

R *What is your full name and spelling?*

Bea Beatrice Cecelia Spanks. There was a girl in the paper this week named Spanks and they're not related to us. And Spanks is not a common name.

R *What were your parent's names?*

Bea My mom was Edna Marion Spanks (nee Scott) and my dad was Harry Greatem Spanks. From Nova Scotia, both of them.

R *What was your husband's full name and his parent's names?*

Bea Harold Albert Swanson. His father was Adolph Swanson [Svensson in Sweden]. His mother was Ruth Amanda Nordin. He was from Kalmar Sweden and she was from Avesta Sweden. They both came out from Sweden.

R *Where were you born?*

Bea I was born in Vancouver. Not in a hospital. In a house on—Earl's Road, I think it was. Right where the PNE buildings are now, I understand. In 1921.

R *You had siblings?*

Bea Yes. Four. Three brothers and one sister. I was the second child.

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

Bea 1953.

R *Was that to live? Did you ever visit here before that?*

Bea Harold came down from camp with Henry Whittaker, looking for property, but that would have been a year or so before we moved here. He came down and bought property on Mermaid Street.

I was here in 1929, I guess it was. I had cut my leg quite badly up in a logging camp and I came down through the Skookumchuck on the *Comox* and we spent the night at one of the Whitaker's hotels and caught the Union Boat the next day.

R *What were you doing in the logging camp?*

Bea My Dad was the camp cook. In Blomberg's Camp. [*Pronounced 'Bloomberg'*] Up near where Star Logging was later. Jervis Inlet. Up above Vancouver Bay. The camp where dad was, was just above Brittain River.

R *How long was he there?*

Bea I think he was only there a little over a year. All of us were there except my youngest brother who was conceived during the time that my Mom was there—she didn't have him till 1930. So four of us kids were up there.

R *What was that like when your leg was cut? Do you remember that journey?*

Bea Yes. It was July 1st. The men at camp—and I don't know if my dad was part of this, or not—built a scow—it was like a scow almost, a boat. It was big and sort of flat and not

fancy at all. We were headed on a picnic and there were 13 of us going. The boss's wife was absolutely frantic when we were taking off. She said, "You can't go like that! There's thirteen of you. Something's going to happen!" And she was screaming her head off. We didn't pay any attention to her. Anyway, we got down to Brittain River and had a picnic. My sister and brothers and I rushed to get to a huckleberry bush. There had been a small sapling cut off, and I slipped and fell on this sapling which took quite a hunk out of my leg here [behind knee]. It was kind of bad because it was so deep it didn't bleed. The cut was very close to the cord in my leg. It missed that. There was a prospector living in Britain River at that time. My folks broke into his cabin to see if there was anything they could put on my leg. They found only iodine—Mr. Graven was the prospector and no logging was taking place at that time (1929). I had to sit in camp from Sunday until Tuesday when the boat finally came in. I was okay except I got quite a scar on my leg because the cut sort of stretched because it hadn't been stitched earlier.

*R What was the trip down like?*

Bea I don't really know, except when we came through the Skookumchuck I remember the Captain coming down and telling us, "We're going through rapids, and it's going to be a bit rough." It was at night, and I can remember feeling—you know what it's like in the Skookumchuck—but it wasn't really bad. It was probably running a bit.

I didn't walk again until September. I still had a scab on my leg when I went back to school.

*R You went to school up there?*

Bea I went to school in West Vancouver. Went to Vancouver, and then moved to West Van because the rents were cheaper or something. We lived on Ambleside Beach. There was a duplex. Along with—you know Florence Sharman, who married Wiljo Wiren? She was next door to us, visiting for the summer. So we heard about Gibsons Landing at that time. We were only 9 or 10 years old. Then found out later that she had married this Wiljo Wiren.

*R How did you meet Harold?*

Bea When the [Lion's Gate] bridge was being built into West Vancouver, the rents went up. My folks were on Relief. We were poor—really poor. My mother's folks had come out from Nova Scotia and bought property out in Surrey, out in Newton. I guess it must have been them who encouraged Mom and Dad to move out. We rented out in Surrey for \$5 a month. That was in 1937.

*R And you met Harold there?*

Bea We went to school together at Surrey High. I had my teenage years out in Surrey. Harold was born in Vancouver, too. His dad was a logger. He worked for the Capilano Timber Company, and up in Misery Creek, Slate Creek, and finally for Gustavson Brothers at Deserted Bay.

They moved out to Surrey in 1930, so Harry ...no they were there before that. They had

a new house built and that's the one they moved into after his sister was born. So they lived out there—it was maybe between 1928...in around there some where.

