

Watson Peck

Interviewed by Cindy Graham & Chris Callaghan November 15, 2000



Q: OK Watson, we're going to start with just a couple basic questions, but then we can let you direct the whole thing.

A: OK. Number one.

Q: Number one. What is your full name?

A: Watson Arnold Peck.

Q: Watson Arnold Peck. And who were your parents?

A: Ah, Emma Jane Hinxman and Levi Peck.

Q: Emma Jane?

A: Emma Jane Hinxman.

Q: Hinxman.

A: My father married her. Levi Joshua Peck married Emma Jane Hinxman.

Q: And where did they originally live, each of them?

A: My father grew up here, and my mother down the Landsdowne Road, right down on the right. The house is still there.

Q: OK. Do you happen to remember any names of your grandparents?

A: My grandfather was Joshua Peck. He built the house here.

Q: This house?

A: Yeah. In 1865 or thereafter.

Q: And what about on your mother's side? Your grandparents on your mother's side? Do you have any recollection of them?

A: Ah, my memory isn't all that good, but ah....Hinxman....I guess I need my brother in law or my sister to help me, or my wife. She's my memory. She should be here. She's in Digby.

[Interruption, checking and fixing mikes]

A: Well I worked in the Power House twenty seven years.

Q: Oh, we were discussing that on the way over here, if you had a regular old career, or if your life was just one big adventure.

A: My father worked in the Power House, the old Power House. The old undershot bucket wheel, built in 1892, Bear River. And we pumped the water down to Digby....pumped power down to Digby. He worked there from 1919 to '27. And then they shut it down and had power comin' down the Valley. And I got.... then Oakie got a job there, and I got a job there. So three generations have worked in the water power house right here in Bear River, which is sort of unusual. Three generations.

Q: So did the Power House coincide with the whole beginning of having electricity around here?

A: Now I remember when the first....before we had lights, we had candles and oil lamps, and I had to study my lessons with a lamp or a candle. I remember when they first lit up power here. No telephone, no lights at first. But those days were in the twenties....twenty three, twenty four, twenty five....in the twenties. I can't pin it down exactly but....

Q: And was that like hydroelectric power from the beginning?

A: Water power, yeah. We only had lights. We didn't have any....anything else.

Q: No.

A: Just lights. Them big long bulbs with the pin in the bulb....you've seen 'em....with wires in 'em. You've seen the light bulb? You see 'em in a museum now.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. You screw them in and they last quite awhile.

Q: So with the advent of electricity, I don't..... Canoeing, there's....I've always noticed there's these flowage lakes up here. You know, they're doing all this damming, Nova Scotia Power, right around here. So it must have changed the whole landscape when they started damming.....

A: Oh sure. It dammed up and dammed up, and it upset the nature according to the First Nations, but they like power too, so they get their power, water power. They wanted a....they wanted to get a new power house. A while ago, they wanted it. But no, that's overdoin' it. (Sigh) But, next.

Q: OK. Ahm, we're going to go, sort of chronologically, go back as far as we can go. When....tell us about being born in this house.

A: Well I was the youngest of ten, and they said my brother ran down the hill to telephone the doctor. When he got back I was born. So my father did the, whatever. And ah, I was in that room, the little room there. And ah, so ah, I grew up here and ah, we had cows and oxen and horses and sheep and hens and chickens and pigs and all those things that they....everyone did their own in those days. And when I was six I went to school, down to Oakdene School. Walked every day of course, home at noon, back again after dinner. Played ball on the school grounds. Then later on we had a rink over here, played hockey and.... Oh, that's the way, that's growin' up in those day, in horse and wagon days you know. A car was a luxury. Anyone got a ride in a car on the old dirt roads, my goodness, that was something you know.

Q: So you were the youngest of ten children?

A: I was the youngest of ten.

Q: And how many in your family are still alive? You have a sister?

A: Two sisters only. One next door, Mrs. Wilbur Parker.

Q: Is her name Jenny?

A: Jenny Parker.

Q: She's still alive, yes.

A: And one in Boston. Well my mother lost two young ones, ah, one at two or three years and one at several months. Ruth and Oakley. Oakley was the first one. She lost Oakley in 1896. He was born in....or '98. She was married in 1896....

Q: Wow

A:and Oakley was born in 1898. And I named one of my sons Oakley. He lives on top of the hill. And my wife had ten pregnancies and eight children. Seemed like history repeated itself. She lost one at birth and one at seven months, and she could tell you all about that. But then ah, I went to school down here at Oakdene from 19.... Ah, I finished in 1933, eleven grades....ah....

Q: You were born in 1916?

A: 1916. 19.... When I was six....

Q: Around '22.

A: 1922 I started school. And '33, that was eleven grades. Yeah, and ah, I liked school. I was awful sad when they boarded up that old school and sent them all off to Digby and Annapolis in buses. We tried to save the building, tried to save and save....finally we did it for this and that, and Oakie plays there. And, I got strapped one day. There was an old man walkin' up the hill, and people saw it, and the boys were throwin' snowballs at him. Well I threw one at him just for the fun of it, and he turned up and got it right in the eye, and I mister, they run and told the principal, Mr. Joe Steadman (?) and he strapped me, I think it was six times on each hand but.... I didn't cry out loud. I was in grade eight. But sometimes we had to stay after school and write lines, "I will not talk in school" around twenty five times in chalk, and then write twenty five more. So I got so I could write pretty good. I think you can understand my writing, even without a thumb. School days, good old school days. Well we had a high school orchestra!

Q: Yes?

A: Mrs. Clarke....the Clarkes were big dealers in Bear River you know. The Clarkes, the McIntyres, they built the pulp mill and all that. So she said, "Bring your instruments." So I had a little old violin, and Ted Miller brought his saxophone. You know Ted Miller in Smiths Cove?

Q: No.

A: He was in my grade. Ted Miller, he can tell you some stories. Smiths Cove.

Q: Yeah?

A: And ah, and (Lanfest ?) Harris, the trumpet.

Q: Who played the trumpet?

A: (Lanfest ?) Harris.

Q: (Lanfest ?).

A: You don't remember him?

Q: No.

A: He lives up in Truro now. His father was the...had a drugstore.

Q: Mm hmm.

A: So we had two trumpets and four or five violins and a piano. Louise Harris played the piano. And we had a...we practiced and ah... and we had a concert. We had a concert once in a while, and I'm telling you, I loved that. Roy Gehue...no...Roy Gehue, who lived down on the River Road on the right there. That house is empty...no there's a car there.

Q: What's his last name? Geroux?

A: Roy Gehue.

Q: Oh yes, yeah.

A: He was born in Boston. He sat next to me and he had a three quarter size violin. And I'd try to help...once in a while I'd help him tune it. And I never forget...when the war came he went and joined the American Army...Airforce, and crashed in France. And ah, his wife...or his sister...his sister gave me the violin, that little violin. And I gave it to my granddaughter, Janet. That's Joy's oldest girl. My oldest girl's oldest girl, Janet. She played beautifully...plays in church and teaches violin. And then later on she sold it to somebody. I'll never forget those days. I loved it. I love music, gospel music and...not rock, but all the good music.

Q: Yeah. Was it your mother or father that instilled...

