



**TSUUT'INA  
GUNAHA  
INSTITUTE  
ANTHOLOGY**

**SECOND EDITION**

Tsuut'ina Gunaha Institute Anthology First Edition  
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Earth Magic Media Ltd.  
Tsuut'ina Chief and Council  
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 everyone 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'ya" 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.

## **AUDREY PIPESTEM**

Audrey is an elder of the Tsuut'ina Nation reserve. She was born on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1947. Audrey's parents are Narcisse and Clarabelle Pipestem. She was born and raised on the Tsuut'ina Nation reserve. Audrey is a nice and caring lady, and is one of many elders that participate in a lot of the community functions. Audrey believes in how important it is for all young people to get a good education. Audrey said "We are unique, that's why we are different from everybody else."

## **Audrey Pipestem**

My name is Audrey Pipestem. My parents were Narcisse Pipestem and Clarabelle Pipestem. I have one brother John and one sister Donna. I lost a few sisters and brothers that have past. Since then my parents have passed on. I have one sister that had passed on few years back. My eldest sister's name was Irene, I had a brother older than Irene, named Joseph. There's Joseph, Irene, then there's myself, Edna, my sister Jean then there's my brother John who's still with us. My sister Theresa she passed on and my younger sister Donna. I am the third oldest. My Birthday is January 11th, 1947.

My mom's parents were Chief Joe Big Plume and her mom's name was Mary Big Crow. My dad was originally from Hobbema, when he had married my mom he was voted in. There were a number of men that were voted on to the reserve here, Sam Simon, Mike Black Fore, Dave Jacobs, that's all I can think of right now. My dad was originally from Montana reserve in Hobbema, his dad's name was Peter Pipestem, from what I learned of my mother but I had never met him.

I never met my Isuh because she died when my dad's younger sister was a baby. My dad had to help my Grandfather raise them, my aunt and uncle. When they had become of a certain age I think about four or five, my grandfather had put them all in boarding schools in Hobbema, Muskawchees. That's where my Dad had gone to school. Originally we're supposed to be from Hobbema, but I don't know I guess they said my dad was voted in. My dad had gone to residential school in Hobbema, Muskawchees. My mom had gone to residential school out here, down at the Old Agency.

With my parents, my dad got land on the west end of the reserve, the area of Bragg Creek that is where we were raised. We had lived there most of our life until my dad had passed away in 1966. When he passed away we moved down this way to where Diane Meguinis' house is right now, a little bit north there was a little red house we used to live there. Our neighbour just right in front of was an old lady by the name of Mable Dodginghorse. That is where my brother and sisters grew up. They were very young when my dad passed away. My mom had passed away seven years ago, so my mom raised us. My earlier years were always in Bragg Creek, that is where we were raised. We would come down, spend couple days or couple nights and go right back.

In Bragg Creek I did a lot of work, labour work. My dad would treat me like a guy. We had to cut posts, dig seneca roots, and tree's. It was our way of living. It was our means of living to get our meals. We would go out thrashing in Spring Bank and Jumping Pound. It's where we would go in the fall. We used to camp out. We even went to school in Bragg creek, Spring Bank, Priddis and in Drumheller. I went to University in Regina Saskatchewan. I was going for different trades here on the reserve. When they first started that Bull Head Adult Center, my sister-in-law was one of the people who started it. She got the upgrading going, that's where I had gone to school for a while. It was opened in the early 90's. My first school experience was off the reserve. One year I went to school

here on the reserve, day school but only for six months, that was when we were living at the hall. Most of my education was off the reserve.

There was a school in Bragg Creek that's where I had first went to school my dad had sent me there for school. During that time my brother John and my late sister Theresa were going to school there. We used to walk to school from our house, down to Bragg Creek, the hamlet of Bragg Creek. We used to race the sun to get to school, to see if we can beat the sun before it came over the horizon. That morning we were late and rushing to school. We didn't pay attention. We were rushing down the hill. We didn't go on the road we had a short cut, when we had come out, there was no school. It had burnt down that night, we had no school. May, June, July and August, we had four months of holiday, because our school had burned down. This was in Bragg Creek it was a public school same as Spring Bank and Priddis. Drumheller was a residential school.

My first school was here in Tsuut'ina. I don't have good feelings about that school because of the teachers we had. There was one teacher there that had a hook arm, she was really mean. She would grab us by our necks with her hook and shaking us with it, that hook would get into our throat. She was the one that was always strapping us, for any little thing. I got into trouble but it wasn't my fault. It was the boys that got me into trouble and I got the strap for it. The straps had those bumps on one side and on the other side it was flat. She had always hit us with the bumpy side on the hands.

She was going to strap me one time. She told me to hold my hand out. So I did, I saw her turn the strap around to the bumpy side. She had raised her hand with the strap over her head just as she was coming down to hit me I pulled my hand away and she hit herself on the lap. She got mad at me and started yelling calling me a "stupid Indian" and all that. We were living at the hall at that time. I ran out. She was chasing after me. I remind you that we were living at the hall at that time, my dad was there. I went running to my dad and had told him that I was going to get the strap. I had told him what for and what she was about to do to me with the strap that was at her side. My dad got mad and walked over. Once he got there he had her removed from the school. Her name was Mrs. Remple I think. She was a short white lady. I can't remember what year this was. It's too far back.

The Indian Agents opened up a school where the fire hall is, by Jackie Crowchild's place and the baseball diamonds. We used to have a day school there. That's where I had gone to school. There was quite a few of us that went to school there like Bruce Starlight and a few others.

I had gone to school in Priddis, over there I got into a vehicle accident, and it was winter time. We were on our way to Priddis when we got into a head on collision. We were on a school bus. The bus is different from today's buses, the students would be facing each other and the windows instead of facing forward towards the road. The older ones would be sitting upfront and the younger ones would be sitting at the back when we would get on the bus. Like I said how we were sitting when we got hit. We got tossed back, and our bus driver was knocked out. The kids were all screaming and freaking out. There was a

boy named Brian Birdy, we were around the same age or so, I kicked the window open and told him to go out. The bus was going back, it was slowly going into the creek. Actually the window was cracked already I just kicked it more and broke it open. I told Brian to go out and I would bring the kids to him. After he got out the bus I continued to go back, I got the little ones and gave them to him. It came to our bus driver. He was knocked out so I don't know where I got the strength but I pulled him to the window. Brian had grabbed him and pulled him out.

By that time there were already vehicles coming around. Well people were coming around to help. I was the last one out and the bus was really starting to tip over. Literally going up there was no weight in there anymore. Some of the people were yelling at me to get out. They were trying really hard to hold the bus down by the fender so I can get out in time. Once I got out on to the ground, the bus had gone back into the creek. I was about twelve or thirteen when this happened. There were parents and white people that took us to the school, some of the women were nurses. The nurses checked us to see if we needed to go to the hospital. But I think we were just more scared than anything. We just had bumps and bruises. That was about it, nothing serious like where we had to be taken to the hospital. That's what happened to us just out there on your way to Priddis going through the reserve, right where the Whitney's live, around there.

After that, my dad wanted me to get more education. My parents heard of Drumheller. Around that time Indian Affairs was downtown right across the Co-op on 11<sup>th</sup> avenue. We had to go see the Education Director down there, her name was Eva Hunter. She set me up to go to school in Drumheller. I went to school there for two years, or no it was a year and a half because the end of the second year is when I had lost my dad. I didn't go back to finish school. I had won a scholarship there in Drumheller "The Knights of Columbus". They asked the students to write an essay on their choice of career. At that time I wanted to be a nurse, and I won the contest. They were going pay for it and I was going take my training in Edmonton at Charles Camsell Hospital. When I lost my dad I went back to school for a few weeks, and I won that essay contest. I called my mom and told her, after I told her that she had hung up on me. So I never took that training I just came home.

I don't know why my mom hung up on me. I told her, I won a contest and they wanted to send me to that Charles Camsell because I wanted to be a nurse. Everything was to be paid for after I finished my school year. Then I could go to Edmonton in the fall. Like work and go to school at that Charles Camsell Hospital. I was doing really well at this school up until that incident happened. I really got discouraged and hurt. I know if my dad was still around he would have encouraged me to go for it, because he really believed in education. He wanted First Nation people to get their education. He would say, "If you don't get your education white people are going to walk all over you. So get your education, you can be a leader for your reserve and make wise decisions for your band members". I didn't finish in Drumheller, I came back and I went back to Bishop Grandin. I went to school there, I got my high school there.

I started having kids I had three boys. My oldest boy's dad is from Standoff and my other two boys' their dad is deceased, he's from Siksika. I'm not comfortable mentioning their fathers names, it's up to the boys if they want their relatives mentioned on here. Vincent is my oldest, and there's Quinton he just came back he was living in Europe, Germany. He was living there for three years; he hadn't come home for Christmas. So I feel whole now that I have all three of my boys. My niece was asking me what I wanted for Christmas I said "I already got what I wanted for Christmas" she said "I know that but what you want for Christmas?" So anyways there's Vincent, Quinton and Wendell. Oh I had my boys for so long, the years they were born are 1971, 1974 and 1969.

I remember the people were very strange in Drumheller the ones that looked after us were white people. The boys were on one side and the girls were on one side. We still couldn't talk our language, if we were caught speaking our language we couldn't go home for the weekend. We could go home for the weekend, you know our parents could phone in and make arrangements and we could go home for the weekend. If they heard us talking our language we couldn't go home, it was still like that. I speak Tsuut'ina and Cree.

At home with my dad the language we spoke was Cree, my mom very seldom spoke Tsuut'ina. I learned Tsuut'ina from my grandmother Mary Big Plume. I spent a lot of time with my grandmother. My uncle hooked up a team and we would go down to the ration house at the agency and get rations. One time we were going there with my grandmother, and aunt. The wagon was going I was sitting on the little wooden bench. I was always singing. My dad always sang pow-wow songs. So I was singing pow-wow songs. I was singing away, we hit a gopher hole and I had bounced off. I didn't get hurt or nothing, I just sat there. My aunt and grandmother went down the hill to the ration house. My grandmother turned around to tell me to help my auntie with the rations but I wasn't there. So she made my aunt turn around, I heard them coming because of the chains on the harness. When I heard them coming I started crying. My grandmother got my auntie into trouble but I wasn't even hurt or anything.

When I was in residential school there were Blackfoot from Siksika, Kianai, Piikani, and from up north Alexis, Alexander, Hobbema, Saddle lake. It was a hard time in residential school, because of the way we were treated, and because we couldn't speak our language. We would go home during Christmas, Easter and summer, but in between if we wanted to go home, our parents would have to phone in and say they wanted us home for the weekend. We went on the Greyhound it would take us to Drumheller then we would take a cab to the school. It wasn't really residential school, the white people from around the neighbouring towns around there and the farmer's kids stayed in the dorm with us. But them they were allowed to go home every weekend, their parents didn't have to phone in for them and all that.

During the week day we would have a study hour right after supper from seven to nine. We would have a break. We had to be in bed by ten and lights out by eleven. In the morning we would get up at seven. There was a cafeteria there, we would just go line up

and have our meal's there like our breakfast, lunch and dinner. There was a long hallway from our residence to the school so we didn't have to go outside. On the weekends there wasn't really much to do so we formed our own sports team, like a basketball team of First Nations. We would play the neighbouring towns with basketball, volley ball in the spring and fall time it was soft ball.

I moved to Saskatchewan, Sweet Grass Reserve is where I had got married. I worked as a T.A (teacher's assistant) there, they had hard times on getting teachers to stay and teach the students. Some of the students were rough. So the band hired me there to teach. They couldn't get any more teachers to come out there and teach. So I started teaching from grade seven to nine. I did the best I could. I couldn't pass their grades myself. They had to do departmental in each class so they could pass onto the next grade. But I liked it there in Sweet Grass. The students, I took them on field trips. I even brought them out to Calgary here when PICSS was over here. That place in Spy Hill School and to the Husky Tower. I took them to Edmonton that's when AMSA was first started, that radio program. I took them to the Hutterite Colonies in the Sweet Grass area to play baseball with the students there.

So when I was older I got married off the reserve. I couldn't marry anybody here because we're all related. My dad really emphasized that, not to marry anybody here, because we are all closely related. On my mom's side we are descendants from Bullhead, on my dad's side we are descended from Big Bear. My dad's mom came from a family of fifteen sisters I met some relatives from Browning and Rocky Boy. But the ones in Saskatchewan I haven't met those ones yet, I have some more relatives in Frog Lake and Kehewin, my Isuh is married into Duffield.

My dad helped start the pow-wows here. He had introduced it he was involved in the first Indian Days here. They had it out by the Hall, as well as the one who had made the first Remembrance Day pow-wow. Annie Manywounds used to have ceremonies she would bring wreaths there, and my dad had made sure that Leonard Crane and Harold Crowchild were all recognized for being in the war. Some of them came by but some of them didn't. Still they were recognized because they were band members that had fought in the war. Yeah, we used to have a pow-wow for that during the Indian Days.

My grandmother always had dinners, she was into that W.A "woman's auxiliary" from the Anglican Church. During the summer and early spring she used to have, what is called today "garage sales" to raise funds for the maintenance of the church. We used to have clothing, bake and bead work sales. The people from the city would come out to the sales we had it down there by the Anglican Church.

In the spring time or in June we had the coming of together, we would have sports day down at the river for the last day of school. We used to have Halloween parties and there was a group called Home Makers Club on the reserve that used to sponsor those, like Halloween for instance and even Easter both Catholic and Anglican would have meals. There was even a community feast, like where everybody got together. They did what

they could at that time it was a great time, with what they had for meals, but they made sure that everybody had something.

In the winter time my dad did a lot of hunting, like elk and moose, especially in Bragg Creek when the elk came in they would eat the all the grain and stuff like that. Those white people used to call my dad to come and kill them. My dad would kill a few elk, butcher them up and come around give them out to the whole reserve.

My influences in life were my dad he had introduced me to the Cree aspect of the cultural way. He had always made sure there was a form of faith in our life. He brought us to church on Sundays and during Lent we had to give up something. On Fridays we would not eat meat and on Christmas time we would go to church for a Midnight Mass. We still smudged and prayed in Cree.

My grandmother had the bundles we learned that spring and fall is when she would clean the bundles, during that season. She had it at her place just over here. My grandmother and my dad never spoke to each other they communicated through my mom. My grandmother would tell my mom what to do I would go with my dad. First we would go get a blanket and spread it out. My dad and I would go get the bundle, take it to my grandmother. She would open it to air it out and clean it. She used to have this red stuff to clean out that bundle. It wasn't very big, it was like a wooden container. She would pray and sing, I would sit there with her.

It had life, that bundle, I would sit there and talk to it, that old man I should say. He would talk to me that bundle. I used to play there where that bundle was. It was on like a table kind of thing. It was like sawhorses but my uncles would put a board over it and cover it. I sat on there at nights and talk with it. There was an old man that played and talked with me. When I first started talking with it my mom got scared but my grandmother had told her "no, leave her she's okay he's not going to hurt her" she would say that in Tsuut'ina.

On this hill not too far from here we were going to make a sliding place on the hill but my grandmother had said "no because there are some graves there on the east side" she had mentioned there are some babies buried there and not to play there because we would wake up the babies' spirits. It is located right over here by the old agency, where my cousin Melody lives. Those are the babies from this past community, from Bullhead times.

There were always old people that would come and visit my grandmother. They would be talking and I would be listening to them. She would never send me out but she would send the others out like my cousins and brothers out to play with my sisters when they were small. She would tell them to go play outside. She never sent me out. When I'm home alone I sit there and think about those old people, what they would say and how they would talk in Tsuut'ina. I would write it down and give it to my kids for my grandchildren. When they talked to my grandmother they told stories.

I try to remember how they said it word for word, how they said it because I don't want to mix it up. It's hard but I do a lot of praying and concentrating, I ask for help for me to not mix it up or give wrong information. So I write those down for the benefit of my grandchildren in case I don't live the day to see my great grandchildren.

There were a lot of predictions from the elders. I am remorseful from my dad because of what he used to say when we lived in Bragg Creek. At that time we didn't have power. We used oil lamps and a wood stove. My dad would be sitting there, he was always singing pow-wow songs. In the summer time we would go to the Indian Days in different reserves to play hand games. He would sing pow-wow they would get him to come and sing.

He would say things are changing. He would emphasize on the education on how important it would be to the nation. You know to overcome the government at that time for the youth to continue and progress. Not to give up on the education he thought that education was the most important tool. I see and understand what he means today. I really believe in getting an education for the young people and how important it is. I been hearing about our treaty rights it has been trying to get taken from us now. So it's important for our young people to get their education but also to be proud that they are Tsuut'ina.

The young people have to understand their identity, First Nation and the language as well as education. The faith whether it be Anglican, Traditional or Catholic whatever the religion they were brought up in just as long as they have faith. These are the things that I was brought up on. To have strong belief in the Creator, it will eliminate all the struggles with alcohol abuse. That's one thing we have to emphasize on how bad drugs and alcohol is on First Nations people because it wasn't meant for them.

You know it was the Europeans life style that was into the drugs and alcohol. It's destroying a lot of our young people, with their minds and bodies with car accidents and attempted suicides and suicides. So don't do drugs or alcohol. I feel bad when I hear of someone who's using because that person must be in a lot of pain, mental, physical and spiritual pain. They don't know where to start to talk about it. The pain is so painful that they can't bare it anymore. So to them it seems they feel it's the only way out. If only there were somebody there to reach out to them and say yes there's a way. We don't have that right to take our lives. The Creator put us on here for a purpose. We are here until we complete our task that he has put before us. When we complete our task he takes us home. It's painful when we lose a person from natural causes like when they pass on it means they have completed their task.

The Creator said for them to come home, but it hurts as well as when someone takes their own life. It hurts inside when I learn that person has done that. It hurts the family of the person. I feel bad, they had to do that. If only I could have maybe talked to that person. Maybe it would have been different. Maybe just to hear that person out when they were hurting so bad. Sometimes all they need is a sounding board. So those are some of the things we have to really look at to help these young people.

The city is just at our door step, with access to all this hard core drugs that's going around. It's making it more accessible for our young people. We have to emphasize to our young people to say that drugs are wrong. We don't need to take drugs to be somebody. Just believe in ourselves and to be ourselves. We could be somebody that could be anything in this world that we set our minds to do. Anything positive that we could set our minds to, with a lot of encouragement.

Encouragement is the best way for the young people. A lot of people that speak that language need to give them encouragement and not to laugh at them when they try speaking Tsuut'ina. As well as to show them the pronunciation, they will get it but to emphasize and encourage the Tsuut'ina language, not only the young people but for the people working at the band office. I was in a sweat where Bullhead came in spiritually. He really emphasized was the language. It was a spiritual sweat and Bullhead had come to us and told us to keep our language alive, so we can do anything in this world with our language alive. It's a form of our identity.

People really need to take time to understand each other and get rid of this jealousy. We all have the potential in life. It doesn't matter how old we are or if we are male or female. We are all equal and have the potential to do anything in this world that we set our minds to. If someone chooses to be a Doctor or a Lawyer, encourage them don't discourage them. Show that you are proud of them. Never mind this hillbilly feuding. Its back there in the past that's been carrying on from generation to generation. It's got to stop we have to look at today there's nothing we can do about yesterday. But we can really try to do better for tomorrow. Praise that person that is really doing well so they can say hey somebody really does believe in me. I'm going to try harder.

We need this to be put into schools because it is a part of history. It would be great if these were formed into plays. Like the stories being told in the anthology. It will have an impact on the students. It will give them a form of identity and pride will enforce the Tsuut'ina speaking. The Tsuut'ina people are unique, we have our identity, and we believe in ourselves. We have our language and beliefs. We are unique that's why we are different from everybody else. We don't need to learn what's going out there like all the bad stuff we need to learn what's going on here, all the positives.

## **Reg Onespot**

Reg is an elder of the Tsuut'ina Nation reserve. He was born in 1937. Reg was born and raised on the Tsuut'ina reserve. He is also one of our fluent Tsuut'ina speakers. Reg has once said "It's not just a religion it's a way of life."

## Reg Onespot

I'm Reg Onespot, I'm seventy-two and I was born in 1937 and raised on Tsuut'ina Reserve. My mom was Alice Crowchild and she married a guy named Frank Onespot. Which is not my biological father and I don't want to reveal who my biological father is but he was from the Tsuut'ina reserve. I have an older brother and five sisters. So far there are just three of us left, my brother who's older than me and another sister. I was the youngest in the family. All the others have passed on.

