

Transcribed by David Morin

GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE FOLKLORE INTERVIEWS

Hap Boyer, Rose Richardson, and Sherry Farrell-Racette

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0.2 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Where you from Hap?

0.3 - Hap Boyer - I'm, I'm from North Battleford right now but I was originally from Cochin which is about 20 miles North of North Battleford.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh right.

Hap Boyer - Around Murray Lake there.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Okay.

Hap Boyer - We lived there, I was, where I was born.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Who were your folks?

Hap Boyer - My folks was Joe Boyer and Helen Villeneuve.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Villeneuve?

Hap Boyer – Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Are you related to those Boyers who fought at Batoche?

Hap Boyer - Yes, I'm related.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Which one?

Hap Boyer - I don't know, they're all Michif Boyers, and John Michif Boyers but...

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Yeah, it's like Jean Baptiste, Jean Baptiste, Jean Baptiste.

Hap Boyer - My Grandpa he was born in St. Louis. He was a jigger and a fiddler and a, and, and, he went to Battleford and then he went into the First World War.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh right.

Hap Boyer – Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Was he the one who taught you how to play the fiddle?

Hap Boyer - No, Dad used to play the fiddle a bit and he'd tune it up for me and that got me started. And I used go to the house dances and listen to these old Métis fiddle players and I thought they were so great, you know, and I'd...**(Inaudible)**...should watch them, and I'd go home and practice. And I'd get mad because I, "how come," I said, "that old fiddle player can't even write his name and he's deaf, he can't tune his fiddle and then he could play like that."

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Do you remember the names of some of those old fiddle players?

Hap Boyer - Delorme.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Delormes?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. Good fiddler, yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Lots of different songs?

Hap Boyer - Oh yeah. My, I never forget, I don't know if I was getting on my Mother's nerve or what, but she says to me, "if you want to be a good fiddle player," she says, "you wait for a nice big moon in late night." She says, "and you go out the Ile a la Crosse road," and she says, "at midnight," she says, "you stand on that crossroad and play a tune." And she says, "you'll become a fiddle player." "Oh," I said. I kept that in mind until one harvest night with a big moon. So I went in the barn and I got the horse, saddled it up, and about 12, 11:30 at night I went out, put my fiddle in the, in the pillowcase. I didn't know if it was okay, I got on the horseback and I went up about a quarter of a mile down the road. I tied the horse to the fence, and I, then I got the fiddle, I went stand right in the middle of that crossroad and I waited till 12 o'clock and then I started playing the fiddle. And I finished and I got on the horseback and come home, and I said, "now I'll be a fiddle player eh?" I didn't tell anybody that.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh you didn't tell anyone that you did that?

Hap Boyer - But that's what happened eh?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did it help?

Hap Boyer - I don't know. Not much, not much.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Do you remember what tune you played?

Hap Boyer - You know my first tune, that's another story. I played Old Blango, **(Sings a song)**. I was so proud of it. I said, "Dad listen." And I'm playing that and after I finished playing he said, "what tune was that?" And to top it off, I was playing this Mexicali Rose Goodbye nice and slow. And my Grandpa listens and he says, "are you playing for a funeral?"... **(Inaudible)**...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So you had critics?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So would you say that you learned mostly by yourself? Like listening?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. By myself.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - And that, and then that... **(Inaudible)**...

Hap Boyer - My cousin played the guitar, and he knew chords and that and, and my neighbour played the violin and he had no .22 at that time. And I had no fiddle at the early, earlier part of my life there. So he lend me his fiddle and I lend him my .22...

Rose Richardson - ... **(Inaudible)**...

Hap Boyer - But after a while we went to an auction sale and got a fiddle, but my first fiddle was, and I was about seven years old. My brother got the wooden fiddle and I got the little fiddle made of tin. I was mad. Yep.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – So you first started out with a tin fiddle?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, a tin fiddle.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well how old were you when you first started playing then if you got your first fiddle...

Hap Boyer - Well I had a little fiddle but I was just fooling around with it eh? But I didn't really start playing till I was fourteen years old, fifteen I was, I got serious. I could go to bed and hear fiddle music, fiddle music right through my ears and then I'd get up and I'd, at night and they thought I was crazy I was trying to play. So I learned that tune.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Just tunes that you heard?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Or tunes that you heard other fiddlers play?

Hap Boyer - Other fiddlers play.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So how old were you when you went and stood on the crossroads?

Hap Boyer - Oh, I must be about, oh thirteen years old. Maybe 12.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Okay, just a kid.

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Rose Richardson- And then you heard the fiddle music in your head after that?

Hap Boyer - I heard the fiddle music and ohhhh. They say that's the devil instrument. Is that right?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh I don't know.

Hap Boyer - Did you know that the fiddle...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - But I did, I have heard stories yeah.

Hap Boyer - Did you know that the fiddle is a, is a woman?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - No I didn't know that.

Hap Boyer – You didn't know?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well that explains everything.

Hap Boyer - You ever hear, you always hear an old fiddler say, "she's a good sounding fiddle. She's a good sounding fiddle eh?" She's gotta be a woman.

8.0 - Sherry Farrell-Racette – There is a guy named , Joseph Cobertson **(Unknown Spelling)** who was born in Montana, this is a long time ago. And he was a fiddle player, and I guess he went way down some place in South Dakota. And he was playing a fiddle and it was, I think it was on like one of those reservations down there, but mostly like where they were was like a halfbreed stays. And there was a Sioux woman that was married to a, a Halfbreed guy and this guy's like playing his fiddle, playing his fiddle and all of a sudden this woman comes running up and she's trying to stab him. She says she has to kill the fiddle player. And she says, "stop, stop playing that music, the Halfbreeds are going crazy," she said. I guess what happened is while he's playing this fiddle, her husband is falling in love with this other woman all these people are falling in love and go running off with each other. So to save his life he goes, "oh well," he says, "there's lots of other men, you

know, that guy over there, he's liked you for years." And she goes, "oh is that right," and he said, "oh but they're still together yet." He had to do matchmaking to get out of that in one piece. I know I heard a story too about someone told that if you, and this wasn't that long ago cause this, the person they were talking about, like this might have been thirty years ago. Where if you slept with your fiddle under your pillow for three nights in a row, then the devil would come and you'd be this great fiddle player. You know, so this guy apparently, you know, he slept with his fiddle one night and... **(Inaudible)**...and then he slept to the next night and he could hear these like louder, and then the third night he slept eh, he heard this really loud voice and he just picked up his fiddle and he threw it across the room, he got scared he couldn't go through with it. So that was supposed to really happened cause I heard like sort of that people from that community were telling this story about this guy who had tried it, so, I don't know if it's true, but you do hear stories, you do hear stories. But you wonder if they just were stories that were put out there because the fiddle players like had sort of power, you know, like they had power and I think people were threatened by it.

10.5 - Hap Boyer - I went to catechism, I was 7 years old. I went to catechism and I had two pieces of sticks in my pocket, you know. And the priest he was teaching catechism and then I took these, I was horsing around, and the priest come up and he grabbed me by the ear and put me next to him at the front. So I sat there and while he was teaching I took these little sticks and I was playing the fiddle with these little sticks. He seen that and grabbed me by the ear and they walked me right out the door and get out. And you know why? About 40 years after they called me to play for his funeral. Back at the church with my real fiddle this time playing, more than one stick. That's how it started.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So that's, that's how, I mean he threw you out just cause you were pretending to play a fiddle?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, yeah. He threw me out of the church. He, while I was horsing around he was trying to teach catechism. But then, then they asked me to come play after for a funeral and I play some more funerals. How much would you charge to play a, for funeral for my Dad. I says, "I won't charge nothing. I'll play for nothing." I said, "why would I want to charge to play for a funeral?" You know, "oh no," the lady said. So I went and played couple of nice hymns at the church there and that, the undertaker, the funeral guy was there and when I was finished he give me an envelope, a thank you envelope, and when I got home it was fifty dollars inside. Now why would they want to pay me? And then a year and a half after her mother died they asked me again to come play for her funeral. I went back there I said, "I want no money." But the, the funeral person paid me fifty dollars again. I guess he paid the organ, he paid, I guess, all in the package deal. I don't know.

13.1 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - I think the music comforts people. It has a healing quality. You know it's nothing to say you know, if it's the devil's instrument, I don't think so, but I think it has power, you know. Because I know myself, you know, like at Batoche, when you go to Batoche and someone plays the fiddle there, you just feel like you're gonna float, you know, it's special.

13.4 - Hap Boyer - Father Cochin, you remember I was born in Cochin, that Cochin is named after Cochin, Father Cochin. Did you know that?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well I knew there was a Father Cochin.

Hap Boyer - That Cochin is that one.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh okay.

Hap Boyer - He was, he played violin. My mother often told me Father Cochin plays the violin, and he said Father Cochin performed funeral at the, at the wedding, when my mother and Daddy got married. I've got funeral in my mind here. And then he has postcards, a postcard of the funeral of Father Cochin being buried in Jackfish, Saskatchewan. And then the funeral, you see the old cars there, but later in years they moved the, they dug the grave and moved it to St. Albert. That's where he's resting now.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - That's where he is now?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. Father Cochin had a big beard.

14.5 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - What about you Rose? Where are you from?

14.6 - Rose Richardson - I'm originally from Meadow Lake. I was, lived part of my life, but as a little girl my, my father sort of abandoned us and we lived a lot out in the country. And I guess basically, that's where I learned a lot about survival.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Right.

Rose Richardson - And just living off nature and being in, in tune with nature.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Who was your Mom?

Rose Richardson - My Mom was, her maiden name was Bella Kennedy. And my father was Max Fiddler. But when I was about five, my father just left and didn't come back home. We, we were really quite self-sufficient in, I guess everybody was, you had gardens, you had root cellars, you had a nice

house, you know. And basically, all your, all the homes were probably one bedroom or just one big room that included almost everything, you know.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - How big would it have been?

Rose Richardson - Certainly not the size of this room you know. Just enough to have probably one or two beds, and your kitchen stove and a heater. Probably a cupboard, probably about, let's say 18 by 20. They were just log houses. And it was really neat, you know, because log houses were close to the ground so they were a lot warmer. And they were insulated like, the end of log houses. And every fall you'd mud the house so you'd have to mix mud and straw and mud the house. It was like, you know, putting plaster on the house and then we'd white wash it. You know, with lime or whatever.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Is that what they used?

Rose Richardson - Yeah, and it was really neat because the houses were really warm and then in the winter you'd pile snow around it so, so it kept the house warmer. Like prevented the wind from blowing in.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - How many kids in that house?

Rose Richardson - Actually, there was, well I have like three sisters, myself and one brother.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So five?

Rose Richardson - There was five of us.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Now we, you know, when we think of, I think people use to stay a long time outside back then, you weren't always in the house.

Rose Richardson - Actually, yeah you spent a lot of time outside because you had to survive. You had to haul wood. You had to haul water. Didn't have running water. And you worked lots.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah, lots of work.

Rose Richardson - There was no TVs to watch, you know, you were lucky if you had a radio. But most of the people, like Hap said, had some years musical abilities and they could play guitar or fiddle and there was a lot of. Like most events are like, like say get together, get togethers, included the whole family where people ended up taking their children to somebody's home parties or, you know, weddings, or whatever.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did they have those parties where they used to take most of the furniture out of the house and just have chairs around the outside? I haven't been to one of those for years, but the last one I was at, like, that was at Fort Qu'Appelle.

