 [1941].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** '41, okay so you were a kid.

[0:04:28]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright. Let me see. What's your earliest memory of the bakery?  
Did they bring you in there to visit like you brought me?

[0:04:45]

**Joe Darensbourg:** My dad and my grandmother was talking and I was seventeen and they said, "We're going to get Joe into the bakery," and I overheard and Leidenheimer hired me at seventeen and put on there I was eighteen.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay.

[0:05:02]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And like me, you used to take me to the bakery and show me how everything worked, but did they take you in? Did they take you in too? Did they take you to the bakery to work a little bit or just to learn about it or did they just bring you in to start you working?

[0:05:17]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Brought me in to start me working.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright and do I remember what?

[0:05:21]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Oh, when we went up there and cut that machine up and I let you sell it for \$100.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** A machine from the bakery?

[0:05:31]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Uh huh.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** No, I don't remember.

[0:05:31]

**Joe Darensbourg:** [*inaudible*]

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Oh, yes, yes. That was my business, my metal business, yes, yes, but I don't remember what I was doing.

[0:05:39]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Do you remember putting the [inaudible].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** No, no, but hang on a second. Let's stay on the bakery because this – hang on.

[0:05:54]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Now the bricks are still on the ground by EG Reese.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay.

[0:06:02]

**Joe Darensbourg:** That's right across from The Famous Theater. If you stand in front of the Famous theater ...

**Joseph Darensbourg:** I don't think The Famous is there anymore.

[0:06:07]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Oh no?

**Joseph Darensbourg:** No. I've been there, but I don't know. What street was The Famous on? I only went there one time.

[0:06:18]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Well anyway, I have to think on that.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright, no problem.

[0:06:22]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Right across the street, if you stand by The Famous, you could see the bricks on the ground from the oven where they had grind them up and they were still on the ground.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Gotcha. So when I went to the bakery, I remember the elevator that was wood and you slid the little gate across it.

[0:06:37]

**Joe Darensbourg:** That was Leidenheimer.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** That's what I mean. I'm saying that's my memory of the bakery. You used to bring me in and I used to bag the bread a little bit and just go see and look at the breads go all the way on the thing around the whole thing.

[0:06:53]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** But do you remember brick ovens in there at all or was it always gas?

[0:06:56]

**Joe Darensbourg:** It was always gas.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay.

[0:07:00]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Does Pop have early differences? Did he bake dark bread like sourdough, pumpernickel, rye?

[0:07:09]

**Joe Darensbourg:** No.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What about shoe soles? He never made none of those?

[0:07:12]

**Joe Darensbourg:** No.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay.

[0:07:13]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Jack made all of that.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So my grandfather made all that?

[0:07:17]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Now why did he make that?

[0:07:19]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Because he worked at so many different bakeries – you see, we were going from bakery to bakery because some bakeries paid much more than other bakeries.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** How did you all get in good to go back to Leidenheimer when you wanted to? Respect?

[0:07:31]

**Joe Darensbourg:** No. In other words we had a contract with Leidenheimer and we used to work at the other bakeries on the weekend. You see, [*inaudible*] sandwich from Parkway.



That's the last place my dad had worked at, Parkway and I love Parkway sandwiches. It was a sister and brother that owned Parkway. Well now they got new people that own it, but it's still good bread. Right across from the funeral home.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** I go there. 'm always around there. I told you, I'm back in my neighborhood so I'm always around there.

[0:08:08]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah, right across from the funeral home.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What was hard about being with the bakery?

[0:08:23]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I loved it. Everything about it I loved because like I say, Parkway paid much more than Leidenheimer.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So you baked at Parkway. They have a bakery. They call it a bakery, but do they still bake?

[0:08:38]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I don't know. I have no way of knowing.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Well, I'll find out for you.

[0:08:44]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Well it won't do me no good.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Well, I'm just curious. I don't know. You just gave me a connection. You all were all over the place, so what makes New Orleans bread? What's special about the bread? Is it the water?

[0:08:59]

**Joe Darensbourg:** The water.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And it's just the water?

[0:08:59]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Now what do you think it is about the water, that it's hard water?

[0:09:03]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And that's it? It's hard water and full of chemicals and crazy stuff. Do you think pollution helps?

[0:09:11]

**Joe Darensbourg:** *[Laughs]*

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright, that's fair enough. You just said it, but it says, "What's your favorite po-boy or ways to eat French bread?" What's your favorite way to eat French bread?