*R So he'd spend his summers in the logging camps?*

Bea Yes. His dad used to go to the camp (Capilano Timber Co.) During the summer months. I believe they crossed the suspension bridge. That's where his dad was working at that time.

*R What was your earliest memory of Sechelt?*

Bea I can just remember the hotel in 1930. It had a great big porch out in front. I really don't remember much else about it, except getting the boat and coming down.

*R What year did you and Harold get married?*

Bea December 1942. We went right from there, from Surrey, up to Deserted Bay.

*R What was the camp like at that time?*

Bea I have pictures of it here. There were lots of bunkhouses and that because Uncle Eric—who was Harold's uncle—owned the camp and they had moved from Slate Creek, which was a railway camp, over to Deserted Bay. So there were several buildings. [Shows album of logging pictures, enlarged, clear, sharp images of camp buildings, equipment, workers and their families]. I copied this for my two daughters and for one of the Gustavson boys. This is Stan Gustavson [in picture taken in front of camp buildings]. He died fairly young, but his brother is still living over in Nanaimo at Nanoose Bay. But these are unusual pictures.

Harold had labelled them all. I'd given all them to Clarence Gustavson, because I thought maybe he should have it because it was his dad's camp. And later we were at a funeral and Clarence brought this back and said, "I don't think I should have this." So I said, "I had been meaning to ask if I could borrow it to get the captions." Anyway, I kept the album and made 3 more copies.

So that's what Deserted Bay was like.

We were up there later—we took a trip up—Harold and Len and Beps and I, and Harold's sister and husband from Surrey. They were helicopter logging the morning we came out of there, so we saw them doing that. In Deserted Bay, too. The camp actually was sold and closed down. But there was Paul Gallant and I don't know what others that were in there after. They were just doing gypo logging.

*R For a young married woman, was it strange going up there? Had you been up there lots of times? How was that for you?*

Bea No. It wasn't strange because I'd been in a logging camp over on Vancouver Island on Cowichan Lake with my dad, on a floathouse over there. Then being in Blomberg's camp for a year, then going back up, it wasn't very strange to me at all.

And I never was used to anything very fancy, Rosella. I mean, we were poor. My dad was on Relief, all my years of growing up really. At least from West Vancouver on—it was the Depression years. We were in West Van for 7 years, I guess. I went to Hollyburn School, and then to West Van High. Went out to Surrey when I was in grade 10.

*R* *Were there a lot of women in the camp?*

Bea No. In Gustavson's camp when we were there, there were usually around five families.

*R* *So did you socialize a lot?*

Bea Yeah. We all had children and we sort of went to someone's place for tea in the afternoon or something to get out. Quite often on Saturday nights – well, lots of Saturday nights everybody was through our house for coffee.

*R* *I found at Clowhom that there was a closeness among people that wasn't present in town.*

Bea Well I found it really strange when we first came here. If we were baking, for instance, [in camp] if you were baking bread—and I baked just about every second day—there was always somebody else in camp that got a loaf of your bread. And when they baked, they'd bring over something—some cookies, or some squares, or something like that. I can remember taking a loaf of bread across the street to—I can't remember if it was Vivien Reeves, or who it was at that time—but they were—they didn't seem to know what to say or do. And I took a blackberry pie up to someone here and he asked me—he said, "Well, what are you after? Why are you doing this?" I just figured they couldn't get out to pick blackberries and I thought it would be nice. So I stopped doing that sort of thing.

*R* *How many children did you have? Were they born in camp?*

Bea I had three girls. Marilyn was born while Harold was overseas. She was 15 months before he saw her. We went back up to camp after he came back from overseas, and I got pregnant rather quickly. Valerie was born and then Gail was born about 18 months later. But they were all born in Vancouver in the hospital.

*R* *Did you go and stay with your parents?*

Bea Yes.

*R* *What was it like raising children in the camp?*

Bea It was okay. You had to be really careful. Like Gail, when she was tiny, she wanted to climb up the steps to the logging road and they had the trucks, so I used to go and bring her down and spank her—it's frowned on now, but if I didn't spank her she would persist on going right back up the stairs—she was just stubborn enough. And then we had the Deserted River just below us. So you had to be watchful, at first when they were really little anyway.

But Harold built a huge platform—as big as this room—for the kids to ride their tricycles and that on. Then we had a little playhouse that the previous people had built. This was a shake house that we lived in, and Harold's dad bought it for \$50 when Harold was

overseas. Because the lady who lived up there, her daughter was ready for school, so she moved out and went to Matsqui. So Dad bought the house and we moved into that shake house. That was John and Mary Larson. John was a steam donkey operator—ran the *Empire*, I think.