A: My mother played the, played organ in church all her life. And my...everyone in the family played in church, and I played violin. Everyone of our family.

Q: How did you learn how to play the violin?

A: My mother taught...oh no...I didn't take a lesson on the violin, but...organ, they all played organ. My mother taught organ to my wife... Anyway, how'd I learn to play violin?

Q: Yeah.

A: My mother taught...oh no...I didn't take a lesson on the violin, but...organ, they all played organ. My mother taught organ to my wife... Anyway, how'd I learn to play violin?

Q: Yeah.

A: Ah, by watching others and ah...I went downtown one day and there was a fellow there that was teachin' violin. And I took him ah...let's see, he wanted, for how many lessons, ten or fifteen lessons... I took him some deer meat and six dollars, and I took one lesson, or whatever. He showed me how...and he never come back. I never had anymore. And I was huntin' in the woods there. I've been a guide for...since I was eighteen. Woods guide. We have a camp back at Whitesands Lake. You ever been back there?

Q: No, but I just read Bud Inglis's book, and I'm going there.

A: Whose?

Q: Bud Inglis.

A: Oh, Bud Inglis. What book is that?

Q: Ahm, I forget the name of it, but it's a canoe...a canoe adventure book

A: Oh yeah, good. OK, what else? School days. And then ah, oh canoe racing at Lake William and the cup and all that. But we used to have, Bear River Cherry Carnival, greased pole...walk out and fall in. I got five or six of them in six years. And canoe racing and tub racing and... Bear River Cherry Carnival's quite famous.

Q: Mm hmm. They still do the greased pole.

A: Yeah. It's getting longer. It got so long this year they decided to cut it off next year because it's too whiffy. Eddie put...Eddie...we gave 'em the lumber, the stick every year and...but ah... Life is a greasy pole too.

C: How does the greased pole event work for someone who doesn't know?

A: Well ah, bare feet. Three trips on your bare feet, and if they don't...no one wins the flag, hundred dollar flag, you can put socks on. And every time someone takes a little more grease off. And there's a boy named Dukeshire, that he's got balance. He's won six or seven in a row.

Q: In recent years?

A: Yeah. And this last year he didn't...he couldn't quite take the flag, but he got the prize for being the last one over.

C: Is the pole in water?

A: Oh no. It's up over the water.

C: Oh, I see.

A: The tide of course, we depend on the tide for our...

Q: But you fall in the water when you fall off.

A: Yeah. It's a sure duckin'.

C: And what do they grease it with?

A: Ah, just shortening. Shortening. Eddie goes out and greases it. And they go out and then start walkin' and the first walker of course got the most grease. But they have those around a few places, not too many. I'm gettin' a little hoarse. I need a

Q: Want me to get you water?

A: No, no, no. A thing of juice

Q: Want some juice?

A: I got some juice out there but....

C: I'll get it. Would you like me to get you a glass?

A: No, we'll keep her goin' a while.

Q: OK. So as the youngest of ten children, how do you think that affected the way your life turned out?

A: Well the older ones helped the younger ones. And I can't picture it being the oldest one. My brother was born in 1899. He.....

Q: The oldest, the first?

A: Yeah. Oldest brother, yeah. And he worked down in New York on a streetcar. He ah, drove a streetcar on Seventh Avenue. And ah, 1933 was it, the Depression.....

Q: Yes.

A: People were jumpin' out of buildings and.... He ah, came home. He drank but never smoked. Now I never had a cigarette in my mouth or took a strong drink except Communion wine or whatever. Anyway, he got acquainted with (Jonah ?) Sanford, the rumrunners. You heard of them?

Q: Yeah.

A: And, he built a still down in the pasture. Told the boys it was a sheep pen. And he had a big bucket....big barrel in the basement here. And he went up on the Hill, Indian Hill and cut wood and paid 'em, an got wood, and had the thing goin' here. Well anyway, one day somebody told on him. And they found his still and they caught him and they fined him two hundred dollars I guess. A lot of money in them days. And the police took....burned it there, burned it down I guess. Tore it down, took the tools. But those were rum runnin' days, I'm tellin' you before Prohib...ah, that was Prohibition.

Q: Yeah.

A: Now it's drink., everybody drinks.

Q: It's still illegal to have a still I think.

A: That's right. But I think people have 'em. They have marijuana plants grow in the back pasture.

Q: Yeah.

A: We don't though. And they find them with a helicopter. Isn't that something?

C: Yes.

A: Marijuana is a great plant. They built rope out of it years ago. The old fashioned rope. I had some of it. And I've heard of kids smokin' rope but I didn't know what they were tryin' to get.....

C: I think they'd have to smoke a lot of rope before they'd get any kind of high. What kind of liquor would they get out of a still? Would it be like vodka? Was it a clear liquor?

A: No, it was ah, moonshine.

C: Moonshine.

A: Ninety five percent pure.

C: Yes?

A: I don't know how they did it and I'm not interested.

C: Do you know what they made it out of?

A: Oh, beets, or....they cooked beets on the stove here and....

C: Right.

A: I don't know any details.

Q: Did your brother do this when this was still your parents' property?

A: Oh yeah, right here.

Q: Yeah.

A: When....we were married back in 1939....or thirty....in the thirties....late thirties.

Q: Is when you were married?

A: Yeah, we was married in '39.

Q: What is you wife's name?

A: Frances Elizabeth Parker.

Q: Frances Elizabeth Parker?

A: And ah, I remember my first little job was pickin' potato bugs, five cents a hundred. That was before I went to school, so I could count to a hundred before I went to school maybe. I don't...I forget...I can't pin that down to a day. Anyway ah, everybody in our family went to Boston to work. So, that's something. I went to the sport shows all over the United States. Log rolling and canoe tilting, wood chopping and sawing. Sportsmens shows. Well at the...I met her the night the old school burned. Ah, we see a fire down there. I ran down and Oakdene School was on fire. They had no fire department. They got down the brook and started a little rain, a little squirt of water and...(Pistols ?) Brook they called it I guess, and then the church, the Church of England next to it caught fire, couldn't stop it. We kept throwing snowballs and carrying water. And the wind was up the hill slightly. If the wind had been down the hill strongly, it would have cleaned Bear River. It would have. Would have been no way to stop it. It has done that. Chicago Fire, you've heard....

Q: Yep.

A: Anyway, I'll never forget that night. But that was 19... That was February....on a Friday night, February 28, 1933 or '34. '33. But in the spring of 1934, someone come up from Boston and said we want to make...take and put the outdoor show indoors. Guides Meet. So we went down to the old Boston Garden. They had built a great big tank, two hundred feet by sixty. We had three canoes race....three in a canoe.... three canoes race at a time, and canoe tilting and log rolling and rough and tumble on the raft.... And I'll never forget the....there was five in each canoe, canoe tilt, and we're drifting together very slowly, and everybody was quiet. Five in a.... you know....five canoes on each side....

Q: Yeah.

A: Drifting together for canoe tilting. You've seen that where the....? Never seen it?

Q: No.

A: Well there was a big ball on a pole. And I lost all four of mine.... and all these balls kept coming and I said, oh yeah. But I got a hundred and twenty nine dollars. I was second in log roll, and I felt like the richest boy in Boston. In 1934, we worked for....we were helpin' load pulp boats down here for ten cents an hour. Whewww.

