



**TSUUT'INA  
GUNAHA  
INSTITUTE  
ANTHOLOGY**

**FIRST EDITION**

Tsuut'ina Gunaha Institute Anthology First Edition  
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Tsuut'ina Elders**

## INTRODUCTION

The Tsuut'ina Gunaha Institute values the contributions made by the Elder Members of our community. Although we were unable to record all the Elders we managed to interview at least thirty. We were fortunate to have been able to have the cooperation of those who participated. The availability and the health of the Elders was a prime reason for their stories not being told.

We selected a cross section of Elders who played various roles in Tsuut'ina. There were the cowboys, others that worked with programs in Tsuut'ina, self employed and some of the younger Elders.

Each and every one in Tsuut'ina made a contribution to Tsuut'ina. If it were not for the dedication of the citizens of the Tsuut'ina Nation our community would not be what it is today.

The history of the post treaty Tsuut'ina has not been told. We have lost a lot due to the passing of many Tsuut'ina Elders. However, rather than lament their passing we still have those that have shared their stories of their life experiences and their life on and off the reserve.

It was a struggle to try and stay with the form that is used in culture of oral history. Many of the nuances that appear in an oral culture were transposed into English. We maintained some of the repetition so often found in storytelling.

The recordings of the speakers who were interviewed maintained the traits of Tsuut'ina storytelling. The use of "and" and "then" was consistent. When telling stories in Tsuut'ina the use of "ʔuwat'iya" which means "and" or "then" start most sentences. When the Elders were telling their stories they intuitively inserted "and" at the beginning of a sentence.

We had several meetings about whether or not we should maintain the unique nature of the storytelling or make corrections to comply with correct English. It was decided that we comply, and yet try to maintain the storytelling model.

The Anthology is meant to be shelf material for the schools to remove "and" at the beginning of sentences and avoid "then" as much as possible. "That" was another word used extremely. However, it was not as visible. It fell into a gray area that makes it follow English diction. It was interesting to experience the English of a Siouan speaker who used "used to" in her interview for the past tense.

The transcribing was done with the help of a number of young people from Tsuut'ina. They were a dedicated group who did a great service in helping to maintain the historical and contemporary history of Tsuut'ina. It is safe to say that they learned about our community and the Tsuut'ina people.

It was interesting to note that it is unanimous that the effort to maintain and try to save Tsuut'ina was important to all the people who were interviewed. It is also important that there is some incentive and compensation to relay information.

Of the four people interviewed, all spoke of picking berries at Blueberry Hill. They spoke of it as a momentous occasion in their life. I remember the ride in a wagon up to

Blueberry Hill during haying time. You met and saw a lot of wagons and teams of horses. I remember the sweet smell of the sweet pine after it rained.

They all spoke of their experiences while attending school. The experiences varied according to the age and gender of the interviewer. It is evident that the residential school and day school did not differ a great deal. The corporal punishment and exposure to traumatic events are the same, witnessing beatings of students for stealing food by Archdeacon Timms and the death follow students and the uncertainty of not knowing if they will survive the night.

During the interviews some of the Elders suggested that the only way to speak Tsuut'ina was through oral teaching and repetition. This approach has been tried many times since 1972 with no positive results. It proved difficult for retention. We discovered that there was too much interference and a pervasive influence from audio and video electronic devices. It would be more productive if the speakers play supportive role in the delivery of Tsuut'ina Language in their homes.

It was decided long ago that rather than compete with DVD's, CD's, iPods and Video Games we would embrace the technology and use it to our advantage. We also uploaded some Tsuut'ina material that has been developed over the years and some stories. We hope to upload more material to develop an on-line in home program.

We created a Web Page that has Tsuut'ina sounds using non-sense words in morphemic form that have consonant and a vowel. It is meant to expose the learner to Tsuut'ina sounds and appreciate consonant and vowel quality.

The project was undertaken by Earth Magic Media a company that is well versed in the production of documentary films. They interviewed the fifteen Elders with excellent video quality. We are able to edit and create videos of the speakers for use in the schools. This project with Earth Magic Media has a variety of applications that can be used in many settings, e.g. home, school, cultural camps, and adult language classes.

The transcribing and editing helped young people to understand the strict vocabulary nature of Tsuut'ina. The storytelling rules and the identification of sentence endings and paragraph completion is a unique feature of oral tradition. It could very well be another project to study the view of First Nation Language Speakers about English.

The booklet of the First Edition of the Anthology of the Tsuut'ina Elders was kept to four speakers or 40,000 words or more. The booklet must be user friendly and be available to be used for schools and school projects.

The Tsuut'ina Gunaha Institute would like to thank Dit'oni K'odza Charities, the Income Support Program, Tsuut'ina Education Board, the Elders that were interviewed and last but not least the Tsuut'ina Nation Chief and Council for making this project a possibility.

## **BIOGRAPHY OF VIOLET CROWCHILD**

**Violet Crowchild is an elder on the Tsuut'ina Nation Reserve. She is born and raised in Tsuut'ina, Alberta, Canada. Violet can speak the Tsuut'ina language fluently. She was born 1918 in November. She comes from her families, Afraid of Grasshopper and Otter. Violet's father is Oscar Otter and her mother is Daisy Otter. Violet desires our culture and history. She took part in the Earth Magic Media interviews to keep our history keen for our youth. Her input about her life on Tsuut'ina can be a great influence on our youth today. Young children can read about her life stories and challenges and grasp from them. She hopes in the near future, with her stories that the young people would start respecting about our ethnology and dialect. There are only a few fluent speakers left in our community.**

## **Violet Crowchild**

My name is Violet Crowchild, I come from the Tsuut'ina reserve. I was born 1918. I'll be 91 years old in November. I grew up on the Tsuut'ina reserve my whole life. I was born in Tsuut'ina, my mother had to go to a mid wife. They had no doctors or nurses in those days. It was in 1918 just when the war was over. That's when that disease went through every tribe. I think it's called the Spanish flu.

My mother told me stories about the Spanish flu, and by that time we had a doctor. I forgot who was the doctor for the nation at that time. Anyway the doctor told my mom to be very careful so you and your daughter don't catch the influenza. The Spanish flu killed a lot of the people.

My mother said the government did most of the damage. The disease was among the army people. When the war was over the army gave the Indians grey blankets that the soldiers used. The blankets were all contaminated with the flu. They didn't even clean them or wash them. They just gave them out to the people. That's how the tribe got really sick. That's when we were wiped out. The influenza affected our people. They called it the disease that wiped out our people.

I had a letter, I can't find it. There was an army guy that wrote to the Indian Agent, and the Indian Agent said you can just send them blankets I can use as much as I can. He said well they are contaminated with the flu. Well that's all right he said; the more blankets you send, the more, the better. He wrote that letter, and I had it somewhere. When I was working for the school board I lost that letter because I had three offices to go to. There are some white children that stole from me too. So I don't know where it went.

That's what I was talking about in that letter, what the Indian agent wrote. It said keep bringing the blankets. It also said we are going to get rid of the Indians. I'm so sorry I never found it again. It must have been burned in the city garbage. In those days they used to burn garbage around the city, but the mayor of the city put a stop to it. The people complained about the smoke, and they don't know what kind of chemicals are in that smoke. They really took care of each other in the city. They never took care of the Tsuut'ina people. Even though we are neighbors. They don't take care of us.

They never separated until that time when they crossed that lake. A lot of them stayed on the south and north of the border. I don't know too much of the story. I know this, that this woman, she had a baby on her back. That's how they traveled them days. I traveled like that on my mom's back. Anyway the baby was on her back and they were crossing the icy lake. That baby said to his mom, "mom I want that horn". There was a horn sticking out of the frozen lake. The baby kept bugging his mom to go down and grab that horn for

him. It has something to do with animals. He wanted to learn about it. So she finally gave in and started whacking away at it to get it out of the ice. Then the ice cracked. That's how it started. It starting cracking right across the whole lake.

That's how we had northern Tsuut'ina and southern Tsuut'ina. Navajo and the Apaches are part of Tsuut'ina, that's all I know about that. To this day there are Tsuut'ina down in California. There's also Tsuut'ina in Russia. They still speak the same way we speak. So that's the part I know about Tsuut'ina.

I heard about the northern Dene people, Dene people are part of us, there's also the Beaver people and Dog Ribs. Anyway that's how I know that we have separated as a Nation. They always take care of their children, because when they lose them in the camps they never find them. Somebody will just pick them up and raise them. The Tsuut'ina were a big tribe. That's our real name, Tsuut'ina. I say that Indians were aboriginal people, and that Indians were not from India. We are not from India.

When my son Harley was taking care of the elders program he took us down to the Crow reserve; that's when they were having their Indian days and rodeo down there. He rented some vans and he took us down there. One of our elders passed away. She had relatives down there and her last name was Big Crow. We still have Big Crow's on our reserve, but not very many. You can't count them by that tribe. You can count them by the different last names left. There's not much to count anymore.

The hospital and school were together. The school was a separate building. The children slept in the hospital year round while they were in school. They went home three days in a year. That's what my mom said.

Anyway there was a building down by the old agency, today there's still three buildings standing there. There was one that was the farmer instructor's house and the other one was a place to keep your machinery, horses, and tractors and all different kinds of things to work the farms. The Indian agent will go out and help the people farm.

My mom and dad always told us these stories. My dad used to say, down the road you'll meet people that will tell you how they got their names and tell you stories of all that. He also said you have to be careful on what you say about your people and don't make up stories. He used to say that to me and my brother and sisters.

My dad talked to us about those things, also taught us respect, and not to steal and not to lie. He said if you lie just keep your mouth shut. If you steal and don't give back what you

stole you are going to lose more than what you stole. You also might lose something that is precious to you. That's what my dad used to tell us.

That's what my mom said. It's always good to tell everything I know because I want my great grandchildren to listen to my stories and tell them where I come from. I want them to know that we're Tsuut'ina, instead of Sarcee and it's Tsuut'ina again. If I don't know it I won't talk about it. I might talk about it a little bit of where it came from and how things happened.

Later on Archdeacon Timms took over the boarding school on the reserve. He came from Gleichen or somewhere down there anyway. Those days we were called Sarcee. Sarcee is a Blackfoot word. So that's what he knew. So he called us Sarcee. The Indian Agent picked it up, and they called us Sarcee. Lately not very long ago we took back our name.

Tsuut'ina means a lot of people. The old people used to say when you camp out you have to watch your children. You might lose them and you'll never find them because there is so many Tsuut'ina in camp.

From what I heard Archdeacon Timms wasn't a good man. I knew him; I didn't go to school yet but from what my mom told me about him. My sister was in the boarding school first. I used to be with my sister. I knew him. He had a beard and a cane. When the children didn't listen he used to hit them with a cane. When the boys used to steal vegetables from the garden some of them will be looking out for him, and some of the boys crawled underneath the fence. When they would get caught they would get hit with that cane. I saw him do it.

The children starved when the minister or someone was in charge of the boarding school. I was there when that happened. The minister was Archdeacon Timms. He ran the boarding school. The boarding school was terrible. That's where lots of children got the sickness of tuberculosis. There were children from different reserves that came to the boarding school. It was to recuperate in the hospital and the school.

I wasn't going to school yet. I was with my mom and I asked her why is he doing that. She said because the boys were starving and they were picking vegetables to eat. It must have been in the 1920's because I was born in 1918. So I must have been eight years old or ten. We had to be in school when we were seven years old. So it was around when I was seven. When the parents didn't want their children going into boarding school, the Indian Agent would come with police and take the children to school by force. That's what happened to my mom and dad. My mom and dad said it was terrible because they couldn't do anything about it because the Indian agent will always turn to the RCMP. My parents were scared of the RCMP.

We were poor and we didn't get help from the Indian Agents and the government. They never looked out for the Indians good. They never did. They starved us. You can never do anything without asking them and there was no way of getting food.

The only time I heard about Bullhead was when he stood up to the RCMP. They were going to take one of the Tsuut'ina men. They were going to charge him for destruction of property. That Tsuut'ina man was giving out rations. That was his job. It was to give out rations to the people. We always get the rations on Wednesdays. I guess he was cutting up the meat and carcass and they were butchering up the meat and to bring them halves and bring them to the reserve. I remember they used to kill the cattle right on the reserve. It was at the river down by the old agency. There used to be a building there, my auntie took me there one time to get rations.

The Indian agents controlled us and this one time when they were trying to take control of that Tsuut'ina man who was chopping up the meat for the rations. The Indian agent told him to chop the meat up smaller. We're not getting any more meat. The Tsuut'ina man got mad. He got mad at everyone in the building. He said you're just starving my people.

So the Indian Agent got the RCMP. They sent a word to the Chief. Bullhead was Chief at the time. This happened and they were camping down the hill. I know this place because my mom showed it to me. My mom said I was just a child, and I wasn't in school yet but my mom told me to pack some things just to be ready to take off into the woods. The RCMP was ready to come get the Tsuut'ina man. The Indian Agent got the RCMP. And my mom said the area down the hill is still there. I think the Jacobs live there now. Anyway it was down towards the old agency.

My mom was telling me when that guy was chopping meat at the ration house down by the old agency. That's when the Indian agent got the RCMP to pick up that guy who was giving out the rations in Tsuut'ina. The camping ground is still there. I know it and I know where it is. The hill coming down by old man Otter's house. My mom said down the hill there, the RCMP were coming down. She said it was just red. It was their red uniforms. They were looking for that man. He was in that camp and Chief Bullhead came out to meet the RCMP and the Indian Agent. Bullhead told them if you want any of my people, you take me first. They didn't want to do that. They didn't want to disturb anything that Bullhead said. He was really protective of his people. So that's how Bullhead always protected his people. They didn't end up taking that man or Bullhead. Bullhead was a powerful man. I know where Bullhead's grave is, it's across the old agency.

I forget the man's name, and I know it too. I'll probably sleep on it. You know some of the names I forgot, even some of my language and when I'm sleeping I'll think of it. And my son Harley said why don't you just sit up and write it down. Anyway, maybe someday I'll do that.

My grandfather, old man Otter used to have a house there. That was the first house I knew. There were four houses in a row. I knew the old people that used to live there. I can't say their names in English. All I know is by our native tongue. One was Teddy Manywound's grandfather that lived in one of the houses. He lived in the second one next to old man Otter's. I only know those two, but I forgot the other two.

Indian agents gave permits, and it was at Fort Calgary. There was a fort. It wasn't a town or city. It was a fort because logs enclosed it all. The people that lived there were scared that Tsuut'ina people would attack them. They were scared of us Indians. Anyway, if they don't come back on time. They used to have a clock at that gate at the fort. They would set it at a certain time, so they would know what time to be back. Somebody from the fort used to put the clock on, just so the Tsuut'ina people would know that the time is set for them.

Even if my parents wanted to go to the city, they had to get a permit from the Indian Agent. When you go to the city you had to be gone for certain amount of hours and be back at a certain time. So that was given to the people when they wanted to go to the Fort Calgary. And they would go get groceries or go trade with the Hudson Bay. That's when the Hudson Bay would get rich off us. We would trade them our beautiful fur, like beaver pelts or coyotes, anything they would want to trade. I heard a lot about the Hudson Bay, and I also heard a lot about people that worked for the Indians.

My dad is Oscar Otter, his dad was old man Otter and his dad was a powerful medicine man. My mother was a Grasshopper before she married my dad. Her name is Daisy Otter. I talk about how the Otter name came about, and Brokenknife. Old man Otter is my grandfather and that's how we got the name Otter. They just didn't pick names. There had to be some kind of date to mark a name. The Indian Agents they didn't know how to translate it so they just called him Otter. That's how he got his name Otter.

He was sitting at the edge of a river. Something went wrong in his home life. He was crying, sitting there. Something didn't go right. A beaver came out of the water and tried to console him. He said "do you want to have something you can depend on so you won't be crying anymore?". The beaver told him to close his eyes. The old man Otter did, the father of my grandfather. He closed his eyes and when he opened them he was in a teepee

and he told him to look and see. He saw those bundles, that's how we have that Beaver Bundle.

The people that keep the Beaver Bundle they probably know the history behind it. They should because the Beaver Bundle is our protection. The beaver, he became a man. He asked the Tsuut'ina man who was crying, he asked him which bundle do you want to take with you. And he looked around and he saw ten or twelve bundles around him.

There was an old lady sitting at the door and she whispered to him, take the oldest bundle, don't take the new ones. So that's how he picked. He picked the one above the door. It was the oldest bundle. Bundles are made out of hides and there was no such thing as cloth those days. Everything was tanned skins, skins with fur on them. They used every bit of the animals.

He picked the old bundle and the man of the teepee asked him "why did you pick an old bundle and there's all these new ones?". Well, I chose that one so I can be humble, and I do not want to make myself a big man just because I have a bundle. That's what the old man Otter told him. So it's all right that I have the bundle. That's how he got the bundle.

Part of my grandmothers relatives, are down in the States. Long ago they used to fight tribe against tribe, over horses. She would be my great great grandmother. They found her and her little brother wrapped up in a raw hide. They were tied up together. That's how the parents would leave them when they took off when they couldn't take them. So they wrapped them up in a bundle and left them there. When the enemies came, they found them. This warrior was going to kill them and the Chief of that Nation said no, we don't kill children. So that's how the Otter family has relatives down there in the States.

The way Pat Grasshopper got the name Afraid of Grasshopper; some Tsuut'ina warriors were sitting around the campfire. Anyway I guess one jumped right over and hit him right in the forehead while he was sitting there. He fell backwards and he was yelling, "I'm shot, I'm shot! I'm going to die! One of the other guys went over to him and said you're not going to die it was just a grasshopper; it just jumped on you. That's how he got his name Afraid of Grasshopper. Down the line Pat Grasshopper is my mom's father and their father's name is Brokenknife.

I don't know if the grasshoppers are still around. All those farmers use herbicides and all those things. They kill off a lot of insects and animals. I don't know if there are still those big grasshoppers. I saw them because when my mom was sick I used to chase the big grasshoppers.

I was talking about my mom and her relatives. Pat Grasshopper is her dad and my mom was a Grasshopper before she married my dad. From the way I understood it, Pat Grasshopper was a great warrior. He gave my mom and dad a teepee. I was the only one with the painted teepee. I was living with my mom and dad at the time when they had a ceremony for that teepee design. There are two teepees. My older son Harley has one but he wasn't initiated with it. He only asked for it and took it. I don't mind if they ask. He had the respect for me to ask me if he can use the teepee.

We were curious as children, and we wanted to know how we got the name Otter. It was a man with a lot of power, and you can't pronounce it with our language. So the white people pronounced it as Otter. Pat Grasshopper was never a Chief.

Grasshopper was going to paint with another teepee and he went to fight a bear with a knife. He just about got killed but he survived and he killed that bear and it was his traditional way of saying he's going to make another teepee with bears on it. The people that have the teepee now, I think they have trees in front. I have to see it again to remember the story about that one.

The one he gave to my mom and dad went through the ceremonies. It had water and whatever you call them, they grow in the sloughs. I forget the name of it. The teepee of my mom and dad, I know where it came from and how it was given to my mom and dad in a ceremony. The part I know is what the design means. I know the designs that were on the smoke flaps. The flaps did not let the rain in or to let the smoke out or the wind coming in from the east. You can close the flaps with the flap poles. I know these things, but I don't know why the design is on the flaps.

They have the ceremonies and they serve special food. The fourth night, I remember that day when my mom and dad were getting the teepee. On the fourth night they gave the teepee design to my mom and dad. I remember that because every night my aunt took me to her tent to sleep. They pray and sing for four days and four nights, everything was for four days and four nights.

That's how my son Harley's boys Gilbert and Daryl got married, through the Indian way. We have two teepees anyway and he still has one and my oldest daughter Regina has one. She can't use the design, because she never went through the ceremony. That's the only time you can own a teepee, is when you're initiated with it.

Brokenknife, all I know is that he's my mom's relative. He's buried in Saskatchewan. They were on a warpath and the enemy tribe caught them. They were stealing horses. They got surrounded and all his warriors were killed. They were killed one or two every day. Him

too, when the enemies came over to attack him, he would kill one or two. It would drag the dead body over and make a fort with the enemies' bodies.

Brokenknife just told the enemy just to kill him after they killed his warriors. They told him you can go home. Brokenknife refused, he didn't want to go back to his people and let them see him like that. He was all spotted with gunpowder. He said to the enemy, "just kill me". They said no.

Brokenknife said "I'll give you this feather", so he gave them his feather that was on his head. All warriors have feathers on their heads, and in their hair. So he gave them his feather, and he said, "I give you permission to kill me". He said, "at least you can give me that wish to be killed by a warrior".

So they killed him but part of his body walked out from the fire and he appeared down the road. Brokenknife said, "You know I'm still here and you haven't killed me". So they had to try and kill him down the road where he was. They made another fire and they put him on there to burn him. He said, "This time you all watch around the fire, so I won't walk out again, even my bones will walk out". So they really watched around the fire, to make sure that he was dead.

Finally they killed him, that's how come he's buried over there. They just dug a hole at the spot where he took on a bunch of enemies by himself. Towards the end he was one man unto himself. He was the only one that took them on, all alone. They knew that the other warrior got away and he made it back to Tsuut'ina. He told the story to his people. He told them the story of Brokenknife taking on a bunch of enemies on his own.

Brokenknife was covered in black from the powder in the guns. It's not like today with automatic guns. They had old fashion guns that they loaded with powder. The powder will stick to your skin. They said he was just black from where the powder they used to shoot at him.

There was one that escaped. There was a woman and her baby boy sitting on the hill. She was watching the fight from a distance. She was praying for that one man who escaped. He was crawling towards the horses so nobody can see him. The women saw him and she was sitting there praying for him to get away safely. She was praying for her baby boy to grow up to be a man. She was praying for him to get through. So she got up and chased the horses towards him so he won't be seen. So the Crees can only see the horses. That's how one of them survived.

At the old graveyard where Bullhead is buried the coffins are starting to slide down the bank. When Harley was looking after the elders program he asked the Chief and Council to do something about the graves. Like Jeanette Starlight at the museum, she made sure all the bones were all in one coffin. There were so many boxes and we all went there as elders to help her with what she was doing.

There's so many little things people don't know, like the people that work. Like Tsuut'ina working for elders. The past people they started all this. Otherwise us elders will still be in the background and the government won't even know that we exist. People should wake up and realize that the elders are important. I always tell them to teach the young people.

They built schools on the reserve for Tsuut'ina culture. All these things they teach, some of the children don't even know about Bullhead. It's so sad, once they get a job they'll think they know it all. I used to go talk to the students at the Adult Learning Centre. I don't know why they don't ask me anymore. Maybe because I talk too much Tsuut'ina. You know it's good for young people to know where we come from. Tsuut'ina means lots of people. Tsuut'ina gut'ina that means a lot of people.