*R What was your house like?*

Bea At first, everyone up there had a living room/kitchen sort of thing. That was the main room. Then we had two small bedrooms off of that. Then Harold added—the house that we had in Sechelt, he tore off some of the building that was there and moved this new building up to the place. That was a shower and two bedrooms that we added to it. That came down through the Skookumchuck years later, to Mermaid Street where we built. We had it on the back of the lot—Teddy Osborne towed it across from Porpoise Bay with the Cat and we had it on the back of the lot, then Harold—when we moved there [to Mermaid Street] we didn't have a kitchen. We just had two bedrooms and a bathroom. Then Harold added on a kitchen/living room. So we spent a whole summer outside. We were lucky because it didn't rain much—we had maybe two days of rain that whole summer! Then he went back to camp, before I even had that. The neighbours were absolutely horrified because I didn't have a door in my house. We just had the two bedrooms. We were still eating outside at that time. That was in 1953.

*R Your house at camp—did you have electricity?*

Bea No, we started off with kerosene lamps and then we finally got a couple of gas lamps and we had running cold water except when it got to be November. Then Harold had to haul water from the Deserted River. And I washed clothes every day. I think I must have—I don't know why he didn't get mad at me. I thought I had to wash the diapers every day.

*R How did you wash them?*

Bea With a scrubbing board. We had to heat the water in a boiler on the stove and pack it out—there was a washroom. In fact, Mary and John had made wooden bathtub, and we pulled that out when we moved in and just had a bench-like thing to set the tubs on. Mary was so upset with us when she came back up to camp and found out that we had destroyed her tub. But we didn't feel like bathing in someone's—you know, it was a wooden tub. That's pretty personal.

*R How did you have baths?*

Bea Cow tubs. Until Harold built this extra piece on, and then we had a shower in it, but that wasn't until two years before we left camp.

*R Did you have a garden up there?*

Bea We tried. We got sea weed and the soil was good, but we got all tops. The carrots tops grew great and so did the potato tops, but there was nothing underground. No sun. The sun never hit our place even in the summertime till 11 or 12 o'clock..

*R Were those good years?*

Bea Yes. You know, I really think it would be great if every young couple could start out in a

logging camp, in the sense that you learn to appreciate everything that you've got when you get down to a place like this. Even the girls were that way. I can remember when we first got our new fireplace, the girls were so afraid that some of the kids would come in. They wouldn't let them step on the hearth or anything because it was their fireplace. It was things like that that I noticed with the kids. They seemed to really appreciate anything we got later.

*R So you came to Sechelt in 1953, you moved down here to a house on Mermaid Street.*

Bea Yes, we pulled our house in on Mermaid. Harold had cleared the lot the Easter before we moved here—we moved 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, I guess it was. Then we moved that house forward. Dug an excavation and moved that part of the house onto the excavation, then added to it. We had meant to build a new house, but we didn't have the money, so we decided to do that.

*R You had the three girls at that time. How old were they?*

Bea Gail was five, and Valerie was 6 ½ and Marilyn would have been nine, I guess.

*R They were in school?*

Bea We had a school in Deserted Bay and Marilyn went there. Valerie started school here in Sechelt. At Sechelt Elementary. And Gail went the following year.

*R What was the school at Deserted Bay like?*

Bea It was actually a Rec Hall that they'd built for the men. They had a pool table in there and it was quite a good sized recreation hall. We used to have our Christmas parties in there as well. The school was during the day and then they had to be out of there so the men could go in at night.

*R Was it a good school? Did they have good teachers?*

Bea Yeah we had super teachers. I write to...Flora Morton, she lives out in Surrey, she out in White Rock and she works in the archives out there. She was our first teacher. Her husband was a first aid man there. And Art Ulmer, who comes up to see me quite a bit here even, he was only 19 when he moved up there and took over from Flora Morton. He spent most of his time at our place. And there was Earl Hilsden. He lives in Campbell River and I don't know how is. I haven't been in touch with him for quite a while. He had quite a bad heart attack. He was principal at the Campbell River High School. His wife was quite an artist. She taught school as well. And then, Mrs. Irwin. She was the last teacher there. That was after we left camp. She later taught my sister's children in Riske Creek, Yukon—after she left Deserted Bay.

