

INTERVIEW OF LEMMIE CHARLEY
INTERVIEWER LACAYAH ENGBRETSON
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COPPER CENTER, ALASKA

Transcribed by WRST Seasonal Employee: Aubrianna Bright up to 24 minutes.

Rest of interview transcribed and first part reviewed and corrected by Karen Brewster, 8/22/16.

[00:00:24] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So we're going to ask about your hunting, when you used to hunt and go as a guide. So we're gonna ask you about that. Can you start with who your parents and grandparents are, and talk about where you were born?

[00:00:47] LEMMIE CHARLEY: I was born up Chistochina. They said I was born in '35, so I can't tell you whether it's wrong or not, but yeah -- And my dad was Frank Charley. My mom was Minne. Sick long before she married my dad.

[00:01:06] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Okay. And you grew up there in Chistochina?

[00:01:11] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Yeah, all the way, uh-huh yeah, Chisto -- Uh-huh.

[00:01:17] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: What did your parents do while you were growing up?

[00:01:23] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, I don't remember my mom. My mom was gone before. I guess I was about a year old when she died. They said so I don't know. Just a little bit I can remember, like maybe I've seen her, and then just my dad was taking care of us, uh-huh.

[00:01:50] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: And he was living off the land?

[00:01:54] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Yes, pretty much. Uh-huh. Yeah, them days you gotta be a good trapper, I have a family, and making sure there's -- Like myself, I didn't go to school. I never know what's inside the school. And when I was -- got big enough to go out in the winter, well, I was helping my dad trap and cutting wood. And we all did, all three of -- all four of us. Yeah.

[00:02:29] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did he work any other jobs, or just trapping?

[00:02:33] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, in summer he worked on the highway. Road Commission job. Uh huh. Yeah, he was a laborer.

[00:02:41] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: When did you start hunting?

[00:02:48] LEMMIE CHARLEY: When I start hunting?

[00:02:49] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Mm mm.

[00:02:50] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Oh, I don't remember. I don't remember when I even got the first ducks or first moose. It was just -- just like it should be there all the time and that's what I was doing, yeah. One thing I do remember about moose, my brother shot the moose. I was a little bit scared of it, but just like anybody else, I guess. I remember telling my brothers how tough and how mean I was and everything. A little wind blowing that day and I shot the moose. He told me go and kill that moose. I went up there and about a half mile away, I see the moose and I climb up a big, tall birch tree and keep shooting from up there. Must've shot about a box of shells. That tree keep moving and I keep missing all the time. [00:03:53] And my brother went back up with me. He said, "You're all -- " He said, "You're mean, and do this and do that." He said this moose can't walk anymore so he just chopped it with an axe. And, yeah. It was the first moose. And from there on I went on my own, pretty much, to hunt. Yeah.

[00:04:15] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So do you remember who taught you how to do it? Who taught you how to do it?

[00:04:22] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, my dad, I used to hunt with him, watch him. Yeah. Then my brother, he was hunting alone and always bringing meat in. And this other older brother, I hardly know him. Walter -- Walter Sanford. Do you know old man Sanford?

[00:04:47] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Kinda, yeah.

[00:04:49] LEMMIE CHARLEY: And I remember he trapped all the time. And he'd break his snowshoes and I'd have to undo it for him. Take all the babiche, all that raw hides, off and soak in the water for him, and my dad would make a frame, snowshoe frame, on one side wherever it's broken. Put it back together. Then Walter himself started on there, and knit [net?] it, you know. He was the first one went away. He went to work. And then later on, my other brother, Jerry -- You remember Jerry?

[00:05:38] BARBARA CELLARIUS: Hm mm.

[00:05:40] LEMMIE CHARLEY: He went to work. When I got to about 17, I guess, and I thought, well, I'll find something else, you know. And so I went. I don't know too many people around here, 'cause I was away all the time working, working, working. I go where the what they call where the money is, you know. Yeah. [And then got everything,] I guess.

[00:06:12] BARBARA CELLARIUS: Hm mm.