Rose Richardson - Yeah, they, they have a, the dance would start like a New Years dance and people would start coming, they'd play the music and eventually, you know, one piece of furniture would move and then finally they'd take down the chimney and move the stove out.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Holy. You too? Did they have parties like that at home?

19.6 - Hap Boyer - My Grandma told me a story, this is true. Every Métis family took their turn, turn on Saturday nights to make a house that. And

who made the dance had to supply the sandwiches and the coffee. And it was at this place had their dance and they couldn't figure out, they were very, very poor, you know, and they said, "how are you gonna feed the people?" Fiddle players were, they'd go and play but when the food start to come out they had to have, feed the people. They had two kinds of dogs. Now this the truth. Why they had two, one was a catcher and one was a killer, and a coyote.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh, right they were trained?

Hap Boyer - Trained, oh yeah, they were good coyote dogs, and one was, he chased the coyote and knock him over and the other guy come and grab by the throat, hold him there. But he had two coyote dogs and they had a big dance that night and by golly they had sandwiches. Everybody had sandwiches, everybody ate. Next day there was no, no dogs to be seen. Figure it out.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – You do what you have to do eh?

Hap Boyer - That's the truth.

21.3 - Rose Richardson - And what they said they'd done to is they, they'd put a coin, they'd make a cake and they'd put a coin into the cake and whoever ended up getting the piece with the coin is the one that had to have the following dance.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh is that how it worked?

Rose Richardson - Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Cause I know when I was a kid we used to have the coin in the cake. It was good luck if you got it eh? So that's how they figured out who got the next dance for the next week?

Rose Richardson - Exactly.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh that's neat. That's really neat. I guess you know, when people used to all live together in one community, now everyone seems to be spread around and a lot of those traditions have stopped.

Rose Richardson - And it was like, people lived together in communities and everybody looked after one another. Like when they'd go hunting food was always shared, so one person would get a moose and they'd share it with other people in the community. They'd help out their widows and the elderly, single, single parents. Actually, in my years I guess a single parent family, there wasn't that many because most of em just lived alone with their parents, you know. So, and housing was not easy to come by, so large families lived in small houses and sort of shared the workload all the time. But I guess it's, it's really neat when you think about how they looked after one another and how the communities cared for one another. And like, when a child went out, if there was a person that they had to watch, like, okay, let's say somebody got labelled as a, a pedophile or something like that. Children were like, the community looked after it so what happened is if the children went out it was all the people's responsibility to look after that child. So if they labelled somebody it was okay. If he was, if a person was walking and was you know, not regarded as a very respectful person, then just anybody would end up picking up the child and saying okay, you come here and you wait, I'll take you home to your parents or, or just a lot of protection like that. Like today we sort of feel it's not our business and you can't interfere with somebody's life. Before it was everybody looked after everybody's children and everybody cared and if you disciplined somebody's child it was because you cared. You know, now you can't do that.

24.9 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - What I've noticed is that it seems like, especially when I went up North from you know, living down South, it seemed like people had an awful lot of Grandparents. You know what I mean? You'd be walking down the street and the little kid, hi Grandma, and you know, hi Grandpa, and how many grandfathers do you have? It was like every, like all their, I guess it was all their great aunts, like their grandmother and all their sisters, but sometimes it was just practically every older person in the community that would be.

25.4 - Rose Richardson - And that's how we, I guess addressed people as grand, as your Grandparents or as your aunt. Like I'm teaching school up North and the kids are always saying, "hi auntie," you know. And I'm, you know, accepting it, like saying, hi, you know, instead of I'm not your aunt or how did you figure that out, you know. It, it's just, it's acceptable and it's still acceptable in the North and during my generation it was showing respect.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - And it gives you authority when someone calls you Auntie. That's what gives you authority to discipline because then you're their, you know, my nephew, you know, you listen to your Auntie.

Rose Richardson - It was like endearment or respect, you know. So it's sort of different.

Hap Boyer - Do you live in Green Lake now?

Rose Richardson - Actually I live in Green Lake.

26.5 - Hap Boyer - I remember going to Green Lake, 1938. We went by covered wagon. We went over there to make hay. And we had a rack, and we had the moor and the rake on there and a bunch of

stuff...(Inaudible)...and we had a (Speaks Michif) - that's covered wagon, my Grandma, my mother used to call it.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - (Repeats the Michif word).

Hap Boyer - Yeah...(Inaudible)...And we travelled sometimes 20 miles a day. But I'd listen to Dad and we'd be travelling and, and it was a storm coming up, he'd say, well, he'd tell yeah, it's...(Inaudible)...the other wagon. He said, "there's a storm coming in French," he said, "take a look." He said, "we better," there's, they'd always look for water and feed for the horses. He says, "so we'll stay here for the night, cause there's good feed here," he said. "There's water," and we'd stop, put up the tent, hovel the horses and the storm went to us, hit us and go over. Next morning we'd, they'd hook up and they'd go again. Sometimes we made 20 miles a day all the way to Green Lake. Yeah and we'd, we had a .22 and my mother was shooting, excuse me, with a .22 she'd shoot prairie chickens along the road there. I'll never forget she's, she's, we stopped and there was a prairie chicken, was more than one. She took her .22 shell in there and she shot that prairie chicken and killed two more beside it. It ricochet eh? Got three prairie chickens with one shot.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - With one bullet?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. With a .22. And we got to Green Lake there we set up camp along the river and we had a tent and you put poles there for a log that's just so high. But I remember going fishing, just walking along, and fishing and throwing my hook in, and would you believe every cast I get a fish, every cast, I get a pickerel or a jack. Oh it was good fishing then. Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - That's amazing that'd you'd see that many birds along the road and then taking, so it wasn't quite as hard to make a living off the land too, there was just more out there, more game.

Hap Boyer - And this, that friend said, "I'll give me old gun here," he said, "you might see wild game or deer or moose." So he left him an old gun, oh it was old, he left him five shells. So one, one evening we're about 500 yards away was a moose drinking water and standing there and Dad took that gun and he ran in the bush and the moose heard noise and he was alert. And he started drinking, Dad would come closer again. And then he'd hear the noise, the moose was stop drinking and Dad would stop, excuse me, then he thought I better start shooting. So when the moose was drinking he says he shot and the first shot he hit that moose. The moose jumped that high and he looked around and Dad fired two more shots. He missed one, hit him with another shot, the moose turned around, went into the bush. Dad would, wouldn't go in there, so he'd come home. Next day the, his friend comes down and he told him about the moose story, so they went to look. And that moose was in the bush, as soon as he got in the bush he laid down. He was wounded and he was blood all over on the, on the ground, and they couldn't find him. But he told Dad, he said, "you probably shot him in the shoulder blade, cause he, he went in the bush to lay down." But they never did see him again.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So he got up?

Hap Boyer – He got up and must of died somewhere, end of the moose story. Yeah, that was Green Lake there. I remember going to church with Mom.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah.

Hap Boyer - Yeah, and going to church there and I remember the lady complaining about the priest. Oh she said, "he preach in Cree for a long time, then he'd preach in English, then he'd preach in French." Well there was no end.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Three languages?

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

32.0 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - What language did you speak when you were growing up?

32.1 - Rose Richardson - Actually I, I spoke a mixture of French, Cree, and English, so it was like Michif.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - When did you start speaking, well when did you start going to school? Did you, were you able to go to school?

Rose Richardson - Well I knew how to speak English when I started school. But it was like, like when you grew up it was a mixture, my Grandparents talked a lot of French. And because there was lot of discrimination they taught me how to talk French. And when I got to Green Lake I mixed lot of my French and what I figured was Cree was actually French. Like when the teacher asked me, "do you know how to talk French, Cree?" I said, "yes," and she said, "say table" and I said, "la table." Here it was all French and all the, all the other students would just laugh you know, when I was talking Cree and it was so mixed up with French. It was like they didn't think I could talk Cree but what happened was all my verbs were in Cree like **(Speaks Cree)** and that so, that's the way I grew up with quite a mixture.

33.6 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - What language did they speak in the home when you were growing up?

33.7 - Hap Boyer - They spoke French, Michif French, but when the, our Indian friends would come around Grandma would speak Cree to them. And she's always speak Cree, they spoke Cree quite a bit there. And I learned from my Grandma and listening around there and she was, this one

Saulteaux old lady...**(Inaudible)**... like she was saying white wash in the house. She'd white wash and she was a Saulteaux lady and she'd sit down there and Grandma would give her food and tobacco and she'd eat and then she'd take her pail and Grandma would fix it for her, she'd go out and white wash. And I could hear her coming in, she's telling Grandma **(Speaks Saulteaux)**, in Saulteaux. I said to Grandma, what is **(speaks Saulteaux)**, she said, "that's empty." Nothing left in the pail eh?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - She could get along in Saulteaux too?

Hap Boyer – Yeah she'd, then we'd have a lot of visitors come in there. Grandpa was in the First World War and he has a steel helmet hanging on the, over the door. And this old Métis guy come and he look. He said, "your husband was in the war?" You know, in Michif my mother said, my grandmother said, "yeah, he was in the First World War. He was in the frontlines." Which he was eh? He didn't want to be outdone, he said, "I was in the war too, I was right behind." Grandma says, "that's no good being right behind, you gotta be in the front."

Sherry Farrell-Racette - What was your Grandma's name?

Hap Boyer - Virginia.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Virginia?

Hap Boyer - Virginia Nolin.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh a Nolin?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, her, her Dad was in parliament there in Batoche.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Is that Charles Nolin?

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh okay.

Hap Boyer - That was him. That was him. He's buried in Battleford there. He's got a stone there and when I went to put flowers for my daughter and my mother and Dad, and Dad didn't like flowers. I didn't put flowers on his grave. He hated flowers. But I put some for old Charlie Nolin, Charles Nolin. He was 72 years old when he died. Quite young eh?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah, was your Grandma like from the first marriage or the second? Cause he had two wives.

Hap Boyer - No, no. My, my, that was my Grandmother's Dad.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh okay.

Hap Boyer - That Charles Nolin.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - He had two wives. He married a Lepine. Rosalie and then he had a wife from before that but I don't know her name.

Hap Boyer - I don't know about them. One of, one of my family got in the, in the family tree who, who they all are.

36.9 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh right. Yeah it's hard to keep these big families straight hey? There's so many of them. So, when you're like, you didn't have radio, well, you maybe had radio but not often. You didn't have televisions so, when you were looking for something to do, did people tell stories?

37.3 - Rose Richardson - Actually, people told a lot of stories. And stories were told mainly in the evening or on rainy days. And in the summer you went out to play, and you'd, first you did your chores, which was hauling wood, hauling water, you know, cleaning up. We all had wooden floors that we called **(Speaks Michif)**, and, but it was made out of like shiplap, quite wide shiplap. And every week we had to, every weekend we had to wash the floor. And we'd have to clean out this, the cracks and clean them up really good because they were, you ended up having quick to clean them when, you know, using homemade soap, which was called **(Michif Word)**, and **(Michif Word)** was made from in, you know, let's say, oil or bear grease or any kind of grease that were saved up. And you used lye and that was a sort of a lye soap. So we used a lye soap and, and ashes to clean our floor, to keep it really clean cause there was no linoleum. And these people couldn't afford linoleum, if there was any. So you'd have to do all your work, every week we did the clean up and every spring we do our spring cleaning too. So all the furniture would be hauled out and the mattresses would be scrubbed and, and some of us didn't really have mattresses so what we call mattresses now was what we call **(Michif Word)**. When I was a kid and what it was, was canvas bags that were filled up with straw, slew hay or whatever. And the mattresses were really, really thick and by spring time they were really...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - They'd squish down.

