

Tape 1, Side A

Your full name is P-h-y-l-l-i-s?

Yes

And your middle name?

Maude. M-a-u-d-e

And how is your last name spelled?

M-c-C-r-i-m-m-o-n

The McCrimmons are the pipers of Scotland. They were a branch of the McLeods and they had a piping school on the Isle of Skye.

My maiden name was White. Phyllis W-h-i-t-e.

Your birthdate and place of your birth?

9 January 1912. Vancouver, B.C.

In a hospital?

It was in a hospital but in those days they had a lot of private hospitals, and this one was over by Main Street. It's not there any more.

Do you know what the name of it was?

No, I've no idea. My mother used to point it out to me whenever we went down Main Street.

It was about Main and around 6th or 7th.

Your father's full name?

Harry Edgar.

Was it Harold or Harry?

No, just Harry Edgar White.

His birthdate and place of birth?

England. His birthday was August 26th, I think. 1884.

The year?

I can't tell you the year. I never thought about it.

Can you tell me the place in England where he was born?

Portsmouth

Is that where your father's ancestor's came from? England?

Yes.

Your mother's full name.

Maude. She didn't have a second name. Culley. C-u-l-l-e-y.

Her birth place and date?

She was somewhere around my dad's. We never put much stress on birthdays in those days.

She was born in England, too?

No, she was born in Rochester, New York in 1884.

What part of the world did your mother's people come from?

England.

Did you ever hear stories of how your parents came to Canada?

No. I know my grandmother, they used to say she was cockney because she was born within the sound of Bow Bells in London. That was a church and if you were born within the sound of Bow Bells you were considered cockney.

Your parent's occupations?

My father was a commercial artist.

Where did he work?

In Vancouver.

What kind of firms did he work for? Or did he have his own business?

Well, latterly he had his own business, but before that he worked for another firm. I have heard the name of it, but can't remember it now. But latterly he had a business called The Art Engraving Company.

Your siblings?

I'm an only child.

Your husband's name?

Douglas Farquhar –which is gaelic for Frederick–McCrimmon.

His birth date and place?

September 2, 1913. Vancouver.

His father's full name?

He was Frederick Norman. It would have been Farquhar, I guess, only I think they must have changed it.

Where was he born?

Vancouver. They came from Kincarden, I think it was called, in Ontario. They were a pioneering family in Langley. Milner is where they had their house. Actually, their house has been declared a heritage house now.

Where is it at?

Milner, which is close to Langley.

There was a big Scottish settlement there.

When did they come there?

Well, they were kicked out of Scotland because of the sheep. It was called the clearance. All of these farmers in the highlands. They lived on the Isle of Skye because that, in those days, was the place where the McLeods lived. There is a castle there, Dunvegan Castle, that's the McLeods castle. So their farms were taken over and they had to leave. It was very cruel at the time. To make way for the sheep.

Do you know what year they came to Canada?

No.

Your husband's mother's full name?

Constance Granger. G-r-a-n-g-e-r. I don't remember her second name.

Her birth place?

She was born in Petermaritsburg in South Africa.

How did she come to Canada?

Well, her father was in the Black Watch who fought the Boers in South Africa. He was a lawyer, actually. Then he came and he was head of the Lands Department in New Westminster. Until he retired.

[Not recorded:

Doug's mother belonged to the Natural History Society. They studied plants, and a Professor Larson instructed them. Constance took Doug everywhere--there's a picture of them on Black Tusk when he was about 12 years old.

She was a school teacher in Cloverdale. She met her husband--Norman McCrimmon--there--he was also a teacher. He had a friend who worked with BC Electric. Norman also got a job there and was electrocuted when Doug was just six weeks old.

Constance continued teaching. During the winters they lived with Doug's grandparents. In the summer Constance would take him to Woodlands. The family had a summer camp there and she would fix it up for the family every summer.

She didn't want to be a teacher. Her father saw an ad in the paper about teacher training at the Model School on 12th and Cambie. He told her she had to become a teacher. One day the mail came and she saw this application from the Model School and even though it wasn't what she wanted, she did know she was going to be a teacher.]

Date and place of your marriage?

1937, February 20th.

Where did you get married at?

In the Anglican Theological College at UBC. It's still there.

How did you meet your husband?

We were blind dates. We belonged to the Outdoors Club. We both went to university and that's where we met. We were blind dates at an outdoors party.

Do you have children?

Four. [shows picture] My husband was very tall. 6'6".

Your children's birth dates?

Joan was born June 7, 1940. Warren was born on September 1, 1943, and Craig July 3, 1945, and Bruce was born on June 22, 1952.

All born in Vancouver?

Yes.

Where did you go to school?

Well, I went to King Ed High School. King Edward. I went to several public schools. And I went to UBC.

What year did you graduate?

1932, from UBC.

Which public schools did you attend?

One was Bayview. Gerald Gordon. And Fairview. We moved around quite a bit.

What did you take at UBC?