My mother's parents were Mark and Sarah Crowchild. Mark was not originally from our reserve. In the old days when they use to set up camp around Tsuut'ina. That is where he came from, well that's my understanding. There were five of them in my mother's family, there was Dave Crowchild he was a Chief and Bertie Crowchild, Bessie Meguinis, Winnie Bull and my mom.

I ran for council one time, back in 1969 and I got in. That was a nightmare. That's when we first came into self-government. They needed an administrator I applied and got it. It was trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, I only lasted four months, I had enough.

I went back to what I know best, work. Some of the staff never had a job in their lives, some of them don't know how to punch in on time and to do a job you're assigned to. I use to like whatever job I got because I was working with my hands. Sitting in an office, Holy God, that was a death sentence. Well I needed the money they were paying good money. Stupid me, I went and applied and I got in. At the time when I ran for council and got in I was getting a big sum of fifty bucks. Jesus what their making now is just pale my salary in comparison. Things have changed so much in my life time. It's hard to keep up with some of it. I'm a modest man we don't live beyond our means. I don't drive a new car every two years just to keep up with somebody else. I go with what I have. I have some toys, like I have a saw mill, back hoes and tractors.

When I was in grade nine our school here on the reserve went to grade eight. We were sent to schools in the city one day a week for carpentry work I really enjoyed that. So when I first went to city school just before the school term they put us through an aptitude test. It didn't take me long to know what you are best at. I was mechanically inclined.

When I went to high school I took shop classes. I couldn't get into automotive because it was full when I got there so I took electrical and metal work. That's why I keep telling these people out here get an inventory off your workforce and put them through an aptitude test. So that when people apply for a job you'll know who's good at maybe computers. Like I say it's like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole if you pick the wrong candidate.

It falls on deaf ears. I wasn't trying to fool anybody, I had my own gravel truck, a couple of them. I had a little cat, and a back hoe. Now I have a saw mill and I noticed what makes them tick you know because I have that knack for it.

I would have went the other way, mechanic rather than being an electrician. When I went to school high school all the other shop courses were full and that's the only one I could get into was electrical and metal. I wanted to get into auto-motives and carpentry. They were all booked solid. So I had to settle for electrical I wasn't too keen on because sometimes you had to do math and I was very weak on math.

I would go in for heavy duty mechanic because that's what I like doing. Our school on the reserve went up to grade eight and grade nine up we had to go to the city. In 1954 or 1955 was the first year I went to city school and in 1958 I finished. I didn't get my diploma. What the hell as long as I got my shop you know that's all I cared about. I use to get A+ in shop. Algebra, where you going to find a place for it, why do you need algebra? When there was a test the only thing I got right was my name. Who the hell's going to use algebra in the real world?

I got the basics from going to school. I went to the other school. The school of hard knocks and I learned a lot, most of it was self-taught. This is a big classroom we live in. You have to apply yourself to whatever job you have. I didn't find any discrimination but there were some red necks that I ran into. They wouldn't even sit at the same table. In high school we had a lunch room there was these rich kids, you can tell they were rich because they would stick their noses up at me.

I wouldn't have any contact with anyone, but I was treated fairly. I made a lot of friends in high school. They didn't treat me any different. Only to know that I was different from them that I was an Indian and they were white people. I've never had confrontation with my race but I knew some people wouldn't sit at my table. So I said, that's fine it didn't bother me. It's their problem and I use to just look at that way. If they were going to talk behind my back, who cares.

I was pretty care free and very poor. We got by with whatever we can and I know my mom use to go work for the doctor that was a resident for the reserve. She worked for him. She also worked for the minister just domestic house cleaning. That enabled us to buy the necessities and there was no extra money. We struggled that was a very tough life.

We were happy. We had nothing but we were happy. People got along and respected one another. It's not like what it is today. There's a lot of animosity out here. In my days we use to have a safety net and what they call welfare today, our welfare and safety net. We got rations once a week and we use to just get the basics, flour, beans and a slab of bacon, tea and sugar.

Once a year we use to get blankets, which was our undoing when small pox hit. Long ago the blankets they gave us were infested with the germ. So that was our safety net and

today if you need help you can go to welfare and they base it on your needs. It was a good life and we were happy. Everybody got along which was basic for a community to thrive.

We use to go picking potatoes around surrounding farms. Where Wal-Mart sits now, it used to be a big potato farm and we camped on Willowpark Drive, well where Willowpark Drive is now. My mother, my aunties, and my cousins would camp there. We'd pick potatoes there and sometimes we would go to other farms.

Picking roots or stones and stooking before the thrashing machine. I don't know how much money we got at the time because I was just a kid but we all helped. We worked as a team and we went from farm to farm picking potatoes. We did all kinds of work. As long as we had a team of horses we were okay, that was our vehicles.

On the reserve during spring time a lot of guys use to plant trees. They loaded them up in a wagon and peddled them in the city. To this day, there are still trees standing that came from Tsuut'ina. They were just saplings. A lot of guys use to cut willow pickets and in the winter time it was Christmas trees. Rails, if they can get orders for them. Others went out in the fall with a team of horses and would go out to farms. The farmers would hire them to fill the thrashing machine.

The guys loaded up the bundles and haul them to the separator and on and on. There were some farms on the reserve that had a thrashing machine. Guys would put in twenty, thirty, forty acres per day in the fall and they would go around helping each other. We had about twenty acres that my brother put into crop. They had farm implements like tractors and binders to tie the crops in the fan. We cut it and it come out in bundles. So that's how things got done.

People use to stook them and let them dry. Then they would bring out the old thrashing machine with the steel wheel and it was rougher than hell. They would go from farm to farm. Wherever they went it was the people's job to feed the men that were working in the field. They'd feed the guys and when they were done they'd move on to the next field.

There were cattle ranching. We grew up with cattle and horses. Some had cattle and a little farm. In those days thirty or forty acres were pretty big especially when you had to do it with horses. The band had some cattle. I remember they used to bring a truck full of bulls in the spring time, fresh bulls. Everybody had a little hand on bull farming and ranching.

You had to improvise, there were no jobs. You had to go out and create your own employment. A lot of guys use to camp up in the bush and cut rails. One time there were a lot of rails and we had a pretty good supply. There was a white guy that bought in a saw mill, small scale and some of the men use to work for him. There was a lot of hunting and in the fall people use to make dry meat which carried us through the winter. There was a lot of berry picking chokecherries, saskatoon's, and blueberries.

We went up into the hills. One hill is called Blueberry Hill. That was quite an adventure for us young people when we went up there. We'd camp out in the wilderness and pick blueberries. The men use to go further west and go fishing. They brought home fish but big enough for a family. I really enjoyed that when we use to go up in the hills because it was different from where we lived there were pine trees. It was a fun time. The men would hunt moose and if they were lucky get elk but there was a lot of deer. Some men did some trapping for beavers in the spring time and muskrats.

Another thing we did, my mother and I, we hitched up a team in the spring time. Well it was another job we created for ourselves. In the spring time after the snow was all gone we use to hook up the team and there used to be a lot of sloughs and a lot of water. Sometimes in the winter time cattle and horses would die. In the summer time we would go down to the sloughs. Sometimes the bodies would get bogged down in the mud. We would even watch for dead animals and pick the bones and load up the truck and take them to the city. We would get a few bucks for that.

There are pictures, I think from Winnipeg. They had piles and piles and rows and rows of buffalo bones. I had seen pictures of that. That's what we did, load up bones and take them in. Get a few bucks. I don't know how much that was. Another way we made money.

There was a training center on the reserve, the Harvey Barracks. It was called Camp Sarcee. That was our big economy. When they went out on maneuvers they bought their big machine guns and rifles and we sat there and listen and try to pinpoint where they were shooting from. There was a flag pole on top the hill when they moved in. The red flag went up we didn't go in there. When the flag went down they were moving out and we were moving in.

I saw a lot of the soldiers trained on our reserve that went to war. There was like hundreds of them marching and having warfare games or whatever. They were training to probably go overseas. That land was restricted to us because there was a lot of ammunition left behind or bombs. A lot of soldiers trained there. Sometimes they camped out there for a week or so in the summer and winter to condition them for warfare.

We would pick up shell casings. We took them downtown and get paid for them. They got smart and started picking up after themselves and that shot our economy down. I think they were instructed not to leave anything behind that those Indians can cash in. I remember my mother and auntie, the same bunch, we went out there on wagons with gunny sacks and we look down and see something shiny. There were big stacks where they used the machine gun and also big stacks of shell casings. It was just like gold. You fill your gunny sack up and throw it on the wagon. We picked that place clean. Then we'd take them into the city, I forget where we took them. They paid us by the pound. I don't know how much it was those days. That was a good economy till they smartened up. When they started cleaning up after themselves there went our economy.

There was a family that almost died. They found a live shell and two of them are still alive. The bomb exploded on them. There was one lady there, one leg is shorter than the other where she took a pretty good hit. There's another guy Sammy Simon he had wounds around his neck. They almost died. Their grandmother, well she's long gone now. They just about died when that bomb exploded on them. They were compensated recently. If it happened to a white person they would have taken them to the cleaners. They got just what they thought they should pay them. It wasn't much.

They were just out, looking for shells when they came across this bomb. They didn't know what it was and they threw it. It might have been one of the kids. I think it was a grenade. I'm not sure but Sammy will know what it was. Sammy Simon lives up in Bragg Creek and he goes to the elders meetings. He would tell you what really happened. They just about bled to death. Sammy has scars on his neck where that scrap metal hit him. The other one was Deborah Big Plume she's kind of crippled up now but she's still alive.

Their grandmother Clara Big Plume she died a quite few years ago. I think it was the three or four of them at the time, I think it was just three. They lived close to that shooting range. Clara lived about a mile from perimeter of that training area. They were out there looking for shells or something when they found that bomb.

I walked and ran. That was my transportation right there. When I finished school the first job I had, I had to walk twelve miles a day. I would start walking at six o'clock in the morning and get to my bosses place at quarter to eight or so. After work I would walk home.

Just for a measly fifty bucks a week and that's what they make in an hour now. It made me responsible. I learned how to spend my money wisely the best I could. Every time I got paid I used to take the screen off my record player in the back. I would stick a twenty dollar bill in there every time I got paid. Until I had enough for a car.

I was king shit from turtle island. I think I saved up to \$250 all summer and all winter. Just walking and sometimes it felt like I was walking in one place. I'd be walking right into the wind in twenty below zero weather. That spring I bought my first car, a 1947 convertible. Man I was pretty proud of myself because I did it the way I wanted to do it. I enjoyed it right till fall and it got too cold for a convertible. I traded it in.

My mother said a long time ago if you want something bad enough you go work for it. Nobody's going to give it to you, it is true.

We had cattle and she use to help me out to buy a car. She hated walking just as much as I did. Like walking to town, so she helped me out. I was working steady then, everyday. I worked in the city and I started out as an apprentice electrician and the foreman I was working with was a father/son company. We did a lot of rural farm work 90% of our work

was out in the country farms, dairy farms, and big ranches putting in a lot of furnaces and water pumps, stuff like that.

So they sent me to a big company in the city and I was stationed at this one job for sixteen months, that's when they were building McMahon Stadium. I'd go back and forth to McMahon. They needed someone on maintenance I would go in the back and some motors would kick off and I would put in new fuses. I was there by myself. They trusted me enough. That's one thing you have to have is trust. You have to be trusted. They gave me trust at that plant where I was working.

I was there for about sixteen month's maybe more. I was at the old Calgary Brewery for about a year. When the time came for me to go to school on my apprenticeship all the boys I was working with got their papers. I was wondering why I didn't get mine. Here he didn't file mine and must have misplaced it. By that time the semester was already full. He said we'll get you into the next semester.

At that time work started to dry up and I had a family by that time. So he said you better get your stamp book because they used to give stamps to unemployment insurance. He said you might as well come down to the shop and pick up your book and file for Unemployment Insurance.

So that's what I did. In the meantime I had a little family. I had two kids at the time. So I had to go out and find whatever I could I did a lot of things, worked on a ranch for quite a few years. Then I started doing my own thing and I had my own truck, a gravel truck and backhoe. What my mother told me was still in my head. If you want something bad enough you go work for it. That is what carried me. You make your own choice because you're the one going to live it, not me. I'll suffer with you but I can't live it, with you. Whatever choices you make you have to live with.

I didn't know Teddy Manywounds. I just heard of him and I was quite young then. I didn't know him personally I just saw pictures of him. I don't even know where he died. I do know he's buried overseas. That's the only thing I know about him.

The one that went and came back and that is still alive is Harold Crowchild. He was overseas for, I don't know two, three or, four years. I never knew him till he got home. When he came home there was a big welcoming committee for him at the train station downtown. He was related to my mother and they all went down to greet him.

There was another gentleman Teddy Manywounds that died overseas. He's buried somewhere in Holland. Harold fought in the World War and came home to tell the story about it. At that time I was just little. I didn't know who he was until somebody told me.

I used to hear people talking about Harold and when he came home is when I got to know him. There was another guy Leonard Crane but I don't think he saw any combat. There was Freddy Eagletail he joined the U.S Marines back in the 1950's. Those are the only ones.

Harold told me some stories and he use to drive a tank. This one time they camped out for the night and they were sleeping under their tanks and they heard this bomb coming it was whistling. It landed on the other side of the track where he was laying but it didn't go off it was a dud.

There were some comical stories he told me where he and his buddy were camped outside a small town. Harold and his buddy decided to sneak into town because it was pretty well evacuated and they walked into a wine cellar. He said the wine was up to my knees. They took bottles off the racks. They passed out and Harold said he got kind of high and pulled out his pistol and kicked a door but there was nobody in the room.

So I guess he passed out and when he woke he could hear the rumbles of tanks. He thought it was his outfit moving out on him. So he ran to a window and looked out, here it was the Germans going through. So he sneaked back to his unit. He said sometimes at night it was like daylight because of the bombs. He got out of there without a scratch. That's the closest he got when that bomb hit and didn't explode. It was just outside the tank where the tracks are. That's a story he told me. There were others but I don't remember them.

When we first went to school we played baseball and a little bit of soccer. In the spring and summer time, it was baseball. Those were the only sports we knew at the time. We skated down at the creek. I was never involved in real organized sports, like they have today, like those leagues.

Later on in my life when I was a teenager we used to play hockey against other reserves. Being so small we didn't have that many hockey players. We use to get bombed by the other reserves because they had a ton of people to choose from. We just iced the team we can muster up. Sometimes we had nine or ten players. The other reserves are quite bigger and they had a full team at the time.

In school that's about all we played was soccer. Springtime it was baseball. During the summertime holiday we didn't play much sports because we were out doing our own thing. I went to day school and started with grade one because there was no kindergarten in those days. We went as far as grade eight on the reserve. The school I went to was attached to the old hospital that was down there. I think it was 1950 when they built that brand new school, which was quite the change for us because it was kind of modern at the time.

We still had the coal burning furnaces and at the old school we just had a big wood stove in the classroom and all classes were lumped together in one room it was just a one room school.

We got a lot of strapping's. We had one teacher that enjoyed strapping us for no reason sometimes. Then we moved to the new school and it was quite the change. We used to get strapped for speaking our language.

God I don't even know how many times this other guy and I was strapped. This one teacher just relished the idea that he was going to catch us speaking our language and you know what that meant. He was mean. We got strapped. That was the low point, not being able to speak our language. I think it was just their personal choice and maybe they had a dislike for Indian people or maybe they just didn't like being stationed out in no man's land with a bunch of Indians. Maybe they had visions of teaching in the city and got stuck in Indian Country.

We had some fairly good decent teachers but for several of them just had it in for the Indian people. I remember one woman teacher she took a pencil and because this one student wasn't using the eraser. He just ran a line threw the sentence and told him to start a new sentence. She got very upset about it. She took his pencil and ran it across his face and that lead pencil cut his skin. Don't you ever do that again use your eraser, she told him. You could see where it cut into his flesh, an x right on his face. She was very mean.

Another man that taught at the new school. He would pick on a student for no reason at all. He would walk up and stick his thumb in his neck. I don't know why he done it. He was the one that had that strap handy all the time.

There were two rooms. One was the junior room. The junior room went to grade four. Grades five to eight were in the other room. This one day the teachers, they were a husband and wife team. The lady came into our room and whispered something into his ear. We knew what he was reaching for in the drawer. He took that strap out and put it in his pocket. Apparently, the woman teacher made some preserves like peaches and pears or whatever. She put it on the ledge. The teachers had living quarters attached to the school.

There were two jars missing and someone said it was these two girls. We listened from our room. He took them down to the landing of the doorway. He wailed on them. They were just screaming. They kept saying we didn't take them.

The next day those girls had big welts on their hands. I bet they got thirty or forty straps to each hand. When he came back he was just beet red because he was so mad. Those girls came in next. Their hands had big welts on them. They could hardly close their hands. Maybe he didn't like Indian people, I don't know.

He never talked to us in a civil manner whereas other teachers used to mingle with us out in the play field. It seems like he didn't want to mix with us and he was very cruel. Looking back on it, I don't think he would do that today because some kid would punch his lights out.

We were very intimidated by the white race, right from Indian Affairs and down. They were kind of like our guardians or whatever you want to call them. I kind of looked up to them. Maybe it's from being intimidated I don't know how to explain it. You always had

to say mister, mister so and so. It seems like they were a superior race and you had to do what they say. We were intimidated.

Well today we are supposed to be all equal and that will never happen. We will always be one below the ladder. I always say were like a totem pole and were always at the bottom of the totem pole. Look who we're holding up, all these different races are standing on our shoulders. We stood the test of time. I think we were supposed to be annihilated. That's why small pox intentional. Just so they can see if they can kill us all off. They killed all the buffalo so we could starve. They just about succeeded.

I've read stories where these rich people would get on the train. They would come through the prairies and shoot the buffalos by the hundreds. That was our mainstay of survival, the buffalo. That was our shopping center. We took the meat and the hide for clothing and shelter. Nothing was wasted. As a sport, these rich people slaughtered these buffalos. Even on the railroad tracks.

The old hospital on the reserve is where they had a school on the top floor. There was a boy's side and a girl's side. That was the dormitory. I think they tell the same stories about how they were treated and that they were taking from their parents. I think my mother spent some time in that residential school in the old hospital. I didn't hear any stories about how they were treated. I imagine it was the same as how we were treated.

They were yanked away from their parents. At least their parents got to come down on weekends well from what I understand. That woman in that picture was Mabel Dodginghorse. She had T.B (tuberculosis). I remember seeing that picture in a classroom. She had a big scarf wrapped around her head because of the T.B sores. In the old days it was T.B that was an Indian killer and today its diabetes.

I know my sister spent how many years in Edmonton in that old Charles Camsell hospital. That's where they use to send the Indians with T.B. They cut out one of her lungs, same with my first cousin. My auntie's daughter they spent time up there. There was about four or five of them that I know that spent time there in that Charles Camsell hospital. That is where they sent all the Indians with T.B not just from Alberta but the Northwest Territories. They would send them all down there. I imagined some died in that old hospital.

My auntie used to tell me about, smallpox. She was just a young girl then when she was told about the times when smallpox hit. Maybe one to four people would die at night. During the day they would just put them in one tent and just run. They would break camp and set up another camp. They couldn't out run that disease they would set up camp. The symptoms were still there. Another couple would die and they would just put them in one tent and run.

Well I don't know how they overcame that whether there was a vaccine or something. I really don't know how it came to an end.

A lot of people died from that. I don't recall too much just what my auntie told me. When they died they would put them in one tent or a tipi. How it affected them or what conditions. I really don't know. It was a very trying time to survive because they couldn't figure out what this sickness was or how to overcome it or how to cure it. Maybe it was in the fall and the germ died. There are a couple people older than me that might know.

I really understood diabetes. My daughter died from it. She deteriorated but it was so unexpected when she got it. Like she would go to school and her brothers and sisters would be running out to catch the bus and she would be asleep on the couch. We had to wake her up to send her to school.

So we took her to the hospital and they said you get this girl to the hospital right away. I'll get a bed for her. So we went home and packed some clothes for her and we took her up to Rockyview Hospital. It was just a little dinky hospital at the time. They had a bed ready for her and how she got it was from my wife's side they have a lot of diabetes.