Rose Richardson - Squished down yes, squished right down. Then in the spring we'd empty them back out and refill them in the fall and everybody had what we called, what we know call duvets, we made a lot of quilts, but everybody had, what in my days were called feather beds, and we'd, we'd save all the feathers in our, the goose feathers, and duck feathers, or whatever you could, and you stuffed them in a bag and stitched them on, so everybody had feather beds, and but it was a sign of poverty so when you did quilting and your, feather beds, that was what all the poor people had. Now it's totally switched around you know?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah, a duvet is a very cool thing to have.

Rose Richardson - Exactly.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did you have a feather ticks there?

40.8 - Hap Boyer - I had feather ticks yeah.

Rose Richardson- What about **(Michif Word)**.

Hap Boyer - Yeah, had that too. Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - What did they call the feather ticks? Like not duvets, what did they, how did they call them, like do you remember what the called them?

41.0 - Rose Richardson - We ended up calling them feather beds.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Just feather beds?

Rose Richardson - Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - There was no word in Michif or anything for them do you think? Can you remember? Blankets?

Rose Richardson - No, no what did you call the featherbeds?

Hap Boyer - I don't know, I don't remember.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You don't remember?

Rose Richardson - No.

41.4 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - It's like people don't, like, people I think don't believe maybe that we had these things. That that's not something new. You know, that this is something that people had, I found an interview with a woman that was very old, she did the interview in the 1930s and she said she would make a feather tick from two hides, like, it was leather. So I guess even when they had canvas, they would make it out of, out of hand tanned hide, and then she put feathers in that.

41.9 - Hap Boyer – Well, what did you call mattress in French?

Rose Richardson – **(Speaks Michif)**.

Hap Boyer - We used to call it **(Speaks Michif)**.

Rose Richardson – **(Speaks Michif)**.

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Rose Richardson – Yeah, the **(Speaks Michif)** went under the **(Speaks Michif)**.

Hap Boyer - Oh.

Rose Richardson - ...**(Inaudible)**...

Hap Boyer – We used to do a lot of card playing, they're telling me a story about this guy doing threshing, it would rain so they couldn't thresh. And they'd be, they were just talking and they'd talk about people being scared to go at night, near a cemetery. Imagine...**(Inaudible)**...And this guy said, "I'm not scared." He says, "we'll give you two dollars if, if." And in the middle, and

it's kind of raining eh? He said, "you go to the cemetery," he says, "in the country there and put a stake in the middle of the cemetery and come back and we'll give you two dollars. See if you're scared or not." So he said, "okay." And he went and he never come back. So the next day he said, "where's that guy he's not coming back." So they went to look for him. Here his, his horse was still tied to the fence and he was dead in there, in the middle of the cemetery. It was raining. What the conclusion they come to figure out was when he went to put that stick in the, in the ground he hammered it down. It was dark, he nailed his trench coat bottom to the, to the ground and when he went to walk away it pulled him back and he got a heart attack.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh he thought someone grabbed him?

Hap Boyer – He thought the Rou Garou grabbed him.

44.0 - Rose Richardson - See that's a, that's the whole thing, people were, lot of them were sort of gifted and, but there was a lot of superstitions. You know, I grew up being able to see ghosts and spirits, but I didn't realize that nobody else could. I could, when I was a little girl I played with **(Michif Word)**, the little people. And we, we'd play ball every evening we'd have a ball game. And I remember this one would come along, little boy, and he always wore a, a tweed jacket, and tweed shorts and a little tweed Great Gatsby hat, you know, like they'd call la **(Michif Word)**. It was you know, it was not le **(French Word)**, but le **(French Word)**. You know, and they laid flat.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Like a little flat hat. Bannock hat.

Rose Richardson - Uh huh, and he'd wear that but I never questioned the fact that every time they came they'd have a ball and bat and I never questioned it till later. Where did they get that ball and bat from? You know,

but we never talked. But we still communicated. We'd look at one another and I'd know when it was my turn. We talked and we laughed a lot and every evening we played ball until one day my sister said, "who are those children that come and play? Where are they from?" And they lived sort of on a flat, in a flat area, but there was kind of one little hill in that area and when I went out to check they were gone. And you could see a long ways and I couldn't see anybody, it was like, they didn't have time to leave, where did they go?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So they just disappeared?

Rose Richardson - Yeah, so the minute my sister asked about them, they didn't come back. And they were just so fun to have because I, they had the bat and the ball and there was, they were so friendly.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Were they the same size as you?

Rose Richardson - Yes, and like, it was, we were children so we didn't bother asking what's your name, it was not a concern. It was not, when you're a child it's not a concern as to how you're dressed or, you know, your name is not even a concern you just have a lot of fun together. So it's, it's like, I grew up like that, I grew up seeing my aunt and her coffin six months before she died.

Hap Boyer - Really?

Rose Richardson - Yeah. And I didn't know that other people didn't see it because like, we're all sitting here together. As a child I'd say, well if I can see something, so can everybody else, you know. I figured that if you cried and I cried, we were crying for the same reason, that we didn't have individual minds.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Right.

Rose Richardson - So as you grow up, you think, you don't waste time thinking of all these things, you're more self-centered I guess, but.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Well you just think that your reality is everybody else's reality.

Rose Richardson - And like I remember running down this hill by where we lived and seeing a bear with a hat on. You know, that talked to us. To me it was okay and it was, it was normal for me. I didn't even ask anybody about it or tell anybody about it because I figured that everybody sees the same thing.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - If you were Irish, they would say that was the second sight.

Rose Richardson – Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You know, like Irish and Scottish people, they'll say that sometimes someone has the second sight, like they can see, like we all see this much, but then someone with the second sight can see that.

Rose Richardson - So I like, as grow up in life. It's like if something doesn't happen to me this month I figure what did I do wrong? You know?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You're losing your gift.

Rose Richardson - Yeah, yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Does he ever tell you stories about those little, little, like the little small, I forget how you say it. **(Michif Word)** little small?

Rose Richardson - Actually that's what we call little people, and I was pretty small when I played with the little people but like they're tricksters and, and I know when they're around.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - They take stuff, hide it.

Rose Richardson - Oh yeah, they take stuff and hide it so you end up having to give little gifts.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So you put little, little, like, what would you do? What would you do?

Rose Richardson - Well I ended up putting little buttons and marbles and, you know, colourful little beans, you know, along the creek by where we live. And we'd put em in a container and we kind of bury em. And they know when I'm falling behind, that's when I start losing the keys or whatever from the house and usually...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - That's what I'm doing wrong... **(Inaudible)**...

Rose Richardson - Yes and usually if I'm, if I'm losing a lot of stuff, one day I lost the, the car keys for I'd say, about two months. And finally I just said well that's it you can have the car. You can have the keys, you know, I'm not looking for the keys anymore so keep em, you know, they're yours. And the very same day I found the keys on my bed. You know, they quit playing the game too, and came to return the keys back and probably figured I was a poor sport.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You you weren't fun anymore.

Rose Richardson - Yeah.

49.2 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did you hear any stories about little people when you were growing up?

49.3 - Hap Boyer - No, I didn't hear anything. All our people were big people.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You didn't say, oh the little people took stuff or?

Hap Boyer – My mother weighed, weighed over two hundred pounds and was 5 feet five. He'd say, "Helen, why don't you lose weight?" She used to tell em, "you never see anybody saying there's a nice skinny horse." She'd say, "there's a nice fat horse." But like, talk about poor people, my Grandma, my mother, her aunt, she was quite poor and I remember going to visit her, at that time they were by the Provincial Park where the park is now in Battleford.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Okay.

Hap Boyer - And you know I remember going there but I didn't know they were poor because I was only about, maybe 6 years old. I remember going there and they had no floor, no floor at all, dried mud, dirt like. No floor, and her, my, her auntie's husband had a very, very sharp ax, very. And he did all his work with that sharp ax. And that poor lady all winter she at suckerheads all winter.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - That's all they had?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, suckerheads and they say there's a lot of nourishment in that. Suckerheads. The odd rabbit but fish and suckerheads. Suckerheads all winter. Imagine! And he took that ax, her husband and made me a toboggan. Imagine making me a toboggan with an ax, surely, nothing else.

And I played with that toboggan slide on that big hill at Cochin for years and that's all they had. An ax made that toboggan, yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did he just cut trees down or just firewood or?

Hap Boyer - I don't know how he did it but he sure made a good toboggan, yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Use it for a long time?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, and then my poor, her poor aunt there, she was very, very poor. That's what you'd call poor.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - And yet they would still make you a gift.

Hap Boyer - They'd make me a gift and they'd always, yup, they'd always have tea there. It's awful, some people ask me were you ever that poor? And I'd joke along, I said, "we were so poor," I said, "the mice would run across the room with tears in their eyes."

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Do you want to take a break? Wanna take a bit of break, walk around for a little bit.?

Rose Richardson - Did you wanna take a break?

Hap Boyer - Yeah, where's your bathroom? Outside?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah you gotta go outside...

[Break in audio from 52.8 – 54.4]

54.4 - Hap Boyer - You're not supposed to look at me.

54.5 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah, and whenever you see television there's always no one sitting there eh? Everyone's always sitting on half the table. So you were saying that you used to do a lot of story telling when you were growing up, that people used to do story telling.

54.8 - Rose Richardson - Actually storytelling was part of the way in which they taught younger people about values and traditions. I know that storytelling took place usually in the evening or rainy days, or in the wintertime. Storytelling didn't just take place anytime at all because only certain people told different stories. Like it, if it had to do when spiritual qualities not just values. Like if they told stories about, let's say the rolling hen or they told stories about, about Witikgo, only different people told those various stories but all the stories had values. And most of the, like we had various characters. We had Wesakejack, and Métis people sometimes had stories about **(Michif Word)** who was a characters like Wesakejack but irregardless it was probably the same type of stories they tell of Nanabush, Wesakejack or coyote. But it was just a name change in terms of where you were actually from. But the, the stories always had a meaning to them like they talk about Wesakejack who was very vain, you know, a very, very proud person. So it was like he was always showing off, or he was a trickster. And one of the stories I heard was about Wesakejack one day was walking along the river and, and he seen these geese swimming and, and sort of gliding along the river and, and he knew they were all heading South because they were all coming together in, in flocks. So Wesakejack went over and said, "why is everybody gathering here?" And they said, "well we're heading South. This is our meeting place and we're heading, heading South." And they, and the geese danced, you know, along, on the water and at the edge of the water. And Wesakejack looked at them and he sort of thought, "oh isn't that beautiful, I would like to dance like that too and be so beautiful." But he was mostly thinking about himself not really survival like the geese were. So he went to the hen and the geese and he said, "can I fly South with