I took math and chemistry. Graduated with a Bachelor of Arts.

What subjects did you excel in at school?

I loved sciences.

What ones did you have trouble with?

Calculus and languages.

What was your social life like at school?

It was pretty good.

Were you part of the student union or anything like that?

Well, I joined a sorority. Alpha Gamma Delta.

[not recorded:

I drove from time I was 15 years old. Actually my mother taught me. My dad had such bad eyesight he refused to drive. She taught me to drive. I think she paid a dollar for my first driver's license. So I've been driving a long time

What car did you learn to drive in?

It was a Nash. I was going to university the next year, so that was another reason she taught me to drive.

I went to university when I was 16. I skipped a grade somewhere along the way. My husband went when he was 15. He was pretty bright.]

Did you have a favourite teacher?

Dean Buchanan. I enjoyed him in math. Oh, Dr. Shrum. He was physics.

What characteristics did they have that you liked?

They were good teachers. Interesting.

Do you have any memories of your school days as a child?

Well, when I was ten years old my parents joined the Jericho Tennis Club as charter members and from then on I played tennis all the time. I was a junior tennis player and as a matter of fact, I won a cup in 1930. After that, whatever I won it for kind of ceased to be, so the Tennis Association reassigned it and Maddie Shoemaker next door has just won it again. So my name is first on the cup and hers is the last.

But, I played tennis even until after I was married. That was my big interest.

What kind of things did you do as a teenager?

My teenage years were not all that exciting. I was not into boys. I wore skirts down to my knees, and I wore knee sox. I was not the picture of what the boys liked. I never had any boyfriends or anything. I wasn't really interested. Just tennis.

Did you win any other awards?

Yes, I won several cups. For tennis.

What years would this be? In the 1920s?

I can't remember. I was ten years old when I started to play.

How about scholastic awards?

No, I didn't get any of those. Just graduated. It was the depression.

How was the depression for you?

Not very good for anybody.

How so?

People don't realize what it was like. If you saw something you liked, you didn't bother with it because you knew you couldn't have it. There was no money. It was a very stark time.

It wasn't until the second world war that we came out of the depression. Of course, I was alive during the first world war as well.

Do you remember about the first world war?

Well, I remember my parents had a friend who was in the army. But I was pretty young. I remember him bringing me a great big doll.

What about World War II?

Of course, I remember that. We were rationed. I think they were rationed in the first world war, too, but I don't remember that. You had to get coupons for meat, butter, eggs, and things like that.

Where did you get them from?

The government.

They just mailed them to you?

I think you went and collected them. The post office. Yes, I guess they'd mail them.

[not recorded:

The period after the Japanese entered the war—people don't realize now how terrified people in BC were at that time. They were terrified that the Japs would come here. A Jap submarine did shell Point Estevan. But then they went down to Port Darwin instead and we were all so relieved. We had several friends who moved to interior of BC because of their fears.

My husband played football for UBC. Almost all the young men who took agriculture in those days—which was quite a large faculty—many of them went to Kuala Lumpur to work on the rubber plantations. Most of them were in managerial jobs. When the Japanese came they were captured and interned. They were big husky men and they came back weighing about 70 pounds and had

no teeth—it was just awful.

Were your husband's friends there?

Yes, we had some very good friends who went there. A lot didn't come back. A lot died in POW camps.

Your husband didn't go into the forces?

No. In the first place, he was yellow and blue colour blind. Still, he tried, but they wouldn't take him. He had very bad varicose veins. They offered to operate and clear these things out. In those days they'd take fellows right out of medical school and to have one of them operate on you . . . well a lot of people never recovered. So even though he wanted to join the navy badly, he turned that one down.

Did he feel bad?

Well he was in logging industry and that was declared an essential industry and loggers weren't supposed to join armed forces. But he wanted to go. A lot of his friends were in the navy and some friends were in the air force.

Were you relieved that he didn't go?

Well...of course I would be.

Did you do anything towards the war effort?

No I had three children in five years, so I didn't have time to do anything but look after my children.

Were you afraid?

Everyone here was. They have all the sympathy for Japanese going up to New Denver, but I have no sympathy at all, because at least they had good housing and weren't in the middle of a jungle and starved to death. I know they got raw deal on fish boats.

We had good friends who were Japanese. Their children went to the University of Washington. One boy joined the American Army, but one of girls became a Tokyo Rose type of thing. She spoke on the radio trying to get soldiers stirred up to mutiny. These are all things people don't know anymore.

People were very upset when they shelled Point Estevan. And when they went into Darwin everyone was relieved because they knew they wouldn't invade both places. That's what the thinking was. You just didn't know. The Japanese who were here were all supposedly good Japanese and supporting us, but who knows?

It was quite an important part of my life and of anybody who lived at that time. These young

fellows whom I had know who'd been the picture of health—big strapping men who came back so emaciated, their lives ruined.

Same things happened with Germans.