We thought it was hereditary but apparently it had something to do with her diet. The strange thing about that sickness is if they go into a reaction there not supposed to have sugar in their daily routine. When they go into a reaction, it is sugar that brings them out. So we used to have a jug of sweetened orange juice. When she was going into a reaction we would give her that sweetened orange juice and after awhile she'll come out of it. She was quite active and we used to pack lunch for her. My wife would put in some sugar cubes and when she started feeling woozy she would tell her to take one sugar cube.

We alerted the school of her condition and when she started getting a reaction they would take her to the nurses. They would make her lie down and give her some sugar and she would come out of it. I think it had a lot to do with our diet. The way we ate and the way our food is processed now there are so many things in the food now. It's bad it's almost epidemic now amongst Indian people. Every reserve there's countless people and half a dozen of my friends have diabetes.

I noticed obese kids in my day. I was as skinny as a rail and I had no problems. I think the only thing that got me sick was these vaccinations against measles and stuff like that. Those immune shots we used to get used to make me so sick. They would give them to me and my arm would just puff up.

In our days I guess it was a blessing because we didn't have much to eat and we were quite active. Everywhere we went we walked or if we had a horse we'd ride. In the summertime we use to do a lot of swimming down at the creek. People would walk there or ride. People didn't have bicycles. I noticed kids today are so into that television set and games, even my grandchildren. I get after them and tell them to turn that damn television off or shut that damn game off. They would just be sitting there with that thing that really ticks me off.

In my day we were outside 80% of the time. My grandson is twenty-two and that's all he does. He goes to my son's house next door because they have a game there I told him to

take that game off my TV. So he goes next door and comes back about three or four in the morning. Then he sleeps till one o'clock. I told him this has to stop. They are so inactive they can't even walk and they have to be driven to wherever they want to go.

That one boy Christopher is a go getter. In the old days we use to call the guys that worked. I mean, they did anything and everything. We use to call them go getter. Today we got a different breed of go getters. They're the ones that send their wives to work and go get her.

It's been interesting, I have a lot of experience you learning from doing and you try fall back on what the old people use to tell you. Discipline was number one. In the old days one of my grandmothers was very strict and it was everybody's job to discipline kids. When I was growing up about seven or eight years old, wherever there was a function or a gathering of people if we didn't behave whoever was closest would discipline us and scold us. My mother never said anything because that was our law because it was everybody's duty or responsibility to discipline kids.

Today if you try to discipline somebody else's kid you got a fight on your hands but in the old days that was the law. My grandmother if we were rough housing and all she had to do was look at us. We'd sit down because it was our respect we showed her. All she had to do was stand there and look at us, just look at us and one by one we'd sit down. Today there's no discipline and that's a big down fall. I don't care where you go. You have to be disciplined in the way you conduct yourself.

Long ago when someone is down you would share. I remember going across the road to my grandmother's place and we used to saw wood for her with a hand saw. We used to help. First thing in the winter time, my mother used to march us over there. We would cut with a hand saw. We would cut and split wood for her. You never had to lock your doors and if someone came by and you weren't home and they needed something they would take it. They would tell you about taking some flour or whatever. Your doors were never locked. I think that's common with all Indian people. They shared and they never let anybody go hungry.

It's been talked about before the only time we get together is when somebody dies. We would all show up. We would bring food or and try being supportive of the family. We lost our daughter here, two and half months ago. A lot of people came to my house. They shared. They brought food and they shared our grief. That has been said many times, "Why do we only get together in time of sorrow". We should have a big happy gathering once in a while, where people can get together and have a good time.

We don't know each other anymore, a lot of people don't know who they are. They make up about 75% of our population. Twenty five and under and a lot of times I don't know who they are. Some of them are even my nieces that I didn't know. Someone told me we have drifted so far apart. I moved to one place away from my brother and his kids. The sad part about it is we lost our Indian way. We're trying to assimilate with the white man.

It's not working we're abandoning our values and that we valued. It worries me, what the future generation is going to be like because we relied on our grandparents to lead the way.

Growing up, in the time I did, we were all equal. We had nothing. One thing we had was respect for one and another. We shared not only the good times but during the bad times. Especially when someone passes on. That's when people got together. We were all on the same level. Playing the field them days. People who had more than the next person would elevate themselves to be above that person, maybe one guy had two teams of horses and the other had one. The guy with two teams didn't elevate himself to be above the guy with one team of horses. We are all on the same level playing field and today its different, the values have changed.

A good example is our language is dying off. I think there are about sixty nine of us that still speak the language. So that's the sad part, we lost our Indian values. Where we are going, is anybody's guess. I think from my experience looking back, the real older people were just a cut above the rest. You helped them as much as you can. They were just a cut above the rest people because of their status in the community. They were put a little bit above the rest of the people and you really had to respect your elder's, especially the older people.

I grew up in a time where there were a lot of old people. My grandmothers were old when they passed. There were a lot of old men that I remember. We used to help one of my grandmothers. She lived near us. My true grandmother, my mother's mother she had two sisters. We always referred to them as grandmother and grandfather and even if they weren't blood related any old person you address them as grandmother or grandfather. They were given preferential treatment in some way. You never ask for pay. If you did something for an elder they rewarded you in some other way.

We are still here today because in the old days their prayers were powerful. There was no bad influences they were exposed to like there is now, booze, and drugs. In the old days things were clean and when they prayed. Their prayers meant a lot and that's what brought us this far. They prayed for the future, my generation and the next generation. The Indian people did a lot of praying in their own way. In the stories I heard the men used to go out and do sweat lodges and they used to carry pipes.

The Anglican Church was pretty well dominating out here, compared to the Catholics at the time. The Anglicans had a church down by the old agency and it's still stands there today. Whereas the Catholics, they had a church but it was out of the way. They still have the old steeple and cross. They've wrecked it where that old church once stood.

At the time I think there were more Anglicans then Catholics. The churches were in cahoots with the government. They kind of worked together to suppress our feelings and our way of life. This is why Archdeacon Timms was such a powerful figure.

The churches had a lot of influences one way or another. The church intervened in our way of life. We worship the same God as they do. It's just a different method they read from a book. We pray from our hearts and our minds we don't need a script. We worship the way we want to worship and we use the words we want to use. I mean everybody's entitled to their own beliefs.

Somehow one way or another he convinced the old men that they were worshipping evil by having sweat lodges, Sundance's and using their pipes, to pray. Somehow he convinced them. Apparently he took all their pipes and rattles and buried it somewhere. Some of the older men still sneaked out, to continue their way of worship. I don't know what role the women played in the spiritual part or what they believed in. It was mostly the men putting up sweat lodges. So I don't know where the women fit in there.

They outlawed the Sundance and saying we're doing evil things but it's slowly coming back. It's starting to come back because people are starting to do their own sweat lodges. In the old days Archdeacon Timms was something else. He helped destroy some of the things that were essential to us.

They practiced their traditions privately not in public. The spirituality of Indian people is not displayed. Like I remember going to a Sundance about fifteen years ago, this guy came there with a big bus, it was a big motor home, people got off and they started clicking their cameras. They said "no, you put those cameras away, this isn't for public viewing". Sometime later when they developed the films there was nothing on it because this is not something you display.

So I think if they had ceremonies. They did them in private because I think they were still under the impression that they may lose their pipes. It was because of that Archdeacon Timms, he was hell bent on destroying our culture. That's why he took those pipes away. I bet you to this day those pipes are still buried somewhere. In private they had their own ceremonies.

I have no problem with people being Catholics or whatever. I believe what I believe, my Indian way. I always wonder and I'd like to ask some of these people that are very skeptically of our Indian religion. It's not just a religion it's a way of life.

I'd like to ask them, before the white man came, "Did the Indians pray?" Maybe they got Christopher Columbus mixed up with Christ. That's when they bought their way of life, and their religion over here. They did a good job brain washing the people for the Indians to give up what brought them so far. Like, I believe in the Indian way but I have no problem with people that are Catholics but they have a problem with the people that pray in their traditional way.

They were well indoctrinated by the missionaries to say that's evil. Whereas us whatever happens, happens. If you want to be Catholic, fine. But they sure turned on us when we had a Sundance or a sweat lodge. Oh that's evil. No it's not. It's just a method. The methods are different.

Well in my own estimation is that our people have lost their ways because they don't believe in anything like the old people did, the Creator. In the old days the Creator was the center of their being. Today I doubt, even if they do go to church I doubt they believe, even if there Catholic, I never see young people in church when I drive by church every Sunday. I think they lost their way because they lost sight of the Creator or don't believe, I really don't know but that's my concern.

## **Bertha Big Plume**

Bertha is an elder of the Tsuut'ina Nation reserve. She was born on July 7<sup>th</sup>. Her parents are George and Clara Big Plume. Bertha has worked at the Charles Camsell Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta for five years as a nursing aid. Bertha can bead, make blankets and patch blankets, she can also tan hides.

## **Bertha Big Plume**

My name is Bertha Big Plume. I'll be eighty on July 7th. My dad died in 1940. My mom raised my siblings and me. My mom is from Hobbema. My dad is from Tsuut'ina but his relations were from Hobbema too so that's how come I don't talk the language.

My dad's name was George Big Plume. He was from Tsuut'ina. He's related to the old Chief, Joe Big Plume. There were four brothers. Jim Big Plume and I don't know the other three. There were four brothers, they were the fathers of Stanley and my dad, Dick Big Plume and there's another one, Peter Big Plume. My mom was raised in Morley. She was from Hobbema. But my grandfather Tom Labelle took her when she was small. So he raised her in Morley. But somehow he got to give her to my dad. That's how they used to do it long ago. They give the woman to the man they want. There were nine of us. There are six girls, and three boys. We lost my sister when she was a baby. So there's all of us, there's only two of us left, Deborah and I. My brother and sisters names are Joe Big Plume, John Big Plume, Mary Simon, Elsie Mistakenchief, she was married in Cardston, and Florene she wasn't married. She died here in Calgary. We lived with my mom mostly. I was looking at a picture of my old house yesterday.

He's my cousin, Clifford Big Plume. He still lives on the reserve. They took Clifford to Yellowknife about ten years ago. Roy Whitney was Chief then. He met people in the territories. It was really good. I think he took his wife Venora too.

Long ago I think we had a better life. Even though the houses weren't as good but still it was more joyful than it is now. Now everything has changed. Seems like everyone is split apart. I only got the two boys. My oldest boy Jim Big Plume, he's got four kids, two boys and two girls. They're all married though. I don't know where he is. I think he was in Vancouver last time I heard, he should be back pretty soon. He works for the band. He does a lot of travelling.

I grew up on the reserve, right from when I was small. I remember my dad was sick. He had tuberculosis, he was always lying in bed. He had a spit can. My younger sister used to be scared of him and she'd sneak up, can I empty, your tattoo? She was trying to say spittoon. I remember him he was sick all the time.

The sicknesses were pretty bad. I worked at Camsell hospital for five years. It was pitiful when I was working there. Sometimes the mother and father would be in there and the little kids would be outside calling them, looking up through the windows. There was only a few that had that tuberculosis. Godfrey Big Plume was up there, he had meningitis so I stayed up there with him, he is my nephew. There was no cure back then. He got cured and he's alright now.

My mom talked about it. She was Metis. They were riding around here in Tsuut'ina. She said some just passed away without being looked after. Also she said there was quite a few that had smallpox. My sister had it when she was about five years old. She got cured. I guess they never looked after them good enough.

They had a hospital on the reserve. It was pretty good, well my brother Joe had tuberculosis on one side and he stayed over there for about a couple months. There were quite a few young guys that stayed and got cured in Charles Camsell.

I don't know when my dad passed away I was only about seven years old and my mom had to raise us alone. The boys Joe and John weren't old enough but they were helpful. She passed away about five or six years ago. My brother John passed away.

My dad raised cattle on the reserve. He cut pickets, took them to town to sell them at the auction sale, for fence posts. I saw them when I was small passing with loads of pickets, taking fence posts to the auction sale. I think it was eleven cents for one post. I know my uncle had about twenty posts cut and he took it all the way to the auction sale. All he got was ten cents a post. It was a lot of money at that time.

My dad was raising cattle, until he got sick and my mom used to cut wood. She sawed them into blocks and to haul it to Killarney. People would buy them. That was for coal and wood stoves. I remember that time it was cold winter we took a load of cut wood. She did it herself. It was hard times but still I think it was better at that time. We enjoyed it. She raised us by herself. I think she did pretty good raising Joe and John. Still it was more fun than it is now. Now they all leave, they all buy cars and they're gone.

I bead and make blankets, patch blankets and tanning hides. My mom used to tan hides. She did a lot for us. She had to raise us alone. She would teach us to pick berries, and go to town and sell them. We used to go through the army camp to go to Killarney. We unhitched the horses there and take a streetcar downtown. It was nothing to us in those days. I don't think we can do it nowadays.

By the old agency there was a big building there and a hospital and a school on the side. When they closed the school, they closed the hospital. They re-opened the school. We used to walk from Weasel Head to the other end, to go to school and walk back. All through the winter, we did that and I don't know how we survived. I don't think I can walk that far now.

I remember a nurse by the name of Ms. Henderson. Her son Brad Henderson talked about the school because she was there when they had sickness. She was really good but sometimes she used to get mean with us. Like the school was on the side, a small building and we would go to the hospital to have a dinner. Sometimes we used to have an argument with Clifford. Clifford used to be really crazy. It was good to go to school. At least we sat at the school the full day and we had good teachers at that time.

But since they started sending them to town, they kind of strayed away. They don't really get educated. I noticed that. Well when they go to school in town, they get strayed. You know they go with other kids, different ways. Then they don't keep their education. They begin to learn the wrong things.

Three of my boys went to St. Mary's in town and the youngest one came home crying. The teacher strapped them. He didn't like that. Well he's still home, he still stays with me. I have three other boys. Jimmy Big Plume and Darryl Big Plume and I lost Dale and Ronnie. Ronnie was my oldest boy and then Jimmy, and Dale then Darryl.

I didn't go to boarding school. But they had boarding school in Tsuut'ina. My oldest sister went there. She used to talk about it. She said they hardly got educated. Even though she finished her grade twelve, she said still she didn't really understand.

The boarding school was down by the old agency. It was kind of east of there, a great big building. My sister had pictures of it. I was looking at them about a week ago. I was going to ask her for them but she passed away, so I have to ask her daughters for them.

There were a lot of kids that went to the boarding schools. I went to school there till I was about twelve years old. Coming back my mom told me to stay in Edmonton to work at the Camsell. I stayed up there. I worked up there for five years. I was about seventeen right till twenty-one I worked up there. I didn't like living in Edmonton. Even now, when I go up there I think it's a really boring town.

I was working in the kitchen at first and then I started training as a ward aid. So I worked there for five years and it was alright but it was really lonely. I went and saw the Camsell last year. It's just all falling apart, and oh, it looks awful.

There were some patients from Cold Lake, Fort Macpherson and from Cardston, Glechien, Morley, Hobbema and Winterburn. Oh there were a lot of them. A lot of them never came out of there, though.

At that time they never had a cure for TB. After I quit there, I came home and I worked at the sanatorium here and then I ended up with TB. So, I was in the sanatorium for nine months. It's contagious, you can catch it easy.

I was working in this unit five, some kids didn't have tuberculosis but their mother and father had it. So they put the kids in there and they'd be yelling across, trying to talk to their mom and dad. They used to cry. The father and mother ended up dying there. So I don't know what happened to the kids. It's really sad. At that time there was hardly any cure. But now I think they cure it.

Everything is different now. The drumming, they have competition. They try and beat each other. It's not like the long ago. Long ago they just went ahead and danced and drummed. The competition and everything they do now. It takes all the fun away from pow wow. Long ago the drummers didn't compete against each other. They seem to enjoy it. But now it's something things just like "I'm better than you", or something like that.

They never had a Sundance. I don't know, they don't know how to run a Sundance. I never had seen one yet. I went to Cardston for a couple of days to see their Sundance. I don't really know how they do that.

I haven't been to a Sundance you know. I saw one in Hobbema. My mom was from Hobbema and her sister was in that Sundance. She told me you can't bring the little boy in there. She said it's dangerous. I didn't know what they meant. Sure enough they said "You don't take kids in there". I don't know, after that I never went to a Sundance or anything. I lost that boy not long after.

My mom came from Hobbema. Her mom was married to a Metis, Simon Goodeye. They lived in Westrose, but her sister was married in Hobbema to a Crane. They all passed away now, and I only got cousins up there but I don't know them. I don't know most of them. So the family I am related to in Hobbema would be the Crane, Ermineskin and Nadeau.

There wasn't too many Tsuut'ina long ago. Like now, you don't know who's a real Tsuut'ina. Dick Big Plume and that family, my dad was from that family too. The rest married out. The kids came back. There's not very many. I don't talk the Tsuut'ina language. I understand the Cree, because my mom was Cree. My dad was Tsuut'ina. My dad died in 1940 and he was just a young guy. Thirty-six years old when he died. She would pick berries and go sell them. She did all that for us.

Joe, he used to run away and go play pool that's how come he's a pool shark. He was all right, he used to take a horse and ride to Killarney. I don't know whether he sells them or not. He never came back on a horse. Then he would have a lot of money he made at the pool table. He became quite famous. He passed away a couple of years ago. Yeah, I still have a lot of pictures of him, I cut out of the paper, the newspaper. He never showed that he was famous he used to think it was nothing but as soon as you mention his name everybody is anxious to find out about him.

In the summertime we mostly picked berries and some would go out to work. Not very much to do in Tsuut'ina. Somehow they made a living. There were a lot of cattle and horses. Now there are hardly any horses or cattle.

My son was a bull rider. I think he's going to the States this weekend. He won in the States and all over. But he's getting old, that's my youngest boy. His name is Darryl Big Plume. He's doing housing at the Band Office.

It's alright you know. You just have to know how to budget your money. I live alone, just me and Darryl. Jimmy lives quite a ways from me. Darryl stays with me, he has his own place but he stays with me. I got horses, I bought horses for the boys. One of them just died last week, one of the horses. I don't know what happened. I used to ride. Nobody believes me, last July I was riding around. The women from Tsuut'ina, didn't ride horses, not really, I don't think so. I never saw them. Just a few, like Sandra Crowchild, I see her in rodeo's all the time.

My dad told us "Don't listen". When visitors come, you kids go in the other room. His nephew got killed in the war, Teddy Manywounds. When my dad was getting low Teddy Manywounds knew it. I remember, I was small Teddy Manywounds came into the

kitchen, he told my mom "I don't think my brother's going to last he said, so I'm going to town I'll be back later on". So he came back to the house, he was in a uniform. He went and signed up and when my dad passed way they shipped him away. Teddy Manywounds never came back. He died I don't know where.

Teddy Manywounds. It was his nephew. But he didn't want to be around when he knew my dad wasn't going to live. They said he got killed in a war or he got in an accident. We heard different stories, we never got the truth. There was a few that joined the army like Harold Crowchild, Leonard Crane, Teddy and Freddy Eagletail. I think Freddy it was in the States. He joined the marines. My granddad from Morley, Tom Labelle, he was in the army for two wars. He lived on the reserve with my mom and dad. When my dad passed away he re-enlisted. In forty-five he went to a war. When he came back he was already wounded by the bullets that shred. They were all on one side. So he didn't last long when he came back. He died about ten years ago.

He wouldn't really tell us about the war. Some of the veterans are like that, they won't talk about it. Like my brother-in-law, Steve Mistakenchief from Cardston. He went to the both wars. He never used to talk about it. He didn't want to talk about it. He never really told us.

The history, the Tsuut'ina hardly talk about. I don't know they're stingy about their history. When you ask them questions they don't answer you back right away.

My grandfather, that was Tom Labelle's brother, I think that was his brother I'm not too sure. He used to ride from Morley all the way to Rockyboy. Then he came back with a bunch of horses. He talked about it. He wasn't married. They called him Flat-Head. My mom said he was going down to steal horses. One time he brought about four horses to my mom's. She never did take those horses. I don't know what happened to them. My mom said he stole them.

I worked in that school and I worked in the Camsell. I worked in the Morley Hospital. When I go to a meeting and when I ask them questions they say we don't want to hear it. We don't want to talk about it. They won't tell you and you end up not knowing anything. Same thing in Cardston, my brother-in-law the one that passed away, he wouldn't tell us about the boarding school. Him and his brother, they put them in boarding school when they were small. He said he had to raise his brother alone and he did talking about it.

Well I didn't really know Chief Joe Big Plume. He had long braids and he was quite friendly. He lived the old Indian way. Not like now, you can't find a Chief. My dad used to talk about Bullhead. We were too young to listen.

