

Is there a history to your name?

Gunnar was my dad's name. The family name Wigard was *Vigard* in Finland.

Your birth date?

July 1, 1946.

And where were you born?

I was born in Vancouver BC, but I was taken from there up to Doriston, to the logging camp, in a banana crate and that's where I lived until I was two years old and had to go to school. Then we moved to Selma Park.

Your father's name?

Gunnar Andreas Wigard.

Where was he born?

Kornaby, Finland. I'm not sure of the spelling.

Your mother's name?

Jennie Marilyn Wigard.

Her maiden name?

Cuthbert. I'm not sure if that's with an 'a' or an 'e'.

When and where was she born?

Kinley, Saskatchewan on January 12, 1912. She is 94 today.

Where did her ancestor's come from?

Scotland. Wales.

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

Well, he had enough money in the bank in Finland to get back there if he didn't like it here. But he stayed. The money remained in the bank until about 30 or 40 years later when my Uncle Whalley came out and my dad signed over a draft for the money to him to do whatever he wanted with it.

What was your father's occupation in Finland?

He was a logger and a finishing carpenter.

Did you ever hear why he wanted to come here?

To travel, I guess. His friends came over to Canada six months earlier.

How old was he?

He was twenty-one.

And your mother's parents—how is it that they came to Canada?

I have no idea.

What did your father do when he got here?

He came over to Victoria and went up to Jordan River. Originally he got a job as a high rigger, then he heard about a camp for sale and a logging quota here. He ran into Charlie McDermid and it became M & W Logging. They had three camps in the inlet—not all at once though.

Where were they located?

One was in Doriston where I grew up. And just this side of Doriston was another camp. And one across the inlet on the far side. One at the entrance to Narrows Inlet, just before you go into the inlet.

Was it close to Lawler's camp in Narrows?

Not really. It was more into Sechelt Inlet.

How big was the Doriston camp?

About 50 men. They lived in camp, in bunkhouses. No one commuted.

How long would they stay?

I don't know. Quite a long time. At least two weeks.

My uncle was a bull cook there. That was my mom's sister's husband –Aunt Lucy and Uncle Irv Anderson.

What kind of show was it at Doriston?

Steam donkeys. There is one donkey still there. Rocky Hemstreet took a 4 x 4 up there a short time ago and saw it. It was still there, but in bad shape.

And the logs were brought down to the inlet?

Yeah, they all came down to the inlet and they were put in a flat boom and shipped out.

What role did your dad play in the operation?

Dad was a high rigger and part owner. He climbed up the spar trees and set them up. I have a picture of him on top of a big fir in Selma Park—he was 300 feet up.

When did you leave Doriston?

We left in about 1947. He bought a house in Selma Park.

So what did you do as a child in Doriston?

Got in to trouble. Went fishing. Bugged the guys in camp. That's about it.

Did your Dad stop working at the camp when you moved to Selma Park?

No. He stayed at Doriston until 1956. Then he sold his partnership to Charlie McDermid. Then he worked in Wigards Shoe Store in Sechelt.

Your Dad did? I thought it was your mother's store?

They both worked there.

That was quite a leap from logging to running a shoe store. What prompted that?

Well, Mom wanted something to do. I was in school. And they didn't have a shoe store in Sechelt. You had to go to Vancouver to pick up shoes via the Union Steamship boats.

So, how did they learn about selling shoes?

Trial and error. And they had help from the shoe wholesale man—J. F. Muzhadin. He had a wholesale business on Water Street in Vancouver.

When did they start the shoe store?

December 4, 1954. They started in the Richter Building, beside Richter's TV & Repair, until they built the new shoe store and apartment block—the Wigard building.

Did your father build that block?

Yes.

How did your parents meet?

Mother moved to Chilliwack to her aunt's place. Somehow she and my dad met in Stanley Park.

Was your dad in the war?

Yes. 1 ½ years in Finland and then he was in the logging camp at Jordan River for the rest of the war. He was the corporal in charge of the Jordan River division of the West Coast Militia Rangers. They were similar to the home guards we have now. There were the Rocky Mountain Rangers, and an Alberta Rangers and the West Coast Militia Rangers. The training came out of Chilliwack and everything was supplied to them from Chilliwack.

Did he get a rifle for that?

Yes, and I have it. It has the West Coast Militia insignia on it.

If Sechelt had a museum, they could have that gun. I've also got a 22 that my mom gave me. Her grandmother gave it to her. They would probably have to be deactivated if they were in a museum.

It's aggravating that the village is spending so much money on useless things and yet there is no museum here. I know a lot of people who have things to donate. I have albums of pictures. Transportation up and down the inlet was on a converted fish boat.

Charles McDermid had a fishboat called the *Maude*, and Dad ran the *Breeze*. It was a faster boat than most on the inlet. It was still around here until Sam MacKenzie passed away. He bought it and was going to try to restore it.

How big was it?

28-feet. Had a Ford flathead engine. It packed about 6 to 8 people. Sometimes more!

Were there seats?

Yes.

What kind of house did you live in at Doriston?

We had a house directly up from the dock. It was a great big cabin—three bedrooms, a kitchen, a combined living-room dining room, and a full verandah out front. I loved that verandah. I used to run from one end to the other!

What kind of stove?

Wood. And a diesel oil heater. An old-fashioned wood stove.

Was there running water and toilets?

No, but there was a creek running alongside the house.

Was there a school there?

Yes. Spencer would know more about that. It was a one-room school. I didn't go to it.

Did you know much about the Jardine brothers?

Not much. They built boats. The last one they built didn't get in the water. They were still planking it when one of the brothers passed away.

As a kid I knew them to talk to them. But dad knew them.

How many kids were in the camp?

A few. Bill McDermid. Spencer. Lorne. My sister. Those are the ones I know of.

The camp I grew up in, there might have been 50 to 60 loggers in that camp. Maybe even more. And some kids. But a lot of loggers came to Sechelt if they were married, or Vancouver. Most were hired out of the Loggers Convention Hall on Pender St. in Vancouver.

So your mom had lots of company in camp?

Yes. My aunt was there. Mabel was there. There were four or five ladies in camp.

Did your mom like living there?

Yes, Mom liked it.

How long did she and your dad operate the store?