After they got back they tried to resume their lives, but how could you? They were almost unfit. One fellow had a farm on Van Is , but he didn't live an awful lot longer.

As a result of his injuries?

Well, he had been starved and as a result he lost all of his teeth, his vision was gone, everything was messed up. They weren't fed properly and they were treated so abominably. It was sad - you didn't recognize them.

People don't realize the consequences of war. It's all very well to be patriotic, but there's a lot more to it than that.

I had a friend who lived in Hong Kong and she'd just had a baby a month old when the Japanese invaded. They were put on an English freighter with 1 suitcase and dumped off in Prince Rupert. She didn't know a soul there. She just lived on. Actually, her husband eventually became administrator of the hospital up there. Lived there quite a few years, then they came back to Vancouver. She had a couple of other children.

We were intimately touched by the war. Now people read about it in books written by people who weren't there. Young people whose grandparents tell them these things, but it's not the same. It was a very sad, very difficult time.

Was your father in the war?

No, my dad was not in the war. He had very bad eyesight and I think he was the wrong age. They had conscription in WWI but they didn't take him. I think he was probably too old.

War was a difficult time. We were all on ration coupons and things like that. But we managed.

You had blackout curtains?

Blackout? Oh yeah, but that was the least of the problems.]

What kind of books did you like to read [as a young person]?

Oh, I've always loved books. Anything that I learned something from. And I read all of the regular books in those days. I read a lot of classics. My father was a Dickens fan and he used to get me a Dickens book every Christmas—a leather-bound one.

I was more into classics.

Where would your childhood summers be spent?

I remember one time we had a summer camp in West Vancouver. You had to go to North Vancouver—they had the interurban then—to Ambleside, I guess it was.

How long would you go for? What things would you do?

I have no idea how long we stayed there. I can just remember going on the interurban.

What about as a family? Did you go on summer holidays as a family?

Well, when I was about four or five years old my parents had friends called Trethewey. They're still around. They used to have a sawmill out near Mission some place. They owned this great big ranch up in the interior. Huge place, thousands of acres. There was the Gang Ranch and the Trethewey's Ranch, and a couple of others.

We went up there and we were in a car that had what they called a 'dry' battery, and the battery ran out. So we had to stop at Clinton and wait for them to send another battery. I can remember that. Then we went up to this place. It was quite close to a river—I think it was the Fraser. And I still have a bracelet that my mother got up there. You gave the Indians a silver—I don't know if it was a silver dollar or a fifty-cent piece Anyway, they hammered this out into a bracelet that fitted above your elbow. I've still got that.

It was a great experience. This huge big ranch and all these horses and cowboys. Real cowboys.

Where would you stay?

Oh, we stayed at the ranch.

In the main ranch house?

Yeah. On the way up we stayed at another ranch. Might have been the Gang Ranch.

What year would this be?

I was just four or five. So about 1917, I guess.

Did you ever go back?

Actually, we went up there, but not to that one. We went to one close to it, called the Empire Valley Ranch, with my husband, years later. He was looking at timber there. He worked for M & B (MacMillan Bloedel) at that point. He was in the logging business. It was owned by people by the name of Bryson. There is a Dr. Bryson who was working at the hospital in Sechelt one time when I was there, and it belonged to his grandparents. I had known a Bryson in high school, too, and I asked him about it. But I remembered this trip to the Empire Valley Ranch.

Were there any fads as a child that you participated in?

No.

What was your happiest time as a child?

Oh, I was always pretty happy. I don't know of any really sad times. My father being a

commercial artist, life was kind of up and down. Some times were good, some times not so good. But then I was too young to be too much affected. I guess my happiest times were when I was playing tennis. I liked school.

What was your first job?

Well, before I was married I started working as a commercial artist. And I worked at that after I got married, but in those days women didn't work like they do now.

Did you learn that from your dad?

Yes. And later on I painted. You see, those are my pictures.

Have you had any shows?

I used to belong to a group in Vancouver called The Group of Seventy. And I also belonged to the [Federation of Canadian Artists]. They have a studio there and I used to show my paintings there.

Have you won awards for your paintings?

Yes, a few.

What ones?

Don't ask me! Well, you know, when you're in a show, they give you an award. It's like tennis cups. You just don't remember.

So you didn't work as a parent?

No, I didn't work after I had children.

What was your most difficult time as a parent?

Well, I'll tell you. My most difficult time by far was when my youngest child was born.(1952) When he was 10 ½ weeks old, my husband was made manager of Northwest Bay Logging which was a division of M & B, on Vancouver Island. I went over there with a 10 ½-week-old baby. And this lady, who was the former manager's wife, refused to move because he was moved to Port Alberni and she didn't like the house there. So my husband rented these different places in summer cottages, mostly along the highway on the beach side in Parksville. Then they all closed in September, so I had to go live in what they called the Guest House at the logging camp. We had a wash basin and my husband got a 2-burner hot plate, and that was it. I had to wash all the diapers and everything in the wash basin. Finally some lady who was also down there took pity on me and she had rented a washing machine in Port Alberni at Woodward's—which we hadn't even thought of, which was kind of stupid. So she let me have it. Then we finally made it into the manager's house. So that period of my life was the most difficult time.

