

Index to Robert LeBaron Interview

Abstract of Interview: This interview contains discussion of the Valdez accident in Alaska that resulted in ocean contamination. Mr. LeBaron briefly discusses his return trip to the United States after his last patrol. The majority of this interview focuses on events that occurred during his service in the United States Navy aboard both the *USS Thomas Jefferson* and *USS Casimir Pulaski*.

Biographical Note: Robert LeBaron was a member of the US Navy Submarine Service between 1964 and 1972. He was a machinist's mate in the nuclear engine room aboard the *USS Henry Clay* then the *USS Thomas Jefferson* stationed in Holy Lock, Scotland, and Rota, Spain. After his enlistment, LeBaron found employment at Alabama Power Company's Farley Nuclear Plant in Houston County, Alabama.

Interviewer: Dr. Martin Olliff

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Date of Interview: June 23, 2003 Tape 2 of 3 (No recording on side B)

Place of Interview: Robert LeBaron's Home on Buie Road, Columbia, Alabama

Name of Indexer: D. Jordan

Date of Index: June 13, 2007

Topical Index to Interview

Initials	Side	Counter	Topic/Response
RL	A	001	Renewal of Introduction: Introduction of Dr. Martin Olliff as interviewer and Mr. Robert LeBaron as narrator.
RL	A	004	Valdez ¹ wreck: Valdez wreck in Alaska that caused an oil spill into the ocean and discussion about the ocean's ability to cleanse itself. Mr. LeBaron states that the ocean cleans itself better than the environmentalists are able to do. He believes that it is necessary for humans to be involved in oil spill clean-ups especially in harbor areas where land is affected or in cases where animals are being harmed.
RL	A	026	Ocean chemistry: He discusses the health benefits of ocean water that he has heard about from friends and doctors, due to the mineral content of ocean water.

RL	A	218	Mr. LeBaron's role in removing the hot spot: He was responsible for devising a method of flushing this hot spot with water, and then the capturing and disposing of the contaminated water. He explains that he setup a system of flushing the water into some poly bottles that held 25 gallons each. The three men in the reactor compartment wore lead aprons for radiation protection.
RL	A	232	Description of the hot spot material: He describes the substances as being similar to what would be found in the bottom of a radiator.
RL	A	248	Contamination of the water: Mr. LeBaron says that the water used to flush the pipe in order to evacuate the hot spot would become radioactive. The bottle that captured the accumulation when flushed out weighed 200 pounds and had a radiation level of 75 R [Roentgen].
RL	A	258	Received commendation: He was given a commendation for devising a way to flush out the hot spot and capture the contaminated water.
RL	A	261	Removing the bottles from the ship: He describes a system of passing the full water bottles from the reactor room, through a tunnel to the machinery one room where the bottle was placed on a hook and lifted up out of the ship and placed on the tender.
RL	A	273	List of Hatches: He lists various hatches on the submarine: the engine room hatch, the machinery one room hatch, and the torpedo room hatch. The engine and torpedo room hatches could also be used as escape trunks if needed.
RL	A	283	Time required to remove the bottles from the submarine: Mr. LeBaron says that the time required from flushing until the bottles were placed on tender was about two minutes. The crewmen had practiced the process prior to the actual event.
RL	A	293	Prior event on the <i>USS Casimir Pulaski</i> : He had been responsible for devising a system to remove a broken compressor from the back of an engine room to the machinery one room so that it could be removed and a new compressor moved back to the engine room in its place.
RL	A	305	Description of the system: Mr. LeBaron rigged a set of chain falls to hook the compressor to one chain and then swing it to the next chain fall in order to advance the compressor to the machinery one room. The process required three men.
RL	A	316	Number of men required in the hot spot event: Three men were in the reactor room, while four men occupied the tunnel and machinery one areas.

