

**Transcribed by David Morin**

GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE FOLKLORE INTERVIEWS

Norma Welsh, Joe Welsh, and  
Sherry Farrell Racette

February 7 & 8, 2004

**Videotape 2**

**6:05:00 Sherry Farrell Racette:** When did your family move to the Métis Farm?

**Norma Welsh:** Oh boy, it'd have to be something I can't remember. I don't remember the year, but I remember we were there about eight years and we moved off there from, in 1948. And I was, actually, I was only four when we moved, but at the same time I can remember us going up the hill to the Métis Farm and our cows were tied to the back of the wagon. And we're all sitting around and all our, what little stuff we had on the wagon and the team of horses. And I guess I don't remember much after that, you know, until I was a bit older and my dad worked, all the men worked at the barn where they, they, we had cows and had pigs and chickens. And so we always had meat and chicken, and we always had, there was also farming done, and because I can remember making stooks.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, we used to have to do that by hand. But the houses, I can't remember how many houses there were up there, but I remember this big fabulous house, and I thought I'd never see anything like it in my life. It was a mansion, and it had four bedrooms upstairs, and it had a kitchen and a

separate living room downstairs. And, of course, old wooden stove and that kind of stuff. Cupboards—that was unheard of, and it was just wonderful. A big yard and, I think, all houses had sand, sand boxes in their yards.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, really?

**Norma Welsh:** We remember playing with the sand. And all the men were at the farm and the women just gossiped, and occasionally we would have a, I think it was once a month, they had a hall where we could have a party, and about once a month they'd have a square dance. My mom and a lot of the women around would bake and make soup, and we'd have a big feast up there. But it would just involve the people who already lived there. There was Blondeaus, there was Desjarlais, there was Morins, there was Kellys, and I think there was about three families of Blondeaus up there. And who else? Did I say Desjarlais? There was two families of Desjarlais, too. Actually, the one family had about, the lady there had kids from a Blondeau, and then her husband passed away and she married a Desjarlais, so that's Mary Louise.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, yes.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, who else was up there? Sarah Blondeau.

**Joe Welsh:** Sarah Louis.

**Norma Welsh:** Sarah Louis and John Morin and his wife were the next ones. Mary Louise was the one, next one. Auntie Clara was there. I think they build a couple houses after we left there, but Maurice Blondeau, [?] dad, lived up by the barn where all this, all the activity was. They lived up in the, what was called the main house. And we had a baseball diamond, and what else? Well, like, I say, once a month, I believe it was, they would have a party—square dancing and jigging and every, all families would take part, but Mom and her and, and the women made the meals, baked the cakes and bannock and all

that kind of stuff. We would, some of us, my cousin and I were two of the people that had to milk cows every morning. I started that when I was eight years old. We'd go up and milk the cows and we'd gather the eggs and, well, we weren't the only ones milking. There'd be several children, our age group, anywhere from eight to fifteen, whoever could get there in the morning to milk the cows. That before we went to school, we had to do all that. Then we'd gather the eggs and we would be required to go and help clean the blinds, you know, that kind of thing. Horse, barn, and the cattle, and there would, be once a year, butchering, couple of cows and pigs. It would be enough to feed all the families that were up there at the time, and all meat would be cured because certainly nobody had fridges, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Norma Welsh:** We had root cellars, though. And every summer we would get these big blocks of ice. Actually, my dad worked on the, on the lake, making these big blocks of ice and delivering them to families so that they can put them in the root cellars, and then they were covered with, what is it they were...

**Joe Welsh:** Sawdust.

**Norma Welsh:** Sawdust, yeah. The ice was covered with sawdust and, and they would last for the summer usually.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Really? How big a chunk would it have been?

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, big, huge chunk.

**Joe Welsh:** He [?], they used to have ice haulers into the, into the '60s in, well, I know in, in P.A. they used to have ice wagons, but did they have them in Lebret too?

**6:11:25 Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and they would deliver the ice up the farm once a year, and they would have baseball games. You know, those kinds of outdoor activities and all the kids would, excuse me, in the community would get together, and we do have other games as well. Like, we'd play tag and red rover red rover and all those kinds of games. We used to have one called [?] de marmot.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Tell us about that.

**Norma Welsh:** Run around in a circle, and, and you'd stop behind somebody, but that person isn't supposed to know you stopped behind them, and they have to have their eyes closed, and, and they have to guess where you stopped, and it was such a fun game. Well, we made up most of our own games anyway.

**Joe Welsh:** What was that marmot, is that a weasel or a...

**Norma Welsh:** A marmot is some kind of animal.

**Joe Welsh:** A mink or a weasel or something, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** But what we call them, [?] de marmot, was an old cast iron pot, soup pot. So I don't know where the name of that game came from, but we would play that and drop the stick. And in wintertime we would make angels in the snow and go sliding, like we'd come off the Métis Farm and of course there was all kinds of hills there, so we would have big sliding parties and stuff, and it was, I don't know, just a wonderful time of my life, I thought, anyway. And just visiting, you know, women getting together and visiting. They'd make a lot of embroidering of tea towels and pillow slips and table cloths and that kind of thing. And, of course, the kids, once a year it was, wasn't it, they'd have a little circus. They'd have rides and merry-go-

round of some sort, or, you know, different, like, a fair, you know, and I actually, I don't know where that came from, like, if it was, had to be have been paid by the government, I think. But so we used to have that once a year and, of course, there was our picking berries every year, but we did that all our lives, so that wasn't...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Nothing new.

**Joe Welsh:** ...anything new, but there would be oodles of people going out picking berries. We had two or three different managers up there. I remember Falloons for one that was managing whole area, and I guess I, I was twelve, I think, when we moved off there.

**6:14:34 Sherry Farrell Racette:** So you would have spent the better part of your childhood there?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, but it was a wonderful, wonderful up there 'cause we'd never lived in, in that kind of house. You know, we lived in shacks and, and log cabins and that kind of thing, and, like, a lot of our relatives were there, too. Some of us were related to everybody there, you know. Actually, my dad became ill and he, we had to leave in 1948 because he was no longer productive.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, so he couldn't work?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, he developed emphysema, and I believe a lot of it was working with the pigs 'cause he's the one that, that looked after the pigs, and he'd castrate them and butcher them, and you name it.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, he was also small, so they used him for, the threshing machine got bugged up, he'd be the one that'd have to go on the straw

walkers to unbung it. Or in those days, too, they, the grain sheaves, you had to mostly shovelling and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And so the dust...

**Joe Welsh:** ...grain dust and all that kind of stuff and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So they wouldn't have had any kind of...

**Joe Welsh:** No pension plan, no...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, you know, so if someone became disabled when they were living there then they had to leave.

**Norma Welsh:** And he was relatively young at that time. You had to do, you know, but and not only that, like, we took our horses and our cows with us. We had our own when we moved up there, and when we moved off we weren't allowed to take them.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Really?

**Norma Welsh:** So I, I don't know what happened there, like, I imagine, I don't know if the cows would have been too old by then, anyway, but 'cause...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** But the equivalent when you contribute.

**6:16:30 Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, but we left there with nothing, just our furniture and the clothes we had. But we had a lot of fun there with all kinds of relatives and friends. And there was one occasion, I think Ernie, my brother Ernie, was out in the field making stooks, or he was helping Dad do something, and he would have to take his lunch. I guess it was past

Charbonneau out that way where, where he was working on some farm. But, anyway, he used to take his lunch, and Billie would make the lunches for him. And one day he came home and he said, "Oh, what an awful lunch," he said. "My sandwiches tasted like wax paper, you know." So, lo and behold, the next day he went to work and he had wax paper sandwiches for lunch. "Don't complain." Yeah, she had made these wax paper sandwiches, but, needless to say, he didn't complain again. I think it's my oldest brother joined the army when we were living up at the farm, and my oldest sister, I think she was already out working. She must have only been about fifteen at the time.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, girls went out working. Well, everyone went working [?], too.

**Norma Welsh:** But, like, other than that, I can't remember anything specific 'cause...

**6:18:11 Sherry Farrell Racette:** You had said something about working with bees?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, my dad looked after the bees, as well, yeah...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So they had bees?

**Norma Welsh:** And he would come home with the honeycomb, you know, and we, that's how we got our honey.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That was your treat?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah. It was wonderful.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Where would the combs have been, like, where would the, where were the bees at then? Like, I'm just trying to visualize 'cause it's changed a lot down there now.

**Joe Welsh:** You mean a physical, oh.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, like, where would they have kept the hives?

**Joe Welsh:** Probably keep them near trees.

**Norma Welsh:** It was, you know, where the hall was. Do you remember that? It was behind there somewhere, there was some bushes along there, but I don't think that hall is there anymore, so it's hard to tell you where the houses were because they're in a totally different place than they were when we lived up there.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** There's two houses that are kinda close to the barn. Were they more, like, up here? So it'd be, yeah, it would be interesting to sort of map it, how it used to be, you know.

**Norma Welsh:** When you came up the hill from, from the road, there was a road going this way, and there was a slough on this side, and you crossed the road, and that's where all the, our house was the first one on your, on what would be the west side.

**Joe Welsh:** The west side, I think.

**Norma Welsh:** Our house was the first one, and there was five houses in a row, I believe, on this side, and then on the east side there was six or seven houses. And on, like, our side we used to go play in the slough. We'd play with salamanders and all that kind of stuff. We built a, a barge, like, you know, a raft, and we'd go on this raft in the slough and play with the, yikes.



You wouldn't see me with a salamander today, but we did those kinds of things. Oh lord. But I know I don't remember any, anything else in particular.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** But it was pretty self-sufficient, eh?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, absolutely, yeah.

**6:20:28 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Really self-sufficient?

**Norma Welsh:** And the only thing we'd have to go to town for was your basic, flour and sugar and, and that kind of thing, 'cause we had the eggs and the meat and we grew our own gardens. They'd be big garden for everyone, you know, where we'd grow potatoes and vegetables, and then everyone would just take what they needed.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So it was like a communal...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** ...a communal garden they would work on it together?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did people can, that kind of thing?

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, for sure, that was a big thing and, yeah, all kinds of things—vegetables, carrots, peas, corn. That's the only way you could preserve them most of the time, you know, 'cause some of those vegetables you couldn't keep in the root cellar either 'cause it wasn't cold enough. But, yeah, there was a lot of canning and, and Saskatoons, you know. There'd be a, once in a blue moon, we'd get a, I remember this very distinctly, we'd get

a, a box of apples, McIntosh apples. Oh my god, that was just like heaven getting that. Once a year, we'd get this box of McIntosh apples. Needless to say, it only lasted about two days. Don't ever believe that an apple a day will keep the doctor away 'cause we'd just eat, gorge ourselves on those things. Oh, I don't know if we were, they were bought for us, or if our parents bought them, I have no idea. I have no idea where, if they were getting paid for, like, the men were getting paid.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Right.

**Norma Welsh:** I don't, might have been twenty-five dollars a month or something like that. That way you'd be able to buy your flour and sugar and baking powder, whatever else you needed. But I really liked, liked the farm. It was a fun life.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** It would have been good for children.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, it was. And in the wintertime, like, they build us a big, what they heck did they call that thing, some kind of van.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, yeah, well...

**Norma Welsh:** What did we used to call it?

**Joe Welsh:** The cottage, well, it was our, like, a shack built on a wagon, had a little heater in there, a chimney and everything.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, I've seen pictures of those.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, well, we used to go to school in that. They would take, take us to school and pick us up everyday in the wintertime. That is actually there, was snow, yeah.

**6:23:00 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Was the school right at the farm or did you go to Lebret?

**Norma Welsh:** No, we went to the Lebret school, yeah. Yeah, and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Before, well, before you had moved to the farm where had you been living previously?

**Norma Welsh:** We had been living on somebody's farm, [?], was it? We always managed to live on a farm because Dad did a lot of, of farm work and the people would let us, you know, usually have a little shack of something that we could live on, and it was mostly road allowances, like, around Katepwa, and Katepwa and, like I said, some of it was in the summertime, would be on one of the reserves. If Dad would get the work, we, we'd go there. Pelican Point, all kinds of little places where we would be able to set up tents and that kind of thing. But that was, to me, it was a great life. It was, what was fun.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So you lived in tents quite a bit in the summer?

**Norma Welsh:** Hmm, like, for the summer months when the kids weren't in school, so we used to do that because, well, until we, until we moved to the farm, of course.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** What kind of tent was it? Is that those big white square ones?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, it was big, huge. We could, you know, with that kind of family, you have to have a big, a big tent, but. And then mom would write letters for people and she'd read letters for people up at the farm

because a lot of people couldn't read or write there, and somebody was always coming to her for something.

**6:24:50 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Where had your mom learned to read and write, do you know?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, I'm trying to figure that out. I don't know. Like, I know Dad was just, went until Grade Four and, and I'm sure Mom went further than that because she, she was smart, you know. And she knew how to, to explain letters to people, like, what they meant, the whole thing, and then she would write letters for them.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, Billie tells some stories about her writing letters for people whose sons and husbands went to, you know, the war in Europe, and how, and then they'd answer and she'd, she'd read them the, the answers.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So she'd know what's going on with everybody. Obviously that would have been important in a, in a community where literacy was, you know, not very many people were literate.

**Norma Welsh:** And they looked up to her for a lot of things, you know, just kind of a, a mentor I guess, like a lot of the women would come to her and she'd also deliver babies as well, you know. It was happy...