But bringing up my children, my husband was very supportive. He was very proud of his family and he was very supportive. We never seemed to have much in the way of trouble. Bruce, our youngest, is a type 1 diabetic.

What was your husband's career like?

He was in the logging business.

As a manager? How did he start out?

Well, he started out when he was quite young, because his family have a summer place up at a place called Woodland up at the North Arm. A man named Teaport owned an island there. So Doug used to help him, filling in the holes in the island and planting plants. Also they used to take the booms of logs up there so my husband used to work with the log scalers—which in those days was done all by hand—and he got his log scaling certificate when he was about 16, I think. But they wouldn't let him practice because he was too young.

So that was the start of his logging. Then when he went to UBC he tried several different . . . he was in agriculture for a while . . . he ended up graduating in commerce. But then he got a job with a logging company. After he'd worked for a few years he went to MacMillan Bloedel. So logging was always his prime interest.

When we were first married he worked for Goodwin & Johnson Logging Exporters. Then for Thurston Flavell. Then with MacMillan Bloedel until he retired.

Where did you live?

Well, we lived in Vancouver when we were first married. Then we built a house in North Vancouver. Then we came back to a house in Vancouver, then we went to the Island for five years. Parksville.

[not recorded:

There I played golf at the Qualicum Golf Club where I had my first hole-in-one. There were no tennis courts in Parksville.

When we moved back to the mainland we lived first in West Vancouver and I joined the Musqueam Golf Club and had two more holes-in-one. In Sechelt we joined the Roberts Creek Golf Club as a social thing. I played with them a little, but my husband was sick then and I didn't want to be away from him for so long.

When we lived in the west end, there was a big building near the entrance to Stanley Park. It was the Horse Show Building and they used to have horse shoes there. My husband told me he used to go there when he was young, about 10 or 12 years old, and feed the horses.

Was your husband working away from home?

He was working in the logging camp part of the time. He'd go away Sunday night and come back Friday. That's when my children were little. I'd tell my children they couldn't do this and could do that and then he'd come home and tell them the opposite.

We had a car, but he took the car because he used to drive up to [where he caught the boat] to Powell River. I think the logging camp was at Gordon Paisha Lake. So I didn't have a car all week. On Saturday morning I'd take the car to Woodwards and do all the shopping for the week.

One thing I didn't get clear yesterday was what work your husband did in logging?

Managerial.

After university he went to work for Goodwin Johnson, who were log exporters. Then he worked for another company that were log exporters and had sawmills.

Then MacMillan Bloedel bought out Jackson Brother's Logging, and he went to work for them. At one time he was the manager and he lived at Wilson Creek with the Jacksons. They had a booming ground where Stalishan is now. M & B made him manager of that. Then he became manager of Northwest Bay logging for M & B and from there he was sent to Vancouver as manager of lands and forests. That had to do a lot with taxes and rights of way and things. Just worked at Wilson Creek a couple of years.

[Northwest Bay was at Parksville.]

The Jackson family were quite interesting.

Did you live on the coast when he worked for M & B at the Jackson Brother's booming ground.

We had friends who had a place at Gibsons. It had belonged to the wife of a very good friend of ours—Joan and Frank Rush. Her grandparents had homesteaded on Franklin road, which was named after her grandfather. When she was married to our friend his father built a modern home there and we stayed there in the summer. That would be around 1950 or 1951.

That was just after they got the ferry service here?

Yes, there was a ferry running - Blackball. We were there when they first started the Blackball. Before that it had been the union boat.]

What would you consider the most important inventions that have been made in your lifetime?

Well, after all, I was born in 1912! That's when the Wrights first flew their airplane. I've been through so many inventions. Cars.

What was your family's first car?

They had what they called a Nash.

Do you know what year they got it?

I was quite young. I must have been about ten or twelve.

When you went to the ranch when you were young, did you go by car?

Yes. It was a big old car, I don't know what kind. As I said, it had a dry battery which went by the wayside. We stayed in Clinton for a few days.

What would you say was the most significant invention during your lifetime?

Oh, well. For me at the moment, tv was quite significant. When you get old it's nice to have tv. Telephone. Anything in the way of communication. Telephones were quite rudimentary. When we went to live in Parksville, we were all on party lines. Three rings was us. Everybody listened in. Phones were usually on the wall.

Cars. I remember an electric car going up Granville Street. Very slowly.

When did you come to the Sunshine Coast?

[not recorded:

1969.

The very first time we came up would be around when the war first started, about 1940 I guess. A whole group of us who were friends of this lady (Joan Rush) who's grandfather owned the place - stayed at the old house. Then we used to come up with our children when our children were little.

Joan and Frank Rush just came up in summer. Ended up selling it because people used to come in during winter when they weren't there and swipe everything. They sold it to a captain on the BC Ferries. I think his name is Davies.]

