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[side one]

Dennis Demmert [DD]: I'd like to get started. As was noted in the last session, they always seem short when you get started telling us these stories, Hannah. And we didn't much chance to talk much before this class session, but we talked a little about dog sledding. And there were some questions asked about that, as well. And you said you used to dog sled. Could you tell us about dog sledding?

Hannah Solomon [HS]: Well, in those days, they don't have carnivals or dog racing like we do now. But mostly the dogs are being used for home. And us kids, when we were growing up, we do lot of wood hauling with dogs. Right after school we used to hitch up dogs and cut out a load of wood and bring it in. When I think of things like that, I just wonder how we made it. There's always--we never think that we going to get stuck the next day. Even in cold weather, people just hitch up their dogs and bring in sled full of wood. We don't buy cord of woods like we do now. Just by daily. And us kids, after school, we used to hitch up dogs and go out and bring in a load of wood. And we cut it, and then we bring it in the house. That's for night. The next day, just about the same thing. Lot of time the fathers do things like that. But lots of time us kids like to do it, too. And when my father died, he had six dogs. He died in July when they had the flu epidemic. And we kept that--well, I quit. I never went back to school that fall.

DD: What year was the epidemic?

HS: '25.

DD: 1925.

HS: I never went back to school, because I had to help my mother. And right from Birch Creek, our fish camp, another one was--I forgot the name of it. Box Car, I think. It's up by Porcupine. They come in, and they tell my mother to send a team out there so they can give her fish and meat. And I did lot of that that winter. And cut my own wood and bring it in with dogs, and kept the fire going for my mother all winter. Then before next fall, my mother think it was too much for me to do it, so she gave the dogs away. And I never did handle dogs anymore after that. And after I got married, my husband traps with dog teams. They did everything with dog teams. But I never did handle dogs anymore. When I first got married, I married to a man that has two kids of his own. And we moved out on trap line. We stayed out there all winter. No airplane or anything in those days. And they did mostly everything with dog team. Before Christmas, everybody get ready and go to town. We traveled into town, to Fort Yukon, about two or three days before we get to Fort Yukon. We stay camped in those--there is a little different villages everywhere. We stayed up there and stay overnight. And even after we got--I got so many kids. We still traveled with dog teams. We used to load them up in the toboggan, and we would be sitting at the back end. The men would be on the handlebar. And we went to Fort Yukon with three teams. But his son was old enough to have a team of his own. And we had another boy staying with us, so we moved to Fort Yukon--went to Fort Yukon for the holidays with dog teams. When we hit the Yukon

River, it was so cold, even that we have to get up there. We travel in cold weather! So it took a long time before--well, we never did have airplanes when I was out there. The last time I was--that we live out there was 1936. And they start using a plane maybe two, three years after. We used only dog teams when I was living out in the woods.

DD: Did you ever get lost?

HS: I never did, I don't think [laughs].

DD: How did you know where to go?

HS: Well, they have trails to all the villages. And they usually tell us before we leave, where to go. And we never did travel all by ourselves. There's always two, three teams at a time.

Student: Is there much wind up there? That would blow the snow over the trails, so that it would make it hard to find?

HS: Well, in the river it does, but over the forest it's good.

DD: You had questions? Karen.

Student: How far do you have to go to get good sized--or house logs big enough that were practical?

HS: Well, I don't know, they usually--house logs they get it in summer time. They go up the river to get it. I don't know how far they go. I've never been to that.

Student: Did they float them down the river?

HS: Uh huh. They float them down the river. Make a big raft and bring it into the village.

Student: What kind of stoves?

HS: Well, in those days we used only Yukon stoves. A little flat stove. Later on they start making their drum stoves. That one came way later. Usually only Yukon stove. We live in a log cabin. Everybody, just about everybody, has only one room place. That little stove just eat up the wood just like nothing. And it burns up fast, too! And during the night, sometimes the fire would go out. Nobody would put wood in the stove, and the fire will go out. So cold in the morning, I remember. And whoever it was would get up, start the fire.

Student: Did everybody like to lay in bed and pretend they were asleep so they wouldn't have to...

HS: Probably [laughs], I don't know. Maybe they do [laughs].

Student: That's what we do [laughs].

DD: There have been quite a few books that have pictures of that area, as well. Lois, you're from where? Arctic Village or Venetie?

Student: Arctic Village.

DD: Arctic Village. What was your family name?

Student: Tritt.

