

Edward Sparrow Sr. and Harriet Cook

(main interview) and with Harriet Cook (daughter of E.S.)

Interviewers: Marilyn Clayton & Pat Berringer (for the Britannia Heritage Shipyard Project)

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(Project) Tape No. 115:1 & 115:2

FULL TRANSCRIPTION OF TAPE - NO RESTRICTIONS

MC: Here we go, I've turned it on now, okay, and we're just going to... What we want to do Edward is just talk to you about what you remember, Steveston wise. In the Britannia-Steveston area just... You start and tell us your story. What can you remember about...

ES: Oh, I can remember all, everything what I've seen, I guess. From nineteen hundred and five or so.

MC: And where would you, did you go seasonally to stay on the site there?

ES: No, no, no. In the, in the, that's when it would be nineteen hundred and five or so, my parents were there in the old Star Cannery. That's the first time I ever, I was ever in Steveston.

MC: The Star Cannery?

ES: Yeah.

MC: Okay.

ES: BC Packers, that's the, that'd be the road right in line with the hotel. The cannery used to be down below there. That was the Star Cannery and the camp was up across the hotel. This is about 1905-1906 or so, I don't know. I didn't know not a word of English then, you know. I just, I well, I'm only guessing, only guessing about the year you know because that same year we went to Duncan with my grand parents and a potlatch was put on over there and they used the mask dancers there and I got a picture and it was dated 1906. So that's what I go by.

MC: Okay. Now when you, when you went to the camps, the fish camps, did you go seasonally. Like every year would you go back?

ES: No, we were only there seasonally, in the summer time.

MC: Okay.

ES: No. Unless, you know, further down, there were people living further down towards Garry Point. Our people, they used that for camp, some of them. Stayed there permanently.

MC: Now, how did you, when you went to the camp how did you get there?

ES: By boat.

MC: By boat. Okay, what kind of boats?

ES: Sail boat, (canoes) there was no power then, except tug boats. Columbia built boats.

MC: Oh, the Columbia, like Columbia river boats?

ES: Yeah.

MC: And did... Now those boats, were they owned by yourself or were they owned by the canneries?

ES: Some, some of the people owned their own boats and some rentals. Supplied by the company, canning company.

MC: Now your boat did you own it yourself, or was it..?

ES: Oh, in nineteen two and eight I..., Kishi Brothers built me a boat, in nineteen two and eight.

MC: What was it called, do you remember?

ES: Seabird.

MC: Seabird.

ES: That's the name I give it.

MC: Okay. There's two Kishi's. There was, Jim Kishi is like a younger son and you're probably referring to Jim's father (Tonino) and his uncle (Saeji). I'll have to look back in the records.

ES: Let's see now, 19... Just before I retired in 1972, the older Kishi was looking for me there, I was out fishing there, you know, with a guy. I bought his boat for one of my sons, when they were run into concentration camps or something up in the interior. I bought his boat for \$1500, he didn't want to give it up to the custodians.

MC: So you bought it?

ES: He give it to me very, very cheap, for my son. Then I never seen him after that. Until about 1972, he was at the Pacific Coast looking for me. I was out fishing when he got there. I don't know if I can remember how he looks, you know. I haven't seen him for so long.

MC: I should have brought a picture but I'll come back. I'll come back and I'll bring a picture of some of the other people that we've interviewed. You'd probably enjoy seeing. If you've got any specifics...

PB: No, go ahead.

MC: Okay. Now was the whole family involved when you went to a camp, a fishing camp?

ES: The whole family moved there for the season.

MC: Okay. So what would the, what would the women do, what kind of work?

ES: They worked in the cannery.

MC: Would they maybe, would they be working with the Japanese women then?

ES: Mostly Indians were working in the cannery in those days then. Well, there's no modern machines that they've got now. Mostly done by butchering knives. The Chinese they, they head the thing and then they rip the thing open, by the stomach and they shoot it off for someone to take the guts out. They had a conveyer going, belt going conveyer they call it. From there it goes into a fish, a fish washers, conveyer going all the time. The only thing, the machinery they had then, you know, was the, they called the iron chinks. Where they cut the salmon to the size of the can. Well, of course they had conveyors but no canning or cooking or one thing and another. But that only came in, oh about in the '30s, I guess. Probably a little bit earlier, I can't say for sure. But most of the work was done by hand. (They did have some machines, the ""Iron Chink"", a machine to put lids onto cans, and retorts.)

MC: Packing in the cans and everything?

ES: Beg your pardon?

MC: Filling the cans?

ES: Yep, yep.

MC: How long was the fishing season? Like how long would you...

ES: Well, it usually started in July, and end up, it would end up or four or five weeks. They didn't fish like we do now. I think we over do things right now, you know, right from, right from May 'til, well they're still going at it every now and then, I think. And the fishermen are complaining they're getting not enough time. Well, they're getting more time and at that rate there'll be no more salmon left.

MC: That's what it is isn't it. Did you fish yourself? Like you went out in one of the Fraser River Skiffs?

ES: Well, I fished pretty near all my life until.... I started in 1911. Fishing with my, I guess you'd call him my grand uncle, my grandfather's first cousin. That's how I started, boat puller. In 1924, well, it got so bad I went to log camps, you know. After I came out of school. There was a slide in probably 1911 or 12, in the canyon, fish can't get up to the spawning grounds no more. (Hell's Gate slide of 1913 caused by C.N.R. blasting) They died down to nothing, they were nothing at all. 1916, I only had a little over 300, I was on my own then. I only had a little over 300 sockeye for the season. I went behind on my gear, and one thing and another, my rental, boat rental and everything. So I quit that and started working in the logging camps.

MC: Okay. And how long did you do that?

ES: Well, I started in 1924 up Skeena. I never think about fishing during the war. I went up there for, started 1924 til 1942, when I quit going up Skeena. There was a place where you could make a dollar or two you know. This was practically a dry well out here. There was few fish but they didn't last very long.

MC: When you fished in one of the skiffs, that would be, like, what they call a dead skiff, no motor in it or anything,

ES: Yeah, well, just an ordinary boat.

MC: You got towed out?

ES: Yeah. They had tug boats for towing them. They had a long rope behind them, they anchored this boat here, on the last boat permanently. He's hanging on to that tow line, and the other guys are zig zagged along the tow line. When they want a good spot, a good opening or whatever it is, then they let the bow go and then the guy down in the stern would hang on for a while and would just shoot right out of the waves.

MC: How many would be in a boat? How many people?

ES: Two.

MC: Two.

ES: Yeah, always two in a gill netter.

MC: Always two. So you'd stay out there until you got your fill and then be....

ES: Wait until the tide. We worked by tides.

MC: Okay, okay.

ES: No, we could work pretty near all day if we wanted to, if you're full. In them days you can't, you just anchor at times. Wait for the tide to turn. Otherwise you'd keep going way out somewhere, where you didn't want to be.

MC: Drift out to sea. I understand you have a story to tell me about the drum, the drum. First drum on the...