yeah?" And the goose leader said, "No, Wesakejack, you have no respect. You can't come with us because you never listen and you don't have respect for anybody." And Wesakejack said, "I promise, I promise I'll do what I'm told and I'll be very respectful this trip." You know, so finally the head of the geese said, "okay Wesakejack, you can come with us but the birds say we have to do things right and we have to begin with you closing your eyes because if you're gonna fly with us you have to become a goose like one of us." So Wesakejack closed his eyes and he felt this tingling through his body and when he opened his eyes he was a beautiful goose. So he started dancing around, you know, just really vain showing off his new feathers and how beautiful he looked and the leader of the geese said, "Wesakejack, you know, you have to come with us and start planning. You can't waste your time dancing." So Wesakejack remembered that he had to listen to what he was told to do so he followed in along. And when it was time to leave, Wesakejack was told, "okay, you fly at the end, with the, at the end of the line with the geese." And he said, "okay. I'll do what I'm told." And before they, you know, flew off South Wesakejack was told, "you have to follow one instruction on the flight. When you're flying, never look down. Never open your eyes to look down." So he had to keep his eyes shut till they got up and then he couldn't look down. So Wesakejack joined the flock of geese and they flew up and headed South and Wesakejack was so proud. He figured he looked the best flying up there with his new feathers, his beautiful wings. And all of a sudden he heard people saying, "look, look at those geese, look at those beautiful geese!" And Wesakejack figured, well, he was the most beautiful of all the geese so he wanted to check to see if they were pointing at him. So anyway he figured there's no harm in me, you know, just looking down a little. So he close, he had his eyes closed, he looked down, he opened one eye. The minute he opened his one eye, he fell down, turned back into Wesakejack and he fell to the ground. And the people went running. They said, "look at that goose falling." And Wesakejack fell to the ground. They got there and they said, "oh, that's Wesakejack, he fooled the geese." So they tied him up and they took him to the bush and the Chief

instructed everybody, "it's Wesakejack playing games and having no respect again so you can, you can do whatever you want with him." You know, so they tied him up in the bush and this one guy went out for a walk and as he was walking by he wanted to rest and he couldn't find a place to rest. No logs, no stump to sit on, so he sat on the guy and the guy said, "why are you sitting on me?" And the guy said, "well I have no soft place to seat. No stump. So I decided to sit on you Wesakejack cause you have no respect for people, anything anyway." And then when he left this elderly lady come along and she was really kind and said, "what are you doing tied up in the bush?" And Wesakejack said, "well, when people come out in to the bush they untie me and watch me dance and show em tricks and all that, you know." So this kind lady untied him and the minute she untied him Wesakejack ran into the bush and said, "I fooled you." So the people from the, came back and they were gonna check on Wesakejack to see if he had learned his lesson but he had already tricked the, the elderly lady and ran off again. So Wesakejack is walking along the bush, now he has no friends because he's sort of alienated everybody. So he's walking along looking for something to eat and after a few days he can't find anything to eat. So he's walking along the, the lake again and he sees these geese swimming, no the ducks are swimming and the geese and the loons, and they're still heading up South. So he ends up saying, "okay," he said, "I, I see you're gonna be leaving pretty soon and I'm gonna really miss, miss you people, my friends." He said, "and I'd like to have a party. A go away party for all my friends." He said, "tell all your friends. We'll have a, a go away party." He said, "so I'm gonna have a dance cause I'm gonna miss you so I wanna have a dance." So he went out and he ended up making this wigwam, a big wigwam. He made a fire in the, in the centre and, or towards the side and the ducks are coming in there. They're, they're dancing, and then Wesakejack says, "okay, now we're gonna have the shut-eye dance." So that they're, they all have to shut their eyes and they're dancing around. In the meantime Wesakejack goes into the centre and starts ringing their necks eh, cause he's really hungry. So he tricked them into getting them to come there so he could end up killing as

many as he can. And all of a sudden this little goose who's sitting by the door went, ends up peeking and said, "brothers, sisters, run! Wesakejack is killing us all." So they all went to the door and they flew away and, and the loon ended up being the last to leave and Wesakejack kicked it from behind and ever since then the loon has not been able to fly and take off from the ground. It has to be on water before it can lift off.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Why, cause it walks?

Rose Richardson - Yeah, and that was because Wesakejack kicked him. So anyway Wesakejack is really happy anyway because like he's really hungry and, and he has, there's a few ducks that he has, you know. At least he'll have something to eat so he makes this big fire outside and cleans the ducks and starts cooking them. A fox comes along and says, "my brother," he said, "what are you cooking?" And Wesakejack said, "I'm cooking some ducks." And the fox says, "you know, are you gonna share with me, some of your food." And Wesakejack said, "no." He said, "I had a hard time getting this food and I'm very hungry and I'm not gonna share with you." So then the fox had come limping in eh, and the fox said, "you know," he said, "I'd end up having a race with you, you know, and whoever wins the race gets to eat the duck. Or, you know, if I won the race, you'd have to share your meal with me." He said, "but I don't want to race now because I hurt my leg." He said, "and I can't run very fast. I can't run very far." So Wesakejack said, "well, okay, if you can win me in a race then I'll share my, my food with you." So the fox says, "no, no I, I can't win. You know, and you know I can't win because my leg is broke." So Wesakejack insisted he wanted to race him because he felt that he couldn't win the race. So then they started off till finally the, the fox agreed, "okay, I'll race with yeah." So they start off and, and the fox ends up passing Wesakejack, but he didn't go very far. And he stopped and he's rubbing his leg on the road, you know, and Wesakejack goes racing right past the fox without trying to help him or see if there's anything wrong. As soon as Wesakejack went around the bend, the fox

turned around and raced back to the campfire and ate up all the ducks. But Wesakejack came around the bend and could see and smell the, the food at his camp. He kinda slowed down, looked behind. The fox was not coming yet. So he kinda took it easy getting to the camp and when he got there he found that there was no food left. It disappeared. Bones sticking in the hot, hot ashes and he knew that the, the fox had tricked and he had nothing to eat. So again Wesakejack wondered off and, and he was really hungry now because it was a few days, and as he wondered along, he'd eat rose, rose hips. Stop and eat rose hips, and continue walking and, and the rose hips I guess made him pretty itchy. So, and it was a hot day. He kept walking and the sun was so hot and I guess Wesakejack was wiping the sweat off his forehead as he walked. And then he came across this rock. It was a big rock and he stopped to sit on the rock and the rock was really hot so he jumped back off the rock. Poor Wesakejack, he, when he jumped off the rock, and the rock was so hot it just skinned him, you know, skin peeled off. But he walked on and on looking for food and later on during the day he was coming back and, and he didn't find any food so he had to try and make his way back home. As he walked back he came upon this rock and he was so thankful because he seen this patch of dry meat sitting on the rock. And he took it and he started eating it and there was a birch tree standing beside the rock. Wesakejack took the dry meat and he started to eat it and the birch tree sang out, Wesakejack **(Sings in Michif)**. That meant, Wesakejack ate his scab and Wesakejack got so mad he grabbed his dry meat heaved it on to the birch tree and then he took a willow off and he whipped the birch tree. That's why now you see the birch tree has the, it was a poplar tree I guess or a birch tree, and they had the marks on it. And, and the, the, let's say, the dry meat was what we know call Chaga and it's a cancer medicine.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - That's cancer medicine?

Rose Richardson - Yeah, and that's where that little story came from. But that's like four little stories all put together as a, as a journey and then the journey goes on and on and on.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah he just sort of goes through life having one adventure after another.

Rose Richardson - Exactly, one experience after another. And, like we were told many stories happened. And one of them was long ago. People had to travel on long, long distance. And sometimes they had to leave their family or, you know, part of the family had to stay behind while different members of the family went out hunting or gathering or whatever. And this, this other story's about a lady who lived with her daughter and they lived way, way out in the bush, and that's the one about the, the chicken reel. You know how to play that song. Anyway, this one time, this lady went out and told her daughter, "I have to be gone for a few days, and you look after the place. Look after your chickens." And her daughter was really, really nice and well disciplined and, and knew how to survive and knew how to look after animals. And had lot of respect for herself and, and treated the animals with, and their chickens and whatever they had with a lot of respect. So everyday, the girl would go out to the chickens and she'd go feed the chickens. And, and everyday when she'd go out and feed the chickens, she knew that the chickens were producing eggs and giving them lots, lot of food. So she'd end up holding hands with the chickens and they'd end up dancing around everyday in the chicken coop, and they danced the chicken dance. And one day this here guy came along and he looked and he seen this beautiful woman walking from the couch, the house to the chicken coop. So he watched her from the bush and thought how beautiful she was, you know, so. But he went closer and he still was a little, a knothole in the door and he looked through the knot hole and he seen this woman and I guess his eyes just bulged straight out, she was so beautiful. You know, and here they were, she was holding the chickens by the hands and they were dancing the

chicken reel. So every, every day she'd go dance with the chickens and the chickens really liked it, liked it, so they gave more eggs. So as soon as the guy sort of felt he had a good look at her he went back and hid in the bush and then he waited till the next day and then followed her pattern again and she went and she danced with the chickens. And every time he looked at her his eyes would bulge out. And so he'd watch and then he'd go hide. So after the second day he went to the house and knocked on the door and, and the young lady was really kind and generous. She made him some tea and she fed him and treated him really well and he ended up asking if she'd give her hand to him in marriage. And she said, "well right now I'm looking after the place for my mother and I can't leave. Yes, I will marry you." Because he was really kind also and that's all she seen in him as a very kind, kind person. So he said, "I have to leave you now to go look for a way to make a living for us and to inform my family." So he left and the mother came home and the girl told her mother about, about this guy. And she was really pleased because they were really poor. A few days later came back and, and he was a very wealthy person. Like **(Speaks Michif)** he was very wealthy. And he came with all, all his family and all his wealth and food, whatever he had to offer the mother and that young girl. But anyway, he found out that she was very kind because she'd go and dance the, the chicken reel with the, with the, with the chickens. And they'd, they'd have a lot of fun eh, so maybe you could play us a chicken reel. **(Hap plays the fiddle)** And then the ducks, the chickens and the young girl would be dancing and together and doing the chicken dance.

Hap Boyer - Go like that eh?

Rose Richardson - Yes. Thank you Hap.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So that's what she danced with the chickens to eh?

Rose Richardson - Yes.

77.7 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh that's amazing. I'll never hear that song again without thinking of that girl that danced with the chickens. So Hap, you had a story about when you were a young man?