I have two brothers and one sister, so there were four of us. My sister passed away, she was one of the elders from Tsuut'ina. I don't even know how old she was when she passed away. My brothers' names are Alfred and Roy Otter, and my sister's name is Rosie Big Belly, it used to be Big Belly. They changed their names to Runner. Well they did good because in Tsuut'ina Runner is their real name.

I wouldn't mind knowing it too but it's hard to find anything. We never had anybody to write our history. It seems like our young people don't know it, and our schools were built for that. So they'll grow knowing our Tsuut'ina, customs and language, and everything else for that matter. It never happened. He's not teaching them Tsuut'ina. It seems like he's teaching them the Indian Agent ways. We have to watch. What would young people think down the road when the elders are gone? For example, what is he or she talking about.

Bessie Meguinis, I know her. She used to help me a lot when I was married. I know her ways. We would come together and talk all the time. She used to help me to get to my house. She was a good person and she helped anybody even though she had nothing herself. Every little thing, like rations, she would go and feed people and she would deny herself. Just so she can go out and help people. These kinds of people they don't recognize.

In our ways today they won't recognize Big Belly as a good Chief because today our Chief and Council they're just busy fighting the government all the time. Which is a good thing though. Or else we would still be under the government that used to treat us the way they did before. I shouldn't say Indians, I should say aboriginal people.

Chief Big Belly well he tried to put the people together, to decide how the reserve should be organized instead of Indian agent ways. That was his main project, and he tried. Today a lot of the organization comes from him, the Chief and Council how they operate. There are thirteen now, than from a one man Chief we had before. The councilors are not called councilors, they were called Minor Chiefs. They turned away from that and now they call them councilors. I don't remember when it was changed. For every one hundred people there's one councilor.

Chief Big Belly's real name is Runningdownthehill in our language. The Indian agent changed it and put it as Big Belly. Big Belly was a nickname for George Big Belly the father. When he was small he had a potbelly. You see it in Africa with young children with potbellies, because of starvation. That's how he was named Big Belly. He had a potbelly and they carried it on until Rosie found out the difference and she changed it. She got Dr. Murray to change it. Anyway, that's how come we have Runners now. There's Steve Runner, Tom Runner, Margaret Runner, and Dorothy Runner. And they all used to be Big Belly's. That man had a story to his name Runningdownthehill, but I don't want to say it because I don't want to make up stories.

They want to take my land away and give it to someone else. I already gave up land to one of my grandsons and great great grandsons. They took my land away before. It to my neighbors, and it was Chief Jim Starlight that stood up for me and gave me land. He said people are complaining that my horses and cattle are on the road all the time.

Chief and Council, without me knowing they gave some land away from where our stock drank. Long ago, a company came in looking for water. That's what we've been using to water the cattle and the horses. We still have horses but mostly barrel racing horses. My daughter is the only rodeo person in our family now.

That's how come my son Rupert built fences for the livestock. Some of the people leased out their land to white farmers. I never lease my land for money. It was always something to feed my livestock. I never did collect money for it because that's the way to run a ranch. I had lots of horses and lots of cattle. To feed those animals takes a lot of planning. So I try to get as much feed as I can. During the summer and fall, and I don't have to worry about winter.

Now I think I have to go to court to keep my land or what's left of it. The land I have left, well there's a hundred acres up west that's been put into hay. We leased it to a white farmer. He takes what he gets out of the place. He looks after our cattle during the winter. That's the kind of deals I make and I don't cheat the white farmers or he doesn't do the same back. He's always been a good man.

These interviews should focus on people who helped the community and the Chiefs of the past. I know Big Belly was the last Chief before I got to know what exactly what a Chief means. After Big Belly it was Big Plume, Joe Big Plume. I knew Joe Big Plume, I know how he ran the reserve, and he was a good Chief.

Chief Joe Big Plume went to Dunbow School, it was a school in Midnapore. There was Joe Big Plume and George Crane and some of the other old men. They all went to Dunbow School. They went there to learn trades. Some of the trades were carpentry and anything to do with building. I don't think they went to go learn English, English words that make you laugh. Learning English makes you laugh or it either makes you mad.

Anyway Joe Big Plume went to that school and when he was finished there, he was sworn in as the Chief. He wasn't educated like how the Chief and council are today. Everything is different from today, compared to long ago.

Joe Big Plume was a good Chief. He didn't have that education from what they have today. To say hard work in English, well you're not working unless you go out there and work with the people and to see what they want. That's the kind of Chief he was, and he also used to go around and visit everybody. People would welcome or invite him into their homes, and they would feed him. Then he talks about things that are going on in the reserve. He asks the people what's their thoughts about the things that are going on in the reserve. Then they would have band meetings with the Chief and one councilor. The councilor was Jim Starlight, and at that time he was the Band Scout. I think he was the policeman for the reserve.

This one time at a band meeting people wanted Chief and Council to just go with eight councilors because twelve was just too many. They were stepping on each other's toes, because one wanted to go this way, and the other one way. It causes a lot of conflict amongst them.

I don't know how many policemen we have now. I have never been bothered by them. The only one I can depend on now is Warren Crowchild. I think he's in the police department. I'm not too sure but I have to find out. He's the only person that gets things done. Even though he the gets threatened I know he won't back down.

Dr. Murray was an Indian Agent and he was our doctor and he was also our administrator. He was a good man. He cleaned our reserve of TB. Our reserve was just full of tuberculosis. I don't know the actual years Dr. Murray came to Tsuut'ina.

Dr Murray he just came out of the army when he took that job. I don't know the actual years Dr. Murray came to Tsuut'ina. The boarding school was just full of TB. They brought children from other reserves because they didn't have facilities for them. So they brought them to the hospital and the residential school. The small building beside the hospital is the school. You walk from the residential place to the school every day. He made sure the children ate good meals.

The staff would eat with butter and the children would get a slice of bread with lard. For the mornings, the night before the cook would make porridge. The next morning we would all sit down, boys on one side and the girls on the other side. The matrons would serve us that porridge, it just looked all hard and lumpy. We would use skim milk for our porridge they wouldn't give us any sugar so we had to eat it that way. I wouldn't eat it, and the matrons said they would get the Indian agent after me. I told my dad and my dad went down there and told them to leave my girl alone and the Indian agent just left it alone. I only had to stay there if the weather was bad.

So Dr Murray made sure the children ate right, just before he came the matrons only had butter and milk. The school had cows and they had a man that milked cows, looked after, the chickens and the gardens and all that stuff. He put the teenage boys to work, instead of going to school, but they would go to school half a day. The rest of the day they would have to help farming. They would milk cows and make cream and they would make butter from the cream.

Chief Joe Big Plume and Dr Murray are the ones that cleaned up the boarding school. Dr Murray, I don't know who was the Indian Agent before him.

After that when Dr Murray came they gave us fresh porridge and they gave us straight milk and they also gave us bread with butter. All that changed, so it was good. We would also get a glass of milk. It was never a glass it was just a cup but we would call it that. So we would drink straight milk. The matron made good rice pudding. I think that's why I love rice pudding today. When my daughter goes to town she asks me what I want. I just say rice pudding.

Dr Murray changed everything. He had an office in that one building. When he left they closed that office down. You know when he left, my cousin, he's gone now, they made him take all the books and papers out of that building and burn them. He said, he sat down and read some of them. He was reading what the Indian agents had commented on.

They tried to make themselves look good. Even when Dr Murray came he looked up what they were supposed to be doing with the people. I don't know, but some papers were floating around on the reserve and Frank was the one that was cleaning up the office. I don't know who he gave them to. It'll be good to find out who has them now, just to see what the Indian agent was saying. It's hard to say where they disappeared.

This one time, I saw an old lady, they gave her a bed in the basement, and one room and it was all cement. Well look who's talking about cement floors, I have cement in my own house because I can't walk. I don't want to ask Chief and Council for a new house. I'd soon to look after my children.

I used to stay there once in awhile when the weather was bad. I used to go to school on horseback every day. Unless the weather was bad for me to travel in, then I would stay at the school. The matron had a bed for me. Even Dr Murray checked my bed, because he said make sure nobody sleeps on it because it's my bed when I need it. Our beds were cleaned off because there were lots of lice on them.

I know Violet Starlight, Lily Starlight, Juliet, Hilda, Ruby, and I knew a lot of people that went to school there. Most of them are gone now.

Some of the sicknesses that came to Tsuut'ina, I know some that died from the sicknesses. They got brought in when children from other places would come to our hospital, and our school and hospital were together. So that's how they would catch the sickness. A lot of residential school children stayed at the residential school, and they caught TB. Some of them went home, and they had bandages on their necks because the TB broke out on their necks.

I know them and some of them healed from TB and it left a scar. You can tell that person had TB because of the scars. That's crazy, my dad used to be against people who would talk about them in a bad way. People used to think they still have TB just because they have a scar on their necks.

Anyway, gradually the TB was gone and the children got healthy, so that way they can learn faster. They were eager to learn more.

My mom said by the time Dr Murray got there, there were only two hundred and some people left of our people. Now there are like two thousand or more Tsuut'ina people.

Nobody was interested now or then. Just lately, like Bruce. He started the language program. Well Harley started teaching the Tsuut'ina language at the St. Stephens School, with Violet Meguinis, she was a teacher's aid. She was helping Harley teach the language.

Just to help promote the language in the schools, that's how come they built two schools on the reserve, to teach the young people to learn how to speak Tsuut'ina. To teach themselves and other people whichever way. They weren't qualified to teach the language. It's hard to teach the Tsuut'ina language.

Small pox, I really don't know anything about small pox, my mom used to talk about it but I never took any interest in it.

My mom told me, that they went to the city to sell potatoes. It wasn't a city then, it was just a fort. It was called Fort Calgary. The Tsuut'ina used to sell livestock and a lot of potatoes. They used to use dog travois, to take the potatoes to Calgary. They had to cross the Elbow River, the one where they built a bridge over the Elbow River.

It was the fall harvesting. We stayed with my grandfather, and we went home everyday to feed the chickens and pigs to see if they were okay. I don't know why we had to go home. Anyway my dad was the boss I guess.

The army built that bridge, and I wish we got that back. I also wish we got Weasel Head back from the city. The army never used to have land on our side. The only place they had was where the fighting range. The army barracks, but we never gave them land that was on our side. The army said the city gave it to them, and they enforced it. Every time I go to gamble at the casino, I see that fence, and the city is claiming all that land. It is not true, and we should try and get it back while there's still people alive who knows that is our land.

There's a bridge further down from the present bridge, that's where we used to cross. We never used to cross the new one because that was only for the army tanks and trucks. The people used to cross the one further down the stream because we all used wagons and in the winter we used sleighs with a team of horses. We put feed on for the horses. We would go up to Killarnary. We would tie our horses up to that wagon or sleigh, so the horses will have something to eat. Then we would go down with a streetcar. Even if we had children, we would pack them.

We would buy groceries and we would eat, it was always a treat to eat. Then we would come back on our streetcar and go home. The bridge is still there. There was a movie theatre called the Empress, but who knows. We didn't know any movies. Now there are all different kinds of movies people watch.

My only memories of growing up on the reserve, is that it is a place where you can run around, eat and had a place to sleep. As I was growing older I had lots of chores to do. I just took them naturally. Sometimes I ask my mom, how come I have to work so hard. She said, well you're the one that's doing it.

My dad, he farmed and he had lots of animals and my mom, her project was pigs. With things like that we survived. I called the pigs, my mom's pigs. She was the only one that can get into the pigs' pen, without the mother pig chasing her. If it were my dad the mother pig would chase him, even when they had the piglets. It was my mom that was always there. She had to help the sow to help deliver the litter, and I had to help too.

You want to know how come you have to work so hard, and she said that's what you have to live for. If we didn't have any chickens, we would have no eggs. If we didn't have any pigs, we wouldn't have any meat.

My dad knew how to clean the pigs. I had to help him too. He made a big pot with boiling water and he tied up the pigs legs and he would put it down in the boiling water. He had a table beside it, and when it was finished he put it on the table. I had to help scrap the hair off. He had to take the guts out first. Otherwise it would have rotted. Anyway that's how we cleaned the pigs, and after everything is all done my dad would cut it all up.

Our fridge was a natural spring. It's somewhere in the woods, I don't know if it's still there. My brother is living there. My dad put a box in there, and he would wrap it up with the brown paper with linen on it. My mom would wrap it up and sometimes she put salt in it. We put it in that box, it was sitting in the spring, where the water was coming up. Some part of the food he let the water run right through it. Some of them he kept them dry, I don't know why.

My dad was good. When I asked him questions, he didn't refuse to tell me. Same with my mom, that's why I think I worked so hard all my life. It was my job to make sure the chickens were fed. We had lots of geese and ducks. We had a natural spring and around it was flat. So the ducks and the geese came in and out of the water.

The only time we had turkeys, was just before Christmas. My dad bought them when they were small then we would raise them. Not many, just enough for the family and whoever deserves it out of the old people. They didn't even know how to cook turkeys. My mom always managed to cook for them.

We had lots of vegetables in our cellar of our house. It was a dugout underneath the house. We had different areas for different things. Like for carrots my dad would bring sand. We would dump it in the corner, with the walls around it. We would plant our carrots in there, and it never spoils. We had fresh carrots all winter.

The turnips, we had to scrap them off. We would only have the peelings because if you don't do that, they'll get rotten. Onions you just put it in the dirt just like the potatoes. I think that's the only vegetables we had. My mom would pickle the beets.

She would pickle eggs all the time because when I was growing up I liked pickled eggs. Today I don't even want to look at eggs because my daughter cooked me rotten eggs for breakfast. I don't even want to think about it. Anyway, she pickled eggs and she gave a lot away to the old people. You know some of them walk just to get to my mom and dad's place for vegetables. Most of the old people liked our turnips, carrots and potatoes. They didn't bother with the other ones. They used to cook potatoes outside in the fire. They put them in hot ashes. Maybe that is where our baked potatoes came from. Even cooking bread in the fire, which came from aboriginal people.

They had to work with nature, and what nature produces they survived on. Like wild meat, today we can't even find a rabbit. My grandson killed a wild rabbit up west on the reserve. He brought it to me, and when I was cleaning it to cook it, there was something wrong with it between the meat and the skin. It looked like some kind of bubbles. So I just gave it to my dog. She ate it and she survived. I don't know if I would have survived if I ate it.

In the springtime I had to help my dad plow the garden because he was getting old. I had to help plant the seeds in and plant the carrots and potatoes and all those things. In the mean time I still had all my other chores to do, chickens and geese I had to take care of. This one time I lost one mother goose, and I watched her to see where she was going. She disappears for days. I followed her quietly and here she had a nest behind the hill, and it was covered in the tall grass. That's how I found them, and there was a bunch of baby geese.

I have all kinds of forks and spades lying around. This one time a cow chased us, and we were going under the corral underneath the fence. I was behind my mom and she was dragging that fork. I kneeled right down on that sharp fork. I didn't say anything there, but after we got through I showed her my leg. There are still scars on my leg. Another time I was chopping small wood to cook with, for morning. We had to have small wood. I was chopping into the wood, and I missed it and cut my leg. Now I have a big white scar.

Another time we were cleaning the basement, and we were cleaning the vegetables, and my mom had the short handled fork. We were cleaning out the old vegetables. The fork was small and flat. We had to crawl through the window. I had to go out and pick the stuff up. I used the wheel barrel. I used the children's wagon to haul stuff around. We would throw the stuff outside through there. When we were working down there I should have known my mom was a chicken. There was a rat down there, something like a rat, must have been a big mouse. I told her its right over there where you're going to dig. You just watch it. I was going to tell her to be careful. Here I said it the wrong way and she got scared. She poked my leg and she said you get in there and kill it. I did what I was told. So I just grabbed one of the small shovels and I killed it. I picked it up with the shovel and showed it to her. I was told to get away with it. That's all I know how we lived.

We also had to milk cows. My dad was beginning to milk young cows. That was my chore was to milk cows in the mornings and in the evenings. She said you start milking young cows. You watch it, you tie the hind legs first. Of course I didn't tie it well because she kicked that pail of milk into my face. My dad laughed, he said I told you what to do. You don't listen. Now you know that why we tell you these things. After awhile I didn't have to tie her legs because she got used to me.

My youngest son he survived on raising pigs and selling them in High River or some place. One time he was taking them on his truck, he had a little black truck. The end gate came off and the pigs got out. They got all over the farm where he was. He was running around trying to catch them. After catching them all he took them to the slaughterhouse. The next time when he traveled with pigs he was going to nail his tailgate.

That's how the animals survived. The coyotes whatever they can hunt they eat it. Hawks and eagles they survived on mice, gopher and they enjoyed chickens. I found out, the hard way too because I lost a lot of chickens that way.

Animals are smart. They're smarter than humans. They know how to survive. Like you talk about bears hibernating. You don't see mice or any animal running around when there's bad weather.

Right now in my house, I have no basement it's just cement flooring. On the edge of the floor and the wall, there must be openings. The house inspector came and he didn't do anything about it. He said there were holes on the outside where the boards meet. That's why ants and different color worms come inside my house. It used to be my job by putting raid around the house, now it's my daughter's job. She's smarter then me. She even puts it on the outside of the house. So it's not too bad now. We didn't have any

insects inside the house. We didn't have big holes down there where we kept it clean. So we didn't have any insects of any kind.

The employment we had on the reserve, was cutting wood and selling them to the city. Everybody had wood stoves. They didn't have electricity. They didn't bring in their food and warm it up like today. They depended on wood and clean water. They would dig for wells, and some of them were artesian wells. There's still some on the reserve, I know one place, and right now it's still coming up. Up in the hills, we call it Blueberry Hill and there are two springs there.

It's where we used to go. We used to go up there a lot during the summer. There used to be so many blueberries. We would camp in the Six Mile Coulee. During the weekends, Friday evenings, pretty well everybody packs up and goes up to Blueberry Hill. We would spend our weekend there picking berries. Some will be hunting, and when they kill something, they would split the meat up amongst the people that were there. That place is still there. I used to go up there every year with my own family. Harley and Calvin, my boy Rupert that passed away. He was never interested. He was only interested in livestock. He had cattle and horses, I don't know what happened to them. I don't know who has his livestock.

Some of the men cut logs at the Blueberry Hill. They cut them to make the corrals. The wood at the Blueberry Hill lasts longer than the poplar trees. Spruce trees last longer, and some would make log houses out of it. A lot of them were very talented, for doing things for themselves. Well we had no money to buy anything, so we had to make out with what we had on our land.

The kind of teachings my mom and dad had to offer, was my dad did a lot of talking with us. Not my mom, my mom was a quiet person. I don't know why she's shy to talk about our life. My dad he was outgoing and took all the time to talk to us.

My dad he used to make us do lumber. There will be two of us on each end of the saw cutting lumber. I still had that saw but I don't know what happened to it. Since I can't work outside all my tools disappeared. Whoever wants it can just ask.

Right now I have to watch my buckskins, because I still have lots and beads. I just got one full suitcase full of white beads. I bought them all when I was down in Los Angeles. We went down there with our teepees. They invited us from the Calgary Stampede and we moved down to Los Angeles with our teepees and our teepee poles. We just took our stuff that belonged to us and there was a truck that took the rest of our stuff.

The missionaries really split us up. The Indians really believed in God because lots of times they pray for something and it comes true. So they knew there was a God that was not invented. He takes care of people and He was the one that put us on earth and everything that was going on that was His way of telling us something. We had to make sure it won't happen again. It just hurts other people for what you do. I learned that from my dad.

First it was the Anglican Church that had the boarding school. They were running it and they were getting their money from the government. All the children got taken into that boarding school. I don't think there was that many Tsuut'ina that time. When there was that sickness we just got wiped out. We managed to survive. There was about two hundred and something.

So first it was Anglican ministers, I don't know when they came amongst us. They taught us that there was a devil and bad people and good people. They taught us that in school. If you were doing something wrong the devil would take you or something like that. They used to talk like that because I used to hear them.

The first church I know of is right in the corner there. It had four stones as a fence and there are chains around it. It was the first Anglican Church, and they used that building, it was a log house and they used it as a church. They used it for classes during the week. They also used it for a school.

Then later on they had a boarding school right beside there. The one building, the last time I was down that way, I see that it's still standing, one side of that building. There were two buildings it was connected by a hall, one side was the boy's dormitory and the other side was the girls. In the middle it was the kitchen and dining area. I know that because I saw it. My mom told me what they were for. Boys sleep on one side and the girls sleep on the other side.

Before we became Anglican, we used to have our own traditional way of praying. Our traditional way of praying is when we pray with a pipe. It was very strict; you can't play around with the pipe unless you really mean to pray with it. It's what I've seen and the traditional way of praying I did it lots of times. As I was growing up we always did the traditional way of praying.

I went back to praying in the Indian way. You give tobacco to somebody and they'll pray for you. If you know somebody that is an elder and traditional and will pray for you. I never went back to the Anglican or Catholic Church. I don't mind I would go back to church if someone were to do something. Something that is good for the people, it doesn't matter what church I belong to, there's only one God.

The first Catholic Church, it's not too far from my house, they have a monument there. A little monument, I don't know if they cleaned the area, but the trees are growing over that little monument. The Catholics don't use a bell, only the Anglicans. Some wanted to go through the Catholic way. Today it's still liked that. People are against each other because of the churches. No one goes to church anymore. Only some people are slowly starting to go to church.

Shane my grandson he can speak Tsuut'ina but he's shy, he said the other boys his age make fun of him because he tries to talk Tsuut'ina to them. He's good at it. He's been speaking it ever since he was small because he grew up with it. When I see him we talk Tsuut'ina to each other. That's the only way if we wake up and teach our young people. I'm not the person to say, you do it this way, you do it that way. I've done it myself but I can tell them. This is how it's going to happen if we lose our language. There will be no more Tsuut'ina. There will be only just a mixture of people. So that's the only way I can think about it.

My grandson he's in the fire department and he phones me and I asked him where he was and he said we're going behind people with crosses on them. They were behind them he said. They were protecting them just in case of a fire or an accident. We were told to follow them.

So I guess they're renewing the churches because one of our ladies became a minister. She went through all her training. She phoned me and she said I'm going to have my first church service on Sunday. Can you come? I told her I can't go because I was going into the hospital, getting ready for my tests. I said sorry, I made so many gestures of being sorry. Then she said that's all right. Today I don't know how she's making out. I think that have church every Sunday. That's the way it was before. In the bible it says you don't have to work on Sunday.

My son Harley was really into the Anglican Church. He started collecting money to build a new church because our church, the way it is now, is pretty well gone. It's so old. Anyway, he wanted to build a new church but it didn't happen.