*R How many kids were there?*

Bea Well, Marilyn just turned 5 in June, and Ronnie Bowman didn't turn 6 until Dec or something and they asked if we would allow them to go to school so they could get enough children for a teacher. So I would say there were maybe a dozen kids there. Because some of those that were going to the Deserted Bay School came from Slate Creek. There was a camp there too and they used to come over in their boat called the

*Hubba Hubba.*

*R What was it like?*

Bea The boat? It was just a little speed boat.

When it first opened it would have been some of the native....and I can't remember if Jamie Dixon was one of them or not, but Carl Joe, the cop that was here—he was definitely one of them—and Raymond Joe. Carl and Raymond were Jamie's brothers. Alfred August, who was later Chief, lived across the Deserted River.

*R So they all went to school together?*

Bea Yes. And I think that's how it started. The native children and the ones in camp.

*R Was there a native camp close to where you were?*

Bea Yes, in between Slate Creek and Deserted Bay. The natives used to row over and work in the camp. They were maybe a quarter of a mile from the camp.

*R Did you socialize with each other?*

Bea Not really, no. When they came from camp, men would go home on the boat. Other than Madeline Joe—she's still alive, Jaimie's mother—she had Doug Joe. She must have had him prematurely in camp—she didn't get out anyway. Mrs. Fitz-Louie delivered Ronnie Bowman in camp (he started school with Marilyn), and she may have helped, or she may have had the baby on her own. We all got together with baby clothes and whatever we could give her. I think when Joy Gustavson used to send her clothes over to their settlement—you know she thought they would use them, but the kids—they'd come over dressed as pirates and everything in these clothes that Joy had given them. They'd torn them up and made skirts and whatever....So I don't think they were ever used for what Joy intended.

The Joes (Johnnie, Dougie, and maybe Darlene and Madeline) were travelling up to Deserted Bay in a boat one night and the boat caught fire. They got off okay, but I don't remember how.

We had Xmas parties and if they were in camp, they were invited. Johnny Joe—everybody loved Johnny. Yet when they came out of camp and down here we didn't see much of them.

*R What was your address on Mermaid Street.*

Bea 5774 Mermaid St. There wasn't very many houses there when we moved there. Most of them were bunkhouses they moved in.

*R What was in Sechelt then?*

Bea The Village Centre where Jim Parker had his hardware store, Ben Lang had his drug store, and Smith's had a bakery, and there was a telephone office there too. Kay Nelson's parent's house was beside the hardware store—it was Hanson's Transfer at one

time. And that's where the *Reporter* is now. Catherine Nelson is at Echo bay now, living with her son on a floathouse.

R *What were Cay Nelson's parent's names?*

Bea Louie and Janet Hansen

R *What was on the waterfront?*

Bea Well, we had the bog in between Sechelt and the waterfront. A boardwalk that went across to the waterfront. But all those houses were there—all the Union houses, Morgan Thompson's Men's Wear, Calypso Café—I think that's what it was called then—in fact, when Harold was clearing the lot he'd go down and eat there. Also the Union Store was there, because he used to get our mail there first, and our groceries there. And some of the totem poles were still there. There had been a roller skating rink behind, but nobody was using it, I don't think when we came. It was sort of abandoned.

There was a pool hall where the Family Mart is located [5525 Wharf]. Chuck Blanchard had a garage near the water tower. The firehall was just beyond the water tower—now the Cenotaph is on that corner.

R *Was there a bowling alley?*

Bea That was later, I think.

R *The Union Store. Did you go to the counter and order stuff?*

Bea They'd run around and pick it up for you. They even did that in Redman's store when it was first on Cowrie Street there. You had a list of groceries and they went and picked up all your groceries for you.

R *Was Redman's store there when you came?*

Bea It must have come later, because why wouldn't we have shopped there, rather than the Union Store. Now I'm not sure of that at all. I can't remember what years now....

R *Travelling back and forth—when you went in and out of camp, you went by boat and Union Steamships?*

Bea The boat left from Vancouver, I guess it was the Union Boat for a little while, as far as Pender Harbour, then we'd take a gas boat. And there was no toilet or anything on the darned things, and half the time no place to sit. You just stood up to travel. That was the first time I went up anyway. I went up with Don and Bill McNaughton on the *Nighthawk*. They just had us go into the cabin and we stood in there with them.

R *What can you remember about going on the Union Steamships?*

Bea Not really too much, except the meals and that were pretty classy at that time. Service and everything was pretty formal.

R *White table cloth?*



Bea That's right. The waiters were dressed pretty spiffy.

R *Did it cost a lot of money?*

Bea I have no idea!

