

R: *Your full name was Dorothy?*

DR: Dorothy B-r-o-o-k-e-r. My given name was Ethel Dorothy, but I have never used the Ethel. When I do a signature I put E. Dorothy. Only time I've ever heard "Ethel" has been in a lawyer's office or something.

R: *Your husband's name?*

DR: Thomas George Robilliard.

R: *Your parent's names?*

DR: Horace and Vera.

R: *Your mom's maiden name?*

DR: Walton.

R: *Where and when were you born?*

DR: I was born in Vancouver in a home, 4355 St. George Street, which is no longer. It's been taken down now. They've even levelled off the bank. The house that's there now is level with the sidewalk, but we used to have to go from the sidewalk up some stairs, up a bank, to get to the house.

R: *What year was that?*

DR: 1925.

R: *Did you have brothers and sisters?*

DR: Yes. My brother was the oldest. He was Horace Brooker. His middle name was Walton. Horace Walton Brooker. He was 16 ½ years my senior. And my sister was Constance-Vera Constance, but her name is Connie, we call her. The same as she never got called Vera. She's 10 ½ years my senior. Now she is still alive. She lives in Sechelt, in the Royal Terraces. My brother passed away in 1991.

R: *What is her married name?*

DR: My sister? Wilson.

R: *Where was your husband born?*

DR: My husband was born in Vancouver too, in 1924. But I didn't know him in Vancouver.

R: *Did he have siblings?*

DR: He had an older sister named Margaret.

R: *When did you first come to the Sunshine Coast?*

DR: My brother had a large boy's camp for years at Fisherman's Cove. Every summer since I was about 6 or 7, I was included at the boy's camp. Now and again a girl or two would come in there. Mostly it was boys, of course. Then he bought property up Sechelt Inlet.

I don't know what happened at Fisherman's Cove. I think either the property was sold—I don't know what the reason was. But he bought this property, 32.4 acres up the inlet, at Porpoise Bay—beyond the island, just beyond McLean Bay, on the east side. He had a boy's camp there, but only for a couple of years. Then, through other marital reasons, etc., he and his wife moved to Sechelt, and he was a telegraph operator.

He had this boy's camp for just a couple of years, and then in 1942 – My sister had been married in '39 and she and her husband moved up there. There was a house that used to be the old Hammond property. Cliff Hammond lived at this place at one time. He had a lovely launch-type boat. It wasn't a fishboat, but it was a lovely launch, a big boat, and it was called the Sailor Maid. It was very nice. They owned that property and my brother had bought it from them. They had lived there—there were two houses on the property. One they had lived in, the other was not finished. It was finished outside, but there were no rooms, etc. inside. It was just a big long room.

My mother used to go up to visit my sister and my mother was never a well woman. All my younger life she was mostly in bed. She had asthma very bad. When she came up to visit my sister, she found that she could breathe so much better up there. So they decided to pull up stakes and move. I was very distressed at the time because I had so many friends and highschool and all around my area, and I was really upset about moving. Anyway, I had to do it. So we came up in 1942 and they had built this darling little house, but it only had one bedroom. So that was the way of getting the last bird out of the nest, I suppose!

So I had to get a job and I came over Sechelt side, and I was very fortunate. I guess I had a bit of pull, but I had to go to Vancouver to be interviewed in the government telegraph office. I used to be a telephone operator there. The longs and the shorts, 2 longs and . . .

R: *In Sechelt?*

DR: In Sechelt. All the party lines etc. It was a funny switchboard. It was a hand-cranked switchboard. It was on a generator I suppose. You had to crank it as you plugged the plugs in.

In the wartime everything of course in those days was blackout, black curtains all over. They had a secret code—it was a word. I don't know how often that word came through, maybe once every couple of months. I'm not sure. But you would just get this from the operator in Gibsons. They got it from, I suppose, Victoria. They would phone in this code word and she would pass it on to me, and all they would say was the code word and that's all. They didn't have the radar in those days, so they had what they call the Aircraft Detection Corp, and all up the coast . . . at Halfmoon Bay there was Pearl Osborne, Ted Osborne's wife. All the planes were reported. Every time they passed these small areas, all the way down the coast, and they [the spotters] would just say "ADC" and I would say

the same thing to the Gibsons operator, and their message would be passed on to Victoria. I had to do that, too. I had to spot the airplanes as well, as they came over. That way they tracked.

One night they did not locate the airplane that was reported. This code came through and the hairs go up all down your back! So then I had to notify the RCMP of course, and the ARP, and the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers were called out of course, and of course the telegraph operator was there. We had instructions that if the enemy landed or were about to land, we were to smash all our equipment, telegraph and telephone. We were to smash all the communication so the enemy couldn't use it. But that was rather a frightening night. They were all stand-by. Of course, they all gathered at the old telegraph office and around it.

The telegraph office was right up at the head of the wharf, or I suppose you'd say the end of the wharf. I think that old tree is still there—that great big tree there? Well we were right beside that tree. It was a small office. For heat we had an old stove that used briquettes and they had little Isenglass windows, or whatever they were. You could open them up and have it glowing, or you could shut them and watch it. But that's what we had for heat. It was quite rural. I had to light the fire every morning.

But it was fine. The Union Steamship, of course, the annex and the store were right across the street from the telegraph office. Every day Port Mellon phoned in all their production and how many tons, and all this. I wrote this telegram down and then the telegraph operator would send it. I can always remember the address was Sorg Pulp Company, Middletown, Ohio. I can always remember that, because it was a thing I did every day.

When I first got the job, I boarded for a month with Mr. and Mrs. Edric and Florrie Clayton. Of course, I had known Peggy from when I came up in the summers, we'd got to know each other. There were a couple of other girls here at the time around my age. We'd just pal around a little bit.

They had a wonderful thing here at that time when I was here. The Union Steamships were still in operation. They had a tea room and then they had what they called the pavilion right beside it. It was a joint building, I think. The tea room was just separated. This pavilion had a lovely fireplace, and all the floor was hardwood. Well, on Friday nights they had roller skating there. The roller skates had rubber wheels.

Now that's where I met my husband. He was great at roller skating. He was turning around and doing all these tricks on his skates, so I met him there. He was logging at Halfmoon Bay. Mr. Tait at Halfmoon Bay had a taxi. His daughter was Orma married Tom Beasley who owned the little general store there at the time. He brought these young loggers down every Friday night to roller skate, and of course this one Friday night

Peggy Clayton (Hemstreet now) was with me. She said, "Let's go roller skating." I thought, well, I can roller skate on the other wheels, but I'd never done it in a roller rink. I'd just done it on sidewalks at home. Anyway, we put on skates and we were skating, and it was a great thing there.

Saturday nights mostly they had dances there, and my brother had a small orchestra and they played for the dances. Very often I was the ticket-taker at the dances. My brother also formed what they called the Sechelt Entertainment Society and we had to memorize plays. We had practices once a week and we memorized these lines of course. He was quite strict with us. We would put on a play maybe once or twice a year. Mrs. Berry Sr. was in it, and Bob Kean, and Alec Gray, and there was a school teacher, Miss Turner. She moved away. But she was in it too, and my sister, and my brother-in-law, and myself. And we had a great time with these plays.

When there was a gathering in Sechelt of any kind, everybody used to come from far and near. Around the area, you know. Because this was the entertainment. It was a lot of fun. The dances were fun. The local kids came. It was very nice. There was a lot going on, but they were simple things. In that era, of course.

