

**Jeanne Pelletier, Clementine Longworth, Maria Campbell**  
**Video 2**

**Start 2:54.05.05 Maria Campbell:** So how old were you when you started to call, when you decided to do that?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Oh, not, I used to mimic my grandparents long ago, but it never dawned on me. I was just young, eh, but when I first started was in the early '80s.

**Maria Campbell:** Oh, that, not that long ago.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** No.

**Maria Campbell:** Why did you do it?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Well, I had a, a group of children and we were teaching them how to do the traditional Métis dancing. Like, how we did it from back home, and the guy I was working with didn't want the children. He didn't have, like, he's an interest. They drive him crazy, so I told him, "I'll take the children and you can have the adults." So we split up the group, and I took the children. And he didn't know I knew how to call. So I told him, "Well, if I can sing, I can call." So I did it.

**Maria Campbell:** So, did you find somebody that knew how to show you, to learn all of the, 'cause that's a lot of ...

**Jeanne Pelletier:** There was, I remember all those old ones.

**Maria Campbell:** Oh, you remembered them? Okay.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** All those ones I heard from way back, I remembered them but I have to translate them a little bit different, so I could, I couldn't

remember the exact words they say. Or sometimes they said a word that was kind of a swear word, and I didn't want to say, say it like that, so I changed the word. I didn't try to change very much though. But then, now it's all English and **(inaudible)**. I have to do it on a tape. If I had to, to do it in ...

**Maria Campbell:** In Michif.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Yeah.

**Maria Campbell:** Yeah, so you just don't know Michif right off, like, to, to, to call in Michif, you don't know how to do it?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** No.

**Maria Campbell:** Right off-hand.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Right off-hand ...

**Maria Campbell:** Without practicing.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Yeah, there's just one call that was very easy that I, I did while I was instructing the GDI students, like, you know. And they just looked at me wondering what I was saying, eh, so I had to translate it back to them.

**2.56.08 Maria Campbell:** Yeah, now what, what happened the first time that the older people heard you calling? Did they did they say anything? Did they remark on it?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Oh yeah. It was a very hard struggle because there was only a few men that, that were, well, a couple that I heard that were, were

calling. There was one I remember in Batoche. And, and the man I was working with was a caller, too, and they, they, I knew there was quite a few. So when I started visiting my, my older relatives and told them what I wanted to do, they started helping me. Like, they used to dance and call, but they're all dead now.

**Maria Campbell:** But nobody gave you a hard time because you're a woman doing it?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Oh yeah ...

**Maria Campbell:** Oh, they did?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** They, they said that it's not a job for a woman, a man's supposed to be doing that. But if the man didn't want to, to do it, well, why not? Things change. So that's what I used to tell them. We have to do what we have to do if we want to keep our tradition alive. So that's basically the reason I, I, I learned all of it, and I wanted to keep this tradition because when I came back home, like, to, to Saskatchewan after living in BC, I couldn't find any Michif dancing. And I asked my brother, "Doesn't anybody?" They try once in a while, but it always peters out. So I told him, "Well, I'm gonna try. I'll get people together." So I got this guy that was able to call, he was still living and was able to dance. So we got together and we started that adult group, and then we were moved to the children. I told him I wanted the children. And he, because I knew he couldn't stand them. He said, "They, they don't want to listen, and they," he didn't have the ...

**Maria Campbell:** The patience.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** ... the patience to work with children. So I worked with the children. And the children I brought to Batoche were one of the first Michif bunch of children. I brought some seven year olds to dance in Batoche

in the early '80s, and that's, that's when we were on the go. And I knew it would be a lot because I was working on the curriculum to put it into the schools, so different people would, would know.

**2.58.37 Maria Campbell:** Do they, when, when you did the curriculum, you did that with, with Gabriel Dumont Institute, eh?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** No, I did it with one of the schools.

**Maria Campbell:** Oh, I see.

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Yeah, and I had a, like I worked with the teachers, and they're in the calls. They took out lot of the Michif stuff because it wasn't appropriate for the children to, to hear or to, to learn, but I told them if you take out any more we may as well not do it.

**Maria Campbell:** And do they still teach it?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Oh yeah. It's, it's, it's in the schools all through Saskatchewan. I did workshops in, in Saskatoon and, and in Regina with the, with the teachers to, to get a handle on the book, itself and the dances. Yeah, and they teach it in school, and the kids like dancing. Even these that are, these students that don't, don't learn well, like, the schoolwork they don't, you know, don't pick it up quick enough, or they take a long time. Those are the best, best dancers. They can pick up sewing, they can pick up embroidering, they can pick up dancing better than they could pick up in their arithmetic or their science or their social. Because I had an after school club, and that's what I taught them how to embroider, and we did a great big quilt with all the, their rooms, all the different rooms in the, in the class, in the school. We embroidered every, every day. We, we put it together, and it's hanging at the school.

**Maria Campbell:** Which school is that?

**Jeanne Pelletier:** Sacred Heart.

**End: 3:00.22.06**