C: Yes? Big money.

A: And my wife did errands for her aunt across the road, and she gave her twenty five cents for the year. And she was happy to get that twenty five cents. She could go downtown and buy....you could buy a big ice cream for a nickel in them days. Oh my, in this life, how it's changed.

Q: So how did you field your first woodsmen's, sportsmen's team? You were working in a pulp mill?

A: No, I never worked in a pulp mill.

Q: OK, where did your first team come from?

A: Team?

Q: How did you field your first team to go to these sports shows?

A: Oh ah....

Q: How did it all originate for you?

A: Well my brother got the team together. There was about twenty....how many of us.....twenty four, twenty five to go to Boston Garden. We had that two years. That was competition. My brother won it both years. But after that sports show was just show business.

Q: Yeah?

A: And....fall in the water, and everybody laugh, and get wet and.... And Cleveland you know, and New York, Baltimore. And Kansas City, Toledo, ah, San Francisco, San Diego, and a place right near Hollywood, ah, Gilmore Stadium. That was Hollywood, I call it. And we made a movie there. And we got twenty five dollars for it. And the fact that the guy who....North American Champion, (Baincaster ?) or something, he wanted a hundred and seventy five dollars and they wouldn't pay him, so the show never went to market. Now can you beat that? I'm going to sue Hollywood. Twenty five dollars, big dollars though. But I've visited cousins all over the United States. I have cousins mostly in Boston, but down in Florida, and California, British Columbia....relatives, nieces, and nephews.

Q: So it started out as something everybody who worked....was connected to the woods somehow....a lot of people would be doing the competition? It was sort of their....

A: Yeah, in Boston, you mean. Yeah, Maine guides, and New Hampshire and....they weren't from all over North America, like now they have things that....Hank Peters, you know, you....sports shows, small tanks, big enough for two canoes. But they have three or four of them on the road usually. Not quite as often as it used to be, but.... But Phil Scott from Barrington, nine time world log rolling champ, he's out in Cincinnati now, or else got home recently....still at it. Now I was fifty years old, and he was about the youngest. We had a....in 1965 we heard Canada was going to celebrate an anniversary, a hundred years....

Q: Yeah.

A: So in 1965, Dave Caldwell, over in Liverpool, he got us together. He got a canoe made in Fredericton, twenty five foot canoe, something different, and six in a canoe. And we practiced. We went from Liverpool up to ah, up to Oak Island. Oak Island. We saw Oak Island. Lindsay was only ten years old, went with us. And we paddled for practice. We weren't used to big rivers. So in 1966, we went way out to ah British Columbia, ah, Stuart Lake, Stuart River, and the Chilko and the Fraser. Eight days. Eight or nine days down that big river. And we were seventh about every day. Seventh, seventh, seventh. And one day, the last day.... of course the night before the next day's race they give us a talkin' you know....now you're goin' here, you're goin' there, the tide, the wind.... So we listened and we heard the (inaudible word) so we went this way, and we were third on the last day of the race in Victoria. "Nova Scotia! Who are you fellows?" We were seventh every day. But Manitoba was always ahead. They was from Flin Flon, you know. And Alberta and British Columbia. And then Saskatchewan and Ontario. And there was no canoes from Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland. We could beat ah, we could beat New Brunswick and Northwest Territories. Yeah, we could beat them every day. Anyway, any rate, after that was all over, two weeks later....two weeks later the canoes had to come by...to Montreal. Then we went down to New York. Now, that was 1966. And Eddie Crouse was one of our....he's still alive. He had to go home. We got another substitute. And then we started down the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain, and down the Hudson to New York, Statue of Liberty.

Q: All in this twenty five foot canoe?

A: Oh yeah. And we met Mayor Lindsay.

Q: Yes?

A: He was the mayor. And my boy's name was Lindsay. And ah, it was common, every night we stopped, they gave a paddle to someone....the mayor, you know. So....I forgot to tell you, the first....when I first started the race, the first half mile, I lost my paddle. But we had one spare. And I never lost any more paddles. And Mr. Caldwell ordered another one from New York....from Quebec. So we got the extra paddle way late. A stiff long paddle. It was too stiff to paddle with. And I got the names of all those boys on that paddle, both sides, all the teams. It's the only one like it in the world.

Q: Yeah.

A: And Mr. Sanford up here is redoing the names a little bit, makin' 'em clearer. And we have it down in the windmill in the tourist bureau every summer.

Q: Oh.

A: And last summer there was some people there from Alberta said, "I knew those guys that's names on that paddle." Now you can't beat that? However, we finished that part of the race. And I was working in the Power House and I got off for that...that month of August. And I could have got off without pay, to go the next year. But I was fifty years old. I was the oldest one in the race. And Phil Scott was the youngest, and he's still at it. By all means, go to, go to Phil Scott in Barrington and get his interview. And ah, so that was that race, and I was written up some of that. I got something the other day from Saskatchewan. Three pupils in Saskatchewan University are doin' a story. They want everyone to write up their story of the race, and ah....

Q: What was the name of the race? Did it have a name?

A: Centennial Canoe Race.

Q: OK.

A: Centennial. Voyageurs Centennial Canoe Race.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I think someone made a video. I'm tryin' to get that.

C: I bet ya. I was just thinking....

A: That would be somethin'. 'Cause that was ah, that was from....how many days? Eighty two days, eighty four days. And they paddled down Lake Winnipeg.... Oh my goodness, what a story.

C: Yes.

A: And it should be written up. It should be history, Canada's history. 'Cause it's the only one like it you know. And I wish I'd a gone....whoever finished got a thousand dollars. Phil Scott finished and....but his brother had to come home. Phil Scott and....anyway....yeah.

Q: And you say your son Lindsay was.... took part in it?

A: No. He was ten years old when we practiced. Just took that one little trip to Oak Island.

Q: Ok, yeah.

A: And Oak Island treasure....that's a story you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: A mystery. They spent millions there but never found the treasure. Strange.

Q: Do you think the treasure's there?

A: Well, everyhting points to it but.... You know Bear River has some pirate stories. My goodness. You know where the old Advent Church is?"

Q: Yes.

A: It's empty now. It's a workshop. The Kemptons.... related to Annie Kempton. You've heard her story?

Q: Yeah.

A: Lived there. And one night they heard digging outside, and they went out in the morning, and there were coins layin' on the ground. Someone had dug a treasure. Huge trees grew there....a great marker. OK, that's one story. And my....you know...you've heard of the Golden Girls? Henderson....Goldie and Beryl. You've heard of them?

Q: No.

A: We call them the Golden Girls. Well their father was our preacher, Mr. Henderson. He told us in Sunday school class one day, that my grandfather, or a couple, four of 'em heard there was a treasure buried down the river. You know where Raymond's Point is?

Q: No.

A: Raymond's Point points out in the river a mile above the bridge. Bear River Bridge.

Q: OK, yeah.

