

The building of the old hall.

They would gather up money, I remember my older sister going around collecting money from all the businesses. The native people doing the labour, you know it was all volunteer work that built that Gitanmaax hall in the first place. My mom and dad were very active and religious, well the hall needed organizers and that was my parents. My mom, Mrs. Sterritt and Mary McKenzie's mother, they were the ones that did the organizing, it was really neat that men would be working on the hall and the women would be working on a lunch to bring the men. The men would bring their own tools to work: hammer, hand-saw, they provided their own tools. I always admired that and I'd wish that would happen today. Even if it was to build a house, his neighbours would all get together to help him and that was all without any pay. That was the way old houses got built, they helped each other; that was something we've lost volunteer work or doing it out of the goodness of your heart. Maybe it was necessary because money is so important now days, it wasn't as important when I was young. They got things done without money. I think the Salvation Army was good at that, it was a labour of love. If our church burnt down today I don't think we would ever get it built again (as inexpensive), that kind of thing doesn't happen anymore.

Do you remember any feasts when you were young?

there seemed to be a lot. They happened in the winter, there were some in the summer. I remember one in Hagwilget with my parents, they had theirs outside. They had a little hall but it was nice outside so they had their dancing singing. I used to see these ceremonies lots because my parents. I can remember going to feasts and sitting with the chiefs, it happened because my father was a chief and sometimes he couldn't make it, so I would go in place. I can remember sitting there till four in the morning and thinking of how I would rather be out with my friends. My dad's special seat was right beside John Smiths, I remember he was next to me, he was close anyway. He used to pat me on the head and say in Gitksan "it'll be over soon, child". He could see I was becoming impatient and yet protocol required you sit there and that was what he'd do, sit there. I just remember Mr. Smith, I would fill in for my mother or father. I remember going to feasts that were held by my mother's tribe, fireweed. The big difference is the children and their constant playing, before the children used to stay at home. It had to be quite quiet there wasn't any loudspeaker for the speaker. I remember being disappointed by the children because I was trying to hear the elders speak and couldn't.

Did you teach your kids the way your parents taught you?

Very similar a little discipline didn't hurt anyone.

Did you hang around with your parents?

No, I didn't but times are changing. I remember when Jeannie was sixteen and we allowed her to go to her first school dance, but she had a older brother, Mickey, who was

there, We knew she was looked after. I remember he rebelled cause she always had to go home before the party was over "Gee, I always have to come home before the fun begins" but she always came home anyway. We always disciplined our children but we were more lenient with Marty and Heather.

What kind of changes happened in Hazelton?

Mostly new people coming in, even after we were married we were still in a state where we knew everyone here in Hazelton even in New Town, We knew everyone. I think the new people are the change, that's not too long ago. Now if you go to a social event, I don't go too many, every once and a while my husband and I go, I feel like a stranger. Before we used to go and we knew everyone. Now I hate going because everybody there could be strangers to me, that was a big change. Maybe it's because I'm older, there's a lot of people I don't know I'm older and I don't want to go out. I don't even meet the teachers any more now that my kids aren't in school. I used to know all the teachers I used to make it my business to know the teachers. Except the ones that live close by like Caray Wing. To me it's the people that have changed, they're strangers mind you they're probably good people when you get to know them. I guess the interesting thing is that you don't see right away are the major changes.

Do you remember Mrs. Baines?

Yes yours and Marty's kindergarten teacher. I think her intentions were good you have to remember that she was a European, a German, she's different. Her attitude was different than mine but her intentions of teaching were good. She realized there had to be a kindergarten. I don't really know where she came from, but when he came around and asked about Marty I thought it was a good idea. I sent Heather down to Mrs. Hobb's mother, she had a group of about five kids and a grandchild, Brendt and Gordie Wilson were the other ones. She would invite the kids there and it was free, she felt her granddaughter needed the education and the companionship. It was a couple of days a week. Then Mrs. Baines came to set up a regular Kindergarten class. She was there for two years and the mothers had to take turns helping, because she was always by her elf. She must have had a grant of some kind, I think it was a small grant. All I know is that she had enough to pay for the rent. We had to pay just \$5 dollars a month, I went once a week to help, it was all volunteer work. And the school board finally saw the need and took over. It seems they have to see it work before they do something in that effect.

(So, Marty and I were the beginning of organized labour) Yes, and it was quite inventive of her to use the rented apartment for kindergarten, it was out of concern for the children that they had the room for their classes. He turned an apartment at the back for a class room (at the old Myros-Smith building). I think there was just the one bathroom, it was a beginning.

Did you win any trophies?