The churches talk about being against each other, teaching people that the Anglican Church is better than the Catholic Church. Even the children at school, my grandchildren they go to that school. They said the children talk like at the schools. Their church is better than ours. I told them straight, there's only one God we pray to. One God that will do things for you. Two religions is not going to do it, it's your own self that will accomplish what you want. Pray to God and ask for help and what you're going to do.

That's all I've told them. It's nothing to do with being Catholic or Anglican. It has to do with your own self. That is the way it is right now.

It doesn't take much to split people, like giving out money, some more will come and they would want more money. You will have more on your side because you've found money. People think money is everything. It is not, if you want to survive you have to pray and ask God for help. That is how I survived all these years. I lived alone all these years with my children. My husband and I separated because of alcohol.

When I was growing up the Tsuut'ina language was still strong amongst the people. Also our music has changed too, my children were listening to hard rock music. I bought them all musical instruments. So they got into that. It was the musical teenage before they started growing up. We forgot about our church. We hardly see young people in the church. We older people still carry it on. I haven't been to church for so long. I don't know what's going on now.

Seeing the language suffer, well I didn't teach my daughter. I was working in town and I spoke English all the time. I came home and spoke English to my children. I never taught Sandra how to speak Tsuut'ina. She asks me why you don't talk Tsuut'ina to me. I said it just came natural. I talk English when I get home. I never thought anything of it. If somebody told me what I was doing, maybe I could have taught my children. If somebody had pointed that out to me. You have to let people know that they only say we are going to lose our language and there's going to be no more Tsuut'ina.

A lot of those have to do with marriages. All my boys are married to girls from other reserves, like Cardston, Enoch and Blackfoot. My boys had to marry those girls because if they married girls on the reserve they would be relatives. It's something we're really strict about, no intermarriages because it will hurt the children that will be coming from that couple. So that was the main thing that we talked about, inter marriages. Even me I was told, you tell your boy don't go with that girl that's his cousin. I said thank you for letting me know. I didn't know he was going with her. That was a decent way of telling me, that my boy was running around with a girl that comes from his family.

That's how it ended up being so many different languages and now a lot of the young people are going with white girls and they can't marry them because we have a membership code. It says if you marry that white girl than you're off the band list. Right now they've been having meetings and they've hired people to go around and gather people to talk about the membership code. They want to change it and so it won't hurt our future generations. If it keeps up like that we will have no more Tsuut'ina. Just like we are losing our language.

I guess when you have children, you have priorities while you have life. You brought your children into the world and you have to help them grow up. You can't just bring them up in the world and expect them to grow up on their own. You can send them to their granny's, if they still have grannies.

I like to do more stuff for my children but it didn't turn out that way. It's something you can't get rid of love for your children, no matter what. If your children beat you up, you can forgive them and ask them what has brought them to do that.

I miss that one that just passed away. He was a big help to me and I depended on him for everything. He helped by telling me what to do. He had good thoughts, the only thing he had never dealt with was the people. He said that would only cause more trouble.

He said mom you better do something with your beadwork, take it to the museum. He said take it to the girl there and tell them what you want to do with it. She's an honest person. I know who he's talking about. I think he bought a buckskin dress for his little girl. He never told me, I could have finished the dress. I was doing it to give that girl a chance to go on the parade. She wanted to go on the parade so badly.

We managed to find moccasins and belts with my beadwork. We managed to dress her and her horse. I told him, you should have told me. You know I'll do anything for my children. He said you got too many to look after. I said I could do it, as long as I'm in good health. I'll do anything for your children. It means something to me. It means something to wear buckskin clothes.

I'm thinking of making a buckskin vest for my grandson now. He wanted a whole outfit but he knows I couldn't do it. I'm just going to make him a full beaded vest with moccasins. I made four purses, for my three girls and my oldest son. There's only two I haven't made anything for. I want to do it before I lose control over my hands. Otherwise your hands shake.

All I like to see is those who are doing well like Bruce Starlight. His wife, she would cook and she would bring me a plate at the Calgary Stampede. I can never forget that. That's a real Indian way.

My message to the young people is, I just wish people would help each other more. Not to give them money or anything like that, or not talking about a bottle of wine. Talk about how you survive, and help your fellowmen because there are lots of things young people don't know. Harley's boys they know how to butcher a moose or a deer and lots of the boys don't know. That's one of ways to survive is how to get food. Teach them if they don't know how to hunt for deer.

If they get into trouble in some areas they'll get into trouble with the law to get food and to get money. It's not going to work that way. My dad used to say everything you get is from the Lord. When you're having a hard time, don't forget to pray. You can get your strength from the Lord. He calls Him the one that created us. We call Him in our language nato, ?itoo, our father He created everything, even those ants you killed. I told my grandson to come out here, he was in his room. Come out here and kill those gophers they're starting to get too many. He said why they want to live too. I said why do you want them to go under the house and come up your floor. Oh I have fun with my grandson.

## BIOGRAPHY OF GERALD MEGUINIS

Gerald Meguinis, also known as Zask'a. Zask'a means Winter in Tsuut'ina. Gerald was born and raised on the Tsuut'ina Nation Reserve, Alberta, Canada. Gerald was born on December 9<sup>th</sup> 1948. Gerald's mother is Helen Meguinis and his father is Phillip Meguinis. Gerald is a knowledgeable and humble man. He is the youngest fluent speaker in Tsuut'ina. He has taught the Tsuut'ina language in the school's to keep our language persuasive. Gerald once said, "Once our language is saved, our community is saved". He has a strong intention and spirit for our language to be revitalized again.

## Gerald Meguinis

My name is Gerald Meguinis, I also have an Indian name giving to me by Dick Starlight's mother when I was a child. They called me Zask'a, and that means winter. And my brother was the opposite his was ?Ama, and that means summer. So to tell the difference between my brother, and me, that's how you can tell. I didn't get any other name that I know of. I turned the age of 61 on December 9th of this last year. It doesn't seem like it but that's my age right now.

My mom was Helen Meguinis, and ever since she's passed on there's been people that I never knew in my life that has been telling me about her. Telling me that they knew her, and where they met up with her.

She was a woman that took children from different nationalities as her own and they used to call her mom. So I guess I have a lot of brothers and sisters out there that I don't know about. The only time I got to know some of them was when she passed away and they came to the funeral. So I still have a long ways to go on that, for who she really knew.

When the time was coming near to my mom's passing it was hard for her to say anything because she was so sick. The things I do remember when she was well, she said when I do go you as children stick together. Don't let anybody go, and help each other. Look after your children, and your grandchildren, talk to them. It's your duty, I can't do it anymore. They won't listen to me, they won't listen to an old lady. If anything when I'm gone do these things.

When people want you and need you, help them out. Don't be stingy with anything and don't try to hold out. Where is it going to get you when you hold out on a story or anything? Just you will know and nobody else, so share it. If you can't write a book well talk about it.

When people come to you asking you for help, try and help them the best way that you can. Just do your best and keep checking on each other. Not every one of you are well people. My sister and brothers are not healthy, so we keep checking on each other. Don't fight each other, work as a team. Most of all respect each other, don't say bad things towards each other. When they put you down the only time you start crying is when you ask for forgiveness. So respect each other, or you might lose focus on it some days but try and stay on that path.

So that's what she said, and that's before she got sick. When she got sick all she wanted to watch was the Calgary Flames game when she was in the hospital. She was always chasing me home when she was sick. She said you better go home your children they might be hungry. Go home and feed them. She didn't want us to be there. She wanted to come home with us. The more we came, the more she wanted to come home. That's why she didn't want us to be in the hospital. She wanted to come home with me but she couldn't

because the doctors wouldn't let her. No matter, the girls always went to go and see her. I kept telling them don't go see her. She's going to get mad at you. When she sees you, she gets home sick.

Dr. Murray, the Indian agent/doctor. Well that one time I heard him say that he wanted to adopt me. I guess the answers right here, that he didn't. He wanted to take me when I was small. My mom didn't want to let me go. I often ask mom, would you have done it? She said no, you crazy. Don't talk like that. As it was brought up, we killed it right there. I thought I would let you know because there was a possibility. Can you imagine how I would be raised? I wonder how I would turn out to be today. I kind of wonder sometimes.

I never saw him in life. The stories they have told, they said he was pretty good. I don't know how many people told him. My mom told me that he was pretty good. He lived in town. He would come out and do his rounds and everything. After he left I don't know who took over and everything. That is as far as I know. Well today they name the health centre after him. I think it's through my mom that they got that idea, I'm not too sure. I don't see a plaque or anything with his name on it. All I saw was plywood, you know with his name on it. It's something to ponder.

As for my dad, my dad is Phillip Meguinis. He was a very knowledgeable person. I spent a lot of time riding around and working with him. During springtime, when we are done branding and hunting, we did just about everything together. He taught me a lot of things. During the time he was alive, between jobs and stuff, he told me stories. He used to say, one of these days these stories are going to come in handy. I said yeah sure. It's just to pass the time.

Lately over the five or four years the stories he has told me, when he was alive, are starting to come in handy. There were stories that sounded like riddles. Sometimes when you hear stories you have to figure it out. Now that I think about it, what he told me is coming so true.

He was a very people person. He was liked on the reserve. I mean people didn't hate him for what he was. He was a person that used to joke with people and tease them. And he was a person that used to make people laugh, just to make their day. Even if the person is crabby, he'll get on the person somehow and brings up the persons past. Sometimes, guys want to kill him. He was that kind of person.

He was a very hard working person, and the last time I saw him was during Indian days. He called me over and he had a pair of brand new gloves. He said son look what I got. He said he has his new gloves.

After Indian days we start to work and start haying. That day he never came. On the weekend he ended up in the hospital. I started haying without him, and a whole month of

waiting to see if he's going to get better. My heart was at the haying. My mind was at the hospital, just wondering if he'll get better.

He left me, it was hard. He told me something like this was bound to happen. He told me to get my act together. I have to do things on my own. He said everything I have taught you, you better remember. When I leave you, you're the one that has to teach your children and your grandchildren and talk to them no matter what happens; today life is so fast for them. They can't grasp anything. They can't think straight.

They come to me with their little problems, and marriage problems. I just say slow down, and nothing is as bad as it seems, you just have to re-think things. I'm getting to the point, like last week I got sick, and my grandson came to me. He had little girl problems and after that I got sick. During the time when I was laying in bed wondering if I'm going to get better or not; It was time to reflect on the things I did in my lifetime.

My dad and my in-laws said to me, when you get to our age you will get to know what we've been through. It's sure coming true now, and eat what you want to eat nowadays. I'm lucky, because I'm here to tell you guys on what I've encountered. It's pretty hard to find a person that will lay his cards right on the table and tell you what has happened.

The other things I got from my dad, was the time when I was always around him. He always told me to help out wherever it was needed. Never to look on, and watch a person suffer. You know if he's doing something, just get in there and help out. You don't have to get paid or something just get in there and help them. Even if they're having a hard time, get in there and give them a helping hand. Make it easier for that person. That was the law, just don't look on and don't let anybody sink with their ship. You are never sick or anything, you are always motivated. You get these guys that are laid back and don't help anymore and it's hard, very hard.

Like even drinking, we had our shares of drinking. One day, he said you see all that beer there. I said yeah. He said you could be buying diapers and milk instead of buying that. Don't you think that's what the picture should be instead of you drinking beer. What happened was I offered him a beer first. He saw all these beer laying there. He never got mad he just said that's what I would do. So after that my conscience started bugging me, so I slowly tapered off.

You know even in that category he was good at counseling. Just for people to improve their lives. Like I said, he was a person that joked a lot with the boys. Teased them, and he used to bring laughter. You know when he's around because they would say, oh there's that damn Phillip. Everybody got to work and get out of his way. If not he's going to be down my neck. So they kind of stayed away from him. They gave him that respectable distance. If they had no choice, they had to confront and cross paths with him and stuff.

I think about him quite a bit, we were just talking about him a month ago my aunt and I. When he was just about passing away. She said she went to see him and she told him, your horses are outside waiting for you and I know you're not getting better so you better leave; go, your team is waiting outside for you. Go out and get on them and leave, leave us here and we'll deal with this misery.

Even when he's gone and when people talk about him nicely, the good times that they had; it's nice to hear people talking about him like that. I'm very thankful for people talking about him like that. Lots of memories, and there are certain areas where you can remember clearly. There are some things that you kind of block out and can't remember or you just don't want to talk about it and stuff like that.

You know every day, as you get older you realize a lot of things. You start praying to have a good day and I never did when I was younger. Just to make the day better for myself and whoever is related to me. As the day goes by I guess you really appreciate everyday as you get older. The little things to appreciate life. Some people don't really grasp it. They don't get up in the morning and feel good, eat breakfast and say your prayers. There are some people, I think about, that have all these problems. I think to myself how can I help them. The way I do it, is to pray for everybody but I don't go around and show off telling them I pray for everyone. I just keep it inside of me as much as I can. The love is there, that whole reserve out there I'm related to.

Right now I can't even do too much, nephews and grandson are just jumping at me, saying uncle I'll do this or grandpa I'll do that for you. I always picked up my garbage when I needed to, but that's how much respect I get. I'm glad some of the younger parents were taught to respect their elders and they are very polite.

Well my dad's mom is Bessie Meguinis. There was my dad, Mary Jane Starlight, Mike Meguinis, Sarah Meguinis and Walter Meguinis. That's all my aunts and uncles on my dad's side. I'm not too sure, but I want to get it crystal clear that Grasshopper, supposed to be our name. How we ended up with Meguinis, was something mixed up or something and I don't want to say anything on tape that is not right. Ever since I've known I've been stuck with that name. That's how I'm related. I know Bessie. I spent time with her, when I was younger about ten or twelve years old. She used to stay with Sarah. She used to take care of ?ino Bessie.

Granny Bessie was the great one for beading. Her brother was David Crowchild, and David used to get Bessie to do stuff for the Calgary Stampede. Teepee pegs, and the tripods for the backrest inside the teepee. She used to do a lot of stuff like tanning hides. She did a lot of beading for her children. You know moccasins, belts, and stuff like that. I wonder if they still have it today, I don't know. She made me a belt but I don't know where it went. It was a nice belt that she made me. When we used to go to school, the days we were not feeling good we used to stay home and there's not much for us to do. She used to give us a tea towel, and she would poor beads in there and told us to go bead.

So she gave me some beads and thread. I used to bead, I don't know if I ever finished it or anything.

Whatever she taught me, I spent every little time with her, now today I'm doing it. I'm getting orders to make moccasins. I learned from her. The designs that she had, those were geometric designs, like for an example, those little pyramids. Those were her designs. When she passed away, I just don't remember which day, she passed away. They showed some of her stuff of what she did. I remember that because they had displayed the things she was working on.

She was a person that always smoked a pipe, just an ordinary pipe. She smoked straight Irish Twist cut tobacco. The tobacco you cut up. We used to get her that for a Christmas gift. The tobacco was hard to find; I don't think anybody makes it anymore. Whenever we had a sinus problem or head cold, she would take the stem of that pipe and blow it right in our noses. It cleared your head up pretty good.

She had medicines for men to clear out your systems. She would make a pot and boil it, and give it to the uncles and the men, just to clean out our systems. It we used to do it every month, because you're supposed to keep your body really well.

She beads whatever she wants and in the evenings she plays cards. Her cards were starting to get faded because she played it so much. That's how much I can remember about her.

Where she stayed was at her little white house, just west of there, there was an old barn. In the attic she used to have all her hides in there. You know the stuff she worked on. You know I never had the chance to see her work. She worked in the attic. She did do some tanning and she did a lot of things for her brother.

She was a church going women. Every Sunday, a little argument starts up. Did you ever watch that movie with that Indian lawyer, with his stick and his salt, moving it up in the air? That was her. She had her stick up in the air. What I mean is by getting us into trouble. We had the vehicles to pick her up and drive her down. But nope, she would say I'll use my legs. She would go as far down as my other grandmothers. My mom's mom Mable, she meets up with her and then they continue. They walk way down to the agency. They would go to church.

She had a big green shawl with a safety pin. That's how religious they were, after they used to catch a ride or walk up back home. That is how she was, she wasn't a big person. She was a short little old lady. So that's how much I can remember of her.

On my mom's side, my mom's mothers name was Mable Dodginghorse. Mable was married to Anthony Dodginghorse. In that family there was Henry Dodginghorse, my mom, and Robert Dodginghorse. Back a little further, Mable Dodginghorse, her dad was

Two Guns. Two Guns never had a Christian name, that's how I knew him. I never knew him in my lifetime. I never had the chance to know him. The stories I've heard that he was one of the people that looked after the Beaver Bundle. It's kind of strange to see that Two Guns daughter was very Christian, my granny Mable. At that time my mom and dad got married, but after a certain time they separated. During that time when they were together, there was just Brian and me.

So my dad married another woman and my mom married another man. When that happened it became one big happy family. So at that time, my granny Mable took me and my brother Brian and she raised us. She would send us to school, and she raised us right when we were young. We stayed in that little red house.

The people that stayed with us were me, and Brian, my granny and my uncle Robert. My mom had her own place just at the north of us. She had her own house there. My uncle had cattle and horses down the hill there, and that's where he looked after them. We helped along. I mean by helping along, we had to pump the water for the animals. It never seemed like we got anywhere with it. Every time you pump, it already goes down. He had a big team of horses, and those horses can drink. Because the animals drank it as fast as we pumped it. There were cattle, and when I get tired of pumping water. Brian would take over. It was one of those days you wish you had a machine.

I noticed back then when there were all these houses, there were always three or four houses in a group. I used to wonder why, and here I found out because of the water wells. One well for those row of houses. There was my mom's house, and my granny Mable's. There was one house just at the south of us. I only saw the foundation of it. Further on there's another house, that one was John Sleight and his wife. Below there was where the pump was.

In the 50's that's when they got their own pumps. It was right between my mom's and granny's place. So we didn't have to go that far anymore. So that was the reason why they used to have houses close together. That one house, I always used to see the foundation. I never used to know who lived there. People used to move around quite a bit in those days. It was cold in the houses those days, now the houses we have today, are warm. You can hear every movement. I don't know how the old lady got everything going good. We had two stoves, one in the kitchen and the other in the living room.

We never had to go to bed, no television. However it was nice, every day we had porridge, get our lunches and go to school. Nowadays it's really cold and you can't even go outside. Back then it was twenty or thirty below for months and it was nothing and ten below was a Chinook. The days were so cold.

Now today everything has changed, now today it's Celsius, and back in the day it used to be Fahrenheit. It was a nice clean life. I'm kind of noticing the difference between hardships. Long ago you had to do it, or you're not going to succeed. Now today it's so

easy, and everything is getting so easy for everybody. It's kind of getting ridiculous. Now you don't have to earn your money.

Now today I don't think the young people today even know how to use a hammer or an axe. They always got that frightening feeling of using an axe because they might cut their feet. During our days, I used to use one hand to chop up the wood. We always had to have wood and water every day.

My grandfather Anthony, he was a very kind hearted and a working person. He was a person that traveled, and he never stayed home. He was a person that was always on the go. He always rode on the trains. Where he went, I don't know.

Two Guns, he had a lot to do with the old ways with the bundles and stuff. My mom told me this one time, I don't know which year it was, but it came to one year, that there were Cree's who came and captured Tsuut'ina women. The Tsuut'ina captured the Cree women. What happened was that, the Cree women that were here in Tsuut'ina got shipped back north and vice versa. The Crees shipped back the Tsuut'ina women.

My grandfather Two Guns hooked up with this woman. She was a Tsuut'ina but when she was up north she was staying with this woman that knew how to work medicine. She got the herbs and all that stuff. The story goes like this, Two Guns hooked up with this woman. They stayed together and after a while he kind of didn't like the idea. What I mean by that is she used to make good medicine for people, and people used to come to her. She was working both sides of the fence, like between good and bad. He didn't like what she was doing. I guess he found out what she really was. I don't want to touch up on it, but I know there's more that happened. I'll just leave it at that.

Two Guns, he looked after the bundles. Remember when I told you that he hooked up with that woman he married. When Two Guns married that woman, she could help people the good way and the bad way. Two Guns didn't like that. This woman can either heal you or put medicine on you. Either way, or he didn't like it. So when that time came he took the bundle out and he just hung it outside on the tree. He didn't want any harm to come to him. I think it was Jack Big Plume that came along and saw it. He thought Two Guns didn't want that bundle so he took it. He took it over to Joe Big Plume but it wasn't that, it was because of that woman.

He didn't want it in the house with that woman. So after a while that woman kind of lost it, and she had a big knife and she was stabbing the ground around herself. She got committed and she got sent up to Ponoka. She passed away up there.

Her bundle, her medicine, Two Guns took it up to the foothills and buried it up there with all that stuff she had. When she died in Ponoka, my granny Mable had a blue elk dress that they sent it up there for her to be buried in. To put it on her for her to be buried in. That dress was sent up but it was never put on, Two Guns wife. When she came

back from Ponoka she still had that nightgown she died in. Where that dress went, nobody knows. It was a nice velvet dress. So that's as far as I know and there is more I can tell you but my eyes are getting tired.

Pat Grasshopper, well I know that he's related to us through my grandfather. The only time I knew that he existed was when they had his bead work. They had four trucks filled of his bead work. The way I understand it, my dad was supposed to get it but he never did.

Grasshopper the name was given to him long ago when he was a young warrior. I forget who it was, but it was the Cree's they raided for the horses. When they stopped at the creek coming back from watering the horses and to eat something.

Grasshopper was one of them. He sat on a log along the river, and he was going to eat. He just sat there and out of nowhere a grasshopper jumped on him right on his chest and he fell back. Ever since then the people that were with him started calling him Afraid of Grasshopper.

That's how he got his name. He had a different name but I just don't remember right at the moment. A grasshopper scared him and that's how he got his name. That is as far as I know. There's more to it. To be honest I can't say. Maybe if I had my friends with me we can feed off each other's stories and it'll refresh our memories.

It's not like today. We do have politicians. It's our Chief and Council. What they really lack is to have really good knowledge of where they are coming from, and their language, and what they are thinking. You don't have to have a degree or anything, as long as you have your language, and know what you're doing. Getting your point clearly across to the people for what you want. You can go a long ways, it's simple as that. Nowadays they get to the point where it's so mumbled up that nobody knows what people want. It gets everybody frustrated.

Every year our land seems like it's getting smaller, and smaller. We're living on an island right now. People don't realize that we are surrounded by white men right around our whole reserve. Our population is rising, I don't know exactly how many Tsuut'ina there are today. Now they are building houses.

I told my girl, I said my girl we have to smarten up, about the land that was allocated to us. We have to try and put up our fences. One of these days we are going to have some neighbors that you are not going to like. Maybe I won't be here to fight for the land for you. That's our land that was given to us. So the land versus the people.

Building codes and membership codes that should have been kept up long time ago. That just went to the side. That should have been kept up. We have BillC-31, with our

own women coming back. Our own women and we have to look after them regardless of all these things.