DD: Tritt.

HS: And what is your second name, Lois?

Student: Which second name?

DD: Your middle name?

HS: Your middle name.

Student: Ann

HS: Yeah. I brought a book up here that--I was looking through my things. One time BIA sent me--was it BIA? Tanana Chiefs, I think, send me out to village to collect old pictures at the village. And this book, Jessie wouldn't loan it to me. I forgot all about it until I came across it this morning. Her name is there. And the book said Lois Ann Tritt, Mount Edgecomb School. And then, there's Beverly Tritt's name and the date was February, 1966. And back here it says, "I am, I am, I am, I am a bad girl." [laughter] So you probably had this book! [laughs] And there's lot of old pictures in there. But I was telling you folks about that I seen, this morning.

DD: There's some nice old pictures of old times.

HS: There's--if you want to pass it around, or you just want to gather around, it's okay.

DD: Come on up here. You can come up, too, Lois. [laughter]

HS: Well she--you going to see a lot of people in here that you know, Lois.

DD: Let's see what the title of the book is. It should be right in here somewhere. Alaska...

HS: ...The Land of the People.

DD: ...The Land and the People.

HS: This is the way I said we been packing our babies. And these

are the old fiddlers. And these kids are dancing. That's Billy Frentzel right there.

Student: Oh.

HS: Uh huh. And I think it's Jimmy Roberts playing the fiddle. And you know all these old people, I know. Mary Johnson, Sophie Henry. Sophie Henry was her name?

Student: Sophie John.

HS: Sophie John. I know this is Ellen's mother, but I can't think of her name. And there's, unless I told you that the village used to have Native meetings. She used--and councils--and that's a picture of Venetie. And the person that's sitting at the end name is Johnny Fredson. He's the one Dr. Burke and the mission took him when his mother died. And his father gave him up to the mission. They sent him out in the States, and he went to school for many years. I wouldn't know how many years.

Student: They said he went to college.

HS: When he came back, he still can talk our language.

Student: Thirty years he was gone.

HS: And people were so surprised that he still can talk his language. And I remember when they ask him, "How did you remember our language yet?" He said he had a Native book that he read right along and get the explanation of the words in English to Native. So he never lost his language.

Student: He worked with Edward Sapir? [inaudible]

HS: Who?

Student: Edward Sapir. He was a linguist.

HS: Oh, you mean--that's [inaudible]. Johnny Fredson was gone long before Sapir got up there.

Student: Oh.

HS: And this is where John--well, when Johnny got back to Fort Yukon, he went up to Venetie. There was no school up there. So the councils got together, and they built a little school house for their children. And the village make a little collection to have Johnny Fredson teach their kids for them. That's the way school was started up at Venetie. And he is the one that explained to the people about the future. So that's how they got the reservation started up at Venetie and Arctic Village. Later on, my old man, and there was several of them, the BIA school teacher was named George Wilson, they worked hard, they took a survey of the village to see what the people owns and what the people have. And they explained to them that they wanted to start a reservation. They voted, but it got voted out. That's why Fort Yukon never did become reservation. But Johnny explained to these people what it'll do for them later.

Student: Can you identify the others? [inaudible]

HS: Well, I know who they are. Lois probably do, too. But they're all gone. Only this old man right here, this old man Elija John, he's up at Denali Center now, he's in his ninety's. And this is the way that they used to carry their things in the summer time, by dog packing.

Student: [inaudible]

HS: Uh huh. I've seen it too.

Student: Did you have a dog on a leash? Or just followed with you?

HS: They just follow. Sometimes you have to lead. This is another old man, Johnny Frank, was making snow shoe. The boys I don't know. What's that?

Student: Use willow?

HS: No, birch.

Student: What about for the dog sled?

HS: Uh huh. And this is a woman cleaning moose skin. I'm going backward. [laughter]

DD: Do you recognize some of these people? Or not.

[inaudible conversation in background]

HS: No, not. This is my stepsister, Josephine's mother, Rose. You seen the picture of her the other day, standing with her mother. In those days, when a man dies and leaves the woman with a bunch of children, there's no relief, no pension, no way they get help. So the woman has to provide for everything. She goes out and cut wood, pack water, trap, and sew. And she raise lot of her own kids. Getting...

Student: Who's that?