Peggy and I became pretty close friends when we were young. We were the two that palled a lot together. There was another girl called Pat Dunn. Her father was a lineman for the government telegraph system at that time. When I worked there, he was the lineman. And I used to do the books there as well as do the switchboard. There was a June Campbell. She was a very beautiful girl. A very glamorous girl. And Pat was pretty glamorous, too. I got a bit of attention from these young loggers because I was something new, but they were definitely the glamour girls. They were very beautiful ladies.

I went to see Pat. I found out where she was, she was in a care place in North Vancouver. About two years ago she passed away, but I went to see her about a week or two before she passed away. I was so glad to see her.

When I was at the telegraph office, that was the big means of communication, and the phones. I connected with Gibsons for long distance calls and then they connected with the B.C. Tel in Vancouver. So we didn't have a direct line to B.C. Tel, but Gibsons had one. They were Lou and Harry Winn. They were the operators at Gibsons.

It was a nice little community. I boarded with Claytons for about a month and then I boarded with the Youngsons who had Rockwood Lodge, and then I boarded with Mr. & Mrs. Billingsley. They were inlaws of a friend of mine, Alice Billingsley. We really became very close friends for years. I boarded with her mother-in-law. She stayed in a cottage. Clayton's had their house right in by where the sports store is [Trail Bay Sports.] I have pictures of that too. Right behind them and to the east a little bit, maybe a lot or so, there were two little cottages in there and Mr. & Mrs. Billingsley Sr. were renting in

there, and I went to stay with them because it was closer to where I worked. Noreen Woods stayed in the cottage beside them. She had a small family, two little boys. Then she moved over to Selma Park into a duplex right past the reserve, but in that bay there. I don't know whether the duplex is still there. Right on the beach. I moved in with her and we became pretty good friends. Then I had to walk across every day. I got off work very late, it must have been around 9 o'clock. I usually worked till 9, and old Mr. Billingsley did not like the idea of me walking there by myself at night. So he would walk right across with me until there was a little bit of a trail and a bush, and a bit of a hill, but not much. He just walked down there, and then it was cleared and the houses were beyond that.

We had a good rapport with the first nations people at that time. Nobody had any problems at all. Until the law came in [allowing them to purchase alcohol.] The chiefs were very much against having use of alcohol. At one time apparently it was forbidden. Then the law came in where they were allowed to and the chiefs were all against it and the elders. Anyway, that came in. Then I think after that there might have been a few problems. Otherwise everything seemed fine.

There were a couple of taxis. There was Mr. French. Oh, I stayed with Alice Amelia French, too, for a little while. I boarded with them for a short time. She had a little library behind the Shell Station and then her house was behind that again.

My brother had chinchillas and he was right behind Crucil's house there. I think the house is still there. It's probably been built on, I don't know. But I know the chinchilla house is still there and I think that's a home now. He raised chinchillas there at one time.

My brother and brother-in-law, when my sister was first married, had a mink farm up the inlet. It's past the island where we finally came to settle, and we lived on my brother's property there. I didn't live there at that time.

There was an artist. He was almost blind and he lived in a little house where [the old library was beside the Baptist Church]. He was approximately there, where they lived, a Mr. Smith. My brother had some of his paintings which my niece has today. Very beautiful artist. An Englishman. He was a dear fellow and he and his wife lived in this little house right near my brother's house. There's some beautiful paintings he did.

*R: I'd like to go back to the night that the airplane went missing. You spotted the plane and no one could find it?*

DR: No, somebody else. I put the call through from somewhere, I can't remember where it was, but they couldn't locate this plane. Whether I had put the call through, or whether it was further up in another area, Vancouver Island, I don't know. That plane was never located at the time, and that meant everybody had to be on the alert. So it was scary. Everybody was quite tense. But it all passed and it was never located. However, years

later, when I lived with my husband near Porpoise Bay, Ted and Mildred Chambers lived in a house a couple of houses away from us. Ted and his son Barry had gone on a small island—I don't know which one it was, it could have been Nelson or one of those islands, I don't know—and I remember at the time they had found some kind of Japanese diving gear on this island, and they had brought it in to the RCMP. They didn't know what it was about. This was well after the war. It was funny because at that time that night went through my mind and I thought, "I wonder if the plane had dropped people, or something, and they had been there. Or maybe a submarine had come in." Who knows. They have marvellous detecting devices now, but not in those days.

I read a book by a Les Hemsall and he was in the air force and he talks of being located at Comox at one time and he talked about that era. He wrote this book which I just got about 8 months ago, and he said there was a shelling of some kind. I didn't know about that at the time. Not till I read this book.

*R: I'd like to ask more about your brother's boys' camp.*

*DR: It was called Camp Buckhorn. And my brother was a great fellow for every night around the camp fire. We had a camp fire every night. Some of the kids would have money from home. They'd be lucky. They'd be able to buy marshmallows at Kolthammer's store at the head of Fisherman's Cove. We'd roast marshmallows. I don't remember roasting weaners, but I know we roasted marshmallows. Every Sunday he took us on a small hike up, almost to Horseshoe Bay. There was a big rock bluff somewhere near there that we sat on, and he would give us a religious sermon. He was very organized. We had tent inspection, maybe three times a week, and the tents had to be neat, orderly and clean, otherwise you got kp duty and maybe had to help the cook at the cookhouse with peeling vegetables or carting water. There was a beautiful little stream ran through there. We used to catch minnows there. We got our drinking water from the stream also. This was at Fisherman's Cove. The tents, by the way, were not just the canvass tents. They had canvass tops, but the had wood bottoms, and there was wood up about 3 feet high, and then the canvass on top of that.*

At Fisherman's Cove we used to go a little place called Sandy Hook where there was a real sandy beach, and we used to swim over there.

*R: And at Porpoise Bay?*

*DR: Well, they used that long building, that other house that wasn't finished. There was water up there. My dad could divine water. He never understood how or why it happened, but he used to do this for friends, even out at Crescent Beach when they built a house out there in the older days. He could divine water. But [at Porpoise Bay] they had an underground stream up there that was like spring water. It was icy cold even in the hottest day in summer. And we made a dugout a little bit, so that's where we got our*

drinking water from. Beautiful, beautiful water. When Dean was little, I used to cart water from that stream. I lived there for a few years. I used to cart water for formula and any kind of water we wanted, and I used to cart it to boil his diapers in and stuff like that. It was lovely, lovely water, and so clear and cold.

My sister lived up there at that time, and my mother. The year I was, I think 13, I used to take a boat, a putt-putt they had, and my brother-in-law and a man who lived between our place and the road—he was way up in the bush, much closer to the road—a Ben Salter and his family. They had 3 or 4 children at the time, and they had a horse and the horse used to come down and graze on our property. We were glad because it kept some of the longer, wild grass down. This kid's name was Buster Salter, and he used to bring the horse down. The horse's name was Buck.

The boys' camp was great. They would take the kids on fishing trips up Gray Creek. I have a picture of a bunch of boys on the wharf that had come back from Gray Creek. He also had quite a few clinker-built row boats, and they were painted yellow with a blue trim on them, and of course, they all had the name Camp Buckhorn on the bow. There were life rings—we didn't have life jackets—there were life rings on the boats. I think they were kind of covered with canvass and that kind of kapok stuff inside. I don't know how good they would be, but that's what they had.