[00:06:14] LEMMIE CHARLEY: And then, well, this is like bragging, I guess, but I've done more than what Copper River Native people would ever do. Like I ride a horse, ride in a rodeo, and never hear those Copper River people done that. And I've boxing in a ring. I never -- Well, I know this one guy from Copper Center here, Craig. Ray. Pete -- Pete Craig? Yeah. He was doing the same thing. He was a boxer in a ring. Yeah, just anywhere the money was, I guess I got to get it. When they tell me, well, you know you can't do that, you know, well, that sounds like to me, well, you gotta do what you gotta -- get it. That's about how I had it and so that's what I was doing.

[00:07:19] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So you worked as a guide?

[00:07:25] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Yes, uh huh. I used to work on the railroad. And you'd work all the time and you'd get 30 days off in a year. So I used to work all the time, and save up my time and get 30 days off. So as soon as I'd get 30 days off I'd come back up here going hunting. And that was my life. My outdoor life, uh-huh. Then this guy died down here in Tazlina not too long ago, Bill Etchells. I used to work with him and he was guide, too. And he told me one time, he said, "You're a funny Indian. Funny breed of Indian I've ever seen." He said, "Indians [used to be] a little bit back. He didn't wanna work too much, but you, you work a year on the railroad and come back up here, and you don't even know what time you'd come back in or go to bed or anything. Where you could be down there just eatin' to the table and everything." Well, that's my life. Yeah. I still like to do those things. But I got to have somebody with me, some of my grandkids or somebody. Yeah.

[00:08:50] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How long did you do that? Work as a guide?

[00:08:55] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Work as a guide?

[00:08:56] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Mm mm.

[00:08:57] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Oh, I don't know maybe about 10 or 15 years. I was a packer when they get a moose and sheep and stuff. I used to go out and pack it and skin it out. And then a few years later, well, I went out guiding. And it didn't matter to me, 'cause I have to pack it all in anyway.

[00:09:30] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How come you quit doing that?

[00:09:33] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, there was more jobs and then I got married and raised all my kids and all that.

[00:09:44] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Who did you say you work for?

[00:09:47] LEMMIE CHARLEY: I work on the railroad.

[00:09:49] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Who did you work for when you were hunting?

[00:09:51] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Bud Conkle, yeah. And I worked with Don DeHart. I was breaking horses in for him. But I didn't guide for Don DeHart. I was a wrangler, or whatever they call it. Go out and get a horse and a bad horse you'd have to straighten him out and put a pack on and get him all ready for hunt. But this other guy, Bud Conkle, I worked for him because him and I, we got along real good all the time.

[00:10:33] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did anybody else work with you guys?

[00:10:35] LEMMIE CHARLEY: What's that?

[00:10:36] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Anybody else work with you guys?

[00:10:39] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, Steven Jones used to work there. And a guy named Jake Butler. This guy named Jake Butler, he would tell a big stories all the time that what he wasn't. And back in '47, there were -- they had laws up here called -- Santa Claus laws they call them. And Jake Butler come down from Ruby with a bunch of dogs, and lived there and got married here in Gulkana. And he tell them he was 46 years old or something like that, that owner there. And then one day, about 30, 40 years later, we're getting our hunting license and this guy named Don Duffy and he was there and we was getting our hunting license. He asked me if I know how old the Jake is. And I said "No, he's much older than me." And Don Duffy said "Well, ever since I met Jake, he was that old. He's 102 years old now. You wanna take him?" Yeah, I had a lot of fun.

[00:12:12] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How did you start riding horses

[00:12:17] LEMMIE CHARLEY: I don't know. Just natural, I guess. Yeah, the first time I got into with a rodeo, I think, there was three of us fooling around drinking and stuff like that. And this guy named Toby, he was from Nebesna way. He grown up with a bunch of horse up there in Nebesna, old working horse. Got into Palmer and there's three guys. I had to grab one horse, put a saddle on him, ride him, ride him. Just the right saddle. And I told him to help me I can do it. But I'd never done it, but I told him I can do it. And this guy said, "If you wasn't drinking," he said, "I would help you." I said, "I'm not even drunk." I said, "I can do it." So we grabbed that horse, grabbed that horse and hold him by the ears. Grabbed that saddle, and got the saddle on him. Got on him and ride him. And from there he hired me to ride a horse. [00:13:39] After a while, there was the three things that I got to know all their mind first. Dogs. Like they'd come by here. Well, were they gonna go this way or that way? Somehow it's up here. I would know it as I seen that dog going by and he's gonna turn this way. People used to ask me that. "How do you know that dog was gonna turn that way? How do you know he wouldn't turn that way? And you said he'll turn that way." I don't know, it just up in my mind. Horse was the same thing. People was the same thing. After about 20 years, 25 years of fighting all the time, boxing, all of that and then I got to know just what they gonna do. Whether they're gonna try to kick or they gonna use their left hand to get -- get my eyes on their left hand, and trying to hit me with their right. Well, in my mind something tells me you gotta watch the right. So you gotta move the right hand and then you get your hands in there. That was three things I was pretty much depending on myself. Depending on.