HS: That's Josephine's mother. Later on, several years way later, when my mother was up to the age, I guess, we never got any help. And one time BIA teacher told these old people to come to the meetings, and they gave them a slip of paper. They went up to the

stores, and they gave them fifty pounds of sugar and fifty pounds of flour. Oh, the people were so thankful! That was the beginning of people trying to get help, I think. They kept that up for quite a while. They gave them just flour and sugar for while. And then, later on, they started with little pension for them.

Student: How did they get food before then? I mean, did she hunt, herself, too?

HS: Yes. Hunt, trapped, sewed, and everything. Right here she has a big wolverine on her--coyote on her shoulder. So it says, "A woman trapper."

Student: That must have been a lot of work!

HS: And this is tanning moose skin. That's Ned Robertson's wife.

Student: Is that my grandmother there?

HS: Ned Robertson's--who was he married to?

Student: Emma?

HS: Emma. That's Emma. This is Steven.

Student: Yeah, she raised my mother.

HS: Uh huh, Steven. This one here. There was another thing I was going to show you. From there it's down river, the people. Oh, this is the way they used to pack their water.

Student: That's my grandmother there, too.

HS: Uh huh. That's her. Emma. Uh huh.

Student: Is that a fur coat?

HS: Fur coat. Fur parkas they make. We make them, too.

Student: My mom [inaudible]. She was adopted, too [inaudible].

HS: Uh huh.

Student: But they were first cousins [inaudible].

HS: And I just--this is very interesting. I was going to read it and I never did. [laughter] This I never seen before, but I've heard so much about it. Down river they used to put everything what the person owns on their graveyard. So says right there, "gun," or whatever...

Student: [inaudible]

HS: Uh huh.

Student: Those things would never last in a graveyard, here in white society.

HS: Now, yeah. Now it won't. But at that time it probably did. Like there's a graveyard over Nulato and there, which I heard that they used to cache everything in that little cabins, or whatever they built on the graves. I never seen it. I just heard about it. And these are the caches that we used to have out in the village. We don't have no refrigerator and things like that, but this is our refrigerator [laughs]. Everything is being dried in the summer time, and they just stack it up in the corners. Fish on one side. Meat on one side. Everything.

Student: And that kept all the animals out?

HS: Well, to keep the animals out, they sometimes put a tin around on the bottom of the post. To keep the mouse, or whatever would

climb in there.

DD: Did you ever see caribou like that?

HS: No, that's reindeer.

DD: Oh, that's reindeer?

HS: I seen a big bunch of caribou up the Porcupine River and Yukon River, crossing. That was before the highway or anything started. They used to be plenty along the highway.

DD: And they would come from the Canadian...

HS: Back and forth.

DD: ...side to the American side and then back again, hmm?

HS: Uh huh, yeah. There's lot of other village's stories in there. So I brought that out. So Lois, I know you had it! 'Cause your name is in there [laughs]. Nothing to laugh about, it's good. Really.

Student: Wonder why I wrote, "I'm a bad, bad, bad girl."

[laughter]

HS: I don't know whether you wrote it. I couldn't say.

[laughter]

Student: It sounds like me.

HS: Maybe Beverly, 'cause Beverly was the last one. This is a graveyard down at Galena. They have those little cabins on them. Do they still have?

Student: No, they don't make them anymore, but [inaudible]...

HS: But there is some that there...

Student: [inaudible]

HS: Uh huh.

Student: Used to take them food and stuff in there.

HS: Yeah.

Student: We'd find old fashioned [inaudible] and things.

Student: I was going to pick one up...

HS: Oh, yeah. I heard about it but I never see--huh?

Student: My mom told me to put it back! [laughter]

HS: So if any one of you wants to keep this book, just to read, I wouldn't mind. But I want it back at the end. So sure [laughs].

Student: [inaudible]

HS: There's lot of--I just read a little of it in there this morning. But there's lot of things that I've been telling you people about. It's in there. So what I say is not false [laughs].

Student: Did you help put that book together?

HS: What book?

Student: This book here.

HS: No.

Student: Oh, I thought you did.

HS: That was many, many years ago, I guess. I just found it among

my things. It was loaned to me.

[inaudible conversation]

Student: [inaudible] my sister wrote that.

HS: Yeah, uh huh.

Student: I was at Mount Edgecomb when she wrote it.

HS: Oh probably, she was thinking about you, that's why.

Student: That was my first year away from home.

HS: Um hum.

Student: I had a question about the picture that shows the coyote. Not too long ago there was a coyote that came around Fairbanks, and they said something like they'd never seen them up here before, or something. But they used to be around Fort Yukon?