No, just as a team. Usually just ribbons, there was just not as enough money. I can remember the boarding school, they had sports days and prizes of a pair of socks or a book to read things like that, they were always wrapped up nicely. That was a real award for winning something, the cups and trophies came later on in life. That's big business I think you can get an award for going to the bathroom. It used to mean something significant, now they offer so many awards the value has depreciated. You don't have to be good to win an award these days. It's something I don't agree with but I'm an old woman and there's a lot I don't agree with.

What about equal rights? That must have changed your views not just being a woman but also a native?

Oh definitely. There is definitely a lot of discrimination in this town, it's very subtle but it's there. One of the big things, in church down the isle they had a white rope, satin that was for the whites and the natives on the other side. I don't remember this it was before my time, but I do remember the hospital where the natives couldn't go through the front door, they had to use the back. Because I was a young person and a rebel I would challenge them and go through the front door, I know they turned other people back but they never said anything to me. I challenged them everytime and always got away with it. I was never ill if you had friends in the hospital you had to go through the back door - if you were a patient you still had to go through the back door. They divided the ward in half, the white people on one side and the natives on the other. It wasn't until Dr. Whiting came that they did away with it. That was when they did away with discrimination.

He was always my doctor, was he Marty's doctor too?

Oh, yes, I can remember a time when Marty was twelve and if he took ill and doctor Whiting wasn't there, he would have died instead of going to see another doctor.

(So he was part of everybody's life)

It was his attitude I think he made you feel like you were special. He was quite a person. Discrimination, even with our own people, was felt by me, especially when I was a child. I fought against it I let them know who I was.

(that was before women's lib)

Yes, that was before women's rights. Even within your own family you felt it. Even the man you married felt the discrimination. You were looked down on because of being a woman, you had to do certain things. I demand that quality in a person, if I can have it, I will it in my own home. I don't know how successful I've been. Watching my own sons in their own marriages, they pull their own weight. They had to look after their babies they bathe their own child before they say it was women's work. I see them cook their own meals, I see them wash their own dishes. I think discrimination doesn't change; you have to change, individuals change, you have to know yourself, before they respect you. An individual choice. That's why you don't see me screaming on T.V., screaming for feminist equality. I am responsible for what I am. It was a choice I made. I would

never get up on a soapbox and scream. I don't think you can legislate attitudes. So that's what they'RE screaming. This new thing, that native women can get back their status I won't be part of it, it was a big mistake in the first place. Now it's going to be a big mess, and they said it's a start, you have to start somewhere. They can't undo the mistakes they, how stupid. When I got married, I got a call from the Indian Agency, it used to be up on the hill there. I think his name was Mr. Morganwright. I just forgot about about him cause he called me up and told me I wasn't an Indian anymore. I said yeah, and how you going to do that. He said you know what I mean, I knew, but I wasn't going to let him know. You not Indian anymore, how you going to that he was talking about the papers then.

THE NATIVE VOTE MUST HAVE BEEN JUST AFTER THE WAR?

Oh yeah I can remember that, of course I was allowed to vote. I was able to vote since I got married. I never accepted the word status. and I wouldn't even join the non-status group. They invited me, but I just hated the government word. It didn't matter it was DIA creating all that.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE OLD FIREHALL BELL?

Oh yeah, Actually it struck fear in your hearts when you heard it, like that siren goes off now, when it goes off other room. That bell you could hear it all over. It was just a scary feeling

HOW DID THEY GET TO THE FIRE?

They never used anything everybody just ran, afterawhile they had vehicles.

HOW DID THEY PUT THE FIRE OUT?

They used the old man-power and pails later on they had hoses were the start. It wasn't too long ago that they installed fire hydrants. Man power was always available they just went because there was a need. There were some that were expert until they formed the volunteer fire department. It still is a volunteer. Everybody just did it, they went out of curiosity. A long time ago, I felt a concern for the lives that might be lost.

WHAT ABOUT THE OLD GREEN POLICE STATION?

Well as far as I'm concerned it was always there, when they had courage workers. Then the RCMP came they used to work from over there(next door) They had horse and stable, at least one was patrolling. (any emergencies)

No I don't think so. I can remember the Provincial Police, the police had a lot of power. If you resisted arrest there was nothing to stop them from beating you severely up. They were the law. They did mix very well. They played ball with the people. They mixed well, they

were young.

DID ANYONE STAY?

No, I don't think so, maybe the head guy for 5 years. There not like the nurses or teachers, in which some stayed on. Nurses or teachers would stay on, because they would get married, mostly nurses though.

WHAT ABOUT RADIO? WHAT DID YOU LISTEN TOO?

On a personal basis-I enjoyed stories, but we never had a radio till later, when I was getting older. and baseball I remember cause we all knew all the rules. (what were the names of the big players)

I don't think we weren't into personalities: unless big names like Babe Ruth. We weren't into hero worship, like we are now. If they were good, it would be for a year or so. It was our communication vehicle. I think the radio was a big help.

