

1: I whipped it off to her...

2: Well your mother was a man and I was the Madam. And I didn't know the song in that either. Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-Deeay, and I had all the lines; it was ~~me~~ that wrote the lines on the back of this fan I had. (laughs) You love some men though.

SD: I ask you to tell me or tell the tape, where you were born and when you came to Lake Cowichan? And maybe we can just go around and ask?

2: 1909, August the tenth, and I will be 70 tomorrow.

3: Yeah. ~~It~~ is your birthday tomorrow.

2: That's right, tomorrow.

3: Happy Birthday to you. (sung)

2: [We arrived here,] ^{My name is Eva Wilson} we arrived here after Fred got fired for organizing the miners. And we came to ~~Youton~~ on 24th of May for weekend, and I been here ever since. Well he got a job at ^{134?} ~~Y...~~, then lost that. We came down here in '35. The '35 or ^{? date}

'36 strike [That's when he walked out in sympathy with the loggers, so who can remember that strike?]

4: That was the '34 strike.

2: I don't know.

5: You mean a...

2: (When the loggers walked over [the mountain,] the back of the mountain and came down) ^{to pull the mill out.}

5: That was in '34.

2: Thirty, well, that was the time, because [Fred was working on the loading deck. And he was the only that came out in sympathy with the loggers, and Red, Ken Rendall, [yeah, Ken, Red,

a
Wilson:

Eva
Wilson

EW:

EW:

Personal
histories

? date

LG

EW

LG

EW

LG

EW

✓

W 2: (Cont) [whatever you want to call him,] he walked back and forth on that loading deck, couldn't make up his mind whether to come out in sympathy or not, but he finally stayed on the job. And Fred worked for a week and a half and never let me know, I put up his lunch every morning. [worked for a week and a half an' me puttin' up his lunch.] [Y'know tryin' to let on that he was still working.] I was never so mad in all my life 'cause he had promised me he would never organize again. But that was a laugh.

G. 5. [He failed to work; he went to work but he didn't work.

EW 2: No, [he was on the picket line.

[SD: So you were making his lunch for the picket line actually.

EW 2: I was, for a week and a half.]

(laughing)

EW 2: When I found out, [he could hardly,] oh, god was I mad! Jesus! Well you would have been too, making his lunch for a whole week and a half.

[SD: Did you come from a family that had been on the Island and been involved in union activity?

EW 2: No, no way. No, my dad was a miner, I don't know what year he came. But I was born in Nanaimo, that's about 70 years ago.

6 Born in Nanaimo eh? (laughs)

EW 2: Well there was only one me, thank god. None of them were active in the unions.

SD:

W 2: Well there no unions then anyway; they only organized the miners. It would be in the '30's. I was married in '33.

G. * 5 There was union activity in the mines; it was in 1912 *what did they*
] have a strike.

2: But there was nothing there, because the man ^{that} tried to org-
anize the miners, and he was, ⁱⁿ later year, he fought in that
Papigean Battalion in Spain,

G * 5 Lawrence, ? Lawrence, not Ernie Lawrence but...

EW 2: I've forgotten his name.

LG * 5 Well Archie worked too.

EW 2: McKinnon, McDonald.

LG 5: Mary's husband worked to organizing the miners.]

EW 2: There was no organization ^(among the miners) because Fred edited a paper. The
Scow that went from Number One to Protection, was called
The/We Too, so he edited this paper and it came out for a
long, long time, and it was called We Too, [so you have *The Scow*,]

, but it was We Too Want a Square Deal. And when they
found who was editing the paper, out he went. So that was
that.

[(laughter in background)
SD: That was the miner's organization?

N 2: Miners.

SD: And when was that that he was doing that?

EW 2: Well] we were married in '33, and he must have been doing it
before, but I didn't know anything about it until after we
were married.

(Laughing in background)

[And] *I was born in Nanaimo, about 70 yrs ago. My dad was a miner.*
I do remember my mother and dad, oh my god, he was against
[you know,] unions. Because dad and them they all had good jobs.

[SD: So how did you react to your husband being an organizer?]

EW 2: What could I do! (Laughs) Married, with one baby, then.
four,
Sharon would be five months old when we came here in May,
and we'd been married the year and a half before.

LG 5: A person couldn't just walk in those days anyway.

EW 2: Oh, no.]

LG 5: You couldn't leave your husband in those days, with a family,
could you? No car, no \$ to go anywhere with, you had to stick it out

EW 2: I never heard tell of it, I guess I'm ignorant. (laughs)]

LG 5: If you didn't have your independence, there was nothing to do...

EW 2: If I'd ha' known about it, I'd a been the first one to do
it. (laughs) And the mine was only working about one or two days
a week.

LG 5: No car, or no money, to go anywhere with,
you had to stick it out.

SD: Right.

EW 2: And the mine was only working about one or two days a week.

LG 5: Or no days.

SD: By the time you came up to Lake Cowichan, were you pretty
pro-union ?]

EW 2: I was anti-union, against everything, mostly myself. (laughs)
I never did settle down to that. Even though the active part
I took in it. No I used to blame everybody, I was really
bitter.

[LG *5 Well, I mean you]

EW 2: Well we didn't have a darn thing. We had two rooms.

[5: That's when you lived where I was living, didn't you live
didn't you? You lived ...

EW 2: ? No, no.]

Laurie 5: Weren't you? Ooh.

EW 2: No.] When we first came to the lake, we were in where the forestry station is now; there was two shacks there.

Laurie 5: ?

EW 2: Oh that's right.

Laurie 5: ? Wasn't there three cabins or something?

EW 2: And I lived in one of those, and I only had Sharie.

5: The Chilsons were living in that big house.]

EW 2: It was the Red Light District. (laughs)

* That's not where the forestry station was.

Laurie 5: It was.

*

EW 2: It was, and] Fred was workin' at lake, loggin' then.

*

... where the bank is...

EW 2: No, no, no. Where the forestry station is.

*

EW 2: Evelyn lived in there. Evelyn, you remember her, she had a cafe.

*

Oh yes the cafe.

EW 2: And then there was Chilson's. And, Ralph Roman

*

Yes. And Ralph Roman.

EW 2: And Ralph Roman. And you lived in behind Evelyn.

*

Yeah.

EW 2: I lived in behind Chilson's.]

*

Yeah.]

EW 2: And it was Chilson's that was the Red Light District, because all night long there was people knocking at my door.] And Mrs.,

EW

2: And Mrs., she was quite an active member when it got going. [Oh,] I can't think of her name. Better left unsaid anyway.

[SD: I should ask you your name.

EW

[2: Eva Wilson.

SD: Oh. Would you like to go through some similar background?

LG: You want my maiden name? or?

SD: Sure, and your married name when you were active.

LG: Lillian Will...Laughter. It doesn't sound right because I didn't go by... my name was Harriet Lillian Greenwell. But they called me Tot^S and then I had Harriet at school. And then I got called Lillian which is my second name. So Lillian Godfrey sounds OK but not Lillian Greenwell. And I was born in Extension in 1915 and my father was involved in coal mining. And of course my mother along with him.

[SD: What did your mother do? Was she in support of the miners?

LG: Well she was looking after the children. [I guess they were married in 1911 and she had three of us by 1915 and the strike was in 1912, 1914 and my father was in jail when the miners were put in jail from Extension. So like she said [of] the younger sisters

of hers would be going over to the trials, and that.
The trials were held in New Westminster but she couldn't go back and forth with the children on the train, so she would just have to tough it out at home. She had worked before she was married, [she worked] in Victoria sewing in overalls, [and things and that type of work.] She wasn't married too young. [And] then we moved [to South Wellington, well] first to Nanaimo, after the miner's strike I guess my father worked for the co-operative in Nanaimo. And then he got work in the mines in South Wellington. He died [when we were,] in 1924. So mother was left with four of us. So she had to just go out and work and wash clothes, sew and that type of thing. And we had another brother born after he died, [about six weeks after, no,] a month after, and then he died when he was six weeks old. [It] was that thyroid trouble which they didn't know anything about at that time?]

The following July our house was burnt down so it just shows what conditions were. After my dad died he'd had no compensation or, [you know, any] ^{money} or anything so she got widow's pension which was \$55 a month for herself and four of us. When our house burnt down she had \$1500 I think it was, fire insurance. So they took her pension away from her and made her live on it for

ten or eleven months. [It wasn't until...I forgotten who the MLA was at that time, but,] before they'd give it back. they wanted an itemized list of how she had spent this money, [you know,] before they'd give it back to her. And ^{part} of the insurance money was owing on the house, [I mean] she didn't even have \$1500. Anyway, she worked and saw that we all got high school education because she said if anything ever happened to any of us after we were married she wanted us to be able to support ourselves, [you know,] not like she was left-to go out and wash clothes and floors and that type of thing. So I was very fortunate. With the help of my brother and others, like, I had a scholarship and I got to Victoria College and ^{to} Normal School and became a teacher. That was in the early '30's. And ^{regardless} of education, as it is today you couldn't get a school, unless maybe you went away up to the wild west somewhere and it wasn't sort of my cup of tea I guess, so I went out and did housework, [Things like that,] for \$10 a month. Taught for one year before I was married. [And I haven't been a substitute or taught since.] I was married in 1937 and we came to Lake Cowichan and have been here ever since. Married a logger.

[SD: And had you sort of grown up with strong pro-union

traditions in your family?

LG: Definitely.

SD: So when you came up here you already knew you would support unions if there was organization?

LG: Well ^{in Nanaimo} my brother, who is Mary's husband, he was active in the organizing the, helping to organize the miners and he [joined with the...] came down here and started to work with the loggers, in [I think it was] 1934, when they had their first strike. And he was very active [then,] so, and he was on the sub-local executive here. Naturally when I came here, he was already here, what I didn't know, he was trying to prod me along to do anyway. But I didn't join the auxiliary because I had my son in 1938. Didn't become involved in the auxiliary until 1940.

Mary: Well, I don't have a long story like that to tell. (laughter). Well I was born in Chicago and lived in Victoria from the time I was ten months old til 1941 when I married Archie Greenall. And I had my first experience with unions about a year after I married him I guess.

LG: What do you mean, it was when you... (laughter..) got married and ^{he} took off to a convention. [a congress...]

MARY: Yes, well he did, but myself, [I mean,] I never had anything to do with it. I was too busy with children. [you know.] And I didn't know what it was all about. I'd never been raised in that kind of family. My father didn't believe in unions. He was very anti-union.

[SD: What did he do?

MARY: ^(He was) Superintendent of the [Cooperage,] Sweeney Cooperage. Archie, (before I knew him), said he'd been down there organizing. he says it was my father that kicked him out. My father never did meet Archie.

[LG: I guess he was dead before you were married.

MARY: Yea, he was. He died the year before.

SD: Did you work before you got married?

MARY: Oh yes.] I worked in [15¢ store, dime,] ^a [four cent] store, Woolworth's you know. And other jobs. I done housework and you know, low pay, cut the hay. [you know.]

[SD: What kind of pay, what kind of conditions?

MARY: Oh, dear.] We made \$15 a week at Woolworth's and you worked long hours and you didn't fool around in those days. You kept on your toes the whole time. If you were seen talking to anyone you got told off by the boss: 'Don't talk you're wasting time, Miss Ward.' [And, from then on, ...unclear...] I'd never been used to this kind of life but, oh, I liked it after I got into it.

[SD: Were you able to work during the '30's?

MARY: Oh, yes. No, I was working a bit. Not too much though.

SD: And did you live with your family then or with your parents before you got married?

MARY: Oh, yes.

SD: When you were working did you ever run into people who were trying to organize?

MARY: No. Never. I remember one time at the Cooperage the fellows all decided to go on strike and so, my father was horrified about this, you know. But most of them all went back. I think there was one man out of the bunch that stayed off the job, you know, wouldn't go back.

(maybe) LG: But did they gain anything?

MARY: No because all the rest went back.

LG: I didn't know whether the company might have offered them something on the side, you know, to the ones that were hard up...

MARY: no, no, they never got offered a thing. They just went back and worked like they were before.

SD: Did you know your husband was a unionist before you married him?

MARY: Yes. (laughter)

SD: And how did you feel about that?

MARY: Well,] I thought it was alright. ^(that my husband was a unionist.) He seemed to be doing what I thought should be done [you know,] for working people.

[SD: Did he talk to you about trade unions?

MARY: Oh, yes.

SD: So did he kind of...

MARY: I knew what to expect, you know. That it was gonna be a different life from what I'd had.

SD: And did your attitude change towards trade unions during some of the discussions with him?

MARY: Oh yes. ^{Well,} I always felt too that the poor people were not getting enough out of life even when I was living at home. ~~Couldn't figure~~ my dad talking the way he did. We never had too much, there was seven of us in the family and he wasn't working for that high a wage either. And I thought, well, I don't know, I had a feeling that it was not, justice wasn't being done anyway.

laughter

[LC: ...my mother was staying with some of my relatives and one of the young boys had a tape recorder and she was just afraid to open her mouth, you know. She didn't know where he had it hidden or anything. And then of course he'd play it back to her and she was just...

MARY: ...always sound so different from ...

SD: ...it picks up a limited range of what your voice is in terms of the sound, so it changes it.

MARY: and...?

laughter]

My name is June Olsen, used to be June Eckert.
JUNE: I was born in Forestburg, Alberta, June 21st 1927.

And dad was working in the coal mine there, but my grandparents, my mum and dad's, you know, my mum's parents had come up here in 1923 and things were really tough back there, in Forestburg, so they decided to come out. / she came from a big family so they come out to visit them, [and arrived here and they had to come by... well Louise mentioned, when she was living here] A taxi brought them from Duncan out to the lake and they had to go by boat out to the float-houses at the Lake and arrived at night and started handing kids over, grandma said ^{my} god, it's Marge and Jake'.

(laughter) And they never left here. They stayed here.

[] : Did your mum's folks come here in late 1923?

JUNE : Umhum. My uncle ~~that~~, great uncle, well he had come out earlier out here...

: And he was sort of a logging...

JUNE : [] ^{my uncle Neil} He was logging superintendent. In fact [] he owned McDonald [✓] Murphy [you know,] up here. [In fact] [] He was one of the only bosses, [] he marched with the workers to get better conditions, [you know.] [] He was really respected.

[] : Oh yes, everybody talks about him because he gave them jobs when others couldn't...