R *Do you remember when the ferry came here?*

Bea Well, you know the Blackball Ferries started in 1951 and that was before we came. They were just paving the road here when we came in the summer of '53, from Gibsons to Sechelt. I think it was just beyond the school—I think beyond Dawe's place it was still gravel road.

R *What was it like to drive on the road? Did you have a car?*

Bea We had gotten a truck. A 1958 Ford.

R *It must have felt different being able to drive from Gibsons to Pender Harbour.*

Bea Yes. My Mom and Dad were still out in Surrey, so we used to go down—well, not often, because it cost too much to take a whole bunch of kids and yourselves down.

R *What was it like on the Blackball Ferry, as compared with today?*

Bea I know the *Smokwa* was pretty small, and I don't think they had any food or anything at that time. I don't remember buying anything at first....

R *Did you get out of the car?*

Bea We would have gotten out of the car and gone upstairs, I guess.

R *Would you know a lot of people?*

Bea Yes. I mean it got so if you took a book with you and thought you were going to read, you didn't get to read anything. At that time you knew everybody. But I can remember—the Blackball Ferry went out from Gibsons Wharf and my husband before he left in the morning he'd have to pack all the wood for...well two weeks almost! He had to have all this done and all we were going to do is go for the day! But he made us late, I don't know how many times. We'd get down there and the boat had pulled out, and when we got there it pulled back in again and let us on. It did that a couple of times for us. They used to do that for people. But after they changed to Langdale, that didn't happen anymore.

R *Who were your neighbours in 1953?*

Bea Chuck and Levina Poteet lived next to us. Joe Archer and Hilda Archer, and Tom and Gladys Parish who's still alive. I still see him quite a bit. He and Gladys lived across the street from us too.

They were just clearing Hackett Park at that time.

R *Did you and Harold help with that?*

Bea Well Harold was still in the logging camp. He didn't come down to stay with us for

about two years after that. He stayed in camp and moved off all the buildings and built donkey sleds and moved all the equipment off to the different camps that had bought the equipment.

*R What prompted them to come out of there?*

Bea It was sold out, and I guess the timber claim must have finished. It was sold to North Shore Timber. But Harold stayed behind and moved out all this equipment. He was there at times by himself.

*R Did he go into another logging show after that?*

Bea No. He didn't want to go into logging after he came down. Ted Osborne approached him, when we first came here, and he said "We'd like you to be foreman at the camp." But Harold said, "No." He didn't want to carry on with logging anymore.

*R What did he do instead?*

Bea He just did odd jobs at first, carpentry and that sort of thing. Five years later he started working at Hillside at the sand and gravel plant down there.

*R When did he get his own gravel operation?*

Bea 1963. He and his brother, Len. Len had worked at Hillside at least five years before Harold went there and it was because of Len that Harold got the job at Hillside. Harold was there for five years. The Hillside plant closed down because it was obsolete and in order to bring it up to standard it was going to cost too much money, so they abandoned it all together. So there was 25 families that were out of work. They had jobs for us out at Mary Hill in Coquitlam, but we didn't want to leave the peninsula, so Harold and Len decided they would try an operation together. Stockwell's was for sale—that's who they bought it from. Herb, and Ray—because it was Stockwell & Sons—and Jimmy probably too. I think it was sons, rather than son.

So we bought a dump truck and a backhoe, a Ford backhoe from Herb and Ray, and they had what they called the grizzly. You could dump the gravel into this 'grizzly' and it was a shakey thing and it separated the sand and the rock. So that's how we started, pretty small. It wasn't until not too long after that we bought the property [gravel] down there. But at first we must have leased from Ray and Herb.

*R How long did you run the business?*

Bea In 1969 we went into Ready Mix. I worked in the office. Harold and I left in 1979 and then Len continued on, and we sold to Len's son in 1988, and Fred is still there. At first, Ocean Cement that Harold and Len had been working for, it was called Gilley Brothers and then Champion and White, and a hundred other things, I guess. But they left all the stockpiles to Harold and Len and it was a long time before they were depleted. It was all crushed rock and navijack, I guess. And drain rock. Cobbles. They used to have to travel from here—sometimes they'd leave at 5 a.m. to pick up a load of rock to deliver to somebody here. I think Burtnick's were our first customers. I can't remember what...I guess maybe gravel for their driveway, or something.

*R* What would you do for entertainment when you came down to Sechelt, after 1953?