**Joe Welsh:** When she wasn't having her own.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, that's right. In between, you know, she'd be at somebody's bed by, plus do all her own work. I always think she was a magician. They always do a lot, eh?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, when you think of doing all that.

**Norma Welsh:** We had to chop wood and we'd have to go into the bushes and gather wood. We used to pick up all dead trees and you'd have to bring them home and saw them and chop them, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So you mostly take the dead fall.

**Norma Welsh:** Hmm.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That would keep the bush nice and clean too, eh?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, oh yeah. And there was a lot of it 'cause everybody did it. Now that was one thing we always did, no matter where we lived, you know—go out in bush and pick up old dead trees and, and chop it and saw it and the whole thing.

**6:27:04 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Where did you get your water when you were on the farm? Did you have pumps in the house or?

**Norma Welsh:** No.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** No.

**Norma Welsh:** There was, up at the farm by the barns and stuff, there was a couple of pumps you used to have to go up there and get it. Everybody would take pails and go up to there and get and, of course, the, there was a dam too not far from, from where we lived there, and we used to go there for water for washing clothes.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How would you wash clothes?

**Norma Welsh:** By hand, scrub board.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you have big, like, big tubs, that you would, to heat the water, did you have big pots?

**Norma Welsh:** We used to, Mom used to do it in those big canners.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay.

**Norma Welsh:** And also, you, we'd have big pails and that kind of thing. She'd heat, we'd heat that on the stove and, you know, you'd just keep adding to your water, kind of thing, and if it got cold you'd heat it up with some more water. But she boiled all her white clothing and starched it as well. So they starch shirts and everything in those days, you know, and it just had to be perfect. Well, and I, I, you know, I don't really know anything, remember anything really significant on the farm. Guess to us it was just another way of living.

**6:28:41 Sherry Farrell Racette:** So your house, was, was it two-storey?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, all the houses were the same and they were all two-storey. Had little steps going up to the front door, and little steps. There was two doors and one going out one side of the house and the other one going on the other side. And, of course, we had the outside toilets just close to the house, you know, and I remember we used to, to steal tobacco, wrap it up in brown paper, and go to the toilet to smoke.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That's a pretty harsh cigarette.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, it was horrible. And my Uncle Albert used to have to walk by our place to get to up to the barns and that, and he'd come by and he'd yell out, "Well, Marion, Marion, your toilet's on fire." And we all run outside. "Where's the fire?"

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Catch you guys smoking.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, it was quite fun and a good life.

**6:29:54 Sherry Farrell Racette:** When you left there, where did you go, where did the family go?

**Norma Welsh:** We went up the hill. We were, you familiar with the seminary in Lebret? I guess not, eh?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** No, no, no.

**Norma Welsh:** But did you know where it was located?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I think someone pointed it out to me. It's across from the...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, it's right across the lake from the church.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** So we just lived up the hill there behind the seminary, that's where we moved. And then when we moved there, there was one little log house shack, one room. And did we move in the summertime? Yeah, because my dad and a bunch of friends of his built another one right attached to the one that was already there. Taped up this other little log cabin and, and that's where we lived. The one cabin was filled with beds and the other one was the kitchen, the kitchen table, and Dad used to build benches, like, you know, you have to have big long benches and a table pretty long.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So it'd be, like, tables would be rectangular and then all these benches on either side?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, hmmm.

**[No audio]**

**6:32:44 Sherry Farrell Racette:** So you were telling us about the log house that you moved into.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, like, we built another one onto, I should say we, one was filled with beds, the other one was the stove and the table and chairs. And we had those old fashioned cupboards, you know, which to me are, oh, I wish I had one now there 'cause Maria has one.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, which kind, those...

**Norma Welsh:** Just little cupboards, like they're built, like, what do you call that? We used to have a name for them.

**Joe Welsh:** That blue one at her place.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right, hoosier? Does it have a place for flour and all that?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, oh, yeah, all of those, yeah. I want them, too. Yeah, and then us kids used to walk to school from there. In the summertime, we'd have to go around the lake; in the wintertime, we went across the lake. But we had a good life there, as well. Like, we were a very close family. And then, of course, Dad had to go and find work, but there was always farmers around that would hire him because he was very good at what he did. And we fished and snared rabbits and picked berries, all that kind of thing. Grew our own gardens and made our own games, like I said.



**6:34:20 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you play marbles or any of those things?

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, for sure, yeah, marbles. We had chickens there, my mom had chickens. She would get these little chicks, you know, and in the wintertime they'd have to live in the house, but, like I said, they were, they were in cages, eh? So we had to live with the chickens and somebody had to keep the fire going all night, so Mom and Dad took care of that because chickens have to be kept warm. And this is story now, I, I can't remember it, but when we went to kill the chickens for food, Billie always tells me that I used to kill the chickens and I would get the axe and cut their heads off. But she said every time I brought the axe down I would close my eyes. And forever and a day they've been teasing me about this. But I don't remember closing my eyes to kill chickens.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Do you remember killing chickens?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I do, and they'd be hopping all over the place, you know, and their heads would be sitting down here, eh, blood flying everywhere. Yeah, I used to kill the chickens. Chop the wood, she said. I chopped wood with my, my eyes closed, too, and she's always said, "Don't ever let Norma kill your chickens." Oh, what happened was my cousin would hold it, hold the chicken down for me, and I would have to chop their head off. Oh, lord, but anyway that was quite fun.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I guess.

**Norma Welsh:** Of course, that was after my mother died, like, we still had chickens when she died, and after that we never did get any more.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That was a lot of work, I guess, eh, that was probably her, her project.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yes it was.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Her undertaking.

**6:36:22 Norma Welsh:** And then, like, just I don't know things sort of fell apart. My dad ended up in the hospital, he was so shook up that he had to go to the hospital to have treatment. And then we moved, after that we moved to Fort Qu'Appelle. Wasn't it, was that before Dad went into the hospital?

**Joe Welsh:** I think it was around the same time. It was '52, fall of '52.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, we moved to Fort Qu'Appelle, and it was there we had a bit of a problem with Social Services and, like, 'cause Pauline and I were looking after the kids at that time, and we asked if they could give us some money for ourselves, you know. 'Cause I think Mom was, not Mom but, we had what they called mother's allowance at that time and, of course, then after Mom died, Dad got it and it was all the money we had. And so we asked if we could get more money, and what did they ask us if we were still virgins?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Jeez.

**Norma Welsh:** And, you know, why couldn't we look after our siblings for nothing, like, I turn around, I told them to get the hell out of the house, I was so mad. I just said, "You get the hell out of here," I said. "We'll make it without you." And we did. Don't ask me how, how that happened, but it was shortly after that the kids went to the orphanage. And that was a pretty sad part, too. And then I, then I just came to Regina. I stayed with my cousin for awhile.

**6:38:15 Sherry Farrell Racette:** That must have been a big change. You know, you think then 'cause you guys pretty much lived out in the country, you know, pretty natural life.

**Norma Welsh:** I flipped when I saw my first flush toilet. I thought, "Oh my god, what is this?"

**Joe Welsh:** [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, power, electric lights, you know. Oh god, that was something.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** It was all new?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah. Pay rent, what's that, you know?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Pay for water.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, everything.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Pay for water. I thought that would be, like, paying for air, you know, like the idea that you'd done for water.

**Norma Welsh:** Or even when we lived in Regina, the area I was living in, you'd still have to go walk a couple blocks to get water.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh really?

**Joe Welsh:** That's the north annex.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Yes.

**Norma Welsh:** 'Cause they had water pumps.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, they didn't have cement sidewalks there till, you know, till, hell, '71, '70.

**Norma Welsh:** I was long gone by then, yeah. But we did have power, but that was the only thing.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, these have a board, a board sidewalk that went from Sears on 4<sup>th</sup> and Broad. But you said a board sidewalk into what they call the north annex, and they didn't have a cement sidewalk 'till, like, I think '69 or '70, when they got a cement sidewalk. And plumbing, too, so I could do her plumbing and, and...

**Norma Welsh:** It was certainly new to me, and we had a, what we had an oil heater in our suite. This is after I got married. We had this oil heater in our suite, and, and one day I guess the pilot light went out. And I never heard of such thing as a pilot light, but anyway my husband at the time said, "Well, why don't you go light it?" So I was lighting matches and throwing them in the oil tank.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Jeez. You're lucky you didn't kill [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, the oil kept burning up, you know, and I think, "How the heck do I light this anyway?" So he, he didn't realize I didn't know anything about oil stoves or how to light them, but I learned fast after that.

**6:40:33 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, I guess. One of the things that I was gonna ask is growing up in the Lebret area, were there, like, in a lot of Métis communities you see a lot of, like, really good athletes. Do you

remember, were there some good athletes that came out of the valley that come to mind? Like men and women?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, I never knew, but, but there, there's stories about, oh, I forget his name the, the, a big left-hand pitcher, he's an Indian guy, but he, he was, he was scouted by the New York Yankees. Okay, this is according to a couple, like, Cliff LaRocque is one of them, and then he went to the Yankee training camp in, in the early fifties. And at that time the Yankees had a couple old pitchers that they owned, Allie Reynolds and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Allie Reynolds was an Indian.

**Joe Welsh:** Eh?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I think...

**Joe Welsh:** He was part Indian, yeah, and then there was a couple more, well, the, Mickey Mantle there's supposedly part Cherokee and stuff like that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, I didn't know that.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right, but, oh, I just had it, but this guy apparently had the talent and to be covered by a Major League baseball team, but he, according to, you know, Cliff and these other guys that I've spoken to about him, he didn't cut it because, you know, there, there's only black players, and then into the Major League baseball, you know. And I, '47 or '48, Jackie Robinson and the element of racism was still there, plus he, you know, on from Le Bret to New York is a, a hell of a big deal.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Pretty big jump...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, and he came back, but these guys say that had he, had he, you know, been able to, you know, to take being away from and all that kind of stuff, he probably could have made the Major League baseball. Damn, their name just slipped from my, my mind again. But, but the, well, the Indian School had a good, good hockey team. They had always good ball teams, but I remember [?] used to be the coach, used to coach the, the hockey team plus the baseball team. And they were combination of boys from Fort Qu'Appelle and Lebret, and I think they called them, the name I remember is the Fort Qu'Appelle Sioux Indians for some reason, the, the, the name of their baseball team and the hockey team, but, like, the...

**Norma Welsh:** I don't remember any of that...

**6:43:18 Joe Welsh:** And, and, and there were people around there who, well, I guess there wasn't the opportunity for a lot of them guys. But, but they say that there were few, had they, you know, had the same opportunity as one of the white kids, they could, could've made it into the NHL.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, there must have been a lot of good hockey players, almost all Métis communities got real good hockey players, ball players.

**Joe Welsh:** That was just it, you know, when they weren't working, they were fooling around playing ball or other things, you know. That, but, but the, the system, such as it was, was from, you know, built for them, well, I don't know the, the, the, the Norton boys, you know, they're from up north, but, you know, guys like Penny and that, there's, they had the opportunity and the training. I know Penny Norton could have made the NHL and he could have been tougher than John Ferguson.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yep.

**Joe Welsh:** You know, meanwhile he was.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** No question.

**Joe Welsh:** But, no, it was even that late into, you know, I don't know how old Penny was, must be ten years younger than I am at the [?]. In the '70s, he would have been old enough to for the system, but it wasn't there for guys like that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, well, it still isn't actually.

**Joe Welsh:** It still isn't, but you gotta [?] the tough time [?] some of them Ted Nolan, all about the, when he got in. Look at little Jordan Tootoo there. Man, every time he gets on the ice, there's five guys after him. But he's taking care of himself, the little bugger. But, but, yeah. Opie, Obie...

**Norma Welsh:** Opie?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, I used to know Obies.

**Joe Welsh:** That was that pitcher. But the stories about him are legendary, you know. That, you know, left-handed pitcher has some mystique to them anyway, but, you know, they, and when you, you hear about this guy's curveball, you know, depending on who's telling the story, it breaks anywhere from five feet to fifteen feet, you know. Yeah, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, swerves more depending on who tells the story?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, Art Obie.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, Art Obie...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, that was name of the guy. He was from, I think, Little Black Bear, around that place, but, yeah, but that guy apparently was the best around there.

**6:45:33 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did they have cross-country races in, in the valley at all? I know some places they have long distance running.

**Norma Welsh:** We used to have what we called track and field day where we'd compete against other schools. This is when we were going to school. We'd compete against other schools for broad jump, high jump, ball throw, races of all kinds. Relay races, baseball games, you know, stuff like that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How did Lebret do?

**Norma Welsh:** We did very well. I won the, the softball throw about three years in a row.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, is that right?

**Norma Welsh:** Hmmm.

**Joe Welsh:** It must have been...

**Norma Welsh:** I wasn't a baseball player.

**Joe Welsh:** Milking all them cows, eh?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, must have been.



**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Forearms, all that forearm.

**Norma Welsh:** But we're all, like, the whole family were very athletic. Like, we were all good in all those things, but, of course, I think after Mom died, you know, it just, everything just fell apart. None of us wanted to do anything, so we didn't. I thought, I think was it [?] did very well in hockey, too. At the orphanage?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, yeah, all of us, well, little Jerry in particular, but, yeah. Well, it wasn't fun, like, you guys had, there was a big guy with a hockey stick ready to clod you over the head if you made a mistake there, so, but if you made the hockey team you got extra bread.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Jeez, motivation.