JUNE : Well [] they used to have a blacklist if you tried to organize any and Uncle [] he would always hire the

guys on the blacklist. He always said they were the best loggers that ever were. (Laughter)

[SD: ^{They were} appreciative of getting work...laughter

JUNE: Yea. But they really worked. [They were the best ones. So] then we were educated here, lived here and I got married to a local boy, ^{Nelson Olsen,} we started school Nels? together and we got married in the same schoolhouse that we started Grade One in. [It was the church.] It got changed [from the first school house] to the church. [I should say, they burnt it down recently, but that was ashame.]
^{in 1946} Right before I was married I worked in the bakery at \$18 a week and I really figured that was something.

[LG: And what year was that in?

JUNE: I started work in I guess about '46 there. I only worked there a couple of years, it may even have been '48. And] that was from 7:30 in the morning till 5:30 at night.

[SD: Six day week?

JUNE: Umhum.] I had three brothers and a sister and they all loggers and my dad was a grader man. [I don't know if dad was a strong union person when he first came here or not, I don't think he knew that much about it; but] evidently they all got to be union and Nelson, of course, who I married, his parents are really strong union and when we were first married ^{and} that was when we were trying to break away from the States and

we used to have people come in and stay at our house when Nels^{son?} and I were first married, like Harold Archett and (Aylmer?) Elmer and George Grafton and that you know, so, as I said joined

I joined the auxiliary when I was sixteen and went on the trek. [I didn't really know all about it but you know, to Eugene, and we went to the trek to Victoria and...]

[SD: Did you join the auxiliary before you were married?

JUNE: Umhum.

SD: Why did you do that, was it because you were...

JUNE: Well, I guess because of all the people we knew, [My mum was in the auxiliary, and my sister was in the auxiliary and all our friends were in the auxiliary,

[you know. And] future mother-in-law, [.] she was a charter member.

[.] She was a charter member...

JUNE: She was a charter member, [.] was. My sister-in-law to be was and...

SD: So you grew up in an environment that was very strongly supportive of unions...

JUNE: Umhum. And] you used to hear them talking about the conditions in the logging camps, [you know,] how they treated the men, and the food, and how they had to sleep like animals. They had to do something to better conditions. When my husband went out on strike, he always said they had to have the support of their wives because they're the ones that had to put the food on

the table and look after ^(the family) and if you didn't have your wife supporting you, he said you would never have won a strike. [And so I guess,] we've been here 52 years now and Nels ^{Ph!} has been here 55 years, so altogether I guess we're about some of the oldest living couple that were raised here, still here.

[SD: Can I just ask for your name.

JUNE: June Olsen. Used to be June Eckert.

LAURIE: You're going to have to ask questions because I haven't got much experience in unions or anything like that.] I'M Laurie Belign and I came to Lake Cowichan in 1936 and I don't think I was here more than about four weeks when that strike was called.

[I forget where it was. But it didn't last too long. In May when we were here, because] I came in April and ~~this~~ this was in May.

[I don't know whether it was '34 or '36...

LAURIE: Well this was '36 but it didn't last too long.

JUNE: Wasn't that ^{was} when they built ^{the} picket hall...

LAURIE: Yea, I do believe so...

JUNE: ...when they built] their picket camp. [That was...]

[...they all loaded into Harry Smith's father's truck] I remember Archie and all different ones and they went up to Courtenay way] and that to] try] and...slept on the beaches up there, Trying to organize [the..]

[LAURIE: What was the name of that company called? That was

[on strike up there?

SD: Up Courtenay way?

LAURIE: Yea.

SD: I don't know.

LAURIE: Because, this is what they were in support of wasn't it, the loggers here. I just really, if i'd known that I was going to have this I would have sort of asked Belign. I know, because I never had any experience in union activity of any kind when I first came to Cowichan and...

SD: Where did you come from:

LAURIE: Well that's a long story. But I came from Vancouver before I came here, but I was born in North Dakota.

[And then, like] they were always after me to join the auxiliary and it took two years before I joined. I didn't join until 1938 of May, and Bertha finally came and got me to go to the meeting, and then it was held at the picket camp. [But that's where I joined up there.]

When I first came here I only came for a month. I'm still here another forty-5 years pretty near.

[LG: That's what I thought. That the meetings were first... when I joined in 1940 there was a little, our only general store was right down at the corner where the auto supply, and they had this building across the street and we had our meetings there. I used to call it the ^{wheat} shed because it seemed the ...unclear.. joining there was where they kept their wheat and all that stuff for the store.

LAURIE: ...the storage room for those things, yea.

SD: When you came to Lake Cowichan you had not really been exposed to trade unions?

LAURIE: None whatever.

SD: What had you done immediately before that. Had you been working, were you married, or...

LAURIE: Yes, I was married long before that. And that's a long story too. ~~laughter.~~ But anyway, I learned and like I say, I had to [sort of] change my mind about a lot of things that I wasn't accustomed to living under; the activities of unionism [or whatever you call it. And, but you learn and it's been a good experience.]

[JUNE: I was going to say] Laurie's husband, ^{Olaf Olsen} ~~Oly~~, he's very active. ~~When he~~ was one of my husband's, ^{dad's} best friends [Olaf Olsen] and they were all fallers.

[LAURIE: ...YEA, they worked together...

JUNE: and the faller's originaly the ones that started the IWA, I think, you know. From what I can understand. discussion, well, no, I think they were the fallers...

JUNE: Well, anyhow, ^{June:} Nels plays the piano in ^{the} Scandinavian and Oly plays the accordian. He's entertained loggers for years and years playing the accordian. Still does. At dances.

[SD: I'm going to ask a general question now and just whatever

response...what were conditions like when you came here. What was it like in the community, what kind of housing was there, what were the wages like, what was it like ~~to~~ trying to keep a home together on the wages that came in, what was it like raising your kids, just generally if you would like to talk about that and maybe if you could give some of the dates because I know that people came at different times we can get a sense of what it was like living here and you know, why people would organize a unionize and why they would join a union and why they would join an auxiliary.

LAURIE:

Well when I first came here I only came for a month and I'm still here another forty five years pretty near.

(discussion)

Conditions:

: AB: ...well, we just lived in a cabin really when we first came, [which was, yea] I guess they called them shacks.

LG: There was no indoor plumbing, no electric light, no running water. When we first came here we had a well which we had to go pump water out of. Then a fellow [by the name of Pete Olson [not her father-in-law] installed a small water system. We had to have spring taps. You couldn't waste any water and you didn't have hot water, it was just cold water on the back porch, [and it.]

They used to log quite close right down in here, when we first came and you could hear the whistles from the wood. And they knew; so many whistles would be a death, so many whistles would be an accident and all the women would gather, the women would all get together and wait, wait for that. It was seven whistles was a death. And they used to

Naturally outside ^{where} we'd do our washing. [I can't remember just ...] At first we had gas lamps or coal ^{oil} lamps and that was after 1937. No washing machines, no electric irons. ^{well} there was no power period. And ^{that we} the electricity had was diesel engine down at the corner here - and you run on a big / couldn't use appliances on it, just mainly light; and at one time [that, then] there was one ^{an engine} hooked up to a water system and lights would go out at one o'clock in

the morning and you had to have all your work done by then. ^{And if} you got up on early shift, which the loggers had to do in those days, ^{well, still day} you wouldn't have any light - you'd have to go back to the coal oil lamp or gas lamp.

L.G.: ^{1*} and ^{L.B.} In the summer the water got low it would be ^{a little} yellow. ^{flicker up there and} Because it was water powered, so there was poor power there. ^{to pg. 53} Then they introduced this diesel plant which boosted the power. **L.B.**

MARY: ^{2*} know, for the next whistle [.] **LAURIE:** just be terrified you know, I used to come up to where Skolie's store was,

[remember when Mr. Skolie had the store and post office together, well] whenever the ambulance went down, [I used to run to the store] just to see who

was, whether it was your own or who it was that was carried out by the ambulance. ^{That was scary.} ^{Mary: I think it was someone you knew anyway.} [I think] one of the first projects ^{It was a closely knit community, you knew who it was anyway.}

of the auxiliary was to demand a better road from Lake Cowichan to Duncan because ^{even as yet,} the hospital ^{is} in Duncan. ^{And when our men got hurt in the woods, they felt that they deserved the} best road to get there as fast as possible. ^{Laurie: At one time they used to take them through to Chemainus. They didn't go to Duncan, that was just when the} Blue Cross covered. ^{L.G.:} That was when the Victoria Lumbering and manufacturing company was in here until about 1941 and

so we paid hospital coverage in Chemainus, because when I had Bob ^{me} my son, in 1938 I had to go to Chemainus for him to be born. In ^{ed} you'd go to the doctor here at the Lake and then you whisk down there in the middle of the

LG: (continued) night of course to Chemainus and have a doctor who had never seen you before and be in the

hospital there two weeks. *That was in 1938.*

JUNE: *They used to say The doctors here, to come to us, it was considered isolation, it was sort of a standing joke, "Well, we sent them out here to practice on all the loggers and their families, and when they get good enough then they'd branch out to*

Victoria or Duncan or somewhere and we'd get another

new one in until they'd practiced enough, you know.

EVA:

I've got the information upstairs *in the attic.*
 What was the year they formed that
 a hospitalization plan.

LG: In Blue Cross, I just read about, *Elna* was giving a report in about 1945 I believe, she gave a hospital report and recommended that we join the Blue Cross.

EVA: No, this was a local one and / ^{Fred} and Archie were in on it, *well,* they were in on everything you could think of, but anyway they formed this and everybody in the Lake joined it. I've got a list of all the names and people who had minor things wrong with them. They got everything fixed up, gall bladders out and everything. ~~But~~ I mean they all took advantage of it and it went broke within a very short time. They had everything fixed that needed ~~to be~~ fixed for years. Don't you remember? I do. Archie would.

LG: Well that would be before we had ^{company medical, or} government medical plans.

June: Oh, long before that...

LG: I mean, we saw the need for it, they saw the need for it

either as auxiliaries or with the men in the

sub-local.

LAURIE: We always had a project to work with, didn't we? We never had, the auxiliary always took part in the really important projects that we really worked at.

JUNE: Most of the people in the auxiliary belonged to the PTA or everything there was to help with. They all were working people.

LAURIE: We had representation from the health units, like to get a health nurse here. And then of course, there was dental plans + moving on to mental health plans not

JUNE: The auxiliary so much that but ^{as a lot of members these days it was first} formed here. (END OF SIDE ONE)

SD: So the community played a role in structuring community life it sounds like, like every level of it.

LAURIE: Really did. We had a quite a stronghold I think for things like that. We all...

LG: We had a membership of an average of fifty or fifty-two women and we had to meet four times a month, in parts ^{of} times, you know, we got so busy we'd have a social meeting and educational meeting and two business meetings and then we'd start political action meetings which were apart from the other four meetings, in which we studied anywhere from parliamentary law, credit unions, co-operatives. We studied long before we had them established here in Lake Cowichan. We studied them in the auxiliary. And we

also had, pre-school playgroups, is that what you'd call them co-operative playgroups?

MARY: Yes, co-operative playgroups.

W.A
1940s
Pg. 35
playschools
↓

LG: which I didn't belong to. I don't know whether it actually had...it would be out of the auxiliary but Mary was, having small children *was involved in it.*

MARY: ...well we didn't have a kindergarten here then so a bunch of us got together and decided to you know, form one. But it never did come to shape with us because they started a kindergarten the next year. But they've had them since you know.

SD: That's really interesting.

SD: Where did you get the idea to do that from?

LG: you discussion ...well I had the study group for about two years didn't you, and made furniture and of course the drawback was there was no place; *you had* to have a place suitable, you know, according to government regulations and then a qualified instructor had to be found. But we certainly did it *groundwork* on it.

SD: That's really incredible.

EVA: *Wasn't it* formulated because *when* previous to this we had meetings, everybody used to bring their kids and you never had such a meeting in all your life.

EVA: I remember *like* Sharon ...

Mary: ...well you *pretty well* had to...

EVA: she'd be sitting on my knee and I was trying to conduct a meeting. I mean that's how that was formed. *Why --*

JUNE: We were always *at the dances, kids and*

There were
that you know. little kids sitting on benches
because they didn't have babysitters... When there was

at a dance, everybody used to take their kids to the
dances cause they didn't leave them at home too often.

LG: I think the idea of pre-school playgroups and that wasn't
so much that, there weren't that many of us that were
working but I think that we realized that women had to,
we wanted the women out of the homes for a certain amount
of the time and the kids couldn't be neglected and so, if
one mother was only involved in helping with the children
then that left a few hours for the women to get together,
they might just have coffee or work on a quilt or that.
But it was getting them out of the house.

end playschools ✓

SD: It's interesting because like I talked to other women
in areas where that wasn't that kind of structure and
it really meant that women with small kids were barred from
being involved. Going back a little bit to the conditions
when organization occurred can you talk a bit about wages
and you talked a bit about safety. I'm interested in
knowing how many, were there a lot of deaths, a lot
of accidents. What prompted the men to start to organize?
Around what issues?

MC: Well primarily it would be wages.

EVA: [Wages. Fred earned,] when we were at Youbou
Fred
he was working on the green chain which is one of the

hardest jobs in the mill and he was getting 2.25 a day at that time, [I remember that. Mind you,] the mill worked every day...

[voice: six days a week...

EVA:] Six days a week. [But 2.25 a day, and] then when he lost that job, ~~and~~ the loggers, they're out in the summer for fire season, they're out in the winter for snow, and there's one year Fred worked a month and a half and that was the year ^{they came out} in October or November, the latter part of November, for snow, ~~and we~~ dealt at Stanley Gordon's and he got a cheque for 48 ^{dollars} so he took it to Stanley Gordon, [and he's] says, "no Fred, [he says, "you take that home, I refuse to take it." Fred says, "well that's all I got." He says, "you take that cheque," he says, "you've done all you possibly could do," he said, "and go and buy yourself a bottle and get the kids something for Christmas." And at that time we owed Stanley Gordon for groceries alone \$750.

[LAURIE:] ^{One of our} dead horses they used to say in the spring when they started again, 'cause you had all that grocery money

to pay back.

[Mary: He kept everybody around. He was very good.]
 LG: No unemployment insurance or no sick benefits or anything like that which was...