77.9 - Hap Boyer - Well I was, when I was, 1948, I wasn't that young. In 1948 I was fishing in Great Slave Lake, I was fishing there in November, by middle of January we were finished and I was getting 150 dollars a month from my uncle fishing there. But after fishing was over my aunt says I should go up to Spirit River cause there was a logging camp just North of there, where I could get some more work. So I, I went to Spirit River, got a ride with a trucker and went over there and my aunt was living there in Spirit River. So she knew the boss, so she called him and he said my nephew wants to work. Well he says, "if he can take it he can come work." So I went over there to in the bush it was 15 miles North of Spirit River and he put me in a logging camp there and they had bunkhouse and not to sanitary. I didn't like it there. And the first day they brought sandwiches out at about two o'clock in the afternoon and I was hungry and I really didn't like that. So the next day I told my friend that I'm quitting, I'm going, I don't, I'm not gonna go live like this. So I told that guy, that boss, I said, "I'm quitting." "Oh," he said, "what's the matter?" I said, "oh I'm just quitting, I don't like it here." I said, "in fact," I said, "you owe me for a days pay, pay me." "Well," he says, "I have to give you a check. Well when are you leaving." I said, "right now." "You can't leave now," he says. He says that, "it won't be long it'll be dark." So he said, "oh you got a trail, truck trail." He says, "if you want to quit go tomorrow we'll take you in." No, I was stubborn, I wanted to quit right now. So I started walking to Spirit River. I walked about 5 miles and it started to get dark. And I walked a little way longer until it was really dark. And I was getting tired. And I could hear timber wolves and that didn't help any. Timber wolves howling like they were right around me. So I thought oh I should turn back but I was kinda tired. I said, "if I turn back they'll laugh at me." So I

was looking around and just anywhere would do. I seen a light in the distance. By golly that's a house, house, house light, and I'm looking, and then it'd look like a star. Now I was confused. So I thought I'll, I'll pace out a hundred steps that way towards the light and I'll look again. So I stepped out a hundred yards, like I stepped a hundred paces and I looked and it looked like a house then it looked like a star. I didn't know. So then wolves were howling more and more, so now I'm getting kinda panicky. So I went another hundred yards and I looked and I could see a shape of a, of a, of a house with a little light flickering. Was I ever glad. So I went over there, walked in there. I knocked at the door, and this old, looked like a Russian guy, come to the door, an old man. And I told him who I was and I said I was going to Spirit River and I was tired and when he opened the door I guess his wife was baking biscuits, that's two and that just hit me. Oh geez that smell nice. I said, "can I get something to eat?" I said, "I wanted to go on to Spirit River but I was hungry eh?" So he asks his wife, and oh she didn't like that. Told her in that language or whatever they spoke, Mennonite or Russian, and she didn't seem to agree that I should have even a biscuit or to eat. And he talked to her then. I was waiting there. "Come in," he said, "sit down." And he talked to her and then pretty soon she brought me a little bowl of stew and one biscuit and she had a lot there them biscuits. Oh that tasted good. So I ate the biscuit and the stew, of course with that heat I was tired...(I **naudible**)...And I thought, oh I'll stay here tonight. Why go tomorrow, I didn't want to go back. I go, I'm gonna sleep here tonight. "No room," he says. "No room. Only one bed." And then he told his wife what I said, and she started yap at him, like and oh she was kinda really mad. So I said, "well I'm bigger than you, you try to kick me out." So I took my parka and my bag and I threw it in the corner and his bed was right there. Not a very big room. And I said, "I'm gonna lay down for a while," I say, "I'm tired." So they're yapping away and...(I **naudible**)...that old shack was a lean-to and that lean-to is where he had his horses. And I could hear them eating in there and the horses were in there. So I was trying to lay down there and I said "I'm gonna stay here tonight." I said, "I'm gonna sleep right

there." He said, "cold, it's cold." I said, "I don't care." So they said, they were arguing, him and his wife...**(Inaudible)**...it was time to go to bed. So she got in and she laid towards the wall. And he laid in the middle, they had one of your mattresses that were full of straw. And I laid, and then he laid on this side, and I was laying there, they were mumbling, him and his wife. Pretty soon he hits me on, on the, on the laying on the floor, he hit me like this, tapped me, he said, "get on the bed, too cold on there." So I got up and I laid on the bed, now there was me, him, and his wife. That's uncomfortable there, oh...**(Inaudible)**...but about one o'clock in the morning the horses started to pull back in there, kicking and pulling back, and holy mackerel the old man he got up. He lit the lantern, put on his pants and he put on his, his felt boots and away he went out. And just as he got out that old lady she turns around and she said, "there's your chance." And when she told me that I got out, right out of bed ran around and ate the rest of them biscuits. End of my story.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well you had me right there till that last...

Hap Boyer - See my kind of story you thought I was gonna go and tell a sex story.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Sex and food.

Hap Boyer - Yeah. But talking about the hungry days again, I'll take ya back to 1930. If I can change the subject. I was sitting at McDonald's restaurant and this lady, she, she's 81 I guess now, at that time she must have been about 75, 77 or so. She's the lady that made this vest, and she would tell me how poor they were. Well I said, "everybody was poor." Oh she says you know, "Hap," she said, "I wanna tell you how poor we were and they did tell me the truth." She said, "we had to eat rabbit three times a day" and she was telling the truth. And she said, "we had no dishes and they would, they had to eat out of tobacco tins." Well the old man, he smoked, yet, but they

were poor but he still went out to get tobacco. They ate out of tobacco tins. And she said they used to eat rabbits three times a day. And I said, "why don't we make a song about that." She says okay. I says, "I got a piece of them things they put on the tray." I ripped it in half and I gave her one and I took the other one, "let's make a song about the dirty thirties." And we were comparing our notes and then we changed things around, about 20 minutes it took us to make that little song. So, now we had to have a tune for it and I had to have an introduction. So I said, "well, you leave that with me, I'll fix it." So my Grandpa used to be a fiddle player, he used to play the rabbit dance. Well, I thought, I'll use that for an intro for my little song eh? The rabbit dance, kokum and wapass stew. Kokum used to make wapass stew. Kokum is Grandma, wapass is rabbit. So I, we'll make that kokum wapass stew. And so I made it a, I made a song... **(Inaudible)**...put a tune in and sang it off and on over there at home. When I went to make my CD up at Turtle Island Music here in Saskatoon I did my album and then I says to Kelly, I says, "now I'm all finished I'm gonna leave you a song - Kokum Wapass Stew." I said, "you just keep it, in, in your library here." I says, "and someday maybe you'll listen to it or use it." "Okay," he said. So I played and I was thinking nothing of it and when my CD came out he put the first one on there. And now I'm gonna do a little bit of it. Okay?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh that would be great.

Hap Boyer - And it goes like this. Called Kokum's Wapass Stew and it's about the dirty thirties where people, not all there, not everybody but a lot of our people here ate rabbits three times a day. And bannock three times a day. And that was on and on and on. And, and, and I put this introduction in cause rabbit stew, rabbit dance. Grandpa used to play. **(Plays fiddle and sings)** *"Oh in the dirty thirties caught wapass by the score, when Kokum gave us wapass stew always wanted more, it took two cups of wapass stew to fill a tobacco tin, we always wished Kokum dear would put a dumpling in. It was wapass stew for breakfast, the same for dinner too. Wapass stew for*

*supper and tasty bannock too. ...**(Inaudible)**...Oh Kokum said darling dears whatever would I do if you didn't snare those wapass to make my wapass stew, for three years in a row we ate that wapass stew and if we ate too much of it sometimes we got the trots. Oh, it took two cups of wapass stew to fill a tobacco tin, we always wished Kokum dear would put a dumpling in. It was wapass stew for breakfast, the same for dinner too, wapass stew for supper and tasty bannock too, and tasty bannock too."* Anyway, that's how that become to be.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - I heard you sing it at the conference in the spring.

Hap Boyer - Oh yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You know, in the spring, that was the first time I ever heard it.

Hap Boyer - And that, when I used to...**(Inaudible)**...always asked me to tell that biscuit story. And when I, he's quite the guy. When I come to the wolf, well he come right there and he'd be howling like a wolf. What a guy. Yeah, I toured with Winston, we went up to, up to Northern Quebec, up there. We got on a plane here in Saskatoon, we went to Toronto, and then to Timmins and then...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh yeah, you went all the way up there?

Hap Boyer - All the way there I was his fiddle player and we had a...**(Inaudible)**...we put on a show on, right on the tarmac up there. People were just looking, yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well combination of stories and music is, you know, really...**(Inaudible)**...

Rose Richardson - Really...(Inaudible)...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did you have fiddle players in your family?

93.9 - Rose Richardson - Yeah. Had a lot of fiddle players. My, one of my, my uncle was a...

94.2 - End of Tape 1 Side A

Tape 1 Side B

0.8 - Rose Richardson - ... Curly Guy L'Hirondelle.

Hap Boyer - Oh yeah, I know him.

Rose Richardson - And he was a really well known fiddle player.

Hap Boyer - He was a great fiddler and steel guitar player.

Rose Richardson - Right. And my Grandma played the fiddle too, but she sorta played, she played fiddle music, and it was almost like Celtic.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh really?

Rose Richardson - Like dance that we danced.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So what was her name?

Rose Richardson - My Grandma was, gee, I don't even know her name.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Her maiden name?

Rose Richardson - We used to call her Grandma. She was a Delaronde.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Delaronde?

Rose Richardson - Yeah. And she married Bill Fiddler.

1.8 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Cause I'm just, you know, when you wonder where all, like where the music and the stories come, some of it seems to have traveled from different places and you see the roots, you know, cause all of the mixed, you know, the mixed heritage of all the Metis people. Little French, little Celtic, Cree and Saulteaux, all coming together.

2.1 - Rose Richardson - Exactly. And it was like sort of combined with...(Inaudible)...like even our grass was sort of a mixture eh?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah, yeah.

2.4 - Hap Boyer - Did you hear that rattle in there? A rattlesnake came in here. A rattlesnake came right in this fiddle. It was given to me by Claudette Boyer Falcon, Falcon, Claudette Falcon from Willistown, North Dakota. When she came down to Batoche she brought me a rattlesnake tail. And it changes the tone of my fiddle like in a while I have to thank it because it sounds like I'm playing through a cone of cigarette paper. Then I give it a shake and that old rattlesnake tail will move see. And last year when she came down she brought me another one so I got two.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Have you ever heard of that before? Or is that something that they do down there?

Hap Boyer - Oh yeah, yeah, I've heard of it.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - For good luck or? To, cause the rattlesnake that's a powerful animal.

Hap Boyer - Yeah, she brought me another one last year. She said the biggest, the biggest rattler that there ever was known so far was 18 rattlers, this one's got eight, eight rattlers in there.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Can you see it?

Hap Boyer - ...**(Inaudible)**...

Rose Richardson - That's got eight rattlers in there?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah eight rattles, like eight sections eh?

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

4.0 - Rose Richardson – Actually, actually it's really neat that one, did you say it was to bring you good luck?

Hap Boyer – No, no, no, no, it changes, it makes the fiddle sound better. Why don't you see how it sounded when I played?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh it sounded very good.

Rose Richardson - I mean even if it was out of tune it would probably sound good to me.

Hap Boyer - Well anyway, that's the one.

Rose Richardson - But why, why I'm asking is because the, you know we were raised to say that the fiddle was the instrument of the devil. We were

also raised to say that the serpent or the snake was, you know, was evil, you know. And you get two things that, that are symbolic of the evil going into something that produces such good music.

5.0 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - But it, that talk, like but that was mostly from the, the church that that came eh? Because there's also stories about the snake being powerful. Medicine animal, a protector. Like the rattlesnake protects sacred sites, that's some of the stories that I've heard. So I guess at this one hand you hear stories that it's something bad.

Rose Richardson - It's bad.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - But then there's these other stories that it's something good.

5.5 - Rose Richardson - And I guess that goes right back to a choice you make. You know, everything on Earth is here and it can be used for good or evil. In the Wesakejack stories although he had lot, you know, good qualities, he always made the choice between doing good or evil with the gifts that he had. You know, and it's the same with us. We have a, we have a choice and I guess that's part of, probably, our value system and our teachings and you have a choice. You choose to do good or evil and it's like they're the music, it, it's really good, it makes people feel good you know, and brings lot of joy. So it's almost like it has healing qualities like you said.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah it's like medicine. That's what it has.

Rose Richardson - For something good.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - I think so, yeah. So whatever that power is, that's coming for something good. When you look at, when you go to Batoche, and the fiddle players are playing, you know, it just lifts, it just lifts you up eh?