They operated it till March 3, 1967. Then they started the first sewing centre in Sechelt, and ran that for five years. They sold that and built a big Spanish-style house in Selma Park. Then Mom had nothing to do so she started another shoe store and ran it for four years. Betty McKay bought that one. Then they sold the apartment block.

Mom lived at Selma Park until 1999. Around then Vic Walters went bankrupt. He'd bought the apartment block. When he went bankrupt it went on the market and Mom bought it back and they continue to own it.

When did your dad pass away?

Dad died twenty-one years ago. On January 12, 1986.

What schools did you attend?

In 1951 I entered Sechelt Elementary School. It was right where it is now. Then I went to Trail Bay Junior High for three years. It was the only time it was in operation. In 1988 we had a reunion and only missed three people! There were 178 at the reunion.

What was it like at school when you were a kid? How big were the classes?

At elementary school there were at least 40 kids per class, if not more.

You couldn't go from elementary school to Elphinstone, you had to go to the Trail Bay Junior High.

Was it a close knit group at Trail Bay Junior High?

Oh yeah. Everybody knew everyone.

Did you have one teacher for each subject?

Yes, you went from classroom to classroom. There was no geometry back then.

Was Ray Stockwell in your class?

He was in Spencer's grade along with Bill McDermid, Johnny Walker and John West.

What subjects did you excel in?

Phys Ed. I was an average student. I liked sports in school.

What sports did you like?

Baseball. There was no tennis. Just ping pong and baseball, soccer and football.

Did you swim a lot?

Oh, yeah. Before I could take a boat out by myself, I had to swim from our house, which was halfway up Selma Park hill, to the dock, which was where the Selma Park breakwater is now. That was about 500 yards or 1500 feet.

How old were you then?

About 8 or 9 years old. I remember I went with my brothers when I was about 7 or 8. Ivan Woods lost an oar over the side and we were left drifting towards the Trail Islands. Walter Flay—who was George Flay's father—came out and got us. He had the only rental boats in Selma Park, and he motored out to us.

Were you scared?

No. It was flat calm. We were in no danger, but we couldn't get back in because of the tide.

Who was your favourite teacher?

Mrs. Apps. That was her name when I went to school She married Johnny Hicks. She came to

visit me in August 2006. She was living in Vancouver and came to visit friends on her way to the Island.

And Mrs. Lang. She lived beside us in Selma Park when I was growing up.

Those were my only favourites.

What was it that you liked about them?

Basically they helped you out with things you couldn't figure out.

Being a close knit community, you knew them, and their daughters, and everyone else.

So it was like a big family?

No. There were different groups that you hung out with. The Selma Park kids liked to do things there and you stuck with them.

Who were some of your friends?

Rick Sims. Ray Moscrip. Dennis Moore—he lived in Vancouver, but came up here a lot. Ralph Butler—most of the ones in Selma Park.

I guess because it was harder to get around in those days?

Yes. You either walked or took a bike. Everyone had bicycles then. And you didn't have to lock them up.

So there was a lot less crime in those days?

Yes. You never heard of any B & E's like you do now. Not even in the summer cabins. People would come up from Vancouver and leave their cabins open along the beach at Selma Park.

There were cabins towards Davis Bay—the Blights and Durells and the Hewitts. They never got broken into. They'd leave food and everything and nothing was taken. There were lots of kids around, but we didn't do that kind of stuff.

What do you think made the difference?

Parents were a lot stricter then. If you did something wrong you had your mom and dad to deal with and you knew they were going to be up tight about it, so you just didn't do it.

What chores did you have to do?

Cut the grass. Do dishes. Bring in firewood. Basic yard work.

Did you ever work in the logging camps?

No. I went there to go fishing!

Fishing was great in those days on the inlet. You'd catch salmon, cod, crabs, lots of prawns.

When did you notice it declining?

About 15 to 20 years ago. You could go out and catch fish—not as many as in earlier days, but you could catch one, a spring or a coho.

I still have a map of the inlet that my uncle and dad made with all the little holes where they used to fish. I went to a few of the places and always caught a ling or a red snapper. There's a hole in front of Doriston where my uncle got prawns and fished for the camp.

What were your hobbies or pastimes?

Fishing, hiking, and hunting.

As a kid I fished Selma Park and the Trail Islands for saltwater fish. Up behind the house was a trail to Chapman Creek and in the summertime we'd camp there and fish trout at the falls.

Where would you hike to?

The creek or the water intake that supply Sechelt water. There was a trail there. We'd hike up there all the time. And we'd go down to Davis Bay and jump off the wharf.

How old were you when you started hunting?

Ten years old. My dad used to go duck hunting. I got a license when I was 12. I could hunt provided dad or my brothers were with me. We hunted duck, and then deer. When I was 12 or 14 I shot my first deer.

Where did you hunt for ducks?

Porpoise Bay. They used to migrate in from the interior. A big flock still comes to Narrows and to Tzoonie. We hunted there and in the swamp, which is now the Sechelt Marsh. I'm a charter member of the Marsh Society. There were no houses there then, and across from the government dock there were no houses. We hunted up the inlet to Crowston's and McLean Bay, Carlson Point across to Snake Bay. And on the Tzoonie river. Any place where there were ducks. Even Clowhom Falls. We went fishing there and duck hunting.

Did you know a lot of interesting characters on the inlet?

There were not that many up here.

Minnie and Bergie?

Yeah.

Did your dad have anything to do with them?

Probably later on he might have had them as camp tenders. They were hand logging initially. Basically stayed to themselves. Later I think he got Myrtle to tend the camp.

What year did you graduate?

I didn't. I left school when I was sixteen. I went logging for a while, but got a rough time at it.

What kind of rough time?

Basically joking around, asking me what I was doing up there. I wasn't the logging type.

Did you like the logging itself?

No. It was raining when you got up and you'd get into rain gear and wear it until you went to bed that night.

When I left there I went to work for Brian Briggs. He was a surveyor putting in logging roads. I liked that. We'd put tapes down to lay the road out. We'd fly in by float plane and a helicopter would take us to the sites. When it snowed one winter I got tired and didn't feel like doing that any more. So I went to work for the Shell Station in Sechelt pumping gas, but I didn't like that. Then I worked in the shoe store for my mom.