ES: Oh yeah. Well, well, we'll get to that after a while.

MC: After a while? Okay, well when you're ready you can tell me. When you lived in the camps, what was the housing like?

ES: Oh, they kept up pretty good.

MC: What would it look like?

ES: Well, the one I was living in, for years in B.C. Packers, right, had a sitting room, kitchen, and a storage room in the back and two bedrooms and a flush toilet.

MC: Okay. So, you know, there aren't very many photos or anything, so we're just trying to visualize.

ES: I stayed right next to, I don't know if you've heard of it, Hong Wo's store.

MC: That's what I was just going to say. There's a picture here. That's Hong Wo's store there.

ES: Yeah.

MC: Can you see that? It's kind of blurry. Evidently that's Hong Wo's store and I guess the Pacific Coast Cannery would have been this...

ES: Was over there. I be living right here.

MC: Really.

ES: Right close to that Hong Wo store. All I had to do was step out and order my things and they'd throw it out to me.

MC: So, free delivery was it? That's great.

ES: George, George Lam was the owner then, his father passed away. And his sister, I kind of forgot her name. No, I can't recall her name now. Oh, Jessie. She was married to a white man, her. George, he died in probably '71 or so. He had cancer of the throat I think. Oh, he was a good guy.

MC: There's another picture here, and maybe you can help me with it. This is, it's labelled one thing on the back and we're not really sure. Does that look like any of the housing that you ever saw around in that area? It's very similar to a building that's still left on our site. Hopefully one day we can get you to come down and see.

ES: Gee, I couldn't recall, there were, oh, houses, camp sites, and one thing and another, were pretty near, very near, you know. They look alike, you know. They build as cheap as possible I guess. But around Moncton Street, and one thing and another, there something different. There were stores, and one thing and another there.

MC: Right. Okay, the houses you lived in, were they like, one family per house or was it a long..?

ES: Yeah, just one family.

MC: One family, okay.

ES: Oh, they had house like that, like they call bunk houses. Well, they had a lower floor, then the top section was also a living too. They had kitchens, everything, exactly the same as down in the bottom. They had two story camps like you know. That's the way it was in Star Cannery anyway, I can remember that. Then, later on, it was still there for quite a long time after. There was one, there were a couple at Pacific Coast that were similar. Just the same thing we're talking about now. They had two stories and they were long, oh from here to the house across there, I guess. And maybe 5, 6, 7 sections or rooms, whatever you want to call them.

MC: And two floors.

ES: Yeah.

MC: Okay, so, I guess 14 families could live in that at one time.

ES: Could be, yeah, somewhere in there.

MC: There is a building on the site, and its long and its got a number of individual separate entrances.

ES: Yeah, that's right, every door was numbered.

MC: Yeah, okay, okay. We're just hoping that maybe one day you'll come out to our site and you'll see that one of the buildings that's still there and maybe help us to identify.

ES: Whereabouts?

MC: In Steveston, on the Britannia site. We think its been moved from the back dyke forward, and that's what makes things difficult sometimes is...

ES: Well, what happened there you know, there were houses all along the back of Britannia, and that. That, the place, sand was pumped in. Flatten it, usually, used to be just a low lying area, below the dyke.

MC: Do you remember when they pumped the sand in?

ES: Oh yeah, I was fishing there then. That island there in front of Britannia, just a mud island. Sand was pumped into that place too. They had a light on the end of the island. But later on, they took it off after they pumped the sand there. That's all reclaimed land there, you know, on that little island across from Britannia.

MC: Do you remember the big fire that happened in Steveston?

ES: Must have been when I was up Chilliwack, I guess when it happened. What year was it, I wonder?

MC: There was a big fire in, I think it was 1918. Does that ring a bell?

PB: I don't know actually...

MC: There was a very large fire and...

ES: See I went up Chilliwack, probably 1919, 1921. And I was away for, what 7 years. Things, working in a logging camp, rooming. Then...

MC: That's when the fish were down.

ES: Yeah. You couldn't make a living out of it.

MC: That's when they changed the Britannia Cannery into a shipyard. The same thing, there just, there wasn't the canning facility demand.

ES: I couldn't recall when they changed. Anyways. When I got my boat in 1928, there were probably two, three years before that when they were made into a, one section of it was a machine shop. The other section was a net loft or storage room. Then, on the east side of it was a deck like, just a wharf, they made that into net racks. Then back after they filled it up, they had net racks there. They ripped all the old homes away from there, before they filled it up (with sand). Kishi's boat house was there on the east side of Britannia. (The slough west of Phoenix was filled as well. It was turned into G. Lam's land, which runs east to No.2 Road, between No. 2 and Gilbert.)

MC: There is still a Kishi boatworks on the site now.

ES: Where at?

MC: At Britannia.

ES: East?

MC: No would be more the west. One burnt down, but there is a, there is a Kishi boat works on the site.

ES: The younger brother came back and worked, opened that.

MC: That's right, that's the one.

ES: After the war. But the older one, the one I'm really acquainted with, stayed up back east somewhere, I don't know where he was, you know. I never met him from the time he left.

MC: Do you remember there was a Murakami Boatworks?

ES: Where?

MC: Murakami, remember that name?

ES: Oh, yeah.

MC: Yeah. That was, that was on the Britannia site.

ES: There was a couple of boat houses there.

MC: That's right, that's right. I've got a map, an old map of the site, and we've been bit by bit identifying different places on it.

ES: I kind of think they were more toward the slough weren't they?

MC: Maybe you can help me.

ES: Because, because the Kishi brothers were, yeah, they were side by side practically, you know.

MC: Okay. Now I'll just point out a few things on here. This is, this is the Britannia, combination of the boatworks. Probably what you're talking about of.... With the ways going in there. Okay.

ES: Yeah, the ways was this corner here.

MC: That's right, that's right. And there was a net (rack) loft here. Over here's the Pacific....

ES: Coast. That's where I stayed right there. (Referring to 1936 waterworks map)

MC: Okay, this, this number here, this little red dot, that's Hong Wo's store.

ES: Yeah, and Great West was east of that.

MC: Okay, so now where, show me where you would have lived.

ES: I showed you, it was plainer in that other picture you have.

MC: Okay, so if this is the Hong Wo store.

ES: Yeah, we're right there.

MC: Right there.

ES: Right close, next to the.

MC: Okay, now are you on the water? Which side of the dyke are you? On the...

ES: Inside.

MC: Inside, below the dyke then.

ES: They had a bunch of houses there for, for cannery workers. (Along the new dyke there was a Japanese store, and nets)

MC: So that would be all along in here.

ES: Yeah, a row that way, running west, north and west (along new dyke). There was quite a few and there was few houses right straight back of Pacific. (Also a Store and Japanese nets) What I'm talking about, they call it a bunk houses. There was one, two, three, of them there I think.

MC: Okay. And were these camps, like summer camps?

ES: Well, mostly Japanese lived in them.

MC: Okay. There was a, by Hong Wo's store there was a big bunk house there too for the Japan, oh Chinese.