Bullhead is buried somewhere on the hill, I don't know my son was at the graveyards yesterday. You know cleaning the graves. He said there are some markers that are gone, somebody took them away. He's trying to find out who's taking them. This one guy said Bullheads grave is somewhere along there, but he couldn't find it.

I also remember David Crowchild. Well I didn't really know him, I was working at Camsell at the time. When he was a Chief and I didn't really know how he was but he seemed all right he was real traditional.

When I was growing up the Tsuut'ina were traditional. They talked their own language. I don't know why they don't want to teach us their language. That's one thing, they don't do, I don't know why. There's only a few that talk Tsuut'ina. Like Bruce and Mary Jane, they know the language and they don't teach us how to talk Tsuut'ina.

The church had a lot of influence in the way Tsuut'ina made decisions. They keep closing the Anglican church and people start coming to the Catholic Church. There's about three different times they had three ministers out. I don't know why. It's a real beautiful church too. I'm Catholic, me, I went to the church. It's really nice and I don't know why most of them on the reserve are Anglican's. Gordon Crowchild, he goes to both churches. He seems like he's trying to keep them going. But some get mad.

I don't really think they do ceremonies. My dad really didn't know what was going on and like my uncle Teddy and my dad, Stanley and Dick Big Plume, they usually had to go to church. They go to church on Easter or Christmas. Other than that they never go to church. Still they supported the churches. Nowadays the young people don't seem to enjoy going to church.

I think when we were younger, everything was home cooked, like bread and stuff like that. Nowadays nobody cooks bread. There's a young boy living close to me, not very far, he goes to the cow camp and my son works there. Here my son came home with a bunch of grease bread, that boy cooked them himself. Last week he came up with a whole bunch of dry meat. He did that himself. He's really trying to learn the traditional way, which is good. Now he's teaching my boy how to cook bread. Oh, he really can cook.

They hunted mostly deer, elk and rabbit. But now, they don't hunt. There's hardly any rabbits now. My son goes hunting, Jimmy. He goes up to the hills and gets elk and that. But only once a year he does that.

I'd hardly see them even go to the dances, pow wows. They're not like long ago. In the winter they used to have a pow wow nearly every week on the reserve. Now you don't see that. During Christmas too, they have a big pow wow. Now there's nothing. Long ago it was good. We had a feast and they had a pow wow, two-three nights during Christmas. Now I hardly see that. Even at the Indian days, there are hardly any dancers. We hardly see anything like that anymore.

The old Chief Joe Big Plume, used to pass on his sleigh, asking anybody if they wanted a ride to town. When he gets to Killarney, he unhitches the horses, and then takes a streetcar downtown. Coming home he'd buy them long candy cane. He'd give it to the kids on the way home. He was really good like that. That's the old Chief Joe Big Plume. I was just young at that time. He'd tell us what time he'd be passing and to come to the road.

Some young people like to bring it back. They really enjoy it. But the older people, I don't know. It seems like their stingy of their history or something. Some don't even come to the pow wows. So I don't know what's going on.

The old Tsuut'ina in about the 1920's they just about disappeared. They got sickness. I think there was at one time only a hundred and twenty left. Small pox and meningitis. At that time, they didn't know what meningitis was.

Same thing at the Camsell when I was working, there was a lot of them that had meningitis. The doctors couldn't figure that out. There was some from Cold Lake, a whole family. That had meningitis, the mother and father had passed away. Some kids too. It's contagious you know.

In Morley too, I went to Banff Indian Days. I saw these guys dancing there in Banff. Then I went back to Edmonton, I had a week off. We were going to Lake St. Anne, and here I saw the one guy again. They were back at Camsell. When I came back they told me one of them passed away. He caught meningitis. He didn't last long.

I think Bruce is one of youngest ones that speak it. Mary Jane, she talks Tsuut'ina real good, my sister-in-law, my brother's wife her, Mary Jane is her cousin. She talks really good Tsuut'ina too. But she told me last year, she said "When I talk to people in Tsuut'ina, they tell me I'm saying it wrong". She said, "I know my language" but she said the young people say it wrong. They try and teach them in schools. Some of those kids won't listen. I mean they make fun of the language. That's one thing, if you talk Cree too, they'll make fun of it. People don't teach the kids how to respect.

My dad passed away when I was about seven years old and he couldn't teach us Tsuut'ina. He used to talk to us in Tsuut'ina. Then my uncle Teddy used to try and teach Joe and John Tsuut'ina. But they laugh at each other when they try and talk and that's what's happening now. Like Jimmy doesn't, well he understands Tsuut'ina real good. But he won't try and talk it. He said they just laugh at you.

Same thing as in Hobbema, the Cree language. They do the same thing too. Like the old people should try and correct them. Instead they say, "No, you're saying it wrong, that's not the way" and they won't tell them what's the right way.

I got an auntie in Morley, she's a Stoney. She's married to a Stoney, well actually she was born in Morley. She's a Labelle but my uncle was from Hobbema so she talks Cree to him and they laugh at her because she's not saying it right. Now she won't talk to them in Cree, she talks to them in English. They tell her to quit acting like a white woman.

My daughter-in-law, she's from Saddle Lake. She told me you know I talk Cree good but she said when I talk to someone out here that talks Cree, they say I'm saying it wrong.

Ida Onespot, she's from Hobbema, her and I we talk Cree. I talk to her in Cree. They speak it on the reserve. I worked there for about fifteen years and I used to talk to some

guys from Hobbema. That didn't know the language so I talked to them in Cree. The Tsuut'ina would laugh, "Quit talking Chinese". I don't talk Tsuut'ina. They always say, "You're Tsuut'ina, can't you talk Tsuut'ina"? That's why young kids won't learn.

I can't understand that when you ask an elder to come in and teach this one Tsuut'ina. You'll have to pay a lot. Why do they charge for the language when they supposed to teach them when they were small. I teach my grandchildren Cree, even though I hardly talk Cree.

My dad used to talk to us in Tsuut'ina. My mom understand him, she's Cree. He tried to teach us Tsuut'ina. He was always pretty sick and he told us, try and learn Tsuut'ina. My grandmother came and talk to us in Tsuut'ina. If we answered her, she laughed at us. That made us, feel like we're not saying it right.

My brother-in-law Steve Mistakenchief used to tell us stories about buffalo's when they were living in Cardston. His mom and dad used to tan buffalo hides. They sneaked down to the river and try and shoot a buffalo. He told us stories but I forgot most of them because he passed away, last year. He went to the war too, and he told us about how they hunted buffaloes and he had a buffalo skull. I was going to bring it back with me, I forgot. He told us how his grandmother cleaned that buffalo skull and it was a buffalo they got at Fort MacLeod, by the river. He still knew a lot of stories. He was stingy of his stories. I always tell Jimmy, how come you have to pay them, when you ask them a question. They I don't know. Like his kids he teaches them you don't ask for money when the old people ask you for something. I said, us we have to pay them.

Lottie's mother-in-law was from the Stoney but she married in Tsuut'ina. She used to talk Tsuut'ina all the time. She taught us Tsuut'ina language. She told us your dad is a Tsuut'ina, you better start learning. When she started to teach us, this other woman used to say, "That's not the way you say it". So she quit teaching us. I don't know they seem to change the language.

I was talking to Barbara Otter quite a while ago. I told her how come Tsuut'ina is like that? She said you know when I was small my mom did that to us. She said tells us we say it wrong. It discouraged us and we quit talking Tsuut'ina. I notice there's hardly anybody that talks Tsuut'ina now.

My dad had a lot of horses and cattle. When he passed away in 1946, somebody sold all his cattle. My mom was still young and she was still grieving. They kept hauling the cattle. They said they were going to keep them. She never saw them again.

Just lately I bought three horses. I don't what happened in the morning, when I got up one horse was dead. It was a cute little pinto I had. I really don't know what happened to it. I asked this woman from Cardston. She said somebody's jealous of you. She told me to quit buying horses. Then maybe they'll leave you alone. I tried to get horses for all the kids. I don't believe in Indian religion. But they always say they're using medicine on you. I really don't believe that and my mom didn't either. But a lot of them say that.

My grandfather was from the States. The one I mentioned Flat Head, he brought a big bag. It had hoofs on it. He said it had medicine in there, he told us not to touch it. Then he went to Morley. On his way back he picked it up. He said all that medicine was gone from that bag. He asked us what happened to it. We didn't know. He said somebody's been looking through my stuff. He thinks somebody took it from the reserve, because he said that's why they having bad luck. I kind of got scared.

Sometimes they have too many sweats, and they don't know what they're doing. I was telling Jimmy that I don't go to any of them. They don't know what they're doing, I've seen them. My uncle used to have sweats in Hobbema. He told me what they were doing wrong. They pass money to, each other in the sweat lodge. He said that's not right, money is evil. He passed away, him and his wife, nearly the same time. Now my uncle, he won't touch his bundle.

We lost most of the elders. There's hardly any real Tsuut'ina now. Like Jimmy works for research, he has all the history books. He's always asks me who's this one, that's been gone and we hardly know them. He found a whole bunch at my mom's. He was reading them out to me. I don't know who's been taking them. It's at the band office.

My dad used to tell my mom. Annie Manywounds husband was Bullhead's relative she used to tell me but I was just young then. She told us about Bullhead.

Joe Big Plume was a lifetime Chief. Bullhead was the first one. They didn't go like a vote, they don't say we'll vote this one in. They just pick one guy and then he's the Chief. They didn't have to vote for him. But now they have to vote.

The whole reserve is related, like Clifford and them are my first cousins. That's Darryl's uncle, see they're all related. Yesterday I couldn't believe it, I was sitting outside, my cousin came to the door, wanted to borrow some money. I said who's this woman you are with? He said it's my wife. I said who is she, he said it's one of the Big Plumes. I said you know your grandmother was a Big Plume. He said I know, but she told me we're not related. Here it's my first cousin. That's too close. I was telling my boys, don't marry anybody from the reserve. You're all related. They all know it you know. It's bad when they start doing that. That's what I told my oldest boy Jimmy, his wife is from Saddle Lake. Darryl's wife is from Hobbema, but most of my relations are from Hobbema.

There was just a couple of Tsuut'ina in the hospital. There was about two men and two ladies, and they let the men go because they were cured. But they ended up both passing away. There is one still alive, that lady. She was there for five years and now she's been home for about ten-fifteen years now. She's okay though, she's doing real good.

The first Indian Agent I know was Dr. Murray. He wasn't a very nice guy, he was kind of mean. He used to argue with people. But he got away with a lot of money, him and his kids. He had two daughters, they got educated down there. He didn't have to pay for it, the band paid for it. Then we had the minister down there too. The Indian agent was

really crooked. Dr. Murray, he was a doctor and an agent at the same time and a farm instructor. Nobody knew the difference.

What the Indian Agents jobs were to give jobs to certain people and manage the money and we got only five dollars a year. We still get five dollars a year.

He gave very few rations, but not very many people got it. I don't know what he did with it. They gave you flour, but enough for two bannocks I guess. We got meat, but they used to kill one of the bad cows. They just gave us the bones. It was so mean. If a man's drinking, they wouldn't give him any rations.

Everything had to go his way. Finally they let him go. But still, he worked for the band. He went to Morley, they transferred him to Morley. But he didn't last long there. Dr. Murray got rid of a lot of people though.

The Chief and Council let him fire people. They let him do it because they didn't know any different. You don't see the Indian Agent in charge of the Chief and Council anymore.

I think we had a minister. I'm not too sure. But the priest comes to the church, there's a house there for him but he doesn't stay there. They get a different priest every week.

I worked in South Wood nursing home for about four years. Then I worked in Glamorgan, then I was getting too old.

Calgary has gotten really big to me. It changed a lot too. I worked for the Stampede board for twelve years. But I quit three years ago, I think. I worked as a Security at the barns. It was an okay job.

I never got into pow wow dancing. Only my boys did. Jimmy chicken dances. Dale and Darryl danced but they quit. Darryl rides in the rodeo now but he's getting too old. I think he's about forty-six or forty-seven. He's short too. It's a dangerous sport but you can't stop them in what they're doing.

I still travel. I go to Lake St. Anne every year. They have a big church service. Lake St. Anne helps me. I guess you just have to believe it. It has really changed a lot. When I was small, my mom used to take us up there. It was all traditional. Old people would be cooking outside but now it's different. They have garage sales and when they pray going around somebody would be selling something.

I never really got involved in the ceremonies with my mom's side of the family. We always went to go and visit them. She never did get involved either. My grandparents, they were Metis, my grandmother was from Hobbema but my granddaughters are Metis. They got their own place in West Rose. Near Pigeon Lake, when my grandfather passed away my grandmother moved back to Hobbema. They still own that place though. One of my cousins owns it. They have cows and chickens. They keep it going. My grandfather's name is Simon Goodeye. My grandmother's name, I don't know. Her Cree name was Agotha, it's

a Cree word. They both passed away now. I spent a lot of time with my grandmother. Like in the summer we used to go up and stay out there. My auntie tanned hides and my mom went up and helped her. I know how to tan hides, but it's a lot of work. We tanned deer hides, moose and elk hides.

My grandmother and grandfather had their own land. They were Metis and she finished paying for the land then she started paying for the tax she didn't know she had to pay the tax too. Now I think one of my cousins is making the payments. They all passed away. She said eventually we are going to lose that land. I think they are because I was going to ask Jimmy to take me up there to look at it. My grandfather and grandmother paid for that land and it was legally theirs and now it isn't. I don't know how it happened. She had two acres in one place and down the hill she had three acres. All paid for and now she said she lost one of them. So the white people are really, moving in on them.

I never had seen any elk. Just towards Banff, I know around there. Oh down south, there's elk. But on the reserve I never see any. But we have some moose in Tsuut'ina. Also there's a lot of deer.

In my growing up days I went away from the old religion I guess. I never really went to church. It was just basically what my mom taught us. My mom taught me some of the Indian ways and some church ways. My mom got mad when they change churches. But she really stuck to Catholic Church. She made my dad a Catholic too. He couldn't say anything about it.

There were a lot of phony medicine men. I know that because when I work at the Spirit Healing Lodge, I used to see that a lot and every day they invited somebody from a different reserve to come pray and they give them a lot of money and I don't know it was only for money. I found that out after that.

The whole part of native people's life is almost over. I mean there is nothing true now. You can't believe what they say. I met people that can see the future or talked about it. They always said you can change your life. Like I worked in at a Detox and people came there from Sunrise or somewhere and they believed them. Then after they go and get drunk again. I noticed that. I don't think anybody on the reserve is a medicine man. It's hard to find one.

There were quite a few women who knew how to make medicine with plants. They used to pass a medicine bag to each other, well as they grow older I guess. My grandfather Tom Labelle, he gave my mom that medicine bag and my mom didn't want it and gave it to my other grandfather. He had it when he passed away. He left it at my mom's. They sent it back to Morley. I don't know what happened to it. His name was White Elk, his Cree name. She really didn't believe in a medicine man. Well I don't believe it. When I was working at the lodge, I used to see how they try and say they going to cure you. Especially alcoholics and they believe it.

When I look back on my life for everything I've seen. Everything has changed. Even your family changes. When I think about the future for my grandchildren I really think they should follow their fathers and would try to push ahead. They're not really being helped.

I see for the future for the Tsuut'ina people is that we're losing most of them. There's not too many real Tsuut'ina. I was trying to count them the other day, there's not many. My own grandchildren, they're not real Tsuut'ina. Their mother is from Saddle Lake. My oldest boy is from the reserve.

It gets pretty lonely if you think about it. Like us on the weekend. My mom took us to town on Saturdays or Fridays to a show, and that was it. We don't go back to town till the week after. But now they seem to really spoil the kids. I was telling my grandson that. I was showing him pictures about that. He said I think you guys had a better life than us.

I think the army camp over by the casino. I think they're going to lose that land again. When it was war, they leased it to the army. The army had a lot of tents there and they trained them and eventually they leased the land behind my sister's place. They leased that and they got it back. Jimmy was fighting for it, so we got it back. Even the road, they want to put it right through where my sister's pasture. There's nothing she can do. They're going to put a road right through from 37<sup>th</sup> street. It's going to come out by the gas bar. That's going to cut a lot of land off. Then we're going to lose that too. I think we already lost Weasel Head Road. But they don't tell us what they do.

If I could help the people on Tsuut'ina I would talk to the young boys and girls and tell them what they're doing. They're not helping the young people. Like two of my grandsons, they finished their grade twelve and they gave them jobs, even road construction. I did my nursing aid in Edmonton and then when I was working in Calgary I finished my ward aid.

Life was better for the Tsuut'ina people when I think back to the earlier days. But when I think of today I think it's getting worse. Like me, they don't help me. I have to do things on my own and my sons help me. They should help the young people more. They don't like to help people that are really trying to do things with their lives.

When I think of the casino getting built, I sincerely don't like it. My old grandfather and grandmother, they used to live there in a tent. Before Stampede they'll come from West Rose and Hobbema, pitch up their tent there closer to go to the grounds. Now they can't do that. We don't own that casino. I went to the casino once last year. I didn't like it because when I went there, they were serving liquor and these young boys were getting drunk. They kicked them out and the cops would be waiting there to haul them away. They would have to pay their own fine. That's what I didn't like, after the young boys work and then go there afterwards. I think it's getting worse.

There are lots of drugs on the reserve nowadays. My old grandparents from Morley, they lived by the school. They were wondering why the kids never went back to the school.

They said here they were smoking in the bush. He said there were white people there bringing the stuff for them.

## **Sidney Starlight**

Sidney is an elder of the Tsuut'ina Nation reserve. He was also born and raised on the reserve. Sidney was born December 30, 1943. He's parents are Mary Jane and James Starlight. Sidney has been in rodeos all over Canada and parts of the United States. Sidney is also one of our fluent Tsuut'ina speakers.

## Sidney Starlight

I was born December 30, 1943 in Bragg Creek. I am one hundred percent Tsuut'ina. My mom's maiden name was Mary Jane Meguinis. My dad was James Starlight. I'm the eldest of my siblings. My brothers are Bruce and Jesse and then I have five sisters. I have a half-brother and two half-sisters, my mom and dad adopted two boys, quite the household. My dad was Chief for fourteen years. My mom was a stay at home mom. She had no choice.

We worked every day. My dad taught us a lot. We had lots of chores to do. My dad had a lot of cattle to feed and taught us how to look after the cattle and horses. He died in 1966. He was just fifty four years old and then my mom took over. I was twenty one by then I was old enough to be on my own.

The facts of life, in them days were in order to put food on the table there were things to do. He knew a lot. He had been through life since day one. He was on his own for a while. One thing he taught me was to be a good person. My granny said the same thing, "If you are a good person and if you do good things, good things will come to you". It might be now but eventually it will come. I listened. I never knew my grandpa. He died before we were born, I never really knew my grandpas on my moms and dad side. So I never had a grandpa.

My mom and dad even though there were lots of us kids. We always had three meals a day. We never went hungry. We used to walk to school about a mile. In those days the snow was up to our knees. We took everything day by day, a daily thing. We walk to school in minus twenty degrees.

When we were growing up we were comfortable because mom and dad were there. I feel fortunate to have parents to tell you what to do and how to do things. Always respect your elders, brothers and sisters and everyone around you. We had company and there was always food on the table. People were comfortable around my dad.

He would take us to town once or twice year on team horses, sleigh or wagon. There was a place where you can tie your horses at the edge of town. We would take a street car and we would be walking downtown. Everybody was asking for a quarter or a dime back in the day. That was a lot of money. Whatever he had he gave the money to homeless people. He never turned anyone away. That's something was brought up with. My dad passed away but I always tried to carry that on.

I told him I wanted to be a cowboy. He used to ride bronc's too, when he was young. He really didn't want me to be a cowboy. He knew the punishment of being a cowboy. I was eleven years old when I rode boys steer riding in the Calgary Stampede up until I was sixteen. I rode saddle bronc in Calgary Stampede. I think I was nineteen. I got held up in the stirrups. The horse kicked the hell out of me. I healed and I still got back on.

I broke my neck, my leg, both wrists and both collar bones. It's something I wanted to do. Just like a hockey player wants to be a hockey player. Nothing is going to stop him. When I was young that's all I wanted to be.

After he passed away, I needed more education. I went to Mount Royal College. It was down 8 Ave and 14 Street, right in the corner there. It was the old college. I went for couple of years, did a couple of courses and did one semester at the University of Calgary.