HS: Well, it came around Fort Yukon when I remember it, too. 'Cause they never had it before. And there was two ladies was snaring rabbits. They went out to see their snares. And they caught one in the snare, and they thought it was a dog. Oh, they got so mad! Because he was eating the rabbits. So they got a stick or willow, whatever, and they was giving it to the dog. Just, you know, just whipping the dog, but it never make any noise. It was just as quiet as it can be. So they got scared. So they went home and told their menfolks. They went and got it. Brought it back into town. It was coyote. We used to call it coyote. That was--I wouldn't remember what year, though. That was the first--they didn't know it was coyote. They thought it was a dog.

Student: My dad caught one a few years ago. [inaudible]

DD: Where was that?

Student: At Hughes. On the Koyukuk River. But there aren't very many. I think that's the only one he's ever caught.

HS: Yeah. I don't think there's any around Fort Yukon, either.

Student: Did they used to trap wolves, though?

HS: Oh yeah. Wolves been around.

DD: Other questions?

Student: How about the Northern Lights. What kind of things--what was the most exciting [inaudible], I guess [inaudible].

HS: I don't know very much about that.. 'Cause...

Student: Do you get them up there at all?

HS: Yeah. But we were told not to play outdoors when there's too much Northern Lights in the sky.

Student: Did they have any stories that [inaudible]?

HS: I don't know. I don't know.

DD: Hannah, down the river further, and especially around the Yup'ik area, around the Kuskokwim, they make baskets and weave grass. They use grass for anything up there?

HS: Not that I know of.

DD: They don't make any baskets?

HS: I don't think even today--well, there's one woman's trying to make baskets and not like--you know, it's just a common thing. Not

like the way they make it around.

DD: So they didn't do that there?

HS: No.

DD: Okay. What did people do to, you know, when they had to buy more and more things? What kinds of things did people do to earn money?

HS: Well, very few people will have jobs at the hospital or mission or some places. When we, us girls, when we got up to the age where we know we can do a little extra work beside working at home, mission is the only one that help people right along. We used to go there to wash dishes or whatever. And the first time I earned my seventy-five cents an hour, I remember is when we had a flood at Fort Yukon. We had to move away. We put up a tent, away from town. And we go into town, and they'll be some storekeepers or business people--when there is a flood, it takes a long time before you get the sand away, dried up, inside the building. So we used to mop the floor everyday for those people. And what little they give us, we go home and buy candy, and things like that, and we take it home to other kids. So there's very few people that has job in those days. But people get along. 'Cause they trap, they fish, and they stack the things away that they will need. And the women do mostly sewing. Like I said, that I've been helping my mother with sewing from right along. And she did--she's a sewer. And we used to make a pair of slippers. And the things were so much cheaper now than it is now. So at that time the things are so cheap. My mother and I could make a pair of slippers in a day. I do the beadwork, and she do the skin sewing. And by the day is over, we take up to the store. They give us five dollars a pair.

That'll be fifty pounds of flour. Or fifty pounds of sugar. So that's the way the people get along.

Student: When they trapped, didn't they--did they sell or trade their furs?

HS: Yeah, they do. That's when they buy their winter supplies. Mostly everybody stays out in winter time.

Student: So they keep some for home [inaudible] and sell the rest?

HS: Um hmm.

Student: What--tanning moose hide? What's the process like?

HS: Well, the moose skin will be brought in. Then we cut the hair off. And we flesh it. We flesh it on both sides. Then we be putting it in water, wring it out, smoke it, and do it over and over and over. Takes about two, three--two weeks, I guess, to tan a moose skin. Lot of work into it.

Student: Did you say that you smoke it?

HS: Yeah.

Student: Did you use a specific type of wood?

HS: Just a rotten wood that we gather out in the woods.

Student: Do you have to go very far from the house to get firewood? After a while?

HS: Oh, well, it's just all over, I suppose.

Student: It seems like after a while you'd have to go farther and farther away.

HS: Sure. In the summer time, sometimes, they make a raft up the river and they float it down to the village, too. And putting the moose skin in the water, we used soap and brains. We squeezed the brains through a cheesecloth and make it soapy like. And we used soap with it.

Student: That helps make it soft?

HS: I think so.

Student: When you worked full time, did you think it was hard work?

HS: I never did work full time.

Student: When you worked for the Center...