ES: No, no the Chinese.

MC: Chinese. You remember that do you?

ES: Yeah, well my place was right next to the bunk house. Green, green, green shack or whatever you want to call it. They call it shacks anyways, the company did. They were nice them ones, they moved it from Deep Bay, I think. They had a reduction plant there and they moved it over, quite a few houses were moved over, brought over by scows. And when they got those things in there, we used to live right back of Imperial. Imperial Cannery. (There were two Chinese bunkhouses at Hong Wo's, they were inside the dyke. Hong Wo's was outside the dyke on pilings.)

MC: Right.

ES: They had those long houses you were talking about, few were single ones.

MC: That's right.

ES: Then before I came there, I was living on Westham Island. The company built me a house there.

MC: And then, how did you get... Did you just come by boat across?

ES: Me.

MC: Yeah.

ES: Car in those days.

MC: Car those days, okay.

ES: Caught up with the modern times. No, no more canoes.

MC: Actually the canoes in some of these photographs, is, does anybody still make?

ES: Yeah, there's a few guys that are still making them. But its a lot of work for nothing. [No ones gives you the time.]

MC: Where could we go to see one? Where would we be able to go and see?

ES: I don't know where, I couldn't tell you that.

MC: Okay, its just, its of interest. You know, to see what we can come up with. This, this says Imperial Cannery here. That this was living quarters, at the Imperial Cannery. Now is that the way you recall housing?

ES: Well, these, yeah. Most of them were like that.

MC: Okay.

ES: Some of them were only one, I guess you'd call them one flat deck. But some of them had two stories.

MC: And all those separate entrances. Okay. So where would you cook, inside?

ES: You can't very well cook outside.

MC: Well, when you look inside there doesn't seem That's a kind of silly question.

ES: Sure they had a stove in them, they were nice places. They weren't really nice polished floors or nothing. They were temporary homes. (Had a sink in the house)

MC: When we look inside those building there doesn't seem to be any room division or anything, that's why.

ES: I think they were. Well, they were pretty well kept. They were all painted before the workers would come in.

MC: Sure, okay. When you came back to a camp, would you. Every year, did you go back to the same cannery and the same...

ES: Sometimes we stayed there all year round, my wife and I, and she was working in the cannery. Then when they, the two younger children, well, got older, they were going to old school, I mean high school. Then we were never bothered about coming home. We stayed right at the camp.

MC: Okay. What would make you choose one camp or one cannery over another?

ES: Well, it all depends. You make a good showing and the company would want you to work for them. I never, I never fished for any other company but B.C. Packers. Well, they had assumed I was a pretty good worker, they knew I was a good worker. They'd helped me buy a boat, or any nets, or [anything I want]. They'd give me cheap living quarters and one thing and another. For fact, they built my house in Westham Island. I lived in that for about four, five years. The wife wanted to go back to work in the cannery so we moved to Steveston again. That's when we went to, well, we went to Imperial and we didn't like too many people there. So we asked for another, to be moved, we bought, at Pacific Coast. It was a pretty good home. We had a good sitting room, two bedrooms, flush toilet and storage room.

MC: And that, that's where you were describing on this map down there. Okay.

ES: Uh huh.

MC: We met a man and his last name is Kobayashi, Kobayashi. His first name Yutaka Kobayashi.

ES: I wouldn't know him.

MC: He lived, he's a Japanese man, and he lived in a home round in this area too. It was a home on stilts, right above the water.

ES: We were all on stilts, or just about, because. Well, 19... It had to be that way because every now and then, a lot of them, there would be a great big tide in the winter time, would go over the dyke.

MC: Do you remember storms like that?

ES: Oh yeah, we had to get away from there once and come home to here. We were down below then. We were away for about, almost a month.

MC: Do you remember what year that was?

ES: I think it was in the, in the, in the fifties.

MC: Okay.

ES: I can't recall the exact year.

MC: A winter storm?

ES: (When the Old Dyke broke) Yeah, just before Christmas, maybe a couple of weeks before Christmas, I think. My granddaughter, one of my granddaughter was living there too you know. We all had to move. We got away in time. Cause where we kept our car, the whole place, that place was about three, four, five feet of water, after we got away.

MC: Oh boy. A lot of cleaning out after that.

ES: Went over our neck. A big storm that. South east wind raised the tide higher than usual.

MC: Sometimes there were lightening storms with the south east.

ES: Yeah, mostly, yeah, south east. Happens more in, up Skeena, up the northern area, the south east. Not so much here, I don't think. Up there in Skeena River you could see it, where the lightening is, hits you can see bolts all around you. [You could say] it doesn't happen like that over here. Not quite as bad.

MC: Now you say, the whole family was involved when you were fishing, and probably the women were in the cannery. What did the children do? Did they help at all?

ES: Well, some of them were of age to work up in the can lofts (storage area for cans) or something. It was small pay,

but you know, good enough for them to buy candies. (They would also fill trays with cans.)

MC: At Hong Wo's store right?

ES: Yeah. No, no. My children were going to high school then, when they were there.

MC: Where did they go to high school, in Steveston? Richmond?

ES: My youngest boy was. Yeah, he went to school in Richmond there for awhile, the youngest boy. Then his sister went to Point Grey, I think. She went to a couple, I just can't recall, but my youngest son was at McGee. Went to McGee High School. They had a reunion there about three weeks ago. They were looking for him and I gave them the phone number and one thing and another, and I doubt whether he went or not. I don't think he would.

MC: Did you really enjoy fishing?

ES: Well, that's the only thing in my life is the work I had you know. It was a good way of making money if you work at it. So.

MC: Would you have had to repair your own nets and things like that?

ES: All the time, you have to do it, you know. You can't be buying nets, they're so damned expensive. You put in, weekends you're repairing nets. One or two days, all depends what condition your net had been in, through the week. You'd repair it on the weekends.

MC: Did you repair them on the racks, net racks?

ES: Yeah, on the floats. We had floats where we were. Britannia had the, had theirs on a wharf like.

MC: That's right. There was, I think there was a big rack here, to the side. Its no longer there now, but that's what we understand.

ES: Well, they had the, B.C. Packers had the floats like. Along there was also, a wharf there where they had the racks. And a couple of boat houses, one thing and another.

MC: Do you remember the boardwalk that went along?

ES: They had boardwalks all over the place.

MC: Well, that's right. It was the only way wasn't it.

ES: Yeah.

MC: What can you remember when you think of the boardwalk, what comes into your mind?

ES: Well, they were awful high for one thing, I know. Right in the middle of it was a road, a gravel road, in the horse and buggy days mostly then, you know. And they're (the boards in the boardwalk are) kind of spongy all the time, along the front of the store. And every store was on a post or stilts or whatever you want to call it. It was a real low lying area. But they brought in silt after that, you don't need no high walk now.

MC: No, no. The boardwalk that went , say from Hong Wo's down past Britannia and everything, do you remember that one?

ES: Well, that, that didn't all last very long after the dyke was put in.