[00:15:26] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So where did you go hunting when you were a guide and when you were a packer?

[00:15:33] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, up around Tananda Lake quite a bit.

[00:15:36] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Oh yeah?

{00:15:37] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Yeah. And hunting polar bear around Anaktuvak Pass. And they tell me at that time polar bear not like a black or grizzly bear, he won't bother you. Never bother people. And so this guy up here at Gakona. I forget his name. His two boys are still up there flying airplanes. Chuck McMahan [Cleo?] and Bud Conkle. He took Bud Conkle out with his plane, he went somewhere else, and just me left there on the ice. And go to sleep there and I seen a bear come around. About that big of feet and long hair and everything. Oh maybe, about from here to the wall, I guess. I don't know if he seen me or he didn't see me or anything, but I had that little gun I always carry. .357. I had that just in case. that you were wrong. But then not too long ago, I heard that polar bears start coming into camp around pipeline [Trans-Alaska Pipeline] somewhere, and start eating garbage and hurting people and all of that. Yeah.

[00:17:25] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Were you ever registered with the state of Alaska? You never -- You ever get like a registered guide license?

[00:17:36] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Oh, no not -- not a registered guide license.

[00:17:46] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How did they pay you?

LEMMIE CHARLEY: Huh?

[00:17:49] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How did they pay you?

[00:17:51] LEMMIE CHARLEY: At that time, started at five dollars a day. It was pretty good money. Five bucks a day. Yeah. And even the railroad doesn't pay very good, you know. When I retired in '73 from the railroad, I was a welder, and I was getting the highest pay on the welders pay at six dollars an hour when I retired. And that was after I worked over 20 years. I went to work there as a laborer. Nine bucks an hour. Oh boy, that's a great big money. Then after that you could get into any union you want. So I got into all the unions. Yeah

[00:18:57] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did you have any really good memories about working as a guide, or with those hunters?

[00:19:04] LEMMIE CHARLEY: What's that?

[00:19:05] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: You have any really good memories about working with the sports hunters?

[00:19:11] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Do I have any relatives working?

[00:19:14] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: No memories. Really good memories.

[00:19:17] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Oh. Yeah. And that's when you're not doing it anymore, and, you know, the ones that used to treat you right, the ones you used to work for and everything, and now when I do think about it, it's kinda lonely. Like this guy I used to work for all the time, Bud Conkle they used to call him. Him and I, we got along so good. And the other people he was telling me, he used to say, "Hey, Bud Conkle's pet, come on," they used to say. Yeah, we used to sleep in one little tent. Go -- go out there looking for some of them people that's supposed to come back from hunting. Well, you'd figured they'd come back over this higher ground if they know just which way to walk, you know. So him and I sometimes would split up. Go that way. We'd see them coming and then we'd bring them back into camp earlier. And yeah. When I first start skinning, well, I'd skin moose at home all the time and cut them all the way up to the chin, you know. We'd cut the nose off, and cut it off right there. Take the nose off and the chin part and tongue, and all what we're gonna eat, you know. He didn't tell me about that you have to take the cape off, you know. Him and the hunter came back, big bull moose, and I knew if he didn't tell me how to do it, so I do it like how we've been doing it, you know. Cut the nose off. He looked at it and he said, "This is your first skinning?" I said, "Yeah." The hunter was right

LEMMIE CHARLEY

AUGUST 3, 2016

PAGE 4 OF 9

here with him. He said, "Gee, you done a good job," he said, "Nice job." You know. So when he said that, I thought there was something wrong. And so he took the hunter away there, put him someplace else to where he could talk to me. He said, "You know you cut that thing off. I'm gonna have to get it and sew it back together." He said, "It's gonna cost a lot of money," he said.

[00:22:09] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Oh.