*R: You know where Porpoise Bay Park is? Was it beyond that?*

*DR: Oh yes.*

*R: As far as Tuwanek?*

*DR: Oh, no. It was this side of Sandy Hook, before you ever got round that point. You didn't go 'round the point. Because we went around there one time and visited the Solbergs who used to live at Sandy Hook at the time. No, it was this side of the point, between the point and quite a way this side of the point, but it wasn't McLean Bay.*

Now most of that acreage that he had was rock bluff, and quite forested. I remember the great big ferns—we called them pig ferns, the big, heavy ferns. The growth there was so lush! Even here today, compared to the city, is pretty lush. But the ferns used to grow so tall and we used to play games like run-sheep-run and we would hide in between the ferns. I remember I was hiding one time and this kid said to me, "Don't look now, Dot, but there's a snake behind you." And there was snake had a tale around one fern, stretched out over to another one! Oh, I freaked out! And of course they were mad at me because I gave away the hiding place.

*R: Where did the boys come from?*

*DR: All over. I know several came from Vancouver.*

*R: Through the churches, or did he put an ad in the paper?*

DR: No, it was a private boys' camp. He'd had it in Fisherman's Cove for years and he just continued it a bit. But I think he only did that for a couple of years and then they disbanded. I think there were personal reasons.

The cookhouse was great. We had lots of pancakes with maple syrup. And we played lots of games and did lots of musical songs and the camp fires were wonderful. Really impressive.

When my husband and I were married, we were married in the little church—St. Hilda's Church—the small one. We'd married, of all things, on a Sunday because the old Union boat used to go down, back to Vancouver, on Sundays. So we went away on this boat on our honeymoon. I have a picture of that boat name—the *Lady Cecilia*. I have a picture of boarding the boat. I have quite a few pictures. I should send them to you.

R: *A good idea would be to send them to the Sechelt Archives.*

DR: I must dig them out and send them up. I have a good picture, too, of the old Red & White store. I'm pulling Dean in a wagon on the dirt road. Just little things like that.

I used to teach Sunday school at St. Hilda's. First of all we started in the church itself. Then they built this little hall, and I have pictures of the kids in the Sunday school. It was around Thanksgiving and we all brought things. There was Bruce Redman and one of the girls. I have the names on the back I believe. There would be Tove Polson, Bruce Redman, the Whitaker girl, Bonnie and Corinne Mills. There were a lot of kids at that time. Actually, when I first started, when I was boarding at Selma Park, I used to teach Sunday school then before I was married, in the church, and the Clayton boys were there, Dick and John.

R: What was your husband's story? How did he come to the Sunshine Coast?

DR: His parents moved up to Halfmoon Bay, we called it "up the hill" at the time—there was a big acreage there. Mac and Bloedell I think they still own that property, they bought it from his parents and his parents moved to Welcome Beach and built a house on the beach there. They had quite a farm up the hill. She had guinea fowl and a cow, rabbits, chickens, and a big, big garden.

R: *Did they sell them?*

DR: Yes, they sold their eggs and she had a little Ford truck. It was funny. It was small, but it was like a little cage at the back. I don't know what model it would be. I wasn't interested in those things in those days. They had a wonderful little farm up there.

R: *Did your husband grow up there?*

DR: No. He moved there, I think he said he was about 14 when he moved there. Then, of course, what was there to do but log. I have some wonderful pictures of logging. Some of those logs on this truck—there was Vic Osborne, and my husband, and I think Bill

Mars, or maybe it was the boy—I have a picture of these with the huge logs on it. The butts, I think, were bigger than my husband at the time. I have this picture . . . I should get it blown up really, because of the size of these logs. Enormous. I will dig that one out, too and get it up because it's quite interesting.

Yes, he moved up here with his parents and then I told you I met him at the roller skating.

R: *What year were you married?*

DR: I was married in 1944.

R: *Was he logging at Halfmoon Bay?*

DR: Yes. He logged for Ted Osborne for years and years. But he became allergic to cedar. He used to get cedar poisoning so bad, and finally he just had to get out of it. But he always loved the woods! You could put him in the woods and he'd find his place anywhere, but if you took him in the city . . . He didn't know the streets like I did. I used to be the copilot when we went to the city in the car.

R: *When he became allergic to cedar, what did he do?*

DR: Then he got a job at the Red & White Store. He did mostly butchering. They used to get a lot of camp orders. There were so many logging camps way up the inlet at the time and they had a lot of big orders for the logging camps. Tommy was very clever. He could turn his hand to almost anything. I really think he learned a lot about that through his hunting experiences, butchering deer and things like this. But he used to butcher quite a bit there, and then he did all sorts of clerking in the store when they weren't busy. He worked for Jack Redman for 7 years.

R: *Then he became an electrician?*

DR: Then he carpentered for a little while, then he went into the electric business. He went to Vancouver and took an exam and passed that. He went into partnership at first with two other fellows, John Davis and Peter Beck. I didn't want him to go in. I'd seen their books, and I was really quite against him going in, but he did anyway. Peter Beck died about 3 months after he was with them. They carried on for quite a while and then John went to visit a brother in California. John and his wife, Lee, lived on Dolphin Street. Their house is still there. They went to visit his brother in California and fell in love with California so the business came to the end. So my husband started out on his own.

When we first bought our property near Porpoise Bay, it was all woods. The Union [Steamship Company] had subdivided all this land. I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, we paid \$275 for our lot. And it was a very big lot.

My husband and I fell trees. We used a bucking saw and a swede saw. I would be on one end and he'd be on the other and we'd cut it all, and I used a grub hoe to cut out all the roots. We worked very hard but we were young and healthy and it didn't hurt us one bit.

I'd do it all again if I had the same partner back.

We cleared this land all by hand. There were cats in the woods and stuff, but we didn't have the money to do anything like that at that time. Money was pretty scarce and none of us did.

One fortunate thing was, he and my brother-in-law, and Ben Salter bought this old mill from Herb Stockwell and they had it way up in the woods on the other side of the road, past Ben Salter's place. There was a bachelor lived nearby, his name was McGinley. They had to set up the sawmill there, but it was not too successful because it was too far from anywhere to haul the lumber. So that didn't work very well. Then my brother-in-law was diagnosed with tuberculosis and was sent to Tranquille. So that ended that partnership. But one thing the fellows did, they managed to cut enough lumber for each of them to have rough lumber for the shell of their house. So we got that out of the mill. Little else.

In August 1946, my husband was blowing stumps for a fellow that lived near Herb Stockwell–Ellis Prendergast. He was Herb's nephew. My husband was blowing these big stumps for him on his property and they finished blowing them and they were walking up somewhere toward the boat, and my husband had a dynamite cap still in his hand. It went off and took off the middle finger on his left hand, and the ring finger was left terrifically crooked. They had to take him all the way up to Garden Bay hospital. At that time that road was pretty rugged. All dirt road. He got in as far around Mrs. French's at the Shell garage and somebody came out and offered him a pillowslip to put around the hand. Then somebody wanted to pour iodine on it, and he said, "No.No." It was a pretty bad burn.

I didn't know about this. I was waiting for the fellows to come home in the boat. You could always hear this little putt putt going. I was waiting and they didn't come, and didn't come. It was dark, and supper was drying up. Finally, I could hear the putt putt come and then I heard a footstep on the porch. The door opened, just a bit, and I was standing and thinking, "This is funny." Because my husband always came home he was whistling, always whistling. Happy. Happy. And in came his lunch bucket. I went to the door and opened it wide and my brother-in-law was there. My brother-in-law was a very gentle kind of fellow. He had a very hard time explaining. He said, "Dot, Tommy won't be home tonight." This is the first thing he told me. And I said, "Well, where's he gone?" He said, "Well, I'm afraid he's in the hospital at Garden Bay." And that's how I heard what had happened.