EVA: Well I went to work in '46 I've been working ever since

till this last year, and I swore then that i would, I know I left when the kids were small, well Sherrie, Pat would be about six I guess and Sharon took over. She could make a meal better than I could, you know, she had to do it. I worked for Adrian and I worked for years and years and years but I swore then that I would give Stanley Gordon the last cent I had and we just got the last ^{dollars} ~~cent~~ off when he died. You know, it was really funny, but it took me years to pay that 750 ^{dollars.} ~~to~~

LG: Oh you must have been paying on it after he died if you went to work in '46.

EVA: Yes I went to work in '46.

LG: I mean you must have been paying it to the store but not to...

EVA: Oh, we were paying whatever money came in, whatever Fred brought in.
but

LG: No, I mean that because he died in, was it 1945 or '46?

EVA: Well it could have been paid up before that.

I'm just bringing it up because the auxiliary donated money towards flowers for the memorial service for the late

~~Mr. Gordon because he did, you know, he backed all of us.~~

JUNE: Another reason I think they formed a union is due to working conditions, unsafe conditions and the treatment

CAMP
Speeder
from
Pg. 26

a lot of the men got you know. You didn't have any guarantee of working, ^I if the boss just didn't like the colour of your eyes he could fire you. You didn't have any protection you know. And also a lot of the men had to go out in the woods by speeder and they worked six days a week. Well they used to bring the speeder down Wednesday night and they'd come down, they'd come home to their families for two hours and then they'd have to go back into camp and then they'd come out Saturday night and have Saturday night and they'd have to be back in camp Sunday night.

[voice: G... early Sunday night... 7 o'clock...]

JUNE: Yea, Sunday night] so there was no really, family life.

The men got to see their kids maybe two hours Wednesday night and then overnight Saturday [and that was it, as far as family life. That's another reason. [And their food

at one time, you know, ^{And} the men really fought rebelled against the food,

[voice: ^{And the} cookhouses..]

JUNE:] in the cookhouses.

[voice: not the wife's cooking.

JUNE: No. laughter.] ^{To} they'd have to

eat in the cookhouses and they used to feed them anything at first. The men had to organize; they were doing hard work ^{so} they had to have proper food, [you know, ^{so there's} another one of the reasons.]

[LG: It isn't like the boys see it today when they go into these

camps all the meat and stuff they can eat for what, two
and they're
or three dollars a day. They get it/subsidized by the
companies.]

to page
29 * CAMP

JUNE: There was no such thing as holiday pay. You just
weren't supposed to get holidays. You were just at
their beck and call [you know. And this is the way it
was.] A lot of young kids come out now and they get the
conditions;
they think they handed them these conditions, but they
didn't. There was a lot of fighting and struggling went
to get them.

WAGES
from page
26

LAURIE: Yea, cause I think the fallers at that time, when we
first came were making about \$5 a day and that was the
hand falling, [yes.]

JUNE: And then they went to the four men and the big
saws that weighed [what, almost two hundred, no]
a hundred and eighty [lbs something wasn't it?]

[voice: I forget just what it was...

LAURIE: And when we first came here the average wage was
about five dollars and they used to pay [what,] 95¢ a
thousand when they felled timber, and then, if they got a
raise it probably was 5¢, 10¢ at the most that they would
get [when they went for a raise for the fallers. But the
rest... then I know that the others, [like Eva said
that her husband only, what, made \$2.25...

LG: ... that was in 1934 of course, the conditions were really

hell. But when we were married in '37 Ralph was bringing home around \$145-\$150 a month and out of that, at that time he was able to stay home and there was ^{[one of the,} a private family that run a speeder to camp and they had to pay \$5 a month for their speeder ride. Which always ^[kind of, it] bugs me ^[now] in proportion to the money they were receiving. And that was a six day week, ^[It was] until 1946.

speeder
to page 26

SD: Did any of you live in the camps, were women ever...

voice : No. I never did. No.

SD: Did you Eva?

EVA: No. When we moved down here from Youbou and then Fred got a job and somebody was killed on the cherrypicker, that's how he got that job. It turned out that eventually that he was a high rigger. But he worked at Lake Logging, I've been up there to Lake Logging, stayed overnight, but never lived there. It's a long ways...

Camps
from pg 28

Answer: You were just a "grass widow".
were

:The only men that around would be the butcher and Mr. Gordon and the baker ^{& the blacksmith} and the rest of us were all just women. *All you saw* women and children.

[: ^{the} blacksmith,
LG : .how long was the blacksmith, there used to be a blacksmith shop...
: Johnson

LG: No, no not Johnson, his name wasn't Johnson...



voiced

LG: ...it wasn't Johnson, the old Blacksmith lived right near here

I can't remember his name — but Johnsons

was next door

JUNE: I can remember going to meet the speeder, everybody

in town used to meet the speeder [and then] Gordon's store, he'd always keep the door open, you know, when we...

the guys... and we used to get a (nickel,) a big bag of peanuts, [stop at the store,] that was ^{our} treat and we could

hardly wait for dad to come in and open his suitcase

because you'd get oranges. [Cause] we didn't get

fresh fruit [you know] like that here you know, [and it

was a real treat.]

[voice: ...from the cookhouse...

JUNRE: yea, from the cookhouse. They wouldn't eat it, ^{in their} here

lunch so they could bring it home for us kids you know.

[But you remember these things you know these things because] it was really something to look forward to you know.

SD: It was an event w/ your dad come home.

JUNE: Right. Umhum.

SD: Did that isolation of the women in this sense from the men really help to motivate women in organizing the auxiliary, in coming together to create a community?

LAURIE: Well wasn't it Bergie and Edna Brown got more or less got ^{Edna} ^{auxiliary} ^{Mary}

Camps
↓

To pg. 32

the auxiliary that started it
 Mary: They started it.
 EVA: They came into our house that night, we only had the two rooms,
 eh. And [you know] they're trying to talk me into it.
 Well, to keep peace in the family I joined. That was the
 only thing I think. *insert pg. 34

see pg. 59
 as well

From page 34

LAURIE: But it seems to me that, cause I know when I got acquainted
 with Edna she talked auxiliary, but [like I say] I was very
 cautious about joining the auxiliary because I had never
 done anything like that before and didn't belong to anything
 like that. [And I was just sort of,] well, I didn't
 understand.

JUNE: A lot of men didn't think women had any business really, [there was,
 you know, they were quite...]

LAURIE: ...well I know that [Belign (Betene?),] he had been unionized
 from the time he was a youngster because he was brought
 up with it in Sweden, and they were organized in Sweden [you see
 and
 this is what they did. So, I mean,] he didn't push me, but
 he just let me decide for myself [and] finally I did join
 like I say. But, [like I say, it was very, well,] I just didn't
 know what to expect.

to pg. 44

from pg 30

We'd go so

EVA: we'd get the money off them. laughter. That's why the women walked all in a body up ~~across~~

LAURIE: That wasn't the reason I walked there.

EVA: No, because all of your friends all did, you thought well, we'll walk up. But that was the reason I walked up.

voices: That was to meet the men when they came off the speeder.

EVA: Yes, otherwise these floozies would meet them first. That's the truth. I can tell who the floozies were too, they are very highly respected today. (laughter.)

[LG: Oh well, we don't want any of that kind of, we don't need to know that.]

LAURIE: [I know I used to walk on Sunday night, we used to walk up to the speeder ^{on Sunday night} there and then [of course, the women ^{would} get together, [and then] we usually landed at Bertha's place remember? [And then] we'd sit there and crochet [and do...

LG: : ...until three o'clock in the morning...

[LAURIE: yes. I'd imagine

LG: that's probably where, was the auxiliary formed then or it was just a, I guess the auxiliary really in the beginning were just more a social get-together for company's sake and that rather than thinking of taking an active part in the unions.

JUNE: Do you remember when they had the big fire and we moved everybody into the community hall? [Remember what year was that? I can remember slightly and] all the women brought sandwiches [and they, I don't know whether it was when they had the fire

Speakers etc.

at Gordon River or...I can't remember, can't remember the year. I'll have to ask somebody at home.

EVA: Oh, I can remember that.]

JUNE: And everybody made up an emergency place so that everybody would be sheltered at the hall, []^A and all the women went home and ...

[EVA: fed them all...

JUNE: yea, went home and fed them all.] They made *big* things of soup and sandwiches, [] and all that stuff. But I should ask someone ...

[LAURIE: That must have been before I came.

JUNE: Yea, well I can remember it happening cause it was so close to where we lived and Mum and the whole bunch going over and helping you know, feed them and get bedding and stuff.

LAURIE: I remember when the shack burned next door to us. We were sitting playing cards and we didn't even know the shack was burning until Mrs. Cravell yelled/^{kept saying} "fire, fire" "fire"...

LG: No fire department in those days.
they

LAURIE: No. And you know all did was bring the water from that little creek by your..., and the men just kept throwing water on our shack so it wouldn't burn.

[EVA: I remember that, yea.]

SD: So how did the auxiliary begin and what did it do in that first period of time when it was forming?]

after 1st par pg. 31

EVA: Well, if I can remember right I know that Hjalmar and Edna they talked me into it. And I was practically taking a real good active part in it because Fred and Archie and Hjalmar were travelling by boat, ~~well~~, sometimes they had to swim too, go to Camp See in a rowboat and they'd come home at three or four o'clock in the morning, they were trying to organize some of the camps see. And I would have a great big pot of stew or something ready for them. Three or four o'clock in the morning. They'd be frozen. They did this, they stayed a lot at my place. So.

the men used to have to supply them with

JUNE: Yea, well, shoes, they didn't have anything.

Nels said Hjalmar got the whole big sum of, ^{don't} I know what it, \$14 a month or ...

voice: ...they didn't have anything...

JUNE: No, and then they'd, he'd turn back to him, he wouldn't buy shoes and some guys would round up a pair of shoes, you know, this is the guy ^{that} organized and Edna, I guess they thought well there's no way; somebody's got help these guys. They're trying to help our husbands and get them better conditions. I guess that's one reason eh? She talked to the women you know.

EVA: But when was that big split? That was when I went to work because Fred couldn't get a job anywhere. He was blacklisted all up and down the island.

to pg. 31

June: That was '49.

EVA: '49. No, it was before that.

JUNE: '48 it happened. 1948, cause that's the year we were married, March of '48.

EVA: Well I was working '46. I guess I had to...because I worked for Adrian, and he was in the first play, not the first play, second one, and when I went and I got him to go to one of the plays so it was after '46. Cause i...

LAURIE: ...don't you think our socials were more or less were, that we got together and it sort of got talked about that as a group we would be able to do things so much better for everyone? It seems to me this is the way, like when they were talking to me to get me to go and as a group you can do things whereas one you can't do anything. And through groups you were able to...well didn't we used to go knocking on doors and things . for some kind of a project of some kind; it seems to me I...I didn't do the talking. I just went as the support and let the other ones do the talking.

voices

LG: Of course, I can only speak, I wasn't in it until 1940 so it had already got rolling. But I know definitely that after I had joined and that it was always involved either collecting for the Red Cross or Cowichan Health Centre and then we, when sugar was rationed, we got

W.A.
from pg. 22

sugar for the, ~~from~~ the Queen Alexandra Solarium. Went out and picked berries and made, we'd gather and make jams and take it down to the Solarium. And then the next, the following year we had a 125 pounds of sugar I think it said, and so instead of getting into a group, we divided it to five pounds ^{to each} / person and they made the jam when it was convenient to them and when they had fruit. So...

SD: Can you talk a bit about generally the kinds of things that the auxiliary did. Maybe some examples of what the socials were like and...

EVA: I do remember we put on an awful lot of dances and we never worked so hard in all our lives. Do you remember the Snowball Frolic? laughter.

LG: But then too, its ^{approximately} in 1940. After we ^{joined} this, this belonged to the District Council which was for all auxiliaries in B.C. and then from there we branched into Federated Auxiliaries. We took it as our ^{a full} goal that we were going to have / quota of delegates at all the meetings so that meant a lot of money and so we turned to catering ^{for the} different organizations and that in the community. And we put on these suppers, ~~we had~~ 20

JUNE: ... ~~we had~~ too, to raise money...

LAURIE: ...oh yes, remember that big bazaar we had, the auxiliary, we cleared \$500 that year. Oh that was the biggest bazaar

we ever had. But everybody worked real hard on that.

LG: You had a bazaar all afternoon and like there was things like sewing, crocheting, knitting, toys, woodworking, baking, novelties, even some of them had baked, big lots of potato salad, we sold that. Afternoon tea, raffles, guessing games and we'd wind it up we'd have a card game at night. Then, following the card game, we were still able to go, we'd finish it off with a dance. (laughter.) And a supper at the dance.

JUNE: Yes, umm.

EVA: We had a lot of fun though, really. You know Sharon has often talked, she says, Mum I don't think anybody had a happier childhood than I did. She said, I don't know how you could, you know, raise kids today, she's raising them herself but, she can remember things that we did you know. . . we climbed the top of every one of these mountains, Bertha, and the kids, you know, and Peail and...we had to make our own fun. But the kids really thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

JUNE: And parade. We always had a parade. Oh boy.

LG: And they're still carrying on what we started in 1943 I believe, between the sub local and the auxiliary, we had our first sports day. It was just for the day you know logger sports, children races, what-have-you. The following year the community wanted to get in on it, because

to page 39

kids

WWT
SA

we had starting for the ^{war} years, the knitting club which was done with the Red Cross, and then from the knitting club it branched into, ^{United} organizations at Lake Cowichan which had representatives from all organizations, Kinsmen, KofP, church groups and so they wanted to be included in this picnic idea. So we started our Lake Cowichan sports day which used to be held on Labour Day. And they carried from then until the present. Mind you, the form has changed, but we were the ones that started it out. And we always sponsored the children's parade and, because, there weren't that many cars in those days you know you maybe had one or two trucks ^{that was} decorated to carry the band or something else for the parade. And so we gave the first cup for the children's parade, and the following year we added another one for the best walking group of children representing a local organization. And we also looked after the water sports.

and I believe Eva's husband Fred, he was I guess the best swimmer this side of Lake Cowichan (laughter) he used to ...

EVA: ... was a good swimmer but no diving. Fred judged the diving and...