When I was 18 I went hunting with Peter Finlayson. On his suggestion I put my name in with BC Ferries and on September 22, 1964 I started working there. I started as a cleaner and did that for a week, but I didn't like it. Then I worked in the engine room for a day and I didn't like that, so I got a job as a deckhand and that's where I stayed for 36 years. I enjoyed it.

What did you do for fun as an 18-year-old?

We'd drive around and party, and go hunting and fishing and camping.

When did you get your first car?

When I was 16. That's when you could get a driver's license here, but you could only drive from Powell River to Port Mellon. You couldn't drive in Vancouver until you went there and wrote the test.

So what was your first car?

A 1954 Merc Monterey. Dad knew this person from Davis Bay who came into the shoe store and said he was selling his old car. He hadn't driven it for years, but it didn't look bad and it ran okay. It was the first car I owned.

So would you go to dances?

Yes. There were dances at Elphinstone and at Roberts Creek Hall. We'd dance there all the time. And we'd party and drive around—there was always a party you could find. But we didn't drink a lot.

When did you meet Helen?

We met in the legion. My sister knew Helen and introduced her and we started going together.

What brought Helen to the Sunshine Coast?

Two years earlier Helen's first husband came here to work for BC Hydro as a linesman, bringing the line from Sechelt to Clowhom Falls. They split up and about nine months later I came into the picture.

What skills did you learn from your parents?

Selling shoes from my mom. From my dad, carpentry, building, using chainsaw, boating. He showed me the early stuff, but I learned the rest by trial and error.

And he taught me shooting. Dad was an expert at shooting. He won every pin and crest in Canada. He was a sharp shooter.

I was also a sharp shooter.

He taught me to hunt a little, and to fish, but around here you'd get together with chums and go shooting and fishing and learn a lot of that stuff on your own.

Was he a good carpenter?

He was a finishing carpenter. He built everything. He could build anything he put his mind to.

What did you do during summer holidays?

One trip I remember, we went around BC on a camping trip. We stayed in motels beside lakes. And we made a few trips to Cultis Lake in Chilliwack. My mom's sister owned a cabin on Cultis Lake and we stayed there.

But most holidays consisted of going to camp and fishing on the inlet.

What was your most difficult time as a child?

I never had one. I wasn't all that good in school.

It was a lot better then for kids. We found things to do—they weren't handed to us. On a weekend we'd camp or find things to keep ourselves entertained. We didn't need someone to build a big complex to entertain us.

If someone put on something, it was respected. It's different now, but then we'd have a Selma Park Regatta and a Sechelt Regatta, even though they were only 1 ½ miles apart—and everyone would attend. The beaches would be full of kids. In Selma Park now you seldom see a kid. In those days there'd be 20 to 30 kids on the beach.

We entertained ourselves. We didn't have computers and we were one of the only ones to have tv. And watching that was limited. For one thing, we only had channels 6 and 12!

And telephones—you couldn't use them very often. There were seven people on a party line.

We had to entertain ourselves, so we went to the beach.

What about the winter?

We'd have homemade toboggans and bob sleighs. Back then there was more snow than now. I remember 3-feet of snow, but not for the last forty-five years!

But in winter we still went hunting. We had an indoor range in the basement of our place where you could shoot bb caps. And we had a woodworking area where I could build something if I wanted. We'd watch a little tv in the evening.

If it snowed everyone was building sleds and toboggans and we'd have snowball fights. There were only a few cars, so we'd go down the Selma Park hill on a toboggan.

Do you remember your first date?

Probably Heather Lang or Terry Osborne.

Where did you go?

A school dance. Our parents took us there and dropped us off and then picked us up later. And the teachers stayed there. A few kids walked.

What historical events happened during your life? For example, the loggers who drowned returning from the Narrows Inlet camp on April 14, 1960.

That was probably the only hurricane that ever hit here. I remember them going down. Doug Wakefield was a chum of mine—his dad went down in the boat.

How old were you?

I was twelve. They were coming down from camp. Across from Tuwanek, but up the inlet, the boat went down there..

When did you hear about it?

We heard about it when we went back to school. I hadn't seen Doug on the weekend. Some of the other kids' fathers were in that boat. We all knew about it on Monday morning.

So you weren't involved in the search for them?

My dad and some other camps were. Once the wind died down they went looking. Anyone with a boat in Porpoise Bay went looking.

Did it affect the way you acted on the water?

No.

I remember the moon landing, but it didn't really affect my life.

Princess Di—I remember hearing about her death. We were having dinner at Ruby Lake with Tony and Brenda Kirkland.

And I remember 911 in New York (Twin Towers).. Helen and I were at Langdale when we heard about 911.

Do you remember when JFK died?

Yes. I was out behind the shoe store working for mom. I was leaning against my car and listening to the radio when he got shot.

Were you troubled by thoughts of nuclear war?

No. They were so far away from us, it never really had an effect on us.

Did your dad ever have any forest fires while he was logging?

There was one fire—it was the only forest fire out of M & W. It started when a steam donkey backfired and caught some bush on fire. Fortunately the Forestry had a big crew up here—that was when they still had a forest service here. And loggers from other camps came in and helped put it out.

Big fires in Sechelt:

I remember when the Sechelt Inn burned. People think it burned down but only part of it burned and what was left was dangerous. Only later did they burn it down completely.

The Calypso Room burned down. The Sechelt Wharf burned down. The Indian band church burned down. The community hall in Selma Park. One fellow lost his life in that. He was the cook/caretaker.

Did you know him?

As a kid I knew him if I saw him.

Then the Stewarts house burned. I was hanging around with Bonnie Stewart in those days.

The Selma Park store burned, and Elphinstone High School.

What about accidents in the woods?

I can't remember any.

When did you start your marina?

Twenty-nine years ago, October 1976.

I liked water and being on the water. I had a boat on the inlet. One day I saw a For Sale sign on this place and I inquired about it. At that time I had a house under the power line in Sechelt. I put it up for sale and had enough equity to buy this house.

There were only two logs out front as a dock. Then some friends asked if they could moor their boats here, so I started putting out docks. More friends would come and I'd build more docks and it started snowballing, and I was building even more docks. It's been full ever since and now has 45 boats.