[0:09:22]

**Joe Darensbourg:** My uncle, he didn't work in the bakery long because he said French bread was a jip.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Clarence?

[0:09:30]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah. He said you cut and make two sandwiches and the rest you've got pieces that are going in the garbage, but a lot of people took that and made bread pudding.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Yes. Now what about the butt? Did they dip it and do other things with it?

[0:09:45]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Well they call that the baton. They fill that up with red beans.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Yes. Now Buster Holmes, how much were the red beans?

[0:09:52]

**Joe Darensbourg:** [*Inaudible*]

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright, you taking a little break?

[0:09:55]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I'm going to the bathroom.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright, hang on.

[0:09:57]

**Joe Darensbourg:** That's the [*inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Yes.

[0:10:01]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yes, Buster Holmes had [*inaudible*] employees.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Do you remember any kind of bread, other types of bread in New Orleans that people liked that we don't –

[0:10:17]

Joe Darensbourg: [*inaudible*] bread

Joseph Darensbourg: That's a company?

[0:10:21]

Joe Darensbourg: No, it's a [*inaudible*] bread.

Joseph Darensbourg: What's that?

[0:10:22]

Joe Darensbourg: It's a round bread and you raise the head, the neck of it up and put oil underneath and make it stand up like a little soldier. It's called [*inaudible*] bread.

Joseph Darensbourg: And where did that come from?

[0:10:38]

Joe Darensbourg: It was all over the city.

Joseph Darensbourg: So when you went to a restaurant, they would put it out on the table?

[0:10:41]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: In New England, they have something like that.

[0:10:47]

Joe Darensbourg: It looked like a duck.

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay. Alright. Now can you describe any of the old production methods that have changed over time about what you used to do or was it just all the same since you started?

[0:11:05]

Joe Darensbourg: When you walked in the bakery and everything was by hand, they would hand you a piece of dough and say, "Make me a French bread or make me a po-boy." So you'd take it [*pounds table*]. That was a po-boy and then you'd take and make what they call a [*inaudible*]. The big French bread was called a [*inaudible*] and you [*pounds table*] and make a French bread out of it. But they had two or three bakeries in the city that paid more than the rest of them, that's where me and my dad would go on the weekends.

Joseph Darensbourg: Wow.

[0:11:51]

Joe Darensbourg: Leidenheimer paid – I think the other bakeries paid about four dollars or more a night, yeah, like probably they paid four dollars more a night to keep the people. Yeah, so we'd go get them jobs and we worked for [inaudible]. We worked for Tommy Wens gang. We worked for Sutherlands over the river. So we went wherever –

Joseph Darensbourg: The dough was!

[0:12:34]

Joe Darensbourg: No, the money!

Joseph Darensbourg: That's what I meant, the dough. We call money "dough."

[0:12:37]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah, yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Alright, not glamorous, but the benefits were having the skill in baking gave you fulltime security.

[0:12:48]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Gotcha. Did your father – did you ever consider other careers outside of baking?

[0:12:59]

Joe Darensbourg: Well, when I met [inaudible] across the street. [inaudible] was working for a guy named Chris and Chris had done a lot of gardening work, but he didn't know nothing about electric, so [inaudible] would get all the electric work and then [inaudible] told me and when [inaudible] retired, [inaudible] was working on 220 and when I retired, I was working on 440. Now me talking to [inaudible] across the street, they just started me off as an apprentice and the [inaudible] are longer now and that's why we checked to see what type of [inaudible] they were working with compared to the [inaudible] that I worked with.

Joseph Darensbourg: Your grandkids you were talking to?

[0:13:54]

Joe Darensbourg: No, no.

Joseph Darensbourg: The guy across the street?

[0:13:57]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.



Joseph Darensbourg: I didn't know what he was up to.

[0:13:58]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah. So right now, they work on low voltage and [] and I told him I said, "I [*inaudible*] 440 and I had to have 440 because I can't do it with my hands, but I know it.

Joseph Darensbourg: Now what about when you worked at the mechanic shop across the street on Orleans? How did you get into that?

[0:14:26]

Joe Darensbourg: Well, I took a course at Sydney Collier and I was going to take up baking, but they had no openings in baking, so I took up mechanics and I found a guy – I would make fifty-seven [*inaudible*] for him and he would give three dollars, so every day I was making [*inaudible*] for three dollars for him to sell and that's how I got involved in that. Then mama was going to go to Sydney Collier, but –

Joseph Darensbourg: Is that a vocational school?