*Bea* We used to go down to see a movies. Harold was still in camp, so the girls and I would go. They had these operettas, Wednesday nights—were they ever neat! This would have been like Rose Marie with Nelson Eddie and Jeanette McDonald. I used to go down as often as I could. But Harold would have been here at that time, otherwise I wouldn't have been able to leave the kids. Because you didn't have babysitters or anything in those days. Once in a while the Poteets would come over and sit with the kids, but it didn't happen very often.

And we were sick for a couple of years when we first moved down, because we had no immunity to anything. The kids got whooping cough and red measles and mumps, and just one thing after another. I was sick too with Strep throat. So we spent the first couple of years kind of miserable.

*R* You had to go to hospital in Pender Harbour?

*Bea* At that time, yes. We had a doctor in Vancouver, so Marilyn was in the hospital with pneumonia in Vancouver after we first came down. But Valerie took sick when she was 8 years old and we had to take her out to Pender Harbour. She was running a 105° temperature and she was really sick. They were just getting the road ready for paving out there, there was nothing but ruts. We met the trucks coming in and they said, you'll never make it. We said, "We've got to make it!" We just had to get out there, so we managed to get through all right. So Valerie was in the hospital there. Dr. Swan was there at that time. So she spent Christmas in hospital there. This bothered her for a long time after, the fact that she couldn't spend Christmas at home. She went through a spell where she didn't want us to leave her at all when she first got out of hospital. But she finally got over it.

*R* Was it your truck that you took up there?

*Bea* Yes. But Harold was still working at Hillside at that time, so . . . I forget when he started there, because he worked there for 5 years . . . and bought Stockwell's in 1963, so that would have been '58.

*R* Did you do art work or crafts?

*Bea* Yes. I make quilts. I just have one ready to put together. I made all my own clothes and my kids clothes—coats and everything. And when the kids got married, I made 14 dresses that year. The three girls got married within 8 months. I did a lot of that sort of sewing, drapes and that sort of thing.

*R* Where did you learn how?

*Bea* Oh, you just sort of learn it. I took home ec in West Vancouver, but when we went out to Surrey they didn't have anything like that. They didn't have business courses or home ec classes or anything out there at that time. But I got a little bit of training in West Vancouver.

*R* *So you did your own sewing up in camp.*

Bea Yes. I used to make all the Christmas presents and everything.

*R* *Where did you get the material?*

Bea We'd order through . . . can't remember if it was Simpson Sears catalogue—they'd have a selection of fabric and you could pick out what you needed. I started ordering from the Bay because in those years, everything was rationed. Fishermen and loggers got extra lard and butter and sugar I think, because we had to bake all our own bread. We had trouble with the Bay. Some of our groceries got left at Glacial Creek—there was another Swanson down there—so they dropped off our groceries there and brought their groceries up to us. I used their groceries, but I had to pay for both because they wouldn't pay for mine. So we started ordering from Woodward's then.

I used to work for Woodward's for 1 ½ years— 1940-41.

There mail order system was super. You could write and tell them that you needed a birthday present for a child and they had a personal shopper there that would pick up something and send it up. It was usually pretty good—I don't remember ever sending anything back.

*R* *When did you start quilting?*

Bea I guess when I first moved to Sechelt. Later, after I moved down here, I went into Mrs. Crucil's for a few lessons and picked up a few pointers. My mom always quilted and hooked rugs and things like that, so I learned the way she did.

*R* *I guess at camp you were too busy cooking and cleaning—*

Bea But I did quite a bit of sewing up there.

*R* *Did you have a treadle machine?*

Bea No. I got a treadle machine the last couple of years I was there, but before that I had a little hand machine, a little hand Singer machine.

*R* *When did you learn to drive?*

Bea I guess it was when Marilyn got her car. I would say, maybe 1965 something like that. Oh it must hve been after that. I never drove, just while Marilyn was here, then when we moved down here in 1979 I got a little Honda and really started to drive.

*R* *I guess living in Sechelt you didn't need it?*

Bea Oh, there was no need. We lived right smack in town. It was good, because I walked to work every day and back home again through all kinds of lousy weather. I worked for Harold. We worked out of the house until 1969, then when all the girls got married it was too much of a hassle trying to entertain people at home and try to take orders. So we moved into Joe Benner's building at first, the other side of the Hydro building—ICG propane, in there. Now they have a fitness thing above. Right across from Casey's. Just the other side of the Legion.

*R Did you belong to the Legion?*

Bea No, we didn't. I don't know if Harold belonged overseas or not, but I don't think so. He didn't drink, number one, and he wasn't a fellow that mixed with a bunch of men too much. He was doing photography overseas, this is what he spent his time doing. So I'm not sure. But he didn't belong here.