In 1969, my husband built this place. We had some very good friends--the Dolmages. Bill Dolmage. He built that great big log house on the other side of the bay. He persuaded my husband to come up here.

All the time we were living on the island, he was always looking for a place. Some of the happiest times of his life had been spent at Woodlands, at the north end of the Arm. And he was always looking for a place and in those days he wanted acreage. I was always interested in swimming so I wanted a place you could swim from.

All of this property here used to be owned by the Powell River Company. M & B took the Powell River Company over. And all this out in front was all booming ground leased by a man named Roy Doyle who was a local logger. Those two houses --where they are--were his machine shops. In front of one of the houses is all cement and that was the log dump. So we used to have these booms of logs all over, and my husband just loved that. He loved to see these logs dumped, but it put other people off. There used to be a terrible smell around here because the bark used to

come off the logs and it would sink down and there was a smell to it. Every so often now we get a whiff of it, but nothing like that. But Doug didn't mind at all. Anything to do with logging he loved.

Where the store is, next door, my husband thought that was part of the Powell River Company. Part of an office that they had.

So did you move here in 1969?

No, we didn't move here. We used to come up here weekends, winter and summer.

Tape 1, Side B

We'd bring our family up. In fact, we had a car we'd leave up here. My husband retired when he was 75 so that was in 1978 that we came up here for good. But we did buy an apartment in Vancouver because my husband was sick by then. He had an enlarged heart. So we thought we should be near our doctor. But then my husband would never go to town!

So I used to go back and forth every couple of weeks just to check on the apartment. I'd meet up with my friends in town.

So you've lived here in this house since you came here?

Since it was built, yes. My husband built it all himself. It was what they called precut. M & B had an interest in a company that did that. You designed the house yourself, then they cut it to your specification. Then they brought it up on a flatbed and reassembled it. It was all numbered. But that was just the outside. My husband did all the inside. And my sons.

Did your children go to school mostly in Vancouver?

Oh, yes. Actually, they all went to UBC, but one son, who now lives in Davis Bay, he only went for a year. He got what they used to call a BAC. Bounced at Christmas!

What organizations have you belonged to on the coast?

Just the University Women's Club. I belonged to one in Vancouver for years. Then we moved to West Vancouver—when we left Parksville and went back to Vancouver, we lived in West Vancouver for a while, so I belonged to the West Van University Women's Club. Then went back to Vancouver and joined the Vancouver one. Then came up here.

What has your role been?

Just a member.

Have you been really involved in the community here?

Not really. Too busy painting.

Do you belong to any painting organizations on the coast?

Well, I did belong to the art gallery up here for a while, and the Vancouver Art Gallery.

The Sechelt Art gallery?

Yeah. And, as I said, I belonged to the one that is now on Granville Island. It started in West Vancouver and I belonged to it there, and then I belonged to it in Vancouver. I belonged to it for years, so I should remember.

The Federation of Canadian Artists.

What would you say was the greatest achievement in your life?

Marrying my husband! We were very happy together. I was very lucky. We were very fond of each other.

Who had the greatest influence on your life?

My husband.

In what way?

Well, he was always very supportive. Always very attentive. He was—what you don't see too much of these days—a gentleman. He didn't like me to open the door or anything. Insisted that he had to do it. But he also . . . I notice with my own children . . . he was so good with the family. If I said something, he backed it up. That was a great help.

What would you say was your greatest disappointment in life?

I don't think I've had any disappointments in life.

I've always been kind of a “take-things-as-they-come” kind of person. I don't dwell on things. It doesn't do any good. I'm not a crier. That doesn't do any good either.

I think maybe my greatest annoyance in life was the fact that we had chickens at one time. They drove me nuts!

On the island?

No, it was in North Vancouver. Our property was on a hill, and the chicken run was partway down the hill. In the winter I'd go down to feed the blasted things and it would be all icy and I'd fall into the darned thing. What's more, the chickens were always getting what they'd call the “pip.” If they went around with their head on one side, you knew they were on the way out.

So one time Doug had taken us up to a place called—it was across the bay from Port Moody. The lady who we were staying with she came and said she hated to tell me, but our chickens had been eaten up by a bear. I was so happy! She thought I'd be so sad! So that was my greatest aggravation—those stupid chickens. They would lay eggs at a great rate—this was during the summer—then during the fall they'd stop laying. So we used to put the eggs in a great big jar in some type of solution, but they never tasted like fresh eggs. But that was depression time, so an

egg was an egg.

Whose idea was it to have the chickens?

My husband's. The reason we bought this property was my husband had a friend who had already bought some property and Doug went over to it once lunch hour to look at it with this fellow, so he talked him into buying some property.

Were there any humorous moments in your life?

Oh, there were lots of them.

Can you remember one?

Not one in particular, no.

We had lots of fun together.

What did you do for vacations as a family—with your children?

