

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Jed Pitre

COLLECTION: 4700.2370

IDENTIFICATION: Thibodaux High School science teacher, Thibodaux resident

INTERVIEWER: Janasia Jones

SERIES: Louisiana Sea Grant Coastal Change Oral Histories Project

INTERVIEW DATE: March 12, 2013

FOCUS DATES: 1960s, 1970s

ABSTRACT:

Tape 4295

Full name is Jed Joseph Pitre; born in 1961, July 25 in Thibodaux, Louisiana, and has lived there most of his life; currently lives in Schiever, starting two years ago; earliest childhood memories are of being outside, playing, hanging out with his mom, catching bugs, snakes, and turtles, or whatever else he and his friends could find; Born on the banks of Bayou LaFourche in Thibodaux General Hospital; Thibodaux is a small community, there was mostly just cane fields and agriculture fields, it was very quiet; spent a lot of time outdoors climbing trees, catching anything he could catch, hanging out with the other children in the neighborhood; sometimes they played sports, made up silly games; he read a lot; got a microscope for Christmas so spent a lot of time looking at things under the microscope; he and a friend would collect pond water and look at that under the microscope; very interested in nature, raised fish; most of the places he used to play as a kid are no longer there due to development; really enjoys canoeing and feeling close to nature; When he was very young, some friends of his parents had a camp in Grand Isle, and they would go visit them; remembers distinctly running under the camp, chasing after fiddler crabs; he called them Tula Loos and he remembers being impressed at how wide the beach was; it seemed like quite a walk to get to from the camp all the way to the shore line; Pitre worked at Grand Isle last summer and even from last summer to this year the environment has changed quite a bit; depth of the beach now from the camps to the shore line, doesn't seem to be as deep as it used to be; there's less beach; even from last summer there's dunes missing that were there before; some places are pretty eroded, and some places are actually built up more so; it's changed for sure; don't see fiddler crabs in the same places you used to; there is definitely less coast line than there used to be; his mother and her brother have told him about places he used to go fishing as a child with his dad, Pitre's grandfather, that are now open water; you can ride a boat in that used to be marshes with grass as far as you can see; his uncle showed Pitre on a map one place that he can remember was all marsh, and now it's water; it's definitely changed; thinks winters may have been colder when he was a child; remember wearing a lot more clothes to school; seemed like it got colder earlier too; used to wear coats in September, now it's still hot in that month; don't seem to get as much frost; there was an open field across the street and we'd

always see rabbits; we'd hear bobwhite quill, and he couldn't tell anyone the last time he saw or heard about white quill anywhere near that area; he never see rabbits there anymore. It's just mostly all development there now, but it's interesting, one thing he did notice when he was younger is that there used to be crows in these cane fields behind Acadia woods, and that was the only places growing up you'd see crows; never saw crows in the city, but now they are all over the city; some animals disappeared and some animals seem to have moved closer to the city; first job was in fourth grade washing dishes in the Thibodaux Elementary School cafeteria; Pitre is currently in his 20th year of teaching; teaches Biology I and II at Thibodaux High School; he wanted to be a marine biologist when he was growing up; he is interested in living things whether it's in the ocean or in the forest, lakes, rivers; for his community's future he would like to see less development and more green space, and young people have the opportunities he had to experience nature; he hopes young Thibodaux residents will travel to other places when they get the opportunity, to see that there is life outside of Thibodaux; Pitre is currently learning to become a bird-bander

TAPES: 1 (T4295)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 26 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 12 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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