[00:22:10] LEMMIE CHARLEY: He said, "I should've told you how to do it. He said, yeah. And now if that was some other boss, he would've got mad, jump around and you should've asked and all that, you know. But him and I just got along good on it.

[00:22:31] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So they were hunting for sport?

[00:22:34] LEMMIE CHARLEY: What's that?

[00:22:35] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: They were hunting for sport?

[00:22:38] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Yeah, the hunters, they'd just come out for the heads, you know. The hunters mount the heads up on the wall, trophy.

[00:22:55] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So did it help to support when you were subsistence hunting?

[00:23:00] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Does it help me hunting?

[00:23:04] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Yeah, for subsistence, when you're trying to live off of it.

[00:23:08] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, I don't know. Seemed like now I can live off the land little bit more than the younger ones would do. Like somehow, like, if the moose was here and if we should go that way, then we would think about it and I would try to get them to go where I think that moose would be and why it would be there. And up in through there and see what kind of food there is for the moose, you know. And that's how it should go there and he might -- he never saw it and usually come out pretty good.

[00:23:57] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did it ever get in the way of your subsistence hunting?

[00:24:01] LEMMIE CHARLEY: What's that?

[00:24:02] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did it ever get in the way of your subsistence hunting where you're trying to live off of it?

[00:24:07] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Uh, no. Just national park. Yeah.

[00:24:17] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How did they get in the way?

[00:24:21] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Who, national park? Yeah, I'll tell you how I feel about them myself. We don't need them. We already got a trooper tell you what to do. You go this way. We got a game guide that tell you can't shoot a moose over there. It's low. And here's the parks, well, you can't use this trail and all that, you know. All we need up here is we should have just the Fish and Game. And troopers, they should stay on the road. That's what I feel. What I figure about them. Not to tell us, well, they work as a highway patrolmen like. And then jump back in with the Fish and Game. And I thought Fish and Game should have their own, instead of the troopers. Yeah. And I worked with the trooper. He was a packer, too, just like me. And there, I guess I got it out on him. No, you're gonna pack all of this. And I'm about the same big as you, and I'm gonna half of that over here, and you got the other half. So we gonna do it one time. "No, it's gonna be too much." "No, you just gonna get money there for nothing, if that's the way you talkin' like. No, we're gonna do it right." So, I get down and "you tell me what to do on the highway when I'm driving and I'm tellin' you what to do when we're out here huntin'. And so that keep us pretty even." I don't know why you's do those things. It's just --

[00:26:21] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Are there -- you talked about your trails. Until you can't go on trails. Or are those trails you used to use when you were younger?

[00:26:29] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, they never tell me right to my face, but I made a fish trap one time and I met this national park worker from Slana way, and I tell him I'm gonna put a fish trap in up here at 19 Mile. "No way, you can't do that." "Oh yes, that's what I'm gonna do." "No, you can't do that." Fish and Game, Troopers, everybody there. I said, "Look," I said, "All three of you, bring your guns, and I'll take mine. Ones in the car right here. I'll take that." Just one will walk back, I'm sure. Might be all crippled up. Shot up. But, I said, "I'm gonna do what I used to do. I usually catch 'em in fish trap. And I don't have no fancy fishing pole where fish all day for two grayling." I said, "I'm gonna get a bunch of 'em just like we used to do." No, and after awhile somebody got to him and tell him, "Maybe you better have to go get your gun? Go down and say what you say about how you feel about things. And he's gonna show you how he feels about doing what he wanted to do. So there I don't know. It just -- In my life, in my feelings, if I'd picked up something and I don't think I would ever back off. Like a couple guys out there with a rifle and I'm here with my little gun, then I think we have to come out with it and, yeah, just that's the way. That's the way I growin' up and what it is is half of that come from my dad. And he say, "You fight with the people. He's got a knife. H's got a gun. And that's a danger. And you're afraid of bear, why are you afraid of bear? The bear don't have no life. It don't have no gun." He say, "You're pretty strong. You just grab a club. Break a good club down and kill him with a club. He say, "But people, you should walk away from." And that sounds like you have to finish what you do. So, that's how I've grown up I guess.

[00:29:33] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did you have other family members working as guides?

[00:29:37] LEMMIE CHARLEY: What's that?

LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did you have other family members that worked as hunters and guides?