[0:15:12]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah, but dad would say it was too far so he didn't want her to go.

Joseph Darensbourg: Where was it?

[0:15:17]

Joe Darensbourg: On Weezer [sp?] Street.

Joseph Darensbourg: In the [*inaudible*]?

[0:15:20]

Joe Darensbourg: Oh no, no. We were downtown [*inaudible*].

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay.

[0:15:27]

Joe Darensbourg: So I went there for a year so I knew mechanics going and coming and I met a man and he said, "I overheard your conversation," and he said, "I heard you're quitting school." I said, "yes." I knew if frontwards and backwards. He said, "I've got three cars." He said, "I want you to keep up my three cars." And me, so dumb, keeping up his three cars and I told another guy I said, "This guy's got three cars. They're always parked in [*inaudible*]." He said, "Man, that's a dope run." He said, "He's using those three cars to go get dope out of town."

Joseph Darensbourg: And you would change the stuff on it and make it look different?

[0:16:15]

Joe Darensbourg: No! I was keeping them in tip top shape.

Joseph Darensbourg: Oh I see, he's running so he's got that much wear?

[0:16:20]

Joe Darensbourg: Yes, yes.

Joseph Darensbourg: Alright, commercial break. You're going to sing one of the songs your grandfather sang, [*inaudible*] the commercial. Are you going to sing it for me?

[0:16:29]

Joe Darensbourg: [*Sings*].

Joseph Darensbourg: Alright now Dale Sid was the name of the mechanic shop across the street on Orleans. It's still there. Was that the name of it back then or not?

[0:16:52]

Joe Darensbourg: Napiers.

Joseph Darensbourg: Napiers, okay.

[0:16:58]

Joe Darensbourg: My rent was free and I had to keep Napiers car tuned up and my rent was free.

Joseph Darensbourg: To do your mechanic work.

[0:17:06]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay, if you wanted to fix up a car.

[0:17:09]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Now when did you apprentice with the washer person to learn the washing? Was that just downstairs on Orleans across the street?

[0:17:16]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: So you were hustling it all around.

[0:17:18]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: So Sam [*inaudible*] must have been wondering like this guy wasn't lying to me right? This guy wasn't lying.

[0:17:25]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah. The guy that I used to work for with washing machines and air conditioning, his Pete [*inaudible*] and every night they're were not here, people talked about him. His father-in-law owned Gold Seal Creamery.

Joseph Darensbourg: Really? Was that the creole cream cheese?

[0:17:49]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah. [*inaudible*]

Joseph Darensbourg: So did they make it just like your grandmother's creole cream cheese?

[0:18:01]

Joe Darensbourg: Now that part I don't know nothing about, the cream cheese because I was doing –

Joseph Darensbourg: But Gold Seal was milk?

[0:18:07]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah, right over there where the post office is at.

Joseph Darensbourg: Oh yeah, I remember it. Yeah, right on Carrolton.

[0:18:12]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Carrolton right?

[0:18:14]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah, so Pete –

Joseph Darensbourg: Had the shop below where we lived.

[0:18:21]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: You don't remember the address on Orleans?

[0:18:24]

Joe Darensbourg: No.

Joseph Darensbourg: Because that house is gone unfortunately. Alright and you said that Betsy was moving? [*inaudible*] Betsy.

[0:18:31]

Joe Darensbourg: But anyway, Pete – I'd hear people talk about him, so he still had me working.

Joseph Darensbourg: Who was this guy? Who was he?

[0:19:23]

Joe Darensbourg: A little [*inaudible*] guy that you'd see on the street.

Joseph Darensbourg: And he used to watch you the same way you watched this other person?

[0:19:30]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah and he wound up opening a shop and everything. He done good.

Joseph Darensbourg: That was on Saint Claude?

[0:19:35]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay, I tried to find him, but I couldn't find him, so maybe he moved on, maybe he went somewhere. Alright, now did you consider, after learning this art of baking, was it an art form for all of you all or was it just something you knew and confidently –

[0:19:53]

Joe Darensbourg: I needed the money.

Joseph Darensbourg: And that was that.

[0:19:55]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: So it was not like I'm doing something. I'm just doing what I've got to do.