**Joe Welsh:** Damn rights.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, was that where Jimmy Nielson...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, Jimmy Nielson was, was there.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** One of the guys trying to get an extra piece of bread?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, when we got there, he, I forget, he must have been thirteen or fourteen, but he was, he played for our team. You know, he'd score fifteen, sixteen, seventeen goals a game, and then he, when he went to high school, he made the Prince Albert Nickels. It was a junior team, but, you know, he was, he was a hero. For some reason Jimmy took a liking to my older brother, Buzz, and then our older sister, Madeline. And, you know, there was a hierarchy, and Buzz was not with the little guys, and he wasn't with the big guys yet, so the big guys were picking on him. So, you know,

Jimmy would pick up his fights for him, but he'd say, "Okay, you go over there. There's two of you, you go over there, and Buzz, you fight this guy." So Buzz would fight and beat him up and he'd say, "Okay, now it's your turn," and the guy wouldn't want to have nothing to do with Buzz 'cause he, Jimmy, had the right idea that... But we, Jimmy was a hero, you know, to all of us. And he never took advantage of his, his size or, or, you know, even though he got more extra bread than we did. Never begrudged him that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Those seventeen goals?

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, yeah, with those seventeen goals, and then he played for the Prince Albert Nickels and, and I remember the last year, you know, they had a lousy team, you know. I don't know, but Jimmy, Jimmy carried that team, and I think he got picked up, I forget what year it was, he got picked up the Regina Pats, played in the Memorial Cup, must have been '60 or '61 maybe. Anyway, but he got picked up by the Pats too. They lost the Memorial Cup, but he was that good and then the next they heard of him two years later he was wearing number 15 for the New York Rangers, and he was about a foot taller than everybody else. That's why we were proud, holy cripes.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, I bet, hey. Yeah,

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Something like that really has a powerful impact, doesn't it?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Makes good, see somebody up there like yourself. One of the things I wanted to ask you is, like, you had said that you stoked. I don't know how to say it right.

**6:49:49 Norma Welsh:** Yeah, stoked.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Do you know how still, do you think you could...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, I could do it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** 'Cause there's quite an art form to that, isn't there?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, but I can still do it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How do you do it, do you...?

**Norma Welsh:** You know you stack up the, the sheaves of wheat, whatever [?], although I don't know what you call them, I'm not a farmer, but, they are sheaves? But you'd, you'd stack, like, it's, like, building a tipi.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Norma Welsh:** You know, that's how you'd stack them. Five or six of them in each, in each stack, but it was quite fun. I used to like that, but there was a lot of mice [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, between mice and lizards, man, you had it pretty rough.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** We used to [?], you have to tell the rat story, what's the rat story?

**6:50:44 Norma Welsh:** Oh, that's when we were living up in the hill there.

**Joe Welsh:** Remember the rats, like, you know, like Norma here, one of the strongest people I know, she's, she's afraid of worms, you know. She'd catch a big five foot jackfish like that and stick her hand in it's mouth and not be afraid. Pick up a little worm and she start squirming.

**Norma Welsh:** Did you have to tell them that?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, it's related, relates to the little house on the road allowance. We had rats and Dad used to set traps and stuff like that. And we'd wake up in the middle of the night, we'd hear *bap* and that rat would go *eeeeee*, and then we'd all run to the trap and the rat, he'd be going like that, and they had to take it out of the trap and *whack*. Well, he'd wise up, too. Well, we used to, you know, fool around with the traps and not, see, you know, put your finger in and see if you could...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** New toy.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, but they used to tell us stories about how, how, talk about scaring kids, you know, we're gonna rub rat poison on your face because we don't want to come, we don't, to get the rats to come in and chew your eyes out.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Who would do that? Your loving sisters?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, I, like, I remember Billie saying that she woke up and one was licking her nose. So, you know, if they had poison on them, then they'd climb up on your face or anything, that could be serious, you know. It was a good way to scare them anyway.

**Joe Welsh:** It worked.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Staying in bed.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** But it wasn't every year we had them either. It was just once in a while.

**Joe Welsh:** What I remember is there, there was, I don't know, the rat police or whatever they're called would come around.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** The rat police?

**Joe Welsh:** But there was a big movement on, you know, you know, to get the, rid the country of, or the rural area of rats, and so they, I could use poison and their idea was when you trap a rat, you just kill him, you know, but when you poison a rat, he goes into his home and he dies there. You know, and all the rats see this one dead rat, they say, "Oh, we better get the hell out of here, they're starting to poison us." So they move some place else [?], yeah. That's a pretty smart idea.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, you must be building smart rats. You had really smart rats in the valley, eh?

**Joe Welsh:** They're [?], that was the rationale. How do you think Alberta got rid of all them rats? They come over here [?], yeah. But that's, there's my rat story there, rat's gonna come eat your eyes out if you don't behave. It's gone from girls who were raised on Rou Garou stories and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Just transferred that into a modern...

**6:53:46 Norma Welsh:** But, you know, you threw your slop down the hill, like, you know, which wasn't far from the house kind of thing, and the toilet

was just at the bottom there, and your old Eaton's catalogue and was such a wonderful thing to use.

**Joe Welsh:** And use and use.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I was gonna ask you if you had the Eaton's catalogue in the outhouse.

**Joe Welsh:** [?] McLeod's hardware store?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I think it was...

**Joe Welsh:** McLeod's.

**Norma Welsh:** They were softer.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh god, and you'd be in hell if you used an ivy, the poison ivy leaf. We used to have poison ivy all the time. In fact, I still do when I go picking. But we'd be covered with that stuff, oh, that horrible thing.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did they have anything that they could put on for that or was it just calamine, same as...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, we just used calamine.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, don't you use white shoe polish?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, now I use, I can use white shoe polish.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** On poison ivy?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, because you, you put it on and then it kills the, the growth, eh? And because, I can't remember, when I went to Toronto the first time, and I had this shoe polish on. And because at the time somebody told me it, if poison ivy bleeds, you'd get a, it spreads. But I guess that's just a myth, it doesn't spread. But anyway, it does kill the growth of it, like, or whatever from spreading.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you get on the plane in Toronto covered with white shoe polish?

**Norma Welsh:** Oh god, but other than that it was calamine lotion. We used to get itch from swimming in the lake, at Lebret there. Oh, it was horrible stuff to get, but we had calamine lotion for that. Measles, you name it, whatever.

**6:55:52 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you use Sunlight soap for anything?

**Norma Welsh:** I used to use it to wash my hair. We used to after Mom died. That's all we ever bought was Sunlight soap and I still do. But, yeah, we used it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** We used to use Sunlight soap for poison ivy.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, did you?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Sunlight soap for everything. There's people up in northern Manitoba who use Sunlight soap for tanning hides. There's nothing you can't do with Sunlight soap. I've been looking for those bars ever since. We used to always keep them, like, my mom for years always had these bars of Sunlight soap in the kitchen even if she didn't use them.

**Norma Welsh:** I never knew that. We used to use Lifebuoy, that was one of the...

**Joe Welsh:** Lifebuoy, I remember that, and that was the stuff the dishes used to come in.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, Fab or something like that, wasn't it? I can't remember. There was a soap that used, used to have a dish in it...

**Joe Welsh:** A cup and saucer.

**Norma Welsh:** Or cup and saucer or both, you know, and I think it was Fab or something like that.

**Joe Welsh:** And then was there a brand that used to get towels and nuggets and things like that.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I can't remember the name of that anymore. We used to get those kinds of things in soap.

**6:57:08 Sherry Farrell Racette:** I know one of the things that I was gonna ask you is that if you had heard any ghost stories when you were growing up in the valley. You know, sometimes there's, like, a, an area that's sort of haunted or strange sounds or that kind of thing, like, sometimes that...

**Joe Welsh:** Well, then, okay here again I remember, but when I was two, when they moved off the road allowance, coming out of the farm and on to the road allowance, but I, maybe around four or five, sort of be aware of some things. And where I later found out was they called it Half-breed telephone system on a cold crisp night, you know, sound carries further, and a couple of times there that you could hear people talking and it come from the other side of the valley, and again we'll hide. I think it was another scare



tactic. There, you know, come the bogeyman is coming to get, yeah, and they'd go out there, "Hey bogeyman," and somebody across the valley would say, "What?" And scare the hell out of us. And that would work.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So that was the Half-breed telegraph on a cold night, you could talk to each other on opposite sides of the valley?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, well, so they say.

**Norma Welsh:** I don't remember ghost stories. There was a lot of bogeyman stories, you know, that kind of thing.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Any haunted houses or sort of areas that were considered to be haunted?

**Norma Welsh:** No, I don't remember. I know one of my aunts used to see things all the time. Like, she was telling us when she was up at our house couple of days before Mom died, and she said she saw a ring around mom's head, a light, like some, something like a halo. It wasn't a halo, but something like that.

**Joe Welsh:** [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Auntie Mary, she used to do that all the time, like, if somebody would die, she would always have seen something...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** A sign?

**Norma Welsh:** A sign that would, you know, to her it meant that person was gonna die, you know. She saw her mother and, like, all kinds of people up at the Métis Farm that, you know, eventually died and she always saw them. Her mother was rocking in a rocking chair and, like, well that's a ghost

story, it's a spooky one anyway. She used to tell us that and scare the life out of you.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Which one was that?

**Norma Welsh:** Auntie Mary. She was my dad's sister.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay.

**Norma Welsh:** And she was a Desjarlais, but she's all, was always seeing things, but, and anything we'd see, like, if you couldn't see distinctly what it was to us was something scary as heck, you know. I remember my, oh, my brother had, not the oldest one, Ernie, when he was a mischief in the family. Mom and Dad and, oh, I several families, the parents went downtown this one night for something or other. I can't remember, might have been a fowl supper or something like that. But anyway, it was dusk, like, and Ernie's looking down the road, and there's a hill as, as you go down this road to go to town, and there's trees all over, eh, but this one thing stood out and it was black. You could see it was something tall and black. Well, he had every kid in that Métis Farm thinking that was a ghost or something, some omen of some kind, and everybody was over at our house, and every one of us were just scared crapless. And, of course, to me, the longer you look at something, you'll see it, it move, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right, if you stare at it long enough.

**Norma Welsh:** If you stare at it long enough, it will move and, of course, lot of kids didn't know that at that the time, and he just had, when we stayed at the window, and up till Mom and Dad got home 'cause we were scared to, to go to bed 'cause this thing was gonna come after us. So, the next day Mom shows us what it was. It was a big tree standing right there where that ghost

was or whatever it was. It was a tree. But he used to do those kinds of things. He was kind of a nutcase. But as far as ghost stories, but I have...

**[No Audio]**

**2:56:15 Sherry Farrell Racette:** ...so sometimes people would...

**Joe Welsh:** Apparitions.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Apparitions?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, now I, I tried to find out who they were. I couldn't get names and I did this, so sometimes third and fourth-hand information, it wasn't, it wasn't...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Joe Welsh:** It wasn't, like, family stories or anything, like, that it was, well, community stories and I, but there are, and particularly during Lent again or during a festive season, like, Christmas or something, like, that people would swear, "Okay, this woman saw the Virgin Mary," and it just have an apparition like that, implications of sainthood or, or there's a message, or, and it wasn't like at Lourdes or at Fatima there where the Virgin Mary appeared to those children and spoke and or anything like that. It was just an apparition.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** People would see.

**Joe Welsh:** That they would see, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And it would most often sort of be associated with at times, with, link to spirituality. Other people would be people who were religious, would be 'cause people prayed quite a bit.

**Joe Welsh:** Holy Moses.

**Norma Welsh:** There was always somebody who saw a light or lights in the graveyard.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh really?

**Norma Welsh:** Like, you know, that's the only kind of thing I can remember regarding spooks, if you want to call it that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** But there was, there was that sort of an awareness of something, I don't know, sort of presence.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, you'd see the light up on the hill, like, where the, the shrine is, you know, and people would think, oh, they'd always see ...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, well, even before the big neon cross there, there, yeah, people would see light up there.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, really? So that was very common that people would, would see the light up there by the big cross?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, was there always a big, or was it the wooden cross up there? That neon cross has been, I don't know, must be twenty, twenty-five years now it's been there, but before that...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** People would see...

**Joe Welsh:** ...would swear that there was a light source or a spiritual source energy coming from the top there. Now the, the stations of the cross, that there were thirteen stations in the ritual that we went through on, on Good Friday. Those were thirteen things that happened to Jesus on the way to, on the way to his crucifixion on [?]. And each one of the cross represents one of the incidents. He fell three times, I don't know what stations those would be, and then one he let the women of Jerusalem, and one of them, Saint Veronica, wiped his face, and you heard the story about the Shroud of Turin.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, that was supposed to be...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, the cloth.

**Joe Welsh:** ...the, the cloth and the image on that cloth was supposed to have come from that incident. So there's all kinds of incidents like that in, in connected to, to the crucifixion of Jesus, so the, who knows what, I know what things went through my mind and, you know, me, I have an imagination that, that's activated by fear or awe or. You know, sometimes you see things that aren't really there, so, but I wouldn't dispute that people saw something up there, you know, that, I mean that are, are possible as far as I'm concerned. I haven't had an experience like that, but I wish I would have.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** [?] people have those experiences [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right.