The next day I rowed over to Porpoise Bay Wharf. By the way, when he was in the army, I used to row over every day to that wharf. All through my pregnancy I rowed and rowed. Maybe that's why Dean is so fond of water and fishing.

R: *Was that to find out about the casualty lists?*

DR: Yes. And of course, to get mail when the boats came in. I always got letters, and I always sent letters.

Anyway, Tommy was at the hospital and I rowed the next day to the wharf and Ellis Prendergast had an old car—I don't know if it was theirs, or Herbs, but we drove up to Garden Bay to the hospital to see him. He was in there for, I think, about 14 days or so. And the doctor that was on at the time, a Dr. Werner—I never did meet him—he apparently had recently come from the front lines and he was used to powder burns. But he said he had to sit and make instruments to get all this stuff out.

Of course, you couldn't see anything—his hand was all bandaged. And when he came home he had this bandage on and the doctor had told him he had to go back in about 5 or 6 days to get the bandage off for the first time. That smelled so badly that neither he or I could hardly bear the smell of this wound. He would hang his hand at night out the window it was so smelly. When he first got the bandage off I didn't go up with him. He went up probably . . . I don't know if Cece Lawrence . . . he had the bus line, but it was one of these . . . the first time I remember going was when I was visiting Tommy when he was first at Halfmoon Bay . . . was a 7-passenger, like the taxis used to have in Vancouver, they had two little seats that came out behind the front seats. That was the first that I remember Cece having.

Anyway, he went up there and he had to get the bandage off for the first time and the doctor told him to sit down. He said, "No, I'm okay." The doctor took the bandage off and [my husband] had to sit down! "Now I want you to take the bandage off every day," the doctor said, "get it out into the air and practice as it gets better. As it heals over, I want you to shuffle cards, or do anything to get the rest of the hand moving." So he did that, he went to work driving a cat with one hand for quite a while. When I first saw it the next day when he had to take this bandage off, of course, he said to me, "Well you'd better sit down." I said, "Well you know, things like that don't bother me, Tommy. I'm okay." He said, "Sit down, Dot. I had to. I didn't think it would bother me." But I stood up and then when he took it off I sat down.

There was no palm in his hand. And it grew all back! It was absolutely amazing what happened. Of course, he lost his middle finger and then the ring finger on the left hand was badly misshapen. The doctor up there figured perhaps they might have to remove that finger too. He said, "Well, you'll never get a nail back on that hand." And you know, he did. We did a lot of praying.

R: *That must have been really hard for you. You would not have had an income at that time.*

DR: No, but you know, there were wild berries, we had a great garden up the inlet. We used to take the old starfish and bury them around the tomato plants. And the sea weed. We used to put that and water with the seaweed. We had tomatoes like I've never grown them

since. We lived on the garden. We had no refrigeration, but he had dug a big hole, really deep, in cool spot on the north side of our little shack and I could set jelly in there in the summer. Things would keep cool [there.] Of course, we never had fresh milk up there, we had canned milk all the time. We had to get used to those things.

We had berries. And he shot grouse up there. Deer. And that's the kind of thing we lived on. We sent to Woodward's in those days for the main groceries. We'd get case lots of stuff. There were four families there then—my sister and my mother and my sister's mother-in-law lived in a little place there with her husband, and then there was myself.

Our house had been, years and years ago, a chicken house covered with tar paper with slats on to hold the tar paper down. Then we built on this big addition to it, behind my folks place up there. So we lived there because Tommy was in the army and I was on my own at Redrooffs where we lived first. I sold that place—I was so embarrassed when I sold that place. We had paid \$600 for it. We paid about \$10 per month when we were first there, and then paid a bit more as we could afford it. The fellow that sold it said, "I know your husband's in the army, so you don't have to pay me that much." So he knocked it down to \$10 per month for a while. Then while my husband was in the army my mother suggested that I come and live up there so we'd be nearer. Because nobody had a car, and it was a long way in those days between Halfmoon Bay and Porpoise Bay. So I went to live up there in this chicken house—of course I cleaned it all out. It was not really dirty, it was so old that it was clean. Then when he came home from the army, we built this addition.

Dean was born in December and I'm pretty sure it was the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, I was over at my mother's bathing him, because my husband and my father were building this addition onto this place, and I'd just got Dean out of the little bathtub, onto a towel on my mother's kitchen table, and all of a sudden there was a roar, like a truck was driving by. And of course, there were no trucks or cars or anything where we were. My mother said instantly, "Dot, it's a quake! Get the baby and come outside." So I scooped him up with towels and blankets and went out side on the verandah. My husband and father were working on the rafters at the time and my dad was cursing and telling my husband, "Hold it still! Hold it still!" and of course it was this quake that was doing it. I ran, instinctively with the baby, toward my husband, to be with him. All of a sudden the earth was doing like rolling waves. It never cracked open, but it was rolling. Absolutely rolling. Then it scared me very much, so I ran back up on the porch again. That was frightening.

*R: How long would it take you to row to Sechelt?*

DR: I don't know. I was a good rower! Probably why I developed such good chest muscles. I rowed a lot in those days. Never took a life jacket or a life ring or anything. Never thought about it. I'd be out in real wild waves. Tommy and I used to go fishing when we had our little place at Redrooffs when we were first married. We rented this little shack and it was right on the beach. That's the one we paid \$600 for, and I was so embarrassed

because when we went to sell it Tommy said, well ask a thousand. I said, "\$1,000!" Then David Parish had a birthday part. His mother invited me over to this birthday. They were at Halfmoon Bay at the time. And Eva Lyons was there and she said, "Dorothy, I heard you and Tommy are selling your little place." I said, "Yes, I am." We lived quite near where they lived. She said, "Well, how much do you want for it." I said, [in a shameful whisper] "\$1,000." I was embarrassed! She said, "Okay, here's a cheque." She wrote it right out there. Well, I couldn't believe it!

It was really a funny situation. We sold that and then we put that money into this sawmill, but he let me have \$100 of it to buy a stove. I bought that from Wosks. My first stove.

R: *A wood burner?*

DR: No. Actually, it was crazy, but I bought an oil burner. I always wanted it. They were quite new at the time and I always thought an oil burner would be just wonderful! So I bought this oil-burning stove and we had wood all over. Crazy.

When I first walked in there . . . . We got back from our honeymoon and landed at the Halfmoon Bay wharf, and we were going to stay with his parents. We went down to this shack the next morning and I opened the door and it was just an old—the shack had shiplap for the outside and it was the inside too. There was just shiplap on studs. There was no lining in it. There was just one room, and a little narrow room which I used as a pantry. I'd bought one of those beds that were a couch in the day time and you opened it up—we called it a davenport. I don't know what they call them now. I bought this thing with money I had saved. I had a table and a little tiny china cabinet. But we opened this door and it went cr-ea-ea-ea-k, and there were cobwebs hanging all over and we had to get them all cleared off before we could even walk inside. It was really something!

But, I scrubbed that place out and got a bit of linoleum, made curtains for the one window. You know, you did those things in those days. And there was a little old cast iron stove in there, and the name of it was *Cabin Cook*, and it was a small stove, and it had an oven, but there was no temperature gauge on the oven. But [my husband] kept me well supplied with wood and he got lumber off the beach at that time, and he made me a drying rack, you know the kind that you pull up and down, the old kind, and that's how I dried my clothes in the winter. They took a long time, and of course, you scrubbed them on a scrub board. I did that for years. Even after Jo was born I didn't have a washing machine. This was when we were first married. It was really rough, and I was a city girl and this was quite new to me. And the back house, of course.