HS: At the Center here? Oh yeah. Well, I don't think so, 'cause all my children were grown by the time I start working. I didn't want to work when my kids were home, but just did little odd jobs.

Student: Uh huh. I was thinking, which do you think is harder? If you had to work full time now or if you had to live then, all the hard work you had to do then?

HS: I just don't understand what you mean?

Student: Like, if you had your choice, if you could live now and have to work full time to support yourself, or live back then when you had to haul wood and water and cut wood.

HS: Well, those are two different lives, so you can't compare together.

Student: One's harder in one way...

HS: Well, I don't think it's harder than others. We just have to live along. The day comes when we work right through, and the day comes again, so it's hard to compare those two jobs together.

DD: When you worked down at the Center, you worked part time then?

HS: To start with.

DD: Yeah.

HS: And then, afterwards, it's full time.

DD: Um hmm. For, let's see, when did you start? '65? Or...

HS: '66.

DD: And then you...

HS: I start working for BIA at that time. Just like a homemaker.

DD: Then you retired about '70...

HS: '75, I think.

DD: '75. And by that time you were working full time, huh?

HS: Um hmm. After I went down to open up the Native Center, it was eight hours a day.

DD: Yeah. Your family was all grown by then?

HS: Well, they were up. Their own teenage.

DD: Yeah. So did you have to work and come home and take care of them, too, then? Some of them?

HS: No. They were old enough to take care of themselves then. Yeah. But before I moved to Fairbanks, I worked at school as a

cook. But my kids were in school, too, so it was--I work while they're in school, so it didn't make much different to me.

DD: You were a cook in the school? In Fort Yukon?

HS: Uh huh, yeah. Boy, in my life time I did a lot of different jobs [laughs]. Volunteer jobs, pay or no paid. I'm just--I'm right there all the time [laughs].

DD: But earlier in your life you worked mainly at home?

HS: Uh huh, yeah.

DD: And I think you told us before that it was pretty hard work, sometimes. That it kept you busy all the time, huh? With packing wood and water after school.

HS: Yeah, well, that's when we were at home. Yeah, before. We have to do it because my folks were old. And I was the only one in the family. So I did most of the work there.

DD: I'm trying to get back to the thing you were asking about, Sherry...

Student: Well, I was thinking, like...

DD: ...just to get some idea of the discussion that we're having.

Student: Well, some people nowadays would think, "God, life back then must have been so hard! How could you do it all? Must be so hard!" Some people think now life's really hard. Where you have to get up and, like, a housewife, whatever. Have to go to work and then come home and have our things to do at home, too. I guess you can't really compare them 'cause they're so different.

HS: So different.

DD: Other questions? How about taking a little break? And think of other kinds of things that we might talk about. I've gone through some of the questions and I'll go through some more, but think about other things that we can discuss after the break. So let's take about a five to ten minute break.

[tape resumes after break]

Student: ...and the other part were just stories that he'd remembered hearing.

DD: Okay, when was that book published?

HS: Johnny Fredson was--he was with Archdeacon Stuck when he climbed McKinley, too. He was the one that guards the things and had the dog and supply down the...

Student: Right. He said...

HS: Uh huh. He had the camp going.

DD: Are there any pictures of John Fredson here? No pictures...

Student: I don't think there's any pictures in there [inaudible].

DD: Yeah, there are some pictures.

Student: Oh, are there?

DD: Oh, [inaudible].

HS: Yeah, it's him. Uh huh. That's him. That's him, too.

DD: And that's in 1920...

HS: It says, "The Boy's Club, Clara Burke and [inaudible] Fredson.

So there is story about Burke's and Fredson's. This is the one that he carved at the church and is still up there.

DD: Okay, now, there's a picture of Clara Burke? Where's Clara Burke in here?

HS: Right there.

DD: That's her, huh?

HS: Um hmm.

DD: Okay. And this picture of John Fredson is in 1926...

HS: 1926.

DD: He's about 30 years old.

HS: Age 30, it says, uh huh.

DD: And, let's see, if he were still alive, he would have been almost 90, now. Is he alive yet or not?

HS: No.

DD: When did he die? Do you know?

HS: Well, I don't know. He died in '40's somewhere.

Student: I think it says in there, in the biographical sketch [inaudible]. Did you see this one?

HS: No.

DD: Is that from the Language Center?

Student: Uh huh. Why don't you [inaudible].

DD: Do they still have copies?

HS: Uh hmm.