Fighting for the water, people don't know about that. You know something that we take for advantage. The white men would take that away from us. I know it but does the reserve know it, no, I don't think so. They are too busy trying to do other things, and they're trying to ignore it. What's going to happen, when it's just a little too late. They are going to think we should have done something about it.

They have some ideas because my brother came up to me about it like a year ago. He said brother I have these big containers sitting here. I said what are you going to do with them. He said my plan is to start putting stuff away. In case there's a disaster or something. That is so everybody can just get prepared for it. Start some gardens and go back to the old pumps. How do we know if it's going to be like this for thousands of years.

You never know because it'll be like pressing a button and it'll be back to square one. That's when your old ways come back. If you don't know your old ways you'll just be sitting on a rock. You won't be able to know what to do. If you know your old ways, you can at least go out hunting, or if you know how to plant. Further down the line it's going to help you.

There are a lot of unanswered questions that people just don't want to hear. That's where you get into big arguments, like little groups here and there they just fight. There's nobody better than nobody. Everybody is right, you just have to get together as a group because you are not going to get anywhere just by one person, it takes a group.

I hope to see them come together as a group to go forward. I guess a good example can be, when a car gets stuck you are not going to get it out by yourself. You have to phone your brothers, uncles and aunts. To tell them to help you push out your car. Well that is the same as a problem. You have to work together to solve the problem. That is the way I look at it.

Over the last two months I had the chance of going through Bessie Onespots tapes that were taped by Diane and Jeannette's stories. They were recorded of all the deeds that Bullhead did. It's very interesting what he did.

Bullhead, well my dad wasn't too keen on things like that. He more or less told me things to deal with life. He had a certain way of expressing himself. When we were talking about Bullhead, on my mom's side they must have had some knowledge of him. The things that he did. We never really discussed what he did. He was related to the Big Plumes. That's how he is related on the reserve.

Just lately I just heard about the things that Bullhead did to get where we are living now. The things that he had to go through, politics wise, and how he dealt with the

government to get what he wanted. I guess it just goes to show how powerful he was and how he used his influence over the white people. There was no lobbying and stuff like that. He said I want this and he got it. He had certain ways of getting what he wanted.

My mom talked to me about Bullhead. It wasn't something that happened over night. It happened over twelve years. He finally got what he wanted. I guess he knew that he got the cards dealt with in his hands, some way or another. Bullhead, as far as I know for what he wanted and it was our land. It's six miles by eighteen miles.

The story goes that, we were down where the Blackfoot are right now. We couldn't live next to each other. I guess what happened, was the story I heard that it started over a horse. I don't know whether it was a Tsuut'ina horse or a Blackfoot horse. Then it exploded and then everybody got involved. That's how come we moved away. We didn't want to stick around there.

The Tsuut'ina were very proud people. During my time on this earth, I saw people who were ready to fight and there was no backing away and they won't back down. I don't know exactly how many people he had with him at that time when he moved away. When he did move away he came over where 22x highway is now, and down to Fish Creek. Then he saw the land and then he said that's where I want my people to be. It wasn't just Tsuut'ina, there were other people, long ago you hung around with whoever you wanted. It wasn't a big deal, because there was no laws saying my friend here is not full blooded Tsuut'ina. We hung around all these years together so why not stay there, he's with me. Nowadays it's different, it's the law.

He just didn't stayed around here. He stayed up way near Edmonton. The Crees were our enemies. They are people who we were always having constant fights with them. The reason why it happened was that way long ago we were way up north of here. We ended up somewhere near Waterton Lake area.

So that's how we were down there. How we fought over a little argument over the horse, and whatever happened there. He pushed us back to where we are today. So that's how it goes.

Long ago the Bloods took us in. They said you guys come and stick around with us. They didn't take us in because we had no food or no place to go. They knew us for our reputation for being warriors. What happened back in the day is that the south west corner was unprotected. So here we come along making our way through, we took the job to protect the area. We stayed there but we hooked up with the Bloods. Just to see where we were, it was the south western Alberta, the Bloods, the Blackfoots.

We were surrounding Crowfoot who was in the middle, he was the head honcho. We were protecting him. We were allies. He was just looking at Edmonton, because he was the centre of everything.

Nobody ever considered him important, like he was just another man. That's how the white people used to think. We had our own way of government, but the people never knew. I don't really know that they knew how the structure worked. There was such a thing as a structure that worked long ago.

Some of the children say there must be more land some place that is allocated to the Tsuut'ina people that's in the treaty, but we don't see it. Well there is Moose Mountain. Further than that there must be some more land. I'm not saying there is, and it would be good to fall back on the treaty if there is more land. There would be very good decision that Bullhead made. There was flat land, bush land and timberland, you know there's those three things. You can't make too much living on the prairies. You just got that one, maybe you have mining or something but that's about it. Out here you have ranching, mining, timber, and logging, all these different things we have. I've been in all categories of that so I should know what I'm talking about.

We used to do a lot of logging around Bragg Creek too. Last time I went out was five or six years ago. So many logs we cut down, and it was a messy thing, you know when it comes down to it. If snow is covering them it's hard to see. Some of the boys left logs out there, and they didn't skid out to the mill. There were nice big logs. I remember those days. When you think of that I just feel a skip and a holler. You wish you were back in those days. Our job was trimming and stuff like that. We would get about a good eighty bucks, but it was a hard job. You get eighty dollars every week and you think you're a rich person but today you try and do that and there's no way. Money went further long ago.

Stories about the migration from the north is basic knowledge, and my mom didn't tell me. I heard of it and it wasn't one major migration. It was about three or four. I think the reason on what really happened was because of the mountain area. The story of what I've been told and what I heard is that we started from up north. At the time we came to this big lake. It must have been early spring. They had a choice, either to go around that lake or go right straight across the lake. So the choice was made to go across the lake. So they went just to cut some miles. What time of the day they crossed. It must have been early in the morning, towards noon they started. They started moving, but what happened, as they started moving, the more people started getting on the lake, the more wear and tear the ice started taking.

It came to a point where this woman had a child. I don't know whether it was a boy or girl; I don't it wasn't mentioned. The child was tied up to the woman on her back. She started going out across the lake. The child, I don't know if it was half ways or just about to the other side. The story it doesn't tell you exactly where. As the story goes, they said it was a horn. What kind of horn I don't know, either it was an elk or a deer. Whatever it was I don't know. The horn was sticking out of the ice, and that child was determined to get that horn regardless if they would make it to the other side. So the woman decided to do what the child wanted.

As the story goes, some say it was a knife or a hatchet. She started trying to free that horn from the ice. She was really trying to get it out of the ice, pulling on it and trying whichever way to get it out. Every time she hit the ice, you can hear the ice cracking.

Then finally she got it out, and cleaned it off and gave it to her child. Then they continued to walk again. The story doesn't say whether the woman and the child made it across. The story goes all hell broke loose. The ice started cracking, people panicking. Some made it to the south and north side, people were panicking so they all scattered everywhere. Some never made it out because they drowned.

At that time there was not much you can do. You either keep going because there was no way of retrieving those bodies in the ice cold water. So the people on the north side got stuck there or can't get across. So they must of went back to set up camp.

The rest on the other side couldn't wait any longer so they kept going. They probably thought eventually those guys will catch up to us. They claim that happened at Buffalo Lake. People say that if you stand there in the evenings you can hear those people. The people who have drowned and that you can still hear them crying.

I've always wanted to go check it out, before I get too old. Nowadays they have new machinery and it's not hard to go back ten or twenty years ago. It was pretty hard to travel, and now it only takes a couple hours to get up there. I mean just to see the place, I've heard of it, read of it, and people telling me about it. I would just like to see it if it did happen.

The people that went south kept going. I guess that's the Apaches and Navajos. Over the past year we had the chance to get all the Dene, Apaches and the Navajos to come to our reserve. We got them together and got all the stories. To tell their version of what they heard of the migrations. It's just about the same, but it didn't happen just that one time. The migrations happened two or three more times. I mean they did migrate, and some people would say yeah just that one tribe. It happened, and they came back and forth. The reason why is that some say they did more or less following their food supply. Wherever you found food, you had to go back long ago. So it's very interesting and sometimes it ponders your mind. We know it's true and it did happen. I hear other people telling stories about the same thing.

The Apaches and the Navajos are really hesitant when we have get together. Their prediction on things like that are on their end times. They say if the Dene and the Tsuut'ina come back together, time as we know it will end, and they don't want it to happen. So that's why they're kind of reluctant to come up to meet with us. Their medicine men predicted this.

The Navajo said if you go up, you will know that we have relatives up that way. Yet they don't really want to come, because they don't want those predictions to come true. That the world as we know it will come to an end. So they hesitate.

Lately we've been asked to give lectures to the children. The children sitting right there in front of me, and they are Tsuut'ina, my grandchildren. They feel so small, what I mean by their heritage, they know nothing because nobody ever taught them anything. I tell them way up north just at the tip of Northern America, in Alaska, all that way, that's our people. You turn on the television and they have movies about the Blackfoot and the Sioux and the Cheyenne. I say that's just a pinch. If you talk about Tsuut'ina we are all those two continents. That's how big a group we are I tell them. That makes me feel even more prouder.

World War II, one child got up and asked what about it. If it wasn't for our language we wouldn't have won World War II. So my dad didn't go, and it's not about that. Navajo knew how to speak Dene. That's our language, that's they're language. That's how come we beat the Japanese. They were sworn to secrecy and just over the last five years they got recognized for what they have done. Now you tell me who's greater the one's you see on television or us Tsuut'ina. All the children said, us! Us! We are greater! You can walk out that door and tell them if it weren't for us you wouldn't be walking free.

I explained to them what happened. That child that was sitting there, he didn't say anything he just got up once I finished talking. He grabbed me around the waist and said grandpa, thank you. I never realized. I said it's not your fault because your mom and dad don't know the stories, themselves. They are babies too. If no one told them then it's not your fault. Now I'm telling you, so you turn it around and go tell your mom and dad what you learned from me. That's your payment, you pay me back and go tell the story I've told you. So he did, and the next day he came back and told me, grandpa I told them what you told me to do. My mom and dad feel more proud of who they are now.

So it just takes a little push, and it doesn't take much. Children especially, because their magnets, anything you do they'll copy you. Anything you'll say they'll repeat it from five or six years from now. Their memories are good, if you were to repeat something to me right now I'll forget it. That's the way I like to do things.

My goal in life is to see one or two of my people, young people, fully immersed in Tsuut'ina, history, culture, beading wise, and at least we got that way to start somebody. It's out there, it's just that certain things that we have to do. Going back to that we have to do it together. The only way we're going to get it done is by a group. Nobody is a hero; we have to do it as one.

Earliest memories growing up on Tsuut'ina, from the time I started school, I started school at the Tsuut'ina Day School. From where my house is to get to the school we had to walk, there was Brian and I. Some say they had kindergarten but I'm not too sure. I

know it was grades one through three and that was one classroom. In the other room it was grades four through six. There was two classrooms right beside each other, you have the wall in between and a door, so there was a classroom with the smaller children then the next room with the bigger children. We learned our basics like the ABC's, how to count and write. We got our everything because we had to know it.

I went back and forth every day. I think the only time they shut it down when it got really cold. I think it was a little over twenty below and they wouldn't have school. The children still went to school. I didn't think they cared.

My teachers were, Miss Zacharias, she used to teach the younger ones. There was Ms Remple, she was a tall slender person, and she had one arm. She was a good teacher. My wife and me were just talking about her the other day. She taught the girls a lot, like how to knit. She had done it with just her one arm.

By the end of the day, by three o'clock anybody that was Catholic was pushed to one room and the others in the other room. We believed in our own religion. When I was going to school I never heard any of our own customs that were ever practiced. They must have been but I was pretty young.

We would get our TB tests done at the old Bullhead hall that was just right across from us, and they used to march us over there. The smaller ones we would push them on an orange crate. I never did find out who that guy was that used to go behind the petition. They must take a picture then go back, I don't know. We thought it was a treat because it took up most of the day. Sometimes nurses and dentists came, and that one time the nurses came and we all got a needle. The next day, I don't know what happened whether she was using the same needle. Our arms were swollen. The girls couldn't even move their arms. I don't know what happened, and nothing was ever done. The parents complained.

In the hallway where we hang our coats I had to grab the coats, you know where you hang your jackets and pull up your t-shirt. They had a glass with a needle and they would scrap your back and I don't know what that was for and that hurt.

The dentist was gross. I'm scared of the dentist to this day. I don't think they ever froze a person's gums. I mean, from where they are going to pull a tooth. I'm terrified of the dentist, because that's a butcher shop.

During that time the teachers had a place right in the school there, a little room where they stayed and during noon hour they made hot chocolate for us. They gave us a big blue vitamin pill, tastes like cotton, but that was our treat.

Downstairs they used to have these big boxes. We used to call them dog biscuits and you can take all you want. I don't know where they got them. We always used to take a few,

because we always used to get hungry towards the afternoon around three or four. We took some home, eat some on the way home.

Violet Crowchild, she was a janitor. She used to come in when everyone leaves and she used to clean up. It was a really nice school. We had Christmas concerts. Everybody used to come to the old Bullhead hall and we would have a tree.

One thing I'll tell you about this place is that I got to read. I was not a good reader. I also learned how to write, and I learned my arithmetic, and I also learned about science and social studies stuff. This was in grade one, two and three. I knew my timetables. Now today if you take a child out there and he'll be in grade three. He still won't know how to write his name. What they teach them, I don't know. They call themselves teachers. If you're a teacher you're supposed to teach them all these basic things.

I used to be a substitute teacher for culture and language, and I used to ask the children to write their names down on their paper. There was this one child that was chewing on his pencil. I asked him are you going to eat the pencil or write your name. He said to me, I'm sorry to say Mr. Meguinis but I don't know how to write my name. I asked, doesn't your teacher teach you how to write your name and he said nope. Then I said okay if she can't do it then lets do it.

It took me two days to get him to write his name. I taught him how to write his name, and the child was so proud of it. He said to me I know how to write my name and you taught me. I said well that's good.

The years I was in school was during the 1950's, and I remember that I was in grade seven and it was 1963, why I remember that is because Kennedy got shot. That's what you think, where you were when he got shot. That's what I remember. I was in grade seven at St. Augustine's. We just broke, and what happens is that when we take a class, the teacher stays there but we all move to different classes. The buzzer went on and then all of a sudden there were no classes.

I noticed that there were a lot of young girls in the hallway crying and I was wondering what the hell happened. I asked one of the guys, and he said Kennedy just got shot. I was like what, yeah he just got shot. Right there, there were no more classes, and there was an assembly, and it was a Catholic church so everybody just started praying. Not even fifteen minutes he was being pronounced dead on the television. It was telling what happened, and it kept replaying.

After that the schools were laid back, and there wasn't that much classes. It was a really big thing. Everybody was really into it too. He was really important for him to reach into Canada like that. To be assassinated, he must have been doing something right that people didn't like. I mean he was getting somewhere. So my way of thinking, they just

didn't want him to continue. The old colored guy, Mr. King, he must have been doing something right too.

I never went to boarding school. I only went to day school. I think my mom and dad went to boarding school and stuff like that. During my time there was no boarding school. They used to tell me by the time they went down there, their parents took them down. Their parents left them, and they stayed there. Some of them were lucky enough to go home during the weekends. That was just some of them. My dad, he more or less just stuck around down there.

My dad didn't really say too much on the learning aspect of it. You know how to read and write and stuff like that. It was more or less that they done more work outside than going to school.

He remembers that they used to have a big garden. They used to steal the turnips when they got to a pretty good size. Then they were excused to take the horse for water down to the creek. Then they would take their turnip with them and eat it down by the creek while they're watering the horses. The horses belonged to the school.

They also made butter that they never ate. He said what the hell; why are we doing all these things? He used to kind of imitate what they would do. He said we were never going to eat these damn stuff. Those guys in there are going to eat it. He also said we did a lot of things. We weren't allowed to eat any of them. It was taken away and somebody else got them.

Talking about going to bed he kind of touched on it. He didn't really say anything, like he was scared. I asked him, why were you having bad dreams or what. He said, no son, it's not that. During the time he was there when he was my age. That's when I was about fourteen, fifteen he said. When I was your age it was time for me to go to bed; we were scared because next morning some of the boys wouldn't wake up because they would pass away in their sleep from the sicknesses. I guess that's why they were scared.

He used to say Isaac Crowchild and me, I guess we were made out of hard material because nothing can affect us, any kind of disease. We were the fortunate ones that are still living today.

People his age, some days there were about five or six coffins on top of each other being buried. It was a common sight to see. There was a funeral just about every other day. That's how much the disease wiped them out.

My dad never really specified what those sicknesses were when the boys would be scared to sleep at night. I don't really know what they were dying of. My way of thinking it was something really catchy. So on my way of thinking I think it was TB, but that was later on back in the 1920's, I know early on we did have the small pox. That was during my

grannies years I guess. Between that time up to today, I don't want to say something that I'm not too sure of so I won't comment on that.

He prayed, he gave thanks. He said I'm glad I'm here to tell you what I went through. He said he wouldn't wish it on anybody. With the conditions that they had to deal with. Archdeacon Timms passed away. They invited the boys that went to school. The Archdeacon Timms who was in control of the boarding school. When Archdeacon Timms was going down at the burial, one of the boys grabbed a big rock and threw it down in his grave. He said that's for all you put me through. That's how much the hate inside of him built up. When he passed away this boy, when he was older, he said you're the one that gave me a rough time now look where you are. I'm still standing here, and you are going down there. I guess that's how much he really put them through, all the students.

The women I don't really know too much. My mom didn't really say anything about them. There was quite a bit of them that my dad knew. If they were still alive today they would probably be in their late eighties or nineties. So its sad to say that all these things happened. It's good to talk about it. It's a constant reminder that you have to remember that they're all at peace now. All the things that they have went through, we have to tell to the children. So they can see the things the elders went through. So the children that are living today have to know what happened back then. It wasn't a paradise or anything. It was hell on earth. That's what I think.

The school was down by the agency on the reserve, and the name of the school, I have no idea. There must be a name for it. I was just down there about a week ago. I went down there to look for lilac trees that used to grow around that area. Today if you and me were to go back down there is a lot of vegetation. You can't see anything. Where that building used to be, it looks so different from when I used to see it when I was younger. It looks smaller, and the time I saw it, it was a big huge building to me but when I look at the foundation it's just a little place. As you grow older the things that you used to see as a child you used to see big hills. Now when I drive by it it's so small. It has a name, and I really don't know it to tell you the truth. If I knew I would tell you.

The one I talked about is where my dad went to school by the old agency. Where I went to school it was closer up on the north side. Coming from the main road going past the big administration building, down the coulee, past the Catholic Church and its about three or four kilometers west of there. There used to be the school and the Bullhead hall together. They were right across from each other. On the north side there used to be a little skating rink. For some reasons, which I don't know, they tore it down and it could have been still good. I mean people could of used it for other things. Some say it belonged to the government and that it didn't belong to us. They had the right to rip it down.

Our Bullhead Hall caught on fire, and I don't know how that happened. We still could have had a hall where could have had community things going on. That was a nice hall, a lot of memories. I got married there, had my reception there and everything. A lot of

band meetings happened there, also a lot of dances, and pow wow's, and it was a really nice place.

I remember this one time my dad telling me about this elderly lady and she used to live by herself and they used to go check on her every once in awhile just to see if she was okay. She still used to live in a tipi back in them days. Then one time they went to check up on her and they were calling out to her to see if she was okay. She wasn't well, and she wouldn't move. All that time she passed away in her sleep. They went in and checked her out. The way she was sleeping, it was just like she was just sleeping natural. When they turned her around they said she was just polluted with lice. So they had to burn up the tipi, the one that she lived in. Whether they buried her there or down by the cemetery, I really don't know. My dad never told me her name. It was just the story they he told me.

The time that he told me we were riding and we were looking around for cows that were sick. He was the great one to point out just about where she was living. We were looking at that place. It was a nice place way out in Wolf Flats. He was great one at telling me all these things. That is one of the stories I know. Another time I can remember was when tuberculosis came. When they had to ship some of the people up to Edmonton to Charles Camsell Hospital. I know my aunt Sarah, Robert Onespot, Clarence Big Crow, Agnes Onespot-Thomas, Albert Waters, Ruth Starlight, and they all got shipped up to Edmonton.

When they brought Clarence back he was a person that you never see in public. He's a kind of guy that's shy and stays indoors. He didn't want to be noticed. That's the way he wanted to be and he stayed to himself. He always stayed with his mom. He was self-conscious. He didn't want to be caught in public or anything.

Ruth, she's still with us. Robert, that would be Brian's father-in-law, and he passed away. Agnes is still with us, and aunty Sarah she passed on. These are the people who had TB that I know of.

Any other big disease like smallpox, I don't really recall any of those things that they told me. My mom and dad never really told me too much about it. I know there was small pox but I never really had the fortune to hear any stories. They never told me anything about it. They just never had the time to tell me. So I never knew too much about small pox, just TB and those people that went up to Camsell, and when they brought them back.

The other time I know, the meningitis hit the reserve and everybody got sick. That's an awful disease and you can get really sick. Otherwise it was self-contained; I guess that is how I would say it. The people that went through it, they never really talked about it to us. Whether they didn't wanted to know about it or they just want us to spare the misery of it. You know all the sufferings that went on. So that's, as much as I know, you know things like that I never heard nothing from my mom and dad. I never heard anything about the flu either.

Well speaking for the Catholic's I know we did have a priest that came out every Sunday. We were lucky because the church wasn't too far from where we lived. Brian and me our job was to supply the church with wood. They had a little wood stove in there and it wasn't really our job. It was just to help out. At that time there were a lot of families that came to church. What I mean by whole families the husband, the wife and the children. They were dressed up nicely, just like they were going to town, they had their Sunday best on. We used to have Dick Big Plumes family, they were Catholics.

My granny Mable, late Saturday night, and early Sunday mornings she made a lot of greasy bread, and it was just stacked up, and it was for Sunday. The reason she did was, when you go to Catholic Church, everybody has to fast three hours before they take communion. So most of the people didn't eat Sunday mornings. Granny Mable knew that because she knew those children are going to be hungry right when they come out of Church.

Dick Big Plume's children always used to come up to the house and visit, like Lucy, Joanie, and the girls, Gail and Connie, and Vinnie was the only boy that came up. They would come up by noon hour. When they came up my granny left, and she went to her Anglican Church and they got to eat all the food that she made. We used to play outside and stuff. Not only Dick Big Plume, there was Stanley Big Plume and his wife, Sam Simon and his family, Narcisse Pipestem. It was a small church and it got pretty packed. There was a little partition in the back were we used to sit there when the priest used to do the confession. It was something wonderful.