Rose Richardson - Exactly.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Lifts you up, it's a gift.

7.0 - Hap Boyer - I've been playing at the cemetery in Batoche. Last year I didn't play, but the year before I was playing, and the year before that, and I was playing for all the nine crosses that are there. And I played right there where Father Lavallee was praying there in all the cemeteries and that, and I was there. And this gentlemen took my picture from B.C. and he said, "I'm going to send you that picture along with everybody that's buried in there, their names. And I've got the names of all the nine people that are buried in that, the nine crosses." And I got at home and he sent me every name that's there, that who died and are buried there. And one is, the only one that's there that was, wasn't killed in, in Batoche, well one there that just died from, from sickness he said. I got all the names of that, of the people there. Not too many has got them names. He had a hard time to get them, but I got them.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - How did it feel when you're the fiddle player, playing at an event like that in that place?

Hap Boyer - I feel nice, I feel good. I feel good. I, I, I get to meet some nice, good fiddle players there. I ...(Inaudible)...in the face sometime eh? My favourite fiddle player is, I don't care, he's still my favourite is John Arcand. He's a great fiddle player, yeah, but there's other good fiddlers but he's my favourite.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - I was a big Reg Bouvette fan.

Hap Boyer - Yeah. When Reg Bouvette played in the, in the, up North, he went up to play in Beauval, and at that time I played with Winston Wuttunee

in Beauval. I was Winston's fiddle player. So, of course...**(Inaudible)**...there and then the announcer said, "everyone, Reg Bouvette and Hap Boyer come up and play." But we never played together before, but Reg being a good sport he, he went and he says...**(Inaudible)**...talked about him, or where he's been and all that. And I was standing in the background, and Hap Boyer he says, "to talk about me." And I said, I, I just said in a low voice, "his favourite player is Hap Boyer." Reg Bouvette's favourite fiddle player is Hap Boyer. He wanted to, wanted to play together, so we played Big John McNeil and...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh I love that song.

Hap Boyer - And Liberty Two-Step, but I played with him there. Boy he's a nice guy. He's one of the greatest fiddle players around.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - When, when you were growing up was there a time when you weren't supposed to play the fiddle?

Hap Boyer - When I was what?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - When you weren't supposed to, were you ever told, you know, not to play the fiddle or dance at a certain time?

Hap Boyer - Lent.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Lent?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. My mother told me not to go to, to dance at Lent. You'll meet the Rou Garou she says. I don't care, I'm gonna go to a dance. I had a good horse but I had, I had a, a buggy with a good horse. I drove my buggy there. I told her I didn't care about Lent, eh, but I got scared coming back. I thought the Rou Garou was after me. I was coming down the road

and...**(Inaudible)**...my horse stopped. Oh no, it wouldn't go. I should have listened to my mother. The Rou Garou now was after me for going to, to a dance in Lent eh? What the hell is going on here, I brought it up and I didn't know what the heck. Here it was a skunk, little skunk in the middle of the road and the horse wouldn't go across. The horse wouldn't go across cause it was on the road. That's what stopped.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - That was your Rou Garou?

Hap Boyer - Yeah my, you know, when you were talking about that goose? It reminded me of something. It reminded me of my grandmother who lived North of Midnight Lake in the bush, and that was during the flu epidemic.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh right yeah.

Hap Boyer - And there was not too much food. And Grandma was there with four kids with the flu. And, and there was a bunch of geese flying toward her and they were quite high eh? She ran in the house, she grabbed a rifle and she just pointed and shot at the geese and be darned if one didn't fall. And she went and got it and told us she killed one and made soup with it. Well there you go eh?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - My Mom told me that her grandfather, I think it was a duck, shot it from his rocking chair.

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah, sitting on his rocking chair out in front of the house, saw these birds coming, you know, get my gun, get my gun.

Hap Boyer - My grandfather used and Grandma run the halfway house. And it's between North Battleford and Meadow Lake. Now do you know where Alcott Creek is?

Rose Richardson - Uh huh.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You do?

Rose Richardson - Yeah.

Hap Boyer - Well, you know that Muskeg, you know it's called? You know what it's called?

Rose Richardson - No I don't.

Hap Boyer - That's Big Muskeg. And the old trail ran west there. The old trail ran west from Meadow Lake, pioneer trail there, probably still there, that Big Muskeg is there and then that my grandmother used to make the, feed the people that went by. And Grandpa used to keep the horses overnight then he'd charge 50 cents for the, a night. But Grandpa used to play the fiddle see so he used to play this tune and he used to call it **(Speaks Michif)**.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh right.

Hap Boyer - But I didn't know. All I knew is the first part of the tune. So one day my Dad used to tell me a little, Grandpa used to run a halfway house west of Big Muskeg. Well Big Muskeg is that Alcott Creek area west. A lot of people don't know, but I know cause I was told by, by my, my Dad and his Dad run that halfway house. And then when I play that, that tune used to run through my head all the time that, that **(Michif Word)** so I add a little bit another tune to it and I called it Big Muskeg **(Michif Word)**. And so I put

on my CD and that's how that got its name. But that's Big Muskeg and you lived around there, you didn't know and now your learning from it from me.

15.3 - Rose Richardson - Actually I lived right outside of Meadow Lake, you know.

15.4 - Hap Boyer - The only thing I know is what I've been told eh?

15.5 - Rose Richardson – Yeah, you know that area where Extra Foods is now?

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Rose Richardson - We used to just live west, southwest of that.

15.6 - Hap Boyer - Grandma used to, we used to live in Battleford for a long time. Grandpa used to, Grandma was used to do the washing for the nuns. Wash clothes for the nuns there, years and years ago. Yeah.

15.9 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well should we break for lunch?

Rose Richardson - Probably yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Twenty to one? We'll break for lunch? Take about a half an hour lunch break? That's good?

[Pause in Audio from 16.1 - 17.2]

17.2 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - So Hap, you were talking about the Rou Garou, that you used to get warned about the Rou Garou?

17.3 - Hap Boyer - Yeah, there's a story that my uncle told me years and years ago, and apparently they were harvesting and it was raining again, same old deal with the rain so they...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Dark and scary.

Hap Boyer - They had nothing to do so they, they think of some scheme to do and they, they said, "who is gonna be scared to go in the graveyard at middle of the night and go." And they said, "oh I'm not scared." He says to the guy he said, "I'll give five dollars to anybody that could go into the graveyard in the middle of the night and dig a skull out and bring it back." Okay. And so the guy says, "give me five dollars and I'll go and get it. I'll go and get a skull an old skull out of there." So they give him five bucks, he got on his horse and away he went with his shovel. He got in there and he start to dig. Meanwhile they're gonna scare em. So this other guy, he takes a white sheet, goes on his horse but he doesn't hog tie the horse in the bush and he takes the sheet and he waits. See what he was doing, that guy was really digging. He dug right down and got that skull threw it out. He buried the dirt, the dirt over again and then that guy put that white sheet on and started to hop towards him. He didn't see him yet. He grabbed the sheet and that guy said, "bring back my skull." And the guy looked, the ghost stops. So he kept walking and just ignored him and he started to hop closer. "Bring back my skull." So the guy just turned around and threw his skull at him, got on his horse and rode back. He said, "well where's the skull?" "Well," he said, "I had it dug but," he said, "the ghost come after me and he called for his skull. He wanted his skull back so I threw it at him and said well keep your skull, so here's your money back."

Sherry Farrell-Racette - But they just played a trick on him?

Hap Boyer - Yeah. But, you know, this old priest was visiting my Grandma one time and he said, "you know, I never get scared of dead bodies. I'm a

priest." But you know, he said, "I got scared." He said, the, this guy died in North Battleford, Saskatchewan and he had to bring, this guy had to bring the body back in a sleigh in, in a wagon box. It was 25 below zero and by the time he got to Cochin it was midnight and, and he'd, horses were played out and he was tired and they just couldn't go no farther. So he didn't know what to do, so he went to the priest, to the rectory and the priest comes to the door and he says, he told him he says, "I got a body, what I'm gonna do with it? I'm gonna, I, I don't know where to, what to do, my horses are played out, can you help me?" The priest says, "yeah," he says, "look it," he says, "first" he says, "we'll put the body in the church, the casket in the church, eh." So it was nice and warm in there because he had the furnace on in there. And then he says, "oh I'll go to the hotel, they got a livery stay barn there." So they got the horses put in the barn. And meanwhile while that guy was, and then you come back to the rectory and you can sleep here. So, about one in the morning the priest said, "well I'll go say some prayers." So they, so he went to the church and he was walking up the, the casket was there and he had his beads and he was up praying and back and down, and back. All at once a huge crack, a lot of you could hear it an empty church and this, oh the priest got scared. He jumped like and didn't know what was happening, you know. You know what happened? The casket melted from the cold and wood, it's 25, 30 below and when that melted it, it just cracked and that scared the priest so much that he had to tell that to my grandmother how scared he got. Yeah.

22.7 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - So it had been frozen solid when it went in there, yeah, and then when it went into that warm church it just went cracked, like the wood cracked, made a big noise. Oh yeah that would scare you eh?

Hap Boyer - Oh, scared em.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - What about you? They tell scary stories where you grew up?

23.0 - Rose Richardson - Actually we told, lot of scary stories. And, I, I remember being told a lot of things like in my community it's a custom to have wakes and a wake is where you stay with the body and the relatives for four days because our belief is that it takes four days from this, to travel from this life to the next, to the afterlife. So what they believed is that you don't, you spend your four days and mourn and be with the family and after that it's time to let go and, and you release the person. Otherwise if you don't, then you're forcing them to stay on this Earth and they become like lost spirits because you're not allowing them to go on. So then it was like customary you had the wake and after four days, you, you let the person go. So then they can go on. There was a lot of those little stories that were told so. I guess that was part of the teachings but not only did they tell those type of stories, they told a lot of other stories which taught you a lot about values. And I don't know if people were gifted or what but they told a lot of stories about near death experiences too in terms of what they went through. And I remember as a child going to a near death experience where I was really sick and I lay on this little bed and my mother came over and she was rubbing my forehead and I was really sick. And all of a sudden I felt really good and I was floatin' on top of the bed by the ceiling and looking down at my Mom till my Mom started to cry. And all of a sudden I heard knockin' on the house and that was one of the things we had always been told in terms of if a woodpecker knocks on your house, it's an invitation of death. You know, so you have to stop it or if, or if a bird bumps into your window three in a row it means that somebody's gonna die from, you know, one in our group. And a lot of things like that and people can say it's superstition because, but in most cases it does happen. It's like a sign that people are given but this here time that I was floating on, up by the ceiling. And my Mom was crying and all of a sudden the, the woodpecker's knockin' on the roof and my Mom goes out, and she's really crying and she's picking