[0:20:00]

Joe Darensbourg: The reason I learned the washing machine work, I used to have a girlfriend named Kelly Marie Smith and Kelly's dad was a washer repair man and I used to watch him. I was a kid and I told him I said, "One day I'm going to take your place." And years



down the road, I went to see him, his daughter had gotten married. I told him I said, “I’m equal with you now.” I said, “I can repair any type of machine.” He said, “I still didn’t want you to marry my daughter because I didn’t want her to marry a repairman.”

Joseph Darensbourg: Didn’t want to marry a broke man who looked like he had it but couldn’t hustle. Alright, that answers that. Now we think of the people trying to come back to bake the old school. Is that romantic or should they just do it because –

[0:21:04]

Joe Darensbourg: The money is not there.

Joseph Darensbourg: The money is not there, so it’s really a love that is lost.

[0:21:09]

Joe Darensbourg: [*Inaudible*]. When I left the bakery, between the bakery and Dillard, I was guaranteed \$80,000 [*inaudible*] we were going in the hole with taxes, so we put the carport up and give it to the dog.

Joseph Darensbourg: Was it Harry?

[0:21:37]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah, as a tax write off. We learned that we had to deal with that, but [inaudible] could have worked forever because [inaudible]. I could have worked [inaudible].

Joseph Darensbourg: But do you think people want bread today? They enjoy different types of bread like breads on Oak. They have it going.

[0:22:03]

Joe Darensbourg: I know.

Joseph Darensbourg: But they try to make me work every time I go there and they're real nice, but I know people who can't cut it because they don't understand the discipline, the work ethic, they don't have it and you all taught us that by just being at work and letting us go see what you're doing there and that's fine.

[0:22:23]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah.

Joseph Darensbourg: Were there a lot of creoles at the bakery? I remember Joe [inaudible]. Were there a lot of creole people or was it more like the neighborhood people? What types of people were there? Did you notice or was it just people hustling trying to get their money?

[0:22:39]

Joe Darensbourg: That's what I think.

Joseph Darensbourg: Now you talked about the Hungarians. You said they're real good workers.

[0:22:45]

Joe Darensbourg: In the rope factory.

Joseph Darensbourg: In the rope factor. Okay, that was what war?

[0:22:51]

Joe Darensbourg: The Vietnam War.

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay, so rope making and that's when you met –

[0:22:53]

Joe Darensbourg: Yeah, we made rope to tie the ships up in Vietnam.

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay.

[0:22:56]

Joe Darensbourg: Each reel of rope was \$13,000. I made a reel of rope in four days.

Joseph Darensbourg: Now did that allow you to get a VA –

[0:23:08]

Joe Darensbourg: I didn't have nothing to do with that.

Joseph Darensbourg: Okay, no problem. I think that's it for that, but there was something I forgot that I wanted to ask you.

[0:23:20]

Joe Darensbourg: I bought this house on the GI Bill. This was the first house that was sold on the GI Bill.

Joseph Darensbourg: How much?

[0:23:28]

Joe Darensbourg: \$13,000. Now they didn't know how to handle it because [*inaudible*] had lost it.

Joseph Darensbourg: I see, gotcha. So you picked up at the [*inaudible*].

[0:23:41]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I was on the GI Bill for a year until they transferred me to a regular company.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay. So about the union; you said Pop was too old for the union and you joined when?

[0:24:11]

Joe Darensbourg: [*Inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And how long was your contract each time?

[0:24:17]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Three years.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So three years at a time. You didn't know if you had the job or not, but you had experience and friends in the business because you baked at every bakery on the weekends and that's that.

[0:24:29]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So even to this day, the union is part of your pension and everything?

[0:24:35]

**Joe Darensbourg:** [*Inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Right.

[0:24:38]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah because you see they joined the tobacco union.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** As long as everybody is smoking, you're good.

[0:24:43]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah, [*inaudible*] smoke.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** You said you're going to buy a pack of cigarettes?

[0:24:46]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Alright, very good.

[0:24:48]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I thought it wasn't going to work, but it worked out beautifully.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Fair enough. So 750 loaves a night for who?

[0:24:59]

**Joe Darensbourg:** [*Inaudible*]

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And where was that?

[0:25:04]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I can't remember, but definitely in New Orleans.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So what was your call back price?

[0:25:16]

**Joe Darensbourg:** \$32 for a call back, [*inaudible*] I probably was there [*inaudible*] and I got \$32.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And at the bakery?

[0:25:26]

**Joe Darensbourg:** The same thing, \$32 for both jobs.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And baking and all the other stuff you did?