MC: Okay.

ES: The dyke, they put in, that great big dyke was put in there they didn't need them boardwalks no more.

MC: That's right, there was a higher dyke put in at the back.

ES: Later on they, they gravelled that for the cars to go by, back and forth.

MC: The children that were around the site, what, where did they play? What kind of things did they do?

ES: Back of Imperial, there was a play ground they had then.

MC: So just try and keep them out of mischief?

ES: It wasn't so much events for them. But now they have all kinds of things, you know, pass the time away. Mostly in the summer, they had baseball and one thing and another. That's about all.

MC: Now your whole family got involved in fishing, didn't they?

ES: Well, every one of them became fishermen.

MC: Everyone.

ES: I give every one of them a start. They all done well for themselves.

MC: Now the boat that you bought from the Kishis, the one you bought for your son, what was the name of that one? Do you remember.

ES: Gee, I can't recall what the name of that one.

MC: I'll look through some of the old files and see if we can.

ES: Huh?

MC: I'll look through some of the old Kishi files and see if we can find the name. That would have been about 1940 something?

ES: '42.

MC: '42, okay.

ES: I can't recall what we call it but I know they gave me a name when I bought it.

MC: I bet you the Kishis would remember.

ES: Well, Kishi wouldn't know.

MC: He wouldn't know?

ES: He had to deal with the custodians. They only gave me the number of the boat and one thing and another. They had the boats up at Westminster. In behind them, there were piles. (Note: all Fraser River Japanese owned boats were ceased and kept at Westminster.)

MC: Now in the picture, there's a few photographs with the canoes, the Indian canoes in them. Did you, did they use those canoes for fishing as well or?

ES: No, no, they just were canoes. Mostly up river people, I guess. (Also Skiffs and Columbia boats) (Grandfather only talked about double ended flat bottomed skiffs, 6' to 7' wide and less than 30 feet long)

MC: Okay.

ES: Oh, maybe the odd people from Vancouver Island. Oh yeah, they, they come all the way from, they came as far as Fort Simpson now, Prince Rupert, working the canneries along here. I drove by, they have canneries, all kinds of canneries up there too.

MC: But they'd come down each season?

ES: Yeah, they'd come down just for, I don't know, change I guess.

MC: Okay. Just taking a quick look through here, I want to make sure that I cover all my questions. Now, when we

talked with the Japanese fellow he, he actually referred the Pacific Coast Cannery as Ben Cannery. Do you know that name?

ES: Well, could have been, maybe because B.C. Packers bought up most of the canneries. I couldn't say for sure. Because there was, they bought.. Well, the Star Cannery was theirs. And there was little, a couple of other canneries, Canoe Pass, Canadian Pacific. (Wallace, Mallard) B.C. Packers had two canneries, plus Canadian and the other one, I forgot what you call it, it's an American outfit anyways. They bought up all the canneries. And then later on in the late thirties the other companies, amalgamated with B.C. Packers. And the name might have been changed, I don't know, I couldn't say. Huge cannery and there was a couple of canneries east of Alex Fraser Bridge. They all became B.C. Packers. (Other B.C. Packers canneries included Wallace, and Mallard.)

MC: Okay. You were saying when you went out on your boat there were two people in it. Who would, who would be your partner, when you were out fishing?

ES: Well, anybody that, you would pick a guy that, you know...

MC: Pick a good worker.

ES: Good worker, yeah. That's why you can't get a partner now. Later on, you don't need no partner when they put on them drums. Worked alone.

MC: Okay. So tell me about the drums.

ES: Well, are you familiar asking about boats and one thing and another? That's the end of the story?

MC: No what happens is when you start talking, then I think of more questions so.

ES: Yeah well. Really I don't know, it's, you got away from, you know. It was kind of an expensive thing to put on and still is. But in the long run you gained by having a drum installed, you don't have to pay to nobody. Everything comes to you instead.

MC: Eventually a lot of those little Columbia River Skiffs (correction: Fraser River Skiff) had motors put in, like the little Easthope Motor. Did you ever do that?

ES: A few up Skeena. There were very, very few here that you know, they just cut the stern off square like, put a shaft there and propeller, rudder. Rudder was sticking out there, it got caught in the net all the time. Few of them were, you know while it happened, I'd say about 1911, 12. There were few motors around, very, very few. They only had two cycle engines, I think they called them.

MC: Putt, putt.

ES: They'd make a noise then explode. You would duck every time they'd explode.

MC: So you say when you went out to fish, now how many hours would you be out?

ES: Well, you worked tides, three, four hours.

MC: Okay. Oh, three, four hours, okay.

ES: Something like that. Then you'd wait for the next tide to go out again. You can't fish Fraser River on a strong run out. Its so strong, the tides are swift. You'd get into trouble, you catch a buoys and everything else, because direction of the river doesn't always just go on schedule. You know straight out, it goes out over the flats and all around. When you've gone into the flats and get high and dry and wait for the tide to get out. You got to wait for the tide gets down low, then start again.

MC: Okay. Now in that period of time, you know when you're out there with the tide, would you get a full quota, a full load of fish?

ES: Well, depends if the fish are running.

MC: Okay.

ES: Sometimes you get four or five a day, sometimes you get two, three hundred, all depends.

MC: Do you still like fish?

ES: Huh?

MC: Do you still like fish?

ES: What do you mean, to eat?

MC: Yeah.

ES: Yes, why sure. Why shouldn't I? Its a, its a healthy food.

MC: It is, yeah. Is it, was it a large part of your diet, when you were fishing?

ES: Well, you had to get in a big quota to make money because in 1911, 1913, they were only 15c a piece, you know.

MC: Oh, really.

ES: You know, you had to, you had to get a big quota of sockeye to make money.

MC: That's right.

ES: Your net would cost you, then a yield was cheaper, your net would cost you probably \$120, \$150 or so for you to rent a net from a company then. But if you buy it outright, cork lines and everything, it would cost you about \$300. You got to get a lot of bloody fish to pay for that line.

MC: Did most people rent their nets then and their boats?

ES: Yeah, some of them would work contracts. You'd only get probably two thirds out of a catch. The company would take a third out of your income, something like that. That's how it works.

MC: And did you buy most of your groceries from that store, the Hong Wo store?

ES: Oh yeah.

MC: You know there were a number of different groups there. There were the, there was the Chinese people, and Japanese and yourselves. Did you mix at all, did you socialize together?

ES: Oh yeah, we got along good with the Japanese. Not so much with the Chinese, you know, they're not as friendly as the Japanese.

MC: Chinese kept more to themselves did they?

ES: Yeah. Well, most of the people around then, I don't know why they were talking in English. Well, you couldn't understand them at time. They didn't speak very well. Some of them were really friendly, some of them, you know, you can't get along with them. I don't know why, I can't make out, make out. The Japanese boys are, they mix up with our boys all the time, then. I got really good, a lot of good friends in Steveston.

MC: Who's one of the fellows I've been talking to, Tom Hiroshi. Do you remember Hiroshis?