[00:29:44] LEMMIE CHARLEY: No, not my family. I mean, you know, we used to go get a moose at any time. At that time, a lot of people used to live in the village and one guy would go out that way and another one -- maybe about three people would go hunting. They'd get a moose, come back, everybody got a -- whole family. Then we'd all move out there and all we had was the dogs. We used dog packs and pack 'em. And then we'd build a fish -- smoke rack. Smoke all the meat. Take all the bones out. And maybe we stay there for two months and everybody all live together, like, you know -- We's depend on that moose all the time.

[00:30:42] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Hm mm. You didn't know anybody else that worked with those sport hunters?

[00:30:48] LEMMIE CHARLEY: With the hunters?

[00:30:49] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Yeah. With the sport hunters.

[00:30:52] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Ralph Sanford did for a while.

LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Oh.

[00:30:56] LEMMIE CHARLEY: Uh huh. Ralph Sanford did. And Gillam, I think Gillam used to work in Chisana, I think. Yeah. Yeah, ol' Gillam used to say, "What I learned is, what I needed out of this [inaudible]." That's where I learned, you know. Yeah.

[00:31:24] LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: So, were you still -- were you still sport hunt -- were you still working as a guide when they made the Park?

[00:31:39] LEMMIE CHARLEY: When they start parks?

[00:31:41]LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Yeah, when they -- no, when they made the national park? The park service.

[00:31:46]LEMMIE CHARLEY: No, I don't think I was working for guiding anymore. Yeah. That's Bud Conkle, he got the whole and he died. Yeah. His wife just -- she's over 100 and I never hear from her anymore. And I never heard from their boy anymore. And so I don't know if they're still alive or they both died or -- Yeah, their son, he was pretty good boy and something went wrong up here and he had to fly all the time. And last I hear he can't even work on a car or can't drive a car. So, that's how -- I don't know if he were still alive and still doing the same thing, we probably -- I probably would've stuck around for him.

[00:32:41]LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: How did being a guide -- Oh, how did the business change? How did it change over the years?

[00:32:49]LEMMIE CHARLEY: I don't know how it changed. I mean, I never keep up after Bud died, you know. Cleo -- Cleo McMahan used to pick me up a lot of times out there on the lakes, you know. Bud Conkle, he was kinda a busy guy. He'd fly me out to bring that moose in, or me and the hunter if I was the guide. Me and the hunter would go out and he said he'll try and come back in about three days. But then Cleo McMahan from Gakona would come in with an airplane. And that's the best sounding noise you ever hear is an airplane at that time. Yeah, it get pretty quiet out there. Nothing to do anymore. You got all your work all done and just laying around. So, Cleo used to come down. If a hunter was with me, we'd both go up another place. Or if I was alone, just packing the meat. I'd call Bud Conkle way up somewhere. Yeah, get dropped off there. And a lot of hunters, I hear they have a lot of problems, like food. Not enough food, you know. They don't know how long they'll be out there and the weather gets bad, you can't go out there. They'd run out of food. But Bud Conkle, he never was that way. If he says he's gonna pick you up tomorrow, you know, he'd put out groceries there for about a week. Always had plenty of food.

[00:34:46]LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did it change from -- When you finished, was it different from when you started? Like when you got done hunting after all those years, did you notice it was different than when you started hunting?

[00:35:01]LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, no, not really. I never -- never think about it, you know. Like, sometimes in the winter, we'll go hunt caribou. Maybe get one caribou and bring it back. And not like a guiding but guiding just like -- same when Bud Conkle died up at Tanada Lake. Him and his wife, and wintertime they went out on a snowmachine. And -- you ever know him, Bud Conkle? At Tanada Lake. And he got off a snowmachine and went inside, I guess, and he got what he's supposed to look for and everything, and they're ready to go again. Lock the house, and pull on that snowmachine and that was the last. So, she drive back out to Slana and they come out and get him.

[00:36:17]LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did you see any changes in the animal -- the number of animals that are around now? Than when you were a kid?

[00:36:28]LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, it seemed like there was more, more games around at that time. Yeah, and, well, you can see that, 'cause -- like right now it's open [hunting season] and that'll be open until when, about another two months, huh?

LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: I think so.