**2:59:54 Norma Welsh:** Well, they're so religious, you know, and, and religion was pounded into your head every day, if not at school at church, you know. And the people just believed everything the priest said, and, and

there was fear, it was fear. And I believe they saw things out of fear, you know, because I told you I was scared half my life, you know, because of the things they were told. And I, you know, Mom used to sprinkle holy water, too, when there were storms, thunder and lightning, cover the windows, cover the mirrors. Sprinkle holy water.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, and there's another thing that, that you mentioned after, the fear of thunder and lightning and all that. I, I was afraid for, for the longest time until the, the, I met that old guy from Standing Buffalo who told me a Rou Garou, about the Indian Rou Garou guy. And he, I guess there was something in, I don't know if it's particular to the Sioux culture or in Cree, but the thunder and lightning in the rain is a kind of a spiritual rejuvenation where the Earth takes care of itself. It cleans itself and the lightning replenishes the air and makes that pure, and the rain washes the Earth, and the thunder is, well, the grandfather coming to, to see that things are okay.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Checking on...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, the support type of thing, so after I heard that...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Here comes the super [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, then, and then after that, I think whenever there was a, any rainstorm or a thunderstorm, I went driving in it and follow storm for hundreds of miles sometimes. And just now, I just stop to look, you know, the stuff crashing and me, me, you know, up north, in the middle of, oh, just an ugly, well, it was beautiful as far as I'm concerned, but there was thunder, lightning, and we were driving, I think, north of [?] there on the Number One Highway, there, all of a sudden this big ball, ball of lightning ...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, you seen it?

**Joe Welsh:** ...

come crashing, great, well, I saw it in the rear view mirror, and come crashing back to the car, well, across the highway, that's the only time I ever seen it. And I had heard about it, and, man, did I ever feel good and people in the car, oh, man there I was, the only one who wasn't afraid for...

**Norma Welsh:** I was practically [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Oh yeah, talk about squealing.

**Norma Welsh:** I keep screaming and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How big was it?

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, it had to be about that, well, coulda been bigger or smaller, I don't know, but, but it just happened so fast, and then I don't know why I was I looking in the rear view mirror, but I saw it *bam* [?], just disappear.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I think if you're lucky, that's maybe something you see once in your life. It's not very common.

**Joe Welsh:** Yes, yes, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Like, I've never seen it. My mom told me that, though. She says she remembers, sees lightning rolling, like a ball of lightning rolling during a storm.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I've heard of those things, but I, I didn't actually see the ball, but I saw the light, you know.

**Joe Welsh:** And the crash was just tremendous, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And you [?]. So where was that?

**Joe Welsh:** It was on that, well, we were going, we took off at night, we were going north fishing, and it was [?] and what is next big town, Watson. It was [?] Watson and [?], and the prairie is more flat and bald there than it is here, and, well, that's where, as far as I'm concerned the best storms are because you don't miss anything.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Nothing to interfere.

**Joe Welsh:** Nothing to interfere, yeah, yeah. And just it just came out of wherever it came from and I saw it. And like I said that's the only time I've ever, ever, ever seen it, and I've already mentioned that, I haven't only told a few other people, but over the years, that, that's what they saw, they've seen ball of lightning. Four people and I'm one of them.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And you've heard it.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and I missed it because I had my eyes closed.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, it is loud, eh.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, but, but the story the old man said how he made it a, a nice natural occurrence and the reason for it, that, that, you know, the Earth, nature takes care of itself, and this is one way of doing it that's, that's nice, though. Ever since then, then I, it was a, I forget what year, in the '80s there was a tornado in Edmonton.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, yes.

**Joe Welsh:** And we left and we didn't, we caught the storm and the lightning, and I was up at the [?], umpiring of all things in a baseball



tournament, and we saw the, we saw the storm coming. And I got in my car and I followed it all the way over to where the 55 Hwy that goes to...

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, I don't even know...

**Joe Welsh:** ...and then down to the valley of Lebret, up there to Katepwa all the way, and I ended up at Moosimin about three o'clock in the morning, out of gas.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** You followed it?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, I followed it, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** My mom would like you to tell her about this because she [?], she's a well, like, what my mom did, 'cause she had a lot of the same experiences that you did, but she was sort of, like, she didn't want me to be afraid of things, so she kind of raised me different because she didn't want me to be afraid of things. So she, I used to be afraid of storms, and she used to, you know, she likes, she likes to watch, she's fascinated with them now.

**3:5:55 Norma Welsh:** Oh, I'm not, but my kids, they all, all my kids, most of them are born in B.C., so we never stop...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, yeah, they just in a different environment.

**Norma Welsh:** ...lightning in the [?], yeah, stuff, like, that eh. When we came, moved back to Regina, it didn't bother them one bit. They thought it was just far out, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** [?]. Like, when you were growing up in the valley, like, seems to me, like, when I moved into that area I, like, never had to

worry about tornados and stuff like that. Like, where I grew up, and, like, when you were growing up in the valley, do you remember there being, like, big wicked storms and tornados, is that...

**Norma Welsh:** Electrical storms and...

**Joe Welsh:** ...do you guys remember you and Billie and Frank talked about the, the, the big tornado...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** ...that was in the, when you was, maybe before I was born, but...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and it, but it, it damaged a bunch of stuff at the church. That's where it, the centre of it was, and it was, well, I guess literally turned people over in their graves and stuff like that, so. But Dad was talking about it [?]. [?] ...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** ... [?] it went right in the graveyard. Funny how people would, like, you could see that was, like, bad luck and stuff or...

**Joe Welsh:** I bet.

**Norma Welsh:** I, I don't know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Think it had a spiritual [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, some of them of probably did, yeah, but that was the way in the '30s sometimes, so, but that's the only, like, that type of storm, but there were, there were a lot of electrical storms. And big, you know, rain storms, thunder, lightning, and 99% of time we were under the beds. I hate

to say that, but we were. But, yeah, there were lot of snow in the wintertime, tons of snow. There were times we had to dig ourselves out of our little log cabin, you know, because the doors would be just covered with snow, but it was fun. Like, none of us ever thought that was a disaster or anything. We thought it was great fun.

**3:08:07 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, I know a blizzard was a good time when you're a kid, eh?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, and it was fun, but I guess we have storms just like anybody else did.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did, did you, did you have snowshoes? Did your family use snowshoes or did anyone make snowshoes?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, Dad made skis for us and he made sleighs, but we never had snowshoes. We just used to, didn't matter how deep the snow was, we'd all find our way to school. Roads would be all snowed in, everything, and we still walked to school everyday. And it didn't matter how cold it was. I can't ever remember missing school because of cold. You know, we just walked. We always had somebody's old hand-me-down boots and stuff like that. We used to wear the big old rubber boots and they had a lining inside of them. They used to call them German socks for some reason, I remember that. But that's what we wore and that, like I say, was mostly hand-me-down, what we wore. I can't even remember my first new pair of shoes or my first new outfit of any, any kind.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, it was the times, eh?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, we all had them.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you wrap your feet?

**Norma Welsh:** No.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you have big fat socks on?

**Norma Welsh:** We had these big socks, yeah, like I think you can still buy them. They're big grey socks, you know, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** With the red.

**Joe Welsh:** Weren't there a pair moccasins that you got through the Hudson's Bay Company or something, like, they weren't...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, with the liners?

**Joe Welsh:** With the liners, yeah, and, and wrapped around.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I know some people have those, but I don't ever remember having anything like that, no. But some people did have them, yeah.

**3:09: 57 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did people still use dogs to pull sleighs when you were a kid, or had they quit that?

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, yeah, yeah, that was, that was fun. My Grandpa St. Pierre had a dog and it used to pull a sleigh. Like I said, he wasn't really my grandpa, but he was, we always called him mooshum St. Pierre. But what's his dog's name? Brownie or something?

**Joe Welsh:** I don't remember.

**Norma Welsh:** A big brown dog, and he used to hitch it up, and, and lots of other people did, too, you know. Anybody with a big dog would...

**Joe Welsh:** Just a dog not a team, but, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** No, it was just one single dog on a sleigh, but that was quite fun, too, 'cause he'd come up and give us rides and, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I wonder if people quit doing that because you would have used that, so I mean Norbert Welsh talks about the dog that they had and [?] all out and the people were still using dogs, like, in the '30s and the '40s. How long would they still have been using the dogs?

**Norma Welsh:** I don't know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I don't remember anyone using dogs when I was a kid.

**Norma Welsh:** For sure up until probably about the early '40s.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And what kind of sleighs were they? Did they have sides or was it like a...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, some had sides and some didn't. Like it depended on, most people made their own sleighs at that time, yeah, so it depended. If you wanted an elaborate one you could put sides on it, you know, and paint it and whole thing, but lots of people just had straight sleighs with the runners.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay, so did they all have runners just about, or?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, basically all of them, but, and I'm not quite sure when that stopped.

**3:11:51 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did they ever decorate them up?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I saw that, decorating. But, you know, not everybody had one, there were a few people who did.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How did they decorate them?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, with colourful ribbons and bows and stuff like that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I can just see it. Can't you see it?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I just...

**Norma Welsh:** Bells, you know, with little [?], but, yeah, it was quite, quite nice to see.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I guess all of that little extra stuff would cost money and it would depend on what the people...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, whoever could afford it, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** In case you have any...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right [?], eat the dog.

**3:12:35 Sherry Farrell Racette:** You were saying that you, eat the dog, jeez. You were saying yesterday that, you know, you used to fight over the

rabbit head. Did, did you ever play any games with the rabbit head? Like, 'cause people were saying they would spin the rabbit head and just do different things.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, really?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** No, we used to, I talk about this, my kids better not be around because they just gag, you know, and we used to fight over who'd get the rabbit head because we'd eat the eyes and the brain and then, and the tongue and everything, you know. We would just eat it clean and there'd just be the skeleton.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, I think a lot of people used to, that sometimes they used to use it to spin it [?]. Who's gonna do the dishes, like, stuff like that, just use it like a little fortune telling thing kind of.

**Norma Welsh:** No, we never did that. We never argued about who was gonna do the dishes. It's stuff that they needed done, somebody did it, so.

**3:13:41 Sherry Farrell Racette:** When you worked together, did you, when you mention that, like, how did you divide the labour? Was it something that was planned or did it just everyone just pitched in, or...?

**Norma Welsh:** No, just everyone pitched in, you know, and if you did dishes three times that day, so what, you could do it the fourth time, you know. It didn't matter if you did two or three times a day. You just got up and did them. And after awhile we never had to be told what to do. Make beds, we had a wooden floor, so we'd have to scrub that every couple days.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How would you scrub it?

**Norma Welsh:** With, we had these big scrub brushes.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Hands and knees?

**Norma Welsh:** Soap and water, get on your hands and knees, yeah. And bake bread, we always had to bake twice a week at, at the least. And from the time we were seven, eight years old, we were making bread.

**3:14:36 Sherry Farrell Racette:** When did you make your first pie? Can you remember?

**Norma Welsh:** Actually, I was married when I made my first pie.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh really?

**Norma Welsh:** Mom used to make lemon pie and Saskatoon pie, but I never, I never did any of that when I was young.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, who baked for us then after mom died [?], 'cause I remember flapper pie or whatever.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh yeah, but that was that was easy to make, yeah. Like, to me...

**Joe Welsh:** Well, you said...

**[Everyone talks at once.]**

**Norma Welsh:** You know, actually nothing.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I can't make it.



**Norma Welsh:** Oh god. Well, I was married when I made my first pumpkin pie and I made my crust, and I had my mother-in-law over for Sunday lunch and I gave her a piece of pie. And I said, "Well, how is it?" She said, "Not bad, but I think, I don't think you put enough sugar in it." I said, "What sugar? I never put anything in." I said, "It's, like, I just dumped the can."

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Probably thought you were making pies since you about four or five something 'cause you're so good at it.

**Norma Welsh:** Starting making pie, you know, I was about eighteen, nineteen.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, tell them about the stuff that, you used to make us candy. You used to make those biscuits and, I don't know, it takes to make some kind of...

**Norma Welsh:** We used to make...

**Joe Welsh:** ...with sugar and stuff.

**Norma Welsh:** Drop biscuits we used to make, and baking powder biscuits. We made fudge, our own fudge all the time, and we made toffee, you know, like, pull toffee.

**Joe Welsh:** But that was easy.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, it was, and I know, well, they made cakes, you know, that kind of thing. But I mean, that was easy, too, if. We used to be able to make stuff out of nothing, you know, you had to with, can't, we never starved. We always had something to eat and no matter what it was, we could make it taste good.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I know, that's thing that amazes me, you know. Instead, when you, you know, people really lived pretty humble lives, and yet everyone talks about how good the food was, you know, how good the food was.

**Norma Welsh:** It was, but, and everything I, I learned was from my mother, and I was, well, just about sixteen when she died. But everything I learned was from her, and I've never forgotten it. So that's where the pie and all that kind of stuff comes from, the bangs, the bannock.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, the famous bangs. I was gonna get you to take a look at these pictures that we've been looking at. So that's Billie.

**3:17:43 Norma Welsh:** That's my sister Billie, and my aunt Margaret. She's my dad's sister. She just died a couple years ago, actually, and way in her '90s. I'm not quite sure of how old she was, but as you can tell on here, she used to be tall, really tall, and not hefty. But here she's just a little wee bit of a thing. Billie is quite a bit bigger than she is.