JUNE: ... my sister used to win the, for swimming, you know in her age group. She's a strong swimmer.

to 39

with
 EVA: I remember/Sharon, she won a cup or a ribbon or something across the river and she wasn't six. But I threw both of the kids into the water *whether they wanted to go or not*. I figured *them always* getting drowned or something. Well I made them that good *that* Pat, My daughter, she swam 23 miles in that, she swam the Lake in that great big storm There were seven foot waves, all the log booms, they lost Pat half a dozen times you know, they did really. And they were rowing...well, you can remember that, that's not too long ago. But she wouldn't get out. They finally pulled her out. Everybody else had dropped out at Youbou. But she swam the whole Lake, she was all but one mile, and it was 23 miles long. So whatever I taught them they did well or else.

~~JUNE: Well I'll have to tell them. The IWA used to have a contest you know, it was Duncan, Chemainus, different route, yea. I won the lumber queen ^{sponsored by the *club*} in 1916 you know. Down in Duncan. voices. discussion.~~

LAURIE: That was a big event.

JUNE: Yea, *she* didn't win it for beauty looks, *she* had a lot of supporters, tickets, and made money, eh? voices. discussion.

voice: That was when the lady of the Lake started, wasn't it?

voices. *it* when the lady of the lake started

JUNE:

to page

from
 37

LG: ... H. really sharpened up by memory when I was writing all these things out.

EVA: And the lady of the lake title, I suggested that.

No, I did at a PTA meeting and it's stuck ever since .

That's a long long time ago.

" Our Youbou "

LG: Now, listen this was in June '45. delegates

report plans are being made for annual Labour Day sports

and carnival. We will ^{again} sponsor the children's

parade. This year's support committee will plan a

Miss Cowichan Lake contest. We submitted the following

recommendations. You know we ^{were} always submitting

something. "Each community of the Lake area sponsor a

girl, each company in the area be asked to sponsor a

girl. We would like our auxiliary to be 'oh, this is, and

then it goes on, 'to be represented in this Duncan Dominion

Day parade committee' and that was when we had those girls,

and that was in '45 and they were all dressed in ^{their} green and

gold crepe paper dresses, ^{and} had the insignia on their head

and a big banner "We support Local 80's labour programme,

Equal pay for equal work for all, Every union man's

wife in an auxiliary, unity in war and peace". This was

our theme when, after I joined it, always work with the,

help the men and work with the sub local and then the

~~local and that~~ And the auxiliary. I think it was in '46

when Kitty gave the report at the Work of Ladies' Local at

Lake highly praise ^{d "this was} the Local 180 in Duncan. This covered all the Cowichan Lake area, had their annual meetings and we sent delegates. It took all ~~the~~ newspaper print to give our report, so they, you know, we really got recognition and really had accomplished a lot in that year. Oh, this was in '46, January. 'Sister Brown gave her report on hospital contracts and recommended we subscribe to the Blue Cross plan'. I know there's that other plan that you were talking about but this was in...and then we were involved in the welcome home parties for the returned servicemen. So then we had to make another recommendation to that committee.

(laughter)

LAURIE: *By the way when did we start the United Organizations when every organization belonged to the united organizations club?

LG: Well that was during the war. That was in '43.

EVA: When did we have our first parade? Because I remember you and Fred and myself and Ralph for years, five o'clock in the morning we'd have to mark the ~~end~~ ^{start} of the parade, get up at five and around nine...

LG: ...lines would ~~across~~, where they were going to line up and numbers to show we had it all organized.

JUNE: Another thing we started here and I can remember, I was a kid but, the big masquerade balls and my mom sewed. She

was a beautiful seamstress and she made all these women
that^{with}the, the Dionne quintriplets were really popular,
and they all, they were dressed as the Dionne quintruplets,
and mum sewing these pink frills and frills and big^{bows}...
Ellen Tass was one of them.

voice: I was one too.

JUNE: Over in, the ones that lived over^{here}/you know in the Bay
when there was still

LG: Oh, that was before I was here. That was in the early
days of the auxiliary.

JUNE: That was a real challenge. They used to really have a
good time.

EVA: Well your mother was the doctor, she was dressed as a
man again, she wasn't very big either, I don't know why
she...

LG: ^{Doctor} Dafoe? Dafoe was it, the quint^{uplets} doctor?

? MARY: You would^h'n't remember would you?

laughter. No, it was too long ago for you. (directed to SD)

LAURIE: I mean they were born in '36 weren't they?

LG: We had a hard times dance several years and anyone that
didn't come dressed up they were fined, and then we'd have
a mock court, and then they got fined for not participating
and, all during the war we remembered all the fellows and
girls in the service...

LG: ^{is} is my husband Ralph, Sara Diamond. So we should have

top 9
73

had you here when we were going back to the '30s.
Was '34 . . . the first strike that you fellows went,
what camp did you go up to, up Island, in '34, or was
that in '36?

RG: Elk River.

LAURIE: Elk River, I couldn't remember.

LG: And was that in '34?

RG: Yea.

LG: And in '36 was the next strike, right.

RG: That's right.

LAURIE: And how ~~did~~ that camp ~~got~~ started? You went in support
of that camp that had gone on strike?

RG: '36. Oh, we were...it started up at, I was up at Gordon
River, ^{though} it didn't start there I don't think.

MARY : That was when the men came over the mountain to pull the
mill out?

LG: I remember that. At Youbou. *That was in '36*

JUNE: *Whenwa* ~~it~~, they had the split remember and the guys were
going to go up strikebreaking up past *Wanaimo*. Where was
that?

RG: Oh that was up around Campbell River ~~away~~ there.

to:
No, wasn't it down at the...can't remember. When he talks *its*
about ^{where} Gordon River is now, but it '36 it was called Rounds
where most of the men that had been ^{out} trying to organize...

voice: Iron River. (discussion)

RG: Iron River that was it. (discussion)

JUNE: I was looking at that picture in the paper, it was an old picture, have you got it? That one of all the loggers from Lake Logging, McDonald Murphy, Uncle Neil's right in the front of it anyhow. Have you got that picture?
[There were fifteen to twenty families living at Rounds in those days.]

RG: ..I haven't got it, yea, I saw it though, I remember the picture. Well there's a dam up there at Rounds.

LG: Well do you remember the auxiliaries, like there was an auxiliary coming up there, or like helping with, did you have dances or just Christmas parties up at...

RG: Just Christmas parties.

EVA: Just Christmas parties.

voices *No dances or anything up there.*

LG: And did you come down to like did they put on dances or socials at the Lake prior, during 1936 that you might have attended? Well that's before I married you see, so this is why I got, I don't know what you did before ...

laughter

JUNE: *She's just trying to help a line on you.*

EVA: Edna Brown and there was a man, might have been we went to old Lake Logging, to get the women interested in the union, in the auxiliary. I remember. Yes, overnight.

to pg 59

stay

LG: How many families were living up at Rounds in those days?

EVA: There'd be about thirty.

RG: No, I don't think it was quite that many, no. Maybe twenty at the most. Fifteen to twenty.

MARY/EVA and Long Oscar, remember Long Oscar. He was about eight feet tall.

RG: laughter, oh, no. laughter *He wasn't that tall.*

EVA: He was and he married one of the Oats ^{le} girls, jeez they were beautiful girls. They were. Do you remember them?

voices

JUNE: Jack, what was Jack's name, Jack he'd come round to mum's he formed a charity then for those guys. *I'm trying to think.*

EVA: That was in, Pat was born in 1940 and I was laying in a semi-private room with, oh, a relation of mine, oh Lila Pitts. Remember Sid Pitts from Duncan? Well anyway, she had a baby born then at the same time. But Long Oscar and Dave Badill came in with a box of chocolates and a bouquet of flowers for me, and his wife was in the hospital in emergency, she'd had a miscarriage or something, and so anyway I remember Lila saying 'who was that tall man?' because how tall was he? And then we figured it out you know, his wife was in there and she said, 'gee no wonder she had a miscarriage'. laughter. Boy. he was tall.

LAURIE: Yea, but I don't think he was eight foot tall.

EVA: No, he wasn't but he was about 6'6 because Fred was

6'2 and he towered over Fred. You know he was really tall.

SD: What kind of other social activities. You were talking about theatre.

EVA: [Well] I started ^{the theatre} [that] in 1946.

[SD: Do you want to talk about that a bit?

EVA: I should have brought the scrap book. No, well] we started that to raise money. [You know,...

LG: ...] ^{LIL:} the first play was put on through the PTA that you started out there.

[voice: Beantown]

EVA: Beantown Choir. [And] it didn't matter whether they could act or not, they had fo. [We got her in it...

LG who said I couldn't act? laughter

EVA: [(to Lil)] All you did, I still remember you know, and I was trying to think of this song] ^{EVA: Lil} was supposed to sing Polly Wolly Doodle All the Day...

[LG: Well I didn't have a big part...]

EVA: But you had an apple in your hand and you were chewing that and laughing like heck at me you know. Stuck there in the middle of this audience. And my kids shouting 'she forgot it, she can't sing it! she's forgot it'.

JUNE: One of the ones that was in the group with Eva, [is she' amime? isn't that what you call him?]

EVA: [Oh] Adrian, I started him. See I was working for him in '46 cause Fred couldn't get a job...

[LG: Is he still in Vancouver or where is he now?

EVA: No, he's [back in,] back East, Lake of the Woods...

LG: Me used to be on a Kleenex ad didn't he?

EVA: He still is.

LG: On TV.]

JUNE: ^{He was} On that children's programme Mr. Dress-up, [he was] ?

EVA: He had a School of Mime and he had oh I guess about 175 pupils the last I heard from Adrian and Addie.

[SD: So he started here?

EVA: Well] I dragged him into the play whether he liked it or not, but he was good.

LG: [Well they appeared,] They went as far as the Dominion Drama Festival...

[EVA: Yea, well they went with..the play Three Cuckolds.

LAURIE: Well do you remember the play he did all by himself all he had was a ladder. laughter. voices. That was a beautiful play.]

EVA: [Betty Lincoln and him were on, the two of them.] We took ^{The 3 Cuckolds} that play to the Festival, Vancouver and it won B.C. Championship and then they went farther than that.

[LG: But Yvonne Green was in the Dominion Festival one, wasn't she?

EVA: Well, she directed ^{the} Three Cuckolds. I remember every one in there.

LG: Oh, she directed. Would it be OK if I went and put lunch out? Have you got time for...]

*the
part was*

Comments

EVA: ...Eugene, Oregon. But I left here with borrowed clothes cause I had none and 50¢. Now that is no lie and we're gone for how many days, a week...

...well ten days I think we were in Portland. Our rooms were paid and our meals were paid for but I hand't a cent, 50¢ So we were going up a street, Mary and I and I said, "oh," and Bertha ^{Eckland} was looking after my two kids, so I said, "Mary, let's go in here." I said, "look at that little ornament."

I was gonna buy a gift for Bertha...

EVA: Yea, I was gonna buy this gift for Bertha. So she said 'alright', she says, 'I know it won't be very much. All these cobwebs all over, everywhere. Oh it was dirty. So I goes up to this woman and I said 'I'd like to see that little ornament you have in the window'. ^(French accent) 'Oh, you are very fortunate madam, it is French. It's a little bit broken but you are very fortunate. I will let you have it cheap, \$750.' And Mary grabs a hold of my rear end and she says 'c'mon, come along'. I said well I do know nice things when I see them. Oh brother. 50¢. \$750. So with the we went in a 15¢ store and I brought everybody a gift back with that 50 Cents. I did!

MARY: I did remember buying a pair of purple shoes and I got an infection in my foot from them.

LG: I wonder how much the shoes cost in those days?

conv.

MARY: I don't know. They were on sale so I never...

EVA: Oh, you could buy all sorts of things for 50¢.

LG: 50¢ was not that much money, I mean you couldn't even
the
go over to Vancouver with amount that a whole
bunch of us went to Eugene with.

EVA: Well we were allotted for our room and our meals, each
member was allotted a \$100. And...

voice: that much money?

LG: Oh no.

MARY: Never in those days.

LG: We wouldn't have had that much money....

LAURIE: You weren't allowed a \$100...

MARY: \$25 more like it.

LG: In fact nobody got the money I don't think.

EVA: Well no we didn't but...

LG: ...pursestrings...

EVA: and she got it all in silver dollars, do you remember
that? And we made you the treasurer, *He said, you're the treasurer,*
you have to lock
after the money. So everywhere we went she had this bag
of silver dollars. laughter. Weighed a ton. laughter.

JUNE: Who was the treasurer?

EVA: Grace Brown.

JUNE: Oh right. She was ...

EVA: Don't you remember sitting on the train...

laughter. discussion.

Cowen's

LAURIE: What did we do when we went to V^ancouver, when the split was on?

EVA: That would be in '48.

LAURIE: I know you ~~were~~ there weren't you?

EVA: I've got a picture of that.

LAURIE: And then we went into that, what was that Chinese cafe called where we had our picture taken? All of us. And we stayed at the, was it Alcazar, yea. Not Alcatraz.

EVA: No, Alcazar, just up from the Cenotaph there, yes right up there. I remember that.

SD: People still call it the *Alcatraz* actually.

LAURIE: Do they?

SD: Yes.

EVA: I remember staying there.

LAURIE: We stayed there because that was the only time that I partook in any of the auxiliary activities was going to V^ancouver that time, and I was scared to death. I really was because I had never, you know, gone.

JUNE: I was petrified when we went to Eugene because I hardly ever been out of Lake Cowichan. ^{Imagine,} Vancouver and then to Eugene.

EVA: You had seven women looking after here. I know you slept, you and I slept together and Pearl slept in the other bed. All piled in there like sardines.

voice: All in one room?

EVA: Mmhum.

JUNE: Yea, they'd all come into our room to meet and giggle and talk and then we had to be up early the next morning to go to Convention, you know, and write down everything.

EVA: Whether we understood it or not we wrote it down anyway.

Do you remember, you were with me and I know Archie was there, we were in this big convention room and when they were voting on a very important issue, but I can't remember, because it was all Dutch to me anyway, whatever they were voting on, but I do remember when they took the vote, and this is no lie, there were...men would go up and those that did it refused to stand in favour of the vote, remember there'd be somebody else get up behind them and stand behind their chair until they were forced to vote. Don't you remember that? Because I...^{I said,} "what are they doing?" and Archie said, "they're forcing them to vote."