The late 1960's going to church started to die out. People going to church and stuff like that. It started to go downhill. Today, you don't see anybody, I mean there's people that still go to church. The only time you see people in church is when somebody passes away or if somebody gets married. That's the only time you see churches filled. Otherwise there's nothing and it makes you wonder how come people are not going to church anymore.

Most of them turned back to the old ways. Like praying with the pipe, which is good. I mean if you look at it from my point of view you go to the Anglican Church or Catholic. It doesn't matter because you're praying to the same Guy. Its just that your doing it a different way. They don't see it like that, Catholic might see it as, it's not the way. The Catholic didn't take time to go to a pipe ceremony and sit there and see what happens. We pray to the same God and, vise versa. I think today as I'm sitting there the majority of the people have gone back to the old ways. It's not a victory of our culture, it's just a wakeup call. It was there before the Catholics and the Anglicans came.

So that fight and arguing continue, my God is better than your God. To me there's just one God. We pray to him, just in a different way. He's the only person I can think of. If you go to a Catholic Church you have to kneel down and sing hymns, and take communion. Same thing with the Anglican. You get to drink some of the wine. When you

go to a sweat lodge, same thing, pray with your pipe, and after everything is over you have a feast. The only thing is that we don't wear clothes in the sweat. All our problems are left in the sweat.

When we go to Catholic Church, we don't guarantee the problems stay there, they might come out with you. So there are disadvantages and advantages. At one time the Anglican and Catholic Churches split the people up, just for a while. I mean when a woman was either a Catholic or the man was Anglican, marriage and funerals, the Anglicans and the Catholics question themselves. Where should we take them Anglican or Catholic. It didn't really matter, you know just going back to what I just finished saying.

When I got married my wife was Anglican and I was a Catholic. How are we going to solve this problem? We have to satisfy both my wife and I. So what happened was, I asked her, what are we going to do. She said I'll go to my Reverend and you go to your Priest. Well what I'm going to say I said, ask your priest if he can pray along with the Anglican together as one. To bless us together.

They both came to the Catholic Church. The reason why it was held there because it was a bigger Church and there was more room. The Reverend came up, and then my Priest came up and they both married us. Which satisfied both of our families. They didn't care because both of them were raised in the city. They were raised to understand us. They were men to kind of enlighten everybody. It was one big wedding, and I think that's the first time I seen an Anglican and Catholic together like that. Doing our vows and being blessed by both sides. I mean it wasn't like the hillbillies where you have the McCoys on this side. It was all mixed up. Overall it was all really nice. That problem what we were talking about, that there is only one God, it came up one time.

If I got time I'll explain it to you and in my memory it did happen during Stampede week. We were putting up the tipi. My wife and I we used to move in for our father-in-law because they were getting old. So we used to move in with them. Our responsibility, when we moved in, was to pitch up the tipi, take the tipi poles and pitch it up and make everything comfortable.

The old people were in charge, all we did was put everything together. During that time somebody came and I can't think of this person. He was walking down looking around the Indian Village and he had a camera when we pulled in that evening. We used to move in the same time as my dad. My dad had his father-in-law's tipi that he had to put up. So to save gas and money, we used to travel together my dad and I would pick up my poles and he would pick up his poles then we would all move together. He would help me pitch up my tipi then we would go and pitch up his tipi.

There was this one guy, and I noticed him, he's a white guy. In the distance he was just taking pictures, and my wife says there's just a white guy over there taking pictures. Did you see him? I said yeah I seen him, just don't bother him. He's not bothering us. So we

went in and we finished the tipi because we were all tired and I was lying on the ground. The grass was kind of wet, I was looking up at the tipi. I was thinking to myself, how in the world do people long ago master to put a tipi together? How to interlock everything.

This guy, the one I was talking about, that was taking pictures. He stuck his head in and took a picture of me. I was sleeping. I turned around and said what do you want. He said I want to ask you a couple questions. So come in I told him. He sat there beside me. He started talking about religion. He said can you tell me in simple words how I can go back and tell somebody, it's been bugging me he said, he asked do you pray to God? I said yes. He said which God? There's only one God I told him and I couldn't get it through his head.

So I told him to come here and lay down beside me. I was laying down on an old carpet. I said you look up. He said what am I looking at. I said look at the tipi. You see where all the four tipi poles are tied together. He said yeah, I said you see where it's all wrapped up with raw hide. Now look around it. You see all the tipi poles are interlocked all the way around. Now the question you asked me, do I pray to God, and I said yes.

Notice that rope coming down and it's anchored in the ground so the tipi won't blow away. So this is me, the rope is the prayer going up to God. It's right in the middle. You notice all these poles, every pole that's a different religion. You know where they end up, they join up there. So next time that person is asking you, every tipi pole is a different religion. When you pray to God looking at this rope it goes to the centre with all your tipi poles. That's the best I can explain it to you.

He looked up and said now I understand. Now you go and tell who ever is bugging you. He came back two days later. He gave me a lots of photos of all the different stuff he took pictures of the tipi. He said I have nothing to give you but I'll give these to you. I said okay, and we will put them away because I was looking for it the other day. We have so much stuff and I can't remember where I left them. I'm trying to remember that guy's name, that's what I'm trying to remember.

I mean it's good because it refreshes your memory and it happens. What ever happened in the past it's good to record. Hopefully it'll help a lot of people in the future because were not going to stay at 1700 people all the time. I have so many nephews and nieces, it's hard to keep track of them. I'm trying to remember but its very embarrassing like who's your mom and dad.

Long ago it wasn't like that because we were all together all the time. Now we spread out very thin. We don't know what the other guys are doing. We would probably meet them every couple of months or maybe a year that you might run into them or something. All you know they might have children, or grandchildren that I don't even know about. Some of them separating from each other, some of them leaving each other, making new families that you don't know about. Well there's a very big challenge.

Big Belly, my father-in-law George Runner that's his dad. He was a very powerful medicine man. I mean to what extent I really don't know. The thing he had did, I really don't know what he accomplished. Like within the reserve, because it was a little further back than my time. I think it will have to deal with my dad's era. I see pictures, we have pictures. Like that's on my wife's side and she is related to him. It's funny because on my side I'm related to Two Guns and my wife is related to Big Belly.

As for the Chiefs the only one I can think of is Jim Starlight. Which is my uncle. He was married to my aunt Mary Jane. He was a very fair-minded person. I didn't dabble too much on politics but the things that they done is the result you see today on the reserve that they worked up to, financially and all these things. The good thing about them that they knew their language and the people that they worked with knew their language. That's how come they got so far.

Today I don't think there are many that knows the language that's in our leadership. They know here and there, but they don't know that much. That's what is really lacking. You have to know your language coming from everything. You have to understand and you have to be with your people. Be amongst them, not away from them. You have to mingle with them, ask them what they want, what they need, and what's the problem.

That's how these old people used to be, and they visited each other. Then when the phone came, they started phoning each other. When big meetings were going on they would talk to each other sitting there talking in Tsuut'ina, and the people around them don't know what they're talking about. Thinking it's a good thing. Right in front of the people they're dealing with.

They never decided anything right on that day. Just give them couple days, I have to do it right now, they can't decide right there. There's some times that they made some bad decisions. He died in 1966, and I was way up in Sundre on a trunk line working going north we got the call that he just passed away. Okay goodbye, we put down our power saws and told the guys where we were going and everybody went home. We started from our reserve moving north. It was a shock and I was surprised. I figured he would live for another twenty years. He just left us suddenly. I respected him because he was my uncle. I respected him a lot.

As for Gordon Crowchild, he was good. He was trying to follow in his dad's footsteps. He tried his best. You can't step in anyone else's footsteps or you can't duplicate it. I think he was the last one that stayed with the people. He kind of lost his objective of where he was going to go, what his goal was. There was no goal or nothing or what he was trying to work up to. Things like that I think the reserve suffers their own consequences. That's all I can remember.

The advice I can give to you children, is to be proud to be an Indian. I know Indian doesn't suit us. Some people call us aboriginals. When I hear that I kind of feel like I'm an

Aussie and I kind of get a kick out of it. I guess Indian is the best benefit of identifying myself as a person.

## BIOGRAPHY OF JEAN DODGINGHORSE

Jean was born February 14, 1934 in Paul First Nation, Alberta, Canada. Jean moved to Tsuut'ina in 1952 with her husband late Harry Dodginghorse. Jean's mother-in-law is Katie Dodginghorse. This is where she learned a lot of the stories of the Tsuut'ina Nation and its people. Also, from her personal experience of being on the reserve. Jean's faith is in the Anglican Church. Jean is fluent in her language, but also wants to fully learn the Tsuut'ina Language. Jean is one of many elders that participate in a lot of the community functions. Jean is a very nice caring lady and is humble and courteous when it comes to her fellow Tsuut'ina elders. Jean said "you must retain the language; you must learn it."

## **Jean Dodginghorse**

I moved here in 1952. I met my husband Harry Dodginghorse, through a girlfriend named May MacDonald. May MacDonald was working in town and we came to town to train my half-sister and I. That's how we met May, we stayed in the same place. We met May that way and then from there to Sarcee, she brought us up to Sarcee and then we met those boys like Freddie Eagletail, Harry Dodginghorse, Richard Dodginghorse, Robert Dodginghorse, Amos Manywounds, Frances Manywounds, and all those that generation year. That's how I met them. Then we just chose the guys we like, I ended up with Harry.

My early memories of coming to Tsuut'ina is that things were done different, there were no schools on the reserve. In terms of facilities there was nothing, just the Indian agent and the churches. Oh, yes well looking back at the many years.

I was born at home on February 14, 1934. I was born at home. At that time my mother's generation they didn't go to the hospitals. Kids were born at home. I was one of them to be born at home. I was delivered at home by a midwife. They didn't register me right away, there was a conflict of days. Way, way back I could chose February 6, February 9 or February 14. So I chose 14. My auntie keeps telling me in Stoney, the second moon just talking Stoney. The second month is February and the second week. So February 9th or maybe February 14. I had to make a choice, so I picked February 14. I was baptized as Jane. In the process of time though Indian Affairs I have Jean on my records. Yes, by birth it's Jane when I was baptized as a baby it was Jane. So I chose Jean. I would never go back to Jane.

Well I completed grade nine. Then I went on to Alberta College to do grade ten. I didn't finish when the social worker for Indian Affairs worked with us. They said you might be interested in taking a course in Calgary. Of course I doubted that I could get out of school, the program was grade nine. You can get in she said. So that's what we decided, and we pulled out of Alberta College, Beatrice and I from Hobbema. We came down to Calgary.

In the process of it we took a test, what do you call it, the ALC test. The equivalent to grade twelve. I took courses in my life I think that's what the difference is. I took a Community Health course at Lac La Biche, Community Health. The course I'm talking about, the one I came down to Calgary for was Nursing Assistant so we moved here to Calgary.

It was just community dances in the hall. Bullhead Hall, they use to have community dances but they didn't have what you call inter-tribal Indian days. They didn't have that

when I first came here. We used to go to community dances in Bragg Creek. Bragg Creek instead of Priddis. I don't know why in Bragg Creek.

I just like dancing because that's the way I grew up, up north we inter-mingle with half breeds. They are better dancers, old good country dancers. Another thing they use to have like better dancers and then pow wows. They don't do any of that now, dance is different. The bands usually would have their own instruments like guitars and violins and maybe those tubas and that's when drums came in.

Granny Katie shared a tipi at the Calgary Stampede with Dick Starlight her Uncle. So we had two spaces in the tipi. The Starlight's would have a room on one side. We had a room on the other side. I helped out, carry stuff to prepare for the inspection day. I didn't actually have a role with putting up the tipi and decorations. They did that work.

I noticed that everybody was speaking English. I use to hear the older generation speaking their language. I found it strange because I didn't understand a word. So I regret that I didn't try to teach my children the language. You must speak Tsuut'ina. You better learn. It's really sad, that's what I'm worried about the language, the loss of the language. The language we should be speaking is Tsuut'ina.

My husband did try at least. I think we should all should speak a native language because we are Indians. English is our second language. I think with the language program they got a lot of work to do. So that's why I have regrets because I didn't teach my children the language. I could have taught them my own but this is Tsuut'ina land. They should learn Tsuut'ina first.

We were with Katie and Jim for a year and they used to speak Tsuut'ina. That's how I picked up a few words, everyday words. So I think you pick it up faster that way, I always say do something, this program you guys are involved with should get going. The people that speak should go out in the community. Do everything you can to promote and maintain the language.

The kind of work on the reserve was mostly a lot of farm work. A lot of people working on farms outside the reserve. Gordon Runge sawmill at Blue Berry Hill, the guys would work there winter time. They worked for white farmers on the reserve to help out as farm helpers. A few people had their own cattle and horses. They would look after them and cut hay in the summer. We all camped up west. We camped while they were cutting hay. Then we would go up to Blue Berry Hill picking berries, blue berries. We use to go up there on a wagon. In fact I got a picture of when we got to the top of the hill.

The ladies I felt didn't accept me. I think it was because I was a strange girl in the community. I guess they had to get to know me first, I thought your great grandma was friendly to me. I remember certain women, Mary Big Plume your mom's mother, she reminds me of my grandmother. She always use to be friendly to me. When I use to meet her she was always smiling and shaking hands with me. So I'll always remember her, and that's how I made friends with Katherine your aunt. Your mom was more distant and Katherine was more outgoing so I made friends with her cause her mother was very friendly to me. She made me feel welcomed. I can't say that about the others because some of them didn't like me, that's honest.

I think that's why your grandma had that spirit. When I first came here she was friendly to me and open hearted. I can't say that for all the ladies though, just a few. I can name them, I know who they are myself.

It is very important for the Nation to get that message. When the Chief and Council get sworn in, the night before the swearing in, two elders asked me, can you make sure they use the bible at the swearing in. I said I thought they did because I missed the last one two years ago. The one two years ago, the lady said I think they did I'm not sure she said.

Okay I'll find out I was phoning around and I couldn't get a hold of any of the councilors, the old councilors. I finally got a hold of Marie, because Brent got sworn in two years ago. I asked Marie were you at the swearing in two years ago. She said yes, I asked did they use the bible for oaths for swearing in. She said yes but it was a choice, she said. I said that settles it, they'll use it. I thought this was the night before the swearing in. So I'm not going to worry about it. I'm not an authority but I have a right to speak up because as elders you're the gateway to the future.

The teachings of the church. I think the teaching of the church is very important because that's what I was bought up with and that's what made me stable. I was not an alcoholic or a drug addict. One husband so that makes a person strong and you get your values through that.

You have to give advice to the younger people and to stand on what you think is best for the nation. I'm not talking for myself I'm talking for all the young people. One day you're going to be old too. So they didn't use it, I didn't see the Bible. So that really bothers me, so I spoke to some of the elders after. They agreed with me that they should use it. The way it is now, they're turning more towards the traditional ways, mind you to a point it's good.

My concern is what I said that we are not teaching the children about the Bible, the word of God. As a result I see a lot of carelessness, a lot of drinking going on, changing partners

which is not right as I understand. I think we need to do something with all the drinking that is going on, it's getting out of control. When I first came here it was mostly on weekends I use to see people getting drunk. Now it's during the week and it's not good. It doesn't make the nation look good because white people have already branded us. They brand us as drinkers. So I don't like that and I don't like seeing it.

They still need to know what's in the word of God. All the teachings. It was in visions. I don't know if you know Granny she might have told you. It was a vision way back before the treaties were signed. I mean after the treaties were signed they moved here and it was that year 1883. They said within this tribe, this Tsuut'ina, Sarcee tribe. There was a man that was able to see visions.

He told the Sarcee people that there's a man coming with a long coat and he has a big book. The big book had to be the bible. You listen to him. It will be good for our tribe. I guess he told them that. He also said you people are going to be living in matchsticks. Now we live in match sticks. The houses are all lumber, those are the matchsticks. I guess that was what he told them. So when the missionaries came the people were very keenly interested because of what that man told them. He was from here, Granny doesn't know his name.

The Grandfather Dick Starlight Sr. is the one that told the old lady. The old lady that he told the story was Katie. I don't know maybe your mom knows about it. I told Randy to record it on tape, what she was saying. This was ten to fifteen years ago. Now she forgets.

They need to be taught, that's very important, like I said that man was not educated, and he had visions like a prophet visualize. It is a true story. I don't think he was psychic, I think it's more that he see's visions. A prophet, a better word is prophet. She didn't say who he was but he was from this tribe, and that was before the missionaries came. That was before Christianity came. When they were by Blackfoot's. It's just one though, and there was only one medicine pipe holder whatever they called him that was Freddy's grandfather. He put it away. He gave it up. He burnt everything. He wanted to go to the Christian way.

Katie told the story to Harley and Ronald when they first started working the museum. They didn't tell the exact true stories and she was upset about that. It's still that way, it's not corrected. So she doesn't like being interviewed because they don't write down what she says. I would like to see transcribing properly being taught. It's has to be that way.

We used to say Sarcee. They signed treaty at Siksika, Blackfoot Crossing, I think the Blackfoot's call them Saksii I don't know what it means in Blackfoot. So that's how they

signed the treaty Sarcee, so I don't really know the background history. I wasn't born here. I don't know enough.

So, also what I was saying they wanted to move away from the Blackfoots. The Blackfoots for one thing were greater numbers, you know the bigger tribe. The men were fierce they said. That was the interpreted word, fierce. They use to take their horses away from them. I didn't tell you yesterday but that was part of the story she told me. They use to take their horses away. They were sort of mean to them. That's why they didn't want to stay there.

They told Bullhead they want to move away. So Bullhead came this way and looking around. He cut some logs. Your uncle's place, that stone monument. He put rocks there and he chose this land. He went back and told the people I chose a spot where I could take you. He was the Chief. Then he negotiated with Indian Affairs to bring the tribe back over here. He must be a good negotiator because he convinced them. We moved here. I say we because I'm a member of the tribe now, but that's what happened. So that's how they settled here Tsuut'ina Reserve, Sarcee Reserve.

I don't forget she told me a lot of things about this reserve I don't forget. The stories about how the Tsuut'ina migrated from Blackfoot Crossing. We could have been over there if it wasn't for Bullhead listening to his people. The people didn't want to be there the Blackfoot were kind of aggressive and mean too. It's true, I didn't make that up, and it's a story from long ago. It is one of the things I know. The reason Bullhead moved the Tsuut'ina over here to where we are today.

Families are breaking up. We see a lot of fractured relationships, fractured families. We know that they will have peace and all get along.

So that's the most important thing, the language, you must retain the language you must learn it. I speak my own language but it's not good here.

Who's all home with me, well Nathan moved out, Samantha use to stay with me. Then she moved out. Just Adam and his wife, they have two kids. They don't have a place to stay. So they are staying up there. I offered them my old house. I don't think they like it because it's too old. I'm going to put my maiden name.

People are more diet conscious. Canada's talking to start to look at the national child nutrition policy. They are concerned about the children being overweight. Especially among Indians there's a high rate of diabetes. So I think they're looking at how to help people to stay healthy. For that reason I don't think it's a good idea to give bologna. They should give dried meat. They do that in Paul Band, they give dry meat. They still do it, in

the ration. So that's a thing that can be reviewed and considered as food, and some people don't like bologna. They're well off and they throw them away in garbage bins. That's not right. People are starving across the ocean. So people have to appreciate what's given to you. So that's something that can be reviewed again and maybe start over. I don't know who wouldn't appreciate dry meat.

Well the word respect, you look at it in the dictionary the definition, the other word is honor. So we have to honor elders. You say respect I'm saying you know it was a practice that should be continued. Like I said, one day you'll be elders too and that practice should continue. There's not that many elders that take part. So we say, respect elders.

Katie has a lot of stories like I said through her grandmother and through her grandfather she said, that was Dick Starlight Sr. Dick Starlight's father. The old man she'd say for Dick Starlight Sr. So from those stories they were passed down verbally, well they just tell stories okay. They tell you stories and she was told those stories when people use to camp. When they lived by Blackfoot Crossing. I tried to live in Blackfoot Crossing before we came here, long ago.

More of the people lived down east on this side. There wasn't that many on the west side. The majority lived on the east side, for one thing. The two churches were located on the east side. The old Indian agent use to be down there by the church. Where Wendy BigPlume lives. I think that's the Indian Agent's house. There are buildings down there, that school was already down when I came here because that was the school Katie attended. Most of the people were on this side, and the army lease was over there. You don't dare go that way, because the army was there.

I use to get scared, you know those big army tanks. I used to see it coming on Six Mile Coulee road, and boy I would take off I would get scared. I thought the war was coming. I'll always remember that, I was younger then. Buttons was small then. I was just walking on the road, checking out for Seneca roots. I went across the road and I see that big tank coming and oh did I ever take off. Well it's frightening when you're not use to having big machines like that around every day. It frightens me.

Well from what I understand they haven't completely cleaned up the land. That's why they don't want to build houses there. They did some clearance. I don't know how well they cleaned the land of bombs. They say that there is still stuff over there.

I would like to see houses built along the reserve boundary. So that way people can't take our land. According to the Indian Act open space between the city and us, they can use it. If it's not being used. That's just an idea that I have. Eventually with the population growth, there will be more people needing houses. They should have build houses there,

on the outskirts anyway, along the river. I don't know it's my idea and I wouldn't mind living over there.

Before the white man came on the reservation, we were living over there. Katie said we were nomadic people. They use to bury people up in the trees. That was her grandfather's story. When they came here they starting burying them under ground. They had to because they had to stay here. They couldn't just put them up in the trees anymore. That was the practice when they used to roam around. I can't say what year they start burying people here but maybe 1912.

The Anglican Church and mission house were built 1912. You know that little one you see. Prior to that I guess they use to have it in the mission house. They would have a church service there, and later they built a church we have now which was in 1912. Bullhead's grave is there too. They put those crosses up there. Eventually they suppose to disintegrate back to the earth. It'll be a long time.

They are still finding dinosaur bones down South. Can you imagine dinosaurs in this country? Well I've read about them, not too much you know. One time I was telling a story to Marvin's foster children, I think it was Hardy Jacobs's two boys. Those two boys Marvin and Marie use to foster. One time I was telling this young boy a story about dinosaurs. He was thinking and asked were you still here when the dinosaurs were here? Oh he made me laugh. I told him no I'm talking a long, long time ago. When the dinosaurs were here in Alberta, I was born way after.

When I went home I gave myself supper and Jennifer phoned on voicemail and wanted me to go over there at six. So I didn't have much time. I was glad to see the little boys. He took the youngest one to the back and put his hair back, like he put gel on it. It was just really combed back, it was real cute. They were dressed up too, they had little antlers. Colored antlers, jingle bells. They were taking pictures. They will probably show it to you sometime later.