What do you like most about the marina business?

You get to meet different people. And there's woodworking. I can fix docks and build things. See who catches fish and crabs. Socializing is a large part of it.

What do you like the least?

The storms. We had two major storms, one on December 14, 2000 and one on December 18, 2002. Leslie's lost their complete dock and never rebuilt, but I rebuilt mine.

Clayton—he's a pilot next door—he had the winds in the 2002 storm clocked at 117 km. It was the worst I've seen. That storm moved granite blocks at Stanley Park and they had to get machines to move them back.

Did you suffer from that ice storm in the eighties?

No. We had lots of ice all across the other side of the bay, but from the old BC Mill site to Rudy Crucil's, it was clear. The planes were coming here because it was the only piece of clear water

they could find to take off from.

What organizations did your parents belong to?

Mom's a charter member of the Eastern Star and she and dad were both lifetime members of the Rod & Gun Club. And Dad was in the Masons. And they were members of the Legion.

Were they ever involved in local politics?

No. They wanted dad to go, but he didn't think he was a good enough speaker.

How was it that your mother was a charter member of the R & G Club?

Because of Dad. She helped with banquets and all of that. Dad and other members of the community built the Rod & Gun club to what it is today.

Did he build the buildings?

Yes. He had access to a chainsaw and other equipment. And the Oikes and Osbornes helped clear the property. They brought in a bunkhouse and changed it to a shooting range and did all the interior work.

Harry Bachelor was the carpenter. Tom Robilliard was the electrician.

I have the original records, as far back as 1946 when the club started. They didn't have a shooting range then, they just met at people's houses. A can of milk cost 3 cents then. That's how meticulous the records were!

Several years ago the president of the club was cleaning out things and she was going to throw away the old minutes and trophies. Mom and Dad went down on Sunday and asked what she was doing, then gathered up all the records and some of the trophies and shields and took them home. I had them passed on to me.

If they build a proper cabinet to keep them in, I'll donate them back.

Discussion about Sechelt history.

Vic Walters wasn't around when M & W was here. Anything Walters had to do, he came way later. When he came in, he bought part of a camp off Charlie McDermid. Vic and his wife lived in a bunkhouse on a log raft right by the old BC Mill site.

M & W played a big role in logging on the inlet. They represent a lot of Sechelt history.

Gus Crucil and his wife had the Tasella Shop and they lived behind the shop, not down here where Rudy Crucil lives. Gus Crucil was a logger too. He logged in Porpoise Bay, up Dusty Road.

Oral History Part II (recorded October 5, 2006)

You said Charlie McDermid had a old fish boat called the Maude and that it was used to transport people and goods up and down the inlet for their camp. Do you know what year that operated and how big it was? How many passengers it carried?

Well, somewhere around . . . probably 1945. I was born in Vancouver and Susanne was born in Victoria. She's a year younger than me. So it would be around 1944-45 when it was running. It was a 35-foot, probably an ex-fish boat. It's still in operation. My brother's seen it over in Campbell River up on stilts on the beach, someone was working on it. So someone's trying to restore it.

How many passengers did it hold?

Oh, ten twelve. Loaded all the kids on their and the adults. We used to go fishing and picnicking and that, so it held quite a few.

And was it used mostly for the [Doriston] camp or for other camps too?

No, it was basically a camp supply boat. It hauled all the stores up there and all the groceries.

And the boat that your dad had, did it run during those same years?

Yeah, the same. It was the MW's boat—that was *The Breeze*. Charlie actually bought the boat and then it just became part of the camp.

Who piloted your dad's boat?

A variety of different guys. Anybody that could run it. There was no set person.

How about the Maude?

No set person on that either. Anybody that was responsible enough to be able to operate it.

How is it that you became a charter member of the Marsh Society?

Well, Norm Watson, whom I knew quite well, and myself, and about three others, including a surveyor from Gibsons . . . there were about five of us who decided we would start it and we applied to Victoria for society licence and we received it so they couldn't fill the marsh in and they couldn't sell it, so it was a non-profit organization. We fed the birds and everything else, and it just kept growing from there. There's a brass plaque on a big rock in front of the marsh with our names on it.

There's charter members and founding members. Charter members are those who originally started it, which is Norm, myself and three or four others. Founding members donated upwards to \$500 for the legal aspects of it, and feeding the birds and getting a path and work parties organized to clean brush and make a walkway going around the marsh. We had a couple of benches made and a gazebo made.

What prompted you to do that?

I raised pheasants and ducks and everything when I used to live in Selma Park. When I moved into Sechelt I had ducks and roosters and everything at my house in Sechelt and I got lots of letters from the Village saying that my ducks and chickens were there before the bylaw went in and they can stay until they die. Tom Woods was the mayor at that time. When we started the

marsh I donated all of the birds to the marsh to attract wild birds coming in. Something like putting out decoys.

Did you have a long history at the marsh? Did you play there as a kid?

No. The marsh only came into effect when Osborne dredged for his marina and he put sand up there. It was all sawdust before because there was a mill on the site. They covered all the sawdust with sand and I guess there's townhouses there now.

The marsh was the diggings of the local natives to build a canal to Sechelt waterfront side. Good thing they didn't make it. There is a 9-foot difference in tides.

They used to have a cranberry marsh along Sechelt. Did you ever pick any?

No, cranberry bogs were between the Driftwood and the Royal Terraces. Along that stretch where all the peat bogs was. There used to be cranberry bogs there. You used to see them floating in the fall but nobody ever—at least, I never picked them. There was originally a boardwalk going across to the waterfront. We used to play on that all the time. Catch frogs. But that was about the extent of it.

When you started working you said you worked for Brian Briggs. Where was that at?

He worked in a lot of logging camps up the inlet. He had a float plane he used and the difficult places we had to go he had a helicopter drop us off and then pick us up when we phoned out, or at a designated time they'd come in and pick us up.

What inlets?

We surveyed Sechelt Inlet, Narrows Arm, Salmon Arm, Skwaka River, Olsen Brothers—that was in Jervis Inlet, and up as far as Nelson Island. I think the farthest we went up was Gilford Island. Somewheres off of Quadra.

Did he have a name for his company?

Just Brian Briggs Surveying.