MARY: I don't remember that at all.

EVA: That is the truth.

SD: Why were they forcing them to vote?

EVA: Well I guess it was ^{different} fractions down there, you know, and they wanted something or other done I just can't remember what it was. But I know all of us attended.

SD: What was the relationship between the auxiliary and the union? Would you be represented at union meetings, local meetings?

✓
COW. CO.

Structure

Would you bring motions to the ^{union?} How did you get to go to conventions for example?

EVA: Well we would be separate, we'd be the auxiliary and we'd often times, the women would go and speak to the men, you know, at the meetings. Like Edna Brown spoke many, many times.

LAURIE: Yea, I imagine she wou'd.

EVA: But we never had a vote or anything like that. And I know during the split, it was Eva Nickel, [do you remember her,] and Edna and I...

split

LG: ...we never had a vote where?

EVA: In the men's meeting. [But] I know we were asked to speak. At least I didn't think I was going to be asked to, but I had to.

LG: Where was that?

EVA: In Duncan. This is during the split. [But] I got up on my two flat feet anyway and said my little piece and sat down quick. [But Edna was always good.]

LAURIE: Yes, she was. She understood the things. She could explain things to you. I know, through her I understood a lot of things with her explaining it to me. Cause I, like I say, I just never had any idea of what unionism stood for, or why they had to...and I know her husband Owen, he used to talk to me about it and of course I'd agree the working man wasn't treated right, but why I didn't know. Yea, ^{athome} we never had no background of those things.

to PG 86

[EVA: Neither did I.] I thought I'd come to the last place on earth when I first came here.

[LAURIE: Oh, I was scared.

[EVA: Well, it was all bush anyway for a start. [And we bought the lot this is an old fellow gave the lot we're living on now to the auxiliary. That was long before your time. And I bought the lot, I could have had a section for the land for \$10—it was crown grant land, which is valuable property right now but it was way the heck on in the bush.

[LAURIE: Yea, but you couldn't afford to buy those....]

we didn't have \$10, we couldn't buy no lot when we first came here, cause we never had the money to buy it.

[It was only \$10 a lot, where we lived down by, where Atkinson's live now in those places...

LG: Were'nt some of the lots only \$5?]

[EVA: But we bought the auxiliary lot for \$100 and I bet it took me nearly a 100 years to pay for that. And I did you know. At a dollar a month or...it did...laughter... I'm not exaggerating...we still live on that property.

[LG: Well we... this lot here we bought in '37, we had a three room house, no plumbing, no electricidty, and a lot, for \$450.

EVA: But I remember, I still have the final receipt for that lot. And Bertha was Financial Secretary for the auxiliary so she wrote "Paid in full" and oh, I celebrated with a

bottle of beer, I guess or something. Whatever I could afford.

JUNE: Well the last major strike that we were involved with was the Hillcrest Dispute, '62. Cause we had just bought the resort and our partners, both of them were working at Hillcrest, Johnny and Alf were both fallers and anyhow they were going to take the men's crummies away from them, you know, their transportation. They were going to make all the men...

voice: ...stay in camp...

JUNE: No, no. There was no camp, but drive themselves to the job, instead of bringing the crummies in. The men said no way, you know. Well they'd gone to the millmen originally and the millmen said, "what can we do," so they didn't fight it. So / went to the loggers, the loggers said "no way, you're not going to, we fought, you know, you're going to supply us the transportation." We ^{'d} just just gone in debt for this resort and they went out on strike in January, a six month strike, they went out on, that was the longest dispute, and oh my god, we had four kids and my dad was in with me and we ^{'d} sunk everything we had in this place up there. But anyhow they ^{ve} still got the crummies you know, in the mill they have to supply their own transportation but the men did stick it out and fought for it.

EVA: Was that the time that they brought in food from all over, people donated...I know I was helping to distribute it out.

JUNE: But you know they got, so we came down, and we, like the women, the wives of the men that were involved in it there's Bea^K Nott and that whole group you know, had pamphlets and we'd go down and stop the other crummies and sneak them under the business men's doors you know. And Freda and I we always worked together, we'd be running around putting out pamphlets and stopping crummies, ^{you know, the other ones,} to explain the situation, if they did it. If they got away with it at Hillcrest well they were going to take the other guy's crummies away eh? So, anyhow they fought it and they won it but it was a long strike.

SIDE 2:

And there was some threats and different things you know and there was a lot of tension because the millmen lost theirs and yet the loggers they said, well,

END OF SIDE I TAPE II

" IF you'd come out and asked for support the loggers always supported the mill guys, you know. There was an awful lot of tension and sometimes you were scared to even open your mouth and say your husband was a logger mixed up with Hillcrest because there was a lot of people didn't agree with them, because they figured it caused a lot of hardship and that, but they had to fight for it you know, so it was

the last big one I think we were involved with.

SD: What was the relationship ~~back~~ like ^b between the loggers and the millworkers and the wives of loggers and millworkers. ~~Were they~~ all involved equally in the auxiliary or did the wives of loggers tend to get more involved?

LAURIE: They were on their own more or less were n't they? The loggers and the millworkers never mixed. I mean they just didn't seem to have the same feelings towards each other I don't think.

JUNE: No, they never have really had, even to this day. There's still that slight difference. They all belong to the same union, but there still is that little bone of contention I think.

MARY: Well years and years ago they always accused the millmen of hiding behind the sawdust piles. Always done that. Cause they never really supported the loggers. But yet they were willing to get all the benefits you know.

JUNE: Well I shouldn't have said what I said earlier about the fallers, Mel said it wasn't the fallers, it was the loggers that built the IWA and millmen now, there's more millmen than there are loggers. So now when they go out for contracts usually the millmen get what they want because there's more of them than there is loggers

you know, to get the conditions you know. Oh, they're all in favour, but they have had a lot of things done for the millmen because there men working in the mills than there is loggers you know.

SD: Were the loggers more militant?

JUNE: Oh, definitely. Still, to this day they are.

SD: Were there ever any attempts to bring the wives of the millworkers into the auxiliary?

EVA: There was the odd one because I remember those, oh what did they call her, Gibson^S, Gibby Gibson, they were millmen and the family, all the sons were interested and their wives, because Mrs. Gibson was on some of those pictures, Gibby Gibson.

SD: How did you get women involved in the auxiliary? What did the auxiliary do to draw people in?

JUNE: Mainly talk to people and...

LAURIE: Like our socials, like I say you'd be together as a group and then they'd usually ask you...

EVA: Well we had more fun than the other groups anyway so they were willing to join you know, they wanted to take part in a lot of the activities that were around.

LAURIE: Weren't we, ^{we} always more or less made it fun, I mean we never had things that were boring, I mean when we worked on our projects, we always enjoyed doing what we were doing, 'cause we knew we were doing it for the

good of something.

EVA: Well whenever we put on a dance I've known people to come from Vancouver and all over place to go to the dances. That hall used to be packed. You know people looked forward to the dances.

SD: Were women in the community ever afraid to join the auxiliary because they were afraid of being identified with trade unionism.

EVA: Called a 'red'.

JUNE: Oh yea, that still goes on to this day. [A lot of people.] that was the main thing the bosses could do, if they could smear you as a 'red' [you know] and the people are petrified of anything like that, [that ^{is me} hangover they put over everybody, you know.]

[EVA: Was it '48 that Fred and Norm were in the, well they were involved in the split, but] they were accused of taking \$17,700. I used to know that figure so well. I've held it in my arms and I've buried it in the cellar [and we packed that money and put in custody of the miners. The President of the miner's union took it to Vancouver.] Anyway there was a court case held but they were freed from all charges. [But you should have, well, who all attended the court cases?]

LAURIE: No, I don't remember that. I guess I wasn't involved.

EVA: That was in '48, in the split.

SD: Were there men who tried to stop their wives ever from being involved in the auxiliary?

EVA: There may have been but I never heard of any because... there could have been some. I mean everybody we knew was in the auxiliary. Well we were all loggers wives, I guess.

LAURIE: Right, and they never deprived us from joining the auxiliary. As a matter of fact they really urged us to really belong to... like *Baligh* would say "well it's up to you, but he didn't force me to go. Like I say it took me two years to make up my mind to go in.

EVA: Well I think the auxiliary was formulated right in our house because they used to hold all the meetings there, Edna, *and* Gully Olsen and I'm almost sure Mrs. Gorenson, and Julie and *C. Tasset*, Mrs. *Banting* and Mrs. *Banting's* sister, Lydia. Well Lydia was more active than what... they lived here, somewhere around here.

pg. 31?

MARY: Well they lived right next door to us.

JUNE:

LAURIE: Yea, next door from Mary Greenall?. The last dispute we had was the faller's dispute, it wasn't the bus dispute the faller's and that was when I was so mad. That's since we've been up That's when the faller's used to work on a contract rate and you know *and* they took the contract

from 19.44

away, and put them on a day rate. And so some of the fallers objected to this you know and there was this splinter groups, I guess they always called the ones, I know they wouldn't let them, the IWA wouldn't let them rent the hall, ^{they} wouldn't let them do anything. So the fallers in this district all met in our house, and God I got phone calls from that IWA office in Duncan; they wanted the women to go out and you know on the picket line, you know, take the men through the picket line. ⁵ My husband was one of the ones in the bad group fighting for the fallers you know, and I was so damn mad when they phoned from the IWA office, using money I figured my husband was paying in to try and break them. Well they lost that fight, the fallers did, you know, but as Mel said he didn't care, he was going to work ^{hard} ^{day} anyhow. But still it was the principle of the thing eh? And the IWA backed the bosses taking them away from contract and putting them on day rate. And the men didn't really have a say in it. The men that were doing the falling.

LG: What year was that?

JUNE: I don't know. Ralph? When was the faller's dispute?

About four years ago, five years ago?

RG: What was that?

JUNE: The faller's dispute. When they took them off the contract

rate to day rate.

RG: Oh I don't know whether it was five or six years.

JUNE: It was that long ago I think so eh?

LAURIE: Of course I knew we had no part in it because Belign's been retired for eleven years.

JUNE: Yea. Well I know we were involved in it because of Nils and that you know. But anyhow. So there's been different times you know that it...

RG: It was after ^I finished work there anyhow.

LAURIE: How long have you been retired?

RG: 1968.

LAURIE: Well you retired the same year Belign did then.

RG: Well I quit in 1968. I had another year to go. When Hillcrest finished well I figured I was all in one piece I might as well stay that way. *I hadn't been seriously hurt yet* laughter....I made my mistakes I guess. No, it was alright though, just went...

EVA: There used to be an awful lot of friction in the schools I remember. You know they accused Sharon of being a 'red' and that Child if she was asked any question well she would say 'I'. But I remember Reverend Endicott, do you remember when he was here, he stayed at our place, and then about a year later his son came, and at that time Childs and Sharon had had an awful dispute in the school, he was the schoolteacher, and

He accused her of something or other finally called her a 'red'. But I remember the young Endicott he told Sharon never say 'I'. He says, "some people feel this way, he says never take I feel, some think this and some think that," he says then you'll never be accused of you know speaking your own mind I guess. But that was the way she avoided a lot of scraps up there. You did. You got accused.

split

SD: What kind of support work did the auxiliary for other kinds of strikes earlier on like 1946 for example?

EVA: Oh brother, we were involved in everything. It was mostly trying to find something to eat.

JUNE: Yea, mainly food.

EVA: I know there was a lot of food...

JUNE: We had out soup kitchens, if the men were out of work and that you know, everybody had, most people had gardens and there was, you could get deer a lot easier then you know. *Just across the street you could get deer.* And like they didn't have deep freezes and fridges they used to have root cellars and they never let anyone go hungry in the community. If the men were all out of work they'd have soup kitchens. Everybody would put what they could in the pots so everybody could eat. They all looked after one another, you know, mainly, they had to to survive. I think it was just a community effort wasn't it?

[SD: What about the 1946 march? What did the Lake Cowichan Women's Auxiliary do...

EVA: The march to the Parliament Buildings? Well I was in that, well we all were weren't we?

MARY: No, I had five children at home but Archie was ...

EVA: But I know, caravans and cars...]

JUNE: We had to make the biggest show ^(in 1946) that the people were really willing to fight for the 40 hour week...

[voice:] there were hundreds of cars,

JUNE: ...and we took thousands, it was so organized, to march.

And the more people we had the more we could demonstrate;

and the women's auxiliary went to support' to show they

supported their husbands. [And they also] they put us

in this army place and the women did the cooking

[you know, cause nobody...] there was no money for

restaurants [and that] so they organized getting the food

while they were there. And they all went with their

men when [they're meeting, when] they marched up Parliament

Buildings...

EVA: ..carloads of fish, carloads of bread, we got support from

all over B.C.

JUNE: The bakeries donated, and everybody donated and supported

the working people you know, so. There were a few that

didn't like it you know, but.

top pg. 64

EVA: The first thing when we settled in that barrack, well they started to organize the working crews you see. So Bertha, in no way was she going to get in the kitchen, so I agreed to go in the kitchen and I remember Charlie Mountie was in charge of it, well I had a soft job you know, just cutting up bread, or making sandwiches or helping to cook. I thought there was Bertha cleaning out the toilets, was she ever mad. Everybody was allotted something to do. laughter.

MARY: How long were you there?

EVA: Oh we were there for two or three days. We got our demands anyway.

JUNE: [But I do remember when they come out, it was Harold Pritchett, wasn't it, wasn't he the President and I still remember when everybody was in that huge great big building and Harold Pritchett come up and he says, well the operators have just agreed. [You know,] they'd been on strike quite a while when they marched there, for the forty hour five day week, forty hours, and something else as well, the raise?

LAURIE: 25¢ and 40 and union security...

JUNE: yea, and you shoulda heard those people cheer you know.

EVA: Well they had to give it to them because we bombarded the Parliament Buildings...

LG: No, they've got other...

EVA: ...they couldn't move, there were hundreds of them.

LG: It was really inspiring wasn't it, when we were all out there on the lawns and Harold Pritchett and Nigel and Hjalmer, the district officers, went in there [you know] and just waiting and waiting to hear what was going to happen. You don't forget it in a hurry. [Well, tea's ready.]

to page
103

END OF SIDE II TAPE II

Tape III Side I

SD: What was the relationship between the social functions of women's auxiliary, the kind of role it played in certain social activities and political activities in the community like for example, during the Second World doing work around war activity. How would you see

that relationship. What kind of work would you do on that front

Mary: ^{That} war brought the women together more than any other kind of work, cause we were all ^{working} for the same purpose didn't we?