ES: Yeah, and the guy, I think he's....

MC: Lanky Mizuguchi?

ES: Watch, that jewellery store there, George. Of course, I forgot his last name. He's a good friend of mine and.

MC: Do you know the name Mizuguchi?

ES: Yeah.

MC: Lanky? I think his real name is Yutaka.

ES: Yeah. Atagi brothers, I know them well.

MC: Yamanaka?

ES: Yamanaka, yeah.

MC: Now, Yamanaka, like Dr. Yamanaka is out in Ladner.

ES: I know.

MC: Yeah, 'cause he's my mom's doctor. And I just, I didn't realize the relationship between the Yamanaka Boatworks and Dr. Yamanaka.

ES: Yamanaka had the boatworks in Burrard Inlet for a while too you know.

MC: Uh huh.

ES: Yamanaka, he's the, the younger fellow's in Ladner now. What's

MC: Oscar.

ES: Right by the bridge, Oscar.

MC: Right, Oscar. You know, we've been making a Fraser River Skiff at the Britannia Project.

ES: Uh huh.

MC: They're building one, it's completed now. And the boat builders were working from plans that were drawn up by D.H. Carter. Have you ever heard of that name? D.H. Carter.

ES: Oh, I don't think so, no.

MC: You don't think, okay. Well, we're just trying to research that name right now. And he was in the area for sometime and drew up the plans.

ES: Yamanaka was above, the boatworks was above the Great West Cannery. His father was the one who had it. Oscar was just a young guy then. Well you know, Oscar, now you know.

MC: Did you know, lets see, now the father's name is Sadakichi. Sadakichi Yamanaka, that's Oscar's dad.

ES: Well, I didn't get to learning the names. I always called them Yamanaka, you know.

MC: Well, that would do it.

ES: Well, Oscar was just about 18 years old then, something like that.

MC: Okay.

ES: Yeah, I know Oscar very well, him and my son used to get along good, play together. I think they went to school together in Richmond School. And I think it was, must have been about the 50's when my son came home and went to McGee.

MC: Do you have any photographs of when you were fishing?

ES: Gee, I don't know. I got lots of.. No, yeah, well, I got a video, on a movie camera. But I haven't got it here, my son's got it. Well, I got a bunch of them and well he, I turned it into a video and he's got it. I've been asking him for it, I'd like to see, you know. People want to see what was going on years ago too, you know.

MC: That's right. It's really of interest now, for sure.

ES: I have a hard time to get it over. And the pictures were took on the Inlet. I'll ask him again, and he said its coming but I'm not quite finished he said.

MC: There we've got our mechanisms rolling again here. So you say you're just getting warmed up. Well, I've brought three tapes so, settle in for the whole day.

ES: Well, you were talking about, I believe it was 1932 or 34, when the drums first came about. You had to have your partner as a net man. You were the captain. He pulled the net in and you pulled with oars. Back the boat up. I think it was 1932, 34 when I put on my first drum. Kishi built my drum. Britannia put in my machine work for the drum.

MC: Do you know who the foreman was?

ES: I just tried to recall his name. He was, he was kind of a small man.

MC: Would it have been George?

ES: George, yeah.

MC: Shorey?

ES: Uh huh, yeah, that's him.

MC: Okay.

ES: He's a.... I think its the first drum he put on, he had to phone a guy in Westminster that build a, started this drum business. I think he came down, I'm sure he came down to help George, draw the...

MC: So Kishi's build the drum for you?

ES: Yeah.

MC: And the boatworks at Britannia installed it?

ES: Yeah. Well, they put the bedding on. Kishi put the bedding on, built the drum and built the stern rollers they call them. Then Britannia put in the machine work. It worked by motor, you know, it was motor going. It got a great big, belt up in the front to turn the shaft through your stern.

MC: And what, what was the name of that boat?

ES: Sea Bird, that's the first boat.

MC: That's the Sea Bird, okay. Then did, by putting the drum on Edward, did that make your job easier?

ES: Much.

MC: Much.

ES: Much easier. You didn't even have to pull the nets. The drum pulls it in for you. You had a lever at your foot. When the fish gets in, well you take your foot off the clutch, then take out the fish and step on, and away you go again. No more hard work.

MC: Well, not as hard anyway.

ES: No. P D: What did people say when they saw you with your drum?

ES: What? P D: What did the people say when they saw you with your drum on the boat?

ES: Oh, I can't really say. Well what's the matter, are you a sissy. Don't you want to work hard no more? I says no. I says got to try something. My, one of my in-laws from Ladner and I were the first ones to put on the drums in Steveston.

MC: Okay. And who is your in-law?

ES: He would have been my brother-in law, Alf Wilson.

MC: Wilson, okay.

ES: Mike Wilson would have been my brother-in-law. I got a bunch of nephews on Westham Island.

MC: Kenny? Kenny Wilson?

ES: Yeah, Kenny's my great nephew I guess.

MC: I went to school with him.

ES: Mike Wilson, Smokey Wilson is my nephew.

MC: Oh Smokey, okay.

ES: He lives on the River Road. Right, the corner of Charleton Road and River Road. And the other guys are down Westham Island, they're nephews of mine.

MC: So they called you a sissy did they, for putting on a drum?

ES: Yeah, they say, ""What's the matter you getting sissy. Don't want to work hard no more?"" We had problems for a while.

MC: Did you?

ES: Sometimes the belt, you'd get the wrong size belt and it'd slip on you. Then you got to pick up by hand, and they make fun of you. Not too long everyone had drums on, they never made fun of nobody no more.

MC: You said you were one of the first to put in on... How did you hear about the drum? How, who...

ES: Well, it was advertised. They were started up Westminster. They started up there first. Then, I don't know why, I kind of think, Alf Wilson bought a, bought a boat, an old boat from Kishi brothers too, I think. I'm not sure. But we were talking together and he says, ""Gee, I think I should buy a bloody drum and get away from having partners."" Have so much problems with partners. When you're ready to go off, they're not there. Or they come down drunk or something like that. I got away from that and I thought I'd better put on a bloody drum and be out on my own. I wouldn't have the worry about waiting for a partner. Oh, waste time, you waste time waiting for these guys. When you're on your own, well, you're not losing nothing.

MC: So when you had the drum, you just went out on your own?

ES: Uh huh.

MC: Just one man in a boat then?

ES: Yep, yep. For years I done that. From the time I put my drum on until I retire in '74. Once in a while one of my sons would go out with me, just for, just for the trip. Then they helped me along. Much easier, you have a, you have a, you don't get so tired. But the other way, hell, you're muscles were two to three times the size. Picking up the bloody nets was heavy.

MC: Popeye.

ES: You had a lot of spinach.

MC: I'm just going to show you, there's a photograph here, or its a xerox picture of a photograph. And this is one of the buildings that's on the site. Now maybe we'll just look, see, we'll look in this area here. It's a long building and its got vertical siding on it. And there's a number of door entrances. We were wondering if that, that might be similar to the housing.