And I had to haul water. There was a standing water pipe with a tap on it. Because the Redrooffs had those cottages there at the time.

My husband just loved sports fishing and he had an old clinker-built boat, a little

rowboat, and we would row out to Thormanby Island and fish, and that passage between Thormanby Island and the mainland. Anyway, we would row out there and fish, and in those days we had so many fish out there. It was wonderful. I can remember one time there was a fellow staying at Redrooffs cottage—or maybe it was in the lodge part—but he was staying there and he'd been out fishing and he hadn't caught a fish. He was just a weekend person. So we had come in with all these beautiful salmon, and he said, "Oh, can I buy one of those, because I've got to take it home to my wife." He said, "I promised I'd bring back a fish!" So Tommy said, "No, you can have one. Just take one." He said, "No, no. Here, I'll give you \$1 for it." He got about a 15-16 pound salmon. But, we just didn't think about that.

[My husband] always went fishing, even when we lived on Mermaid Street. I always canned salmon—enough for our winter supply, but I never canned any more than I needed. And we smoked some. Then, any fish we got over and above that, that we couldn't eat, we would take it around to neighbours. A lot of our neighbours were the same as we were—they loved the sports fishing too—Tommy Ono, and Harold Nelson, and Tommy Gory. They all were firemen and fishermen. Tom Parish. Anyway, neighbours across the street we used to take fish to, and our surplus vegetables from the garden. We'd just give them away. And our fish, if we got quite a few, he would clean them and take them up to the seniors at Green Court, go around and knock on the door, "Do you want a fish?" "Well how much?" "Take what you want." And get rid of them that way.

R: *Can you tell me how he started with the fire department? What that was like.*

DR: Oh, fire department! Those were wonderful, wonderful years. He started very, very early in the fire department, all right. There was Bill Billingsley, and Harold Nelson, Tommy Ono, Tom Parish—I don't know if he was there at that time—but there was Harry Billingsley. He used to butcher for the general store—the big general store on the waterfront, the Union Store. Harry used to be the butcher there. That was Bill's older brother. Those fellows all formed this fire department.

I don't know what you'd call the trucks—Dean would know—but it was very rural. Then Ray Burton, his father had a sawmill at Porpoise Bay and it was quite a good-sized mill. The fellows went out on Saturdays, or whatever days they weren't working, they went out in Porpoise Bay and up the inlet, and they would salvage all the logs they could find that were just floating loose, then carted them over to Ray Burton's father's sawmill. Ray was one of the fire department, too. And he sawed them into lumber and they built that fire hall that was on Inlet Avenue. It was across from the old Municipal Hall. Those fellows were pretty proud.

But it was such a hard go. They got nothing except . . . they canvassed around and asked for donations to keep gas in the fire truck and oil and repairs and things like that. But they did all that work themselves. They built it and the whole bit.

Then the women formed an organization called Fire Belles and we would put on teas, and bazaars, and dances in the old Legion Hall that used to be on Mermaid Street and we raised as much money as we could for the guys. It was always turned over to the men for their needs. The men got so tired of canvassing. None of them liked to have to go and ask for money. And nobody had very much in those days anyway. It was a pretty scarce thing.

Finally they got a certain amount, I don't know where that money came from, some kind of grant. Then as years went by, Tom Parish was chief for a long time. And Fred Mills was in the fire department at that time. Tommy and Butch Ono. Gordon Hall. Maurice Hemstreet. We had a great gang of people. We had good new year's dances at the fire hall. We'd move the fire trucks out and use that for dancing.

When I lived down near Porpoise Bay, when the fire department first came into operation, we would get a message on the telephone, from the telephone office. "There's a fire . . . so and so has a fire." We still had the kind of phones you had to crank. And we had a system. I would phone so many people to tell them about it. A lot of calls would come in during the middle of the night where there'd be perhaps a chimney fire or something that wasn't really terrific, and we'd just let a few people know and maybe 2 or 3 or 4 of the fellows would go out only, instead of ringing the siren for everything. At one time they used to ring that siren for every fire, night or day.

When the Totem Lodge burned down at Selma Park, that was dreadful. I didn't know where the fire was, I just knew there was a fire. Tommy was up and out and away. And I was waiting and waiting. This was the early hours of the morning, somewhere about 3 or 3:30. I could see this red sky from the fire from our place, and I thought, "Oh, I hope it's not the convent or something." I was wondering where it was. Finally a friend of mine—this Prendergast, they had moved to Selma Park, and she phoned to say, "Dorothy, the fire is at Totem Lodge." Right near where they were. It was in March, and the winds were pretty husky that night, too, and they were saving as much as they could around. But apparently this fellow had come in who was at the Totem Lodge—Henry Christianson boarded there at the time, too, and he lost all his stuff in that fire. But he got out with his life. But the one fellow, I don't know if he was drinking, but he had lit this oil stove. Apparently he'd come in late and for some reason he lit the stove, and they used to have a little thing at the back that opened and you left that open for draft when you first lit an oil stove, and then you had to close it as it got going. I guess he'd gone to sleep at the kitchen table, and that's how it started. He lost his life in that fire.

For months and months after that fire . . . we had some neighbours that were right close by there, and if they turned their light on in the middle of the night, it used to shine in our bedroom and my husband would be woomph! Out on the floor, standing up, ready to go. That's how it affected him. It was so terrible. A really bad thing.

R: *Was that the worst fire?*

DR: I don't know. The hotel had burned down. That was a bad fire too, but there was nobody lost. Then there was a little girl that was lost in a fire. I would consider those fires terrible because of the loss of life. You can always rebuild buildings.

R: *Where was it that the little girl lost her life?*

DR: I thought it was somewhere in West Sechelt. I'm not really sure.

I used to answer calls at all hours of the night and day and put these calls through. There wasn't an ambulance here at the time, and the fellows had this van-thing they rigged up as an ambulance. They used to call it the Rescue Wagon, and they would go out on rescue calls as well. They'd just drop everything when that siren went, and away they'd go, night, day, it didn't matter what they were doing, away they went. Sometimes one of the doctors would phone with a patient that needed transporting, and they would phone us directly. I think Tommy was in just about every one, except we were away when the old Catholic church on the waterfront burned. We were away on holiday at that time.

We never went away on holidays for years because our holidays were spent at the Sechelt beach, on the waterfront. We had bonfires there in the nice evenings—we used to get lovely summers, too. We thought well, we're in a holiday spot. Then my husband was working for himself and it was getting awful. He'd try to take a week off and stay here, but it was impossible. You would get phone calls right, left and centre. So I thought, Oh, dear, Oh dear. So we went to Osoyoos because my niece and her husband had brought property there and we went up and helped them build this little cabin and eventually my husband wired it. Now it's all gone and they have a gorgeous home on that spot. Right on the lake. It's lovely.

She was raised here for quite a few years too, my brother's daughter. She's about the same age as Dick Clayton and they used to go to school together.

R: *Your children went to Sechelt Consolidated School.*

DR: Dean. That was different. I was talking about my niece.

R: *What was your brother's orchestra called?*

DR: I don't know what they called themselves. He knew all these fellows from Vancouver and they would come up. He was a beautiful pianist, and he used to be a piano teacher. Piano and voice teacher. That's what he really was most of his whole life. Except for the time that he was telegraph operator for several years.

R: *When did you get your first car?*

DR: We used to have the use of the old Red & White truck. We had to put gas in it, but we had the use of that truck for quite a while. Our first car was a Thames. It was a little tiny truck. Then from that we got a Vauxhall station wagon which wasn't much bigger.