Well, my husband was great at . . . as I say, he enjoyed going to Woodlands so much, he would pick out a place and send us up there for two weeks by ourselves. He'd take us up then he'd come up to pick us up and take us back.

What was the Sunshine Coast like when you first came?

Well, it was a lot smaller than it is now. A lot fewer houses. As I said, over there [points to west side of her house] that was booming ground and the two houses on there weren't there. Roy Doyle had what they call a portable spar and he'd come in with his logging trucks and lift these logs off the truck and dump them in the water. All the rusty chain and things like that.

I guess it was noisy and dusty?

Oh, it wasn't too bad. The road it goes off the main road here and goes down there. That's where they used to drive to. And Roy Doyle had built an A-frame over on the point there. People named Yzerman live there now. They added another 'A' to it, but then after the Yzerman's bought it, it burned down, so they rebuilt the place.

The post office used to be right at the top of the dock. It was run by a lady named Rutherford. There's a Rutherford Road up there now. Two of her nephews are there now. Very nice place.

How would you describe the Sunshine Coast? Socially, for example?

Well, my husband used to go around and visit everybody, but I never was a person to go out for coffee with friends or anything like that because I always wanted to paint. If you're going to paint you can't take time out and spend it yakking away with people, or you're not going to get any painting done. So I'd stay home and paint. So I didn't get to know the people. I knew the Werseens who still live across there. And the Domages, of course, used to live there.

But, he used to get around. He knew everybody. I guess they thought I was antisocial, which I wasn't, because I love people. It's just that I wanted to do my painting.

It is a small town. Or it was a small town.

In Parksville my husband was the manager there and they kind of held that against him. My kids used to get beaten up all the time. They resent somebody successful.

It used to be where everybody knew exactly how everybody was. People still do here, pretty well. I'm the only one who doesn't know what's going on half the time. Because I don't get out that much any more.

The store was a teensy store.

Roy Doyle was married to a woman with whom he built a Panabode, right up on the highway there. Just as you go towards the highway, to the right there. That was his place. Then he split with her and married Carson Greaves. She lives in a white house on the other side of the delicatessen. Her mother had the store.

Carson still owns that house and still comes up every summer.

What would you say is the Sunshine Coast's greatest asset?

Well, I find it very friendly. My neighbours couldn't be nicer to me. I'm just so lucky.

My apartment in Vancouver was a very nice apartment, right next to Van Dusen garden. Beautiful outlook on a little lake they had there. But, I wouldn't see anybody from one week to the next. I knew one couple in the apartment building, but they're the only ones I ever saw. If I went for a walk on the streets around this apartment—it was on 33rd, just off Granville—people would say hello and I'd never see them again.

Here, every time I go out I see somebody I know walking their dog or something. They're all so very good to me. They give me food and do things for me. So the outstanding thing I think about this area here is its friendliness. It's not as quiet now as it used to be because of the store and these great huge trucks coming down. But on the whole, its very pleasant.

How has it changed since you came?

Well, there's so many more people. Not so much here. But when you drive out. Especially at night time, there are all of the lights through the trees.

There hardly used to be anyone in Sechelt when you went in.

Have you ever regretted your decision to move here?

Oh, no, no. I'm only too happy. When my husband died, my friends were so surprised. They thought I'd move back to town, but I said no way. I liked it up here. Of course, he loved it.

When did he pass away?

1995.

What would you say you see is the greatest difficulty facing our community?

Well, if you ask anyone around here, they all say too many people coming up.

How about the nation?

In what way?

The challenges we face today as compared to earlier days.

Well, believe me, we don't face any more challenges than we did during the first world war and the second world war, so I tend to take those things as they come.

That's a different perspective.

Well, for one thing, once you've raised four children, you're prepared for the unexpected!

I never was one to dwell on things. I've always been the kind of person who made my own way. I guess because I was an only child. I mean, my parents supported me, but they weren't always with me. I've got four children of whom I'm very proud, and my husband was very proud of them.

How many grandchildren?

Ten grandchildren. Three great grandchildren.

Any of them, besides your son in Davis Bay, live on the coast?

No, he's the only one. He has four children. Two daughters who are in Calgary now, and two sons in Vancouver. One son is going to UBC. Engineering.

My youngest son is in Los Angeles. My oldest son lives in Toledo, Ohio and my daughter lives in Vancouver. She's just gone to Scotland for a couple of weeks. After that she goes to Turkey for a couple of weeks.

Did you ever go to Scotland or Europe or anything?

Yes. I've been to Scotland two or three times. I've been to China and Australia. Gone around South America, through the Panama. I've travelled quite a bit. I'd love to be able to travel now, but it's impossible now.

When did you travel?

After my husband died. Actually, he and I went to Australia before he died. But he was sick then. And we also went to England and Scotland. That was my first time there. Before that I'd gone to England and France on an art tour.

That must have been exciting, being on an art tour.

Well, it was. I love art galleries. Whenever I visit my son in Los Angeles that's all we do is visit art galleries. Especially the Getty Museum. It's gorgeous.