[00:36:48]LEMMIE CHARLEY: And they keep that up and we wouldn't have nothing here in Alaska, it look like. And it's just too long, the hunt. Yeah. And so it would be nice if they close it and -- What I'd really like to see is Ahtna people and Ahtna workers hunting on Ahtna land and - - But I don't think it's gonna work. They keep talking about it, but they're not saying it out there

to where bigger guy can hear, you know. And that's where you're supposed to get there and talk about it. But, well --

[00:37:46]LACAYAH ENGEBRETSON: Did you know any other kind of changes around the valley? Is there -- is it different kind of weather now? It used to get real cold, huh?

[00:37:57]LEMMIE CHARLEY: Yes, like last winter, I never seen a winter like that. It was real good. Warm and -- Used to be about Christmas time if you had thirty below at Christmas, that's warm. It's real warm. About sixty, sixty-five, yeah. And how -- how people are going right now, too, is a bit different. You're gonna give somebody a ride now in your car, they'd ask you, "You got good heater in your car?" Well, at that time, when I was growing up, you don't know nothing about heaters. It's warm. You're riding. You don't have to walk and that you got to appreciate. Not the heater. Yeah. 1947, we come down here and Christmas at Gulkana. Santa Claus there. And when we went home, it was night. About forty-five below. We ride in an Army Six-by. Wide open in the back. Yeah. Wide open in the back and I don't think any of us kids had a parka or anything. But, yeah, just light -- kinda light clothes. Yeah. But now we couldn't even get into it. We'd be too scared or think we're gonna freeze to death before we get on the truck. But -- Like we didn't have shoe-pacs. No. We're hauling the wood and on the ice there's overflow. And you don't want to get your mocassins wet. If you get your mocassins wet, you can freeze your feet. So, you take your mocassin off. Your socks. Put 'em around your neck, grab your leader, run across the water with 'em. Maybe about six inches of water. And so far, and you get them out there on the snow real good. And then put your mocassins back on and you come back with a dry mocassin. And you stay warm. You'd feel cold for a couple of minutes as you're in the water, but that was nothing new then. And people not caring or treating other as good as they used to. Like them days. You know, Marcle Pete, huh? Marcle Pete was a young guy down there at Copper Center. His dad told him it's gonna be hard winter. Everybody having a hard time. Gotta trap and everything he can set down. They don't have enough wood. Basically they were trapping. He say, "You better go up to Benzalnit and Slusloto and you go all the way up and you cut wood for your uncles and aunts and everything." Marcle Pete went on up. First time I see Marcle we were up at Mile 19 trapping. And he said that his dad sent him up there. He was away about two months, I guess. Cutting wood for everybody. And few years back, I think about it and I ask Marcle, I say, "Did you ever tell anybody about it?" He said, "No." I said, "How come you don't tell -- talk about it?" "No," he said, "You know, you can't do that." He said, "My dad said if you do something good for somebody and he's happy with it, don't talk about it no more. Just leave it with him. Don't even think about it no more. It's done and you had somebody happy thinking real good." So, I told Marcle Pete, I said, "Well, I'll write a book about it, and I'll put my name there. That I'm the one that do it."

[00:42:51]LACAYAH ENGEBRETSON: You notice any kind of new plants around? Or plants that you don't see anymore?

[00:42:57]LEMMIE CHARLEY: Any what?

[00:42:58]LACAYAH ENGEBRETSON: Plants.

LEMMIE CHARLEY: Plants?

LACAYAH ENGEBRETSON: Hm mm. Any kinds of new ones? Or ones that used to be here and aren't here anymore?

[00:43:06]LEMMIE CHARLEY: Well, I -- They call it wild -- wild rhubarb. And I never seen them anymore. And the ones they picked up one time look a little bit close to that, but it's not the same kind that we used to eat. Yeah, it was like a leaf about that long. Maybe about that wide.

And you cut it up and put sugar in it and put a little flour in it and boil it and -- Yeah. I don't see that one around no more.

[00:43:51]LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: What about animals? You see new animals or ones that you don't see anymore?

[00:43:57]LEMMIE CHARLEY: No, I just don't see much of animals anymore like there used to be before. Yeah. You go all the way from here to Tok, you know, and you don't even see a squirrel going across the road. Or rabbit. All you see is them ravens or crow or whatever they call them. Yeah. That's all you see now.

[00:44:25]LACAYAH ENGBRETSON: Did you have anything else? It's over. That's it