ES: That's right, that's the way they build the housing in some places. Some of them had two decks, what ever you want to call them. And some of them, they're just flat like.

MC: This one was pretty, pretty high.

ES: Well yeah, they had to be high. It was so low. That's before they really put in the big dyke. Most of these were built before the big dykes were put in.

MC: That's right, that's right.

ES: As I say, I think they started in 1911, I think somewhere. I used to see the, the, I can't really recall what they call them. Anyways, they had a great big boom. They can control down here. And they had a great big bars, similar to the ones they got in platforms. They'd open out and drop down and they grab the mud and pull it over. They'd swing the boom over. They didn't have no trucks like the ones and the machinery they've got now. Sometimes they had to be pulled by another one. They had 4-5 maybe 6 working with them. In a day or so all scattered all around the island. When they were dyking, same in Sea Island.

MC: Dredging it out of the river bottom. There, on the deck here at the Britannia, there's a big boom or crane and a boom on the deck and its still there now.

ES: Well, another reason that, that (winch) style was for lowering nets and one thing and another. Engines and what not, you know.

MC: Taking masts off. Do you remember...?

ES: They call it a crane.

MC: A crane. There was a crane. There's a man by the name of, Buster McKenzie. Do you remember that name?

ES: No, never heard of him, no.

MC: Never heard of him, okay. There was a fellow in the machine shop named Cecil, Cec Fisher. Is that name.... He did a lot of the welding work and I thought maybe he might have been part of when you had George Shorey working on your boat.

ES: I remember dealing with him, right after that, you know. I dealt with Easthope Brothers in #1 Road. Because I knew George Easthope from Vancouver. Then when they moved, the younger boys moved over there and I dealt with them right away.

MC: Do you know next week, and I'll get the dates on it, but there's going to be an Easthope display at the Richmond Library and it might be something you'd like to go to. I'll get the details on it for you. I think....

ES: I think Percy, I think Percy is gone, the older, the older guys. (Percy's father was Joe) I was talking to the young guy, a couple of years ago, in his shop and I'm sure the older guys are gone now, I know. Some of them would be a little bit younger or about my age. Percy was about my age I guess. He was the, his dad retired and I can't recall the other guy's name, there were three, three Easthope brothers that started the Easthope Company in Vancouver. I bought their engines from them, the second engine from them for my boat.

MC: What size engine, do you know?

ES: Oh, they were small, just, well seven to eight horse power, whatever. One cylinder. Old Dunbar they call 'em.

MC: Was it loud?

ES: Oh yeah, they had exhaust but not as bad as earlier ones. The earlier ones didn't have no muffler. Every time they hit, they hit it with a big blast. You could hear the, a boat away for miles. That's loud. I was saying 1911, 1913, there were two cycle engines then. But later on, they got four cycled. But they, well things began to change, they put on a muffler and one thing and another, quieter. Water running into the exhaust pipe, that cut down on a lot of the noise.

MC: Did they miss sometimes?

ES: All the time. Yeah, you had a problem there. They weren't perfect. I remember one time, my brother-in-law, William Baker, from North Vancouver.

MC: William Baker?

ES: Uh huh.

MC: Okay.

ES: We were out Bowen Island. We were beachcombing and we had a two cylinder primer and the thing stopped running, we were at Point Atkinson. We were messing around, well there was no starters on them you had to turn them with a fly wheel to get them started. And he kept running and running. Oh, we were there for a good hour, I guess. Drifting around different, no wind, nothing, in the evening. He was so mad he got his hammer and he was going to hammer his engine. I said, ""Oh Bill, we'll really be stuck."" I took the hammer away from him. Really thought I was wrong. No spark in it was all (wire was off).

MC: He was going to fix it?

ES: Fix it for good. Well, you do a lot of funny things. One time, I think it was in 19..., I believe it was 1927, I was using a rental boat in Skeena. I was moving from, well, you move from one drift to the other all the time. Some time you go back up river again, another time you go further down. And going along all of a sudden, it started to make all kind of racket and what the hecks the matter, got scared and I ran out of the cabin. I was inside the cabin, steering. Then, hell this pounding, pounding, pounding away and the cylinders weren't matching no more. And these, I didn't know nothing about it all. And I stopped the engine. I went to turn the fly wheel and only one cylinder would move. Other one wouldn't move at all. Finally the other one started after. Then I opened the base and the lead crank shaft was broken right in half. It scared the heck out of me. It was loud. They were rental boats. I lost about two weeks getting another engine up there from, Easthope brought it. We had boats for quite awhile up there in Skeena River, B.C. It was Wallace Canning Company then.

PB: What was it called?

ES: Wallace.

PB: Wallace.

ES: They had a cannery in West Vancouver too. They had enough made it in the, in the, in the '30's. Something like that. Probably before that, went into B.C. Packers. Great West, a lot of other companies around, American companies amalgamated with B.C. Packers. Great West, I don't think it ever did but all of the Packers and other ones. Nelson Brothers came into the picture quite a while after. Richie Nelson and his gang, they took away Great West, after B.C. Packers got that.

MC: Can you remember any funny stories? Any humorous things that happened in your years. Something that comes to mind that gives you a chuckle.

ES: What kind of stories? There were a lot of funny stories on a boat you know.

MC: Well, tell me one.

ES: Well, I believe it was 1915, something like that. Sixteen maybe. My brother-in-law, Mike Wilson, he was one of the few guys that had gas boats in Canoe Pass, they lived in Canoe Pass then. Then my grandparents, I was with my grandparents in Scottish Canadian Cannery down in Garry Point. I was working there and he got the idea for a partner, looking for me. So I went over with him. I fished with him for one or two weeks I guess. And a good foggy night, no compass, well we had a compass, but no depth sounders and one thing and another. No modern equipment then you know. You had to, to stay in the channel, you had to feel your way around with the oar. Doing that and we got to place they call Goose Island, Canoe Pass. He says, ""You'd better go up into the bow, you'll be able to see better"", he says to me. We go along there and we couldn't see nothing, really foggy and we couldn't see from here to the stove. And then we go along there and all of a sudden and then bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, into an echo. What the bloody hell! I looked and there were piles over there and piles over here and we're underneath the wharf. There we were underneath the wharf. Clear inside. We jammed up, we got jammed up between two sets of the piles. I don't know how we did that though.

MC: Well, that's a good story.

ES: We had a heck of a time backing out.

MC: And were you the navigator at the time?

ES: No, he was, he was the boss.

MC: So you could put the blame on him.

ES: Yeah. We kept it a secret for a long time. We wouldn't tell.

PB: Now everybody knows.

ES: This was hard for me in 1915/16.

MC: So you were just a young guy?

ES: Yeah.

MC: Oh, that's a good story.