up sticks and she's throwing at the woodpecker trying to scare it away from the house but my Mom couldn't reach the woodpecker. And I'm floatin' up in the air so as my Mom throws her sticks I grab em and I throw em at the woodpecker and scared the woodpecker away, and then my Mom goes running back into the house and she grabs me and I'm floatin' up there but she grabs my body and she starts crying out loud and it was so pathetic to hear my Mom cry that it was just like a, an elastic bandaid, bandage, or a piece of elastic. I just went right back into my body. And it's really funny because I don't know where I entered from here, or here. And I, I zoomed back into my body and when I zoomed back into my body I was okay. I was well. So, whenever I get sick, I always tend to zoom away because it's like you know, if you get out of your body and zoom away, well you can go back and you'll be well because once your spirit leaves then it's like, you can get well quicker. And I don't know if it's really true but it's, things that, that I believe in. We were also taught about Northern Lights to respect the Northern Lights because the Northern Lights are actually spirits dancing. And, and when you go out, you never whistle at the Northern lights because if you whistle it's like you're calling them down. So out of respect you don't do that. Because they say if you call them done and your mind is weak, they can end up picking you up and taking you away. And especially people that make themselves vulnerable by either using alcohol or drugs and then they become really weak, their spirits are weak. Their spirits can get taken over, they can either die or, or lost spirits that are roaming the Earth because they don't know where to go, can end up stealing your body. So, you know, as, as a young person I heard these stories and I absolutely refrained from alcohol or drugs of any type. So, it became a valuable lesson, you know, in a valuable way of teaching. They also told us stories of shape-shifters and that was people that ended up being able to, it was almost like people selling their soul. So they'd end up becoming shape-shifters, they could become an animal easily, just for a way of getting, getting power. There was this one story named, they ended up telling us about this lady who, who lived with her daughter and her son-in-law and she was always really lonesome and

nobody cared for her or looked after her. And she became really lonesome and every evening she'd go out and she'd walk to the barn and, you know, this one night her, her son-in-law said, "well I'm gonna follow your mother, to see where she goes." You know, but he was really quite mean to her so he ended up following her and when they got to the barn he couldn't find her, you know. So he said, "okay I have a plan." Next day he went ahead to the barn and waited and there was this story that if somebody is a shape-shifter or has sold their soul that or the devil travels around on horses and the horse that is being used or the animal will have braids and the hair is braided so fine it's almost like tangled up and you can't undo it. So he found one of his horses with its hair braided. And the following night he goes to the barn and he hides in one of the stalls and, and waits and all he seen is a cat coming in to the barn. He waited and waited and the woman didn't come in. But he said a cat came in and went into the stall and spooked the horse. And he went back to the house and said, "now I know what it is that is really upsetting the horses at night. It's a cat that goes into the barn, you know, and that's what's been causing all that commotion in the barn, spooking the horses." And so, he ends up the following night, but he said, "I didn't see your Mom." So the following night he has the same plan again and he goes back into the barn and again this cat comes in and spooks the cat it jumps, the cat jumps on the horse's back. Scratched the horse and the horse is rearing up and everything and this guy grabs a pitchfork and he throws it at the cat and one of the forks goes into the cat. And the next day, he said that, but he ends up saying "that cat won't be back, you know, because I sure fixed him, you know, coming and spooking the horses." The next morning his mother-in-law doesn't come to the table to eat. And the girl goes into the bedroom to check her mother out and, and she notices the blood on the blankets. And on her, here her, her mother has a fork wound in her back and she ends up realizing that her mother had become a shape-shifter and the only way that you can change things is to end up being good and kind, you know. So she ended up taking her Mom and holding her Mom in her arms and loving her Mom till all the wounds disappeared. And then she realized that it was true neglect that

somebody else had gone the wrong way because everybody needs love and attention and they had denied the lady the love and attention that she needed.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So she went that way?

Rose Richardson - Yeah, so she went that way. But they were able to reverse it by doing what was right.

34.8 - Hap Boyer - You know when you were telling me about the woodpecker. I just thought of something. You know when I was in Korea a bird hit the window.

Rose Richardson - Yeah.

Hap Boyer - And my wife was staying with my mother then. And, and my mother said, "somebody died in the family." [Coughs] Excuse me. And the next, or the same day, my mother lived three miles from town, and the only phone was at the grocery store. And the storekeeper's wife drove over to our house and he told, she told my mother that my wife's Grandpa had died. Just like that. But that's one instance. And when I was in the army this buddy of mine was telling me about his Grandpa. He was very serious. He said, his Grandpa was blind and there was a sun dance, he said, just to pull him out of the way. And the old man says, "I don't wanna go, you go, you and the grandson go eh? And, to the sun dance, I'll stay home, I'm all right, I got everything here." So they went and that night they made, they were making tea, they had a fire outside and this garter snake come right towards him and went right into, right in the fire and burned. And the Grandma said, "let's go home, something wrong with Grandpa." When they went home, he was dead. He was blind that old guy.

Rose Richardson - Oh yeah.

Hap Boyer – Another incident eh?

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh so the snake was...**(Inaudible)**...

Rose Richardson - ...**(Inaudible)**...

Hap Boyer - Another incident we had a, an elderly gentlemen, he was always 59 years old, it didn't matter if...**(Inaudible)**...but he used to tell me about a haunted house. He used to come from Cudworth, Saskatchewan. And he said, that was in the early thirties, and he told that more than once. He said there was a house here that nobody could sleep in cause there was ghosts in that house. It was haunted. Strange noise and moving of stuff at night when the light went out and they just couldn't sleep there. And he said, "ah you guys." He says, "I'll sleep there," he says, "you watch, I'll go sleep there." So they, they bet him that he wouldn't sleep there the night, if you could stay there all night we'll give you a dollar. That's big money them days. So he took his bedroll and he went in that house and lit the lamp. And he went to sleep and all at once that noise started. Moving of furniture noise, and he got up and lit the lamp and he started to curse at the ghost. "Get out of here you, what are you, you know." He just, just going at it, yelling at the top of his voice, he was mad. Pretty soon he got one hell of a slap right across the face, another slap, and another slap, he packed his stuff and he was gone. That was the end of him. And he got slapped in the face from that, from that ghost and he says that true, he still, he told that more than once. That he got slapped in the face for cursing that ghost, whoever was in that house. You know, and my, that's one incident, and another time my great grandfather died. He died in the, my, my grandmother could see his little shack along the Jackfish Lake there. And was nobody home that time and there was a light on. So my grandmother went over to the fisherman inspector there, he's like a police. He said, "There's nobody home in that house. He says, "and he's dead that old man, there's nobody there yet

there's a light on. Could you go and check?" He says, "I'm not gonna go and check, no way," he said. But then the old guy come back, the son come back, and then he told my grandmother he said, you know, he said, "when I go to bed at night the old man is digging under the bed for his stuff." Moving his box out and he's digging in there. He said, "I put the light out and everything is quiet." And then he come back and told my grandmother that again, so my grandmother says, "okay I'll come." So she went over to his house and took a...(Inaudible)... gonna go to bed, she dug down and she said the rosary and she says, "rest in peace, don't come back." You know, she prayed and she told this old guy, she says, "things should be all right now," he says. So she went home and there was no more after she prayed there. So I don't know if, it seems to me like these, if you pray sometimes it helps.

41.2 - Rose Richardson - I remember this one incident I was told of by a lady called Mrs. Morris. She was one of the people the Métis that were sent on to Green Lake and then that's when the road allowance people and, and moved to Green Lake. When they ended up moving to Green Lake they were, they had horses and, you know, our family didn't but the people that had a little something ended up having horses and that was their means of, of travel. But there was no, there was no telephones, there was no radios, you know, people that ended up having a little something had battery operated radios that would only last so long. And they just would turn them on maybe for an hour or two a day just so they'd last at least a few months. But one day this lady was, went for a walk and, in the bush and this was way in the bush. She went for a walk and she was feeling that something was happening and as she walked along this little bird flew down and flew beside her and told her "your brother is dying. You have to go home." And she had to go home to Punnichy area and that's around Regina. So she ended up turning around on her path going back to the house and packing up her clothing. And when her husband came home she told her husband, we have to go back home, you have to take me back home because like, a family

member is dying. So he ended up immediately he got the horses ready and everything and later on that day, towards the evening there was a knock on the door. A telegraph officer came walking in and said, "I have a telegram for you." And she said "yes," she said "I know." She said, "my relative died." And she said, "we're already packed up, we're gonna be leaving." And he went away not knowing what happened or how did she know, because there was not even a road to the house and nobody had went there and she already knew. And it was because people were so close to nature they were able to communicate through animals or through telepathy or whatever.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - You do hear a lot of stories like that eh? Of people that have no phones, no way of communicating and just knowing what was happening in another place.

Rose Richardson - Like even, even now, if you become really sensitive, you know, like, lot of times it happens that a friend or somebody that, that we know, an acquaintance, will, will pass away through the night. And not everybody, but often, I'll wake up exactly on that hour that they'll come and visit me and at first I didn't pay any attention to it, and for a long time and didn't say anything because people felt that was weird or they didn't want to hear it. Now, now I'll wake up my husband Rick and say, "do you know the, you know, this lady just passed away, she was just in to visit me and she died at 4 o'clock this morning. That's just a few minutes ago, you know." And we'll check it out in the morning and sure enough they died at that exact hour.

45.7 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - I've heard stories from kids, like people who are, when they're young and they would say there we were, like living and having a hard time, like something was bad had happened. And they would have no idea why, like their Grandma and Grandpa would just suddenly turn up or if someone would just suddenly, it was like they knew, even though there was no phones. Like this one, I'm not exactly sure what

happened but they were having a terrible hard time and then the old lady that was with them was saying oh it's all right my brother is coming. And then the door opened and there was her brother come to help them. And, and as a child these kids are sitting there going how did, how did they know? But there was that with the older people who lived, you know, more closer to the way things used to be. It seemed like they had that other sense. That ability to read signs in, like in nature with the animals or to just know.

Rose Richardson - To know, to know, it's...

Sherry Farrell Racette - A lot of people are like that with their kids.

Rose Richardson - Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - My Mom was like that with me. She would have a dream and she would phone me and say, "what are you doing?" Like sometimes it would be, you know, or something "are you all right," you know? But she would have a dream and then she would, and they were always right. I would never say. I wouldn't even waste my time to say oh nothing's wrong, everything's fine, she wouldn't believe me cause she would, she would have had that dream.

47.2 - Rose Richardson - And it's like something you don't, you don't even question. It's just there, you know it and you accept it. Of course you don't go telling everybody because, you know.

47.5 - Hap Boyer – You know what happened to my uncle, my grandmother told me. She used to live in Battleford along the river. She used to do washing for the nuns. Her son, her oldest son went on a party, was a Métis shacks all along the river at that time. And the graveyard was not too far away. But this is the truth, she told me that he went to a party. He got drunk and on his way home he got detoured going through the fence of the

cemetery and he fell in a fresh grave. He was drunk so he fell asleep there. I guess he got, he got kinda cold there and he tried to sober up a bit and he was a tall guy and when he stood up he seen all them crosses and stones and did he ever get scared. He up from that, he jumped out of there and he ran, he cleared that 3, 2 and a half metre wire fence, cleared it, he was scared he ran so fast and just broke into one of them houses and that lady was telling my grandmother he was white as a, white as a ghost he was so scared, he didn't know what was happening eh? He thought they were gonna bury him there I guess, but that's the truth, that's what happened to him.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Did he smarten up after?

Hap Boyer – He smartened up after that.

49.1 - Rose Richardson - It's really funny like most stories about ghosts are, are scary stories. What I know about ghosts and spirits are almost like, endearment, like they won't, they won't hurt you, they're spirits, you know. And a lot of times they're spirits that are lost and it's like you get taught how to help them pass through, of how to continue their journey. So it was never, I was never told stories like that in terms of, I guess maybe they were intended to scare you but they didn't scare me. It was like, it was always neat, I just thought, in Cree they're fascinated by ghost stories. It was almost like accepting the fact that the world is not only here for us.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - There's another...