A: Right across from that, up on the hill, they were supposed to go, if they, you know, were goin', which they did. Go at midnight and not speak a word and start digging. Now that's the story. I'm not exaggerating. Which they did. So they got down there and someone hit a plank. "Ah, there's our treasure!" And then they looked out on the water and there was the pirates under some rawhide sails, and some of 'em comin' after 'em. They ran home. Now that's a story that....I never exaggerate. And then up....there's another place.... oh, down here, down here on the flat, someone got a....was diggin' one night down on the Lower Road, and they saw a ghost comin' down (Inaudible name) Hill and that scared him away. That's three stories that....gold. We need a treasure....we need a detector to go find some gold. Ahh...what next?

C: I'd like....I'm interested in where you learned all these woodsman skills about, you know, canoeing and log rolling.

A: Well my brother did that before. He was thirteen years older, so I copied him. We went down to the old mill pond and learned to roll a log and.... Everyone was, everything was by hand in them days, choppin', sawin' and ah.... Yeah my brother was a champ, so I tried to catch up to him.

C: What was his name?

A: Eber Peck.

C: E-v-e-r?

A: E-b-e-r.

C: E-b-e-r.

A: He died in British Columbia.

Q: And he was the first born child in your family?

A: No. Avard, Avard.

Q: Avard?

A: Avard, EberAvard, Eber, Jenny, (Hetty ?), Florence....Yeah. And, let's see....

Q: Was your father interested in those kind of things also?

A: No, no. He ah, he was always on his knees on the garden. He grew quite a lot of onions to sell. He sold apples. Five hundred barrels of apples one year, he produced. And Nova Scotia sent one million barrels to England one year.

C: My goodness.

A: Back in the twenties. And the Nova Scotia Gravenstein, the old fashion Gravenstein, you can't beat the flavour.

C: I agree.

A: And the old two and a half bushel barrels. They made barrels here in Bear River.

Q: Yeah?

A: And they made nail kegs for Sydney Steel. My brother in law worked there down at the mill here. They were little nail kegs....they're collectors items now. They put nails in 'em. Now everything is cardboard boxes, you know. But ah....then one day in ah, what year was it....1976. Got a letter from Ottawa. Wanted to give me a....something in Ottawa. And ah, free trip, my wife and I. So, we went, and there was different ones. They lined you up and gave me a medal called the Order of Canada.

C: Oh!

Q: Oh, you're a member of the Order of Canada?

A: Yes. Hmm hmm.

Q: Wow!

A: They gave one to the old mother....mother in England [the Queen Mother] the other day, a hundred years old.

Q: Yeah.

C: That's right.

A: Gave her that.

Q: Yeah.

C: You're in distinguished company.

A: Oh well...

Q: Terry Fox, one of my heroes.

A: Yeah. And then another invitation, up the Annapolis Valley, the Queen of England, in Wolfville. My wife and I had a luncheon there. And then another time in Ottawa, the Queen came to Ottawa, and for athletes....Nancy Garrapick, champion swimmer....I got her autograph that day....

Q: Yes

A: And this Mason girl, sat next to her, right next to the Queen, and lived in Halifax. I'll show you the autograph in a minute if I can find it. And ah, that other fellow there, he was there. Ahh, ahh, ahh, I forget his name. But there was a lot of famous people there. Well I got some autographs. I didn't sit at the same table, I wasn't that big. Anyway, I went down and got a few autographs. And ah, the Queen was right about from here to you, and I....and Nancy Garrapick....and I said, "Does the Queen give autographs?" And she [the Queen] said, "I'm afraid not." I'll never forget that. She heard me, and she answered me, but I didn't ask her. And that's her accent. I'm afraid not. I'm afraid not. Oh my.

Q: That would be against protocol.

C: That's a good story. When you were saying that the competitions evolved onto show business, would you go every year then for a number of....?

A: Oh yes, it was part of my livin'.

C: Yes?

A: Yeah, before I got my job in the Power House in 1952. Yeah, from 1932, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38, '39, and the war's comin', '40, '41, '42....the trains were loaded and goin' to the west, goin' to the South....goin' to the Pacific, South Pacific. We stopped in '42, that was the last show. Didn't have many people there, but I got paid just the same.

Q: Did you get paid to make an appearance or did you get paid to (inaudible)?

A: Doin' our act. Log rolling and canoe tilting.

Q: Yep.

A: And Kansas City and New Orleans and.... New Orleans, the week after the big....when the streets are loaded with trash....you know....New Orleans....

Q: Mardi Gras.

A: New Orleans they call it. Mardi Gras. And ah, you see, you work about a nine day show for two hundred and twenty five dollars and pay their own....sometimes get a free ride with the crew. And ah, where was I? Twenty....'42....Then forty....after the war was over.... Oh I got called in the army. I had three little boys home. Roddy, Eddie and Oakie. Joy on the way. Called in the army and joined the airforce. Went to Toronto, Manning Depot.... Left, right. Left right. Get those arms up. Then ah....

Q: How old were you then? I should be able to figure that out.

A: Ah, 1943 I got called.

Q: '16 to '43....

A: Sixteen?

C: When you were born

Q: From 1916 to '43.

A: Twenty six, twenty seven.

Q: In your late twenties.

C: Twenty seven. Twenty seven years old.

A: And ah, they was building Cornwallis. They was building Greenwood. Everybody war, war, war, you know. Or they had built them.... Oh my goodness. Anyway, after Toronto, it went to Montreal to learn aircraft rec....to recognize which one, you know. And then, up around Truro....Mount....Mount....another month up there training. Ah, what's the name of that place.... And then Mont Jolie, Quebec, where I took my aerial gunnery. It was new to me. So the pilot, the gunner, and a Browning machine gun, a heavy stiff one with a tracer.... You could see where it was going. So we would get off, take off the ground. Another plane would take off with a long sleeve. You were supposed to shoot holes in there. So, up we go. "Gunner to pilot, gunner to pilot, ready for take off;" is all I had to say. We got up there and I'd try to hit that thing. You're supposed to allow for bullet yaw and trajectory. High and ahead of it. Naturally, that's understandable. So I hit it three or four times....see the red ones goin' in the correct ring. So I finished that training. One day I went up and the old Browning machine gun would only fire one shot at a time. Had to crank it. Usually it was just, "brrrrrrrrr." And then another time I went up, it was....well the shells were going like that. I thought, that's an awful wore out barrel. So cancel that. I'll never forget those few days. I got word my daughter was born. Joy, my fourth child. Wonderful girl. She plays, teaches....she teaches piano and organ, played in church all her life. Lexie the same thing. She lives in....Lexie lives in Mill Village over near Liverpool. Joy lives in New Glasgow. Anyway I got home in 1945. The war was over. (continued on next page)

And every time we have an armistice day you know....tough, tough. Oh my, lest we forget. What a fool that Hitler was. One man. How could anyone be so.....so many people died, innocent, thousands.....still dyin' in a lot of places.

Q: So did you actually go overseas also?

A: No I didn't get overseas. It was too late.

Q: Yep.

A: Well if I hadn't a had the three boys, they'd have called me sooner.

Q: Yep.

A: So they told me, do up a little work, sell your cow or....what I did....my two hundred dollar cow. However, that's history. My goodness. This century, my goodness.

Q: And you were also born....Can you remember the aftermath of World War One at all, being born in 1916?

A: No, oh no. But my wife's uncle, Leslie Rice was in Passchendale and Vimy Ridge. Survived, came home, had a camp back in the woods. Guided American hunters and fishermen. I knew him well. And he wasn't too well physically later in life. Went out in the (inaudible word) and shot himself.