SIMON GUNANOOT?

Well there were stories, but it was there point or personal views. There were books. There was the native side. The natives believed him.

DID YOU KNOW JOHNNY MOORE?

He went out on the police party. There were stories that Simon would warm up by there fire. The police didn't know but the natives did (they didn't say anything) No, they would leave food for him, after they left. There were interesting stories. So he would fool around with them, but Johnny would have some good stories if his memory is still good. The first time I saw Johnny was at the hall opening that was years since I last saw him. He'd be a good one to interview, for baseball too. He played shortstop and was very good.

WHAT POSITION DID YOU PLAY?

I played pitcher or 1st base or anywhere except catching that was for Emma Hilbach.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT HAZELTON? GENERALLY?

I think I'll live here for the rest of my life. I think I think I can live anywhere, my church is a big strength to me, if I go on holidays, I go to church everyone is good at church, but not Scotty his friends, his work. I don't think he could leave. I like Hazelton my friends are here, my relatives. I have no aspirations of better living. I don't like the city, it's good to visit but the pace is too fast and my only request is to be buried at the Hazelton Cementary. I told my family if you bury me at Two Mile I'll

apply for my status.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE BUSINESS MEN OF LONG AGO, LIKE LECHUNG

Oh yes, the Chinese people Le Chung, B. C. Jimmie, Jo-Ham B. C. Jimmie built and ran B. C. Cafe, Jo-Ham had a restaurant where Terry Jack lives now. O. K. Jo had a restaurant where Sam's or Sunrise Cafe is now. It was more than just a restaurant for the natives it was a place to hang out. I never hung out there we just went there too eat. Jackson's was only here for a little while. The late Bob Mah was a new comer. Le Chung ran the laundry. They were good people and my goodness if you were a friend of the rs, you were a friend for life. Le Chung had a ritual at Christmas he would order Chinese lilies and leachie nuts. He would wrap the nuts inside the lilies. He would do it for all his customers. I remember him bringing a big boxful for our big family. He would do it just in time to make for his friends. The Chinese always liked Scotty, he ate there when he was a bachelor. They sent him gifts of all ages. Special presents The other businessmen well I don't really know them... My grandfather was an Englishman, my father a half-breed. My grandfather came from England to run the bay. My grandfather was the chiefs sister. My father was a result of that relationship I don't remember my grandfather, he left the area. He wanted to take my dad away to educate him. My dad regretting not going when he became Chief for not being educated. In those days Victoris was the end of the world He was the a good chief. When DIA started the band council but they elected hereditary chiefs. Nobody would consider running for position. Mr. White was the first big Chief when DIA started. James White that's Kathleen Wale's dad Gitemgald, but people demanded he was to be there and when the other DIA wanted councillors they put all the other hereditary chiefs in They wouldn't vote for an ordinary person. But when they say chief, I think hereditary (It should be like that, hereditary) But in the newspaper there talking about a different chief and it isn't hereditary. There's quite a difference.

DID WWII AFFECT THIS AREA?

Yes, to some degree, but not as much as in bigger place Quite a few left for the war. Both World Wars In the first WW Doug Mowatt's dad went away, Andrew the Mowatt, the Hamilton Boys in fact I was pictures of them in their uniforms in the 1st WW they had the things wound around their legs, between their boots and pants. Then in the 2nd WW there was Smokey Morrison, Solomon Jack, Arthur Kusick, a man named Isaac Brown I think- they called him pickles. I

dont know why he was in the Army. My husband had joined the Reserve forces. and there were more

DID THE NICKNAMES HAVE ANY IMPORTANCES?

Oh yes most people had a reason for having nicknames, there usually was a story behind it. Even the natives had their own nicknames (in their native tongue) They played a role. What we thought was silly but there was a reason behind the names, of importance Yeah that world war II had some tragedies too. Scotty's younger brother died he was a soldier Marie's younger brother was a paratrooper, he died. Phillip Janze he was a paratrooper he died too. and there were others We were affected indirectly, our family. My husband was working in logging and the government ruled it was an essential job, he was given the chance to stay. He went to the reserve army, they kept him back to keep that industry going. The few women to going Marie Janze (Marie Wilson now) the Lakey woman (Martha Lakey) Kathy Sargent was a nurse in England she was a war bride. The effect was indirectly. ~~Another~~ thing was that we only had one doctor. They were scarce. He was one of them and the rationing. and if you had a big family they'd give you accordingly so sugar was the main concern. All the best went to the army the army had 1st choice. Otherwise it wasn't TOO bad.