My favorite memories, well personally when I had a child that was exciting, and that's something you can't forget. When your children are born it's very exciting and you know as a mother.

1. The feast, that's what I use to like, the women use to get together at Bullhead hall. There use to be a big stove there. They sleep over to cook. We had hot meals I used to like that part, I get asked. I think, at that time Gordon Crowchild was a councilor and my neighbor Marie used to ask me to help her, May Big Crow and I. We use to help her. We sleep over with our blankets and a little mattress and we'd

cook stuff like pies and all that. So I thought that was exciting. Going to Christmas service, get to understand what it's all about. I get excited about that too.

James Starlight, Bruce's dad. David had just stepped down, I mean he got voted out I suppose. You know how elections go. So David Crowchild just finished, Gordon and Victoria's dad. He just finished and James Starlight got elected. He was Chief for a long time. I think it was over ten years. Fourteen years I think, a long time.

At that time, when I came, there were just two councilors, late George Runner and Edward Onespot. There was a meeting. There use to be a school by the old health centre. No maybe a little bit north. There used to be a school there, that's where Muriel used to teach, Muriel Manywounds was a teacher. She use to be one of the teachers there. They used to have the band meeting there. At that time there wasn't that many people to come to the meeting.

The buildings are not there anymore, like the old health centre. You know the round one. No I'm not talking about the one at the village. No, no you know the round one health centre. Ellery Starlight's office the Peacemaker's Building. I think it was just a little bit north of there. I can't remember exactly. That's where the school used to be, the day school. That's where the band meetings used to be held, in the school. They used to have band meetings regularly. I think just about every month, they use to talk about communications. Now we barely have a meeting, but I hope we have meetings with the five new councilors. So anyhow, that's when things weren't that bad.

The people at that time, there were not many adults. So the people that were interested attended. At the day school in a room the size of the room that Deanna uses. Maybe double that size is where they had band meetings. It used to be full. Then we use to have the meetings here, up stairs, in the old Council Chambers.

The Chief at that time he used to tell us how much money was in the budget. We use to have money, they called it Capital Funds. It is in Ottawa. He always used to let the people know if he was going to use the money out of Capital. He always asked the people if it's okay. We were going to do this and take money out of Capital and the people would agree. We would vote yes if we supported it. It's recorded into minutes and from there the Indian Agent would process the papers and get money for us to use for the band. That's the way it worked. Now they don't even tell us if we are in a deficit. I just learned that where I'm originally from their twenty five or twenty nine million dollars in the hole. That's a lot of money, I'm thinking to myself.

I don't know too much about the relationship between Calgary and Tsuut'ina. I think I just mind my own, the community. When we have to shop, we go to Calgary. Didn't really

know anyone personally. I don't know maybe the Chief and Council but me as a person I wasn't close. I don't think they knew about us, we didn't know much about them.

Spiritual leaders, there was hardly any at that time. Katie told me way back, Freddie's grandfather was a medicine man. When the missionaries came nobody went to him. People went to church. So he put all his stuff away. They say he burnt it and that he went to church. So for the longest time there was nobody. Now all of a sudden there's a lot. That's not right Katie said, granny you can ask her. She doesn't remember too much now, but that's what she told me, there's too many now. That's not right. It's not right and they're not doing it right either.

Where I came from there was two, I remember there was two, that's all. Here I gathered seventy two pipe holders which is not right. I think there were seven that claimed to be medicine men. So that is not right. I don't know how they got the idea to have so many in a tribe and granny Katie said that's not right. She tells me to say these things at the meetings. They might throw me out. She tells me to stand up for what is right not everywhere. Sometimes I don't have the courage.

We used to get rations too, there was no welfare until 1960's. There was no welfare Canada. Before that the Indian Agent used to live down there, they used to give out rations every month. Food rations, I remember at home we used to get rations too.

They gave out rations there. A lot of staples, you know canned stuff and bacon and beef chunks. I remember my favorite was Roger's Syrup. I remember up there in Duffield. I wasn't here at the time when they use to give out rations. It's the same in every reserve they gave out rations. My favorite was Roger's Syrup my granny use to make bannock outside and cook bacon. Bacon grease and Roger's Syrup. Oh that was good. I'll never forget that. It just stands out in my mind.

It must have been once a month here too. It stopped when I came here. That's Katie's story, but I know from my reserve I experienced the rations. We use to go for rations. In those days people didn't have cars. They brought their wagons to get their rations. The Indian Agent down there, remember I said the Indian Agent lived down by the mission house. The first one to have a vehicle here was David Crowchild, mostly everyone was travelling on wagons and on horseback.

There was no big wide road like there is today. They were mostly narrow roads, wagon trails. Everyone travelled in wagons. The time I came here it was just a few that had vehicles.

The first to have a TV in black and white was James Starlight. You know up the hill. He was the first one to have a TV on the reserve. On weekends all the guys would go up and watch hockey night. I have to ask Mary Jane how did she like all those guys coming to your house. She's still alive Mary Jane. She probably remembers that too. They were a good couple. Mary Jane was the nicest Chief's wife.

I'm not too fond of beading, Katie's good at it. Up north we weren't really that type of work, more ribbon. Adding ribbons and porcupine quills. More of that kind of handicrafts. We do like bead work. With porcupine quills we do that more not too much bead work. When the Crees started coming on to the reserve, we started doing bead work.

My mother and my grandmother, my aunties and I did more ribbons and feathers, like eagle feathers. I'm not for it. I like sewing. I can make dresses and Indian shirts and all that. No bead work, not everybody's cut out for that, but I can make moccasins. I can cut it and make moccasins. Plain ones, I made one for Vera last year she said she still has them.

You know something that really changed. I get uncomfortable wearing slacks, women wore skirts and dresses. The women copied the trend of wearing slacks. I don't remember seeing some women wearing a dress. I remember seeing others wearing a dress. You know I didn't see too many women wearing slacks or jeans. Even myself, I didn't. The change happened in the 60's because women started to work. They started to wear slacks. Now everybody wears them even brown ones. It kind of bothers me. When I go to a special function I try to wear a skirt because I'm a grandmother and to set that model. I've never saw my grandmother wear slacks or my mother. I think she was raised up, off the reserve. She copied that style you know white way. Up north there was group that dressed that way too. We call them Métis Stoney.

I could picture her, Lucy Big Plume. She used to be the head of the Home Maker's Club for a long time. There was women's Home Maker's Club. She used to be the head of that. Then May Whitney, Larry Whitney's mother. She was a white woman that married on to this reserve. So she use to head that Home Maker's Club on the reserve.

We used to have a women's group at the Anglican Church a women's club. We use to call it Women's Auxiliary Club, that's where your mother, Queenie, was really active. Your grandmother Mary BigPlume. She used to be the head of it and it use to be good. We got together monthly. Women getting together making things, raising money, I use to like it.

Now at the swearing in, I heard the Chief's wife Brenda is going to be starting up the Homemakers Club. January 11<sup>th</sup> I think she said at 6 o'clock at the administration office.

So remember that and go, it's for you young people. It used to be good. We used to do that.

I never tried to paint. Usually Indians are more creative and artistic, it's just that they have to develop and bring it out. I think most Indians are like that. Randy's pretty good and June's boys are pretty good at drawing.

I remember how Queenie Collins looked. I hardly knew them, I live up west, next to Marvin. Since then I kind of got to know them, otherwise we were distant, not close as relatives. I find it that's how people are here they are not close to each other, as relatives. I don't know that's the way I see it. For a long time they were prejudice towards us, I don't want to mention that. Their prejudice against us, outsiders turned Indian. Some of them still say outsiders, which is not right of course. It is being prejudice.

It was respect for the elders to be telling them their stories, because if you didn't get that story from an elder you would have no history, you just assume. For me what I know is from the time I've been here. I have been telling you from way back through Katie. She told me lot of stories. That's how I know about this reserve. I have a lot of respect for the elders, the ones I knew. I always think about it. When I go to church and all those older people before me, I think of them when I go in there. I got married in that old church, my kids were baptized there too.

There are some young people who are in that Pride program too. Some of them he go out and clean walls I don't know what else they do. I hope they go on to training or something. They are wasting their lives. In their spare time they just drink. They think it's fun.

You know I never had that experience myself because we weren't allowed to drink, we weren't allowed to go to liquor stores. I remember people talking about drinking here that they weren't allowed to drink here on the reserves.

If they saw an Indian drunk on the reserve or the public place they would pick him up and put them in to jail for a month. I think that's what they should do. Most everyone will be in jail. That was Canada, they didn't allow the Indians to go into the bar or even vote. I forget what year it was, I think the late 60's I think when they opened the liquor store to Indians. Another thing you should record is that they didn't allow Indians to drink or go into bars.

This reserve was a dry reserve at one point, dry reserve means they can't be drinking on the reserve. Bruce should know, he knows more about that because he's been in council.

Katie is doing fine. She's 99 years old now but you know the body goes down in old age. She doesn't get up much or walk around and she uses a chair like this to get around. A chair like this she goes to the washroom goes to the kitchen on it. Most of the time she's in bed. She wants to stay in bed. A lot of times she goes to sleep right away. So I think a lot of people have to understand the aging process on a person. They sleep a lot. Hearing is hard and eyes too, but for her age I think she's doing well. They thought she was going to go about two or three weeks ago, they were all there. I went over there cause I was a practicum nursing. I went there I felt her heart and her pulse. The pulse tells you heart beat, so that showed it was strong. I figured she's going to be alright. She's still here.

Siyisgaz, Hiy Hiy. I think it's real neat to speak Indian. I picked up Cree when I went to boarding school with Cree kids. I used to always hear Cree every day. Finally I picked it up. The language program should do similar things.

This woman just went out because she speaks their language. So she invites people and they make a circle and she taught them, verbally. You don't have to do theory just verbal. That's how I picked up the language real quick I used to hear it everyday and when I came here. In Saskatchewan their reserve is losing their language too.

I understand Cree pretty good, and I speak my own language good. I want to learn Tsuut'ina. I don't know the wild animals I know the common, domestic animals.

Another thing about respecting other human beings, your father-in-law or son-in-law you can't look at them. You have to talk to them with eye contact, you can't look at them. You have to be shy of them. I guess it's not good communication practice. That's the way the Indians were. Your father-in-law you are not supposed to talk to him. In my case my son-in-law. That was a practice and I think a lot of it is lost. Like what I know here on this reserve. I just about fell over when my father-in-law would just come up and talk to me. I knew that was the practice.

Another thing I see lost in the culture is, that there's not many that dance with the outfits the ladies and the men. I noticed that last year. I'm kind of observing when I go to a community functions or anywhere. I observe things I'm keen on; like I made a lot of observations at that swearing in.

I'm going to have to advise you people to take responsibility to put those events up. I noted that two years ago at the swearing in I think when they had the Chief and Council pow wow. There were hardly any women or men that dressed up to represent us as a tribe. There's beginning to be less and less.

This lady that's making an outfit for herself. I thought it was good. Laura Heavenfire, she dances. That's another thing you know the dancing, there's a difference in how the ladies dance, and the men's dances. I grew up in that environment culturally speaking, my dad used to be a singer at pow wows. At that time they weren't such big events like we have today. People use to have dances and people would dance. There's different types of dances I don't see that here either.

When I observed the women dancing they dance in there slacks. Years back late Mary Onespot used to always point out that women shouldn't get up unless they are worn a dress to dance. That's the way it used to be. If a woman is going to dance you are to wear a skirt or a dress. Mary use to really make that point. She always pointed that out at elders meetings. They didn't sort of take it serious. Nowadays mostly everyone's wearing slacks. You see the women dancing in slacks, so that's not right. That's something they need to discuss. Bring the tradition back, if you want to be culturally sensitive and practice it. That's what I noticed.

Another thing, culturally speaking is us Indians. I'm talking about Duffield. I know and hear there is a big difference. They used to look after their elders, it was usually the youngest girl or the youngest boy in the family. Well growing up like that looking after their elderly; that's the way it use to be.

Here they don't, they put them in a nursing home. I was glad to hear Duane say you're not going to a nursing home as long as I'm alive. I'm not going I said. My home is not the nursing home, that's not a good practice.

This last lady was crying to come home, you know Sarah. She cried to come home and nobody visits her. The nurses use to tell Duane because they have the same last name. The nurses working in Rockyview use to go and tell Duane doesn't she have any relatives? No one comes to see her. When someone goes to see her, she cries to go home. She never came home and she died that way, and I really felt so sad when I went up there to the wake. She wanted to go home and never went home. So I think elderly people shouldn't be put in a nursing home and even Melody's uncle is in there, and who else, Dora.

That's what I mean, you see, that's what I mean that currently those two are in the hospital. I see Dora at functions they should do that with Tom too. Bring him out for functions. That's an example of what I'm saying. Just giving an example of those two cases like Sarah was in a nursing home too. That's what I'm saying. Indians traditionally and culturally take care of their elders. My grandmother died at home. She wasn't put in a nursing home or my other grandmother. So I really think they should consider that too.

You don't want to put your mother in a nursing home would you? You would not want that to happen to you.

That's something they should really bring back. You can't really bring back, you can't put care in a person's heart you have to learn to respect you mother. Your grandmother, learn. Your biological grandmother, it's just not practice with Indians as far as I could remember. It's important, people are talking about a nursing home on the reserve and I heard that and I'm thinking to myself, oh no. To me a day is better because they already got a home to go to. They would be better, feel more comfortable at home is better, just like a daycare. They can go there during the day and do whatever, visit each other. I think that's a better idea, that's what I think.

God willing. I think people want to think in terms of the city, for one thing, white people have to put their elderly in a home. They have jobs and both of them work because they have to pay taxes and pay everything. So Indian communities should be different. I see a lot of values lost in the Indian family units. I noticed that they don't really care for each other. I came here and I observed. I'm from another reserve. When I was growing up they cared for the elder parents. Their families cared for them. They looked after them. I think that should be discussed as the people were growing old. Not just when they get senile and put in a home.

I think that should be a process where families talk about the future but I think instead of a nursing facility I'd like to see an Elders day home. Most Indians don't want to leave their home. Elders don't want to leave their home. I saw that with Katie and Violet and they can stay in their home as long as they are here.

There should be a day home. So they can go somewhere during the day and interact socially with their own people. That way they wouldn't get so lonesome being alone at home. I see that with Katie, she got so lonesome you know she use to cry. She said all my kids are gone and no one comes to visit me. That was about four or five years ago she said that to me. She's much older now and it seems they care a little bit better now. I think a day home would be better, that's what I think. I wouldn't want to do to a nursing home while I'm still able. When I can't take care of myself, I'd expect my grandchildren to help me. Now they have the home care services. Well that's what I mean, I see the values lost in this community.

Anyway another thing is respecting relatives, this is your grandma, this is your auntie, this is your uncle. People need to be taught that too. One time old Mike at the elders meeting said nobody calls me uncle no, nobody knows that anymore. So after the meeting

I told Marvin and them, next time you see Mike you call him uncle. We are related to him, but regardless an elder person you can say grandma, auntie.

You should take biographies of elders too. I'm real proud to say I'm Treaty 6 and make people know that too. I think it would be nice. I'm going to do that on my own. For my kids' sake, because Duane and Randy told me to do that. I mean they asked me to do that, a family tree.

Another thing I noticed when I came here was most everyone had guardians. Now you don't see anything, maybe one or two now. Most everyone had guardians, I know at home. I'm always referring to home. We used to have wild meat, pemmican, wild berries and dry fish.

Our reserve wasn't close to a city. We hardly ever went to the store. So I think a lot has to do with your diet. Indians are getting diabetes. Not just Indians those dark people, Philippines and all those other people are more prone to diabetes than the white people.

They say studies have shown that diabetes has a lot to do with your diet. I don't have diabetes I don't have anything wrong with me. Just my kidney, I got hurt years ago. That's how come I'm taking dialysis treatment. I think diet is a big difference; even those Navajo Indian reservations know that and now they're just trying to promote traditional diet to their families. It's hard because everyone likes MacDonald's, Barney's Chicken.

I think you really have to care for your health, and your children you don't want them to get sicknesses. So I think that's very important like I said Canada is looking at a national policy for children anyway. If you do it for children why not the parents. The parents have to know. They cook for their children at home.

There was a lot of canning long ago like canning berries. Katie did that a lot and Louisa Starlight because I used to see them canning doing that when I came here. So now I don't think anyone does that, because of the freezer. You put everything in the freezer. What I miss is pemmican, dry meat and all that. Deanna was talking to the groups of children she teaches how to do hides. We knew at home we didn't have to go to a group to learn that and we just learned from our mothers and grandmother. They taught us, and we'd help do it. So now I know the process; you know the steps on how to do it. Nobody does that anymore, it's a lot of hard work.

My father was a hunter not just him but more of them from the reserve. When you kill an animal, a wild animal you have to be really careful with the blood. You don't just drip the blood in the pathway of a woman. She may walk over the blood. If a woman walks over the blood during menstruation, the Stoney say the meat will become contaminated. So

the hunter won't be able to get anymore game. That's what they believe. So, everybody was careful on how they handled the meat and the blood, and everything was used from the animal, everything. I don't know if it was a practice here.

We used to eat beavers and muskrats. When I came here people only ate the meat of deer and elk. They use to eat beavers too long ago. One time Jimmy Meguinis Lands Manager came to the elders meeting and he said there's beginning to be too much beavers. Two summers ago he came to the elders meeting and that's what he told us. We don't know what to do.

My grandma told me they are sacred. Everything is sacred but God put it on the earth so we can eat it. They are just like the wild animals. Up north they eat beavers here no one eats them now. I mean since I've been here I know nobody eats them. They use to sell the furs but nobody eats the meat. So it's true what he said there are a lot of beavers. They are sacred. He can't kill them.

We all have to die, one day we are meant to leave this planet earth and years ago I told you I've been here since fifty two. When they have a wake, it was just one night. That was the practice. So over the years there's been a practice of two nights, even that Katie said it's not a Sarcee practice. So I know most families do that so I don't know where to draw the line.

Katie said at a pow wow you don't have pipes there, you just don't. That was not the Sarcee practice. Everything's kind of changed and people do their own things. I'm scaring her. That's what she told me and I observed that too. I've been here a long time like I said I saw the Chief and Council pow wow. They didn't do that. She said it's not right doing that there. You tell them that but so far they haven't done anything.

The people that have been here longer than me like the lady in there, Bertha, always telling me they didn't do that. You tell them she tells me. So that's another thing that's disturbing to me. I think they're teaching the children the wrong way. Maybe they do that in other tribes but they didn't do that at home either. If you have to do it, you have to separate the events.

I'm not telling you any fantasies. What I know my experiences from being on this reserve and what I know from Katie. That's what she told me. She tells us stories. She knows what it means.

I feel more comfortable when I say Sarcee. It was Sarcee when I came here and I forget what year it was they changed the name. The name of the tribe to Tsuut'ina. They say the word Tsuut'ina means something in Tsuut'ina, a large group of people.

## **BIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE VICTOR ONESPOT**

**George was born May 17, 1945. He was raised by foster parents Willy Little Bear and Juliet Poor Eagle on the Tsuut'ina Nation Reserve, Alberta, Canada. His mother is Olive Onespot and father is Roy Otter. George is one of few that are fluent speakers in the Tsuut'ina language. George believes in sobriety and was raised in the old ways. George is a nice, humble man that believes our language should be taught to each and every one of us. George always seems to see the bigger and brighter picture of things. George once said "As a Nation we have to stick together and try to build a better tomorrow for the future generations."**

## George Victor Onespot

I was born May 17, 1945. I was raised by my auntie and uncle, and at that time they were my parents. They tried to legally adopt me. Their names were Willy Little Bear and Juliet Poor Eagle. My uncle told me, Archie Manywounds. Dr. Murray also tried to adopt me at the time he couldn't quite go through with it. My grandmother was a Stoney from Duffield. You know where that is, by Edmonton. That's where she's originally from, I didn't know that. I found these out in years to come.

My foster parents Willy Little Bear and Juliet Poor Eagle passed away. My grandmother died, my mom died 1965 and my dad died 1989. After Willy Little Bear died there is no more Little Bear on the reserve now. I have a grandson named Walking Blue Bear. They were special to me because they taught me a lot and yet I like the pow wows.

May Bigcrow's sister from Morley told us where they came from. She was a Simeon before but she was married to someone else on the reserve. My uncle Willy Little Bear and Juliet Poor Eagle raised me since I was born. My mother Olive Onespot gave me to them. I was born at the boarding school and gave me to my parents at the time. For years I thought they were my real parents. I was raised the old way.

My sister was older than me by two years. Her name is Loraine and she married in Enoch, and we were raised as Little Bear. We went to school up until high school. The recording of that wasn't there; Jim Big Plume on the Tsuut'ina reserve has the record of it. So that's how I found out my date of birth too, I thought my birthday was May 24, here it's May 17<sup>th</sup>. I got baptized on the 24th of May and I got all those papers.

My daughters found it and that's how I found out my birthday and I always joked that I celebrated fifty years the wrong birthday, a week later. I go back now, I got two birthdays but I joke around with my kids. No, no, no but I tell them I was born a week earlier.

I went to school when I was six. I couldn't speak the English language very good. My sister taught me the language. I used to walk three quarters of a mile to school and then when I went to school the teacher picked on me. I don't know why.

The Tsuut'ina school was called the Sarcee Junction. I went to day school. The school I went to was by the old Sarcee hall, Bullhead Hall we called it. It burnt down years ago. The school was behind it. Now they play baseball there. Behind it there's a dump.

I was born in residential school, down by where the Anglican Church, behind there is where the school was. I remember being told about that school. That they were treated wrong there and that they were forced to stay there, things like that. My parents told me lots of stories about that place. They just called it Sarcee School you know. Today I don't know what it is but all I know is they turned it into Sarcee Junction.

The teacher broke my shoulder blade with a yard stick, my mom had to grab her like this. She told her if you ever touch my son again you're going to be sorry. The next day I was in

grade four because she failed me in grade three. So, I went to school for seven years, day school to grade six.

I spoke Tsuut'ina fluently and they thought we were talking about her. We weren't, we were just kids trying to speak the language and keep it. They tried to brain wash us and told us we couldn't speak the language and we had to speak English.

They even forced us to wear glasses even though we weren't suppose to. She couldn't help me spell, to this day I can't spell properly. I can read properly but there are just some words I get mixed up, but I can still understand quite a bit.

We couldn't enjoy ourselves in day school. When I asked the teacher to help me spell she was too busy with someone else. She even hit me on the head with her high heel. She was mean towards me I don't know for what reason and I think I'm not the only one she picked on. There was quite a few of us.

I read a lot of books about our history. We originally came from Athabasca, and then we migrated to Sarcee. It was called the Sarcee reserve. Bullhead was the founder of our reserve and I remember the Chiefs, and I can remember as far back as my uncle Jim Starlight. He's name was Chagudi he was Bruce Starlight's dad and I remember that.