[0:25:33]

**Joe Darensbourg:** No, no, no. The mechanic work was \$32 an hour there, \$32 an hour there.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Gotcha. So mechanic work, what did that entail at the bakery? What did you on at the bakery to fix when it broke down? What kinds of things did you fix when you were at the bakery?

[0:25:51]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Everything.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** I know, but tell me the names of some of the stuff. Like the machines would be?

[0:25:57]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Well, let me give you an idea.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Sure.



[0:25:59]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Leidenheimer bought a mixer. Okay, it was an old mixer, 1951 model. He brought it to me and said, “[*inaudible*] put it in the backyard unless you rebuild it all the way. Take as long as you want.” He say, “I want you to mix the dough in the backyard. Make sure everything is working perfect before we bring it up there.” We got the mixer working. Put all new parts in it. Everything was rebuilt. We mixed the dough in the garage. It came out perfect, so he said, “Now the next problem is we’re going to take that big, big window out of the front and I need a police escort and a crane and bring it up there. I’ve got ten men for man power.” I told him, [*inaudible*]. Got the crane, police blocking the traffic and the men said, “We’ve got to go on break,” the man power. “Want don’t you just hold on a minute? I’m trying to get this thing ...” “No, we’ve got to have our break at a certain time.” So I had to [*inaudible*] they get done with their break and then we got it in there, but it took a crane, a police escort [*inaudible*]. Now I rebuilt [*inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** All the mechanics?

[0:27:59]

**Joe Darensbourg:** After I rebuilt the [*inaudible*], we came out with a forklift. To drive a forklift, you had to have a green card. Well, I didn’t have no green card, but I had just finished [*inaudible*], so I didn’t have no more use for it, so they hired me with a green card to drive it and after that I retired. I worked [*inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Now did they sell donuts at Leidenheimer when I was a kid?

[0:28:38]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What kind of donuts, just glazed donuts?

[0:28:40]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Everything. It robbed them so much that –

**Joseph Darensbourg:** That they had to stop.

[0:28:45]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah, they couldn't get [*inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What about muffuletta?

[0:28:54]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Muffuletta wasn't sold in the front. Muffuletta was sold in the back.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Okay and then I remember you making mini muffulettas and all that stuff.

[0:29:02]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What about the pistolettes? Remember that? How did that happen?

[0:29:07]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I usually [*inaudible*] making pistolettes [*inaudible*].

**Joseph Darensbourg:** I believe we are there. Tell me about the flour company and where you all used to get the flour.

[0:29:30]

**Joe Darensbourg:** The name of the company –

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Chief.

[0:29:35]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Well, we used to buy Big Chief and blend it in, but the name of the company –

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Where was it? What city?

[0:29:46]

**Joe Darensbourg:** We used to go get the trailer and then I'd drive [*inaudible*] and go get the flour I'd say twice a month.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** How many pounds?

[0:29:59]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I'd come back with 40,000 on the scale and when they add they water it doubled the amount of bread that they made when you add the water.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** And how many loaves baked in a day?

[0:30:17]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Well, 4,000 to 8,000. We used two trailers a week and then it doubles when you add the water. Now the name of the company was [*inaudible*]. They're still [*inaudible*] it was on the old Ice Highway and then they moved to Metairie. Now they rented the trailers and I used to go get the trailers and drive to Port Allen and then haul the flour back. Let's see, [*inaudible*] I can't think of the name.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** That's fine. Tell me about when Pop used to ride the mule to deliver the bread and put it on the nail.

[0:31:33]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Oh.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So you all had to deliver it too or that was in Pop's and your father's time and Pop's time? You didn't have to deliver it?

[0:31:40]

**Joe Darensbourg:** No. I delivered it in the truck.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Right, but that was still part of your skill set. You had to have the whole round. It wasn't just baking the bread, it was all of it.

[0:31:48]

**Joe Darensbourg:** Yeah.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** So the mule taking it all and putting it on the nail.

[0:31:54]

**Joe Darensbourg:** No, it was a horse that pulled a wagon. If they had two nails on the back door, you put two loaves of bread, no wrapper.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** What year was that do you think?

[0:32:06]

**Joe Darensbourg:** I don't have the slightest idea, but when I went to New York sixty years ago, they didn't wrap no bread neither. They'd just store in on the counter and everybody went in there and grabbed one.

**Joseph Darensbourg:** Gotcha. We're done.

**[End Joe Darensbourg Interview]**