I started working at the administration office. I was band manager they called them band managers in those days. I worked there for five years. There was a construction company called Sarcee Builders. I worked there for five years. I also worked in Sarcee Development Company I worked as a general manager for five years.

Then I quit, I couldn't stay away from rodeos. I used to rodeo on weekends and be back to work on Monday. After that I divorced my first wife and I married my second wife then we moved to Arizona. I stayed down there for a couple years with my wife and daughter.

In the meantime I picked up another trade, building maintenance. They trained me to maintain air-conditioners, boilers, plumbing, electrical and the physical structure of the building. The cleaning came in later.

I contracted that from the Tsuut'ina office building. I call it the multi-purpose building, that four story building. I worked there for five years. Then moved over to the schools, where I'm at now. I was the only one that was able to maintain buildings other than the people in the city. So they had no choice to contract it to me because I was qualified. I have some good people working for me. I got five working for me. We picked the janitorial services too. That's where I am now. I have workers and they are good people. There's no pressure to do anything. That's my work history.

I went out and did what I wanted to do.

My kids and my grandkids, I got them all over the place. One married in Arizona. One is married in Fort Hall Idaho. One is married on the Blood Reserve. I just got one girl. If I go visiting my grandkids I have to make a two week trip stop here and stop there. They all say grandpa when are you going to come and visit. I have to make arrangements during the summer time to visit all of them. It's good.

My present wife, she has kids on her side they all call me grandpa, so as my kids they all call her mom. Her kids they all call me dad. All the little ones they all call me grandpa. Her granny, they all get along its good that way. We are happy.

My grandkids, you never turn your grandkids away. If they want something, and we don't have it right there. We eventually get it, we are happy with our grandkids. It's not perfect but we are fortunate that all our grandkids are healthy. We are blessed that way, not too many grandparents can say that. Our kids are healthy, we are fortunate.

My history as far as known about Tsuut'ina, I never really went into that. Bruce is the one who knows everything from day one. How it became Tsuut'ina. There are two different versions with that. We are related to them Apaches and Navajos. They say we all came from the south, from South America, but us we migrated north.

Our version is that we crossed over that land bridge in Alaska, the Russian side. There was an ice bridge and we crossed over and got into the north. We migrated south and that's how we decided to stay in this place of the world. The Navajos and Apaches they kept going south. So there are two different versions of how we became Tsuut'ina. I don't know which one to believe. That's in their history. They will tell you they came from the south just like any history, there's always two sides to a story.

My granny brought me up, my granny and auntie because my mom and dad were always working. Some place other than the ranch in the winter time. They will be in the foothills cutting logs for these people in the saw mills. My dad was always working there. My granny and auntie brought me up, that's what I remember of them.

The one who sticks out the most is my granny. She would drag me to church, just a little guy, my granny was only four or five foot something. I used to run behind her to go to the church. Where the road that does to the casino. My granny's house was on the hill. We would have to walk in the morning to church every Sunday. We would have to go, I would be running behind her. We have to walk to the church by the old agency road. The church is still there.

That's where I got my baptism and my first communion. You had to go through some training before you are allowed to take communion. My uncle had a car. He would take us home. Downhill it was okay, but going uphill wasn't as good. So he would take us home every Sunday, I remember that.

What I remember about the reservation back then was most of everybody was on the east side. There was the old Priddis Trail, we called it on the west side. But really it was the south side of the reserve. The Whitney's and the Big Plumes lived on that stretch on the way to Priddis. We use to call it the west side and everybody was on the east side. Everything after that from my mom and dad's place was open.

The army was always there, as far as I remember. Everyone went to Calgary Stampede. After they would go west and put up hay for the livestock, wild hay. We do that every summer and finish just before school. It went on until we started getting tractors and balers. It cut our time in half, to up hay for our livestock. Before, it was all by hand and by horse. We camped out there. It was good. I miss it some days. I still go through that area where we used to camp but everything's changed.

In the fall when it's time to bring the crop in. We started in one field and everybody would work their way through the fields, one to the next. We thrashed with an old thrashing machine. They made bundles that tied the oats and the wheat. They would fall out on the side. We had to dry them out by stooking them up. When they dry out we

start thrashing. We did that all over the place. It would take a month to do, the thrashing. It was fun, you don't see that these days. They might have pictures of them. We would start early and work till it was dark, till we can't see. It was different those days. Now everybody seems to be on their own. There are not much left who lived in the old times.

We had a lot of cattle. My dad made a point to increase the herd. We had a lot of horses and farm land. He taught us how to look after cattle. In the spring time, when the cows are calving some cattle had trouble giving birth to their offspring. We would help the cow and help them survive. He could tell just looking at a cow or a horse, he would say this one is sick and this one. You have to do this, and so we would do it.

The horses too, they would have distemper in the early spring or just before the summer. He checked the horses because we were going to use them in the summer to put up hay. He went through the horses and checked every horse to see if everything's was okay. If one was not feeling well, he would doctor them himself.

We had to trim the horse's hoofs so they won't crack. We used to make young stud horses into geldings. He knew how to do that. It was struggle especially when they got too old. We had to rope them and then tie them up and make geldings. He knew all those things.

I never liked politics, I was a councillor for two years I didn't enjoy it. My dad was Chief for seven terms, fourteen years. Nobody wanted to run against him. It was automatic. They called it by acclamation. He had regular and meetings. Today, they don't do that anymore. He would come home mad and mom would tell us don't say anything. Keep quiet. He had band meetings in the evenings, at the old band hall. Then he would come home, my mom knew when he was in a bad mood. I used to drive him around to his meetings. I learned not say anything or I would get my ear chewed out.

Today I think it's worse because there are more people. The younger people have more understanding, it's surprising. What surprised me was the ring road, the way it was voted down. It was the young people who were emailing each other about it.

My granddaughter who came up to me, she's ten years old and she asked are you going to vote on the road. I said yes. She said did you know it's not a good deal. I asked her why and she said we are not supposed to sell our land. We are going to lose the reserve. I can only imagine what the older people are telling each other.

On my part I was going to vote no anyways. It was not a good deal. Money wise it was good but there was no guarantees that we were going to get replacement land. So we wouldn't lose the amount of land we were giving up. We were going to give up more land there were no guarantees that they would that land into reserve status. That means the provincial land we were going to get we had to buy the land that was designated to us. There was no guarantee.

Seventy eight percent said, "No". It was mostly the young people. There were some of them standing at the outside of the office. When they were voting on the road, they were

telling anyone who walked by to vote “no” for the land deal. You know it surprised me. I thought because the money each individual was going to benefit by \$80,000.00 per person. I thought that was going to sell it. But they said no, I was very proud of them.

There’s a tribe in Oregon, Klamath Falls, the only tribe not selling their land. All the other tribes sold their land. Everyone else, they had nothing. It was like back in the 1950’s. Now the people who sold their land regret it.

There used to be school by the Bullhead Hall and a school right next to each other. The fire hall and the dump site are there now. We walked to school. There were two classrooms. It went up to grade nine. They started transporting us to the city. I learned a lot in that school. To heat the school up we had coal. They gave us cocoa. You could tell when there was less and less cocoa because the cocoa got thinner and thinner or lighter and lighter. If there was no milk we had to use water it was pretty good. They taught the best they can with what resources they had.

I didn’t have any trouble going to the city school from grade six to grade seven. We were at the same level with the city. Nowadays when go to the reservation school when you’re in grade six, you were in grade five levels. They are behind according to the city standards. I went to school till I was sixteen at the Western Canada High School. When I turned sixteen I quit school and decided to be a cowboy.

Since I was a little guy, mom had pictures of me. I had my boots and hat on. I was sitting on these little calves. That’s all I wanted to be. I had brothers older than me. I had hand-me-downs. I had these boots, they were too long but I wouldn’t take them off. I wore them out, I walked right through the sole. My mom ended up throwing them away.

I used to practice almost every day. Just compete against the best. I didn’t take it lightly, I was serious. I remember the Edmonton rodeo it used to be in March and every time just before Edmonton rodeo I would practice. It was minus ten and the snow was still high. I was practicing riding bronc’s. I had a chute built. My dad always told me, if you’re going to ride the mares that are in foal because of the snow. They can’t do much, they will buck for maybe for five seconds and it won’t be as hard. I was alone I had to kick the chute open by myself. Nobody would help me. I learned that way. Today everything’s indoor arenas and bucking machines, everything was outdoors. I did that myself.

My brother Bruce, he wanted to ride bareback, something he shouldn’t have done. My adopted brother Pat he used to ride saddle bronc but to them it wasn’t an everyday thing. My used to say if you’re going to ride bronc’s you have to take it serious. If you want to be a cowboy you have to think about your ride every day. He always taught me that you can’t be halfway. You got be fully committed to what you want to do. If not you are going get hurt really bad. People are going to notice and say “You’re just a wannabe”.

I travelled two years and I lived on hamburger every day. These guys taught me how to rodeo. They taught me when eat, you have to eat to retain your strength. I lived on hamburger every day.

Those days, gas was twenty cents a gallon. If you fill up your tank on five bucks, you were good for two weeks. You sleep in your car. No one on the reserve wanted to travel like I did. I had some buddies who I travelled with. There were four of us.

One of us always had a car. Somehow, we always kept it running. One of us always looked under the hood, banged on a few things to make it run again. One of us always knew how to handle a situation. If one of us won we all shared or if all of us won we shared. That's how we travelled. We all slept in the car or someone would sleep on top of it, or open the trunk and sleep in there. It was good.

There were three or four of us in a car all the time. It didn't matter. It's not like today where you see somebody on the road or parked they didn't help. There are a lot of bad people. Long ago everyone was friendly and helped each other. Four of us would be in a car. It wasn't much of a vehicle but it got us there twenty cents a gallon for fuel. We made sure we changed the oil and made sure that all the necessary things were looked after. One of us always made sure we knew something about the car, if something went wrong.

One time we were just outside this little town by the Dakotas. The tire rod end fell off the wheel. We were just pulling into a gas station. Our one tire went one direction and the other tire went the other direction. Good thing there was a mechanic at the gas station. He looked at it. He pointed out what was wrong.

He couldn't fix it that day. We asked him where we could get parts. He showed us. So we went and walked to get some parts. We got back there was two of us under the car. He told us to make sure that the tire rod is the same size as the original ones. If not your tire is going to be facing different directions, facing out or facing in.

We made sure we counted the threads and measured it and everything and then put it on. We rode it until we couldn't fix the car anymore. After that we went our separate ways.

I was single then. You can do anything when you're single. No responsibilities. I used to have to phone home. We had a phone on the wall. We used to have to crank it to make a dial tone. Mom said your dad used to sit by that phone all night, when you said you were going home. It made me feel bad if I didn't phone that evening. He would sit there just to make sure he didn't miss the ring. I felt bad about that, making him sit there all night waiting for my call.

One thing we didn't do was drink. The guys that taught me said the best way was to stay away from booze. We did. The only time we did was when we had four days to do nothing and relax before rodeos, and have fun.

You must have done that, when you're young. Your dad tells you not to do something, you did it anyway. We had fun all night and day. Then be on the road again.

We always respected people as a group. We never harmed anybody. People knew us like that at rodeos and cowboys. We didn't go to the big rodeos. We went to the little ones just get a chance. They paid the entry fees just to make enough. Cowboys at the rodeo would ask us to pay their entry fees. Some of them would let us keep the entry fee. We would help them with their horses. It was like a trade-off. This was not too long ago, in the 70's. I travelled on my own.

I went to the States, I was the only Canadian in the States. They would sing "Oh Canada" for me. I qualified for the Indian Nation Finals. The first time they had it in Salt Lake City in the year 1976. I qualified twice for the International Finals once in Salt Lake, and once in Arizona in saddle bronc and twice in team roping. I was over the hill anyways when I started team roping.

I quit riding bronc's then I started team roping after that I just roped at jackpots. I'm getting old, I lost two fingers. It was good if I had to do it all over again I wouldn't change it. I'm satisfied just make a few things I'm satisfied with life, the way it went for me. You get your ups and down, but I never dwelled on it. There's going to be a good day coming soon. My mom to is getting old, I worry about her every day.

At the Calgary Stampede, I was boys steer riding I was ninety pounds. In boys steer riding you're on one or two year old cows. I made money there. Once my dad put my spurs on for me before we left the house, I had spurs on when I left the house and all the way there. We got back I still had my spurs on. I rode that first one but I had to practice at home. I didn't just go there. I think I rode home.

We rode twice in the Calgary Stampede in the first go round. Then before the second go round you get paid by the total points. I fell off the second one. When I first rode saddle bronco I was seventeen. I rode the horse but I didn't score high enough.

The third year I got my leg stuck in the stirrup. They called it dragging your stirrup over. I fell to my right and my leg was still in the stirrup on left. I wasn't quite on the ground yet. That horse just kicked me when he kick me the second time my boot went flying. That was what saved me. I held my front teeth in my hands. He didn't knock me out. They just put me back together and I was ready to go.

In Amarillo Texas, I didn't know I broke my neck. I was with my friends, traveling partners. There were two big guys from the city area. They were watching me. What happen was the bronc was coming around the wall and he changed his mind. I was committed to go to the right, but he went left instead. The horse went back the other way and I hit the ground. It was indoors and I could feel concrete. There was hardly any dirt. It almost knocked me out. I couldn't take my chaps off. I went and sat up in the stands to get my senses back.

My big friend, he sat behind me. He was watching me. His hands were huge. He grabbed my head. My head started to tilt. I didn't even know it. He just grabbed my head. They called the ambulance right away. When the ambulance came they put my head in a collar.

They asked me what happened. He said if your neck went over a little more your neck would have curved your spinal cord. It's a good thing your partner saved you.

Those things just happen. I'm so glad he was sitting behind me. I had two surgeries. The first one didn't go too good. They took some gristle from my hips to fuse my neck. I got three vertebrae's broken. They had to fuse it. Then they put me on a plane and sent me home. Those things are expected in sports. My friend he broke his arm three times on one arm just playing hockey.

When I was eighteen I started traveling on the roads. I went to Toronto on a freight train. The next year we had a cutting horse contest in the Maple Leaf Gardens. We had to take the horses on a freight train. We had to live right in the box cars with the horses. We had to feed, brush and water them every day. Then thousand dollars per horse at that time, today it is worth like one hundred thousand dollars. We had to baby them. We had no heat in the boxcar at minus twenty. Finally they realized that there was no in the boxcars. They finally turned them on just outside of Toronto. We froze all the way there it was quite a deal but a lot of fun. I was traveling with this other guy. He was one of the trainers for the horses. He was freezing but we had fun. We had no choice. We froze for three days. It was quite an experience.

In Toronto, when they had the rodeo in Maple Leaf Gardens. I was there. Harry Vold was the Stock Contractor. He said "You guys, start loading the bulls and horses on a freight train".

Late Rupert Crowchild and I, we were on that boxcar. We had to check all the animals when we stopped, all the way to Toronto in a boxcar. It was quite a trip the first time. Before the rodeo started we were checking out the Maple Leaf Gardens. I saw Bobby Hull, Stan Mikita and Pierre Pilot, Chicago vs. Toronto. I saw Tim Horton, the original six, I saw that game free because we were setting up.

There are not too many guys who can say that, it was quite an experience. Bobby Hull, he was my hero. I always looked up to him. He was a real idol to me. I saw them play. Today you see them criss-crossing everywhere. In those days they stayed in their wings. It was to the center men to do all the work, Carl Brewer, Toronto's goalie be at the time, seeing all stars play George Armstrong played in that team when was captain they called him Chief. He didn't like being called Chief. "I'm not a Chief" he would say.

I was in Albuquerque to watch the Indian Finals. I got a call. I forgot how I got the message. It's my mom who got the phone call. She told them where to find me. My wife was home at the time. She told them where to find me. The Sheriff was the one who found me at the rodeo hotel where I was staying. He said your friend is in El Paso Texas. It took me a while to remember who he was. He said he needed a character witness to say that he's not that bad of a guy. He wants to know if you can come down and be a character witness for him.

I went down. We had a hard time seeing if it was really him. He wasn't too sure if it was me. I wasn't too sure if it was him or someone else was carrying his name. I ended up not having to say anything after they read all the charges. My poor partner went to prison. I left anyways, they sentenced him for twelve years.

We didn't know we had a rotten apple in the herd. He was a good guy but it might be family life. He was always a serious guy. He always took things a little more serious than the rest of us guys. Maybe that's what drove him over the wall. He must be out now or still doing bad things. I lost contact with him. He just waved at, when they let him out. I felt bad for him. He was a good kid at the time. I don't know what happened. Things happen in life that you have no control over, I felt sorry for him.

The other two guys, I saw one before I came back north from Arizona. He's married and works every day. I never saw Joe again. My other friend said he talked to him once. He lives in Oklahoma now. He said he drives for the oil companies. They haul their own equipment to the drilling sites. He was one of them rigs. That's the last time I heard of those two. Other than that I would rodeo in California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho, mostly in the western United States. I made it to Arkansas. Like I said I couldn't change a thing. I met a lot of good people. I wouldn't trade that for anything. I got good family and my mom is the one I worry about the most.

I was mostly rodeoing in the United States. People always asked how and where to get to the northern rodeos. I went to the States. The entry fees are cheaper. It was easier to get to these rodeos. You can make a whole circle and just ravel four or six hours to get to these places.

It was easy for us, I travelled up north a few times when I was younger. Then they started having this Indian Rodeo Association Rodeos. I gave up my rodeos in the States and mostly travelled in Canada because the money was good. I did it for five or six years riding bronc's. I quit bronc riding then I started team roping down south. It was year round for rodeos now in Canada.

Everything is indoors. When it gets chilly the first rodeo is in Edmonton. It was in March then. It was Regina indoor rodeo then everybody went back down south. Everybody came back north when summer and spring rodeos were done the rodeos seasons ends in September. Then they go out. It's different now these days. The big rodeos, you have to qualify to get into these big rodeos. Like the Calgary Stampede it's by invitation only to get into competition. I don't know if you went out of your way to see the rodeo. It's really good, especially when they have the elimination round during the week, Saturdays are the most fun because all the ones that didn't qualify for Sunday go on Saturday for winner take all. It was really good to see the best in the world choke up. To see them choke up is funny. Some kid from out of nowhere beat them, some nobody. I get a kick out of it.

I learned bronc riding from the best teachers. Like late Bob Gottfriedson, he taught me a lot. Winston Bruce, he was Worlds Champion. He had a bronc riding school. Harry Vold paid my tuition. My dad couldn't afford the fee. So Harry Vold paid it.

I had the best to teach me. I knew when you're doing something in sports or any walk of life, you know you're not as good as the next person. I was never great but I was good enough, to go to the next level.

My favorite bronc rider was Winston Bruce and my late friend Bob Gottfriedson. I always think of them and what they taught me. The time they took to teach me. I don't know that kind of patience. I'll sit down with someone and I'll tell them "And that's about". If they come back I'll tell them.

But when I went to those guys, they went out of their way to teach me. They made sure I understood what they were saying and how to correct my mistakes. It was good. I miss Bob mostly. I never satisfied him the way I rode. There was always something wrong with the way I rode. It was good. It was interesting. If they ask me and there are available.

Some of the people don't know me, the young guys. But the ones who know me would ask, like the contestant's father, would ask, if their son is doing right or if they were doing something wrong. They ask me to check their saddle and the way it should be.

The bronc saddle has to meet the standards. You can't just grab any saddle. They have to meet the standard of the Cowboy's Association. There's just one standard if you go to any rodeo. It makes it a lot easier.

Livestock today, they are just like equipment. They have to meet standards to not like long time ago. They didn't cut the tips off the bull's horns. They use to be really sharp. Now they cut the tips so they won't hurt any cowboys.

Even steer wrestling, they have to be a certain weight or else you don't use them in the rodeo. The calf roping too, it's easier on these calves that you see today at that weight. Long time ago you use to see big Hereford cattle and they are heavier and bigger boned, compared to what they are using now. It was hard on the cattle. Now today they have strict rules on how to rope a calf. Long ago if you can flip them with your rope, it was allowed. Today you can't do that. You can't let the calf fall or flip over backwards if you do you get flagged down right away.

The rules are good today, the SPCA us annoying. Why doesn't the SPCA leave the guys alone? They are trying to stop the rodeo but not in my lifetime, anyways.