When you were working on the ferries, how did the work change from when you started to thirty-six years later?

Government bureaucracy. Rules and regulations. There's this mass of regulations now that they brought into effect. We never had accidents before, and we never anticipated accidents, and yet they brought in these regulations to kind of foolproof us to not have any accidents. Which probably doesn't work anyhow, but it makes a awful lot of extra work, extra time loss, and of course, extra cost to the government and tax payers.

And the volume of traffic would be more.

Oh, yeah, the traffic increase has more than tripled. I can remember sailing when we only had two cars on board. Now it is probably three-quarters of a load to full loads all the time. There's a lot of expansion on the coast. Why I don't know. There's nothing here. As far as mills and industrial, there's not that much around. Not to attract the amount of people coming up.

A lot of retirees.

A lot retired people up here, yeah.

What was the first boat you worked on?

The *Bainbridge*. Wooden decks. Steel hull. Wooden superstructure. And the *Smokwa*, made out of black steel. That went to a fish camp. And the *Bainbridge* sailed out of Jervis Inlet for quite a few years after that and then it was tied up under the Burrard Street bridge for quite a while after that. We got the *Langdale Queen*, and the *Sechelt Queen*. The *Sechelt Queen* went to Powell River from Langdale. The *Langdale Queen* sat under the Burrard Street bridge for about twelve or fifteen years. I think it's scrap now. I don't know where it is now. Then we got the *Sunshine Coast Queen* and after that was no longer in use it was to be towed over to Japan to make razor blades and cars and it sunk halfway across. I could have told you that boat, before it even left, that it wasn't going to make it. That ship basically had a mind of its own. It's hard to fathom that, it's just something that you get used to. And I have pictures of the ship actually going down.

How did you manage to do that?

One of the mates on the tugboat snapped about five pictures. I've got three of them. I've seen the other two, but I don't have photographs of them. I have three of the photographs of it going down.

After that there were a variety of ships—the *Coquitlam*, the *Surrey*, the *Oak Bay*, the *Victoria*, the *Vancouver*. There was every possible ship going that we had over for a few months here. The *New West* we had for about three years.

How was the Bainbridge different than the ferries today?

It was small. There's not really that much difference. They're both double-enders. It was smaller and old.

Where did it come from?

It came from Bainbridge Washington, out of Seattle. *Smokwa*, I'm not sure where it came from, but it did come from the states. Somewhere in Washington.

What kind of dining facilities did they have on them?

Basically on those two ships it was coffee and sandwich bars. But the bigger ships, it was restaurants. They don't have them anymore, but they used to have smorgasbords on them, and different buffets. But they don't have those any more, not on this run here. I'm not even sure if they have them on the Nanaimo run anymore.

How many crew did they have at first?

On the *Smokwa* and the *Bainbridge* we had 4 deckhands, a second mate, first mate and skipper, chief engineer, junior engineer and oiler.

On the bigger ones, for a good many years, we had 7 deckhands—now they've changed it to six—first mate, second mate, skipper, chief engineer, junior engineer, second engineer, and two oilers.

Catering staff now is 28 catering staff, including the chief steward. Catering on the other ones, there was no chief steward, it was just three catering attendants and a couple of cleaners.

As a deckhand, what would your job be?

Steering the boat. Parking the traffic. Anchor watch. Fog watch. Snow watch. Clean the ship. Wash the superstructure inside on the cardecks, wash all cardecks down. Fire patrol on the main cardeck. That's about it.

How is it that you would steer the boat?

Quartermaster.

You would take the position as quartermaster?

Yeah.

Did you have to take special training for that?

No. Probably do now, because of the regulations. Skipper would be there. Skipper was on the bridge to dock and to bring the ship out. First mate or second mate would be there at all time, except in snow or fog when the skipper is on the bridge at all times.

Were you kind of like a family on those boats?

Yeah, it was quite a social work crew that we had. Didn't change crews very often. And it was a young crew that we had so we stayed on the same watch . . . I worked with one of the guys there, we were both deckhands, for 26 years. So we didn't change the shifts too much. For my skipper I had Al White. I had him as my skipper for 24 years, Charlie Strom I had him as first mate for 22 years. So you see, things don't change very much.

Did you ever have some close calls on the ferry?

Oh yeah, we smashed the ship up a few times, a few docks.

What happened?

Oh, power failures. The *Sunshine Coast Queen* we hit the dock in Horseshoe Bay because of a fuse that somehow went for a pile of reasons. And we used to hit the dock pretty hard in Langdale with the *Langdale* and *Sechelt Queen* because they didn't have bow thrusters on them. So you had to manoeuvre the boat pretty close to the dock and sometimes we got a little too close.

Did you ever have any rescues?

Yeah, we had several rescues. Boats that had flipped over. Motors that had blown up. The last one I was on was a big sailboat that had burned off of Boyer Island, off of Lions Bay. We got the people off but the boat was burned to the waterline. Coast guard managed to get it out before it sunk.

Was there ever a time when you were scared or worried on the ferries?

No.

Did you ever have incidents with passengers?

Oh, we had lots of incidents with passengers. Just about everything you can think of. I was first aid attendant for twelve years. We had a couple of people had heart attacks and died. We had a variety, about every incident you could imagine.

There were people like a woman last summer who aimed at a deckhand. Did you get a lot of that where people were mad?

No. We never had hardly any incidents as far as cars trying to hit deckhands or mates. Very few. If it was, it was purely by accident. It was never intentional.

Did people use to get as angry as they do now about missing the ferry?

No. I don't know why things have gotten so bad now, but before they never seemed to worry too much.

The ferries used to go every hour. Is that preferable to what they're doing now?

I'd like to see them go every hour because your traffic would be lighter. Right now you wait for two hours and traffic builds up and you take one load out and by the time you take that load up the traffic has built up for the second one. If we had it every hour, you'd take so many out in that time frame, and the next hour you're hauling out more. So it would be a lot more efficient to run it that way. But they just don't have the ships to do it. Use to, but not any more. Didn't build enough.

What did you think of the ship that went down?