**Joe Welsh:** Man, you'll be short.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, hmmm.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I guess it's true that you shrink, eh.

**Norma Welsh:** And she was, she lived in Pioneer Village and smoked herself half to death. Like, she used to smoke couple packages of cigarettes a day.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And she lived to be ninety something. Not gonna be an ad for the anti-smoking.

**Joe Welsh:** Yes, that's for bloody sure.

**Norma Welsh:** Her smoking and coffee every day. She'd sit in her chair and smoke and drink coffee. But she had two kids, I think, eh, two boys?

**Joe Welsh:** And a daughter, too, [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, yes, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Where did she spend most of her life?

**Norma Welsh:** In Regina.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** In Regina?

**Norma Welsh:** No, I don't recall ever meeting her husband. His name was Bernard. Well, Bernard was his last name. St. Bernard something, like, that, yeah. But I don't ever recall meeting him. Well, like, how often did we get to Regina, you know? And she would come down there every once in a while because most of the family were down there, you know, at Fort Qu'Appelle, Lebret. She'd come down there. And they usually stay with Uncle Norbert. That guy there. That guy. I'm glad I don't look like him. But that's her, that's Auntie Margaret when she was a little [?], and that's uncle Norbert.

**Joe Welsh:** I love those outfits.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, with the little button-up shoes?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So, when would these have been taken in?

**Joe Welsh:** It'd have to be, oh, he is ten years younger than our dad, so, he looks about six or seven, so that's gotta be, born in 1910 maybe ...

**Norma Welsh:** Well, Dad was born in 1900.

**Joe Welsh:** So he was had to been born in 1910, so that would be 1916, 1917, around then.

**Norma Welsh:** So this past year, he would have been 103, Dad, had he lived, so...

**Joe Welsh:** And he'd only be 93.

**Norma Welsh:** That was pretty old.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And this is your aunt and your uncle. Always had a little bow in the hair, eh?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah,

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I wonder where this would have been taken?

**Norma Welsh:** I have no idea. Probably in Fort Qu'Appelle because they lived there most of the time. And we had a lot of Norbert Welsh's, his family used to come down there and, and visit and usually they had cameras and stuff. They were kind of on the rich, richer side than we were, you know. So they used to bring us clothing and...

**Joe Welsh:** Well, I'm glad they never brought us any of that...

**Norma Welsh:** You don't have to talk like that. I didn't want a skirt [?]. If that's what it is, I can't tell what it is.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, some kind of a little, little dress or...

**Norma Welsh:** Well, I think their, that clothing was unique. I love it. I love the outfits these people have here.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, these ones, oh yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** Grandpa. That's my Grandpa and Grandma Amyotte, and my Auntie Margaret and Dan, Dan Amyotte.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Who did she marry again?

**Norma Welsh:** Joseph.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Joseph Amyotte. And so her maiden name was?

**Norma Welsh:** Blondeau.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Blondeau.

**Norma Welsh:** She was May Blondeau.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** [?] over here. It just amazes me how the looks will pass from generation to generation, that why I had told that I had met Amyottes that lived in the States and they look exactly, like, the Amyottes that live up here, just exactly.

**3:22:16 Norma Welsh:** Well, that's where we came from, so you know. I guess he has family down there that we never met or didn't never knew.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, so this is, this is the fellow that had the siblings that you never knew?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Look at his hands.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, hard working.

**Joe Welsh:** And hers, too.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, oh yeah, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** And she had to be relatively young then because that was her first child.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** [?].

**Norma Welsh:** What did she have, ten or twelve kids? Yeah, a big family she has.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That was pretty much standard, wasn't it?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, because she had twin boys, Uncle John and Uncle Bert, Uncle Larry, Uncle Frankie, and seven or eight girls, and they're all dead, too, like, all my mother's sisters are all, and brothers, are all dead.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So this probably would have been around the turn of the century?

**Norma Welsh:** Probably.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** 1890, somewhere in the 1900s, maybe.

**Joe Welsh:** How old would Auntie Agnes be?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, let's see, Mom was born in 1912, and Mom was one of the younger ones, so that would have been to me in the 1800s.

**Joe Welsh:** Okay.

**Norma Welsh:** Some kind of...

**Joe Welsh:** Oh yeah, she watched you, too.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, possibly, yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Two or three.

**Norma Welsh:** Eighteen months, two years.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That's how big she is, 'cause she has a lot of hair, but that doesn't mean anything. I had a lot of hair when I was born. I had a pony tail before I was two months old.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, so it's a very old picture. She could even be a baby, eh?

**Joe Welsh:** Yes.

**Norma Welsh:** And where again, where that was taken I'll never know.

**Joe Welsh:** That looks like a professional, eh, like, that background...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, it's got the backdrop, yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And if you could see the ground, 'cause there are pictures that, like, Mrs. Bellegarde has these old pictures, but they're sitting in chairs and you can see little tufts of grass when they'd sort of put the backdrop up. So there's somebody who used to travel around with a wagon, maybe, when they would have...

**Joe Welsh:** And it is posed.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, yeah,

**Joe Welsh:** Nice pose.

**Norma Welsh:** But my youngest daughter looks like her.

**Joe Welsh:** Yes, she does. Yeah, she never...

**Norma Welsh:** And I actually, I love that hat. I just think it's awesome.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, there's quite, and there's a picture of one of the Desjarlais women, and she's [?] flat hat [?]. Yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** And was very fashionable to wear...



**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, absolutely.

**Norma Welsh:** ...and the men, including hats, you know. They always had hats, ladies all had beautiful hats. That's a very young Grandpa.

**3:25:06 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Who are these?

**Norma Welsh:** And that's Welshes. This is Norbert Welsh's son.

**Joe Welsh:** An oldest son.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay.

**Joe Welsh:** Francois Xavier.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, Francois Xavier, Xavier. And this is Grandma Welsh and she was a Beaulieu.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, she must have been Beaulieu.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and her brother, Uncle Gabe, was a Sinclair.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Norma Welsh:** I'm still trying to find out why that, how that happened.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I know.

**Norma Welsh:** Do you?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, I went through the, the original Lebret church records are still in the rectory.

**Joe Welsh:** They're in the rectory?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Right, right, and they go right back to, like, the very first, like, the first wedding was Louis Racette and Joshephte [?]. And there was a section in, there was, or was on a scrip application because Heather Sinclair is a descendent of him, and when she was in and I taught her, she was in school with [?], and so then she was telling me that, you know, the Beaulieu dit Sinclair and I ended up finding, looking for something else, and coming across that. And it was because he was raised by, that's the same way Louis Racettes got their name. He was raised by his uncle, so he took his having, his uncle's name was William Sinclair, so because he was adopted and, you know, sort of like a custom adoption, he took his uncle's name.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, I see.

**3:26:35 Sherry Farrell Racette:** So, 'cause he was raised by his uncle and that was the same, how come the Pelletiers ended up being Racettes? Because Louis Pelletier was raised by his uncle Charles Racette, and so then he took the last name of Racette. But all those people were related through the women. So, I mean, it's just like, like, they're all related, but it wasn't. But so that was, he was, took his, 'cause I forget. I know who their father is, somewhere where you, Heather did a lot of work. She wanted [/] and trying to sort that out, and then after I came across that, so I copied it and sort of stuck it in the corner. Haven't given it to her yet, but that's why I picked it, so I could give it to her. There's some, it'd be interested to know where they came from. Beaulieu's not that common of a name around here. It's common in other areas.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, in our, our chart, it says she was from Quebec.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right. There was, there's Beaulieus in [?]. Wingers in Minnesota, too. There's Beaulieus around Shoal Lake, but...

**Norma Welsh:** No, she wasn't from Quebec. Not her, either her mother or her grandmother, yeah. 'Cause her dad, and I've got that all down on that genealogy chart, lived around Ituna or something like that. But this is named Thomas something.

**Joe Welsh:** Up...

**Norma Welsh:** Thomas Beaulieu was his name.

**Joe Welsh:** Thomas Beaulieu?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah. And I, but I can't remember what her mother's name is. Try to go through that and remember all those names.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, the families are so complicated, you know.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, absolutely.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And everyone's, I can't get mine to go, like, this 'cause everyone's related, you know, like, 'cause cousins married cousins, second cousins, yeah, two brothers marrying two sisters and, yeah, I remember we'd be coming up the street...

**Norma Welsh:** Well, it happened in our family, too. Three brothers married three sisters with the Amyotte family.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Who did they marry?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, Uncle John and Uncle Bert and Auntie and Uncle Paul married Pelletier girls, Josephine, Rhoda, and Olive. We used to call her Auntie Mutty, but they're all, they're all dead now. I think Auntie Rhoda's still living. She, she's in a home.

**Joe Welsh:** In Indian Head there.

**Norma Welsh:** Not Indian Head. It's a little town past that. I can't remember where, but, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** She's got a great face eh?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, for sure.

**3:29:16 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Now this is Prince?

**Norma Welsh:** That's our horse Prince.

**Joe Welsh:** This one, there's younger brother Jerry and little sister [?]. That's Grandpa F.X. there, you see, and the dog Buster.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** You know the name of the dog?

**Joe Welsh:** And...

**Norma Welsh:** We had Prince for years and years.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, look how big he is.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, he is a big horse. There, it wasn't just your imagination that he was big, he really was.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, they used to put Jerry, Danny, Cec and me on him, and, well, we took up this much room. There'd be enough room left for three or four more of us. Well, look how these buggy wheels here. The front ones are the little ones, and they were at least three feet high, and, look, we used to, you know, play tag and run under and in and out, you know, that he used to stand like that for hours.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** With one leg up?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, like, that, yeah. And we used to just play around him, and he, he would not do, and he wouldn't even move. You know, we could do anything to that horse.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Was this a collie? Like a collie?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Kind of?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, kind of, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Kind of a Métis collie? Wonder what kind of horse he is. Looks like a [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Well, he, he, he was a mixture of, well, a couple of big horses there, but [?], and what was the other big draft ones.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Clydesdales?

**Joe Welsh:** Clydesdales, no, there's another one.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** There's another one.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh yeah, I know which ones you're thinking of.

**Joe Welsh:** I know, I don't think it was quite a **[?]**, and a, and another one.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** No, it's not Clydesdale, something, but somebody did have Clydesdales out there. I think Uncle, Uncle Gasper had them.

**Joe Welsh:** But he's a Clydesdale, only come up to his shoulder, you know, but that has to be, you gotta be six feet tall at the bloody shoulder here. Or just about.

**Norma Welsh:** Actually, we got that horse from Mooshum St. Pierre.

**Joe Welsh:** Was it St. Pierre, yeah?

**3:31:14 Sherry Farrell Racette:** How old did he live? Did, is this the horse you had to leave behind on the farm or did...?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, well we had moved from on top of the hill, I guess in '53, no...

**Joe Welsh:** '52.

**Norma Welsh:** '52.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, oh, but from the farm, he, he came from the farm with us. Yeah, and then when we moved off the road allowances, what happened then we...

**Norma Welsh:** You went to the fox farm.

**Joe Welsh:** We went to the, oh, Jesus Murphy.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Fox farm?

**Norma Welsh:** 'Cause he was getting old.

**Joe Welsh:** Where they fed it to the foxes.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh dear.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, there's a fox farm at Fort Qu'Appelle, or there used to be. I can't even remember if there's one now.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, really?

**Joe Welsh:** No, there's not.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, like a fur farm where they used to grow them for fur? Okay.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did they have mink farms around? They had mink farms where I grew up.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, yeah, I think those are more common to the north, yeah, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, that is a big horse. Holy jeez.

**Norma Welsh:** And he used to stick his head in our window in wintertime, you know, break through our, our nice Half-breed curtains.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Your cardboard windows. And this is your mom?

**3:32:20 Norma Welsh:** That's my mom.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And she would have been but, how old do you think she was here?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, I asked Auntie Celine, and said she was about sixteen there and already married and having a, having her first child.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Wow, that just... Then these are some pictures of the farm where you spent...

**Norma Welsh:** Eight years I think we were there.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Now, what, what building is that?

**Joe Welsh:** That could have been a pig barn. A pig barn. Now that looks pretty, pretty modern. I don't know if that a...

**Norma Welsh:** I don't know if that's...

**Joe Welsh:** 1954. Holy Moses, it's got windows and stuff. Well, they had to, they had to...

**Norma Welsh:** It was the new building.

**Joe Welsh:** Jeez, those were lucky pigs, holy smokes. I see it's all, you know, ventilated and stuff.



**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, it's all new, 'cause I know when my dad worked there, he, there was no such thing as ventilation.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, this was 1954, so, no, I wouldn't know what the heck that was. [?] tell her. Which one's [?] and which one's [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, we had a famous pig, we called her Maggie. I was trying to pick her out there, but I think those ones are too young to be, to be her.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I didn't think people named their animals if they were going to...

**Norma Welsh:** No, I don't know if they ever butchered her or not.

**3:34:07 Sherry Farrell Racette:** You get attached. Oh, here, look is that stooking?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, hmmm.

**Joe Welsh:** [?] the individual sheaths, that's what put it together.

**Norma Welsh:** And you built them up, like you would a tipi.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you tie them somehow?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, they came out tied.

**Joe Welsh:** They tie them on the binder.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, the binder tied them and...