The rules are stricter because of SPCA. I never saw a chuck wagon race cancelled. I think there was one in 1980, that big rainstorm they had on Tuesday. There was a lot of water on the racetrack. Two or three horses died on the racetrack. It was because of heart attacks. It had nothing to do with the race. I lost two of my good horses through heart attacks. It just happens. They were relaxing in the pasture just grazing. This was in the

fall, he just died the next morning. I found him dead. I asked the vet if they can check him. They said if anything, it's a heart attack. I saw horses die of a heart attack. I never understood why but just like humans your ticker gives out when it decides to. I understand now.

I never tried bulls. I never had the heart for it. It never interested me. It takes a special kind of cowboy to do that. It's hard on the body. Today the bulls are better. When I was in rodeo there were two or three in the Stock Contractors pen that were good bucking bulls. The rest were mediocre. Today every bull is as good as you can have because that's what the rules dictate, the bulls have to be even. They are rank. Some of the world's best Cowboys can last only three or four seconds on these bulls. That's saying something to them stock holders. They are worth a lot of money, \$50,000 each to get one bull that's how important it is to them. After that they get to the PBR for free. The Stock holders they get free passes. To win the PBR Finals the pay is one million dollars in the States. You have to qualify and be invited, like the Calgary Stampede.

There are people from different countries who come to the Calgary Stampede to compete. Some of the people get invited or they turn it down, the biggest rodeo in the world they would have to be here. In Cheyenne Wyoming, there's a good rodeo and in Houston Texas it's second Calgary. You can win a lot of money in Houston. One rodeo two Canadians won Houston, one won in steer wrestling and one in bull riding. They come out of Texas with sixty to seventy thousands of dollars each. They won and now they are leading the world in their events.

One of them broke his leg in the Innisfail Rodeo. He was leading in the worlds to go to the National Finals in Las Vegas. Now he broke his leg and three months to recover.

Calf roping, that Worlds Champ he had everything there all he had to do is tie the calf. That calf kind strain and then he messed up, big time. He could have won the big rodeo, just the pressure and mental attitude. I bet he went to a practice pen after that to get all the kinks out. Like that football player, he kicked for Calgary. Now he's playing at home in Hamilton. He can't kick any field goals anymore. He keeps missing. Over here he was a mister natural. At his hometown he can't kick. He cost them two games. He can't kick any field goals.

One time I rode the contractor's best bronc in Ty Valley Oregon. I never heard the whistle. I rode him. I thought he threw me off because I was just about falling off anyways. I got really mad and thought I didn't make it. I couldn't hear the whistle but I won the bronc riding on that horse. The guy who contracts that horse shook my hand. He said that horse, no one had ridden for the full eight seconds in a long time. Five hundred was big money. Then a day's was give hundred. Today it is worth five thousand today. There were sixty bronc riders there. Today you don't get that much riders anymore.

This was an all Indian Rodeo that I won. It felt good, really good. British Colombia produces the best riders. I felt good beating them. I used to live on one hamburger a day.

Just before noon I'll eat. If the rodeo is in the afternoon or in the evening I'll eat before I ride. After that it's all water whatever you can scrape up. If one of us wins a hundred bucks we would have a meal then and fill up the tank. We also paid our entry fees at the next rodeo with it. We still had some change left. Today you can't even fill your gas tank with it.

You are free, you don't to answer to anybody. That's what I liked. You don't have to look over your shoulder to see anger or to see if you're doing something wrong. My partners were good. Nobody from home wanted to travel. Well none of them were as determined as I was to ride in the bronc riding. My dad told me that I should be okay. He didn't say I was good enough. He said I should be okay to go to these rodeos.

Bruce was more a traditional type if I wanted to know something about the history I ask him. He really knows how to speak the Tsuut'ina language. I speak it, but not as well as him. I hope he told you all the history a lot of elders. He knows a lot about the history. My granny used to tell me about certain elders I don't remember. Him, he remembers everything. He always had a good memory. There are two types of our language, there's the old Tsuut'ina language and then the younger version. A lot of the younger people speak but not a lot of people speak it. Bruce's age and under, they didn't speak the old language. Me, I speak it, the old language, I had no choice. My granny, that's all she spoke to me. Was the old language to me and my auntie. Bruce, he knows both versions. It's good. I'm glad he told you all that. Tell him I said that he would have never made a good cowboy anyway and it's coming from his brother.

There are a lot of cowboys. I don't know if they travelled like I did but there was Gordon Crowchild at sixty-five, he was still wild horse racing. He drove a chuck wagon too. He and his brother Edwin Crane and they used to drive chuck wagons, his dad too, in the Calgary Stampede. That's really something. He almost got killed, a wagon tipped over when they were running the barrels. The wagon tipped over on him. They said they were going to lose him but he survived. That's tough driving wagon. I would not be able to do that you know.

He rode off and on till he was sixty-five. That is quite an accomplishment. I wouldn't be able to do that.

I learned that Harry Dodginghorse was a natural athlete. Anything he did he was good or better than anybody. He used to ride bulls. He won the steer decorating in the Calgary Stampede when he was younger. He used to steer wrestle. He was good at that, anything he did. He amazed me how he can do things.

Frances Manywounds he won the steer decorating in the Calgary Stampede. In those days you put a ribbon on a steer's horn. It's like steer racing but you put the ribbon on their horns. He won. He was fast. He did it on one point seven seconds. Just a blur, can't even think that fast and he won steer decorating.

The late Ronald Dodginghorse, he used to steer decorate too. Amos Manywounds, they used to wild horse race. Gordon used to make me ride his wild horse then. They don't have wild horse race anymore. I was riding bronc's and he told me, I need a rider. I told him if he ever needed a rider he can ask me or if you can't find anyone. Of course he never looked. He knew he had a jockey. You have to have three people. There's the ear man, he's usually the biggest toughest guy. Him he was the guy who held the horse. I was the saddle, the rider. I had to saddle up the horse and the ear man had to hold on to the horse.

I jumped on the horse. We had to ride into the ketch pen with sixteen other horses. After that you're on your own when you get in there. I have done that for a couple of years. It wasn't my favorite event.

A lot of the older guys, they used to ride bucking horses too. Long ago there wasn't any bull riding. It was steer riding. The bull didn't come in till the 1950's. It was steer riding, Arthur Onspot, he used to calf rope and even Reggie Onspot. He even tried riding bronc's. The place we practice every Sunday. When we were young we used to practice at one of my buddies place. We used to fix up the old corral fences. This lean to a pole was sticking out of the roof. My friend was just missing it with his head. He said "Gee, you guys I thought you said you cut the pole" after he got off the horse. He went and he cut pole.

The following weekend he said he wanted to ride. We said "no" you can't you're too drunk. He said "Nah". I can ride him. He bugged us. So we finally put him on. Of course, he fell off. He was inebriated. We didn't know he broke his collar bone. He was passed out on the ground in front of the chute. He was in our way so we grabbed his arm. He was a tall guy. So the four of us pulled him, just grabbed him and pulled him beside the chute. We left him to sleep. We didn't know he broke his collarbone, here we were dragging him with his arms. We were too interested into practicing. It was funny.

I used to have this favorite practice horse of mine. I used to practice on that horse all the time. He was an old horse. He must have been twenty five. That's old for a horse. Sometimes he couldn't swallow. He said this you have to hit him on the side really hard. He will clear his throat. He would be up again. Then we will put him in the chute after that he would be our practice horse. He didn't have any teeth left and that's why we had to feed him carefully.

He taught me a lot. That bronc showed me how to spur. He bucked different ways. We used to ride him three or four times in the evening. Every time he got stronger. I guess his arthritis would work him loose. He would get stronger and ranker. My dad used to say "gee" you're going to kill that horse. That winter it was too cold. There was nobody around to save him. He vanished on us. We sure did miss him jumping on his chest to clear his throat.

We used to hate chute fighting horses. They fight when you saddle up, when they get nervous. This horse was just shaking in the chute. We couldn't get a halter on him. He just knocked himself out. We thought he killed himself. Good thing, no one was sitting on him when he done that. He shook his head so hard, knocked himself out on the wall. We all looked at each other. We opened the. We said "Gee, he's dead". We need somebody to get him out of the arena. He was standing there for an hour shaking his cobwebs out of his head. You know the things today you can laugh at them but that time we were scared. We would have not known what to say if the owner realized his horse was dead.

I saw a Brazilian and some colored guy. I didn't see or notice any white guys. There might have been without my knowledge. Without knowing some of them look white anyways. You can't tell Indian Cowboys at the Stampede. Long ago there were quite a bit of saddle bronc riders, calf roping and steer decorating. Late Rupert used to ride bulls. He was pretty good. Today there's hardly any Indian Cowboys just in the amateur events. I know there's really good riders out there. Some of them don't like to travel today. Today I don't travel anymore. It is hard for me to go places. I go to Standoff or I just stay at home and do things at home. I run my own business so sometimes I'm busy seven days a week and on call twenty four/seven. My life is full with grandkids. A lot of grandkids, they keep me happy.

Long ago, I would be gone all winter or I'll be back and forth. Last run I had I thought I would get it out of my system.

I hate flying Frontier Airlines. It was cowboy's airline. They always made a special effort to accommodate you. I was able to get on the plane. I still had spurs on and my bronc saddle in my hand getting on the airplane trying to make the next rodeo. They allowed that. Today you can't even get pass the gate with your hat on. You have to take it off. It was good. Delta Airlines was the other in Denver. Denver was where everybody met. Then they would fly out to wherever they were going.

There's the July fourth weekend. They call it cowboy Christmas because there's a bunch of rodeos and you can go to as many as you can in that week. This one time I flew back from Denver and I was tired. I hardly had any sleep. I had my bronc saddle in my hand and my duffle bag, chaps and boots. Everything else was in the other hand. You don't have to walk. It just carries you. I was standing there. I fell asleep. I was lying at the end of the track and the thing was going. Everybody must have been looking.

What woke me up was my stirrup was hitting in the side of the head. Every time it came through, it hit me in the head. I was hoping I wasn't late for the plane. I took off. One of partners said I don't know how he heard. He said "Gee what happened over there". I had to explain to him, we criss-crossed. We meet once there. He was going to Portland. I was going to Oklahoma. Somebody must have told him, I was lying on the airport floor. I don't know if he was drunk or not. He told them, "Nah. He don't drink when he's rodeoing, must of just got tired or something". I told my nephews and my nieces. They

asked me to tell them stories like that they get a kick out of that story. I was embarrassed but I just fell asleep.

My first family wanted to come with me. So I bought a motor home. She drove pretty good too. I broke my leg in Crow Agency. I broke it right off, the right leg. I still have a plate in there with pins. It gave me security back then. It's still in there. They said we can't do anything about it. You had to pay a certain amount.

I told them well can I go home. We are in a motor home. They put a temporary brace and a sling. She drove from Crow Agency for fourteen hours in a motor home. Our daughter was with us. She made it in ten hours. We left that morning at eight o'clock. She was checking me in at the hospital at the Foothills at six o'clock that evening. I told her I'm not going to die, slow down, but they said gangrene might set in. Well, hell with it, they will just cut my leg off. I rather get there alive rather than worry about my broken leg so she got me to the hospital.

Imagine there's more today. They got these little youth rodeos now. That's where a lot of them get their start. They are having one tomorrow at Redwood. They start at nine a.m. Last year they said they didn't finish till it got too dark. So like fourteen hours, that's good. I like it that the little guys are getting really serious about it too. It is nice to see in my time. They didn't have youth rodeos or anything like that when I was young. If you wanted to be a cowboy, you had to learn at home and do the best you can. Now they start them off young. It's nice, I like that. It's good to see, especially old guys like me, old timers. I used to rodeo with the old timers too. They had old timers circuit. It was both Canada and the United States. You had to qualify for finals too. I qualified for the finals, one time. It was fun. The rodeo committees pamper you. They make sure everything's perfect because you are older and more liable to get hurt. They make sure you were comfortable.

This one time I didn't know how I broke my wrist. Well I didn't break it. I fractured a bone in my wrist. It didn't bother me too much. It happened in early spring. Then in August I don't know maybe it was later in the year. I was steer wrestling and I got on the steer okay but I missed the inside horn. They get smart the cattle. This one knew must have noticed me when I was reaching for his horn on the inside. He just tipped his horn a little bit. I missed it. I missed his horn altogether right over the front end. The horse was still motion and the steer stopped at the same time.

I landed on my wrist. That hurt. I thought I broke it for sure. I went to the doctor. My wrist was really hurting. They x-rayed it. When it came back, they asked me "when did you break it" I told them "I broke it the other day". He said "No, you broke it a long time ago". He said you broke the calcification on the joint there and freed it up again. That's all that happened. You broke it before. It just healed by itself. So I said okay. He went and moved my wrist again. He said do you want to put a cast on it. He said, nah I will be putting it on for nothing. It was I didn't realize it.

It's all mental, especially when you draw the right stock and riding is good. I hurt my ankle and threw some tendons. I used to pour some ether in my boots to numb the pain when I put my boot. I rode that way. I had an ankle that was just big. I rode till quit drawing good stock. It started to hurt too much. I had to give it a rest. When I think about those things today, I think I only got one life left I think I burned the other right lives. It was a good life.

I was reaching for my stirrup. I was defenceless. That horse just flipped with me in the chute, just straight back. I was knocked out of wind. In the meantime the horse was still on top of me in the chute upside down. Finally they opened the gate. They dragged the horse away. I was laying there. The front of my saddle front end hit me right here (in the chest by the neck) in the back of the chute. Oh that hurt. Then he was flogging around upside down in the chute. I was underneath, I don't know how long. I was spitting blood. It took a while to clear it up. The stock contractor came up to me and said hey boy you still alive. You should be dead by now. I started to touch myself I was still out of breath. Yet I was just looking at him mad. His horse just about killed me.

I was brought up on a ranch. I knew animals how they're act to certain situation. You get this sixth sense on what an animal is going to do or how he's going to react, like people. They react differently to different situations. Once you understand that then you know you'll be okay around animals. If you don't understand then you get into trouble really easy.

I always had that sense for horses, I was practically brought up on them. I was always around them. I had this sense on what they would do. I got to ride a lot of bronc's because I know what the horse was going to do next. Jump before he does it. Then you are ready for it.

Every cowboy tells the next guy about how an animal will buck. They will ask you "what's he like". You tell him everything, what your experience was with the horse. What you did wrong and what you could have done better. You tell them. We help each other that way you know nobody holds anything back. If there's something wrong, you want to know, what a bronc or bill is going to do. We tell each other.

The track records of each bronc are told so that everybody knows. The longer a bucking horse is been bucking everybody knows about it. You always ask the guy that knows him the best. Like some of the stock contractors wouldn't tell you. They want to buck you off all the time. Most of them do tell you. They would tell what's wrong and what to do. That way we help each other out because it's every bodies living. It's not easy sometimes.

Even the calves and the steers, there's a difference on them. How they run, which way they are going to run. If the steers going to run left or going to run slow. They tell you all that. That way its camaraderie, we all help each other out.

There's different ways each person has a different way of reacting to a situation. Even how you land when you get bucked off, each individual acts differently to each situation. It's built into your mind on how you react.

Other than that it depends on your ability to react to what's going to happen. You have to understand when you're in trouble you have to know right away. I was telling you about those bull riders if they fall off the wrong way. They know they are in trouble. The first thing they do is try to stay on their feet. If they lose their feet they know they are in trouble. It is the same for the bare back rider. If he falls off the wrong way, his hands get caught up in that rigging. That's the same thing you got to remember to stay on your feet. Sometimes it's not that easy in bronc riding. Even when you finish the ride, the pickup men pick you up or you get out yourself. You make sure you get your feet clear of your stirrups. If not you are going to get hung up and shook up all over.

I was telling you I got hung up in my stirrup at the Calgary Stampede. My reaction was to keep hanging on to my bronc reign. My head was too close to his hooves. He kicked me. It saved me, otherwise I have been underneath. They would have been still looking for rest of me in the arena in pieces, I hung on to my reign. It was just instinct and I just came out with a few broken teeth and a fractured jaw.

No just when I pulled the stirrup over with me, because I fell off on the right side. I still had my boot in the left stirrup. It got caught up. If my boot didn't fall off I would have got caught up for quite a while. So you wear certain type of boots that would come off when things like that happen. When you get caught up in something it make you more comfortable that there is a way to get out of it.

It's important to measure your bronc reign. Each horse has a different reign sometimes it is longer because they cow the head way down. Some are shorter. You have to have the right reign length, to put up a proper ride. If you don't have right length of shank if it's too short you can't make a ride. If it's too long you're going to get blown out the back. Things like that we all help each other out and tell each other if we should take a short or long shank.

Now today the young men they just jump off the bronc after the whistle. I was not able to do that. I would collapse and someone would have to pick me up. Now they are pretty graceful them young kids it's nice to see.

My partner from Montana he done that, he was doing that and he broke his leg right off. He broke both bones. The doctors pinned everything back together but they forgot a little thread in there. It got infected and they had to cut some of his leg. His leg is short on that side now because of the doctor's mistake. It got infected and it wouldn't heal.

Yeah, he used to sing. He had a hell of a voice. He would make the pow wow just him singing in them days. They make their own songs, I don't know how you can tell the difference but they have their own songs.

My dad said you have to learn how to chicken dance. I tried it for a couple of years but I wasn't really good at it. At some of these pow wows you know I like it now. It's really nice to watch these pow wows. You must have seen some. They are really good, the singers. I like listening to them today, back then it didn't really interest me. It's not that I didn't respect it or anything. It's wasn't in me.

I listened to my dad sing. I drove him around. He would sit in a car. He would sing between places where we have to be. In the evening, he sat at home and sang. It was really nice to hear. As far as ceremonies when I was growing up I don't know if they had any not like today. Today it's almost understood that's someone's going to a ceremony. I never noticed any ceremonies. So I don't really know what happened.

When I was young growing up there wasn't many of us. The count I remember was one hundred and eight that much I can remember. My dad used to go to these different pow wows. Him and his good friend Narcisse Pipestem, they were good friends. Anyways they went to these pow wows on the reserves. Narcisse had a car. He could drive to go to these pow wows Morley and Eden Valley. Narcisse was a Cree, originally from Hobbema. They went up that way. People got to know him. He was a good singer, I hated him trying to make a chicken dancer out of me. It wasn't my piece of pie and to top it off in high school and junior high they used to make dance there too, because I was from the reserve. They automatically thought that I could dance. I could dance so I had to bring my own tape and everything and dance. Everybody liked it even the high school. It didn't get me any girlfriends. I hung that up long time ago.

My mom had chickens. I think I was about nine or ten years old. That one morning they were all gone here a big eagle took all of them and ate them, killed all of them. He was full he couldn't fly. He was up in the tree and he was trying to fly. He landed on the ground. I had a rope. I roped him around the neck. I was so mad at him because he killed my mom's hens. Then we hung him up. We beat him to death with a stick. I hit him over the head. Then, I told my dad "we got that eagle, the one that ate mom's chicken. We hung him up. He is still in the trees". He said "Where?" He got excited. He made his feather hat out of that, his first eagle hate. Bruce has it now, the original, I don't know how much significance it had. I was just made at the bird because he killed my mom's hens. That's how naïve I was to the old ways.

Life was good even back then. Everybody helped each other everybody knew each other and respected each other. Today it's not like that anymore.

From what my granny told me you know Bullhead was a strong leader. A person you know once he made up his mind that's the way it was going to be. That's the way it turned out. He believed in his people the Tsuut'ina. He was a good leader. He was the real leader. The Tsuut'ina people always followed whatever he said. He was one of the strongest leaders. The city of Calgary, the Mounties couldn't deal with him. They had to accept what he wanted, like move the reserve over here from Arrowwood. They had no choice to give us this land because that's what he wanted. That is all I know about him.

What I heard from what my granny told me as far as the history goes about Tsuut'ina. I really don't know too much about it. You got the best guy telling you, Bruce, how things happened. He went out of his way digging through things. I know he's a lot of information.

The people were really down in the dumps Dave Crowchild was one of the ones that really brought the modern thinking onto the reserve. We were way back in time when he started. We had no money in the account in Ottawa. He started to introduce a few things to create some revenue. He was a good leader that's Gordon Crowchild's dad. The people respected him. He did all these things and that's why they got this Crowchild Trail now.