But at Christmas time we had a wonderful time here, when I think of it. We used to load the car with kids. Of course, you didn't have to have seatbelts at that time. We would go way up Crucil's Mountain we called it, and we would go way up in there and choose a Christmas tree. We were very particular about trees. My husband was a great respecter of nature and trees, so he wouldn't just wantonly go and wack down any tree. You had to be sure that that was the tree you wanted. We would take our truck loaded with kids, put all the trees on top of course and tie them on, and we'd sing carols all the way up the mountain, and all the way down, and then they'd come into the house and I'd make cocoa and I'd always have homemade bread and buns and cookies.

Because we all made our own bread and those kind of things.. We all had to do it at that time because there was little else. But they were good. They were hard days in a way, but they were wonderful days really. When you are young and have this vitality, you can do all these things. And cooperation is the name of the game. You have to cooperate with your spouse.

*R: In Halfmoon Bay when they brought in the logging camp in the early 1950's, were you living there at that time?*

DR: No.

*R: They put an instant town in there.*

DR: No.

*R: You must have been living in East Porpoise bay then.*

DR: Yes I was. It was just before Dean was born in the spring of '45 that I came to live up [at Porpoise Bay]

I told you that place was just bare bones, but you know we put a sink in. Now it had a drain out, but we didn't have any running water in. But we took old cardboard boxes—the big heavy corrugated cardboard boxes, we lined our place with that and then we calcimined it.

*R: Amazing what you can do when you need to. How ingenious a person can become.*

DR: Oh, it is. People lived like that in those days. And you did have to improvise.

*R: When did the road go in [to East Porpoise Bay]?*

DR: Well, that road was in, but it was narrow and you never used it. It was way far up in the bush from where we were. We had to walk through a little bush trail way up to get to Ben Salters and then from there we had to walk up through another trail to the road. It was very inconvenient. There was no road down to that property at the time.

Friends of ours bought this other house that I told you was there. Their name was Bedford and they bought this house and fixed it up quite a bit. But then he had a really good offer that he couldn't refuse from the school board back in Richmond so they had to go back. They couldn't refuse it. But they loved it up here too.

In the winters we'd get together when we were up the Inlet. We'd all gather around the radio on Monday night. There *Lux Presents Hollywood!* They would have Cecil B. De Mille and they would have a whole movie on over the radio. Of course all the families would get together, at my mother's usually, and we'd sit there and listen to this play. If it was a whodunit we'd be guessing in between breaks, wondering what was going to happen to this or that. Those were quite the days.

Then we'd gather, too, at my sister's. She was a great pianist. She played here at Sechelt for years for Nicky Weber's group, the *Sixty Niners*. She was a wonderful accompanist. She'll be 88 in December this year. She only gave it up about 3 years ago when she just couldn't manage any more. It was getting a bit much. My brother and her were really wonderful pianists.

We used to gather at my sisters, and the Bedfords—he used to sing and we all sang. Gather around the piano and we'd sing. Connie could play beautifully by ear too and she would play for maybe two hours straight without stopping and we'd all gather around and sing. We'd have coffee or hot chocolate to drink. We never had alcohol because none of us were into that at that time. My mother and father, I think I saw a little bottle of Port wine one time that the minister had brought for my mother in Vancouver when she was so ill. He said, "When you get through this, Mrs. Brooker, we're going to celebrate." And he brought this little bottle of Port wine. A small bottle. I think that was the only time I ever saw liquor in our house. We just didn't do that. It was not our thing.

But we always had great entertainment. We always were singing around the piano, from the time I can ever remember. My brother when I was able to sit up he would put me on the top of the piano at home and play and get me to put in the odd word here and there. He was always entertaining.

R: *Sounds like you had a wonderful relationship with your sister and brother.*

DR: Oh, yes! We were a close family, all of us. My mother and father, too. It was very heart-breaking after Dave and Connie moved away from the inlet and Dave was at Tranquille. Then my mother, she had a weak chest anyway, and she picked up this TB.

My sister had built their other home in Sechelt too, two doors down from where we lived. At that time it seemed a long way away because there were so many trees and bushes in between us, but it really was only two lots. My mother contracted TB at that time, too. But she wasn't sent away at that time. They came to live at my sister's house and the property was left then. It wasn't sold at that time. My brother was still the owner. My mother and father could live there forever, my brother had said, and do what they wanted to do with it as long as they paid the taxes. That's all they ever did.

Then when my sister went up to Tranquille, my Dad finished building their house. When I was pregnant with Jo. My mother was very weak at that time, and I used to do all their

washing, and things like this. All on the scrub board. My mother finally—she had to go up [to Tranquille]. But she went after I was home from the hospital after Jo was born. I couldn't even show her my baby. TB was bad in those days. My mother could only see Jo through the glass door. It was heart wrenching.

Jo was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October. I was in hospital one week, and then I came home. My mother left in early November, and went on a train up to Tranquille.

*Tape 1 ends. The following from written notes:*

Dad went to visit her in February. He was going to stay and visit relatives on the way back, go down to Seattle and visit his sister and brother-in-law and then he would come home and look after my kids so I could go. Before he left in February he had a problem with water on his knee. Dr. Duncan McColl looked at it and said, don't worry about it. When Dad got to Kamloops, his knee swelled up again, so he went to a doctor there. The doctor said he needed a prostate operation, and this was a good time to do it since my dad had the physique of a young man—he was only 64. Dad said okay, so he had the operation and it was a success. My sister, who was working in the kitchen at Tranquille would visit my Dad every evening.

My brother-in-law was still in Tranquille. He'd had a lung removed. I would get letters from Mom and Dad. Dad was crazy over Dean and the baby. Anyway, my sister went to visit him, and he gave her a letter to post to me. In the morning the nurse came to my sister and said, "Your Mrs. Wilson. I'm afraid your father passed away." She had to convince my sister that it was my father who had died. My mother was dying at the time, and my sister didn't know if she should tell her. The doctor said yes, so Connie went in to tell Mother. "Mom," she said, "I have some bad news." Mother said, "I know, dear." "Dad died," said Connie. Mother said, "Yes, I know. He's been with me all night." Dad died on the 31 March, and Mom died on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1950.

*Tape 2 side A begins:*

My kids had a funny cough the day my father died. Jo was 5 months old. I took them to Dr. McColl on the waterfront. I asked if it was whooping cough. He asked, have they whooped? I said, no. He asked, have they been sick at their stomachs? I said, No. So he said, then it isn't whooping cough. So he didn't bother examining them. or anything. I guess at that point he couldn't have told anyway.

Well, I came around there, passing the old general store and a lady ran out. I was pushing the baby in the buggy and Dean was hanging on. We got our mail there, too. They had a post office in that old general store. This lady came out and said, "Dorothy, there's a message for you at the telegraph office." At that time the telegraph office was located on Cowrie Street. It was a new office all together. I went to the office and there was a

telegram from my sister: *Dad died this morning. Love Connie.* That's all it said. I looked at the telegraph operator and I told her, "Oh you must have made a mistake. It can't be my Dad. It must be mother." She kind of gave me a funny look and I said, "Well, couldn't there be an error?" And she said, "Well, maybe." I said, "Will you please check back." I was upset and I went into the phone booth and I phoned our dear friend in Vancouver, and she said, "Dot, I got my telegram earlier, and I got them to check back too because I couldn't believe it was your father. It is your dad." It really floored me and of course, I was pushing this baby buggy down the old dirt road and crying. Then somebody had located my husband and he came out and saw me on the road and walked me the rest of the way home.