My dad Willy Little Bear always worked and my mom taught me the language and that's how I learned about the traditional ways. Boys would do certain amount of things like work and men weren't allowed to do dishes and stuff like that, that was a woman's job. The men's job was to look after horses, the live stock. I was taught to work since I was old enough to walk, to haul wood, to haul water. I had my chores cut out for me I had to do my chores before I could have any kind of play time.

I always had to start the fire and get the water. We used to have a water well quite a ways from the house. I hauled water and I had trap lines. I had a trap line for rabbits. We lived on wild meat and rabbits, in those days there was no welfare. The family all worked together as a family like my grandparents, my uncles. When the wild game was killed, they bought it home we shared it among the family and like flour and stuff like that.

I had my own dog, my own horse, my dog's name was Buddy and horse was named Nickel. My dad trained my horse to where he was just so tamed that they tried to use for a bucking horse. All it did was run around. Everybody laughed because my dad was a horse whisperer. He knew how to talk to horses.

I have an idea of how to do it because I have two pups that I'm raising. They are only four months old and I try to teach them about things. Like how to do things, and I protect them from the coyotes.

Our knowledge of our reserve we have to go back and teach it. Also about the good things in life. You don't have to rich to be happy but you have to be humble, and that's a hard thing for a man and woman to be humble. It's the only way to live. I was taught to pray

and to share and to be good to one and other. Those are the things I've been taught and to respect one and other. That's about all I can say about myself.

I look at animals, like my dogs I treat them like little babies. I baby them and my wife says why you babying them. I look at it as if I were looking after myself. If you put them outside a wild animal will eat them right, even coyotes or a hawk or an eagle. If you take them out and they'll just hang around the house. I let them play around then I let them back in at night time cause I don't want to lose my pups.

I like to go back to the good past and try to tell my grandchildren about the future. The old ways were good but you got to modernize it. You have to respect your elders, respect your household, and things like that. Drinking is no good for you I try to teach my grandchildren these things. Don't drink, if you do then you have to live your life the way you want.

I don't segregate anything from my grandchildren. I try to explain life to them so they can be happy and enjoy themselves. I told them if they don't drink they will be happy. A sober life is a better life because I experienced it. I didn't like the downer from drinking and I tried to explain this to them. My two granddaughters that live with me understand these things.

When they come to my house they do whatever they do like chores. I just give them little chores to do. After I just let them do whatever they want. They have their own rooms and they make sure the rooms are clean. I let them have their privacy like I have my own. That's important in life for each person to be allowed their privacy in life. Whatever they want in life. Respect the other person next to you, have respect for each other and that way life will be good, that's the way I look at it. That's the way I look at children and grandchildren I try let them be themselves.

When they come, my wife puts out a box of toys there so they can play all they want. We'll have little treats for them. I was taught to be good to one and other. Life is hard and we have to enjoy those things.

When my other granddaughter comes home they are just like a bunch of magpies. They say what are magpies. They use to be on the reserve but now all you see are crows. I tell her it's a black and white bird and that it's an Alberta bird. It's an Alberta bird that magpie. That's what I say about us, enjoy each and every day.

We are all unique and I teach my grandchildren these things that you are unique. You are not like mother and you are not like your dad. You're your own person. Be your own person and do what your heart tells you, and not what people tell.

Yet you have to listen to your elders and they will teach you something. I'll teach you one thing but listen to somebody else and teach somebody else. That is what I know I said to my granddaughters. My wife is a woman and she teaches them her certain ways of doing things. I teach them my way. They get their own way of doing things. That's what you

have to teach in life, to work together as a family. It's important. That's about all I can say, that everyone has their own version of life but that's my version. We have to enjoy life.

You always got to have the right amount of food. You got to have vegetables and fruit and meat, and even fish. You know you got to have your calories but to a certain extent that's what we got to realize these things.

Only God makes that choice. We don't. It's up to the individual themselves on how they want to live their life and you can't tell people how to live, it's up to them. Like other people, I try to teach my grandchildren about facts of life. Teach them and that's all I can do teach them but yet they have to learn it on their own. You need to give them that space to learn the environment. A lot of my grandchildren play hockey and baseball. All sports and that's good.

There were a lot of diseases. I lost one cousin. He was supposed to get a new liver but he died from it, Bedford Littlelight. I went to school with him. There's still some my age, there's Charlie Crowchild, Carl Big Plume and Steven Runner. There's only a few of us left around my age. There's a gap in the elder's from sixty five. All of sudden it dropped down to sixty one or sixty two like that, a lot of them are gone to the next world.

I remember it seems like all of a sudden when television was introduced the language went. All of a sudden we were all speaking English instead of our language. The households, you go to certain homes and they can speak the language. You have to marry out to bring new families. There was three hundred that came to Sarcee from what I remember. We were all related so we had to marry out to have kids. That's the way I was raised. I married but I've been divorced since 1980.

I still speak Tsuut'ina like I pray. I was taught by my grandfather to always pray in Tsuut'ina and talk Tsuut'ina is what he told me. Well he told me in the language like him. He hardly spoke any English. Don't give it up. They will try separating you from your life and try to teach you English ways. You'll always be what you are Dina-tii. He said that means native. He said we are all Dina-tii here, Tsuut'ina. That's what he told me. He said to always speak the language and don't never give it up he always spoke to me in Tsuut'ina. To this day I always pray in my language.

I went to church, Anglican that's where I was baptized and I went to Anglican Church. I was forced to go to church, like my parents forced me. My dad always used to tell me to keep still tlagusida. It seems that God was an English way of talking. To us he's the Creator, well to me English is God. To us Nato means our Father, our Heavenly Father. He's the one that looks after us. I was taught to believe in the old ways, but to pray for the good ways. Regardless of whom you are what race you are, you pray for them even if they don't know you.

I worked at the Seven Chief's Sportsplex for two years. I enjoyed working because we had a variety of work and we're our own bosses. We were taught what to do. Once I learned it I just did my work.

We had to teach the people and the children clean up after themselves. I thought that children have to pick up after themselves; that's what I was taught. I tell them these things. One on one if I have to talk to them. You have to be strict with them.

If they went on the ice with no skates that's dangerous. I told them don't you know you can get hurt. This one kid went running down there with a hockey stick. He borrowed one and I had to run down there. There was a big team that came on to the ice and he was shooting at the goalie and he had no helmet. I had to run there and take it away from him and tell him to get out of there.

I had to tell him, I talked to him later on. I told him did you know if you get hit by a puck you can get paralyzed for life. I showed him these things and now today's he's different. It's things like that you have to explain because children don't understand some things. They try to do things that are restricted from but you have to teach them each and every day. You know that's the way I look at things each and every day you have to teach.

My purpose each and every day is to teach something, like a little thing. If someone asks what's a word in our language I'll say it if I know it. Like what it means and the meaning. I try to circle around it and come up with the best version and that's what I like because some people ask me, what does this word mean and I tell them.

I try to teach my grandchildren one word at a time like naya it means get up, and sidina means hurry, words like that. They are real simple, but the Dene language is a hard language. It is, but you have to teach it carefully like ?ichiish is eat and sidina means hurry up. But yet you have to be careful like gujaala that means are you okay. Gujaaila means do it in a good way, magunajid means dangerous or be careful. Things like that you have to teach. I'm teaching every word till they know what it means. That's the only way you can teach the language. What the real meaning of the word is. When we talk English it's like we're talking backwards. I guess you know that yourself, because when you speak English you're talking backwards.

Each and every day I appreciate life and that's what I love about staying on my reserve. You got to teach everybody to learn about your ways because we're all uniquely different. We have to realize those things. We're all unique in our own ways. God gave each and every one of us a gift to teach one another one word or whatever. People don't understand these things. They have to realize that if we were all the same we'd do all the same things at the same time.

My dad walked up to me when I was twelve and told me he was my real dad. I knew who he was. He told me he was my dad. I had an idea, I knew. I had that idea because I was told by other people. Some of the people I went to school with. I do look like my dad. In the resemblance way and he told me don't ever let anyone tell you you're not my son. People will try to deny you. That's what he told me.

That's when I found out about things. People started telling me who my mother was. My real mom was Olive Onespot and she married in the city. My dad always lived on the

reserve his name is Roy Otter. He still lives there, but you see I respect him. She married in the city and I didn't know my real mom for about nine years. They finally told me.

I met my mother and I had a feeling of I don't know. When I met her they were drinking. I didn't know anything about booze those days. I saw people drinking and I've seen what it's done to them. I seen it as a young man, you know a young boy I was six or seven and I asked my mom, what they doing? Are they drunk? What's drinking, and I asked these questions.

In our language they got drunk. She said that means they are drinking and acting silly and acting crazy. I told her not me, and yet I went through that and I didn't like that. When I found out she was my mom. I would rather be with my foster mom because she was teaching the right things about life.

I didn't like the city life at that time because she lived in the city. She lived in Forest Lawn I didn't really like the city at the time. I was about nine. I really didn't care for the city. I rather be on the reserve. In the city it seems more restricted. Like you couldn't be free.

In life to come I have to meet my mom and I drank with her and I listened to her stories. When we met she was kind of restrained because of her husband. He didn't understand who I was. He didn't know who I was. Today I have a sister that's crippled for life, her names April. She's half colored, she married a colored man from Nova Scotia.

He drank but he never said anything at the time. I got to know him and he was a miserable old man. Well that's the way I looked at it. When he drank he was obnoxious and I didn't like the person when he was drunk. When I went there when I was sixteen or seventeen. I went there and drank with them and I got drunk. He kicked me out I had to walk all the way home, from Forest Lawn to the reserve. He got my younger brother drunk. That's not my doing but he blamed me. He had to blame somebody. But yet he made us drink. Then he kicked me out in the middle of the night. I said I'm never going there again and I never did.

On the reserve it's a wide open space to do whatever you want. The reserve is starting to be like the city. Here on the reserve you have to respect the other person. On the reserve you have your own space. You got to respect your neighbors regardless and that's what I found out. I like living on the reserve. When I lived in the city I had to pay rent. At that time I paid sixty five dollars for two bedrooms.

I still feel like I'm fifteen. I went back to my reserve and said I'm not going to leave home. I had my own room I had my privacy and I found out my parents gave me that space. My foster parents gave me my space. I enjoyed that and I gave my sister her own space. It's like there's a divider between a man and a woman. You have to give them respect and respect their space. They will respect your space. That's the way I look at with my grandsons and granddaughters. I give them their space and they can do whatever they want. I'm there as an advisor.

I use to go to Calgary Stampede and Banff Indian Days they were special. When I went there I use to dance. I had a friend there he was from Morley. We used to go all over the place you know. We did what we wanted to do. Yet we had our chores. We'd do our chores.

We used to give out buffalo meat. We'd keep the bones to ourselves, our parents let us do that. We use to go feed the bears at the dump. The bears got to know us. The cubs would come up to us and we would feed them. Today if you got in between the bear and mother you're in trouble. In those days they were friendly. I don't know about today. We use to feed them. We would come back late. They would ask us where we were and we'd tell them we were feeding the bears. We got heck but they understood us, they let us save our bones.

I use to dance like pow wow dance. I enjoyed that. We'd go there for about seven days by train, I remember that and hauling our stuff across the track. Then eventually we got a vehicle and we'd haul everything in the car, then we'd pitch up and I use to help with wood and everything. After that we did what we wanted.

We used to visit each other. We all used to play whatever we wanted to play. My cousin Bruce and I used to like riding these billy goats. We got heck for it later. One time we got a saddle and we were riding. One time the saddle, I got thrown over the fence or he did. We used to get a kick out of it. They use to butt us over the fence. We found out they weren't ours. We got heck but we were mischievous, Bruce and I. We had fun.

We used to play hockey on open ice. There was a field by where I live. We had an old way of cleaning the snow and playing hockey. We made our own pads with cardboard boxes. We learned to play hockey, baseball, football all kinds of sports, horse riding and rodeo. I enjoyed all that. We had fun but yet we had to go to school. We had our chores.

We used to hate going back to school because we were so into summer and enjoying our freedom. Everybody said, oh no, it's almost school time. We didn't want to go back. We were having too much fun.

My foster dad taught me how to work, to this day I enjoy that. At home I do things, you know trying to make sure it looks good. I'm going to put up a fence eventually. It's just a matter of time though. He taught me how to fence. How to build corrals and how to plant trees. All those things. I learned those things because he taught me how to do things. We worked on farms, you know feeding horses or whatever, cattle.

Yet we still had our chores. Number one you do you work first then you play later. That's like today, you always make sure everything's done then we go somewhere. That's why we keep the house clean and tidy things like that.

There was agriculture like farming and stuff like that. My uncle and my dad got jobs working for farms. As I grew older he got me working with him. Like when we were cutting rails. We got orders and we had to go to Bragg Creek to cut these rails and posts.

We got a bunch of orders for rails. We had to work out there in the bush. I used to peel rails or whatever.

We worked for farms and I picked roots and pick rocks for a living and stooking, haying and all that. We had to do all that and right next door was a field. They used to thrash. I use to help out there too. Drive a team and load up or vice versa and help with the chores.

We had to work to make a living. It was a good life because we just lived each day and enjoyed it each and every day. Like after school we had to do our chores. That's what I enjoyed after school I did what I wanted to do because school was strict and we had to do our work. It was like, I was working for my room and board and that didn't bother me because I was learning new things. Today I enjoy doing things each and every day.

That's about growing up on the reserve. It was good times. There were a lot of cattle and horses, there were even wild horses at one time. Each and every day we had to do something to make money like even planting trees and cutting trees for Christmas. It was a different life at that time. We only got a dollar a tree that time. You know back in the 50's and 60's. I remember doing that. We use to walk in fields picking stuff that don't belong there. Like different kinds of flowers that will affect the grain. We had to pick them out and put them into a bag.

My step dad got contracts. Whatever they were we just had to do it, that's all. My sister was right alongside my mom. We had to camp right by Red Deer Lake. It was on the other side of the reserve. We had to work there and do all different kind of work, like stooking. It was during the summer between July and August that's when we stoked.

In September I went back to school but I still had to help out with whatever had to be done. We had a vehicle. I had to go home, and then go to work. My mom and dad would come and get us to help them out. Whatever the work was we had to do it. I remember those things I enjoyed it because we were always busy everyday right from dusk till dawn you were doing something. I enjoyed that.

There weren't many cars. We knew every car. BigPlume's, Starlight and Crowchild's and we the Little Bear's had our own vehicles. Everybody knew each other's vehicle. We waved to each other. Today everybody's going by and asking who's who. Everybody's all tinted you don't know who's who. Most vehicles you can wave and some people don't know who's who today. If it's tinted you don't know who's in there. Whether or not it's a man, woman or an animal driving.

I remember my dad having a model T and when it couldn't start anymore he made a wagon out of it. I think there was a simple thing wrong with the motor. He didn't know anything about motors. One day he was working in the bush and a team brought it back and he was proud of it. He said the motor was still good but the horses brought it back. It was so funny when you think about it today. He was so proud of that wagon because it was on wheels.

I told him one day what are you going to do when it has a flat? He didn't know what to say. In those days you had to take the tire apart because there was a tube goes in the tire. You know that old model T wheels. When he had a flat he didn't know what do, till he was taught by somebody else.

They use to build a fire under the motor to warm it up. One time it damn near caught on fire. The oil was dripping. He threw snow on the fire because it was cold. I threw a shovel of snow on it and went inside. I didn't say anything and did something else.

My dad came in and said what happened to my fire. I told him do you want your horses on fire? I was teasing him but he was mad at me. I told him I put it out cause the oil was dripping and it was going to catch on fire. He said you did the right thing. I was teasing him. I don't think you wanted your horses on fire. He didn't catch on to what I was saying. It was funny.

I told my mom and my sister but I didn't tell him. Then he came back inside and said the fires out. There's snow all over it. She told him you were too busy doing something else too busy and not paying attention. Your son put it out. She said if not you wouldn't have a vehicle. After awhile we found it funny.

I remember the records. My dad liked this old song "Lonely Bull" Do you remember that song? He had it on and he fell asleep and it kept going. Finally my sister came down stairs and it wore the record out. She got mad at our dad and said you broke my record now it's stuck on "Lonely Bull". It was so funny. When I woke up all I heard was Lonely Bull, Lonely Bull. My mom said you're the only Lonely Bull here. He didn't know how to work it. He just put it on Lonely Bull and he went to bed. He thought it would keep playing. She threw that record out in the snow.

There were powwows at the Bullhead Hall. We use to go to the Bullhead Hall and they taught classes about the pow wow. Then they were teaching the rock and roll. Like the old rock and roll like fiddle dance and stuff like that. Everyone knew everything about pow wow. There were bingos. My sister won a TV and one time I won a turkey for us. We were marking with beans and all of a sudden I won. My mom said you sure I got it you know in our language. She said they are going to call the numbers one by one. Then they gave us my turkey. My sister won a big black and white TV with a record that's where the record player came from.

Long ago the sweats were private. My grandfather used to hold sweats. His name was Frank Onespots. I went to the sweats. I learned about the sweats at that time. They are sacred ceremonies, sweats. Our traditional way was only four times a year for the months like spring, summer, fall and winter. That's how it used to be, but today they have them damn near every weekend. It's no good because you are supposed to keep those ceremonies sacred.

People do sweats, like to get rid of their pain for like arthritis and stuff like that. A sweat ceremony is to help heal the body. I believe to help heal your body and to sacrifice things.

Like you don't eat all that day till after the sweat and then have a good meal. People fast to better their lives, they'd have a three or four day rest. There are also certain societies.

The way I look at it is they pray to Creator. Like the East is the way the Creator comes, and your feelings are in the South. Your past, you know your godmothers and fathers in the West. Your powers in the North. Each person has their own domain like if you believe in yourself and you believe in God your life will always be good. That's what I was taught.

I was taught to help my fellow man with a meal, if I got it I'll help out. If I see a person with a dirty shirt and I have one I'll give it to them or even shoes. I give something away just to help that person, because that's what I was taught. Make sure your fellow person's not hungry. Even water, you know give them water or something. But not a drink, you got to realize that the devil is in a bottle or drugs. That's where the devil is at. There's only the Creator and that's all. Devil is in words.

I try to preach the knowledge of sobriety to the younger people. If they come to ask me for help I tell the only person you can quit for is yourself. You can promise the world, promise your family but you have to quit for yourself. I tell them you have to listen to your heart. The only person you can listen to is yourself. Everybody can help you but you have to help yourself first, before you can help others. That's what I do today and I tell them. That's the way I look at my life today. That's why I try to tell young people if they drink I just walk away from them.

If they are talking because they don't make sense. People drinking talk in riddles and you can't understand what their talking about. They will be talking about this and that, and all of a sudden they're on a different subject. When they talk to me I try giving them my input. I tell them to talk to me when they are sober. I tell them I don't want to listen to you when you're drunk you're not making sense and your head is too numb. I say your head is numb and talk to me when you're sober. That's all I can do for you and that's what I tell them.

The way people talk, if people feel negative or naïve, they get on their fellow person swearing and whatever. Swearing is a sign of weakness to me. I'd rather be nice when people are swearing. I just tell them don't swear around me. I don't want to hear it. Take it somewhere else. I don't want to hear it. That's what I tell people. I tell them when you're swearing it doesn't make sense if you look at the words. That's what I tell people and it makes them think. That's what I tell anybody. I was taught not to swear. If you did you don't have respect for yourself. That's what I try to tell the kids of today. I tell them you're swearing for nothing. Do you ever look at the word for what it means? It's an empty word because there's nothing in it.

So that's what I'm trying to teach some kids that swear around me because it don't mean nothing to me. The next time they see me they don't swear around me. Then there's some that don't care that still use it around me. Just because they know you don't like it they'll use it around you. It's just like saying I don't care. In the long run I'll figure out I was right, someday.

I can pray in the Catholic way but it's a different way of praying. In the Anglican Church I can pray in my language. I like to pray in just Anglican because it's just Nato, but in Catholic you pray to God, Mother Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Jesus was our brother on earth because he was a Medicine man. He walked this earth and died for us because he was trying to prove to the world that he was God's son. People don't realize these things. He came from a different continent but if he lived today he would have crossed the ocean. He walked on water. That's why they crucified him. That's what I learned in my life.

I went to school in the city up to grade eight. I was about seventeen or eighteen when I quit school. I walked out of school and didn't want to go back because they were discriminatory against the natives. They called us Indians in those days and they were discriminatory to us. We had problems in school. They tried to segregate us from doing what we wanted to do.

I've read the Bible, I understand it. I've read it numerous times, but yet I have my own idea of the Bible. I got nothing against Christianity. It's just that I have my own way of believing in the Creator. There's nothing wrong with that. White people, the missionaries and priests tried to brain wash us, that our way was the wrong way. We all pray to the same Creator.

The white people didn't realize it till they got to understand our way. They shouldn't have tried to take our ways. The Prime Minister apologized to us for the people in the past, but it was in English so it's empty to me. That's the way I look at it but yet at least he apologized for the priest and nuns and the Anglican ministers. Today, I look at it and they should have never tried to take our language away from us. They should have just let us keep it. Maybe it would have been a better world too, but people are naïve.

I left the reserve when I was nineteen. I moved around with my work. I wasn't legally adopted. When I tried to get my social insurance number I found I was Onespot. I had to move out of Calgary because there was hardly any work here one time. I moved to Edmonton because I wanted to be close to my sister. When I lost her in 1984 I moved to British Columbia and worked out there for seventeen years. That's my experience in my life.

When I was nineteen, I was on foot and I came to the city and got a job as a roofer. I enjoyed working, and my cousins were working there too. When I started working I was a laborer. One guy taught me how to run a kettle. I ran the kettle for five years. I was good at it, the tar kettle. At that time it was kerosene and you had to pump it to build up the pressure. Every morning I had to fill it up and make sure it's hot and everything's ready. Then they all came.

I used to walk from the bottom of Edmonton Trail to the Airport for four months during winter time. I use to be the first one there and last one to leave because I had to fill up my kettle. I would be the first one there to fill it up again. I used to carry a pail of tar up one level. It's illegal now. They pull it up the next level I've done that all day long. I use to be there from seven. It was still dark when I started the kettle. I would use that because

there were no lamps or anything in those days. That's how I worked. Then the sun would be going down, I'd shut her down.

I made sure the kettle was full and everything was put away. Then they gave me a fresh light to work around them. So I would make sure everything was put away right. I would clean their tools in kerosene. In the mornings they pick them up and go up there. That's how I worked. I think at the time the bus was twenty five cents. I would walk up and make sure I had my bus fare every day. That's how I worked and my life was just work. I tried to provide for my family, that's it.