Q: Ahh.

A: His wife was always....no more. Well what a shame.

Q: Well it's tough if you've been physically active all your life.....

A: Yeah, well gardening, organic gardening.... Oh, I met J.R. Rodale, editor of Organic Gardening and Prevention. I met him down there in Emaus, Pennsylvania.

Q: Pennsylvania, yeah.

A: 'Cause I went there to a sports show and one day I said I wanted to go home and on the way and visit him. 'Cause I read his first....way back in 1936....I was twenty. My mother died in '36. And I went up to the door and, "Oh just a moment, he'll be out." Having a cup of tea. Well my goodness, a health nut don't drink tea. Anyway, he apologized. He was havin' a drink of tea. And a black lady came to the door and we had a little talk, and I got his autograph. Don't know where it is now but.... That was J. R. Rodale.

Q: And now it's an empire.

A: Boy he started the ball a rollin'. They came all over the world to see an organic garden.

Q: Yeah.

A: Recyclin'. I have a big bin out back and ashes and waste all go in that and go back in the garden. But I'll never forget that.

Q: Now it's a publishing empire.

A: He had heart trouble and he died around '72 or something like that. My brother died in '72.

Q: Which brother? Eber?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: And the other brother, my oldest brother was found dead on the lawn in Otta....in ah Toronto. Could've been murdered or....I don't think he was that sick. I don'tno details. I just got a letter from the police department. But ah...however.

C: When you were going to Kansas and New Orleans, how long would you be gone at a time?

A: Well we'd leave here about the last of January and be back in April.

C: Really?

A: A couple months every spring.

C: Yeah.

A: Sportman Shows. They had all kinds of, you know ah....visit here, visit there....or go....for the tourists....and rifles and fishing rods and....then the entertainment. People walk around the tank and..... One day my cousin Willard Jack....he's still alive in Toronto and ah....

Q: What's his name? Willard....

A: Willard Jack.

Q: Jack.

A: He lived right down over the hill here. He ah, he had a girlfriend. And he said....we had a log rolling you know, make believe log rolling....and he said, "Will you fall in tonight, 'cause I have a girlfriend here." I said, "Sure." And I'd you know, make believe and fall in just the same, just to please him. And my brother once, he wanted me to do the same thing and give me two dollars. I was bribed for two bucks. But usually I could roll....I could roll them in usually. I wasn't a champ but....not like Phil Scott. Phil Scott rigged up an old oil tank in his basement. You know, these hot water oil tanks....on rollers, and learned to roll that. Hmm, hmm, hmm. You've seen log rolling on sports shows on the TV?

Q: Yeah. But I always thought in your day, it was a way you just kept all your skills honed and sharp for the work that you did, but actually, you guys went Hollywood!

A: Well, yeah, we...we went to Hollywood alright. I even have some relatives and old friends in California.

Q: I bet you met a lot of people.

A: Oh yeah. Well...

Q: So you were a professional sportsman and....Tell us a little bit about the guiding.

A: Woods guiding?

Q: Yeah, and what years you did that.

A: Well ah, my first trip....let's see, do I remember? I helped my brother. Oh we went to Keji long before it was a park.

Q: Yes.

A: Left ah, out in back here, in Lake Joli. Everybody went to Lake Joli, and got in your canoes and got your packs and your luggage and your food and....two in a canoe. I was with an American. And I was a helper on my first trip. A dollar and a half a day. Dollar and a half a day. And ah....

Q: And you were working for.... Who paid you the dollar and a half?

A: Well, the Americans paid. Three Americans and three guides. It was Eber and Louis Peters, that's Henry Peter's father and Billy Meuse er...another Indian. My brother and two Indians, and I was a helper.

Q: Yep.

A: So we got out at the carries and you know, carried the canoes and lugged, and paddled and lugged and carried. It was all muscle work. Rain and shine. And there was usually good weather. And ah, we'd go all the way through to Keji. It was still Kedgimakoodgee (sp?)....they've changed the lettering on it. And the American gave me a five dollar tip.

Q: Yep.

A: And ah...some old feller, I forget. And he gave me another pair of pants 'cause mine was just about ripped up. And that was the first trip to Keji, my first....I mean that was experience you know. Paddling around....be careful of rocks and downstream, upstream, and all that stuff. And then, when I was eighteen I got my guides license.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I've got my license every year until a few years ago, they can't afford pins anymore.

Q: Yeah.

A: And ah, then I built aoh, in 1946, after the war, '46, '47 and '48, I built a camp on Whitesands Lake. You been there?

Q: No, but I'm going!

A: I'd love to take you there. Anyway, we got an ox team. Ben Hill, Harry Hill's father, and loaded an old wagon with lumber from Burt Alcorn's mill. This is 1946, and after the war things were beginnin' to work and everybody was, "Get out there and get to work." So we hauled it way back there, dumped the lumber off. And I got two canoes and put the lumber on two canoes and took it over across the lake, built a camp, lugged....(continued on next page)

I had cut, I'd cut logs, left the tops on and let it dry previous to that. And it took three years to get the camp and the roof up on. And Lois....Lois....Lois....

Q: Harlow?

A: No. Lois ah....My sister had four children. Florence. She was the youngest sister. She had Lois and Basil and Dave and Myrna. Dave Parker, and Myrna out in British...ah California. Lois, Basil, he's out in Alberta, Dave in bear River, and Myrna....she lives in California. Basil helped me lug the logs out on our backs, helped me build it. Basil did.

Q: Is it Basil....Porter?

A: Parker, Parker.

C: Nephew.

A: Lois lives in....Lois and Kenny (Dawson ?) live in Florida now. I called 'em up the other night. I said, "Why don't you get that election over with? [2000 U.S. Presidential election]. Laugh, laugh, laugh. And then she died and Wilbur married my other sister. He married two of my sisters. Jenny.

Q: Yes?

A: And then there's Forestine....daughter....Forestine, Mimmie out in Alberta.....Forestine, Mimmy, Paul....eight children....two sisters....and brother....I married....my wife's brother, Parker....[Watson's wife Francis is Wilbur Parker's sister].

Q: Yep.

A: Well that old camp....yeah....one day I had a hunter there. He was an undertaker from down in the States. He was in the bow of the canoe with his rifle layin' on the canoe. Dave Parker was helpin' me guide. And I was over across the lake with another party looking for a deer. And I heard bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. And I ran down to the shore. They'd upset in the water right in front of the camp. And I jumped in the....I ran down, jumped in the canoe, and come over to tried to help them. And I got in the camp and they was tryin' to get warm. Dave was tryin' to get a fire going. They'd been cold in the water. And he lost his rifle in the bottom in the bottom of the lake, the rifle he'd borrowed. And I'm still tryin' to find that rifle. The undertaker's rifle in the bottom of the lake....across, in front of the camp. Well they finally got warmed up and they got dried out and I had to go over and get the boys. We didn't get any deer to take home that trip. But we saw one. But usually I got deer for 'em, and horns, and they'd go down to New York with their deer tied on the front of the car and, "Look where we been! Up in Nova Scotia." And the buck....horns....showin' off. Show off, you know. Oh been a lot of hunters come up here. Big business.