From there it was my dad who was the next Chief. After that he just carried on what Dave Crowchild started. My dad made us one of the richest reserves in western Canada. He was able to bring a lot of revenue in. we started pay individual member's twelve dollars a month. It would go quite a ways. Twelve bucks a head for everybody. They also gave out ration money to people who needed food. It's carried on today. It's more modern. The new Chiefs I think Dick Big Plume was the next Chief, then Gordon Crowchild, Clifford Big Plume, Roy Whitney then Clifford's boy Stanford. He's Chief today that much I could say that I have some knowledge about, anything before that I don't know.

We accepted each other. It wasn't noticeable if we were accepted by the city. They tolerated us. We each had businesses. They liked our business and they don't mind taking our money. That way they didn't mind us. Most of the grocery shopping was done on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There used to be an old Safeway, where the Olympic Plaza is now. That's where the Tsuut'ina did most of their shopping. There was a meat market, a drug store and theatres on both ends of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There was one called Variety Theatre on the east side. Then The Hitching Post was also on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Uptown it was quite a ways from downtown it was a different part of town. Very few have gone that way. It was always in that one little area. The streetcar would drop everybody off there. Everybody did their shopping in about two block area. It was interesting growing up. It opens your eyes. We got used to getting a cab to take us to where my tied up the team of horses and wagon. So we would take the groceries to the wagon.

It would take an hour at the most. The horses, you can just let them go. They would go home. They used to have an old wooden bridge there. In the springtime it always washed out once in a while. My dad knew there was high water. There was a runoff. We had heavy rain. My dad said "you guys sit still. Don't say anything. Just keep quiet". He let the team of horses go. They found their way across. Some of the boards were missing on the bridge. Some were loose and the horses made it across. My dad, he knew his animals. Us we were scared in the back of the wagon. We didn't even take a breath, when we were crossing. He just stood up in the wagon and just made sure everything was okay. The horse walked across slow.

Then we got home. It took an hour at the most. We went to town two or three times a year. It was a real treat go to the movie house. The family life I was brought up in I

wouldn't trade it. It was good. We had loving parents that's what I know about my childhood.

I think it was David Crowchild or someone else like the Whitney's, they had vehicles before anyone else. The people who lived on the west end towards Priddis, they might have had vehicles. David Crowchild had the first vehicle, till I got married. I started working in the city, I bought a black 1959 Buick. The young kids, like Gerald used to call me Batman. Batman was on TV. The 1959 Buicks were long and had fins. I went to work on it. It was a good car. I had a few other cars after that. Then I got the motor home. My wife wanted to travel. Then after, we separated. That's when I started rodeoing hard again I had a Buick. I always liked Buicks I always drove Buicks.

I had a goose neck trailer with a 4 horse trailer. My second wife, she was a cowgirl, a really good cowgirl. That's when I started roping. My youngest girl is living in Arizona now. Her mom taught her how to rope and barrel race and all that. So I had some nice vehicles. Right now I'm driving 1998 GMC 4x4. I had it since day one. I have close to 500 000 km's on it. All it does not is take me to work and back. I just live a mile from where I work. I come into town pick up some supplies, go grocery shopping. That's about it today. It still runs pretty good. My wife, she has newer vehicles, a 4x4 SUV's. She travels quite a bit in the summer and winter. She doesn't feel safe other than with an SUV. It makes me more comfortable. You never know in today's weather. It just happens in a minute. It changes in two seconds.

I was always a one man show, raising my cattle. I had eighty cattle at one time. I just got tired of it. At my age I was training in this other work anyway. So I got rid of all the cattle. I have this other job. At least it's an inside job. I don't have to be outside. I used to be freezing feeding cattle in the evening and during the day. Then they would be calving in the middle of the night. I'm out there with them. I done it all by myself and I got tired of it. Now I got a pretty good job.

Especially the young cows the first calves, you have to be there with them. Help them out. I got pretty good at it helping. I knew what to do and how to look after them. After when they're having trouble calving I even went as far as I don't know if you want put this on there but this calf died inside the cow before he was born. She was trying to push him out. He was coming out backwards all you can see is the hind legs and I had to push him back in. This was after midnight it was kind of wet, snow falling I cut him inside I took him out piece by piece it took me three hours to do that. I was by myself I took him out piece by piece made sure the cow got up and watered. She was okay. I sold her that fall. I didn't want any more problems.

My dad taught us how much he knew. He passed it on to us. I got to know cattle pretty good. I just got tired because I didn't have any boys, just girls. They are all living in different parts of the country. I feel I have done my thing.

I don't even have horses here anymore. I used to have a dogging team horse and steer wrestling team horse. They won two words champions. They just died of old age I didn't want to sell them. Well one I called, Jack. He was an all-around horse, that one. He was my girl's favorite horse, he was the babysitter. She was only six or seven years old at a rode. He made sure she was not getting into mischief. We put her on Jack. We always knew where she was. She rode around. I bought him in Utah south of Salt Lake, in Spanish Fork.

I bought the other one from my ex-wife's sister, in-laws. I called him Grasshopper. He was a character that one. He teased me all the time. One time, I was trying to pick up this saddle blanket off the ground. He bit my jacket every time I bent over. So I wouldn't pick up that blanket, I kept missing that saddle blanket. I had another one, I called ET everybody knew him, ET. He was the ugliest horse you can find, but he could run.

My dogging team, my yellow horse, the one I called Grasshopper was the dogging horse. Jack was the hazing horse. I took them all over the Indian Rodeos and the INFR. They won the worlds champion twice. They wanted to buy one of them. They wanted to buy Grasshopper. I told him "No" I can't part with him. He's my friend. Sometimes he's my only friend I have, when my wife was mad at me. At least I can talk to somebody. He was a character that one.

One time he got hurt. We decided to leave him at home. We loaded the other three horses up. In the meantime we didn't know we loaded one up first. We turned them opposite directions, you know not facing each other. He snuck in between the first and second horse. Here we had four horses in the trailer. We thought we left him at home. When we started unloading, he was standing in the trailer. He was just bobbing his head,. We had no choice. We just tied him up for the weekend at the rodeo because he was sore. We didn't want to use him. He was a character. The way we communicated, he understood what I was thinking. If he wasn't in the mood to do it, he just wouldn't do anything. He would just pick up his tail and run away.

Well, like I said each horse is like a person. They have individual habits. You have to learn that. They react to certain situations differently, some of them they get spooky. You have to learn how to handle them. You can't overreact when they are nervous. You have to calm them down the best you can. Some, you are able to see, in some of them, the type of horse he is just by his eyes. Some others, by the way he moves his ears. Some of them you just don't want to be around because are going be spooky all their life. Some of them just don't want to be trained. They have a mind of their own. I stay away from those. No use trying to change their mind.

There are some horses that are really nice. They are all good to the kids. They know they are not going to get hurt like an older person. I mean hurt the horse. When they are around kids they act different. They really calm down. They kind of watch out for them and around an older person they act different. They are always watching them, in a nervous way. You have to calm them down. it depends on your manners too, towards

them. They know right away if you're a good person or not. I know some people. They are cruel to their horses. Their horses are always nervous. When come around kids, it's a whole different story they just calm down watch out for them.

You never walk behind a horse until you really know them. You might get kicked. They use their two hooves to kick at you. It's because its either you surprised them or they don't trust you to walk behind them. So you have to calm them down. Let them get to know you. My dad, he knew horses. He would say that one is going to be a good one. He knew right off the bat. That's the way we were brought up.

What surprised me about my dad was no matter how horses were to him he would swing his rope and would be able to rope one of them. He would roll his loop over them and he would catch a horse in the herd. I couldn't do that. He picked them out like that. The old guys knew how to do deal with horses.

I heard there were thousands of horses on the reserve. This one guy owned most of them. He knew every horse, which were his horses. I think, I don't know, one hundred horses or eight hundred horses. He knew every one of his horses. They started selling them to the Russians. They got rid of most of them. This is what I heard. My dad use to talk about it. They take two to three to round them up. Put them in the corrals. Then they would brand them. Make geldings out of them and then turn them out again. There were more horses than cattle.

I'm just trying to think of his name. Mazaa, that's his Tsuut'ina name. It means Knife. I know he had lots of horses. He used to talk about him quite a bit. He's the one who knew all his horses like everybody else. He had the most. He knew which were his. I can't do that. The only way I can tell my cattle through is by the brand. You have you own brand on the cattle. I know them that way, otherwise I wouldn't be able to tell my own cattle.

They were all over the reserve, a thousand head. The reserve is only six by eighteen miles. They had to cover a lot, most of the west. They weren't the type of horse you bring home to your kids. They were always on the wild side. They were always on the west end, where there are no people.

The less they saw people, the better they felt. That's the story my granny told me. When he died the horses knew. They have common sense them horses. They know who the boss is, who their owner is.

Today I don't think you can see that today or find that today. Owners changed so many times. The horses today don't know how to be friends anymore. When you get horses they become your friends. You know, they look out for you. I had the last horses I owned. They got to know me. They looked out for my girl, ex-wife and me. When we were around them, they always knew where we were. They knew they would be looked after, taken care of properly.

I always made sure my horses were healthy. If they were something wrong with them I would know right away I would get a vet to doctor them. They got to know you and got to be good friends. That's the way I looked at my horses. I made friends with them. You had a friend forever.

## **Violet Meguinis**

Violet is one of our fluent Tsuut'ina speakers. She was born and raised on the Tsuut'ina reserve. Violet has taught Tsuut'ina language and culture for twenty-four years at Saint Stephens Elementary. She also taught for the Tsuut'ina language for seven years at the Chiila Elementary. Violet is the granddaughter of Chief Big Belly.

## **Violet Meguinis**

My parents are Rose and George Runner. They were raised and born on the Tsuut'ina reserve, so I'm originally from the reserve. My mom's maiden name was Otter. My late dad's last name was Big Belly but he changed our last name to Runner. So my maiden name is Runner.

My grandparents were Daisy and Oscar Otter. I don't know too much about the family tree. There is a lot of things that we are missing. My mom should have really told us.

I used to be a researcher. I worked with Harley Crowchild. I worked days and nights or weekends. My mom or my grandmother would call me to record them. Daisy would say come up with your tape recorder and do some taping. She told me I'm your last refuge. So I went up there to do some recording with her. So she told me quite a bit about stories about my grandparents, also about herself. I put them away. I haven't really listened to them yet. There is a lot of information on there. I have no tape player. I haven't listened to them lately.

She left with me a lot of information. She even told me about the person that put up the last Sundance. That one it was my grandfather Oscar Otter's sister. She was the last one to put up the Sundance and she told me the name but I forgot, but it's all on the tapes.

I had four brothers and four sisters. Four sisters and two of my brothers passed away. So there is six of us left. We were all taught our language at home. All of us know how to speak our language.

The eldest is Margret Dixon. Dolly Ouellette is the second oldest then Tom Runner is the third eldest. Then my late brother Floyd who passed away, then I was next to Floyd and then Steven. The youngest brother is Roger, who also passed away. The youngest one is Pasty's. So there were four boys and four girls. We were all taught our language at home. So we know. We speak it all of us. Some of them are forgetting to speak fluently because they are married to someone that is not Tsuut'ina.

I was sent to school at the residential school when I was growing up. Parents and grandmothers went to church on Sundays. Every Sunday, even if we had to walk we went to school. It was quite a ways, we had to walk. Sometimes you go on a team to church. That was how we travelled in those days was by team and a wagon.

The new school was built, right in the middle of the reserve. There used to be a hall there. They called it Bullhead Hall. The school belonged to the government they called it Sarcee School. I went to school there until was in grade seven and then we went to Calgary for grade eight. Indian Affairs ordered us to go to the city school to take our grade eight.

It was hard going to the city school. We had to walk two miles or two and a half miles to catch the bus, in the cold winters. We never got help from the government. It was always our parents trying to provide us with lunches.

Even in those days it was hard for our parents to provide a job. There were no jobs for anyone. We had to live off the land. Most families had cattle, pigs and chickens. Those kind of farms. We lived off the land because there was no such thing as money from the government, no such thing as welfare. I think our family allowance was only five bucks. That didn't go very far. So mom used to buy lunch for the week.

My late dad took us on a wagon. We had to catch the bus or else we walked. Some of us we didn't go right through school, because of the hardship. It was too tough but we stood our ground. The schools Indian Affairs sent us to the toughest schools in Calgary. So we got into a lot of fights. It was hard, a lot of prejudice. Prejudice is still here today. It's always around when we were kids.

A lot of the boys and a lot of us girls got into fights. We always protected each other when we got into fights. Just because we were native. We were always together. The Anglican Church burnt down at the agency. That old church, it's still there. That's where I went to school in 1942 to 1945.

They used to cut trees for off the reserve. They used to cut wood. Some of them did logging for some guy from Bragg Creek. We lived off the land, farming. Everybody did their own farming. When it came to harvest time all the families used to gang up on one field. They would be moving from field to field. Everyone would pitch in and have a meal ready for them.

Then they would move to the next person's field. They did a lot of agriculture. When Indian Affairs did help them, it wasn't much. They either gave them a cow or something to get started or a tractor. They mostly did it on their own. So that's how they survived in those days. There were a lot of fields. They really used their land. Everyone always had gardens. They helped each other. If even if somebody needed food. They would give each other vegetables or something like that to survive. If somebody killed an animal, deer or something they would share. That's how they lived they shared everything. There was no such thing as government money from Indian Affairs.

There was also a lot of ranching. Quite a few families had cattle and horses. That's what they lived on selling cattle. I remember my mom and dad raised cattle. They kept the heifer calves. Then in the fall they sold the bull calves. Mom and dad bought a supply of groceries for the winter. That's how they got their money in, through cattle.

The money was better by the weight of the calf. So they didn't want to sell the females because that's how they would increase their stock. They survived through their own farming. They had chickens and we had eggs every day. I got tired of eating eggs. To this day, I don't care too much for eggs.

We were never allowed to hunt off the reserve. I remember there was only one Chief and two Councillors. The Councillors only got paid twenty-five dollars a month. Nowadays it's outrageous. It's awful when you think how hard it was for our people. It was good to see families had their own ranch or farm. Today you don't see that. All young people

don't seem to have any interest unless you're a politician, or when you can afford it. They leased their fields to off reserve farmers. Even that, it's gone. There is hardly any reserve people leasing fields nowadays.

The 1920's, it was really a dark time in Tsuut'ina history because we were only 120 Tsuut'ina people left. The sickness went into the schools kids were dying off. My dad remembers that, five of them sometimes passed away in one night. My dad told us that. It was in the schools a lot of them got wiped out in the old school down by the agency. I don't know what the name of it. Diphtheria was another sickness that wiped out the Tsuut'ina. My grandmother took my dad out of school He just went up to grade two. He said it was bad. So many kids died. That's all he talked about was that sickness.

The sickness I know was measles and whooping cough, when I was young. Tuberculosis (T.B) was among the people. Some of them with T.B were sent to Edmonton for treatment. We got needles for that kind of sickness. Long ago there was no treatment. I think that's why a lot of our people died.

My grandmother Daisy Otter told me he was a medicine man, my late grandfather. Big Belly was a medicine man and he was a Chief and I think in 1912. I know it's a lot of information my late grandmother Daisy Otter told me about him. You now us kids don't really remember him. I don't remember what year he passed away. He was a powerful medicine man and he took part in the Calgary Stampede. Since it started, he took his tipi in to the Calgary Stampede every year. So you know that tipi belongs to my grandfather Big Belly. It's always took part every year. He was the next Chief after Bullhead. He was related to Bullhead through marriage.

Big Belly really helped the people. He helped people in a lot of ways. In those days you know there was no such thing as government money. He always helped to try to make money. Even to make Christmas feast for the reserve. He went out of his way to try to do a feast for the people and the reserve. He did help the reserve. He helped the people a lot.

He helped the people when they were sick, with his powers. He had a lot of pipes that belonged to him. He did help the people when they were sick or missing. He really looked after his people.

He even tried to save the reserve. They always wanted to get the east end of our reserve, the 37<sup>th</sup> Street. He refused. He wouldn't go for it. 1912 he refused it. I have a clipping from a newspaper. I might still have it. I just have to look in my material.

He even predicted that if we do that in the future your grandchildren and your children we'll be wiped out. He predicted things. So he didn't go for it at all because he knew ahead of time what would happen to the people. So he did help the reserve a lot. He really protected the reserve.

David Crowchild, Dick Big Plume, Clifford Big Plume and Gordon Crowchild were Chiefs. Those are the Chiefs I can remember. I don't want to comment too much about

politicians' you know because I had no interest. When you're young you don't have interest in them much. I don't know what they were trying to do, trying to help the people. It was hard, it was really hard.

Harley Crowchild told us to go to the Blood reserve. We took some of the elders with us. We took a tape recorder with us too. We met with twelve of the old people to help us with history of that pipe bundle. So we did. Fred Eagletail backed out. So Harley told my husband to go with his pipe and offer it to the old people down there. So we did.

We took some elders on a bus and went to the Blood Reserve. There were mostly men there who were trying to help us with the history of that pipe bundle. They told us about that bundle.

Those twelve old people, they thought it was going to be another person who was going to offer that pipe to them. But it was us, my husband and I. We were young. We did it and they told us all the history about the pipe bundle and how we can get it back. They told us what steps to take.

So we went back to the reserve. The Medicine Pipe bundle was up at the Edmonton museum. We made another trip up there with the elders. Some elders and Roy Whitney, was Chief then. We went with elders on a bus, to try and bring back that pipe. So we they set a date for us to go and see that bundle with the elders. We all went up. We took the elders on the bus.

They laid the bundle on the table for us, my dad, late Dick Starlight and another person. My husband didn't come with me. I was with Dick Starlight and my dad. We prayed. We smudged. Then they opened the bundle Dick Starlight and my dad. They wanted to see what was missing from the bundle. Some of the stuff was missing in the pipe bundle.

Some of the young people took off. They got scared. I wasn't scared, there was nothing to be scared of. One of the missing items was the main paint bowl. They wrapped it back up again.

We had to go back up to get it. I think it was I was with my late dad and mom. My late mom, late Eliza Eagletail Fred Eagletail's wife, who passed away, and myself. Four of us brought that bundle back from Edmonton. We heard stories about it. So maybe people didn't want us to get hold of it again.

We did bring it back to the reserve. Coming home, we had it on the station wagon there was my mom, my dad, Eliza and myself. We got it back on the station wagon. We had it laying way behind. My dad was on right side of my mom and Eliza was driving and I was on front right side. We drove it back.

We smudged the car before we headed out. It started to get cloudy. The clouds were coming. Before we got to Red Deer there was lightning. We hit that lightning storm. It

started to rain. I was kind of getting scared. We just kept going. Eliza told me to keep smudging the car. We kept smudging ourselves. We kept doing that.

All of a sudden lightning hit the car. We didn't get scared. When the lightning hit the car it kind of shimmered, the lightning was blue. It just went bright inside the car. We didn't get scared. We just kept praying. We just kept praying all the way home. That is how we made it back. On my dad's side, where that lightning hit there was a marble of a rock under his seat.

There was a big crackling noise, on the side where my dad was sitting. My mom and dad were sitting behind and Eliza was driving. It turned bright inside the station wagon but we made it back. It was quite an experience.

We just kept smudging. We all kept praying. We made it back to the reserve with it. That night I heard that bundle belonged to Bullhead and Big Belly.

When we got back to the reserve they had the tipi set up at my late uncle Frank and auntie Mary Onespots house. They had that set it up for the pipe bundle. So that night we put it in there. When we came to the tipi with the bundle the dogs started to bark. So they hung it up in the tipi. Then we took the stuff out of the station wagon.

We knew it was a sign, the bundle was alive. The funny thing about it was the dogs were all barking when they were taking it into the tipi to hang it up. I really don't know to tell you the truth. Somebody sold the bundle from our reserve for money. It's supposed to protect the people. It's supposed help the people and watch over us.

We made it back. To this day they are just shifting that bundle around to families that don't know anything about it. They are supposed to have a feast every spring and fall with the people with the people on the reserve. They are not doing that.

I never talk about much. If I did some people won't believe it. That's what we went through. You know sometimes you have a feeling you don't want to talk about an experience you go through. I don't know for what reason, you know, people feel like that I had. A feeling I don't want to talk much about. I guess just that maybe people might think you're making it up.

We had a house with one big room, a small room and a small kitchen. There was another small room that was supposed to be like a pantry. They had to make it into a bedroom. There were eight of us kids in that one big room. We had our beds in there by a wood stove. We had a big table in there. We had a big closet for our clothing to hang up for all of us.