Rose Richardson - Like this world may be the spirit world um, met with people that after you talked to them you don't even know they were, if they're real. But if they're real or human, it didn't matter to you. That they were spirits no matter if they were alive and going to be here for it, the next generation or whatever. Or if they were spirits who were just passing through. It's you learn to be respectful because we all live here together.

51.1 - Hap Boyer - My mother used to go visit my Grandma and my Grandpa in Cochin there, she used to have to go about oh, a quarter of a mile. And they didn't want her to go at night like that and she's, my Grandpa said I seen a ghost. He says don't you go at night to visit like that cause I seen a ghost. "Ah, "she says. She just laughed at him, well then don't go, I seen a ghost down there. So she wouldn't listen to my Grandpa so she took off and that old man you know, he shouldn't have done that, but you know what he did? He, he went halfway and waited till she was on her way home, he had a white sheet with him. Imagine doing that, they could have...

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Given her a heart attack.

Hap Boyer - And then, I know!

Sherry Farrell-Racette - I hope she made him pay.

Hap Boyer - When my mother was coming she was just a little girl, she was hopping home and...(Inaudible)...she seen that ghost, oh man did she run. Oh, then that there Dad come in, like nothing happened eh? He scared her. She never went back again to visit at night.

52.6 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - I think that a lot of the scary stories were told to kind of keep you inside at night so you'd be safe, you know. So they would, like a social control, you know. So you'd be scared to go outside, so they would, you know, scare the heck out of you, so that'd you'd be, you wouldn't go running off cause I think the scary stories, my Dad used to tell scary stories in the summer at night and we used to be so scared when he'd finish that I would just run home as fast as I could cause we used to have a fire like by the lake and then just run, just so fast like your feet are hardly touching the ground. Your hearts going like this, and then I think, you know we were like thirteen years old, we could have got into all kinds of mischief

after, you know, but instead of getting into mischief we all just went, just as quick as we could cause we were scared eh, we were scared to go outside. But it's, I don't know if it was made up, some of it was and some of it was those mysterious things like this, but it gives you the sense that there's this other realm like that there's this, there's these mysteries.

53.6 - Rose Richardson - But there's lot, lot of stories like my Dad used to talk about this fireball that used to, you know, roll along beside him when he was driving a truck. And a lot of people seen the fireball and that was just a few years I remember it was way late at night and it was really dark and all of the sudden there was a flash, a flash of daylight. It was like a, a blue, light blue misty day, and the whole world became daylight as I looked at it. And I drove home, you know, I was so fascinated by what happened. I was not frightened, I was just fascinated, just, you know, it was really neat to see this all happening. And by the time I got home I forgot about it, and I was only about three minutes from home, so I couldn't tell anybody about it, it was like just happened, I seen it and I didn't tell anybody for a long time. Like one day I was sleeping in the bedroom and I call it our, our mystical bedroom. Our spirit room. And I looked in one corner of the closet and about this high off the ground there was a blue light and a red light and they were side by side. And this was just a few years ago. I lay on the bed and I looked at the lights and I thought how neat, how beautiful, I wish other people could see that. And I remember falling asleep looking at the lights and not even like, I think about it later, wouldn't it be neat if every time I seen something I grab the cameras and, you know, when things like that happen you don't think of grabbing a camera or taking a picture of it. It, it's so natural, it's all part of your life that you don't think about it.

56.5 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Were there any stories about like, creatures that lived in, like under the water or anything like in the lake, like where you guys were from?

56.7 - Rose Richardson – Well where I was from there was stories about the little people, they called them water babies. They lived North of, not North of Green Lake, towards South End, and they called it the place of the drumming. And people that went there or camped in that area would hear drumming every night. They could hear the little people drumming, and the, the story went that you didn't want to see or meet with one of those little people and if you did, you'd never live to tell the story. So if you seen them, then you had respect for them and you let them live where they, where they were living without any type of interference. There's this story that this guy went out there, he heard the legend, so he went out there to search for them and spent all this time searching and they lived under the, like there was this great big hill along the lake. They said that the little people lived under the lake or under the hill and, and lived below the lake. So this guy went in and they say that he found the little people and when they found him he was dead. He had swallowed a fish bone and had died so that's all they could say is he may have found the little people.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Cause he was looking for them.

Rose Richardson - Cause he was looking for them but he never stayed alive to tell the story so the story went that you never searched for them, you just let them live because this is part of their world too. There was this guy, Mr. Laliberte, who had a trap line along Beatty Lake and they say that he went checking his traps and, and it was late in the fall so the ice was froze over but there was no snow, so you could see right through the ice and it was like glass. So he walked over the ice and he looked down and he seen the face of like, thought it was a fish but when he looked it was the face of like a child's face. So it was a baby and they said that's where the little people lived and gradually as people went there and started drinking and partying there now they say the little people have moved on. They have went away because it's not a good clean place anymore to be. But when he seen the, one of the little people he never went back trapping again because he was, he didn't know

who he could tell the story too because at that point in time if he talked about it, they would have probably ended up taking him to a mental hospital. So he just didn't tell anybody about it and people lived in denial. There was this other guy who ended up having a trap line in that area too and in the spring he took his wagon and he was going through this muskeg area and then there was like a little swamp or whatever in the area and all of sudden there were these frogs and they were about a foot high and they were leaping up towards where he was sitting in the wagon as he was trying to cross the water area. And he turned his wagon around, went back out and sort of abandoned his trap line because that's the first time he ever seen frogs that were, you know, a foot high or over.

Sherry Farrell Racette – Wow, that's big.

Rose Richardson - And I was telling this story to a friend of mine from, you know, around Sled Lake area and she, she was saying, "oh, I remember as a kid," she said, "going to Michelle Point." She said, "and my father told me to go tie the boats down. And I walked over to, to tie the boats, you know, and I kept, something kept hittin' my legs." She said, "and I, I didn't want to turn the flashlight on," she said, "because I was afraid that if I used up the battery, I'd have to come back without a light." She said, "so I made my way," she said, "to where the boats were and tied them on the docks." She said, "and in the boats," she said, "I could feel, you know, kept bumping into something." She said, "so after I tied the boats," she said, "I, I turned on my light and here was this great big frog." She said, she said, "I ran back to the house and told my Dad that there was great big frogs." She said, "and the American fisherman that was there," she said, "they got really excited, they went out," she said, "and they were chopping their legs off," she said, "and they were cooking frog legs."

Sherry Farrell Racette – They eat them?

Rose Richardson – Cause she said, “and I always remember that,” she said, “like you tell the story about this frogs, these legends of the big frogs,” she said. Well she said, “I remember seeing them,” she said. That was when she was a kid.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Was there any big bodies of water around where you grew up?

Rose Richardson - Well there was Green Lake probably is about the biggest body of water, you know, it was not that big.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - What about you Hap?

63.4 - Hap Boyer - They're not very, they're pretty dried out now.

Sherry - Yeah?

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So no big fish or?

Hap Boyer - There's fish there but Murray and Jackfish are very low now.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Oh yeah?

Hap Boyer - Very bad.

63.6 - Sherry Farrell-Racette – See I grew up by Lake Winnipeg and, you know, and, and like usually when there's a big body of water there's stories about some you know, great big thing living in that water.

63.8 - Rose Richardson - See in Green Lake, there's this legend about Green Lake that people don't really know how deep it is. And they say that the bottom of Green Lake is lot of crevices and joining to underground lakes so in Green Lake they say people have seen mermaids. And they have seen lake monsters. But nobody has ever taken a picture but the legends are still there but they say that anybody that drowns in Green Lake they've never been able to find the body. And it's sort of believed that they fall in down through the crevices and they're not able to retrieve the bodies.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Oh, they sort of get taken down?

Rose Richardson - Yes, but I remember people fishing and, and get a jackfish about this long, you know, really great big jacks.

65.0 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - Well a lot of lakes have an area where they don't know how deep it is, you know, and that's sort of like where these mysteries happen. You know, this sort of area of this body of water that people disappear there all the time or people keep seeing different things. Did you ever hear of a description of a mermaid? What does a Métis mermaid look like? I'm interested...

65.4. - Rose Richardson - Well actually, this lady said that she woke up in the morning and, and there was a rock sticking out of the lake and, and she left and she seen this lady who was, you know, a lady and half fish and was sitting on the rocks sunning herself.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – Just like a seal.

Rose Richardson - Yeah, and people just didn't tell the stories, you know, it was. I guess that's where storytelling comes in, I guess, you couldn't write it or anything because they didn't know how to write but there was the oral storytelling that took place.

Sherry Farrell-Racette – I wonder if talking about some of those things was discouraged at some point?

Rose Richardson - I believe that it was. I believe that if people talked about lot of those things it was like, you know, they were labeled as mental cases or, you know. Or if you talked about the Rou Garou or anything like, like ghosts or spirits you know and then you could be labeled. So people were afraid to talk about things like that.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - They must have talked about it at one point though. Like that's how the stories got passed on. What does a Rou Garou look like? Were you ever told what a Rou Garou would look like?

67.2 - Hap Boyer - Well, different people here said, some call the Rou Garou great big black dog, that was a Rou Garou. I didn't know...

67.4 - Rose Richardson - And I guess it was like a, a shape-shifter.

Hap Boyer - Great big black dog, was the Rou Garou.

Rose Richardson - I heard stories about big black dogs but I also heard stories that the werewolves or, well we called them Whitiko could take any form they wanted and the Whitiko was based on a very greedy person. So I guess we have a lot of Whitikos in our world today and the legend went that if you got bit by a Whitiko you became a Whitiko too. So you'd see all the industries that come in, they're like Whitikos because they just can't quit taking from the land, they just have to, you know, keep taking and taking and taking the land and the natural resources. And, and if you, you know, become part of it, you get bit by a Whitiko too. I don't know in what form you'd get bit. Probably if you bought a house or a vehicle then you'd have to continue working for the Whitiko.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Yeah I guess eh?

Rose Richardson - You wouldn't be able to get out of it. Depends on how you want to interpret the story I guess.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - So a big black dog eh?

69.0 - Hap Boyer - Well a different version, that's what I heard, a great big huge dog.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Like big like that?

Hap Boyer - Yeah.

Rose Richardson - And I've seen them going from one form to another as being a beautiful woman that could tempt, you know.

Hap Boyer - Oh, maybe I married one.

69.4 - Rose Richardson - Or else, you know, or being an animal or, you know, it was, like I don't know.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - Always different.

Rose Richardson - Always different. It was probably based on what she, you liked or your weakness.

Sherry Farrell-Racette - I know in Fort Qu'Appelle they tell a lot of Rou Garou stories and I had never heard them. I had never heard them before.

Rose Richardson - I remember hearing one about this guy who wanted to go to a dance and was not allowed to go and would end up changing himself to a black dog and race past his parents and get to the dance before they would. And it ended up being a long time before he could get himself back out of it, you know, because...

Sherry Farrell-Racette - To get stuck in there. He became one, yeah.

Rose Richardson - And I guess what we were always told is, don't open any doors, don't, don't go searching. Like I say don't open portals unless you know how to close them.

70.7 - Sherry Farrell-Racette - On that note. I...(Inaudible)...

70.9 - End of Audio