**Joe Welsh:** There's a picture here of an individual, well, you can see him better here, yeah. See, these, these were the sheaves here [?].

**Norma Welsh:** And they're all over here, but we used to go and some of us kids used to go on. We didn't have to do that really.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So it wasn't child labour?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, no. But we liked doing it 'cause it was fun, we thought it was fun.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So it'd come off the machine like that?

**[Everyone talks at once]**

**Joe Welsh:** ...this is a binder, but the swather, it would come off and there. So you can see there's a little canister there where they kept the canister of twine, and that would tie the sheaves individually, and then...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So they'd come off the shoot like that?

**Joe Welsh:** They'd come off like that, and then...

**Norma Welsh:** You plow and then you have to stack them up.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, and then the big machines would move in there, what they, the threshing machines would move in, and that's when the threshing crews would come in the, take each sheath like that, feed it into the threshing machine, and it would separate the, the wheat from the chaff, I guess they call it. And walk it along and separate the, you know, the seeds. And they even had the separators working with the, separate the weeds. Like, in those days there's buckwheat and those kinds of weeds would, would

be common. We'd even have the, the a separator that would separate the wheat sheaves from the, from the buckwheat and all those other kinds. And then again and separate the straw, and it come out the end of the, oh, there's a good a picture of a threshing machine here. But then they use that straw for, they would, they didn't have balers, or not many of them had balers. But they bundled the straws and the haystacks and put it on a hayrack, and that would be the, that would be feed unless it was a bad year. But that would be the bedding for the, for the animals. You'd put in the barns and...

**Norma Welsh:** In the barn, yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Sure didn't waste much.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, no, and, like, like, one of the things that, that I heard people talk about is how much of the farm labour in that whole region was done by Métis men. How many of the crews were Métis men that used to go work from farmer to farmer.

**3:36:40 Norma Welsh:** Well, my dad did that all his life except all the time we were here at the farm. He always had work on a farm.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did he hire himself out with a crew, did he have [?] men that he worked with?

**Norma Welsh:** No, he, he, just farmers called him, you know. They would not call, you know, by telephone or anything, but they would get a hold of him somehow and ask him to come to work 'cause he was a hard worker.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** 'Cause that was a big part of the economy of, for Métis people is working on the farms, like, doing the threshing and, you know, all of that.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, we used to go and pick potatoes for the nuns. They had this big potato farm out by Katepwa and they'd pay us a dollar a day to go and pick potatoes for eight or ten hours, whatever it was. But that, you could buy a whole, a whole bag of groceries with that dollar, you know. Hundred million child labourers.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh gosh. So how would you dig the potatoes? Did you just stick them with a pitchfork, or like a fork or?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, somebody, they had a machine that went along and...

**Joe Welsh:** And they had one of those?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So you just flip it over and you get them all on, like, the side.

**Norma Welsh:** You'd have to do some along the diggin', but we had those little shovels or, you know, to dig any one that were further down like.

**3:38:14 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Now is, is this a school on the home farm, or was that...

**Norma Welsh:** No, we didn't have a school on the farm, but...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** He was down in Lebret.

**Joe Welsh:** You know, what you were talking about that before.

**Norma Welsh:** No, that's not Lebret. See, it looks like Invercal[?] School, which was up on top of the hill.

**Joe Welsh:** On our side of the [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and it was near, what was that camp I'm trying to think, Camp Monahan?

**Joe Welsh:** Monahan.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, it was up on the hill there. That's what that looks like.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Who would have gone to school there?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, my oldest brother and sister went there, and there was a lot of people that lived up in the hills there all over the place, yeah. In the hills, in the coulees, on top of the hills. You name it, there were people there.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** In the coulees?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That's where coulee people...

**Joe Welsh:** Yes, that's right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, that looks like Invercal[?] School 'cause there's the...

**Joe Welsh:** The outhouses.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** ...the outhouses, yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** The swings, oh, that's a fence. [?], Jesus, if you could blow that up that looks like a, a late '30s or '40s car.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Right.

**Joe Welsh:** If you blow that up.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Get the plates on it.

**Joe Welsh:** Get the plates on it, get NASA on the case, yeah. But somebody who knows old cars could tell, yeah, what kind of a car that was and what year it was.

**Norma Welsh:** What year it was, yeah.

**3:39:48 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Because there was, like, depending on when it was, 'course people will often drove old cars, but there was a time after the CCF got in, that they just, they had done some kind of a study where they were, found, like, the Métis kids couldn't go to school or Métis kids couldn't go to school, and then after the CCF got in they started building these little schools.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And they underestimated how many kids there were, so then a lot of people couldn't go.

**Norma Welsh:** Well, like, I said, I couldn't, I didn't start till I was eight.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** 'Cause there was no room?

**Norma Welsh:** No. Not enough room, and they had, like, our school had four rooms and every nun taught several grades, you know, One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, whatever. And then there was the convent at Lebret, where the nuns stayed and they had two grades they taught there, I think. I believe it was Five and Six. No, actually, it was Three and Four. They taught at the convent and all the rest of them were there, and lot of the, the kids from the, the school there when they reach high school, they would come to the school in Lebret.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right, okay.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, [?].

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** This is at Standing Buffalo, I think, because I went to, to Lebret and the museum there...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, it was from Standing Buffalo.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** ...one of the girls was from Standing Buffalo and she was recognizing people in the photographs [?] and a lot of old elders, like, knew her family there. So these are the, the, this is your gang from the, from the [?], the gang here.

**Norma Welsh:** A lot of these people are our cousins, the Desjarlais, and actually I think we're related to, to those Blondeaus, too, through grandma. And Blondeaus, Desjarlais.

**3:41:53 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Lotta you guys are barefoot.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, I just counted one, two, four people with shoes.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did you go barefoot when you were a kid?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I did all the time. I went to school with my bare feet in the summertime, and then they told me I don't know after a couple years that I had to wear shoes. We, we had this lady there at Lebret—what the heck was her name, Kay something. She used to give us her shoes and I think they were size thirteen. And we used to have shoe fights with those things. Oh, they were really big, anyway. And this, this looks like it's me, but it looks, you know, who that really looks like is Cec, but it wouldn't be her. She was born up on top of the hill. So, and that's my cousin, Theresa Desjarlais, and she's carrying one of her little brothers or sisters. This is Pauline.

**Joe Welsh:** Her sister.

**Norma Welsh:** Our sister Pauline. Cousin...

**Joe Welsh:** Alvin.

**Norma Welsh:** Alvin. Like, some of these Desjarlais, there's several of them in a row here that are our cousins, but there's two families of Desjarlais here. Like I said, [?] is on one of them. They're a different Desjarlais.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** They must be related though, eh, somewhere [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Somewhere along the line probably. Big family. That's quite the picture, quite the gang.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Who's this?



**Joe Welsh:** Jeanette [?].

**Norma Welsh:** We don't remember that one. Oh, I believe there'd have to be a Blondeau or a...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** And this, you think, is probably Dan?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, oh yeah, him and his curly hair.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That's quite the little gang.

**Norma Welsh:** Look at that, there was Morins.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Some of them look pretty skeptical at the camera guy.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** This little guy looks ready to take a poke at him.  
"Who the heck are you, eh?"

**Joe Welsh:** "What the hell do you mean smile?"

**Norma Welsh:** Are any of them smiling?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** You are.

**Joe Welsh:** Very experienced one has.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Two girls.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, Theresa and Mary, there, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** This one's looking shy.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, here's one.

**Norma Welsh:** This one has a little smile.

**Joe Welsh:** And Alvin over there in the right-hand corner top right there.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, that this one's Adelia Blondeau here. You know Maurice [?]?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** No, I've heard the names, though. People [?]. So what year do you think that probably is?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, it is probably very early '40s.

**Joe Welsh:** If that's Danny, he was there in '44. So, it there, okay, who was Danny as old as, Danny would be as old as Ida or Helen. Danny and Ronny, and I don't see, there's Georgina [?].

**3:45:25 Norma Welsh:** See, I'm ten years older than Danny. And I'm pretty sure that's him. Two or three maybe. So this had to have been taken before, just before we left the Métis Farm. We moved out of there in '48.

**Joe Welsh:** No, well, no, I was two when we moved. No, I wouldn't have been born here yet if that's Danny. Or maybe that was the year I was born, because if he's two it would be '46. I mean, yeah, [?], '46.

**Norma Welsh:** [?] because I was twelve when we moved off the Farm.

**Joe Welsh:** In...

**Norma Welsh:** '48.

**Joe Welsh:** Were you the same age as Theresa or...

**Norma Welsh:** Alvin and I are the same age.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Do you recognize any of the men working?

**Norma Welsh:** No, I didn't, like, well, I didn't see one that looked like somebody I knew.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, the guy, he said, was, like, he hasn't got a hat on that...

**Norma Welsh:** I can't tell...

**Joe Welsh:** Can't tell from that.

**Norma Welsh:** You can almost tell by the hats. Like, I said this, this here, a skinny guy looks, like, it could be Dad.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, that's what I was thinking, too, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** Oh, my Dad was skinny. But there was another one there.

**Joe Welsh:** [?].

**Norma Welsh:** [?]. Mike Blondeau.

**Joe Welsh:** Mike, it could be Mike Blondeau. [?] guy working in the field without, he's got no hat on.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Right. Well, maybe while we're looking for that, I'll get these guys to come in for close-ups on, on the photographs that we've been talking about.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh yeah, here it is. That's Mike Blondeau.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, it is, yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** That is Sara Louis.

**Norma Welsh:** 'Cause he is the same age as Frank.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Let's just take a break and let them take a, let them take some close-up shots of the photographs.

**[No audio]**

**4:21:19 Joe Welsh:** Skinner's Vault?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Skinner's Vault, please.

**Joe Welsh:** I, first, well, fifteen years ago I became aware of this Skinner's Vault story, and the story was that this old guy came from Germany. I, could have been after the First World War. He brought with him a whole bunch of German money, trunks full, and he wanted to hide it, so he built this little structure on top of the hill above [?].

**[Someone says, "Okay we're just gonna stop here because apparently they can't hear you."]**

**Joe Welsh:** Apparently maybe I'm not turned on?

**[No audio]**

**4:23:21 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Alright.

**Joe Welsh:** I first became aware of the story of Skinner's Vault about fifteen years ago, and as the story goes this old guy Skinner came from Germany after the First World War, and he brought with him trunks full of German money, which apparently was not worth anything. And he, I guess he thought he had a, a treasure of all this money, and he wanted to hide it. And he, so he built this little structure on top of the hill above his farm. And I guess he was kind of a devious kind of guy, and the thinking was that if he built this thing out in the open and people would, and 'cause these people wanted to steal his money or something, that, that this would be an obvious place to make his vault to, to hide his money in. But, of course, it wasn't the real vault. The, the, he apparently built his real vault below his farm near the marsh, and he never ever told anybody where this was. And, you know, naturally, if you got a treasure, you don't go around broadcasting it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Not if you want to keep it.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, if you want to keep it, yeah. And apparently he died without having ever revealed where, where the true vault was. So when I found out about this, me, myself and another guy we went up and we saw the vault, and this I wouldn't hide money there, but it was full of old rotting grain sacks, you know, seed and that kind of stuff. And it smelled like a few rats had spent a couple of nights there, you know, and it was an awful place. So we didn't get to talk to anybody from his family directly, so we went back

there and asked around Le Bret and those and the story, too, you know. Well, stories, if they're really good, they have to go, you know, and the, the, the, one of the things was that he not only brought with him the money, but there, there was apparently some Catholic artefact. I don't know what it's called, but in, in the benediction, that thing where they consecrate the hosts, the priest, and it's round.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Chalice?

**Joe Welsh:** No, it's not a chalice. The, and they do that, and according to the, the ritual blesses, makes them up, the host holy, and that's what the priest uses for the mass, for the next, for the next week. And this thing was supposedly hidden in that vault along with the money. And there's a Rou Garou connection to that, and the, again, this is just part of what the, how the story goes. And when I get the story straight maybe I'll add my own facts to it, but apparently there was a Rou Garou guy, that and the story was that this guy, while he was a Rou Garou, he happened to open this vault and he got in somehow and he couldn't get out. And that to this day there are people who say that in that vault lies that old, all that money, that Catholic artefact, and the remains of that guy who was a Rou Garou who nobody knows. And I, I heard this, this straight Skinner's story, like I said, and then I started talking about people, and then and that's how that story, that's how that story of the Rou Garou connection grew. But now I haven't been back there for awhile, and then, well, I was back there about four years ago, and I asked around and, of course, I'd been there ten years before, and one of the most of the people who, who told me the stories were elderly people, most of them had, had died during the ten years that I was away. So I couldn't get anymore, anymore to the story, and if anyone was aware of that there was anymore to the story, they, they wouldn't tell me. Which if I knew that, I wouldn't tell either. I'd keep it for myself until I could make a, a complete story out of it. But I just thought it was so good how a story like that could,

could grow in a, in a little place like that, and the mystery surrounding this old guy's treasure and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So, no, no one knows where it is?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, okay the, yeah, like I said, I haven't...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** You haven't got any...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right, and old Skinner himself, but I, but I haven't spoken with anybody from the Skinner family about this, and someday I hope to go back there and see if there are any Skinner, his descendents around that...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** His daughter maybe?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, he has a daughter.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, see, at the time she had another name. I didn't know she was a Skinner, and I found out she was a Skinner about, you know, a couple weeks, and I never had the time to really get to talk to her about, about the story.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** She'd be interested, I think.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, didn't she own that little café in Le Bret there.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, it was her, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** She'd probably be surprised to know there was a Rou Garou.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** And you know who would have been good to ask that question was Gladys and Marie, you know, because they lived right on that farm and worked for him. Yeah, there were a lot of people that...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, as a matter of fact, one of the guys who he was, he was, not Raymond, but his older brother, Raymond Redmond, Louis.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Louis.