*R Did you and Harold go to dances?*

Bea No. Harold didn't dance. But we went to the Rod and Gun Club. Harold was quite active in that, and they had parties. And also the Hospital Auxiliary. The first meeting was at our place. It was when Bonnie Paetkau first came here. I was with the auxiliary at first, but then going to work, I dropped out. Then I tried to go back, but it didn't work out.

*R Were you involved with sports at all?*

Bea Yes. We used to play tennis over at the school. There was a court there and Dr. Swan and Dick Clayton, Nestmans, Evanses—we all used to play there until the guys found it too hard. There wasn't enough room—they had the basketball hoops there. So it was abandoned. We bought a net, and that net stayed at our place for the longest time. Then when Valerie and Tom put in a tennis court at their place and they used the net up there.

We didn't go bowling. Not a lot of boating. We had a boat that we had fixed up in camp and brought it down and finally sold it to Bud Stewart when they started the Pentecostal camp in Sechelt Inlet. Glad Tidings. I think they bought the *Prelude* (Henry Whittaker's boat) to go up and down in.

We used to fish—everybody fished in those days. For salmon. This was just sports fishing. Up in Norwest Bay really—crumbs, you couldn't go out there at any time without getting a salmon. It was absolutely fabulous.

*R Did you ever fish for bottom fish?*

Bea Yeah, I guess we did. I can remember getting red snappers up in Sechelt Inlet. We still had an aluminum boat – we bought that when we still lived in Sechelt – and that's what Harold used.

*R When you lived in camp, did you eat a lot of fish and venison?*

Bea Yes. We sometimes didn't get our grocery order during the winter and the bay would freeze because of the influence of the Deserted River—the fresh water—so sometimes the boats couldn't come in. We'd see them going down the other side of the inlet with our groceries, and we didn't get them. I don't know what we did—I don't know what they did with the groceries. But the camp was always there and there would always be staples we could get. But as far as meat goes, Harold hunted and I canned venison and we had that. But we ate once, fish, eight days straight. The eighth day I cooked halibut. I'd never cooked halibut before and I boiled it. I can't stand halibut anymore! It was the wrong thing to do with halibut. It's a bland fish anyway, there was just no taste to it.

No, we ate oysters and clams and everything that was available—crabs. They were sure getting crab out here this year. I had lots of them. They'd bring me over 2 crab at a time, already cooked and the shell taken off. Really nice.

*R You said the other day that you had met Thomas Cook?*

Bea Yes, we knew him.

*R That was through the Whittakers?*

Bea Yes, Jean and Henry Whittaker. They had a hotel out at Farrington Cove. Harold came down with Henry and they spotted this piece of property and Henry bought it. Then they moved down and Harold went up and built some of the cabins for Henry. Anyway, Johnny Cook spent his last years there. He had a little cabin close to the house that Henry and Jean were living in.

*R What was he like?*

Bea I don't remember too much about him. I know he's very small—a wiry person. But I can't really tell you very much.

*R Was he fun to be with?*

Bea Oh, I think so. I think a fairly interesting person. I don't remember visiting, really.

*R You don't know what his relationship was with his daughters?*

Bea Well, it must have been pretty good with Jean anyway, because she certainly looked after him. Took his meals to him.

*R Did you ever knew anyone who was brought before him when he was a magistrate?*

Bea No.

*R Did you know any of the Herb Whitaker family?*

Bea Cherry Whitaker, and their children: Janey and Jeff and Mike, when they were kids. And Ken, Cherry's husband—I didn't really know him. I'd seen him around Sechelt, but I never really talked to him. I'd been in their house when Cherry was there—I don't remember why. I can remember she had some dogwood bowls. That's about all I remember.

*R Are those kids still around?*

Bea Yes. Janey lives out in Squamish. She had a bookstore. She was down here, not too long ago. She and Bonnie Wigard are really good friends. I don't know where Jeff is. Mike was in a wheelchair—I don't know what his problem is—whether it is MS, or arthritis, or what. I know Gail told me not long ago that Mike was in a wheelchair. I don't know where he is. He married a Moscript girl—Leana?

*R What community organizations did you belong to besides the Rod & Gun Club?*

Bea Girl Guides. I was a Brownie Guider, and Marilyn—all three girls—were at the guide camp. We attended St. Hilda's church. I still go.