When I drank I tried to keep it to where I could remember what I was doing. I worked, I had two beers afterwards and that was it. I got to where I could learn to control my destiny. Like drink two beers and I'll be okay. Today if you had two beers you would be charged with impaired driving right. You got to realize those things. People don't realize drinking will make you dumb like not as responsible as when you're sober and that's what I found out in my life. Drinking isn't good for a person and yet you see it every day. I saw people get into crashes because they were drunk. Death is caused by, whatever it is.

While I was working this roofing company in Vancouver, we were doing a house and the foreman was a Christian. I told him I'm going to make a new mop. He said just use it up and I had this funny feeling. He was using a big mop with the tar and I slipped and he tried to grab me. If he didn't try to grab me I probably would have landed on my feet but I fell and landed on my shoulder. My arm is not straight and you can see it.

I was out for three days and I didn't even know. They took me from Henie to Maple Ridge to Royal Columbia in the United States and that's a long ways. Three days later when I woke up a woman helped me go to the washroom. That night, when I was sleeping, I saw the Creator. He told me in my language, he said it's not my time to go. I wanted to go. He said that my family and relations needed me and to go home.

For four years I was on compensation and I didn't know I had a broken toe. That night I fell, I had a collar around my neck. That nurse threw the gate down. She swore at me and told me to help myself. After that I had a hard time getting up and going to the washroom. When I came back I couldn't sleep anymore so I pushed the button. I asked the nurse I want to phone my doctor. My doctor came. His name was Dr. Ing and he signed me out.

He got that woman fired, the one that called me an Indian. She called me down and he got her fired. Then he looked after me at his home. Two weeks later I walked all the way to his office and I was limping and it hurt. He said you got a broken toe. He tells me I already had a broken finger. When you're in shock you don't know and I had broken ribs, and I couldn't lift my arm past here. After all that and now I can finally lift my arm. It was a serious fall and to this day my back bothers me.

When I saw the Creator He was dressed in a buckskin outfit and a headdress. He was standing there, I said in my language Nato ninila. He said it's me God, our Creator. He

said it's me nika nanisha and I said I want to go with you. He said not now. He said your family, your grandchildren and relations missed you. He said you're going to go out and go home one day.

The way I look at my life. I talk backwards but yet I understand from moving around. I was a gypsy, now I'm home. I feel at home that's why I'm happier each and every day. Like when I left it was just like part of me was gone then when I moved home it was part of me felt better.

That's what happened. I came home and I was on the reserve. Then I moved to Black Bear Crossing. Then we got evacuated and I had to stay in the Carriage House Hotel. Finally they got me a place to live in, in the North West. Then they finally gave me a house.

I believe in the Creator. My grandfather told me before he died that he'll always be with me. I was only about seven years old. He told me, in our language. He was like my spirit guide. Some days when I drank he told me to quit and I use to quit. What he told me I would always listen. I would listen to what my parents told me. These are some of the things I've become to realize today.

I felt special, and unique because of what he told me. Like I was his pupil to teach my fellow humans but yet some people don't believe me about seeing the Creator. They think I'm just talking out of the air. Yet I know I saw him and I take off my glasses. I am not lying. I'm back here to try and help you, but if you don't believe me that's okay. I know what I've seen and I'm not naive. I think positive because of what he told me, and today when I think negative I look at what I have seen.

I have visions of what, for like seasons and stuff. People don't believe these things but I see things ahead of time. It's like something that was given to me that I should tell people to be aware of the future.

In today's day and age these young people talk to me and they understand what I'm trying to do. They learn to respect me because of what I'm trying to do. I'm on the reserve trying to teach the young people the language. A lot of young people in this day and age, like after band meetings for the citizenship code, they say I wish I learned this language. Some of them say they feel lost without the language. I tell them you can go to school and learn the language. Bruce Starlight has a school and it's never too late for you to learn. Tsuut'ina can be taught.

The young kids know it in school but its different dialects and each generation has a different dialect. There's this young guy that speaks the language. It's different from me he's name is Hal Eagletail, his dialect is different from mine. The older people, the first generation got a different dialect, like the second generation. I'm the fifth generation speaking the language. I have my own dialect cause of my lisp I can't pronounce some of the words in the old ways. I still understand the old language. When they are talking it I understand what they are saying.

Whatever the old people ask me I'll do it. That's my respect for them for my fellow elders I try be helpful in that way. Like when we're in meetings I try making sure they have coffee and I bring them food because I'm not crippled and some of them are, so I'm there to help them.

I believe he put us on this earth for a purpose, to help one another. If I see somebody hurt or whatever I try to help if I can. I'll get whoever's involved to help them. Like if I saw somebody hurt somewhere I'll phone 911. Like if it's serious I'll call 911. One time they were drinking last year a bunch of drunks were chasing kids with sticks. I had to call the Tsuut'ina Police and they were there in no time. You don't pick on kids. This one kid came running up to me and said there are drunk people chasing us. So I phoned 911 and they got involved because we're only workers not security. We make sure everything's okay all the time. We have first aide so we can help the kids that come there.

As a Nation we have to stick together and try to build a better tomorrow for the future generations. Only the Creator can help us. We have to pray and do whatever we can to help us in our life. Bruce asked me to help him and I told him I'm here for you if you need me to help you. He lost a daughter last year. He had a special meal for her and I was there for him. I prayed in my own way. He prays in his own way. We're all unique in that part. He prays to Creator in his own way and we all need to be like that.

We all need to help each other as human beings. We need to joke about life because when you joke and have fun laughter is a healer in life. You have to look at it that way, even if you tease each other joking wise. Some people get offended by teasing and those people must have been hurt really bad if they can't handle the tease. People who drink get offended fast. All they want is enough money for their next drink. I know because I was there. I didn't like that feeling and today I don't look down on drunks; I pity them. There's help for them if they want it, each and every one of them. Each addiction they have there's help for them.

You can go to classes for alcohol, whatever there is there's something always there to help them. Even the spiritual way, there are sweats that can spiritually help you. Bruce always told me. His sweat is open to people to help them if they need it. He said I'm not a Medicine Man. I'm here to help if that's what people need. That's what I like about his sweats. He said we all got to help one and other, one way or another, that's why we're here he said. He said his family and grandchildren are important to him, and that's what I believe too.

I like sweating with him because it's our language and some people pray in Cree or Blackfoot its okay or in English it's okay because we all pray to the Creator. The Creator is the Creator of life and we got to know these things. I believe we need to help, but you got to help to a certain extent. You got to be helped back with whatever you're doing. That's what I was going to say. You got to help one another to help in life and whatever you give you get back in full. Like praise or a thank you for helping even a thank you is good.

I'm teaching my wife Tsuut'ina and we have a song "I give you my heart" and in the fourteen years we've been together I wrote it. Some day's when she feels down or tired I bring out the drum, she likes that. For my grandchildren I play songs and they just dance to it, like my granddaughter she just dances to them. I told her make sure your home on time and make her moccasins because she wants to dance at the Tsuut'ina celebration.

I went to the celebration yesterday, which is good because I helped my uncle with the pipe. It was important for me because I was his helper because he's older than me. Arthur, that's Reggie's brother. He lost a daughter too about three months ago.

I got him a card and gave him tobacco on that day when I was there. Before I went to the graveyard I went to the buffalo paddock and prayed there because, I was told, whatever I'm told in my heart I listen to it. I listen to my heart and do whatever it tells me to do. I put a cigarette out. I broke it up right by the buffaloes.

I don't know too much about Bullhead. What I heard was that he wasn't from here they said, he was from the States. He got scouts to find the reserve but he was a kind hearted man. He taught the people to be good to one and other, but yet he was a warrior. He fought for the Nation and our race. Bullhead found the reserve. Calgary use to be our land, we use to call it Gusts'ists'i it means elbow. They call the bundle the Beaver Bundle and that's sacred and I found out in the years to come that they only bring it out when the thunder comes. That's when you open it. The peace pipe is the Bible for us, the native people. We have it like a Bible and we have to hold on to it.

It's for the Beaver People. We are Dene but we are Beaver People of our own. The Sarcee's are Beaver People, and that's what I've learned in life. That we're a unique race of our own like we originate from the Cree's, Blackfoot's and Stoney but we're originally from Athabasca. As far as I know we migrated from as far as Arizona and went to Athabasca.

Everybody use to talk the sign language and the way you shook hands back then is they reach all the way up the elbow and that's how you knew you were brothers. They treated each other with respect, the tribes. There are a lot of stories between the Stoney's and Sarcee's. There's this story that the Stoney's raided Sarcee long time ago. One night they raided for a bunch of horses and took them back to Morley. The next day the Medicine Man saw all the horses and two horses had big ears and here they were mules. They didn't know what they were. The Medicine Man told them that's bad medicine. He told them to take the mules back to Sarcee.

So they had to bring them back. They didn't know they were good work horses. That's a story of its own by its self. They raided and stole horses and found two mules well they call them jackasses. They are good work animals and the Sarcee's knew how to use them, but the Stoney's didn't know anything about it.

We used to be told old stories and we used to camp at Blue Berry Hill. We used to go up there and pick blueberries and there was something called a bear berry you can't find it anymore and certain berries. They also use to pick their medicines for ceremonies.

We used to be told stories like if you whistle or make too much noise, Big Foot will come. You got to go to the tent and sleep. When it rained they used to say that was God is blessing us with water, so the earth would grow. Spooky stories just so we wouldn't come out of the tent. So we would sleep. They use to tell us funny stories too.

I saw Bigfoot once. This was when I was working for gravel pit and I was working in Black Bear Crossing. One morning I was going through Weasel Head and the leaves weren't out yet. I think it was during spring time and I was on my way to work. All of a sudden my hair stood up and I stopped. I was driving my truck and my window was rolled down. So I stopped and I took out my binoculars and sure enough there was something standing in the cutline on top of the hill. It looked right at me and I looked at it. You just see the fur but it had eyes just like a human. He looked at me for about five seconds and then he was gone. He just turned around and went east. He just turned around and left and that was just like telling me to be aware about what's going on. It was big and that's the first time I've seen it and my hair just stood up.

My uncle Mike Meguinis he told me a story he said way in the back of where they live. He said he was young. He said there was a funny smell and his hair stood up and he just started running. When he got home he told his mom. She said well that teaches you to be mischievous and not doing your chores. She kind of scolded him. But she told him now you know what he smells like. He made us all laugh.

I didn't believe it until I seen it that time myself. You know you hear these phenomenon's, like down east in Ontario they call him Cat man. In that movie he looks like a cat but here we call is a Sasquatch. There has even been children that seen it up in Rocky Mountain House. They say there are even leprechauns, small people. But you have to have a special gift to see those. I get a funny feeling like there's something looking at me. I don't know what it was.

When I used to walk around I'd get a funny feeling. I knew there was something around. It's your seventh sense they call it, of a feeling of something else around you. Yet there's nobody around you. Like for instance there's a lynx around you, you know it. It's that seventh sense. Like a bear but even something unusual you feel it. It's like a different feeling. Just like that feeling when my hair just stood up and I knew there was something but that was the first time I've ever seen him.

My uncle said you must have seen your son-in-law, he was teasing me about it. The way he said it was so funny, the way he said it in our language was funny. He said maybe that was him, the old people turn things into a joke.

I even saw a grizzly. I was coming to work and I seen something on the corner of my eye and he was running. It was a baby grizzly, maybe about one. Just running so I slowed down and watched it just to make sure of what it was. I thought it was a bear but it was light colored. It ran across from me. I just let it go because it was a baby grizzly. It was about a year old. I told everybody there was a grizzly around cause you know when there

about one year old their kind of mischievous and I didn't know where the mother was. It was just headed straight west and he was just boogying.

My grandchildren gave me a watch and it says Grandpa. They gave it to me and I treasure things like that. Those are some kinds of sacred things I have. My drum is sacred. Like I said my cousin gave me my dad's drum and its forty years old. It has L B on it and it says Bruce Starlight and Victor Starlight that's Lucky Starlight. They are brothers, half-brothers and Lucky gave me that. I gave him tobacco for it. I told him it's a good thing you did for me and from my heart I give you tobacco and I put it away I don't use it. It's a gift and its forty years old that drum. I don't use it I just put it away because it's sacred.

My nephew from Morley his name is Clint Snow he gave me a buffalo rattle nine years ago and I use it at Bruce's sweats. He likes that I use my rattle in there when we sing our songs. He's got sacred songs. I have my own song that was given to me and it's a healing song that I sing. I have my own songs in the language that I sing.

To walk in a good way and to strive in a very good way that's what it means when you translate it. When you translate the language it just like as soon as you translate it, its empty. You ever notice that and when you say it in our language it means more and when you translate it, it's empty. You ever notice that about translations well that's what I've found out in my life. I treasure the language.

When you say Oki in Blackfoot that means Hello, you say Tansi in Cree and that means Hello. Up in Dene they said dant'aa and us we say Danit'ada. I asked Bruce and he says it's a good word to say because we have to modernize our language. He always says Danit'ada to me because he's my cousin. My grandmother taught me how to say good morning in Stoney, but I don't know how to say good morning for tomorrow.

That was my late grandfather, he was a quiet man. He was a Holy man, Medicine man. He's the one that taught me the language. For instance to pray in the language and never give it up. When I was small I use to go down there with my parents and he was getting old. It use to be in his eyes.

He used to say where's that horse and he'd put me in front of him and we'd go to Two Crossing by the graveyard. He talk to the horse and he use to scold it in our language and he'd say you don't want to work for us. The horse would just shake his head.

He use to teach me how to make bow and arrows. He taught me about the way you peel it and at night you wrap it and bring inside till it dries on its own by the sun and how to make the bow. You know the strong willows by the river or the creek, that's what they use for arrows. He said it doesn't matter on what kinds of feathers you find use of them. He said don't kill a bird just for the feathers.

Everything is sacred he told me. Every animal, we have has a purpose on this earth. He told me about dogs, a long time ago he said dogs were our companions and they packed our animals. They were pack animals like horses, he told me about long time ago and how

it was. He told me about horses and they were our way of getting around faster. He said once you find your own horse that'll be your best friend and treat it as your best friend. Treasure every little thing you are given. In this life to come you'll always be important.

He was sacred. He had his own praying grounds and that ground is gone today. He had a rock where he used to pray. He used to go up there for hours on end. The day he was going to pass away he asked for me. He said come here I want to talk to you. He said my father's coming for me. He said I'll come back and see you. He said I'll see you later that's what he said to me. I've always wondered what it was and the years that I was growing up. I grew older he told me that I have to walk my own life. He would come to me in a vision and in my sleep.

He used to tell me it's time. He said don't drink now and you have to look at yourself, and fix yourself. To work on my wellbeing and listen to your heart. He said you walk in a good way. He told me these things and today I'm sixty five and I appreciate those words he taught me. When he died, he died with a smile on his face. He told my mom to loosen all his hair, he had long white hair. He laid down on one of those folding beds. He crossed his arms and smiled then he passed away. A big wind came in like a whirlwind. It came in from the east and went out through the south door.

I remember that and everybody was crying but I was in shock. Then my grandmother, she was Stoney, to me that day she was my grandmother. His wife was from Duffield and she raised a family.

He taught everyone a different thing. He taught me, my cousins, my uncles he taught us all different things in life. He comes to me if I need his help. He doesn't have to ask, he knows when I need him. I say about the Creator. I knew it wasn't my grandfather because I know the difference. The Creator talked a different voice and I know my grandfather's voice.

In my life to come I know these things, like now. He taught me a lot and what he taught me I'll try to pass on and the knowledge. I know that about him, and there's a picture of him at the museum. I know the pictures are in my mind like of my parents and why should I keep pictures of people who passed away in my house. My dad has pictures of his family that passed away and I don't know why people would live like that. I don't keep pictures of them in the house.

I have five spirit guides I found a place out in Bragg Creek, one is my grandfather, grandmother, my mother, and my dad and my sister were sitting there. The only person talking about my grandfather Pat. I walked to them and I was dressed in an outfit. He said it's time for you to dance. When he was telling me that I was dressed in an outfit and my wife was like my mother the way she beaded, that's all just the comparison.

My wife is a real quiet person and she's only 5'2" but she's a very strong person. Sometimes when I feel down, I talk to her. She inspires me and brings me back up. Same thing with her when she's feeling down. I tell her well that time and I go get the drum and

start playing for her. It's like I inspire her and it's about knowing each other's feelings and respect that.

In Stoney it's a different way of saying I'm going to teach you mine. It's similar to them it's have a nice day and us it's have a good day, it's similar. What my grandfather was telling me is it's time, well my cousin was saying it's time to have a Sundance of our own. He was telling me, my grandfather, to have a Sundance. The time will come for me to do that. I told Bruce about it and he said we'll see what happens and we'll know when.

Right now I'm making new crosses for my parents because I made them twelve years ago. I'm making new ones out of pine. When I go home I'm going to start drawing it and things like that, carving it.

My grandfather gave me the healing song. That's what he gave me and I know that already today. It's a unique song. My wife told me when I use my drum don't beat it too loud so my voice is over the drum. So I play the drum slow and I play that song. I can sing it without a drum. This is the forefather's and the foremothers who talk to me. It's a song from high above, the Creator.

It's a song for healing, it heals the mind and the soul and the body. That song was given to me in March when I was coming back from Enoch. My wife and I went up there for a conference for the program she belongs to, and it's called the Wellness Program. Jeannette and Gloria Runner use to run the Wellness Center, when my wife ran the program in Morley.

So we went up to Enoch and had a conference for that. It's even the feelings that you feel. They told us to pick pictures and I picked the ones of horses, mountains and animals. The ones about freedom. In city you feel locked up, even in a room like this. When you're out in the country you feel free. Your spirit is free. This song is meant to free you.

Sometimes, you feel negative from listening to these things and that's a song I sing to heal. Bruce lets me sing in his sweat. My wife wearing her traditional coat. She held a mic for me and I sang that song. It was for everyone that feels down in life and my cousin lets me sing that song in the third round for the healing and he has a song it's called the horse song. He has songs of his own and I have songs of my own.

You have to realize something. Before you go somewhere, anything you feel bad about, you got to give your garbage to God. The way you do it is to go to the river and get some tobacco, put it in the river and you are giving your problems to the river and to the Creator. It's called river of life.

You have to realize that we're all unique in our own way but that's what I do. Sometime I put tobacco and maybe a color and put it in the river. Yellow's for bravery, black is for night, blue is for sky and purple is for night time too. The colors in my house are light brown. The dark colors are the dark soul but I like bright colors. I don't wear dark too much.

I have some real nice traditional shirts that I wear. I got a hat that says native pride and things like that but here it doesn't matter. I use to dress in dark clothes for roofing, sure, but that's a different story. Everything is black on the roof. We started using torch on and it has colors on it. We had gray, brown and green it was a little more important that we got colors. I pick different colored rocks for my wife all different colors and we have them in the west by our kitchen, we got a bunch of little rocks all different colors, you can get unique rocks.

I have to believe in myself first God put us here for a reason and he gave me a reason to come back from the coast. He told me my family and my way of life I have to teach, and to be a guide for the future generation. I believe in today, I have to teach somebody something, of what I know. The old ways and to modify it, to make it a better life for each person. Teach them not to drink and things like that.

You have to pray away your anger and that's what I do. I pray in our language. You know Tsuut'ina to take away angry feelings towards somebody else. Sometimes somebody says something wrong to you. What you do is put up like a shield and say I don't want to hear it. If you want to talk, talk or take it to someone else. Take your anger somewhere else. That's what I was taught. You got to work to get rid of anger and to pray and not judge your fellow person.

You are not the judge, God is the judge. God is our Creator and our judge. I was taught not to judge my fellow human beings. If they say something wrong just say it's your way not mine. Whatever it is do it your way and go ahead and do it your way because I'm not doing it your way. I have to do things my way. When people try take their anger out on me I tell them don't take it out on me, I'm not your anger. Whoever your angry with go be angry with them. You have to tell them your problem. That way you'll enjoy your life.

You have to teach; even your friends teach them something small, very little, because gifts come in words or whatever you're given. You got to appreciate every little gift because people today in this day and age don't realize a gift can be a word. Like saying hi and when you see a person walking with their head down or they look sad say how are you? Things like that if, you know if someone is feeling down try cheer them up. When I see some of my friends down I buy them coffee and talk to them. I do not give them money for whatever they want to do with it.

Believe in the Creator. Every one of us is unique in our own ways. We're all God's children and we have a purpose in life. Always be good to one another, I lost a sister and we were bought up together and to this day I still miss her. Be good to another. Brothers and sisters be good to one another.

In life to come you'll never have that person with you. In the next life you will but today's people don't realize these things. The purpose in life is to enjoy each and every day to the fullest because yesterday is gone. Your purpose today is to enjoy today because tomorrow may never come. Only God can make that decision in our lives each and every day.

You have to learn to forgive each other no matter what words were used and try not to swear. Swearing is a sign of weakness and there's no meaning in those words. There's nothing, it's blank, and people need to realize these things.

Enjoy life each and every day because there maybe never another tomorrow. If tomorrow comes it will always be beautiful. It will be a beautiful sun up. Always worship the sun up, smell the flowers and enjoy life. Enjoy the sunsets because they're beautiful too. Enjoy the Rockies. God put us on this earth to enjoy the sunrise the beautiful earth the sunsets and the beautiful hills, the Rockies and everything like that.

Everything is good in life, and no matter where you live, enjoy it. As long as you have a meal to three meals a day that's all you need, and to work. To walk around for nothing, it's not life. You have to work to enjoy life.

Teach one another one thing at a time, that's what I believe in. Give a compliment each day, oh you dress nice, you look nice and it's a beautiful day, things like that. Enjoy each other's company just to say hello and grab a coffee together. Even have water together but just talk for five minutes.

Say hello, how are you doing today? Know how your fellow person is doing each and every day. Enjoy, no matter what because you'll never get it back. God will always look at you that way. The Creator will look at you because you gave something.

I grew up with my family. I really love animals, I love the mountains, and like in our language we say tsa chu magunichinagha that means beautiful mountains. That's the way we look at life, that's the way we live. I live on the reserve and it's beautiful there by my house. You can see the Rockies. Always pray. Bruce taught me one word for all animals and birds and for children to play like them. Even ourselves to enjoy life to the fullest each and every day. Enjoy each day because you can't go back in time but you can always proceed. Try to teach the good things in life about today and tomorrow. Today's beautiful regardless of anything; people might look at it in a negative way but I don't think of it as a positive in life. I enjoy each and every day.

In my life I'm not going to die with money in my pocket. I'll die whichever way I'm put. It doesn't matter. I know my soul is going to a good place because I saw it. I always tell my grandchildren, even my granddaughters, if I go today at least I gave you something, but just as a joke. I'm just teasing you I tell them. I always tease my grandchildren and make them laugh.



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