We didn't have a telephone at that time. The people next door did. Their name was Beet. They had a phone, so I asked if I could phone my sister, which was a really big thing in those days, a long distance call. I finally got her and I said, "Well, I'll see what I can do about coming up. I'll bring the baby with me." She said, "Dot, you wouldn't be allowed to bring the baby here to this hospital." I said, "Well, what will I do?" I didn't know anybody up there and we didn't have any money for hotels or anything.

That night we went to bed and both the kids—the baby and Dean—started whooping and throwing up. We had a single camp cot and we brought it into our bedroom and put it beside our bed. We had Dean sleep in there. I sat up with the baby laying on my shoulder all night. When one would start, then the other would start and I'd hand the baby to Tommy then I'd take Dean and get him and lift him up. Oh, boy! What a time. They both broke out with whooping cough that very day. So I phoned my sister again and told her that they had whooping cough. Of course, nobody wanted to look after a five month old baby of somebody else's with whooping cough. It was bad enough when it was your own. So it was pretty wild.

So I never got up there. And my sister said, "It's just as well." So she buried my dad and my mother up there at Tranquille. I've seen where their grave site is.

*R: You must have felt like it was a nightmare.*

DR: Well, it really was. I was going around, I think I didn't stop crying for a long time. And then my mother going. Of course, I knew my mother . . . she knew she wasn't coming home. She gave me some important papers to give to my brother. She said "As soon as you hear of my demise, you get that registered in the post office and send it to him. Because he was in Vancouver at that time. And I did.

It was quite an experience.

But I have these wonderful letters that my mother wrote me. Her temperature was way up. She told me in her letter that her temperature was well over 100, but she was still able to write. Some of them are in pencil. They're fading. But I still have these lovely

letters from her. My mother was a peace maker and a very good, good lady. I don't know how I am, but she was a wonderful lady, and she really believed in everything too. A wonderful lady. She says in these letter, all she talks about is how good people are to her. She talked about Dad. I got a letter from her after he passed away. I got his letter about 2 - 3 days after he passed away. I got his letter and in there he has a picture he drew for Dean of a train and a boat. The Union boat and things for Dean. It was pretty hard to read that letter. But my mother was so patient, oh she was a wonderful lady. She wrote about anything that was nice. She had nothing but praise for the nurses and doctors, and she said how kind they were to her. And my sister said they used to love Mom because she never complained. She said some of the patients would complain, but she said, "Mother never complained."

*R: That must have been hard—you had all your support systems here, your sister, brother, parents, and all of a sudden everybody is gone. And you're struggling with a young family.*

DR: But you know, when my parents were still up the inlet, and Connie was still up there, and we were living in Sechelt by that time. We just built — in those days you could build the frame of a house or enough for shelter and move. The only regulations were the chimney, we had to have a proper brick chimney. But we moved into our place which was just a shell, really, when we moved in and we just finished room by room as we could afford it. So we were down at Sechelt and I had this dream one night. My husband shook me to bring me right awake and he said, "What's the matter? What's the matter?" I had been crying. My pillow was wet, and he said I was making such funny noises. I said, "Oh, I've had the most terrible nightmare. I dreamed that mother was dying." Now that was when she was up the inlet. She was calling me and calling me in this dream. She kept saying, "Dot. Dot." And I knew in my dream that she was dying.

My dad had been over every day building Connie's house, and of course he came and had lunch with us at the time, because he was only two lots away. And he had never said anything about Mom being sick or anything. The next day Connie came down the inlet and she said, "I've got to contact Buster. You people better get up there. Mother is coughing up blood. I don't think she's even going to see this side of the inlet again." She did, but she didn't think she would, she was that ill. And I'd had that dream.

*R: Did your brother-in-law recover from TB?*

DR: Yes. He came back. Teddy Farewell had a garage at Wilson Creek, and Dave used to do his books, and he used to do the books for Mrs. Crucil for the bowling alley and what not. Then he was part or all owner of the garage—it's a Petrocan now—but he didn't do mechanical work at all ever. He was really more into the office kind of things.

*R: How long was he at Tranquille?*

DR: About three years, I guess.

The first night that they arrived [back] in Sechelt, they stayed with us, and that was the night, or the middle of that night, was when the fire was a Selma Park. I remember I made this big breakfast, bacon, eggs, pancakes, the whole kit and caboodle. We were kind of celebrating that Dave was back, too. So I had made this big breakfast, but Tommy hadn't come home from this fire, so I had to keep his. When he did get home I went to get him breakfast and he said, "I can't." With that loss of life and everything, he couldn't stomach food at all.

I don't know what night it was. It was in March.

R: *How long did you live in Sechelt?*

DR: I left here a couple of years after Tommy died. He was just a few months over 50 when he passed away. Cancer. I left here in 1978, in January.

R: *Did you go to Vancouver?*

DR: No, I went to Richmond because my daughter lived in Richmond at the time. I wanted to be close to her, so I rented a place there for a while. Then I was only there about 1 ½ years and then they were selling. It was a condo and she had told me she wouldn't sell, but then she was having another baby and she said, "Well, my husband and I have a lot of property and we want to buy a big house with a big yard for the children, so we're going to have to put it all up for sale." So I had to get out of there. I did some hunting around Richmond. I didn't know Richmond too well, although I worked there for quite a while. I used to work for Rayson Shoes, fashionable ladies' shoes. Quite a fancy store. Then I found a place, I was taking a friend out to see her sister in New Westminster and the sister was in this apartment. When we drove up there was a sign out there saying there was an apartment for rent. So I saw the manager there and I rented there for a couple of years. Then I moved to Pemberton for about three or four years, then back to Richmond again.

R: *Do you ever miss the Sunshine Coast?*

DR: I missed this coast so much! For a while when I came back, it really would upset me, because I would see—I remember Tommy built that pole line, and I know he wired this place. Then they still had the old Christmas decorations that he had originally put up in the village. Things like this. It kind of choked me for a while.

The only thing that keeps me from coming back here is the ferry. Because the other side of my family, I know they'd be up so rarely to see me.

Jo was a whizz at typing. She still does that today. Works at Richmond General in the diagnostic imaging. She got a special award in high school for that at the graduation.

R: *Did you know the Pratt family?*

DR: I knew the Pratt's from when we lived up the inlet. I remember we were all at the

Pendergasts when they lived at Porpoise Bay, we were all there for her daughter's birthday. Her daughter was born in January. Dean was born in December. We went up there for a birthday party. I've got a picture of that, too. There was Margaret Prendergast, and Mrs. Pratt and some of her children, and Margaret Ayton and myself and my kids.

It was so funny. When my husband first met Ellis up here, he had gone to school with him at Templeton Junior High in Vancouver. I hadn't known him before, but Tommy did.

*RL: Sounds like East Porpoise Bay was quite a little community for a while.*

*DR: Well, we all used to get together. And the Stockwells. Dorothy Stockwell, too.*

You know, I was in this choir for years. *Sechelt Choraleers*, it was called. The conductor was Harold Roberts who lived at Wilson Creek. He was a Welshman, and he had a lovely voice, and he was an older man at the time, I don't know how old. I thought he was older because I was younger! But we were in this choir for a long time. His daughter was also in it, Evelyn Lucken. We had great times in that choir. Jack Whittaker was in the choir and Reg Jackson. And Dorothy Stockwell. She had a beautiful, beautiful alto voice. That was the first choir here, I guess, that I was in. Then later on, of course, there was a choir that Enid Godkin, she was the minister's wife at St. Hilda's church, and she had a choir. What did we call that choir? I think it was the Sunshine Choresters, or something like that. Of course there were a lot of newer people around at that time.