Q: Also come for fishing?

A: They don't.... Oh yeah, trout fishing.

Q: Yeah.

A: But not now. Not late.... They can come fish now without a guide. But they have to have a guide to hunt with, I guess. For Cape Breton and Newfoundland, that's another story, and moose, you know, and all that. Then moose hunting stopped in 1937. (continued on next page)

I only went on one moose hunting trip and saw one moose, and no shot in the barrel. Never shot a moose, but I shot several deer and helped.....helped the others get their deer out.

Q: But that moose was in Digby County?

A: Yeah, right back here in Whitesands ridge.

Q: So part of your plan for building that cabin on Whitesands was part of your guiding....you'd take people there?

A: Oh yes, yes. It helped make a living.

Q: Yep.

A: That and the Power House was my living. And ah, anything else I could do. Tune pianos.

Q: Yeah.

C: Oh.

A: Yeah. Anything to make an extra dollar, you know.

C: What did you do in the Power House?

A: Just operated it. Well you turned it on, load it up, and the telephone would ring and we had.... shut down or do this, do that. But now it's push button from Halifax. Everything is push button. But I was there twenty seven years. I'm telling you, it was a good thing 'cause it pensioned me off and give me a raise and it was only about five minutes down the hill to work, you know. It wasn't like driving to Digby to work or driving....

C: So I don't really understand. What would a typical day be like for you at the Power House?

A: Well, I'd go downstairs and read the meters. Ah, the water level, the dam, and the voltage and.... I'd read the meters every hour. How much power's going to Weymouth or how much power's going up country. And when to increase it or load it up full load. I could....if you went down to the Power House a few minutes I could show you. On the way, if you'd like to. What time is it?

Q: It's ah, two thirty five right now.

A: Yeah. On the way out if you....if you have time.

C: Love to do that.

A: I'd love to do that. And you know where Don Buckler lives?

Q: I do.

A: He was shot down over Stuttgart, Germany in the Halifax Bomber. The old Halifax Bomber....last Saturday, the whole story of it. Did you see that?

Q: Was it in the paper or on TV?

A: Yeah.

Q: No, I missed it.

A: And they were all lost. And one landed in a lake in Norway. And they just went over there and dug it up and brought it to Ontario to restore it. Old Halifax Bomber. Oh, if I'd got overseas I might have been a tail gunner or whatever and....tail gunner don't live very long, but....that's history.

Q: I think that's what Don Buckler was. Wasn't he a tail gunner?

A: I think he was a top gunner or a....not a tail gunner, I don't think.

Q: OK.

A: Tail gunners didn't last very long because the Germans came up underneath. You've seen all that. If we ever learn from war history....What have you learned from history? You a school teacher?

Q: No, but....

A: What did you do all your life?

Q: But for some reason I'm always mistaken for one.

A: Tell me about yourself now.

Q: No, no....

A: You're a Digby ch.....

Q: This interview is not about me.

A: Where you born?

Q: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A: What? You're a Pennsylvania Dutch? Are you kiddin'? You're kiddin'!

C: No, she's not.

Q: No, I'm serious.

A: Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh. Hey ah, what's that about Pittsburgh? There's something famous about Pittsburgh I heard.

Q: Steel City.

A: Steel, yeah. And what brought you to Nova Scotia?

Q: Well I'll tell you that off camera.

A: OK. And you....?

C: Grew up in New Brunswick.

A: New Brunswick.....New Brunswick. Oh ah, St. Andrews. Ah, Joy's oldest girl, Janet....she has a boy and a girl, and Kim, lives next door to her. She has two boys. And Martha lives in Moncton, two or three kids. That's three granddaughters in New Brunswick. And ah....St. Andrews, that's a beautiful place.

C: Mm hmm.

A: Yeah.

C: How many children did you have in total?

A: Ten.

C: You had ten?

Q: Eight.

C: Yes, you're right. Eight.

A: Six boys and two girls, twenty five grand, twenty five great grand.

C: Oh my goodness!

Q: And you can keep track of them all?

A: Ah, I forget the names sometimes.

Q: Especially those great grandchildren? That's tough!

A: Oh yeah. My great grandson shot a nine point buck the other day. He brought it over here in the truck. He wanted to show me. He was so proud of that. And my grandson shot one up in the woods here, and he come runnin' down like he'd won a million dollars, he was so happy. And a grandson and a great grandson shot a deer a few weeks ago or a week ago. Well I lost one grandson out in British Columbia. He was driving home on a motor bike and a lady ran into him. It was a hundred percent her fault. And ah.... he's....my great grandson that shot a deer. Yeah....gee. Glen. His name was Glen. The only one we lost in our family.

Q: Yeah, I remember that.

A: Well, well, well.

Q: So growing up here, your father was....would you say your father was a farmer?

A: Full time farmer, and the Power House for just seven years, I guess. Seven or eight years.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. And deacon in the church.

Q: Can you remember some pretty hard times, having a big family?

A: Ah, no, there was always lots to eat. Oatmeal for breakfast. And we, every Sunday we'd go down to Sunday school, church. Church in the afternoon and evening. Never missed Sunday school. Prayer meetings. Took the family, and walked. I took 'em down on sleds in the winter and.... Our children were brought up that way, yeah. Well, anything else?

Q: Oh yeah.

A: O yeah! What else could it be? You can go get me a drink of water.

C: I will, I'll get it.

A: Oh she can or you can.

C: Yeah, I'll do that.

A: Don't trip on that wire.

C: No, I'll be careful.

A: You'll upset the apple cart.

C: That's right. I'll get in trouble.

A: Tap on the right.

C: You want some Cindy?

Q: No, I'm OK.

A: Turn the tap on the right and let her run.

Q: OK, you say your mother died in 1936?

A: Yeah. I was twenty years old.

Q: You were twenty years old.

A: Yeah.

Q: Can you remember what life was like for your mother when you were young?

A: Oh yeah. She washed by hand, made butter by hand, and I'll never forget....everything by hand. The old wood stove, cook on the stove, bake in the oven. No lights, no telephone. And that's the way they worked in them days. Born in 1896. [1876?].

Q: Yeah

A: Over a hundred years ago.

Q: Yeah. That's hard to believe.

A: And everything was by hand. Chop wood, saw wood. Yeah. Yeah, she had ah, what do they call it, not arthritis but, what do they call it? Only sixty five when she died.

Q: Yeah?

C: There you are. [Bringing water]

A: Thank you.

C: What a cozy house.

A: 1965 with ah....

Q: Was it something there's a cure for nowadays?

A: What do they call that stuff in the lungs?

Q: Emphysema....

A: No.

Q: Tuberculosis....

A: No.

Q: Pleurisy?

A: No. Oh, it doesn't matter. Oh, ah, lameness in the bones too, ah, name of that. Lame bones.

Q: Rheumatoid....

A: Rheumatism.

Q: Rheumatoid arthritis?

A: Rheumatism, yeah. We used to walk down to the store, down at the foot of the hill for groceries, and came up the hill, and she didn't walk very fast. Yeah. Had the funeral right here, and the coffin.

Q: Was that typical at the time?

A: Oh yeah, right in the homes, yeah.

Q: There were no funeral homes?

Q: Dollar and a half a day. There was you and your brother, and then there were....