I've been in New York. I like the modern art there.

If you had any advice for someone starting out in life, what would it be?

I don't think young people these days seem to make the most of what they've got. This is what I think: that they should appreciate what they have. I mean they get married, then the person they get married to doesn't turn out to be perfect—well who is?—and then they split up. I think it's kind of sad that they don't stick around long enough to make a lasting relationship. Because, when you get older, that's when you appreciate it.

As I say, I've been very lucky. My husband was very fond of me, and my children are very fond of me and take care of me. My boys phone me twice a week, and my daughter phones me several times, and she comes up here occasionally, but she's very taken up with her grandchildren. Craig, the one in Davis Bay, he's awfully good. He comes every week and does chores for me.

I saw that nice pile of wood there.

Yes, well, just this past weekend he finished splitting it.

My youngest son was up so he did quite a bit to it too, but not near as much as Craig.

In your art—what training have you taken?

Well, there was this man in West Vancouver who started us. I can't remember the name of the group, but it eventually ended up on Granville Island. I started going to him for classes. A friend of mine started, so we went together.

I went to different art classes all over the place. I went to one in the British . . . in the Caribbean . . . British West Indies. I've been to a couple in California, and a couple on Vancouver Island. Different artists used to have these classes, so I used to go to some of them.

What medium do you prefer using?

Well, these are all watercolours. I started out with oils, then I did some acrylic, which I didn't like, then I thought well I'd go to watercolours because it was easier to pack around. Turned out it was just about the same!

Do you have a common theme or something you specially like?

Well, I painted a lot of seagulls and they were very popular, so I did quite a few of them. But, I just like to paint what I like to paint.

Mostly scenic?

Yes.

What would motivate you to do a painting? You walk along the beach and the light strikes you,

or . . . ?

Yes.

Is it the light, or the actual object?

No, it's not the actual object. When you paint, you paint shapes, and shapes are caused by light and dark. Most people don't realize that and a lot of people think they paint things. But things are not what painting is all about.

What is it about?

Shapes. See, when you walk into a room, what you really see is the light and the dark against the dark in the room. You don't see individual things until later. Hard to explain.

Do you get lost when you're painting?

Oh, yeah. Go off in my own world.

How long does a painting session usually last?

Usually till I start getting a headache. Because it requires so much concentration.

How old were you when you started?

Well, as I said, my father was a commercial artist. When I was about nine or ten I started . . . well, I always drew so it kind of went from there. When we went to live on Vancouver Island there were so few things for me to do over there. I took up golf, but that was just once a week. I did have my first hole-in-one there. However, there were no tennis courts. So I started painting. Then when I went back to Vancouver I met up with this friend of mine who was also a painter. She's two years older than I am, and she's still alive.

Did you have any single instructor who stood out above others?

Yes, there were a couple. One is Rex Brandt. He's American. And there was . . . what was his name? Rex Brandt's wife is quite a good instructor.

What artist do you admire? When you visit art galleries, is it traditional artists or . . . ?

I like modern art. I'm not crazy about the kind where it's just bands. But there are some types of art that I really enjoy. It's hard to explain.

Do you like the classical, like Rembrandt?

No, I don't. I mean, it's all right.

Art hasn't changed, you know, over hundreds of years. They still paint by the same principles as they used to. In that way, it hasn't changed a lot, but in some ways it has changed a lot. Well, to begin with they invented paint in tubes which is a great help. They got past the point where they had to grind all their paints, or have somebody grind them for them.

Have any of your children followed your artistic . . . ?

Well, my youngest son is in computer visualization, which people think is cartoons and things, but it's not that at all. A lot of it's research. They go into these places in Europe, like Rome and other places, and they dig a little hole and lower a camera way down, hundreds of feet, and take pictures. Then they bring those up and they show what these places were like thousands of years ago. Then they build a replica of what they think they were like. They do models.

A while back these places in Asia Minor someplace had been inhabited by, I think it was Jewish people, and the Romans—they were up on the top of a hill—and the Roman's besieged the place and they conquered it. They destroyed everybody then spread salt over everything—they used to do this so nothing would grow—so that's what's left. This barren kind of a hill. But it used to be a great big town. So they did this research on it.

They've done Rome and some of the cathedrals all over Europe.

What do you think of the controversy over whether photography is art or not?

Oh, I think photography by the right person is art. They use the same principles, you know. I can see it when I look at a photograph taken by someone who knows what they're doing—not just the ordinary run-of-the-mill person, but somebody who actually is an artist who uses the same principles. You have to get the viewer's eye into the picture, and keep the viewer's eye in the picture for as long as you can. You don't want to get into the picture then shoot right out. Most people who do photography aren't aware of this and don't practice it. But, somebody who is a really good, famous photographer—oh no, I think they're artists. I can see it. It's the same principle.

Do you have a favourite artist?