LG: And then I know, we had meetings afterwards like to get the overseas vote, like we worked on compiling The Dominion, The federal voters list, the federal election, we raised money that way and then when the war was over a lot of the boys were not getting the franchise in the provincial election, we had a protest sent in about that and of course we supported all the labour, and that, contacted MLA's and Members of Parliament and we, well we had card parties and worked

for the Red Cross, to do their bit in the war relief like *used* clothing and things like that. Like the Kinsmen had a clothing drive, a national clothing drive, and we sorted and packed all the clothes for them. We worked with all the different organizations...

JUNE: They saved *stuff to make the* blankets

voice: Old wool clothing...

JUNE: *You sent them to* Vancouver, and *they made* the blankets.

indistinct

We made blankets ourselves.

SD: How did *the employers* relate to that war did they try to increase production in the forests and use.

war production in woods

voice: they did, right.

EVA: Because all the years that I've been here there's been a fire season and they've been shut down for snow, but all during the war we never had any shutdowns. I remember that distinctly.

LG: Of course they were exempt to work in the logging industry, the mills and that. Well they were exempt because they needed the logs and that. Because I remember Chuck *Stewart*, you know across the street, when Ralph *told us*, *he was just a young fellow*, but when he came up to Hillcrest logging and if he'd start slacking and that well they'd *fire* him, well *if he* didn't do a good job they'd turn him in and he'd be in the army or that.

You were exempt for that.

EVA: Well they employed young kids too cause you remember the time Alvin and that other guy was working out...they were working on a...

LG: ^{what do you mean} ✓ young kids?

EVA : ...well I mean Alvin was very young, sixteen years of age...

LG: ...they were able to get work...

EVA: Yes, they did. Well anyway, Alvin, your mother came and told me this and I've never forgot it, Alvin and Cooney Anderson, ^{knut,} were working together but they were working ^{under}

Fred and Fred was up a tree you know trying to rig it and

he told these young kids, two of them, and ^{what was, what they were} to send up to the top of the tree you see and ^{he} wrote in chalk, ^{what-} numbered them, one, two

three, four, five. Well nothing went up that tree you

know. They didn't have anything in rotation. So Fred

gets down there you know and my, he says, if you two

buggers are down there I'll take every one of them trees ^{with you,}

out of here he says. So when he ^{climbed up the tree rigged + climbed down,}

he said, "where are those two boys and Fred Weaver

he was a gruff guy, ^{was great} he said, "you fired them two hours

ago." He said, "they're down at the lake now I bet."

They ran out of here. So years after that Fred was

transferred from the mill to go and get a machine out at Hillcrest, and Alvin came home and he said, "Ma, you'll never guess whose working up in that bloody place. He says I'm not going back up there." *Mind you,* still because he had the two rooms then, because *your mother* come over that night and she told *us* and she said she tried to figure out every nasty guy she could think of in the Lake and never once thought of Fred you know. Because it was years after the incident when he fired them, at least he didn't really fire them. He says, well, "Fred Wilson's up there, and he says there's no claim big enough for him and me." (laughter) He wouldn't go back. But then he could log by that time.

JUNE: Mum went to work, quite a few of them did, mum went to work in the mill during the war years pulling lumber off the green chain all day.

LG: ...during the war years...

JUNE: because Nils was overseas and Bill was overseas *my other brother* and Ned. And Dad I remember was working, they didn't have compensation in those days or something and he slipped, cause it wasn't on the job that's what happened. And he slipped and he fell and he broke his arm and they had no money coming in so mum had to go to work to keep us kids alive I guess. She really enjoyed it.

voice: To put food on the table.

EVA: She worked hard...

JUNE: It was too hard work for her really, you know. But anyhow she went. There was quite a few of them took on jobs during the war, like they could rack you know, tie shakes or stuff up at the mill, or bundles and stuff and junk. Jobs they could handle. A lot of them went out whistlepunking.

LG: Yea, Ralph had a girl that was, *blew whistles* voices/indistinct

EVA: Agnes Anderson went whistle punking.

JUNE: Yea, they took them

EVA: Fred, he was still a *Graslers* that big one, ^{when} Pat, "Daddy I want to go up in the ^{bush} ~~woods~~ and work, all these girls, " she was going to school you know. And it was in the summer and she pestered him and pestered him so finally he got mad so he hauls her out of bed one morning when its raining. He picked the worst day you could ever get. It was raining cats and dogs and he made her go up there with him. ^{he said} Well/I did give her ^B fire so that she could sit around and this whistle to blow. But she came home just blue. That was her one and only day in the bush. Made sure of that.

But she did. She hounded him all summer to get up there.

She didn't want to go back after that day.

SD: Those women who went into the mills and I guess the forests during the war, did they get involved in the union at all?

MARY: I don't know.

JUNE: There was no union activity when the war was on, like everything was for the war effort. They never called a strike or any dispute while the war was on.

voice: there were no shutdowns in the woods...

LG: They probably belonged to the union though.

JUNE: Oh they belonged to the union but I mean there was no activity. The one goal was to get the war over. I didn't mean...

LG: ...well everything was for the war effort...

JUNE: ...well I think that...

voice: y...you were buying bonds...

JUNE: Didn't you have to apply to the union at that time if you worked? Weren't you automatically in the union after three days?

LG: No. *They wanted* union security in 1946 so we didn't have it before then.

JUNE: Oh no. That's another thing.

LG: We got the check off after that.

JUNE: Right.

70 pg 71

LG: Like I say, you belong to a union now but they don't know what, its just automatically so they don't know what it means.

SD: Did the patriotism in a sense have an affect on union activities? or how was it seen here, like some people might see it as patriotism, others as trying to stop fascism? How did people talk about the war in relation to the union?

MARY: I don't know. I think they just went to ^{The war, figured} they just had to. I think most of them did.

LG: Well we believed in the cause I guess, I don't know whether you call that patriotism or not but as far as the union....well, I mean one thing, when they came back, those that were in it, I mean they realized that they had gone to fight ^{there} and now they should get something better from the country. Once they had it settled. They were disappointed.

EVA: They had a militia here .
discussion/voices And I can remember.

The PCMR's...

LG: Pacific Coast Militia Rangers. The ones that were in the woods and that, they belonged to this

LAURIE:

LAURIE: Then we used to have these dark nights of blinds *down and*
black outs.

LG: Remember when *they had that bombing, along here where the*
station was.

LG: *It was* the day we were having, one of Mary's childrens
birthdays, so we had a tea party over at her place which
is just over the railway tracks. She's got this
beautiful silver tea service, *she got it as a wedding*
present from the community friends, you know; a gift
from the union people and that and anyway, we were
having a silver tea pot and no electric stove or
anything. The tea pot got left out on the back of
sideburner stove. We went to see this mock road
the... ~~in~~ the fire burning. ✓

And we came back
the legs were melted off the tea pot.

laughter.

voices *I can still remember some of them missed the*
launch, the guys who had come over...

MARY: When my family comes I put it back in the chest after
they all leave and *I was decaying all* ^{*this damn silver*} you know, ^{*and I got stainless steel*} it
looks nice.

you
LG: It was a set that . gave . us for our 25th and its
just as good. I think there's some tea . . .

SD: Did you have any contact with any other women's organizations like the Housewives League?

LG: We didn't have a Housewives League here. They did *Nancy + Anne* belonged to it. Do you mean any other sort of active union league?

SD: Yes.

LG: No we were the only ones. No we were the only union people, you know, active women's group here. Well we had the I.O.D.E., probably? and the *knitting clubs + the church auxiliary* and the P.T.A. but then we all got involved in the PTA and pretty soon we took it over. laughter

SD: Was that an extension of the women's auxiliary work to move into the . . . to do work around the teachers and . . .

LG: Yes.

JUNE: Part of our program was to *get conditions at* school and that you know. Everybody belonged to it to fight for the school conditions for our kids.

LG: Hot lunches. That was one of the platforms. We didn't have, you know, there was no facilities, no home ec rooms or anything of that. still it would be the same people, like us, that worked on getting, serving hot cocoa, lunch hours we'd go there.

And then we got the idea of getting milk, small bottles of milk delivered to the children at lunch hours and that. Before they never had any. Well even, I guess we worked on getting hot lunches served at the school, didn't we? Doris Johnson got the job there, you know, it was through our

...

voices

LAURIE: Oh, I didn't know.
well they have

LG: Yea, two groups I guess like the, Doris did.

more the elementary and now the other, some of the high school teachers. Mrs. Friesen and Mrs. White, and some of the students, put on for the high school.

SD: What were some of the other issues that you organized around in town? For example, prices? or price hikes
What did you do around that?

MARY: Canvassed all the stores for one thing to find out...

LG: chat with the merchants. And then there was the idea that there wasn't enough clothing and inferior grades that came into the community you know. So we sent telegrams about this and price checking and we wanted; we were afraid it would lead to inflation if

we didn't keep the tab on the prices.

EVA: We stuck our noses into *practically everything*.

laughter *Good, bad & indifferent.*

SD: How did the community see the auxiliary, being that it played that kind of active role? What kind of response did you get?

LG: Very good. There was a small minority I think that were skeptical, but I think we made them recognize us actually. They didn't just recognize us at first. but I mean we didn't just talk, we acted, and got involved in so many things that we were recognized. Like, you know, we could put a bazaar on and that and get over \$500 and you know in those days, \$500 today is not very much but it was a lot *in those days*

LAURIE: ...really a lot of money when we raised that and that was clear.

voices

LG: *There was* a variety of articles and things *the* and like/one bazaar we had used like remakes there was a stall on remakes wasn't there Eva? Yea, you know like this was one of the things in the wartime. So we made clothes and had them at the bazaar.

SD: So you must have learned a lot of skills through the participation in the auxiliary.

LG: We did.

SD: What kind of things did you learn?

LG: Well, Bertha showed us tatting and others learned to knit. We had sewing classes. Another sister and I had sewing classes for awhile, for 10-14 year old girls, and Mary here had it, so she took the younger girls and boys and taught them sewing.

voices

LG: . . . in those days and we attended, had joint meetings in the community about sugar rationing. Sent delegates to Vancouver to meet with the wartime prices and trade boards, committees.

EVA: Didn't we get a swimming instructor?

LG: That was through the United Organizations.

EVA: Because I know Pat taught swimming there for awhile.

LG: That was started during our time. The swimming classes. And now we still look after it, and we have swimming over just across the river here, across the highway every, about for five or six weeks a year, every day you know all day long.

JUNE: And they'd go around and canvass every home to get so much money to pay the lifeguards, this was started...

toppg 108-
lud's:
swimming



LG: And the swimming instructor. At first it was one of the teachers, the phys ed teacher up here that I guess was one in charge of it and then as the years went by people that went to the classes graduated and got their Red Cross Swimming Instructors' and then carried on. So, you know, there's so much water around the lake, we have the big lake and the river and that, they have the same deal up in Youbou. I think it's helped to make the children safer around the water, because we haven't had that many fatalities have we? Very few.

EVA: You know, we canvassed this district, at least I did, for many many many many times it isn't even funny, even to get the blood donor clinic. Five years I canvassed that and we never got the clinic. And you know it was this time around that, I said 'my god Eva, I've given your fine blood away every year, when are you going to take it or are you going to take it all at once'?

laughter

You know, there was a lot of funny things that's come out in this canvassing that I never found out really this was for years after, Sharon, she'd be about 11 or 12 and June Anderson, they went around collecting, and this is no baloney, they called on my mother and her friends they collected for

Mahatma Gandhi and *went to all the East Indians.*

laughter

LG: Well if they got anything out of the East Indians they'd surprise me.

EVA: They did. They went all over you know for Mahatma Gandhi and they never did tell me how much they got, but I was absolutely shocked when she told me.

LG: I don't think we ever did have any East, well of course I don't know just what year the East Indians were settled in here, is that when they came here?

JUNE: *They brought them in* during the war to work in the mills.

LG: Because we didn't have any in our auxiliary.

EVA: No. I had them in the drama club.

LG: Did you?

EVA: Remember when we put on Gigi and I was the grandmama? And the girl who was Gigi she was...

LG: Oh yes, what was her name. Sharon? Dhaligial. Dolly we called her. EVA: No, that wasn't the one that acted in Gigi. She was a pretty one.

LG: Well they're all kinda pretty.

EVA: Well they're all not bad looking but she was ... *it was Guss Sharon.*

LG: They all had East Indian names,

JUNE: Not helping you too much now, are we?

Convents.

SD: What conventions did you go to of the IWA and what kind of role would the women's auxiliary play at conventions? Would there be a separate women's auxiliary convention?

EVA: In conjunction with the men usually.

LG: And we were accepted, we were allowed to go. We sent fraternal delegates to any of their conventions. I mean once we, like Local 1-80.; first of all we started sending delegates to the ~~sub-local~~ meetings that were held here and encouraged to have, sometimes they'd send the men to our meetings. And then we'd go to Duncan Local 1-80 meetings and from there to our own the District Council meetings. Then we had District Council meetings formed so we would go there and then of course we got representation on Federated auxiliaries in the States, so...

SD: And were ^{the} delegates elected?

LG: At our meetings?

SD: Umhum.

LG: Oh, yes.

EVA: How many would have been in the auxiliary when Pearl and there was I went with Hjalmar —I don't think anybody hardly.

LG: Well it was before...

EVA: ...before the big one.

SD: Can you talk about that trip?

laughter

LG: *Just above board things* and what happened afterwards?

EVA: Well, I'll tell you I was as green as...

LG: Did you go by car Eva? *You used* the union car.

EVA: Yea!

LG: What *time of* year would it be, in the 1939?

EVA: But I do know everything that was mentioned in that women's convention. I didn't know what they were talking about, and there were only the two of us representing B.C. that's all.

LG: And you went to the Federated convention, did you?

EVA: Yes, well of course.

LG: Now, was Margaret *Hiny* in it?

EVA: No. Ch, I don't know.

LG: Well who was the President?

EVA: The women from the States?

LG: Yea. Do you remember any of those ladies names?