A: Two Indians.

Q: Two Indians. A Meuse and a McEwan or something.

A: yeah.

Q: Can you shed some light on what....Most of the guides that the Americans wanted would have probably been natives, not non natives?

Q: Well the old ones, they were all old Indians then. They were all Indians.

A: How many guides were not Indians?

Q: Oh, a few, a few. Mostly Indians. That was their best....best business, because they knew the woods. They lived in the woods.

Q: Did they live on Reserve then?

A: On the Reserve, yeah.

Q: Yeah. And did you learn....did you and your brother learn.....

A: We learned from them, you might say, or watchin' them and.... Of course they smoked and drank and we could beat 'em in races because we never did that. There was a lot of canoe racing....canoe racing.

Q: Yeah?

A: And ah, there was one race there.....Henry Peters told me that his father told him, that....I got it written down, I can show it to you, give you a copy....Ah, up in New Brunswick, there were two Indians, or three, in a canoe, paddled across the Bay of Fundy, came over for the Cherry Carnival. And they....and the bridge, up around the little island down....they was supposed to race. So they raced. And when they got to the island, the Nova Scotia Indians, instead of turning around the island, they turned their canoe and beat 'em back to the bridge. Now that's a story that he told Henry Peters and he told me, and I wrote it down. It was in the Courier here a few years ago. And I think that's something. 'Cause, three in a birch canoe, and then they went back across the Bay of Fundy, way up.... Oh.

Q: I've heard....

C: My goodness.

Q: You never paddled across the Bay of Fundy yourself?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: Well Eber and I paddled to Annapolis for practice. But we had another race up in Quebec, my brother and I. Two races. (continued on next page)

But that's another story. We went up in....La Tuque....Grandmere....Shawinigan. Yeah, La Tuque River. Hundred and twenty five miles, three days. That was the longest race we ever had, other than the (short one days we had?) We ah, went up there, and Eber had to paddle with another fellow the first year, Alan Hunt. And ah, and then I paddled with....I got a partner and paddled a race, and we came sixth or seventh. I think I got five...or twenty dollars, or five dollars or something. I got a free ride up. Then I went back the next year with my brother, and we came....I guess I got twenty dollars. It was just ah.... Well I forget, forget, forget. But that was twice, or three times....twice in Quebec, we raced that river, La Tuque. Shawinigan River, Shawinigan Falls. That's where what's his name's hometown....our Prime Minister.

C: Chretien

A: Chretien. Yeah. Oh, when we were in the canoe race, the Centennial, we had to wait around Montreal, and ah, a friend of mine said, "Let's go to Ottawa." He wanted to meet somebody, an old girlfriend or something. We went to Ottawa, and Parliament Building, and who was coming down the steps but Mr. Diefenbaker. I shook hands with Diefenbaker! And then I've shaken hands with Trudeau and Chretien and some other famous people.

C: But not the Queen. I'm afrayed not.

A: No, she does not shake hands or write autographs 'cause they'd be sold for a dollar.

C: Did you ever have any close calls in the woods?

A: Ah, no.

C: No.

A: Ah, my accidents....We had an old....we used to burn sawdust in the basement.

Q: Yeah?

A: Get sawdust from the mill free, five dollars a load, put it down there, fill up the hopper. It would burn nice, heat the house. So time went by, cleaned that out, going to break it up. So I went down cellar one day, and my boy Lindsay wanted to help me. He took the axe and split the old thing, and a piece of metal just tagged my pupil. No sight no pain.

Q: Yeah.

A: Went down....went down to the doctor's....no problem. No pain, but ah.... And my son....

Q: So this happened....this happened....ah how were you cleaning this hopper out? Was this some invention....

A: No, we...we took the hopper out and smashed up the old base....metal stove.

Q: OK.

A: I can show you the piece of metal that hit me.

Q: Yeah?

A: Ah, and my son....I was sawing wood....I have a tractor, and I saw an advertisement, "Saw Waste Into Dollars." North Carolina. It's a machine to put on your tractor, it was a nice saw rig.

Q: Yeah.

A: Saw it up instead of doin' it by hand. Oh my good....1947 I guess it was. OK. So, my wife and I went down to Portsmouth, Maine, where Joy....where Lex....where my....where Lois and Kenny were pastors at a church. We stayed there, and I called....I told them to ship it there. I thought I'd save a few dollars on transportation and duty. So we stayed there a whole week waitin', practically a week. Finally we decided to come home. So I went over to the station, and the thing hadn't come. So when they got it, they sent it home. I had to pay duty and transportation. I think it was less than a hundred dollars or so. But, the reason, one of the reasons we come home, we got a telephone..... Ah, we went over to the station, went back to their home. "Oh! Got this telephone call. Your mother died." My wife's mother. So we took off and come home then to her funeral. So anyway, I was sawing wood, February 10, 1950. Down next door here from my brother in law. And ah, after I shut it off....had a wet mitten on, and I just put it on the shaft like that....I'd done it before. It pulled my thumb off, and the cords right out of my arm and ah, it hurt awful. It pulled off....it left a joint....

C: Oh.

A: And I'm tellin' you I didn't want the....want that joint in the way, and I thank the Lord it wasn't my hand.

Q: Yeah

A: Anyway, I went down to the doctor, and I told him to take that out, which they did. And I put that bone up in a jar in the glass closet there..... And an old Indian used to come in....an Indian lady, Mrs. Harlow, and tune....and dust for my wife....and she saw that So I went out and buried it. But I was milkin' the cow in six weeks....

Q: Yeah.

A:After that, and still paddled the canoe.

Q: Yeah.

A: That was 1950. Fifty years ago! February 10th.

Q: I've heard it's really tough to lose a thumb as opposed to a finger....

A: Oh your thumbs are....

Q: But you look like you do fine.

A: I know....your hands.... I called my boss, the guy in Chicago, Frank Hogan. I said, "I had my thumb pulled off." "Oh," he said, "We can fix that up." I said, "No," I says, "I can't come anymore." Had to work on the Lord's day. I didn't like that. Anyway....

Q: Is that the day it happened? On a Sunday?

Q: No.

A: Two years later I got a job down in the Power House. I had to work on the Lord's day in the Power House so people'd have lights on the Lord's day.

Q: Because you can't store electricity.

A: But, that's....that's my thumb story.

C: Hmm.

A: Yeah.

C: Wow.

A: Now, any more questions?

Q: Just....in your ah....just tell me a little bit more about your ahm, connections, relations, friendships with any people from the reserve. Did you pick up any healing....

A: Oh I always liked....I always liked the Indians and ah, worked with 'em and in the woods with 'em and paddled against 'em, and with 'em in canoe races and guided with 'em and hired 'em and....as anyone else.

Q: Did you pick up any folklore or healing? That didn't have anything to do with your interest in naturopathic kind of things?

A: No, not that part, no.

Q: No.

A: No.

Q: Do you know of anybody still alive on the Reserve that would be a good person for us to interview?

A: Ah, Betty Pictou died a couple years ago. She would have been the best.

Q: Yeah?

A: And there's no one there full blooded now, or half blooded even. A lot of white kids went up there and shackled up with 'em you know. Free...so they say. But there....you can go up there and ask 'em. Yeah there's some nice ones up there. Beautiful kids. They have a lot....they spend a lot of money up there.