Student: Yeah, I'm sure that they do.

DD: Hannah, Jane was saying that, in this book of John Fredson's, she talked about a moosehide ball, a big moosehide ball, that they used to play with on New Year's day.

Student: New Year's day.

HS: Well, it even say on that book, that's how they used to play-- make their own balls to play. It says on that book, too.

DD: Yeah. Do you remember anything on New Year's day?

HS: I remember. Uh huh. They don't really make those big ones. Just, you know, just big enough to handle. Just like football. And they used to play it.

DD: What kind of games were there? Were they something like football?

HS: Football. And something like hockey. They just make their own sticks, and they just hit these and...

DD: Yeah. And Jane, does it say in there that they played with that ball on New Year's day after the potlatch?

Student: Yeah. Uh huh.

HS: Yes, outdoors. While the people are having potlatches.

Student: Yeah. And then it said that sometimes the women and children could also play with it. And I thought that was kind of interesting. Were those games mostly for men?

used to grab each other's arm. Just swing each other in the front until the other person comes back with the ball. Is not like the way they play baseball now. Those are the only way they used to play it.

DD: Swing each other around? While somebody gets the ball?

HS: Uh huh [laughs].

DD: And what would happen? Get dizzy?

HS: Oh no. Just dancing or playing, that's what it is.

Student: I was just reading in, you know, Julius Jette, who did all that work? Well, it was further down the river, Jette? He was talking about a hoop game they used to play. They'd roll a willow into a hoop, and they'd roll it down. And they'd try to throw spears through the hoop when it was going?

HS: I've never seen it, so I don't know.

DD: Now, it's from further down river you say?

HS: Yeah.

DD: What area?

Student: Nulato.

DD: From around Nulato?

HS: And the one big game I remember, too, it'll be in summer time. They used to dig a hole. Each person owns the hole. Like Peter will own one, John will own one. The ball is theirs. And they have buttons. And they throw the buttons into those holes. And who get most of the buttons, they call them what now? Nigger

babies [laughs]. And they used to pat them on the back so many times. That's the only game I remember, too [laughs].

Student: I remember we used to cut off the buttons off clothes [inaudible]...

HS: Buttons off all the clothing, yeah! [laughter] Lot of kids just went crazy to pick up buttons here and there. And when they changed, some of them would find out there's no buttons on their shirts [laughs].

DD: And you played that game, too, Lois?

HS: She probably, sure.

Student: Yes, [inaudible] steal buttons. We were button bandits during the summer time.

DD: How many people could play that game at once?

HS: They don't do it...

Student: Well, there was one where--all right, there was just one hole, you know, and whoever, you know, gets the most buttons keeps the buttons. But there was another one, the one that she's talking about, where there is eight holes, you know, and you throw the ball. But I don't remember how it goes. But...

HS: I don't really remember...

Student: But anyway, it depends on how many times you put your ball in those holes, you know. And how many buttons you get in those holes, you're called nigger baby.

HS: Yeah [laughs].

Student: But, you know, we didn't know any better, you know, in them days. We didn't know what nigger baby was, 'cause, you know, I grew up in [inaudible]...

HS: Yeah, we never know. We never know there's colored people in those days.

Student: I know, I saw my first one when I was sixteen.

HS: Um hmm.

Student: No, I was twelve. I take that back, I was twelve.

DD: Was that in...

Student: Here at University. I came to a summer school, and I saw my first one. And I really stared, too. [laughter] I was a little bit scared, too.

DD: Well, I guess I could identify with that. I think I was about fourteen or so.

Student: Um hmm. You know, you grow up with the same kind of people, you know, and then you see different kind of people, and you wonder, you know. You know, I kind of withdrew into myself. They were teaching us how to dance and he was one of them. And he had to hold us, you know, and I was kind of scared. [laughter] He was teaching us—I don't know what the name of that dance was.

DD: Other questions?

Student: Didn't they used to ski at all?

HS: Not that I—I don't think so. There is no such a thing as skis, with [inaudible] when we were kids. Snowshoes. Mostly used

snowshoes, that's all.

DD: Did you ever go up to Beaver on a dog sled or on a boat or anything like that?

HS: No. Boat. When we leave Fort Yukon, we pass Beaver before we get up to Beaver Creek.

DD: Oh, to your camp?