R *What did you do for church up in camp?*

Bea There wasn't anything but Canon Greene. He used to come up in his little boat and he'd come into all the houses and say a prayer and this sort of thing. Once, when we had the Rec Hall there, after the school started, he brought his little organ and we had a church service there.

I was up there for eight years and Harold was there for at least 12 I guess. A couple of years before. When he got out of school, he worked up there and then we went up there when we got married, but we were only there about two months before he had to go join up.

R *What did you do when he joined up?*

Bea Well, I went back to Surrey again and I stayed with his folks in Surrey until Marilyn was six months old. Then I rented a little house on the King George Highway and stayed there till Harold got back from overseas.

I followed him, though. When he came down, he went in to join up and he never got home again. They just took him right away. He didn't have long johns or anything, and he ended up in Toronto and it was 26° below when he got there and he just had a suit. I was in bed sick. I had a girl friend who saw him in Vancouver. He told her that he was shipping out that night and he didn't know where he was going. There was lots of snow on the ground. I was in Surrey, sick with this darned flu, so I got out of bed and went up to Newton to get the tram in and the tram wasn't running because there was too much snow. So I went into the general store there and a couple of guys came in and they must have known I was wanting to go to Vancouver, so they said, well we're going into New Westminster and they said come on with us. So I went—in those days you did that—and I got to the Patulla Bridge and they said, "This is as far as we go, but this guy," and they pointed to the car across the street, "he's heading into New Westminster. So you get a ride with him." So I did and I guess I got the tram into Vancouver to Carrol Street—that was the only place—I didn't know where Harold was, but I figured he'd be there, and he was.

R *So you got to say good-bye to him?*

Bea Yes, I did. Then he went to St. Thomas and I went back in February, then we went from there to Vulcan, Alberta in June, and then he was posted from there overseas. So he had a 10-day furlough, and he was shipped out the day before our first anniversary.

R *Did he see action?*

Bea He was in the airforce, and his airfield was the first one set up after D-Day in France. He spent a lot of his time in Belgium with a family there. He was billeted with them. But he was in England, Scotland, Holland, France and I think, even Germany.

It was kind of tough, but there weren't many people out in Newton. The girls—their husbands weren't in the forces at all. I don't know if they weren't fit or what it was.

*R What was it like to come into a Swedish family?*

Bea I had been used to logging camps, so I understood all that. Harold's folks were quite well-to-do, they were not wealthy, but a lot better off than most of us in Surrey. I mean we were all—we had small farms and no money, but Harold's dad, because through Uncle Eric, he was always out in camps, and he always had lots of work and had a really nice home. And Harold's mother was very nice. Quite reserved, quiet. I got along fine with her. I lived with them for six months, then Harold's mother asked me if I couldn't go back with my folks. I wasn't wanting to do that, so I got a little house on King George Highway.

They didn't talk Swedish—just when Dad came home from camp. If they had company and that and gathered together, they'd talk Swedish. But Harold's mother didn't talk Swedish at all. And yet she came over when she was 4 or 5 years old. She understood it, but she never spoke it.

Even in the camp where my Dad was cooking, they were called the Swede-Finns. And I still write to the Blomberg's daughter, Evelyn Gale. I just got a letter from her—she and her brother were in the camp when I got my leg cut open. That summer they were there for their summer holidays. So I have been in touch with Evelyn, not all the years, but these last fifteen years anyway. I'm an awful person for keeping in touch with people—I like to do that.

*R Is there anything more about early Sechelt that you can think of? Do you remember the first election?*

Bea Most of the people here don't know about Deserted Bay. The Whittaker's did because their camp was just below ours. We used to go—after Harold built a clinker-built boat, we used to putt down to Whittaker's on a Sunday. It would take us hours to get down there, not a lot of hours, but I know we stopped half-way and had lunch. We got there once when a little boy had drowned off their wharf. We'd just got there—we had not communication with them, there were no phones or anything—so when we got there and they asked us to come right up to the house and Jean said the lady that was cooking for them had her two boys here for a holiday—one was her sister's boy. It was her sister's boy that drowned. Goldie—from Gambier Island. The little boy went down to throw something in the salt chuck, a can or something, and he went over. Harold found him. He would have been about 10 years old or so.

That was up at their camp, just below ours. Before you get to Brittain River. Brittain River was on the opposite side of Deserted Bay. Whittaker's was on the same side as us. They used to come up in the *Prelude* quite often, on a Sunday, and if it was a really nice day we'd sort of anticipate that they might come. We always had stuff here anyway.

And Dr. Swan and Rosa used to come often to Vancouver Bay and Britain River to give



medications and shots.

*End of tape.*