Queen of the North? I was quite surprised, shocked by it. Then I realized that the ship was bought in Germany which meant it had a single hull instead of a double hull, which would have made a big difference. I'm surprised with all the navigational equipment that they have got—a lot more than we have on the lower runs because of the extent of their run—I'm surprised that it did go down. I'm surprised that they put themselves in a position where they would hit a rock. But no one's going to find out the true reason why it went down. That's going to be buried in paper work for years to come.

When you were younger you went to local dances. What bands were playing?

Just local bands. Sometimes they got them up from Vancouver. Mostly local bands or taped music. That was about it.

What kind of music?

A variety of everything.

Was it mostly young people, or did older people go too?

No, a lot of it was young people. In earlier years they were chaperoned by older people. No, it was mostly young kids from around Sechelt, Selma Park, Wilson Creek and West Sechelt. A few coming in from Gibsons and Halfmoon Bay but they'd have to drive to get in there.

What kind of dances did you do?

Anything that was going at the time. Waltzes, jives, fox trots. Whatever happened to be going at the time.

Did you dance?

Yeah.

As a kid, what did you do at Halloween?

Go out and get candy.

Trick-or-treating?

Yeah. And the village used to have fireworks for us. We don't seem to do that anymore. A few times, earlier on, we had parties. Instead of going out on Halloween we'd go out trick-or-treating for a while then go to a costume party. That was usually held at one of the school gyms.

Did you ever do any pranks?

Well, not that I'm going to admit to. It was pretty mild. Soaping windows, things like that. Wax and soap and that was about it.

No toilet paper?

No, we didn't seem to get into that one.

How about Christmas. What were your Christmases like?

Oh, Christmases were good. Usually we had snow, which you don't get any more.

Did you have concerts?

Yeah, we had a few in the really early years in school. Mostly it was Christmas parties that you went to. Anything that usually happens around Christmas. You'd do the decorations and all that.

Were there community parties?

Some were. I can remember a few community parties.

What was your relationship with the Sechelt natives? Did you associate with them?

I went to school with them. Partied with them. They didn't seem to be any different than anybody else. I got along with them and they got along with me.

They weren't in the residential school?

The residential school was just being shut down. It was supposed to be almost completely shut down by the time we started going into grade 4 or 5. The residential school was pretty well finished by then. We had quite a few of the locals in our school.

What would you consider were the most important inventions in your lifetime?

TV. I guess, I don't know. Already had cars. Already had boats. Didn't have computers. We had telephones. TV's—we got one in about 1950. Still had almost an oval screen on it, all rounded at the corners. Not like they are now, a flat screen and almost two inches wide!

What kind of shows did you watch?

All the old family shows. We only could get channel 6 and channel 12, on a fifty-foot antennae. That's the only two channels we could get.

Can you remember some of the shows?

No. That was the fifties shows.

I asked what organizations your parents belonged to, but what organizations did you and Helen belong to?

Well, we still belong to the Legion. That's about it. And the Rod and Gun Club.

Is that the Sechelt Legion?

Yeah.

Were you active members?

Helen was for a good many years. I wasn't that active in it. I managed to increase the membership by probably 150 people.

How was that?

My dad kept all of his old papers from the West Coast Militia Rangers. When the buildings burned down in Chilliwack, nobody had any records of the Militia Rangers. So the Legion asked me if I could get Dad's serial number so they could check back on it. I did so, and it came out that they found out they were the West Cost Militia Rangers, and that a lot of people who wanted to join the Legion had belonged to the Rangers, so they could join as active members instead of affiliated members. Before you just joined as an affiliated member, but if you wanted to be involved in the Legion, you had to be an active member.

And because you had the records, you could do that.

That's right. Or, my dad had the records.

So did you give the records to the Legion?

Yeah.

Your dad was a really good record keeper.

He kept everything.

Did Helen work?

Yeah. She started at my dad and mom's shoe store, for quite a few years, I guess. Then she went to the Post Office where she ended up being the Post Master before retiring.

Do you know when she started and when she quit?

No.

What would you say your greatest contribution to the community has been?

I have no idea.

Certainly having the marina here has been a contribution.

That's about probably the only thing, is having the marina.

And collecting those records.

Oh, yeah.

What would you say has been the greatest achievement of your life?

Getting it this far! Basically, building this marina up to what it is right now. That's about it. Not being a burden on the government, so the taxpayers don't have to pay for me!

Who would you say had the greatest influence on your life?

My Dad.

And how was that?

Oh, hunting and fishing, basically fixing cars and anything that came along, he had a hand in it. Dad was probably the biggest influence as far as that goes. Mom showed me in the shoe store what to do in there, as far as selling shoes and that. But the biggest all around growing up influence was my dad.

What kind of man was he?

A logger. He was outgoing. He was friendly. Got along with everybody.

Sense of humour?

Yeah, he had a sense of humour.

What would you say was your biggest disappointment in life?

I don't think I've really had one.

And your greatest difficulty?

School. Trying to get through school, which wasn't fun.

Because you didn't understand it?

Well, not that I *didn't* understand it as much as I didn't *want* to understand it.

Sounds like you are more of a hands-on person?

Yeah, I'd rather do things with my hands than sit down and try to calculate out numbers or anything else. That doesn't really interest me.

But you use a computer?

Yeah. I write e-mails and jokes and what have you. I don't use it for any kind of a business type of thing. More it's just a pleasure type of thing to try to get to understand.

How long have you had one?

Two years. My son built it and gave it to me for Christmas two years ago. He works for cable vision and he gets all these parts from his friends and co-workers and builds them.

Do both of your children live close?

No, one lives in Ladner and the other in Coquitlam.

I have five grandchildren.

Debbie has Mathew, Mitchell and Katie.

Kenny has Brantley and Taylor.

How would you describe the Sunshine Coast as a place to live?

When I was growing up it was absolutely great. Couldn't absolutely beat it. As far as my point of view, for kids growing up, I had absolute fun. I had lots to do. And if you didn't have anything to do, you *found* things to do. We didn't have computers. We didn't have tvs. We didn't have ipods or anything else. We found things to do.

Side B, Tape 1

And now?

Now, the kids got everything and they just don't go out and find things to do. I see kids getting in trouble, breaking and enterings, and all kinds of things. Years ago that never happened. Very seldom you'd hear of a break and entering. Now it seems to be a weekly thing.