EVA: I could hardly remember my own by the time I got to *the convention,* laughter. Everything ^{*that*} came up you know, and they wanted delegates to sit on this committee and that committee so I kept nominating Pearl you see, because I didn't want know what to do.

LG: Yes, but you can only be on one committee. laughter.

EVA: So Pearlie's saying "Ladies!" laughter. Finally Pearl had gone into one of the meetings with the delegates from the other you know, and they said now we'll have a report from British Columbia. Oh God, I had to get up, and that make, and that big building you know. But I got through with it. I...

LG: They didn't have that many delegates though did they, at their meeting?

EVA: Well, enough to scare the living daylights out of me. laughter. But I gave them a darn good report. What I didn't know I made up anyway, so...laughter.

LG: You mean you didn't have a written report?

EVA: Well I had it briefly written down you know, the things we had done and then I, you know, I always glorify everything. They all, god, I got the biggest hand of anybody. laughter . In my own language. They didn't mind, they could understand that.

LG: It was probably in the early '40's, 1940 or something?

EVA: But I do remember, what do they call, is it bibliological. where you're compiling books, what is it called... well anyway one delegate got up and she felt that should be done... you see, with certain books we did have. So this is, I wasn't the only greenwood in there,

LG: What do you say...books...

EVA: Bibliological, isn't that the proper name for it?

VOICE: Biography?

EVA: No, no. It's to catalogue all different books. But
anyway I

LG: That you have, like ^{that} the auxiliary owned?

EVA: Yes. The various ones.

LG: If they were available...

EVA: Well, if there were any. I didn't know if there were
any. But anyway two or three women got up on their big
fat feet and said 'we'll not have any religion discussed
here'. .laughter. So I wasn't the only stupid one
there. " We Didn't come all thousands of miles to hear
a lot of religion. " laughter. I always
remember the stupid things.

SD: Do you remember the other issues that were discussed?

EVA: Oh, good grief, no.

LG: Was the war started then?

LAURIE: The war started in '39.

laughter

EVA: everytime I went with *Hjalmar* there was a
war. laughter

LG: But mind too you know it wasn't for the first years
that they had a union car did they? They used to have to go on
Shank's pony or row or...

EVA: I don't know what car. He could have borrowed it
too you know.

LAURIE: Well who drove the car that time we went to Ladysmith for the auxiliary meeting up there when ...

LG: That was probably that McDonald, what was his name, Bill McDonald.

EVA: Bill McDonald. He

LAURIE; Remember the car leaked and the car ran out of gas or something and you and I walked

LG: No, I didn't go to .oh yes, that was to the auxiliary. But they used to have a dance in, because I remember Grace my sister was involved in that. That was long before I was in the auxiliary. You know ^{would} they ^{go} and put dances on at Ladysmith, for the union I suppose.

LAURIE: Yea, I know but we went to Ladysmith to the auxiliary meeting there and you and I we had to walk in the rain because we ran out of gas or something that night.

LG: We probably had our car, I mean I didn't drive it, but Pearl or anybody used to drive it, and sometimes we'd, we always had problems. And if Edna took it we ran out of gas because she drove it so slowly that laughter ^{if took} ten gallons of gas. laughter

LAURIE: I couldn't figure out why we went to Ladysmith though for the meeting.

EVA: I was th onetime too but I can't remember either.

voices

*It was a District meeting-
...sub-local meeting....*

LAURIE: Because I know it was something special cause we went to Ladysmith that time.

LG: And something was burning in the car once I remember. We expected...we were lucky we discovered before we'd parked the car. We figured we may have had the car burn up while we were at the meeting.

JUNE: I can't remember when we went down to Eugene, of course I was young, and you know but there was some Bill, was really important that they were fighting it. Do you remember Edna? That was one they were fighting That wasn't 46, Bill 46?

: Taft-Hartley Law?

LG: Yea, Bill 46 would be in B.C. but this was the Taft Hartley Bill in the States.

JUNE: Yea. That they were fighting.

LG: gap in tape

JUNE: ..if I can remember right. I know it was something Important to the people.

voices *We'll look up in the papers there.*

JUNE: I know I took a lot of notes but I can't remember anything from when we were there, because you know it was part of our job as auxiliary members to take notes to bring back to the auxiliary, what we had achieved or

what we learned or something. Take notes *and people*
would have to read them.

SD: Yea, did you speak at these conventions. Did you
prepare yourself to speak at all?

LAURIE: I just went there to listen.

JUNE: Well Edna, she was always our main speaker, *eh.*

MARY: Who read the report on B.C. on that convention?

LG: ... for the District Council?

MARY: Umhum. Maybe Mona Morgan or somebody.

LG: Could have been. She was ^{*the*} secretary.

EVA: I can't remember her being with us on that convention.

LG: Yea, well she was in one of those pictures there.

JUNE: I don't see me in there but I know I went to Eugene
Oregon when I was sixteen as one of the delegates.

EVA: I know I slept with you. laughter.

LG: You were probably out counting stars with somebody,
you probably weren't at the convention.

JUNE: Yea.

EVA: No, we attended every session.

LG: Yea, but June, she was available. laughter.

JUNE: They wouldn't let me out of their sight. I would be
too scared anyhow. I was a country hick.

SD: Did the men in the union help you to learn how to
structure the meetings of the auxiliary.

EVA: Oh yea, we had more books on Robert's Rules of Order.

↓ Convert
to pg.

Structure

LG: The men in our educational, when we started our educational meetings that was the first thing, was the Robert's Rules, how to run a meeting so that we could accomplish more, as it said in our notes, and make the meetings more interesting. Try to discourage people from talking out of turn. *(Laughter.)*

SD: And would people take turns chairing the meetings?

LG: Like in the notes there, the vice-president would be chairman for the educational meeting. And you know a different person would look after the social meetings to help the *president*. Oh, they were very good at, everybody had to take their turn sometime, *the majority of them.*

LAURIE: I remember when you made me Recording secretary that time and I had never. .

LG: I made you recording secretary...you were elected weren't you? Or just appointed that day?

LAURIE: Yea. And then you said well you might as well learn right now. And I didn't even know a motion from a ... laughter

LG: Did you just do it for that one meeting?

LAURIE: No I had to carry on because you put me in it.

MAY: It sounds like a dictatorship doesn't it?

LG: Oh, it was democratic, she asked if you were appointed or elected. We had a lot of elections.

LAURIE: Well you figured I was in long enough that I should be able to carry on you see but I didn't know...

voices

JUNE: You probably got voted in because everybody pressured you, and everybody said, 'c'mon Laurie, you can do it'. and you said, "No I can't do it."

LG: It's like June's mother told me, you're only going to learn by doing it."

LAURIE: Yea, well I guess this is what you told me because I remember, because you made my birthday cake that day, with all those bunnies around it and a bow.

laughter

LG: And it was on our meeting day?

LAURIE: Yea, well my birthday was coming or it had passed but you had made this birthday cake for me. Oh, I remember it so well. I can still see those bunnies you know, because of the meeting.

LG: What were they made of, marshmallow?

LAURIE: Umhum. Remember when we had those little white papers and you had coloured the pink ears and made them look like real bunnies laughter. Oh, I always remember that it was down at somebody's house down there. Was it Anna Gravel's or something, in that house down there by the river? Where. I think it was there, because I remember being there and she says,

" you might as well learn. Nothing like starting."

And that was my first encounter with trying to do auxiliary work you see.

LG: As I recall, I'm sure its correct, I mean we were the biggest auxiliary in the *federated*.

And we'd go to these conventions, we had the most delegates.

EVA: And we got everything we wanted too. laughter.

LG: Well no. We'd send representatives and get your vote...that's why I think we used to stress, well you go on strike for better conditions but if the.. but if you'd learn through our political action and that, the people stuck together and put into parliament or into the legislature their representative you know, well, part of the problem's solved, isn't it?

SD: So one of the things the auxiliary did was talk about political action?

LG: Right.

LAURIE: Oh yes, we had ...

EVA: ...well you ain't got nothing done unless you took it to, you know, all these bills had to be passed and they had to be in favour or else.

LG: We had to try and get the action in the government.

SD: What kind of legislation would you take *positions on?*

From pg 85
Conventions

LG: Well, all the demands that the locals were asking for to the District Council.

JUNE: I don't know whether we went through the union...

LG: *When they had* labour lobbies, we *always* sent delegates there, to the labour lobbies and gave money towards, it might be only \$5.00 or something but apparently you can go quite a way on \$5.00.
laughter

JUNE: I don't know if you remember *Lil, I said earlier* -

aboutt the Hillcrest bus dispute and how it went on, and

it was Bea ^K Nott and I can't remember the *ones* that we went to meet, the labour minister in Victoria,

We were interviewed at the Colonist and anyway, Bea who knew everybody, and what was his name, ^{this guy} oh Bea would know his name. *Anyhow, we were in there and* Bea ^{she} says, 'well' she says 'we've come here from your honeymoon town'.

He looked at her and he says 'how'd you know we honeymooned in Lake Cowichan?' Bea, says 'I know everything about

everybody'. And he says 'what can I do for you ladies?' ^{says}

She says, 'well our husbands' *she* / 'one of your main

industries in B.C. is logging and our husbands have been out of work for six months and we think it's about time

you stepped in and got this thing settled.' My God,

the next day it was settled after this woman had been

down to Victoria, they settled it. You know. I don't know whether that did it, but you know, it was settled the next day.

LG: Well, they've still got buses anyway.

JUNE: I don't know whether delegates from the auxiliary went or just delegates...

*from 1989
conventions*

.....voices

it must have been just ^{a few} that had been in the auxiliary that got together, the wives of the woodworkers...but it was through learning through the auxiliary that it was much better in a group you know.

SD: Did you talk at all about I guess what could be called women's issues, like children and child care and women's wages, women's work ^{within} the home and that kind of thing, and co-operatives, any of those kinds of things? Were there discussions of that?

♀

LG: Well we had study groups on co-operatives and credit unions, and like I said the child care but, we didn't have people that were affected. I mean there weren't that, very maybe none that worked out in industry or worked, had worked outside the home. There wasn't the job question around here, like as in a city, you know. So we weren't involved that way but our main thing was that equal pay for equal work, I mean we felt that women should be, if they did work, they

should get, you know, the same as a male, if she did the same job.

SD: Did the auxiliary write a column for the union paper at all?

LG: We always had reports *there*.

END OF SIDE I, TAPE III

SIDE 2.

...you mean like personal opinions, yea, I think we had some of them too. *over the years* Edna or Marge *Cray* or Kay Rogers or some of them would...

EVA: I don't remember Marge McQuarr *ye* being very active in the...

LG: Marge *Cray*.

EVA: Oh yea, I was thinking of Marge Mcquarr .. She wasn't ever in the auxiliary.

LG: Have you been referred to Marge *Dashog* who lives up near Bowser? I don't know her address. It's around Ship's Point Road.

LAURIE: *I went* shopping with her when I lived up island...

LG: ...is it Ship's Point Road?

LAURIE: I don't know.

SD: Can you talk a bit about the process that led up to the split in 1949 and the impact of that on the women's auxiliary *movement*.

EVA: Don't mention that to me.

laughter and means...

LG: We were all on the same side.

laughter

EVA: Well there's only two men that got the brunt of the whole things and that was Owen and Fred. They were blacklisted for miles around.

LG: Well, there was Owen.

EVA: Well I said Owen and Fred were both blacklisted

LG: Oh pardon me. And Bertie?

EVA: Oh yes.

LG: And Ralph was. He joined the *WU*. He couldn't belong to IWA. None of those guys could.

JUNE: No. No voice.

LG: Until, and they'd go, this was afterwards, at Hillcrest where he worked, they'd have their union meeting and first of all, they'd nominate Ralph to, you know, to be on committee. "Sorry," he said, "I can't belong to the union," and this would go on and on until finally they got him back, they allowed him to go into the union. But I know what you mean, like, the main officers like were, but Fred finally got in. Owen did too. He finally got in. Did Fred not get...

EVA: No. Never did.

LG: Owen did didn't he?

EVA: No. Not that I know of. He could have, but they never allowed Fred back in.

LG: Well, there were quite a few of them that were taken back in.

EVA: Oh, I know.

LG: Well, I don't mean just Ralph and that. I mean the officers. In the later years.

EVA: I don't think Fred...well I know Fred never got in. That was one thing he wanted to do, get back into the... because he started it. He was the first President.

JUNE: Nils is in there. Nils had something to do with it, because he was one of the officers.

LG: No, I know but then like we...

JUNE: But he couldn't get into the IWA for awhile, but he got back in.

EVA: Fred was never allowed back in. Never allowed back in. But he was...

LAURIE: What was that union called now?

JUNE: WIUC. Woodworkers Industrial Union of Canada.

We still have the badges and the buttons. Nils said he wouldn't part with this for anything.

voices

voice: The "woocies", we were called the "woocies."

EVA: ^{They were the wobblers} [like the] the old-IWW. But do you remember, we were putting on something, it was a convention or something we were putting on. I guess it ended up with a dance, but we had a whole day here, but what we sat and done in my house, I'll never forget it, you were there and Bertha and Edna, we got oh, I don't know how many logs, they were only about that big around.

LG: That's for our 10th anniversary.

EVA: Yea. and we .

LG: That was in '45.

EVA: And we carved these little pieces of wood.

LG: I'm trying to think where mine is. It's around here someplace.

EVA: And we burnt the, with a woodburning set, IWA or whatever the heck it was, Local 130 and painted on them.

LG: Weren't they done out of axe handles?

EVA: Well they could have been. No you'd bark around the outside so it wouldn't have been an axe handle. I know because I painted millions of them.

JUNE: I guess you know the reason why they were trying to make the split.

SD: Why don't you go through that so that...]

JUNE: [Well I would probably be able to tell better because] they figured that the men's union does that

split
(beginning)



they were paying, the biggest percentage of it was going down ^[across] to the States, ^{and} they figured ^{[why} shouldn't, why, []] we were a big enough place to have our own IWA and ^{it} would be Canadian, not ^[to be] affiliated, ^[because most of the, say] if they had a dollar's dues we'd get 20¢ of that in Canada and 80¢ would go across to the States, ^{you know.} ^{So} this is one of the main reasons, ^[I think, that] they didn't think we were getting enough benefits belonging to the Americans. ^{[If we had} one union that would be Canadian union, []] we could do more you know.