ES: Another time he was practically the same place, where we met again, I guess it was foggy. I say he was going down and I said I coming up. I still think that. We slowed down and talking to one another and he says, ""Where you going?"" ""I'm going home"" I says to him. ""There's no fish, I might as well go home"". ""You're going the wrong way"", he says. ""How do you know"", I says to him. Well, according to the compass, you're going the wrong way. Well, he had his compass next to a can, and it wouldn't give no true direction. The compass was in a certain way like that. I left, I went home and I went by my compass. I was living in the old cannery then. About four or five hours after he came in, he'd gone off in the gulf. So I says to him, ""Where'd you go Mike?"" He wouldn't tell where he was gone. Because I got home and he was still going the other way. Oh well, a lot of funny things happen. And you never know though. But no, he get directions by compass and one thing and another.

MC: So what made the compass not register properly? It was next to the metal.

ES: Being next to metal of some sort, next to your compass, it draws the, magnet or whatever off there. It doesn't stay north no more. It just circles around. Then it may be fine for a while, and then move again. Well according to, you move your boat a little bit, the compass will go that way because the can is doing it. I got that way in the Queen Charlotte Sound. I got oh, about four or five miles off my course. Crossing over I was coming home from North. Travelling with another boat, we were tied side by side. We got about a four hour crossing there. Then there was one long engine. Now you can cross in a couple of hours. I heard noise to the star board. Echo like, you know. I couldn't see nothing then. Thought I'd seen a bloody rock going by me. Hey stop the engine. I was stopping mine. I think we're right in shore someways, I seen a little rock going by me. ""Did you see?"" He says he didn't see nothing. I said no, what are you talking about. We're close to land somewhere that's all. Oh it'd be about five miles off course. It's just I threw that can there. I used to smoke quite a lot, I rolled my own cigarettes. And that can there.

MC: Tobacco can.

ES: Tobacco can.

MC: When you went out fishing, like did you pack meals to take out there?

ES: Oh, I packed my lunches all the time. Then we had to. We could warm up coffee when we're waiting for a tide, anchored. We got to primus stoves to start with, later on we got a gas stove. And if it's not too warm we'd light our cook stove in the boat. We use coal oil in it and cook your meal there. That was when you got time. Sometimes you got two, three hours anchored, waiting for the tide.

MC: Before tides.

ES: Then you cook, use your cook stove. Its so hot in the summer, we very seldom use it. Oh yeah, a lot of time we pack our lunches out, sometimes I take whole bunch of them home.

MC: I'm not sure if I've got any more questions. Have you got any more?

PB: No. I don't know where to start. But don't stop. There's so much experience that you had there.

MC: It's just wonderful listening to your stories.

ES: Well, I'm going to write a book.

MC: You're going to write a book?

ES: Oh yeah.

MC: Good.

PB: That's good. One thing you mentioned is that...

ES: Pat and I are going to do it.

PB: That's right, in their our time.

ES: We were going to do it about ten years ago.

PB: Oh, you should, you've got some...

ES: We were going to go around, go out. Maybe start from Westham Island, through Steveston and back up to Westminster. Some of the canneries are torn down now you know. But I knew where they were. We still can do it. Go on the boat and well, you know, you just have to draw a rough map. Even that cannery by (old) Westminster. I can't recall the name of the two old canneries up there. One of them was in the edge of our reserve, (South Westminster) Number 1 reserve.

PB: It's not Glenrose? Glenrose Cannery?

ES: Oh, Glenrose was down towards Alex Fraser Bridge. (Upriver from Alex Fraser Bridge is St. Mungo, an important archaeological site)

PB: Okay. You mean right up at New Westminster.

ES: That's above the bridge. I can't recall the name of that cannery now, it so long. You know, down in the low. My late wife used to work when she was young. Used to come down from Chilliwack.

PB: Across from New Westminster?

ES: Uh huh, on the south side. South Westminster they call it. Yeah, there was a cannery there. Believe it or not, there was a cannery below the bridge in Marpole.

MC: Was there.

ES: And Dinsmore Island, there was a cannery there. Course they weren't operating when I was young but the building were there. Something or other, it would be 1913, when the, some of the last work, I think. A lot of people used to go there, work out of the cannery.

MC: Do you know, like I can recall some names of fisherman families in Ladner, like Vidulich. Do you know that name?

ES: Yeah, I knew the Vidulichs, yeah.

MC: And the Martinolich.

ES: Yeah.

MC: Now they've been fishing a lot of years as well haven't they.

ES: I think that's my nephews in-laws name. He lives right on the corner of River Road and Tsawwassen Road, you call that. I can't recall their name now. Oh, I know a lot of guys named Stevens.

MC: Oh yeah, Stevens.

ES: I know Homer.

MC: Homer.

ES: Oh, I worked with Homer. He was in the union (UFAW, United Fishermen and Allied Workers) which worked jointly with the Native Brotherhood. For years.

MC: What about the name Ingram? Do you know that name, Ingram, Dal, Dallas Ingram?

ES: Yeah. I know quite a few Savage guys.

MC: Savage.

ES: They all, still using tomahawks. Yeah, I know a lot of them from Westham Island and Ladner. I played lacrosse there you know.

MC: Oh did you.

ES: Uh huh. Bill Savage was the manager of the Westham Island Team.

MC: Bill Savage and he lived on Fairview Road.

ES: Uh huh.

MC: That Bill Savage?

ES: Oh, he's gone. Young Bill was survived, I don't know, he might be gone. I don't know, I haven't seen him for ages. Roland Savage, he's the one that had cancer. He lived right on Westham Island a while back. Oh, I know a lot of guys there in Ladner. I lived there for five, six years.

MC: A whole lot of long time established families out along that River Road.

ES: Yeah, uh huh.

MC: The Fisherman's Hall out there.

ES: One of my grandsons is living in, oh I can't recall the guy's name now. The first road away from, west of, west of the Bridge anyways.

MC: You've got a granddaughter Sharon? (correction: granddaughter is Karen)

ES: Yeah, uh huh.

MC: And she, now where does she live? She lives out the valley, I think doesn't she?

ES: Well now. I couldn't think of who's up in the valley (Cloverdale). I can't recall. I haven't seen her in a couple of years.

MC: Big family. How many children did you have? How many sons did you have?

ES: Gee, I forgot, I got so many.

MC: Okay.

ES: Sure keep trying though. Haven't got enough fingers and toes.

PB: Thirty, forty...

ES: Well, to tell you the truth, my children, my own children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, second great-grandchildren, are about a hundred. We were counting them the other night and next door, with one of my grandsons. Over a hundred of us.

MC: Boy you could populate a whole community.

PB: Just had a new great-grandson on Sunday.

ES: Yeah. That makes it about a hundred and five now.

PB: Yes, that's right. Just since last week.

ES: Yeah. Quite a family. We didn't really want to be too close together, we have wars by ourselves. Well, my oldest son is in Tsawwassen Heights. And the one I'm talking about, the youngest, well he's in, close to No.2 Road. He's coming back again. He owns that big house over there. He's been wanting to get away for awhile and his young girls are growing up and he didn't want them growing up on the reserve here. So he moved out. Now he says he'll be coming back this winter. He's renovating his house now. When he gets through with that, I might do some renovating myself.

