

Stable Views--Voices and Stories from the Thoroughbred Racetrack  
Archie Green Fellows Project, 2012-2013  
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Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Wiley Shirey interview, 2013-10-24 : interview conducted by Ellen E. McHale**

**INTERVIEW LOG**

1:18 Has been working with horses since 1979. He is a developer who retired six years ago. He was racing and building in the 1960s. He lived here from 1979 to 1985. He went back to Florida and then came back here. He is training 3 horses. He had 7 at the last meet, but they were claiming horses. In 1979 he had 18 horses. He was in Destin, Florida. For 27 years he was strictly in building and development. He does train occasionally for people but most of the people in the business are struggling. People get 35-\$40/day to train. Shirey wants \$50/day. Most people get 10% if they win. The odds aren't great if it is a cheap horse.

5:14 In five months, his horses made \$110,000.00. When he did his books, he was in the red. If you don't have a good horse, you don't make any money.

5:46 He elaborates on the finances of training.

7:02 He says that the money is better now than in the past.

7:32 He says that the money is big in Louisiana, but you have to win consistently to stay up. If you win 3rd or 4th you are not paying your bills. At \$50/day you're breaking even and hoping that you are winning and getting that 10% of the purse. Talks about a big barn making money. Numbers make money.

9:08 He has raced in Tampa, Florida--at Tampa Bay. He talks about the beauty of that track.

10:04 He has one man who works for him, a groom. He has an exercise boy who comes daily. They make \$10.00 for five minutes.

10:57 He grew up in Florida and became a developer. He's always had horses. His father herded cows. He started racing on the bush tracks in 1962-1963. He rode in races and his son was also a jockey. They rode match races in Florida. His son was a professional rider. He raced when he was four-years-old. His son is also a builder now.

13:10 His wife is the owner of his horses. She used to ride, but not anymore.

13:35 Hard work makes a trainer. You have to love it. Talks about the sentiment between trainers. Trainers in the same barn usually are supportive of each other.

16:49 End of interview.