EVA: And I do know that ^[in] United States, they wanted all these here groups ^{to} still belong, ^{[and they even sent} head men...

JUNE: ...yea, to break it up... []]

EVA: ...^{head} they sent ^{men} over here and put them in positions you know, ^{be} the President, ^{lead} the local, so the money would go. Well Local ¹⁸⁰ was the richest one at that time and I know there was \$17,500 some odd dollars,

^[and] that's when they took that out of the bank, drew every bit ^{of} it, Fred and Owen and then they packed it around. Edna didn't want any part of it, so it was in our house, and it was in Nanaimo and wherever we went. Finally we sent it to Harvey Murphy in Vancouver, the ^{president} of Mine, Mill and Smelters, you know, and it was in his

care. Well, then, it was too hot
you see, so they shipped it back to Fred again, and
eventually all that money, and that was what Fred
and Owen were accused of taking, the \$17,000.] * Pg. 58

JUNE: But you see what happened and the way as *Bergie*
said, *W* what actually happened, I think, [I don't know,
maybe Lil you can check because] the union had grown
quite big, and men got lacksadaisical, and weren't
going to meetings eh? [and you know] they trusted the
people and therefore the people that were leading
they could see what's happen^{ing}, most of the money
out of the union dues was going across the States,
and they thought they had the support of the membership
behind them. But these other ones in the states sent
people and troublemakers here, [you know when the split
came, eh and all,] and split the people that were for
the Canadian union and the other ones they had them
in there working, and they smeared it like it was
communist, it was reds that were trying to take over
the union. But actually it was to get a Canadian
union to get better conditions here. Cause *they didn't have that*

EVA: Well the international was taking the bank accounts
of the various locals and the men, [that's what created
the split,] they weren't going to stand for that, no
w. *A* During the trial all the bank managers, *I* all

spoke in favour of Fred and Owen. You know, they knew what was being done and there was nothing they could do.

Pg. 52

JUNE: Anyways, there was quite a lot of hard feelings, in the District at the time. Bad friends.

Bad friends.

~~Bad friends.~~

LG: You've still got bad friends. You've, there's still that dividing line I think. I've just stopped to think, see this was '48, '49, in '48. (If you look and see the people that reorganized the IWA auxiliary, and there was to be no politics, this is what they reported in the paper, in the auxiliary. [They figured that...])

to pg 102

JUNE: They were just out to be a little select group.

LG: Yea. ^{The new auxiliary} They could just, whatever they wanted to do they had to get the sanction of the local first, you know, they couldn't do anything before they asked the local. They could cater to dances or teas. [but they weren't...] So when we in 1950, we started the co-op and the credit unions here, and I guess those same people were a long time [either] going in to either one of those, [weren't they, because they figured...]

to pg 101

EVA: Well I remember during that trial and all that, I had to go and buy, walk up the street, and I remember two or three people say 'I'm in the jail house now' (sung) laughter

Poor Sharon would come home from school crying, you know.

JUNE: Yea, it was too bad it happened. [you know] as Bergie says, they weren't ready, and if they'd educated people more, ~~but~~ to this day now, when everything's running smooth, my husband's in there to-day, but they don't attend meetings. Not like they ~~do~~ ^{used to} —

[and if certain groups get in and take over—and the ones who are usually the strongest to fight for conditions, you know,

to have a union meeting now, and how's many's in this local now and] they're lucky if they can get a quorum to you know, half the time, to get a meeting.

[LG: Well, people get too lax unless there's a trouble come up, and then they'll stick together.

LG: Rally around. But like] the executive had their meetings like the local union, and then the next Sunday probably the next day, they'd have a meeting on Saturday OR Sunday to have their local meeting. And they'd go and it would be almost the same ones there. So if they made a mistake you know and didn't have the right reasoning in their executive meeting, there was nobody to point it out to them the next day at the local meeting the next day so it was the member's themselves fault. You know, they didn't take an active part.

[JUNE: Well they always elect, the IWA union office up here, once this new group take over, moved to Duncan who so the men/have to attend a union meeting, have to go into Duncan.]

[LG: There's no sub-local meetings...

JUNE: No, and] there's no sub-local meetings anything here yet to this day, [You know] and this is where [the District, where,] the union really grew, from this District [and they've...]

LG: Well, [each area had their own sub-local meetings whether it be Ladysmith, Youbou, *Camp b.* Lake Cowichan, Port Renfrew, and they would get together for the local meeting in Duncan. But now there's only one meeting and that's in Duncan, unless they have a camp meeting on the job, you know a meeting on the job action. [But this is your thing, and there's no bark on it, my dear.]

[laughter No bark.

EVA: How come mine has bark on it?

LG: I'm sure somebody cut them out of an axe handle to get them. [But] but it was wonderful -- and then they had their names on each one. They made a hundred and something of them.

EVA: How many?

LG: A hundred and something because there was a hundred well that would, I think it said 125 at the banquet.]

[SD: To what extent, one of the things that in labour history, and you kind of hear from the other side of the split is that, the real issue was not trade unionism, but was that the leadership of the IWA was communist. And...

EVA: That's what they were accused of ^(being communists). Because during the trial that was brought up many many times and I'll never forget the Judge, Wilson, he was no relation, (laughter) but, he said that Fred and Owen had been sold right down the road you know, there was no sign of any communism or anything else.

LG: Don't you think this is the first label that even the bosses like to put on anybody who wants to stand up for their rights, or take the opposite side of the fence. you know ^{etc} want to better conditions?

JUNE: PG. 58 →

LAURIE: Any kind of government, its always "communist"...

MARY: Well if they were, they did a good job didn't they of organizing everything I'd say that. There wouldn't have been anything if they hadn't, no union.

LG: ...whether they were reds or what they were. PG. INSEE T

[SD: So when this split took place did it, how did it divide down in terms of the community. How many people went with ^{the} woodworkers international union. What happened after there had been a split, was there A local set up here?]

EVA: The only thing was ^{EVA} the leaders of the other, they ^{local}
 It was
 didn't get back in again. / absolutely a new union local.

LG: You mean the local officers? Well they ^{pg. 34} others withdrew.
 And they set up the WIUC and they were officers there.

JUNE: The ones that got in too, the IWA, they had the
 money ^{eh}, if you got the money behind you, ^{and} they
 wanted these ones we had in out. They were fighting
 for conditions — it cost them
 a lot of money to break, [you know, to get] the split.
 [they were undermining.] In fact we had one of them,
 Jubinville?, he was in the IWA here, and the bosses
 bought him out. This negotiation we just had, he's
 sitting over with the bosses eh, negotiating against
 the workers and he was one of the IWA presidents here.
 This type. They worked on people, eh. They bought
 them off. A lot of them. [Don't you think so Lil?] ^{* pg 97}
 LG: Yea, that's true like you said about the split. [The
 most,] the ones that joined the auxiliary, you know,
 the reorganized IWA auxiliary after the split, were
 people you could never get to take any active part
 or [join union,] join the auxiliary, for their husbands
 weren't active union members either previous to this
 one, during the '40's to '48. They didn't attend
 union meetings then or take any active part. They
 came forward after that but they weren't active.

JUNE: Like my youngest brother hadn't been in the woods that long and he was impressed, nobody was going to tell him anything. Of course all our family was IWA 'cept these guys got a hold of, well they were WIUC'ers. And oh we had one "H" of a row at home with my younger brother. There was Bill, a few of these guys got a hold of Alvin, and they were going up to strikebreak at, that was at Iron River eh? And my brother's Neil and Bud and Dad and the whole crew sat him down and said 'look boy, before you ever get involved in this you better know what you're doing'. ^{He says, "You guys can't tell me what to do."} They sat him down, they says, "you go there and you're blackened for life, you know, cause it caused friction even in your own families. Sometimes they ^{work} at the young guys, you know, and Alvin was the youngest and it was a real kschmozzle. You don't forget these things you know. (to 103)

So it caused a lot of problems. A lot of people that were friends for years, broke their friendships. pg. 97

SD: What happened at Iron River?

LG: Well they were, I guess they were on, there was a strike on and I guess some men went back to work.

JUNE: The IWA was going to cross the picket line.

SD: The WIUC picket line?

JUNE: Yea. They were going to cross them you know. And you never... through a picket line. laughter

LG: No matter who it is.

JUNE: Yea, and I can't really remember, Nils would know, and Ralph would know, what it was all about. But I know, that was just one incident that it happened, it caused a lot of heartache and problems.

SD: Was there violence?

JUNE: Oh year. There was some threatened violence and different things eh? And there was lots of fistfights. And lots of tension.

LAURIE: Well tension and a lot of it.

JUNE: And it's something that I don't think anybody...

tape blank here

LG: ...the Parliament Buildings . That's history being made right there. " And thousands of people in the Province silently echoed these words. Not a beef from twenty truckers after they were finally loaded into cars in spite of twelve miles of driving rain in an open truck. " A member of the parade surrounding the parliament buildings watching trembling stenographers through the windows said 'I bet they think the bloody revolution has come'. The overcautiousness of the Mayor of Victoria whose efforts to get McCulley Point

pg. 102-97-

Barracks, were ~~motivated~~ by a desire to protect the hygiene of Victoria. Although they were compelled to sleep on hard and bare floors very few of the gals on the trek accepted billets offered by trek supporters in Victoria and Nanaimo."

"Never mind the merchandise," he told employees.

"reports the profound concern of the Hudson Bay management for their dear employees during the recent IWA trek to the Capitol. Calling the employees together before the union paraders arrived, the manager told them to save themselves and never mind the merchandise, if the strikers started smashing things up." laughter.

EVA: I'd have had myself a fur coat. laughter.

LG: Soon after the fuses blew and the lights went out.

The revolution was on. laughter.

EVA: I bet we did scare the daylights out of them.

LAURIE: Well, when you think of it the people just stared when we were going down in the cars:

voices; well, we were walking, walking to Victoria.

EVA: There's a picture somewhere, I'll tell you, you haven't got that book, he gave me one, Liversedge, ...

LG: Look at here's a picture.

EVA: I guess I'm in there too.

LAURIE: How come the top is torn off?

LG: I guess it got caught in the door or something. I had opened - *I trimmed it up with my* pinking shears but it was, nothing serious was affected. Oh, it was June 22, 1946. The 15th was when we

LAURIE: 37 Day Strike Ends in Victoria]

JUNE: My mother took me down there to celebrate my birthday
What a little mother. Gee.

[SD: Did the women march at the front?

LAURIE: Oh yea, we were...

JUNE: That's her right there.

LG: And Mrs. Olson, June's *mother-in-law*.

JUNE: Yea, Nils's mum and my sister

LAURIE: Can you see your picture there?

LG: Didn't I have a better picture in that...

LAURIE: Who were the girls that were carrying that banner? I know one of them was my friend Vi from Duncan. And I forget who the other girl was.

JUNE: What paper is this in?

LAURIE: I don't know. *She's torn it.*

tape blank]

LG: ~~we went~~ jobs for all, the take home pay counts!

SD: IWA Auxiliary for a new status for our women!

[EVA: I can't remember what I had on. laughter.

LG: Pants. Anyway. Did you say you didn't wear pants.

Sure you got pants. Just look at you. Definitely pants.

MARY That was warm weather too

LG: Hot June, yes but it rained like a son of a gun.

LAURIE: Oh yes, it was raining. I know cause our car

leaked.

EVA: We've both got pants on.

Well that's why it said it somewhere. It made mention...

LG:

JUNE: ...lost

their figures and stuff

LG: Right. There was an article on that. Oh Mary do you want... Is there a picture of Sweeney Cooperage in there?

she was here at the beginning.

EVA: She was internationally known for being active working

in the auxiliary, well in the labour movement, 1942,

Annie Buller?

LG: Irene Weaver,

EVA: Well anyway, she came to talk, here, and they were just starting, I don't know what year she came, but anyway, there was no houses either, and I only had the two rooms and Bertha did have quite a nice home. So we Hjalmer Bergen came to me first and I said I can't put her up here, I said there's only one bedroom and Fred and I

9

sleep in the kitchen as it is. The kids had the bedroom. So he said well I'll go and see Bertha. So he went to see Bertha and Bertha was terrified. She said, I'll tell you what I'll do, she can stay here, but you have to pretend that you are the owner of the home and you act as the hostess and I'll be your maid. Anyway we got through the day, the two days but we had that meeting and there wasn't hardly anybody show up. It was only Bertha and I about the only ones that showed up. But I don't know even then what she was speaking of but she thought I was pretty stupid, I'll admit that. But it was...that's a long time ago.

The spiritual advisor to Madam Chiang Kai Shek, he was really interesting, and then his son was to come back the odd two weeks in the summer, you know. He was really clever. I don't know where they are now. Never heard from them since. But there's been a lot of interesting people come in...

JUNE: I think Nels would, he would remember probably more than I would about that. But we were there I know. There was a heck of a lot of people...

LG: Ralph and I went, we took our son, and he was only eight years old. EVA: '43

EVA: How long ago was Sunset Trek?

LG: No it was '46.

EVA: My first dance at Lake Cowichan. I attended...Fred wouldn't have thought anything, you know, of it but you should have seen the looks I got when I got there. There was logger's boots, there was everything there, but me in a long slinky black evening gown, no backing, spike heel shoes walking along the track, and you know, up through the bushes to get to this place. I didn't know where I'd got to, I had no idea where it was. Nobody attended *anything in those clothes -* they had sweaters and skirts or.

LG: Well, they wore what they had.

EVA: *And up at the picket camp you had to* sit on blocks of wood, you know, they just looked like, they kept looking at me as if I was something from another world with a backless evening gown on, at a picket camp. *This was in '35 or '36.*

JUNE: I went to dances at the picket camp. It wasn't very big but there were always dances there.

Remember the wood piles that sat on the verandah?

Remember one night Neil and Andy Bell had a fight and there was wood flying every which way.

LG: I always remember ^{that} we had a basket social, and it was at the picket camp and oh, it was a real, it must have been the coldest night on record and the women brought the

W.A.
From pg
59

1930s

baskets and then they picked partners, and it was Mrs. Olsen who we didn't think would do anything, but did she have Archie for a partner, and here she had a little bottle of liquor in her basket for her partner, and he was the most popular and you really needed it that night.

EVA: Do you remember the Supreme Court. — this is not for the record. —

✓
109

ENDENDENDENDEND