**Joe Welsh:** He, he was the one who, who got me, you know, he told, told the story about the Vault and he says, "But there's something else." And he told me a little bit about the Rou Garou connection and the other Catholic thing. So I said, "Well, Christ, was other old people there?" Well, you know, you know how they are some of them. Well, before they get to know you and your, your motivation, they're not all that willing to share which, you know, that's another thing they have to learn. You have to establish a relationship with these people and respect their knowledge and, and approach it from a, from a, whatever it is, a traditional. You know, you, you respect them, you do. Establish a relationship and you don't go uninvited, or if you want to go, you ask if I can come visit you, and offer a specific agenda, have tea, or just talk about stuff. So that's how you have to cultivate the relationship that way, and that's how I was able to get that thing out of Mr. Redmond. And then after I knew how to, what the protocols were, and I just based on respect and that, you know. It's the easiest thing to show if one has a mind to...

**4:31:03 Sherry Farrell Racette:** I think sometimes people aren't sure how younger people are gonna respond to their stories, too. They don't know if



you're gonna think they're, or, yeah, like, they don't, like, they're not sort of the trust, have been hurt by the attitude, you know...

**Norma Welsh:** Well, you know, Cecille is still alive there.

**Joe Welsh:** Cecille [?]

**Norma Welsh:** She's married to a Pelletier, and she would be one to, to have a good talk to you 'cause she would know stuff like that. I, I, completely forgotten about her, but she's the last [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Well, you already have a relationship with her, maybe...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I'll go talk to her.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh yeah, there was another old guy that I met later on. I wasn't able to, to establish any kind of relationship or rapport with him. His name was Peter [?].

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** He's from Lestock.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** I had gotten him to know, I got to meet him two or three years before he died, and then I found out that he knew all this stuff, and by then it was kinda too late to establish a relationship. 'Cause I, I remember him once, somebody referred me to him, and this is another thing I learned. I said, "I'll show up [?] I want to call [?] nobody [?]." He said, "Don't even come visit me until you learn, you know, how this thing is done."

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay.

**Joe Welsh:** Exactly, yeah. He said, "Well, well, he didn't, the word, the thing is, what I learned, the mountain didn't come to me, I had to go to the mountain. So that's the kind of respect that I want from you." And it's a good lesson to learn.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, no, it is. I guess in some ways it's frustrating 'cause so many things have not been passed on, it's like the elders are waiting for people to approach them in the right way and sometimes don't no longer know what the right way is. And people don't visit the way they used to.

**Norma Welsh:** No, not at all.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** 'Cause when you were young, probably people visited a lot.

**Joe Welsh:** Yes. Certainly, yeah. Have tea and bring 'em, like, Margaret Desjarlais, and my favourite thing they, I asked her, you know, "Do you want, what can I bring you?" She says, "Bring me some coffee or bring me tea." So every time when visit her, I bring her a big can of coffee and maybe a pound of tea or something like that, and, you know, spend hours with her and just talking without an agenda. You know, establish one, well, you know that. Like you're doing here. You're asking us stuff and we're spilling forth all this knowledge here without even realizing it.

**4:33:55 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, I know what I was gonna ask you. I was gonna ask you if there were any stories about stuff that lived in the water. Stuff like in or around the water, if there's...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, this, again, this Mr. Redmond in connection with the, with the Rou Garou story. Yesterday, I said what he told me was that if you were kind to this Rou Garou, you would get the, the good luck in hunting or fishing, and he mentioned a, now, I don't remember, it was a being under the, the, okay, we'll go back a little bit. There are people who, now you'd say clans now, there are lake people, where your soul comes from.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Okay.

**Joe Welsh:** In some people, their soul comes from the lake, some people their soul comes from the river, some come from the prairies, some come from the valley, you know. All the geography from around the valley that he said that the, the lake being was one that you also had to, you know, it wasn't like, a gift or anything, but the respect was that the, if you take something from this being, a lake being return some. Like, if you fish, take fish from the lake, return some of the fish back. Either the bones or the or the guts or something, like that. But 'cause it can revive itself that way and, and the lake had a spirit and the river had a spirit, the prairie had a spirit, and the hills had a spirit, that the way, and then that was not a physical being like, like, like, that big, that big fish, that, up there, what do you call them, sturgeons.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, those it wasn't a being like that, but it was spiritual, a spiritual being.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So, it didn't have a physical form?

**Joe Welsh:** It didn't have a physical form, yeah.

**4:36:10 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did, were there, did they ever tell you stories about little people or ever refer to little people?

**Norma Welsh:** Well, I, the only thing I can remember, we used to, when we walked, we used to walk in the grass, and if your shoelace came untied, it meant the little people were down there and they're undoing your shoelaces. That was the only thing I've ever heard, but I've heard a lot of people talk about the little people, you know, and...

**Joe Welsh:** Billie, every time you go picking berries, the first few berries she picked she'll drop on the ground. She says that's for the little people. And then there used to be, again Billie told me, and Aunt Margaret, that in the spring when the crocuses come out, that's the time that you go and put little sweets by the crocuses, candies and stuff. That's for the, that's for the little people, and when the, when the crocuses come out, that's the sign that the little people are coming out, too, and they're starting to do their, what little people do, whatever they look after.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did they, did they ever say where they lived or were they ever, like...

**Joe Welsh:** Underground.

**Norma Welsh:** I never heard anything.

**Joe Welsh:** Under, under...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Trees. That's [?], like, you know, when a tree, sometimes they'll be, like, off the hole. They might leave some little thing by that little hole, like, and then...

**Joe Welsh:** And under those big mushrooms.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** But the toadstools, that big ones, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Camping under there.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, you leave your little treats under, under them.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** In the tall grass.

**Joe Welsh:** Oh yeah. Well, yeah, in the tall grass, they, what do they do, they take the ticks away, they scare the ticks away if you leave them candy.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, good deal.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, damn right.

**Norma Welsh:** Any [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Any [?], yeah, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** People, like, people would, you know, something is missing, you know, you're losing your keys all the time, things like that, you know. Some of the little people are [?], people [?]. They're kind of good luck in a way. So Billie leaves a few berries...

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, the first few berries she picks, she always puts them on the ground and, and so what do I know. I never...

**Norma Welsh:** I don't when I'm picking my berries.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Where's your keys?

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right, yeah, where's your keys?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** If I lose my keys every day.

**Joe Welsh:** Are your shoelaces together?

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, even Auntie Margaret used to do that, too, well, even up north picking blueberries and, and raspberries, and the little people deserve good stuff, too.

**4:38:51 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Now what else was I gonna ask you? Oh yeah, when you were picking berries, like, did you guys pick berries to sell? Or just too...

**Norma Welsh:** Just to keep.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How did you preserve—why are you laughing?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, there's another lesson, eh, but go ahead.

**Norma Welsh:** Mom used to can saskatoons, raspberries, if we could find enough of them. Usually, we're able to find enough maybe for ten or twelve jars. You know, just the small ones. Pincherries were made into jelly, chokecherries were, some of it was made into jelly, and some of it was crushed.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, right.

**Norma Welsh:** We sometimes have a little crushing bee, you know.

Grandma and some of the family would come over and they'd all have their crushing stones, and they'd sit around and somebody would make tea, and they'd crush these chokecherries. And then you laid them on a flat piece of canvas and, of course, canvas is flat anyways, but you'd lay it on rocks, big rocks to dry.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Out in the sun?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, out in the sun, and in those days I couldn't understand, but nothing ever bothered them, you know, you'd leave them out there for two or three days, and as long as it didn't rain that was fine. And then they'd make, you'd dry them, and then you can cook them and, and fry it kind of thing, make a paste. Like, you could, like, jam or jelly, you could spread it on your toast or your bread, and they also made what we used to call torro[?], and it was chokecherries with, I call them [?].

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh.

**Joe Welsh:** Piggy puffs.

**Norma Welsh:** Piggy puffs. With that and sugared and was that all was? Anyway, they'd make this torro[?] and I just loved it, it was so good. But that was basically, at the, the chokecherries, the fat and sugar. Yeah, and it was so good. So we made that and, you know, if we had the root cellars you could keep. Mom would make anywhere up to a hundred jars of saskatoons, and because we just picked all summer we would start around the first of June and we wouldn't quit till the end of July, picking. And that was when we weren't in school. It was after school every weekend, we were always picking berries. And it was fun, like, none of us minded doing that, you know. But, you know, that was mostly our berry picking, we'd sometimes take a lunch or

we'd take the wagon and go in an area where we knew there was lots, and the whole family would be there, have a picnic and just really enjoy it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Was it mostly the women that would go?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, yeah. Even though, like, my brothers picked berries, too, like, the two older boys. We got Joey started picking here a few years back. But he is...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Initiated.

**Joe Welsh:** Initiated, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** We used to, cranberries, hard bush cranberries we had over there. Make jelly out of that, and Mom would make pies, or we'd just eat saskatoons with dessert. And I guess that's just it, you know, it was continuous every summer.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So there was mostly, did, did you share with other families? Like, did you take any over to your grandparents or, that, of course, it was such a big family...

**Norma Welsh:** Well, no, we'd give the odd jar, probably, to Grandma, but every family picked, so you didn't have to give them away.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** So everyone was.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** That'd be your fruit for...



**Norma Welsh:** ...for the year and, like, I get asked for saskatoons all the time because I always have lots. When I go picking, believe me, I go picking. They always tell me, "Oh, Norma just has to stand there and the berries fall into her pail."

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** "Oh, she's here."

**Norma Welsh:** But I, I don't know if this was Joey was gonna mention that. I don't believe in selling saskatoons, and if somebody wants saskatoons I give it away. You know, the only thing, like, I get asked for, to make pies for a lot of functions, but, and then I'll them, like, I'll sell pies, but...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** For the labour.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, if somebody wants saskatoons, I give them away. I give to a lot of the old ladies there, you know. I'll give them a package, and they, it's just appreciated so much.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** A lot of old people love their saskatoons.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, 'cause they can't, they can't go out and pick anymore. I do mostly every summer.

**4:43:50 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Do you still make grens?

**Norma Welsh:** No, I don't.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Some people still make grens.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I believe that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** But it's hard to do in the city. Like, we have a hundred million birds in our backyard and, and if you're going to dry them, but I suppose if you could do that in the microwave or something.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, maybe, I don't know how they make it nowadays, but I know people make it...

**Norma Welsh:** I never thought of that, yeah. I knew people did it, but I thought it was, you know, out in areas where...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Out in the country, like ...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, but I happened, but, Cliff LaRocque does a lot of crushing chokecherries. He has a, some kind of crusher there...

**Joe Welsh:** Probably could it with those big hands of his.

**Norma Welsh:** And I don't know how he, I think he freezes them. And they dry that way. Yeah. 'Cause occasionally he'll give me a, a little jar of them. But that, I'm sure that's what he does is freezes them. But I know, I really think they taste better done outside, you know...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Done the old fashioned way.

**Norma Welsh:** In the sun, yeah.

**4:44:56 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did, when you were, when you would pick, would your family have, like, a different area to go into than other people?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** People would have their spots, 'cause I notice now people are...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, we had, especially when we lived up on top of the hill. We, like, our nearest neighbour was, I don't know how far away, but, and we had the whole top of the hill to ourselves, basically, and we had tons of saskatoons. But most people had their own places, Katepwa, Fort Qu'Appelle. Like, people went up in, near the graveyard at the Fort, there's a big patch up there. And there are patches all over the valley, but people won't tell you where they were, they really won't. What is it, a few years ago we went over to Batoche by Maria's...

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, jeez, that was [?].

**Norma Welsh:** I bet we came out of there with about fifty or a hundred gallons.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Holy smokes, you do serious picking.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, that was a good year. I think it was '95, '95, yeah, and they were like...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, grapes.

**Joe Welsh:** ...grapes, yeah, oh, and so, that's best I've had for a long time.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, and I just finished my batch from there about two years ago.

**4:46:19 Sherry Farrell Racette:** So you were saying you were, you went out looking for a patch on the golf cart?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, yeah, that's my Auntie Margaret there, we went picking with her one day. Before that she would never tell me where her berry patch was, so we went to Katepwa where the golf course is. She rented a golf cart and drove over, you know, five or six fairways up this little hill, you know, parks her golf cart...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I can just see. I have this visual image...

**Joe Welsh:** Well, yeah, dodging golf balls, park the golf cart on a little plateau and she looked at me, "Don't you tell anybody about this." And we walked into the bush about a hundred yards and up a little hill, and there it was—holy moses, the mother lode. And that's how well you guard that, like, 'cause, well, the saskatoons particular, chokecherries, they're all over the place. I never heard anybody having a, a private chokecherry patch, but the, the saskatoons were, were precious. But this is, all this talk reminds me of a, of another lesson that, that I had to learn. Years ago, when we first started going up north fishing, we used to go and in, raspberry and blueberry season started. And we were going along to the [?] road towards Beauval, and there were people, you know, on the sides of the road, all these cans of blueberries and stuff for sale. And I made the remark, you know, about the old, you know, these people, they're selling their stuff, but that's not part of the culture. Billie's there, she said, "That's commerce. Culture happens in the berry patch." And just, you know...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Keep it straight.