How about as a place to live as an adult?

I find it fine. As an adult, there is enough entertainment and enough restaurants to keep you entertained. Lots of inlets for boating. I think for retirement life, it's quite nice. You've got enough to do. You're close enough to Vancouver if you want to go to Vancouver you can. But then you look at the amount of people coming up here from Vancouver and you wonder why are they coming up here, and we're already here.

So you've never in your life had a time when you didn't want to be here?

Nope, I've been here all my life and this is where I'm going to stay.

Not many people can say that.

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

Surrounded by water. And you've got enough hiking trails and logging roads. Small things, but it keeps your mind going. If you want to do that sort of thing. If you want to party all the time then it's not exactly the place to be. And there are no roads to Vancouver.

Mind you, that new swimming pool is going to come in handy. If they ever get it built!

And then decide who is going to run it.

I'm surprised they haven't offered memberships out already for it. I'd be first in line to get a membership.

As you get older, that water's getting colder even though it hasn't changed temperature in the last fifty years!

Do you still go swimming in it?

Yeah. I have a wet suit now.

Where do you swim, just out here?

Out here, yeah. I got a sand bar there. I put 1200 yards of sand there. I dug out the gravel and the mud and roots and everything else and brought in 1200 yards of playground sand, and that's the sandbar I've got.

What would you say is the greatest change since you were young?

Here? Well, I never ever thought we'd have McDonald's here, for a start. It's progressive change. Things have been getting busier. More and more people. The city seems to be moving in on the country.

You bought your home out here, but did you come out here much as a kid? It used to be a gravel road.

A gravel road and mud and windy. The only way we'd come out here was my brothers and I come out duck hunting and deer hunting. We used to come down here all the time. Most of the weekends during the fall either duck hunting or deer hunting. So we travelled the road quite a bit.

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

Say what?

Just to do whatever you want to do and do it the best you feel that you want to be able to achieve anything. You're only going to achieve so much in one lifetime. If you feel that you're doing a good job, then don't worry about other people criticizing you.

Is there anything you'd like to add? You were saying M & W had a large influence on the inlets, but it hasn't been recorded anywhere.

The M & W was a large influence in Sechelt. Most of the loggers came from Sechelt. Most of them—probably all of them—are dead by now. Younger ones came from Vancouver. But the old timers, they were from Sechelt and they basically built Sechelt. The old timers is how the town got started, a few people starting then more and more coming, the finally you have a complete village. The M & W had quite an influence on it. Union Steamship. Of course, the Whitakers when they first started here.

M & W helped along the way. Then [my parents] having the first shoe store and then the first sewing centre. They paid their dues.

Did you know the Whitakers?

I know Janey. I went to school with Janey. She lives in Lions Bay now and has a book store in Squamish.

And I knew kids I went to school with, like Jeff. He was more my age. The older boy was my brother's age. Jeff was a couple of years older than myself, and Janey was the same age as me.

And you knew the Osbornes.

Oh yeah. Terry Osborne, I dated her for a long time. Young Teddy. Old Teddy. Pearl.

And to the present day, January 24, 2007, Sechelt is a great place to live and retire, as I am now. And I still run the marina and will pass it along to my children to try to keep it in the family.

Digital Recording

Roy and Spencer Wigard

February 12, 2007

So you've made some changes on there.

Yes. This bit at the end, I put a foot note down .

These are your files for the Rod and Gun Club.

Yes, I've got to go through those and then you can probably have all of those.

Great. The Archives would really appreciate that.

Yes, well [the Rod and Gun Club] built the cabinet for it, but they didn't put any locks on it.

In the Archives I believe they have it temperature controlled and they have holders that will keep it the paper from deteriorating.

The Rod and Gun club were going to put a lock on it. Then they changed it from the Sechelt Rod & Gun Club to the Sunshine Coast Rod and Gun Club, so that's when I quit. Then Gibsons moved in. But my brother was down there shooting shotgun one Sunday and he said there were half a dozen people down there, but nobody from Gibsons. All the Sechelt gang again. I knew that was going to go by the wayside. It's too far for them to come. Here are the things from Mom. You can look over them.

I can organize them, type them out and show them to you and if you approve, give them to the Archives.

There's a list in here of all the business people in Sechelt. The old time business people. Eva Lyons, when they started the dress shop.

Do you remember Ben Lang, from the drug store?

Vern and Annelisa Richter.

Spencer, you went to school at Doriston?

Roy: No, he didn't I asked about that.

Spencer: I went to school! But not at Doriston. That shut down during the second world war.

Roy: Doriston school was so close by.

Spencer: I went to the Sechelt school. It was small, about half the size that it is now. I have a school picture of me and Lorne there.

Roy: They must have the 1958 year book.

Spencer: 1958? I was working then. This was in about 1946 or 1947.

Roy: Yeah, but all the pictures. There was Billy in there.

Spencer: I don't know about that, because Bill never went to that school

Roy: It was kind of a history book. There was a whole raft of pictures in the back end of it.

Spencer: I never seen that. Bill, he took correspondence for a long time and then went to school in Vancouver. Then come back and graduated from Elphinstone.

Roy: Yeah, because my Dad bought him a new car. I think the book was 1958. It was a gold

one.

In 1958, I wasn't at Elphinstone. But it was an Elphinstone year book.

The Elphinstone Museum might have a copy of it.

Spencer: Probably got burned up in the fire.

Roy: The museum?

No, Elphinstone Secondary school.

Roy: Well, it was 1958.

Spencer knows more about the inlet than I do.

Spencer: ?

Did you have much to do with Bergie and Minnie?

Spencer: No.

Roy: Basically, they basically hung to themselves. They were camp tenders.

Spencer: Yeah.

What camps did you work in, Spencer?

Spencer: Here?

Yes. You had your own, I know.

Spencer: Yeah, but it was sold out by then. There were lots of camps in those days, compared to now. There's nothing now.

Roy: I don't even think Weldwood's going.

Up at Clowhom?

Roy: Yeah. Gene Gatt sold everything out. Just got rid of the last of it about two weeks ago. We got Terry here with that marine service. He bought all of that, so now the Shell station's got . . . Gene, he bought all of Terry's equipment. All he's got left, I think he's got two boats over there. He's got one for sale, and he's keeping one. But he sold all the stuff in the bush—that's all gone now.