I love the German expressionists. And I like the newer—since the impressionists—some of them. Not all, by a long shot. I like David Milne—he's one of my favourites. He's Canadian.

Do you like the Group of Seven?

Some of them. Not all of them.

How about Emily Carr?

I like Emily Carr because she painted her own thing. I like some of her paintings a lot better than some of the others. I'm not crazy about her paintings of Indians as such, but I like some of her paintings of Indian landscapes.

Is there any advice you'd give to somebody starting out painting?

Yes. It's hard work.

How long did you paint before you felt that you were producing something worthwhile?

Well, it's a never-ending process. I wish I could paint now, but I just haven't got the energy to concentrate. It takes a lot of concentration.

Is there anything you'd like to add that I haven't covered?

I think you've covered just about everything!

That Bill Damage, he was the first white child born in the Queen Charlottes. He built a big log house—you go down Redrooffs Road and down Rutherford. Winds around.

Telephone addition to history (unrecorded), September 19, 2006

I can remember when the liberty ship, *Green Hill Park* blew up in Vancouver harbour during the war. They built these liberty ships in Vancouver because so many ships were being torpedoed in the war. They built ships to take supplies to the United Kingdom and the *Green Hill Park* was one of them. There was one man was killed when ship blew up. He was a longshoreman. Everyone else had left boat after closing time he went back to swipe bottle of pickles and so he blew up in the boat.

The anchor outside here—on what they call Anchor Rock—was from the liberty ships. After the war they had all these anchors from these boats so they dumped them up at North Arm Bill Damage was in the tugboat business and he got one of these anchors and put it on this rock. He had been in the navy during war and had so many friends with boats that he wanted to show where he lived, so he put the anchor on the rock.

We were living in North Vancouver when the *Green Hill Park* explosion occurred. After we were married for three years we built a house in North Vancouver, which in those days was really over in the boondocks because people had to go over the bridge to come and see you. Don't remember the date it happened. All of a sudden I heard this big bang. My children were little because it was during the war. I was doing housework and looking after my family. My husband was at work.

What did you think it was?

I didn't really know what it was.

Were you afraid?

Not afraid. I just wondered what that was.

Did you think it was the enemy?

Oh heavens, no.

Did it affect your life or anyone's life that you knew?

No effect. No one I knew. It was just kind of an event that happened right downtown in Vancouver.

I can remember the earthquake when all the chimneys fell at Comox and Courtney

[Note: Earthquake occurred on June 23, 1946, central Vancouver Island, 7.3 magnitude, one person drowned, extensive damage along east coast of Vancouver Island.]

I was in North Vancouver then, too. That was last big one we had. It was centered around Cumberland and Courtney and peoples chimneys all fell over. It was on a weekend, a Sunday I think.

At that point we had sawdust—that's how we heated the house. My husband yelled at me. He thought the furnace had blown up and he yelled, "Get the children out of the house!" Then he ran downstairs. That was a reaction that a lot of the men had. They thought it was the furnace. My middle son, who was youngest at time, was sitting on little seat on the toilet. I grabbed the whole thing and ran out to road carrying my son on this toilet seat!

I remember there was a kind of chemical smell. Don't know what from.

Was there any damage around you? Did anything fall?

No? Vancouver wasn't affected.

We went to a cocktail party in the afternoon and a lot of the men had had the same experience. It didn't really affect our leves, but it did people on the island. Quite a severe one.

I can remember the Second Narrows Bridge collapsing.

[June 17, 1958 – a hot June day, 3:40 p.m.- one of the steel bridge spans on the Second Narrows Bridge construction collapse, carrying another span down with it.]

I was in NV then, too. It was funny because a man came to the door—I'd sent things to be cleaned and he came to door and said did I know the Second Narrows Bridge had collapsee. That was quite a terrible thing. Quite a few people killed in that.

I can also remember the tsunami that hit Port Alberni

[The tsunami was generated by the Great Alaska Earthquake of March 27, 1964.]

That's when my middle son was in his teens. He was working over there during the summer. They had this earthquake in Alaska and the tsunami came down At that point they weren't really too...they knew what tsunamis were, but I don't think they realized they would come this far, so they weren't prepared for it. The tusnami washed fishboats into the town of Port Alberni about 20 or 30 feet.

Was your son in Port Alberni when it occurred?

Oh, yes he was there then. Everyone who was there had to –well the Department of Health sent out these little things, like a cigar holder, a metal thing, and they were supposed to put a sample of stool in that and mail to Health Centre in Vancouver. Well my son coming to Vancouver so

he said to heck with that and brought it with him. Only he couldn't find the Health Centre, so he decided he'd post it in post office. He walked into PO with this thing in his hand and apparently several men jumped on him and grabbed him. They thought it was a bomb. He tried to explain, but wasn't till he opened it that they believe him.

I'm not sure if anyone was hurt in the tsunami. It was quite a devastating thing for Port Alberni.

My son was working for some logging firm or other. All of our boys used to work in summer.

He was not hurt..