**4:48:20 Joe Welsh:** ...keep it straight, yeah. And, and then, you know, the implications of that, and it's true, well, and she said, you know, "Before we had schools, you know, we'd go in there and the women would teach the kids, you know, and then there was, you taught 'em patience, you know." You, everybody, yeah, we go picking berries with your kids, oh, and pick six

berries. "Oh, my can ain't full yet." So they're, you know, you have to have the patience to learn, learn the patience to pick steady, and then not eat anything, and then there'd be the [?] two pails. You only have to pick five more pails and, you know, and then the stories would, would come out of there. And then they'd talk about, the women would take the children and, and well, the girls, mostly. Well, there was all kinds of separations and all kinds of functions to, to, to that culture, where they talk of the women who teach the girls about growing up and what it meant to be, you know, to become a woman and the duties and responsibilities that they had. Then the men would take the boys over there and, you know, the bigger boys, the women always seemed to take the little children, you know, boys and girls. And that's where the, that's where the school was, in effect, before we had schools, and that's where, that's where our culture is, in the berry patch, on the road is commerce.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Men's world, women's world.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, yeah, right, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** But I know when a lot of guys talk about berry picking, they often talk about their moms. Because they used to, that's where they used to go with their mothers, eh. [?] pickers, I mean, like, it's just when you, that's where you spend time with your women, you know, your mom and female friends, relatives, like that.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, all [?] relationships, yeah. All kinds of stuff. That, that was a real part, part of the culture. Other things were as a result of what, the learning took place in that activity.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Culture's in the berry patch.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, I like that, I like that.

**4:50:27 Sherry Farrell Racette:** When you were growing up, like, do you remember any particular, like, not necessarily remember the whole story, but did you have a favourite story or a couple favourite stories? Or, but were, like, your favourite storytellers, is there any particular one that you remember?

**Norma Welsh:** I guess my favourite one might have been Grandma Welsh. You know, we said basically she told us in French, and you could catch maybe from the odd English word that she would say what the gist of the story was, and it was usually a spooky story, you know. Like I said, you could tell by her expression when to be scared and that kind of thing, and it was always dark, you know, 'cause we didn't light our lamps till it was really dark, and we really had to because you had to save on coal oil, eh. But we'd sit around in a circle and she'd be in the middle there, telling stories. And I, I used to love that. But Uncle Gasper used to tell a few stories, too. He was good storyteller, but he told, like, he didn't really want us kids around to tell stories to.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, he had a more adult version.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I think so.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, sometimes they'd wait till you were in bed, then he'd tell a really good story.

**Norma Welsh:** But, yeah, she's the one I, I, liked the most. But I never heard any, you know, real ghost stories or anything like that.

**4:52:00 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Sometimes there's ones that stands out in your mind, you know, that you want to hear over and over again, that kind

of thing. You guys are great storytellers. You tell the stories of your life and stuff like that. When do you tell stories, like...

**Joe Welsh:** Well...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** ...there's times when you...

**Joe Welsh:** My two, my favourite audience is her two, her two grandsons, [?] and Zack. Like, they, well, I got along with her son Danny for, well, off and on, 'cause we had our fights and all that kind of stuff. But we got this, this relationship with her two grandsons. "Uncle Joe, tell us a story. What did you do?" and "What did you do in the war?" "Well, I wasn't in the war." "Well, what did you do?" And they get just, like you're getting me going now. So that's, like, that's, like, they love it, 'cause that's my favourite audience.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** How old are they?

**Joe Welsh:** They're turning fourteen now?

**Norma Welsh:** [?] gonna be fifteen in April and Zack is gonna be twelve.

**Joe Welsh:** No, yeah, but this started...

**Norma Welsh:** When they were years old.

**Joe Welsh:** ...they were small, they were two, three years old.

**Norma Welsh:** They've always liked, loved their Uncle Joey 'cause he makes them laugh, too, yeah.

**4:53:25 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Do you find that, have you used stories, like the stories of, you know, you growing up, to help give your kids a sense of who they are and where they came from?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, mine just laugh at me.

**Joe Welsh:** Okay, but the thing is, though, yeah, they do laugh and they laugh at me, too, but...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** They tease, eh.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, they tease, but through, you know, talking to different people, we confirm each other's stories, we confirm each other's lies. No, no talking with Norma and, you know, talking with a couple of her kids. This happened, this happened, she said this happened, well, yeah. And there, you know, there's reasons for doing things, consequences, and this is why you're here giving your bloody time asking, you know, making me account for something that happened thirty years ago. But through, like, her and, well, whoever talks to them, they're the, the narration, or the stories or the points of the stories are pretty well always the same, and then we add our own embellishments to them. But it's never a lie.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** But people remember different things.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** ...just in a different position in the story, different age, you know. You're sitting at a different part in the room, you see a different point of view.

**Joe Welsh:** Exactly, yeah, what the, the **[?]** perspective, yes.



**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Oh, yeah, okay, yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, they, they get the different perspective and a more complete story, yeah. But, it's all confirmation of. And one of the things that, well, I think most, most of us fail to realize in the telling of a story is perspective because we only see one angle. So therefore that's what happened. So somebody listening from a different point of view sees a different aspect of a story, and when we can show the respect for each other's point of view, and then the, the story becomes more complete and becomes more true.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Yeah, more dimensional, like, yeah, instead of being flat.

**Joe Welsh:** Yes, yeah.

**4:55:43 Sherry Farrell Racette:** So, if you were in Regina tonight or if you were there in time for the card playing tonight, would there be stories?

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, yeah.

**Norma Welsh:** Absolutely. There'll be a lot of swearing going on.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, mostly at me.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Do you guys get together every Sunday night to play cards?

**Norma Welsh:** Me and Billie and Joey and Pauline and my sister Madeline and her husband, yeah. A lot of times Billie and I will make supper and invite everybody over for supper, and then we play cards after.

**Joe Welsh:** And if there's anything left over, I get the...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** You give him the leftovers?

**Norma Welsh:** We send the leftovers home with Joey, especially if it's sweet stuff.

**4:56:30 Sherry Farrell Racette:** I think, like, do you find that that you're, like, my mom said something. I said, "Well, if you move here, you know, we want you to be close so that, you know, make sure to visit you or, you know, we won't forget about you." She says, "No, I'll lure you with food." Do you lure your family with food?

**Norma Welsh:** [?] emails for , "Mom, do you have a cake, an extra cake or an extra pie, you know, I'm having company tonight." My girls don't know how to make pie or anything like that. I guess maybe when I'm gone they can pick up on, on the habit, I don't know.

**Joe Welsh:** Well, maybe they can, but they think it's too easy, you know, they don't know that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** [?] They find out it's not that easy. Oh gosh. So, are you hoping your, your two young men in your audience are gonna be the next Welsh storytellers?

**4:57:27 Joe Welsh:** Well, I, I hope so, yeah, but the, the relationship I have with my sisters now, that took, took quite a long time. We spent eight years in that orphanage and, talking about perspective, eh, and for, for a long time, that's all the perspective I had. And then until I started to know, just through simple act of playing cards, picking berries and stuff, there's another perspective. They took care of us for two years after our mother

died. One morning they woke up and they were missing seven little brothers and sisters. The other side of...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Hmm, yeah. But I think for you guys, the stories of culture [?].

**Joe Welsh:** Oh, for sure, yes.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** It's been a, it's been a very strong thing. To have someone you think is gonna be, 'cause you are strong storytellers. Can you see who's gonna be the storyteller of the next generation yet?

**Joe Welsh:** Well, is it manifest in Zack and [?], like, I never spent that much time with them, with them lately, but...

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, I think so. They would be the ones to do that.

**Joe Welsh:** And, well, her son Danny, and I woke up part of their [?]. He's taking a really, really honest interest in, before, well, he never ridiculed or anything like that, but he was still a little bit skeptical and he never said you're, you're a liar, or that one, that never happened, you're just like mom, you know, you walked through ten feet of snow, and all that kind of stuff, wrestle with bears for your supper. But, again through just listening and spending time, you know, oh, jeez. And it's, yeah, and, well, like, but we had to do, you know, it's fun finding out who you are and where you came from, and what it means to be part of family, to have nephews and nieces and great nephews and great nieces and now great great nephews and nieces, yeah, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Mooshum Joe.

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, grey hair, yeah. And I'm gonna wake up every morning and say, "Oh, I'm somebody's great great uncle." Man. And I had nothing to do with it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Just hang around long enough

**Joe Welsh:** Yeah, right, you just have to hang around long enough, yeah.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Tell good stories.

**5:00:11 Joe Welsh:** No, but this, that, that generation, well, I know Norma's kids, but the ones that I've been most involved with are Norma's, but in Gail too, it's becoming manifest in them, you know. This is, this is who I am, and this is where I come from, and I'm an uncle, and they're cousins, and it means so much more than [?].

**Norma Welsh:** Well, we've taken them where we used to play and I've taken them to pick berries and stuff like that, but I mean, they're no good at... Trish is the only one that picked berries. Nancy wouldn't. Haley came with me one time with her boyfriend, and he had to carry her on his back.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Not as tough as women of before, earlier generations.

**Norma Welsh:** But they know my mother very well because, you know, I never stop talking about her and my dad, too. Like, but we were with mom most of the time, so, which is one of the reasons I, there goes my [?], one of the reasons I talk about her all the time is because I spent a lot of time with her, and they know her very well.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Through the stories.

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, And one thing she taught me was to have respect for people. Be proud of who you are and take pride in what you do. I preach that to my kids, to my kids all the time, and they're all very well. I shouldn't say well off, but they all have nothing to worry about.

**Joe Welsh:** They all have the ingrained, work ethic, the...

**Norma Welsh:** Having a job, having, taking care of your responsibilities, and, and they're all very well at that. So that's one good thing that came out of it. My dad was a very mild mannered man, like, Mom was the strong person in the family. Dad was kind, gentle guy, and a hard worker, but he spent a lot of time away, like, on farms.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** [?].

**5:02:37 Norma Welsh:** Yeah, so, but he was very, very gentle man, and he made all our toys. Yeah, mom made our [?]....

**Joe Welsh:** [?].

**Norma Welsh:** ...our rag dolls and our hankies and stuff.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Were you able to save any of that?

**Joe Welsh:** No, it's a shame...

**Norma Welsh:** I, I could just kick my [?] at times thinking about that, and, in fact, we were gonna try and get some material to make the, the little cars that Dad used to make.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Even if you could remember, draw it, and have someone make those...

**Joe Welsh:** [?] used to get, well, old two by fours, saw off a piece about that big. That was the bottom of the truck, and he used to saw off a piece about four inches square and that was the cab. And depending on what resources were available at the time, he used to get beer bottle caps for the wheels or he used to get an old willow or little poplar and, you know, cut little wheels and nail them to the thing. And that was our, and if you wanted to be real luxury, those old [?] cans, the keys on that, the, the rig of metal, we'd used that for the for the aerial, the radio aerial. But, but those kind of simple things, a little imagination, and damn [?], we'd play with those for...

**Norma Welsh:** Forever.

**Joe Welsh:** Never got bored with them because that was...

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** I'd like to see what they look like because when people talk about them, it's, like, you can't truly visualize them, you know, [?] a little drawing or something. [?] made a drawing, make something from your memory, that would be really neat, I think, to share with younger people. Like, what did the Métis rag doll look like compared to say some of the other rag dolls that you see that are so common, but...

**Norma Welsh:** Well, ours are made with old nylons and filled with rags, old rags.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Did they have faces?

**Norma Welsh:** Hmm, Mom would draw a face on it.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Draw or embroider?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah, she would draw a face on them. They'd have hair and, you know.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** What would the hair be made of?

**Norma Welsh:** I can't remember. It was, what do you call it, wool, like, little wool strands, usually was yellow hair. Yeah, pieces of wool and darning wool, all that kind of things. And she'd draw little shoes on it, you know, and I, you know, it was just like having the whole world, having a rag doll. You couldn't take them away from us, you know, walking around with these little dolls under our arms all the time.

**5:05:24 Joe Welsh:** Did you remember the kites?

**Norma Welsh:** Yeah.

**Joe Welsh:** [?] apple boxes and make the cross, and then get brown paper for the body and the kite, you know, cut it out up in a...

**Norma Welsh:** A shape or...

**Joe Welsh:** ...in the shape of a kite and then the tail, bunch of string and a bunch of old newspapers up there, and fifty yards of string and, and there's even kite season, where the, April, when the winds come up. And then marble season came after that.

**Sherry Farrell Racette:** Used to play outside a lot.

**Norma Welsh:** You couldn't keep us in the house. Not a bit. Oh, my kids were like that, too. You couldn't keep them in house, they didn't care about TV or, you know, the odd show they liked to watch, but they were outside all the time, winter and summer. So I really appreciate, I appreciated that. Now,

a lot of my grandchildren sit in front of the TV all the time or computer. But it was, it was a great life.

**5:06:40 Sherry Farrell Racette:** Well, we can probably wrap up now. How's that?