What outfit did he have?

Roy: Oh, he had the falling contract for Weldwood. Nobody could go in there and fall unless they went through him.

That was Gene Gatt?

Roy: Yeah. He owns the Shell Station now. I think it was Sladey, they couldn't go to some places there unless they went through Gatt first. Apparently he had it all sewed up. He came along in a short time!

Spencer: Yeah, he did. I don't know how he got that.

Roy: Dave ____ was walking in the logging roads where the church camp is, he saw 14 elk there. Got a couple of miles from the beach and about 14 elk come out of the bush.

They put some elk up at Clowhom.

Spencer: Yeah, they're all over now.

Spencer, did you work with your dad at Doriston?

Spencer: No.

You were just a boy then, you'd go up in the summer?

Spencer: Yeah.

It was a different life then.

Spencer: It was better. Well, I don't know if it was better, but it was simpler.

Roy: Well, you don't have a computer anyway!

Spencer: No.

Roy: Not like me. I've got a computer, but I don't know how to use it. I can send e-mails but that's about it. I tried to find one place there and I had to get Kenny to find it.

Recording interrupted. Restarts talking about papers from Rod and Gun Club.

Roy: That's how Dad got this stuff. These old Rod & Gun records from 1946.

Spencer: But not all of it.

Roy: No.

Spencer: Somebody was burning it off down there.

Roy: Yeah. This is what was left. She was throwing all of the trophies out. I got the last sportsman's trophy. Dad won that in 1977. It has the plaque on it. It has the other plaques going all around it.

These records have ledgers. And bill paying statements. Like furnace oil was 12 cents a gallon and milk was 3 cents a tin. They have it all itemized.

Are you interested in history much, Spencer?

Spencer: Not much. Yesterday maybe.

They have a great collection in the Sechelt Archives from Billy Steele and Helen Dawe.

Spencer: Yeah, her grandfather was awfully interesting. And Sam Dawe, he was a captain.

And they have records of Thomas John Cook as justice of the peace.

Spencer: There was a book around, from building the trophy store, before Jack Redman owned it, I think when Joe Spangler owned it. I don't know where that went. I dug it out of that house where Tuwanek is now. There's an old log dump in behind, used to be a house in there. I brought a bunch of papers there, all from 1914, 1916, 1918. Newspapers.

Roy: There was an aerial picture in my Mom's apartment of Selma Park. My grandson wanted it, so I said he could have it.

That was taken in 1969? It didn't have the new house on it.

Spencer: The new house is on it, and that was built in about 1980. It had to be in the early 1980s.

Roy: I have written on the back of my baby picture there that I came up to Doriston in a banana crate. From Vancouver, all the way up there.

Spencer: Where did you get the name Nagy Mountain in your book?

I used to live up at Clowhom and that's what everyone there called it.

Spencer: There's a Nagy main up there. I worked there. But where did Nagy come from?

I don't know. Do you know?

Spencer: I don't know where that one came from, but I know in the early 50s there was a Pete Nagy logging around here.

Roy: Yeah, Nagy logged up behind Selma Park.

Spencer: Nagy Main, that's up behind Misery Creek. I fell all of the ____ on that. My share of it, anyway. There was a Pete Nagy around here in the early days. That was in the early fifties.

He probably worked up at Clowhom at one point.

Spencer: It's not a common name, Nagy.

Spencer: I was there in most of '61 and then in '64 I was back again. That was MacMillan Bloedell then. There was an old guy on the beach who lived there for years. Dan was his name. I don't know his last name. He's long since died.

At Misery Creek?

Spencer: Yeah. He had a little cabin on the beach. He was a watchman there. I think he come up in the Depression. He'd been there for years anyway.

Universal Timber was at Sechelt Creek.

Spencer: Universal was Johnson Brothers.

Roy: I haven't heard of them for years.

Spencer: They were around for a long time, years and years ago. They logged Nine Mile Point.

Roy: They haven't been around here for years.

Spencer: No they all died. The last one died last year, I think.

You worked for Universal Timber, Roy?

Roy: Nope. BC Ferries.

Spencer: Oscar Neimi. Then you've got O'Brian. They logged Halfmoon Bay.

Roy: O'Brian go back quite a ways though.

Spencer: They were all over the lower coast, yeah.

Roy: These records (Rod & Gun Club) go back to 76, these here. But some of them go back to 1945-46. When they first started taking down those -- I guess they were the ____ shacks down there. All those cedar shacks down there. When the Rod & Gun club first went in down below. There used to be a whole bunch of shacks down there.

Like an old logging camp?

Roy: I have no idea. They were old when they first started that. They were from way before Jackson Brothers, that's for sure.

Spencer: I was one of the first ones down there. Me and Dad and Bill Rankin. And Harry Bachelor.

Roy: You must have found the old shacks down there. Because I was on the roof taking off shakes.

Spencer: I was there when they started clearing it, then I went away.

Were you clearing it for the Rod & Gun Club?

Spencer: Yeah. Sort of working there, volunteering.

Who did they get the land from?

Roy: That was crown, wasn't it?

Spencer: No, I don't think so. Pete Jackson, he was down there. He pushed the original road in. Just past Nygren's house.

That's why there is a Gun Club Road. The road used to come down from there?

Roy: Yeah. The original one. You'd go down a steep bank.

Spencer: The gate is still there. That Heritage for Humanity house, they built a house where that road turns and goes down there.

Roy: Those roads would have been burned if it wasn't for Mom and Dad. She cleared out everything in there. They wanted to put an extra storage room in there, so they were clearing everything out. They wanted to make the kitchen bigger, and all the records were behind the kitchen. They just fired up a big bon fire.

Bob Healy, he borrowed them because he wanted to go over them. Some of them were partly burned, I don't know where they went.

Spencer: He was quite a historian.

Roy: Yeah. They actually changed that (name) after he died. The last time I was down there was when they were changing it to the Sunshine Coast. That's when I bailed out. I think there were only two recorded against it. Bob____ was one, and myself who objected to it. Of course, they had a whole bunch of guys from Gibsons there who were in favour of it because they were getting kicked out of their place. It was right across from the cemetery.