The house was small not even big enough for all of us but we survived in there. It was cold in the winter. My late dad used to keep the fire going all night. When we lived in there, we slept in the big room because it had a big cast iron stove. They bought coal, down town. Coal keeps it burning all night when it's cold. The wood just burns fast. Even

the windows, we had to put plastic over it because there was no such thing as storm windows in those days. The windows were long.

We had to put a canvas over the door, so the draft won't come in. It was cold from the doors too. It was really hard. It was cold at night you could hear the walls just cracking because it was in the winter time. It was tough in the summer time too it got hot in the house. We used to keep the doors open.

We had to haul water from the spring below the house. The Indian Affairs, the government, finally got us some outside pumps. We had to pump the water by hand. The steel handle froze to your hands in the winter. So what my mom and dad taught us to is to unfreeze it by pouring hot water over the handle. That's the only way we got water going again. So it wasn't too bad when we got water.

Even to bath we had to heat up water on the wood stove. We were taught to keep clean. Also we were taught to keep the house clean. Even in the winter time. My late mom and dad used to melt snow or they would save rain water. They would heat that up. We would bath in the rain water they said it was the best, rain water.

I remember we had our own pigs, our own cattle and we lived off our chickens. They had to be looked after before we went to the school. We had to feed them before we walked to school. We had pigs they sold the pigs for money and they were big, those pigs in those days. You had to know how to feed them. We fed them all the time, even at night.

In the winter time at night when you're young nothing bothers you. The cold weather, nothing. Today I can't stand the cold weather. At night we used to ride those pigs. My dad gave us hell. We got chased to bed. We had a lot of animals to survive on. We even had milk cows. We had milk every day I think we had three or four something like that. We had to milk them. My mom taught us how to do it. They taught us a lot of things dad and mom, how to survive.

I don't know how to describe it. It wasn't a log house. I know it was made out of wood not fancy. I think Indian Affairs started building houses like that on the reserve for families.

I don't know what year think it was 1955 or 1956. We started getting new houses. They built three houses first. I think it was my late parents and I think a couple of Whitney's. They tried it out. They had big living rooms, a big kitchen, three bedrooms and a bathroom there was no plumbing then. We started to have electricity it was an ideal thing, electricity. They had furnaces in those new houses. The furnace, so it kind of made life easier for us. We didn't have to cut wood any more. That was tough cutting wood, especially in the winter time. In summer the house it was too hot for mom to cook, in that small house. We started to have electricity I don't remember I think in 1955 something like that.

We started to have inside plumbing like toilet and running water. We had lamps we had used. Dad had those high test gas lamps. They were dangerous. Just dad lit them or mom.

We had candles but they weren't too safe because we would forget them. We might set the house on fire. They had kerosene lamps. They put a glass over it for light. I know when it was dim it was kind of hard to see. It is a wonder we didn't get our eyes spoiled, because of the poor lighting.

In 1948 my grandparents had a car some old model. I don't know what you call them but they did have cars back then. Television, they came out too. I don't know in 1952 something like that 1953.

If you wanted a job you had to go off the reserve to get a job. I know, most of my life I worked in the city. At that point we were just working in the city trying to help out at home. There were no jobs no nothing, nothing on the reserve for anybody. Then I worked all over, like even worked in a nursing home. I worked there about two years. Some of us Tsuut'ina women worked in that nursing home. Like my aunt Barbara and another one Bertha Big Plume. We worked in that nursing home. I went back to the reserve I got a job with Harley Crowchild. A researcher for the reserve. I worked there for four years I think. I don't remember.

When I quit school I started working to clean houses in the city. So that's how I made a living trying to help mom and dad with groceries. My dad took all of us to work. My brothers worked in the city. My three brothers worked at Epcor. One of them used to work at some kind of railroad track. My second older sister worked at Eatons. So all of us worked in the city. They tried to help out every one of us, we got off reserve jobs. Dad took us to work in the city.

It was hard you had to be on your own. No such thing as government money, no such thing as welfare. In those days the government started to give welfare to the white people. They had the most laws to get something, you were lucky to get welfare. Everything was red taped, you might as well forget it. You know mom and dad I don't think they ever got welfare, because Indian Affairs was so darn strict with everything. So many laws they had. It's still like that today. It was worse then, it wasn't easy to get money and help from the government.

They had mostly pow-wows, and Christmas feast. Those days the main thing was the Christmas feast and pow-wow. The leaders would provide food to make Christmas feast. Their wife's cooked. The families would cook, to help feed the people. At night they would have the pow-wow. Everyone was there, they had a lot of giveaways.

They left the ceremonies alone. I never saw them perform any ceremonies those days. They had a lot of societies in the time of my grandmothers. They had a lot of societies they belong to. They performed a lot of ceremonies then.

They had Brave Dog Society. The women had the Tall Hat Society, my great grandmother Big Belly owned it. They had a Horse Society, a lot of societies they had. I know I got a lot of material, you know that information in my books of the different societies.

One of those societies my late dad left some songs on a tape with me. I haven't really listened to it, but he sang some of the songs for the societies. I forget what societies it was its on that tape. We printed the names on those tapes but there were a lot of societies. He even left songs of the pipe bundle quite a few of the songs. He left me some of the songs on the Beaver Bundle. His parents took part on those bundles. I think he said the Pipe Bundle.

There is the Beaver Bundle they said there is a thousand songs to that beaver bundle. He left me some of the songs on the tape. He used to sing it when he and my mom were home alone. He never sang it when us kids were around. They were powerful, very, very powerful.

So I'm pretty lucky because my late dad and some of the old people that left us knew a lot of songs. Like my uncle Dick Big Plume they knew some of the old songs but they are gone with it. So I don't know what if, the families know. Like even Stanley Big Plume, so a lot of them went with all the old songs but my dad left me with quite a few.

Pat Grasshopper was somehow related to my late grandmother Otter and mom but not too sure. I remember him, but I didn't know him. It's hard to remember all the old people that passed away because there was so many that we lost, It hard to even remember on how they look unless you see their picture. I know he had a lot of beaded stuff. He had a lot of horse outfits and tipis. I don't really know him that well because I was young.

It all went with them. Another thing to they never passed it on. Like I said it might have been too dangerous, you know you got to be careful. You don't mess around with stuff like that. My late grandpa Big Belly wanted to pass on the power to him. My grandmother put a stop to it. It was too powerful for my late dad.

When they had sweats the old people, the priest and the missionaries used to stone the sweats. When they were in there praying, they threw rocks at them. That's what my dad told us. They didn't want them to practice their religion. So they did things like that. They tried to stop everything.

They think they are the only ones that knew God. They did a lot of damage to the people. The native people, they always wanted Indians to pray their way. It was through them we lost a lot of our practices, religion and Societies. Because of the Churches and Indian Affairs. They used to said it was the Devil's work.

Some of the kids were still going to the city school. There were more kids going to the city schools. There were no schools on the reserve, until they started building the schools on the reserve. I taught at Saint Stevens for twenty-four years, teaching the Tsuut'ina culture and language. I taught grade seven, eight and nine, the Tsuut'ina students.

They were good at learning the language I even showed them how to write it and they picked up, really good. They did really good in that school, even in academics. I taught them the way of life of our culture and survival. A lot of the students that I taught went

through school, finished their grade twelve. One of them has there Bachelor Degree and Doctor Degree. He went to school in the United States, I don't know how many years. Another one went to Vancouver and took law. A lot of them tried to finish.

I taught them a lot about our native culture. What to respect, the ways of our life, our traditional ways, be responsible because things are too easy for young people. That's how they become successful, by learning about their language. They started to speak Tsuut'ina and they were even trying to teach their families, when they go home from school. So I think that's what made them successful and then I left that school.

I went to another school, Saint Benedict's. Back and forth, twice a week, then I quit and went to the culture program. The funding was through native culture. You know they help native programs. There are Indian students going to school like a lesson or something. I left the program. It kind of went downhill. I don't know what they were trying to teach the kids. The people the Calgary School Boards hired didn't know anything about the culture. They mostly were not Treaty. So it kind of fell apart.

Then they started to build schools on the reserve and I taught there for seven years. We taught the language. There were three of us. Two of us were in Chiila and another one at the high school. We taught Tsuut'ina culture and language to the students. The kids were doing good. If we lose our language, it would be really sad.

There are only a few who speak fluently you know just a few of us and even our leader's. Only one that can speak Tsuut'ina out of the thirteen of them. Old people used to say when you know language you're a very powerful person. You are a very powerful person when long ago our Chief and two councillors, they spoke fluently. They were very powerful even if they didn't go through school. They were powerful because they knew how to speak Tsuut'ina. Everything worked for them, they didn't depend on lawyers.

When I start writing Tsuut'ina, I practice every day. I practiced every day and I worked with different linguists from the University. So that's how I developed my material. I got tons and tons of material that I developed. I even made ten tapes on my language. We made ten videos with the University of Calgary it took us seven years to do it. It had a book with it too. We worked on that me and late Ronald Dodginghorse. He worked with me on that one. It was the people from the University, they got funding for it so we got ten video tapes on it and a book with it. We called it Nanagusja, means to "Revive".

I should have brought my books to show you guys but I didn't know what to bring. That's a lot of stuff I did to try and save the language. So that's what I did I finally left the language and just concentrated on doing my own thing.

I did research on the language and I did interviews with the elders. We did a little bit of traveling with the elders. Even the names of the foothills. You know our reserve, the old people would give certain areas names. I did all that.

There was that Sundance that was held at the army camp. It should be a sacred place but there must be other areas that are sacred. We tried to mark down graves we found on the reserve and mark them out. We don't know who they were. We even went across to the old grave site where Bullhead and all the old people's graves are situated.

Harley and I went there. There must have been a lot of the old people there that we don't know.

Not much of the history was taught. It should have been taught but I guess maybe they I don't know. Maybe the young people didn't think it was important to ask questions. Some white man wrote books about us but some of most of that stuff is garbage. It's not true. They just try to write those books to make money on our cultures. I know a lot of books that are not true. Well we lived it. We lived the history and they experienced it. Like I said it's hard to retrace all the history. Well those days there was no such thing as tape recorders. No such thing as cameras. It would have been saved. That's all I can say about it.

My oldest son heard on APTN that the Minister of State gave a lot of money to reserves to save their languages. The government should do something. I have all that material sitting there. I don't know what to do with it you know.

My husband and I are both from the same reserve. I worked in the city. He worked at Cow Camp. The Tsuut'ina ranching, that's where he worked with cattle. They shut down the Cow Camp. He was doing good. They were saying they weren't making money. They had really beautiful cattle. The reserve just sold them. They laid off all the workers. So for a while he didn't have a job. I had a job at the elementary school. Then for ten years he couldn't get a job.

He applied for that Cardinal Bus lines because they had the contract for the reserve to run the kids to city schools and the reserve school. So he worked for the Cardinal Bus line for three years.

Then Bruce offered him a job. I'm trying to teach him how to write the language. He said he didn't know it was so hard, I said you have to practice. So I was telling him I taught at the University for three weeks before Christmas. I taught eleven linguists from all over the world. They picked up really good so I might go back this fall.

I like teaching. I developed material for students and when the kids knew how to speak the language really good they used to help me draw pictures. Then put in the Tsuut'ina words with the picture. I tried to teach them how to write the language.

A lot of them were trying to translate some of the stories for the students. That's really hard work you know. Translating stories it takes me about a month. It's really hard. You have to have time alone and not to go to work. A place where you won't be disturbed. Some of the old stories I tried to translate them into our language.

Teaching the students I had one class room in the city, one big class room. I taught them every day. Teaching different topics or use words that we use in everyday life. They were learning to write it. I read them a short story about our Tsuut'ina. I made them make books. I made them imagine the story that they wrote then draw the pictures to the story. Then I showed them how to write the story underneath because some of the native students were really good artists. They were very good artists and very smart too and they were really good athletes.

So I taught them the Tsuut'ina alphabets and then I gave them a word so they can write it. To use the alphabet and to pronounce alphabet and the word. So they picked it up pretty good. I used to bring elders into my programs to visit the students. Now they are all gone. They all left us but it was really interesting to teach the kids.

We had a big class room and on the walls we had all the language pinned up. They just studied it you know grilled themselves every day.

When they were in my class, they had their own binders to gather whatever they learned in my language class. They put it in their binders. They had their own books. They said some of the parents they still have their books. They're hanging on to them. Don't ever give it out to anybody I told them. Don't lose I'll hang on to it because some day we might lose it. So one mother said that their kids still have the books. That must be about twenty-four years ago and they still have it.

Long ago we had good communication. That must have been in 1985 to 1990 there was really good communication in those days we were only getting money from the government and from the Army lease. Nowadays it's changed.

The big changes is that, they don't respect what we are trying to do or say and teach them. They seem like they don't want to learn anything. The changes just in life they are so different. Communication is so poor. It's not like long ago people used to really communicate. Young people their society is so disrespectful they don't respect anything.

They changed the date of the Pow Wow. That was our days at the end of month that's how the old people. That's what they set their hearts on, the very last weekend of July.

Our ways are so lost there really losing their responsibility and their respect. They really don't see but the changes in the reserve is the money. The things are changing for the people, like that casino. We had no money. We got a new Chief and then they wanted us to vote for certain things.

So they got that casino, things like that started to improve. The money is used for houses, roads and education. Today our kids, like my kids had a hard time. They couldn't finish school because the cost of living. They weren't getting help. Today they are getting help With the cost of living, to go to school and finish. Housing they are building a lot of houses today from that casino.

I don't know if the roads are improving. The thing is, like I said communication it is so poor. We don't know what the government is doing. We don't know how much money they are giving to the reserve. There are no band meetings on regular basis. No information you know from now and then. Even the with casino right there. It's disrespectful to the people that they are not being open to the people. I know there were a few deaths and they couldn't have a band meeting. They are supposed to have three or four meetings in a year but they never kept up. So there are so many things wrong because of poor communication with this generation. I don't know if it's going to get worse or better.

The younger generation it's hard to say what they want. The only thing I find in the younger generation is a lot of them are getting married so young. So young, then they run into problems with their social life. They are not responsible and not ready for marriage.

They are not adults and don't know about marriage. They are getting into it too fast and too soon. They don't know where to go, I tell you because there are a lot of young people nowadays. I don't know some of them any more just the kids I taught. I know now they are all grown up. It's really hard to say what the young people they don't know what they want. It would be nice to really know what they want, but the way it looks like they are trying to keep up with society. Society is so different, it is so fast and their trying to keep up with it.

They don't know how to survive. That's where native culture comes in. Learn how to survive when you know your culture. Nowadays the younger generation don't know anything. They can't seem to survive and they are not responsible. They don't seem to know how to handle marriage.

There was no drinking. It was forbidden on the reserve. In those days Indians couldn't go into a bar. You couldn't drink on the reserve that I remember. Still it was sneaked in.

Drugs is getting to be problem. In our days we were young we didn't know about drugs. We never knew nothing about drugs never heard of it. A lot of changes like drugs because we just live across the street from the city. So a lot of that is easy to get for them. I really don't know what they want the younger generation. I really can't speak for them. It's because they don't know their identity. They don't know their native culture. They don't know where they're coming from. They don't know who they are. As for ourselves we were taught that long ago. We knew who we were. Where we come from. Today it's not taught to the younger generation.

It bothers me but it's just changes. It changes so much for the reserve. People change so much but they really do not have Tsuut'ina identity. Trying to hang on to what we got left. We are really increasing. The thing is, it's really dangerous because we are getting short of land. They are not thinking. That's what is scary.

The east end is getting crowded we got our place at the west end of the reserve. It's really good. It's quiet up there under the foot hills. So I'm happy I moved far up west. They are not thinking about where they're going to put their house.

Our reserve is so small because a lot of people got a lot of land. They are not going to share. I brought that up in a band meeting. Nowadays families have to make their kids build their house on their land because some people have big lands. Quite a few are living in the city. I think close to three hundred are living in the city but the reserve is paying for their rent. Which is good because they owe them a house. The government owe them a house. So there is a lot of people that still need a house. So I don't know it's kind of scary where they are going to put all those houses they are trying to build.

We never even heard sickness like cancer, even sugar diabetes. Now it seems to be a lot of the people with diabetics and cancer. Even the young people have cancer, young people with diabetes. It's just the food they eat.

We don't exercise, don't even walk half a mile. We don't even play sports like baseball. In our days we played baseball through the summer. We walked, even to the river to swim. Things like that we did. Now, kids are putting on weight. They really don't exercise. That's why a lot of them are coming out with strange sicknesses that I never heard about. It's so sad. A lot of young people live on junk food that's what damaging a lot of young people.

A grandmother and her grandchild, she was carrying her grandchild on her back. That child saw some kind of stick poking out of ice. He was whining to his grandmother. So his grandmother started to chop to get that thing out of the ice. It was some kind of horn, an animal horn. When she was chopping with something sharp ice broke open. Some of the people that were in the middle went down, some went across. Some ran back. That's how some of us separated. So that's the story my grandmother told me, Daisy Otter.

When I was working with Harley Crowchild. The lake is called Buffalo Lake where it happened. He wanted to go up there and the three of us spent the night up there. Camped out there. He heard that somebody told him that you can hear dogs barking at night. He said he was telling us about Buffalo Lake. He wanted to go up there and experience it. I don't know what happen to him but I think he chickened out. We didn't go. That's where it happened at Buffalo Lake.

Bullhead selected this reserve. He wanted to select where there was a river flowing through the land and where there was game. So that people can survive on the game. That's why he chose our reserve.

He didn't want his people to live near Siksika because they were always at war with the Siksika. So he didn't want to live there with his people so he moved them. That's what my dad told me. They were at war with Siksika just over some crazy thing, my dad was saying.

Broken Knife was a Tsuut'ina. They had a war in Saskatchewan. My mom told me. They were having a war with the Crees. I don't know what happen they killed him. When they killed him I heard mom telling me that he turned into a rock. He had powers within him. That's what she was told me. He turned into a rock a black rock when they killed him.

My mom and dad went up to grade two. Like I said, his mom took my dad out of school. That's why he only went up to grade two. She did talk too much about the schools. They used to tell us about the missionaries and the teachers. They went and they ate all the good food. They give the kids the leftover food. That is what my dad and mom told me. They ate all the good food. That food was supposed to go the students. The mothers used to take the babies down by the agency to see the doctor but I don't remember too much about Doctor Murray.

I never had a priest for a teacher or a nun for a teacher. There has been so many of them, different ones. There was so many different preachers at the churches. There were a lot of them they kept changing. They always wanted to do things their way. They didn't want our people to practice our religion. They really brain washed our people. They were really good at that.

I didn't know anything about Indian religion until I married Gerald. I heard stories from my dad about my grandfather. I didn't know anything about Indian religion. That's the way their attitude was. They never really didn't like our ways they really destroyed it. But it's making a comeback.

Mostly our distribution day that's one good thing. Each people gets money from the Nation before Stampede and before Christmas. I think it's because of the casino brings in money. If it wasn't for the casino we would have been in short of funding. We wouldn't be like that today. Since the time when my oldest brother Tom Runner was in I don't know what's going on. When they were in council they had band meetings. They showed everything on a black board to show the people how each department spent their money. They always asked the people you know if they should increase salaries. Today they do that on their own without asking the people. They give themselves the big "income". You can that disrespectful.

We are with the elders program, some of them don't come to the meetings any more they way some of them told me is that nothing comes out of it. The leaders don't listen to us. They acted like they know it all and the elders say what's the use? They don't listen to our concerns. That's what they say so a lot of elders that don't show up. There's just a few that show up. The concerns are sent to council. I don't know if it gets to council. We never get an answer back. Quite a few have just gave up. It's just a waste of their time. The band don't take the elders seriously. I mean elders are supposed to be the advisors. They rather go to the white culture or the lawyers to for telling them what to do.

The schools on the reserve I found out that the education is really poor. The city school has the better education for the kids to get is somewhere faster, its government and

Indian Affairs. It's really poor the education I was surprised with some of the grade three. When I was there the grade three or the grade fours didn't even know how to write their names. It was sad. The education is really poor but it's the Indians Affairs doing.

A lot of kids got pulled out of those schools and put in the city because of education. Some of them are surprised there are graduating faster out there. The poor kids there are just getting passed. Some of them don't even know how to read and write. They are just trying to make themselves look good. They are just passing them. The poor kids don't even know.

When they get older trying to get a job they can't. It was tough for the kids. They had to work hard and their homework. I had that class room in the noon hour and they would work on their education. They would work on their noon hour and that how most of them got through school because they really had to work hard for it.



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