HS: Uh huh. There's the one thing that I want to tell you about, too. We usually passed Beaver in the Fall time. And we go up to Beaver Creek. And we stayed up there all winter. But we usually go to Fort Yukon for the holidays, winter time. And in the springtime, first of June, everybody pack up everything, stores everything away. Before we leave the camp, we always clean up everything. The house and everything. Then we come back to a clean place in the Fall time when we come back. We left Beaver Creek, we landed in Beaver, and there was--I know a lot of people there. They know me. And they always come down when there's a boat coming to the village. People always gather at the bank. And they gathered there. And this lady told me that there's a friend of ours back here, she got an awful sick baby. And I think that boy must be about five or six years old. And she told me--she took me back there. She told me she wanted me to pray for the family. I was still young. But my mother raised me in the church. Because she never missed a church, and she always took me along. And this woman knows it. She was from Fort Yukon, and she settled down at Beaver. And she took me back there, and I prayed for them. And the boy died, while we stayed another night. And they asked us if we can stay for another day to have the burial for the little boy. The sister of that little boy is still living at Fort Yukon, and

she always brings that up and still thanks me for it. There was nobody to take care of the funeral. No preachers, nobody. But the teacher told me that he's going to help me a little. And I prayed, and I said all the prayers and sang a song, hymn, for them at the grave. So that's one of my good deed in my lifetime, too. So the people really appreciated that. 'Cause there was no one else to do it.

DD: You were coming back from fish camp, then?

HS: Our winter camp.

DD: Coming from winter camp? So was that in the springtime, then?

HS: Uh huh. In June.

DD: In June.

[side two]

HS: And even right here in the hospital, sometimes they would tell me, "Come to have a prayer for me." That's a thing that you can never say no, and I'm always willing to do it. And I do it for people. I was raised in Episcopal Church. That's the church that we had at Fort Yukon, from the beginning. And later on, there was the other churches that came in. Like they have up there now Assembly of God. And Baptist Church, I think they have up there now. But my mother had me in Episcopal Church, and that's my church there. When they first started to come into Fort Yukon, it was so different, the way of them having their services and preaching. Then that's lot of different ones now, all over the world. So it's pretty hard to say that you stick to one church, but I am. I do. When we first--when first time, I don't know what kind of church got to Fort Yukon. And they start having their

services outdoors. Gee, people would just gather and--'cause they play music and they sing, and that's what the people like.

Student: Do you have an organ for the church?

HS: We do.

Student: Do you know who plays [inaudible]...

HS: Whoever.

DD: With the church coming in, some of the things changed in the way people believed.

HS: Oh, yes.

DD: Some of their old beliefs--you were telling us the last time about some of the things that people were not permitted to do. Like women couldn't step over men's clothing. And there were some other things, as well. But did they quit those practices after that?

HS: Oh, I think so. I think they [inaudible]...

DD: Why did they quit? Was it mainly because of the change in belief or...

HS: Well, this is not the believing way to respect the people's clothing. That's not the religious way, that's just a--save their luck, you know. They would say to--"This man is a hunter" or, "...a fisher." They don't want to change his luck. So they got respect for that person. That's the reason we were told not to walk over a men's clothing or anything like that. You know, they had lots of respect for men side in those days. Even now, I always bring up Poldine Carlo, she would have a party, maybe in her

wedding anniversary or—I know I went to one on her New Year's celebration out here. She would get the men to line up to get the food first. That's the way we were taught. Respect the men. And then us women come behind. But it's not a religious way.

DD: Sounds like there's some nice old customs. [laughter]

HS: Uh huh. That's what it is [laughs].

DD: There's a question over there.

Student: Getting back to your church, did they have baptisms? Infant baptisms?

HS: Uh huh. We baptize our babies, confirmed.

DD: You know, when you were talking about some of the old beliefs for not changing luck, I remember—it reminded me of two old uncles of mine, both of them have died since then, but a long time ago, a long, long time ago, before I knew about it, apparently they went hunting once. And one of my uncles said to the other one, "Gee, I hope we can get a deer today." And then the other uncle got very angry and he turned around, they went on a boat, and he said, "Let's go. We're going back to the boat." And he said, "You changed our luck." And so they went back to the boat. And about twenty years or so later, I heard the story. The one uncle, who had said that, was teasing the uncle who wouldn't go hunting anymore. And the uncle who said, "I wish we'd get a deer," his name was Jim. He said to Henry, "Remember that time we went hunting and I said, 'I wish we'd get a deer.' and you made us go back to the boat?" And that was fifteen or twenty years later. And Henry got angry all over again. 'Cause it was the wrong thing to do. You know, [inaudible]...