C: Mm hmm.

A: You've seen it?

Q: Yeah.

C: Yeah.

A: Spent millions. Frank Meuse. All the Meuse boys.... the oldest one, one leg on, he'd be the one. Old Frank Meuse.

C: Old Frank Meuse.

A: Senior.

C: Yeah?

A: Yeah, he'd be the one to interview.

Q: OK.

A: Yeah. I remember his father and grandfather....er his father. Yeah, I worked with him. He went in sports shows.

C: What was his name?

A: Billy Meuse.

C: Billy.

A: His father. And he was a guide.

C: Mm hmm.

A: Yeah, I got a picture of him.

Q: So do you get back to your camp very often now?

A: Oh, the boys.... We used to take eight hours to go two trips and the carries and Lake Jolly. And then they got a pontoon plane, fly in and whatever. And now a helicopter.... twenty minutes, sit right on the camp. Isn't that....

C: Amazing.

A: You don't have to paddle anymore.

Q: Do you see much change in the populations of any of the animals that you used to go after?

A: Well when I heard about the coyotes comin' and eatin' the rabbits and eatin' deer, I didn't like that.

Q: How did the coyotes get introduced here?

A: Ah, you heard that didn't you?

Q: No, not really. I have them in my neighbourhood.

A: Well they....the big power companies....or big pulp companies....the rabbits were eating the trees....

Q: The seedlings?

A: Or seedlings. And ah, I guess they wanted some more coyotes to eat the rabbits. So they went to Norway and got some bigger, stronger....so they say. Don't ask me. Ask the Department of Agriculture, or Forestry. Or ask the Mersey, or Bowater. Oh....

Q: So you can remember when there were no coyotes?

A: Well a moose used to come up here in the yard.

Q: Yeah?

A: But she had bugs all over the side of her.

Q: Yeah.

A: And kind of tame, you know. Oh I remember when moose were very plentiful. Well Americans came for moose. And then the deer were introduced in 1898, and they increased nicely. Lots of deer.

Q: And how were the deer introduced?

A: Ah, that's another story. A Digby man did that. You ask someone there. They went and got ah....two or three to Lake Jolly, two to Keji, three or four somewhere else....and they multiplied like sheep you know. Very good, and there've been a lot....there's sixteen thousand reported killed last year....and that's what's reported, and you know, sometimes....

Q: Mmm hmm.

A: I ran into one and damaged the car once. So ah....and I see 'em along the road once in a while. But they've survived in spite of the coyotes. Poor animals.

Q: Did the moose decline because of the deer?

A: I don't think they had anything....some say.... You'd have to ask the Department of Land and Forests. I don't know whether they had a disease involved....well maybe, maybe. Who knows.

C: Mm hmm.

A: Who knows. Moose and deer and bear. Used to be a bounty on bear, fifty dollars. No more bounty.

Q: Nope.

A: They're selling the bear steak in New York. And other parts there.

C: That's right.

Q: Did you ever pick up any Mi'kmaq languages....Mi'kmaw language when you were....?

A: No....

A: Did I write somethin' down once? I forget....ah, no.... One language, one measurement, I'm all for.

Q: Yeah?

A: It'd save a lot of money.

Q: With this guiding, did you ever have any connection with Milford House, which I couldn't help notice, burned to the ground recently.

A: My daughter worked there for seven or eight years. She was single....

Q: Yeah?

A: And this fellow got his eye on her, and they were married. Five or six, seven years, they couldn't have a baby. Finally had a little girl.

Q: Is that Lexie?

A: Lexie.

Q: Yeah.

A: And his name is Morgan. He's been with them twenty years, a surveyor. He was a surveyor for the Mersey....Bowater's.

Q: Lexie's husband?

A: Yeah. He knows where all the good trout holes are.

Q: Yeah.

A: And he gives me trout. And ah, yeah, the Milford House, that was historical.

Q: Yeah.

A: Some famous people came. Oh, down here to the old tra...ah, the old ah, the old hotel....the Grand Hotel, Bear River.

Q: Yes?

A: That burned down. But both of my sisters worked there and....waitresses. And ah, and Teddy Roosevelt came here. The reason they called him 'Teddy, he went huntin' once and couldn't get a bear, and they called him Teddy Roosevelt, 1907, or when he was President. And he gave out some silver spoons to some girls downtown. That's the story I heard.

Q: Yeah.

A: I hope it may be true. Leslie Kinney told me that Yeah.

Q: Well that's....I'm about at about the end of my list of questions Watson. If you're still interested in taking a little trip....

C: Down to the Power House.

Q: We'd take you up on that.

A: Yeah, I can show you. It's only three o'clock. They're still open. You can have a peek inside there. They're restoring it, rebuilding it, the whole thing inside. They took it all apart, and it's going to produce.... Years ago they....we could....a full load would produce so much. Then they put a new bottom on it and more efficient for the water to hit, and they got more power out of it. And now they've taken it apart again. From 1952 to...well, forty eight years.

C: When you say a full load, what do you mean?

A: When she's running full speed....

C: Yes.

A: And all the water coming down the pipe is a hundred percent....

C: Right.

A: Like I say, when you're runnin' full blast, that's your full load.

C: Ok.

Q: And is that to meet a certain demand?

A: Oh yeah, it goes...it goes all through the province. It's a nationwide hookup.

Q: Yeah.

A: We even pumped it down to Boston sometimes.

Q: Yeah.

A: But I mean, that's in Halifax now, the.... They know where it's going by the modern machinery. I....way ahead....

Q: But there's really no way to store electricity?

A: But way back in the early days, Willard Jack and his father worked on the.... Where do you live? Down ah....

C: Freeport, on the Island.

A: Freeport. When they first put power on the Island....

C: Yes.

A: They had to get across with the wires, and Willard jack told me he was fourteen. He was helping his father, Derby Jack, who worked in the Power House in the water.... Only one fellow worked there from four o'clock 'til midnight, and then turned off the power. And then they called up.... The McIntyres and the Clarkes were havin' a game of whist, and they wanted the power on 'til one o'clock, another hour. So my father left it on another hour and then he shut it off and come home. I used to go down there and stay all night with him. Anyway, then the power line down to....down....across....

Q: Tiverton.

A: Down ah, what do they call it? All the....

Q: The Neck.

A: Digby Neck, Digby Neck, Digby Neckers....You're a Digby Necker. And, so he helped his father, and ah, where he boarded, the fisherman, man was a fisherman, was away. And there was a lightning storm on. And my cousin Willard was only fourteen. He was all alone in his bed. And this woman come and got in bed with him. Now I'm not going to say any more. He was fourteen, and that's Digby Neckin' for you. Now you don't....don't tell that story. But when you're fourteen, fifteen, the teenage energy, oh my. You all have stories. Well anyway, that's the power. It's all over North America isn't it?

C: Mm hmm, yeah.

A: It's coal and water, air, sunlight. They're talkin' about sunshine. Or.... well they have a bunch of the windmills on top of the mountain, but the wind doesn't always blow. But (inaudible word)it's free anyway.

C: Yeah. Well, why don't we unwire you and head down to the Power House?

A: OK,

C: Alright.

A: I've been wired up long enough.