Another person in the choir, another alto, was Charlotte Jackson. She had a good alto voice. I think Reg was a tenor.

*Turned tape off. Hand written notes:*

Dean said that in the 50s they used to have stockcar races on Nickerson Road. They had an oval track there. Wally Sheridan and Lloyd Bingley used to race in it. They held men's and women's races.

*DR: When I was boarding at the duplex in Selma park there was one Friday night when the summer moon was shining on the water and it was just like magic. So I decided to swim to Sechelt. I swam from there to the barbecue (where the tea rooms used to be). I swam to just outside the wharf and there was a tidal pull there and a school of jelly fish. Now I wouldn't swim there.*

*Tape starts again after I remarked on the clarity of Dorothy's memories.*

DR: My mother had me to elocution a lot and I used to recite monologues. Whole little books. I couldn't do that today, I'm sure. But my mother, as I told you, was very ill and most of my young life I saw her in bed. She was a great lady all the same, and read a lot, and she would recite Shakespeare to me and different poems, and she was a musician also. She had been a musician. She used to play a church organ back in Paris, Ontario, and later on a piano teacher. She'd had all her exams. My brother had his BA in music.

I used to play, but my brother and sister – of course, they were much older than I was – but they were playing wonderful pieces and I was still doing the scales up and down and thinking, Oh! I'll never do that! Of course the way they taught in those days was quite different, of course. I think they make it much different today. However, I played a bit, but nothing like them. But I did go in for a lot of elocution and that sort of stuff in school.

My dad used to take me . . . . on Sundays, not that it was against our religion, but my mother wouldn't allow us to roller skate on a Sunday down on the streets because it made too much noise. She figured it might disturb somebody, and she was always very considerate of other people. Anyway, my dad would take me a lot of times on long, long walks and he was always saying, "Now keep your head up, keep your shoulders back. He was a military type of man, you see.

He'd been a sargeant major in the first world war, but he wasn't allow to go overseas. He used to train soldiers in Victoria, but he couldn't go over because he had a funny thing—he used to get this swelling in his tongue every so often. Today they might have called it an allergy, I don't know, but his tongue would swell up quite badly, and they didn't know what it was , so they wouldn't let him go. Anyway he was quite proper, he was an Englishman and everything had to be ship shape at home, oh boy! We had this old battleship linoleum in our front hallway. We had a big house there and we had to polish that linoleum with this big old hand polisher. When I was very little I can still remember I would stand onto it, and hold onto it. I guess my brother or my dad used to polish and I thought it was fun, I got rides on it. But as I got older, and I had to do it, it was not so much fun.

We had these two flights of stairs to get up to our bedroom and there's a flight and then a little landing, and then another flight. The railings—wooden railing all the way down, and when I got older it was my job—every Saturday I had to dust and polish these things. I didn't like those!

Yes we had a great old life. We had a wood stove at first. I developed a taste for almost-charcoal toast because we cooked it on the old wood stove. We never had a toaster, we had an old wire rack that we used to put it on. Of course, invariably we'd burn it.

It's funny how you survive. When I think of all the things my mother didn't have. She never owned a fridge. But she did have a washing machine. The tub outside was all

copper.

Then we went in for a sawdust burner. I don't think my kids ever saw a sawdust burner. It was great. Every so often sawdust would be damp and hang up and then it would smoke, and in the middle of the night the house would be full of smoke and you'd have to go down and bang the sawdust down from the hopper. I don't think the children ever knew that.

When I first came up, as I said, I went to the boys camp. And we came up on the Union Boats. They didn't run every day, but I'm pretty sure Tuesdays, and I know for sure on Friday nights they had what they called Daddy boats used to come in.

As the children were growing up here, my husband took the Cubs when Dean was in Cubs and then he took the boy scouts. I've got some little silver coffee spoons that have the scout emblem on them. They were presented to him when he left.

Dean was into baseball a lot. We had wonderful baseball teams in those days. And my husband used to play baseball on the Sechelt team. We used to go to baseball games, but that used to bring out the worst in me. I'd get so excited. Gibsons was a long, long way away in those days because the road was dirt and in the winter time the road was mud. In the summer the dust was so bad it came up through all the floor boards and you were just covered in dust. But we always drove Dean and the little ball team down there. We played Port Mellon and they played . . . well Wilson creek, the men were real competitors for Sechelt, the men's teams. They were very competitive those guys. But there was a great kind of competitiveness, almost anger at times, between the fellows when they were playing ball, but after that it was all camaraderie. .

John Clayton was a good ball player. When the old Union used to have this place, it was great. They had a huge park here with swings, teeter-totters. They had a place for picnicking—long, long tables—and for shelters they had just like a shingled or shake roof over it, so that if the weather was inclement you'd at least have a bit of shelter there. Then they had slides, swings. All the Union Steamships used to have huge picnics, like B.C. Electric and the B.C. Telephone. I guess they would charter and whole boat and come up and have these picnics. Of course, they had free ice cream. Of course, the local kids got in on all this stuff. John Clayton was a marvellous little runner, too, and he used to win a lot of the prizes.

*R: He was allowed to participate?*

DR: Oh, yes sure. There were so many people they wouldn't know who was who anyway. Then they had a lady's washroom down there that was just lovely. It was a little house, almost and there was a waiting room in it. It had a wicker couch and a wicker chair, and they were all padded and they had a mirror and then the washrooms, the cubicles in the other section. That house has changed completely, but it is the one that is on the corner

of . . . it's the preschool place. That was originally a bathhouse. Who bought it was Bob Kent and they lived there for a while and then they moved on the other side of the street further down.

That was a lovely washroom there. They had sinks. They had this cover, the same as they had over some of the tables, they had this same roof shelter, and they had huge, huge sinks there, so you could do your picnic dishes. And they had hot and cold running water.

That was amazing. That park was a lovely park.

*RL: The community must have been sad to see it sold off.*

*DR: I don't know what happened, whether they had to sell, or what. Anyway, they divided up much of their property then and sold it and that's how we bought our first lot.*

There were places brought in, just after the war, houses brought in. The one between my sister and I, that house was brought in. Then there was one around, Mr. and Mrs. Frayer used to live near Porpoise Bay, there was one there. Then the lot across from us, Teddy Osborne at that time had an office built on that lot at one time, and then where that went, I think he lost it in a poker game, or something. Because it disappeared.

It was mostly all wooded that lot, and I remember Dean, he was 2 ½ at that time because we had moved over on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. I remember by the date on my picture when we first moved over. That summer Dean was out playing, and it was all real rough. We hadn't finished clearing or anything, but we were there. Dean was out playing and he came in one day and said, "Momma, I saw a bear!" And I said, "Oh yeah." And I thought I was being smart, and I said, "A bare what?" "A bear what we can shoot," he said! So of course I thought it was just child's imagination. Well, Tommy came home from work that day and said, "Oh, I hear there's been a bear around here." He said somebody else had seen this bear. So I guess he really had seen it, but I didn't realize it. I thought it was just his imagination.

One night I remember sleeping and getting woken up by this terrible screaming. It sounded like a woman screaming, like she was being murdered or something. It was a horrible scream. My flesh was creeping it sounded so weird, and I was kind of scared. So I nudged my husband and woke him up and asked, "Did you hear that scream?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, do you think we should call and see if someone's in trouble?" "No," he said. "It's only a cougar." He knew what the scream was, but I didn't recognize it.