PB: Are you? What are you going to do?

ES: Going to fix the basement. Well, I think I'll have somebody live down there or I can live down there too. Then I got one son left over here. He never did move. When you marry an Indian, you've got to stay on the reserve. If you marry a white lady you've got to move out. My boys are married to white, white ladies, most of them.

MC: One of your sons lives in Tsawwassen. What's that called the village, up in the village?

ES: No, up in the Heights.

MC: Up in the Heights, okay.

ES: No, he doesn't live in the village there. No that's right.

MC: It's called ""the village"", or something I think.

ES: Yeah, I know, yeah, you're right.

MC: It's just the name of a subdivision out there.

ES: Well, I think that's where. You know where my son's living now. There's lots of artifacts there you know.

MC: Yeah, Stahaken.

ES: That's what I think. There was a, that was a camping ground I'm sure. Because I was talking to one of my in-laws from Saanich. He thinks the same way, because the Saanich people used to stop there in the old canoe days. They lived (correction: should be stayed. Was a non permanent residence) there for a while and they move on again to Lummi. That's, I supposed that's before they moved the boundary. I don't know. I can't say for sure, I'm just guessing. But the artifacts they get from there are a little bit different from ours. So they say, I haven't seen them. That's what Lee was telling me. So, don't know if I believe it or not but from that high spot in there was like an island when the tide was high. The rest of the place would be flooded. Canoes would be waiting there to cross over when the tide was high enough.

MC: This is in Tsawwassen?

ES: Yeah, right by the Indian reserve. Yeah, that's what they say. Some guys laugh when I tell them that. But I kind of think if the water receded, it happened.

PB: As the delta grew out.

ES: Because there's land, I believe it. Because there's nothing but sand all over. I used to hunt around there when I was living in Westham Island. Hunt, hunting pheasants. And I know there's nothing but sand there. Right through the whole reserve, to the highway, nothing but sand. Then, as the water recede, well, it was building up all the time. You know a crater was building up a crater land. I believe that was a low area. I mean you could have been able, should have been able to cross over if the tide's high.

PB: There's another slough that comes from the South Arm right across out close to where the village is now at Tsawwassen.

ES: Somehow I think they were living in Mud Bay, somewhere. There I don't know just where. I never did go and look at it.

PB: Now there's a big shell midden over there.

ES: I don't know where your, where your, where your people come from. Make it rich, give you money for the land or give you the whole Canada back.

PB: There's the question of the day isn't it.

ES: We were just talking about it the other day too you know. Way before you were here, they asked me what I think. I don't know, cause anyways, its pretty hard. Going to be a problem. A lot of people think we're going to try to move them away from where they're living now. Darn, we never even think about that you know. We only want to get some kind of compensation for what they got. Oh probably the actual land. After all they took it away from us. We want it back. So we're not greedy, like them.

PB: Just want some back.

ES: Some back. I think, I think we should be able to get it from them. You take Quebec. They have a case there, the rest of Quebec want to move away from Canada, right, but the Indians says no, we're going to stay right here. This land belongs to us. They have a problem right there now.

PB: They sure do.

ES: This only come out about three, four days on the radio. I was listening, I was laying down. My back's been bothering me so I went and put a heating pad and I put on the radio and I well, I think Quebec is in trouble anyway dealing with, what do you call that falls where they? James Bay, is it?

PB: Uh huh, James Bay.

ES: Well, what do they want to get out of it, only loaned it to the province by Federal. How true I don't know.

PB: There's two different legal opinions right now. It'll be interesting to see how that works out.

ES: That's the first I ever hear of anything like that, you know, where two lawyers were talking to one another.

PB: That whole northern area was added, to the province, long after Quebec became a province...

ES: I think they have quite a bearing on the [American] land, I think. What ever we demand, I don't know whether we've demanded yet, you know. I was going get up last night but I didn't feel right. So I thought I'll wait 'til another time. I want to find out what they're doing. If they're not doing anything I'll run for Chief again.

PB: Are yah?

ES: Uh huh.

PB: Well, that's good.

ES: Well, run backwards.

MC: Run for chief backwards.

ES: Yeah, I want to see what they're doing you know. They never give it any thought of any kind. I really don't know what's going on. Is that right? Well, if I think about a story, I can't tell you any more.

MC: Well, you've done a wonderful job. It's really a pleasure to sit and listen and talk with you.

ES: Oh, I got lots more.

MC: You've got lots more?

ES: Lots more of Garry Point, you know.

MC: Oh boy. Well, if it works out, we'd love to have you come down to the site and take a look. If the weather clears a bit, its kind of miserable.

ES: Well, what are you doing at Britannia?

MC: What are we doing? Well.....

(Tape turned off to discuss Britannia Heritage Shipyard Project)

Edward relates a story of the watchman, ""Old Al Rye"" at the Pacific Coast Cannery.

More family members come in.

ES: Charge. Anyhow, [I guess I took the boy] to do a little shopping. That's my younger boy. He was about six, seven years old, I guess. A Chinese guy working in the place (Hong Wo's), they called him Lum. He says, ""Hey, when you going to pay your bill,"" he says to me. He says [he was talking about candy he was charging.] He was charging there all the time. Charged all things.

MC: On your account?

HC: No, this was on his own account.

MC: His own account.

ES: Own account.

MC: And he was six years old?

ES: Six, seven years.

MC: He had a big account for candy? A goody account.

Discussing Photographs.

Discussing Britannia project.

MC: We'd love for you to come out and see the site. Do you know how to get to it, out in Richmond?

HC: Oh yeah.

MC: Well, you should just come on down.

HC: We lived out there for year, so we know.

MC: We'd love to walk around the site with you because I'm sure you'd be able to give little bits of information.

HC: See this is the kind of thing we didn't see.

MC: No, no. This is Hong Wo's store.

HC: Yeah, I recognize that, yeah. And it was always the board walk there too.

MC: There's the boardwalk. Do you remember that boardwalk?

HC: Oh yes.

MC: When you think of the boardwalk, who do you think of walking along it. When I ask that question of some people they, they remember long lines of the Chinese people walking along. Does that come to mind?

HC: Oh yeah, they used to work at Phoenix and walk down there from Hong Wo's to Phoenix.

MC: And I've heard they'd walk down in single file. Do you remember seeing that?

HC: Yeah.

ES: Single file, Chinese style.

HC: We used to fish off the wharves. Granny would make us fishing rods out of sticks and fishing lines. We'd catch bull heads and they'd go hard and sit there for a week. We wouldn't let them throw them out.

MC: Just sitting right on the...

HC: Just sitting on the wharf just down from the store.

MC: Okay, so that would be. Yeah actually there was a wharf on the side of Britannia. Like a net rack kind of thing. When was that, what year, can you remember?

HC: Nah, I can't remember, we were just kids.

Family discussion.

MC: So, about what year.

HC: Early '60s, 65.

ES: Yeah, we left there in '74.

Ladner family discussion

END OF INTERVIEW