HS: Oh yeah.

DD: And he was alive early in the 1970's, but the idea of changing luck was still very important to him at that time, so--I know there were things that people couldn't do to change luck. And one of them was making fun of animals, what we couldn't do was make fun of animals.

HS: Yes.

DD: Were there some beliefs about animals, as well? And how you treated animals?

HS: Well, they really do because, you know, they don't get more than what they going to use. They going to kill a moose, they make sure that they use every bit of it. There's no waste in any animal. And if they know it's not going to last for the winter, they would kill two or three. They know how much they going to use for the winter. And they never kill more than what they should get. They never waste anything, even rabbits or ducks or whatever. They make sure they just kill what they going to use.

DD: Yeah. And then they also, besides hunting for their own use, they trapped for their furs, too. Some for home use and then for sale...

HS: Uh huh, yeah.

DD: ...for sale. And then that was ...

HS: There's lot of furs that we use for clothing.

DD: Yeah. Did you use fur clothing?

HS: Uh huh.

DD: Other questions?

Student: Getting back to the animals and the treatment, I wondered--I remember once from reading about the Yup'ik people, never named their dogs people names. Did you have any beliefs in naming your domestic animals?

HS: I don't know.

Student: It didn't matter?

HS: I never...

Student: Did you name all of your dogs and stuff? [inaudible]

HS: They do. Yeah, they do. Yeah. One of my--three of my little boys, when they were raising three little pups, we ran a coffee shop at that time. Their father was sick and couldn't go back out. They had three little pups. One was Cake, Pie, and Donut [laughs].

Student: I was wondering about your son's name, Mardo, does that mean anything?

HS: I don't know. That's the grandfather's name, my father's name.

DD: That was your father's name, huh?

HS: Yeah. And my oldest son's name was Mardo. And my husband's name is Paul, so my second boy's name is Paul. So they usually go back, and they want to name the kids about somebody that lost, you know. Died or something like that. We keep the names up. My first daughter's name is Hannah [laughs].

DD: When people were named after someone else that was older, did the older people usually feel something special about the young person named after them?

HS: They do, uh huh.

DD: Did they ever see any similarities or...

HS: Oh no, just the feeling, I think.

DD: Mainly just the feeling?

HS: Uh huh. When--my old man's father has a Native name, [gives Athabascan name]. I don't know the meaning of it, but, when we lost my old man, Peter, my youngest boy, adopted that name to his second name. He had it recorded.

DD: Hmm. And that was his Athabascan name?

HS: Uh huh.

DD: What was that again?

HS: [gives Athabascan name].

DD: [repeats Athabascan name]?

HS: So he adopted that name for his second name.

DD: Um hum. And that's on the legal record now?

HS: Uh huh, yeah. In early days, I don't think they have two names. Very few. That started way later.

DD: Like the first and last name? They just had one name.

HS: Uh huh, yeah.

Student: [inaudible] middle name?

HS: No.

DD: What was your family name before you were married? Didn't you have a last name?

HS: Eliza. Eliza and Mardo.

DD: Well, Mardo was the name...

HS: Mardo was my father, uh huh. My mother was Eliza.

DD: Um hum. Any other questions?

Student: Well, about the religion again. Like you were saying, some of the things were just for luck, you know. You don't step over for respectation and for luck, you know. But what about some of the other old things, like if a girl was on her puberty and she couldn't eat certain things? Did they stop doing that when the church came?

HS: Well, I don't think it went with the church. I think it's just the time of changing. The kids got into the modern way, so they're not living like the old days. I don't think that has anything to do with the religious.

Student: Oh. I think a lot of the people think that the change came when the missionaries came. And that that's--I think that there's a really wide idea that that's what made the changes. I don't--maybe that's wrong?

HS: I don't think so. I don't know. I couldn't say.

Student: I know one of the changes is that a man can only have one wife after the missionaries came.

HS: Yeah, those are the things that we--those are what we heard.  
We didn't see it in our time. It was way before my time.

Student: So religion--the religious part is just how you feel  
inside. Like what you're beliefs are about God and stuff. But all  
the things about your daily life don't have to do so much with  
religion and...

HS: Um hmm, yeah.

Student: ...[inaudible] with custom or respectation...

HS: Yeah. That's just custom and traditional way of living.

DD: Other questions? Well why don't we...

[tape ends]