

Tape Interview-Mr. Wally Danes
Summer Of '88

Mr. Danes, could you tell me where and when you were born?

January 11, 1921 in Hazelton.

Where did you attend primary and secondary school?

Right here in Hazelton. Schooling that we had was strictly up to grade eight-there weren't no High School.

Where was this school at that time?

It's a little place right beside St. Peter's Church.

Many things were different-entertainment, work, education, and social activities-when you were young. What are some of these differences?

Well, the difference that you can recognize is that there is so much drinking now, in my race. Its not as bad today. And I noticed that you have on the sports there, and entertainment. I played for the Dance when I was very young-and that's one of the entertainments- and I played baseball, I played soccer. That's entertainment that we did.

What were your main activities as a child?

The activity that we do is-in line of work-I guess, got trapping with my father when I was very young. So sometimes I have to miss school.

Did you have parties? School concerts? Dances?

Yes, we had parties and school concerts.

You walked to these events right?

Yes, that's right.

At first you didn't have electricity?

No---no electricity in those days. We used gas lamps or coal oil lamps.

Did you travel any longer distances?

Not really. Prince Rupert, and canneries where my father worked. We worked down there every springtime; fall time we walked back.

How did you get there?

We get there mostly by train.

Did the War affect you very much?

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Yes, I guess you could say that. I was in the infantry when I was about 18- I join up. I didn't go overseas just stayed around Victoria and Vancouver and Prince Rupert.

Where did you work after you finished school?

I worked in a lot of places, but I picked for a while, for the packers and then I worked in the cannery. For the longest time I posted on the wall there

How many years you worked in it?

I was there for 25 years. That takes of a B.C. packer.

How many children do you have?

We have tow girls and three boys
Where are they?

They all live close by here. Walt lives in the next street here; and Terry lives here; and Molly lives down in Kitsego Kela; and Debbie lives in the next street here,

Do you have grad children?

Yes, we have eleven.

What were the Hazeltons like in your earlier years?

Well, you know, just about everybody in Hazelton before. There's a little increase in population. Hazelton don't change that much, but its a larger population now.

Where you that involved in tribal activities?

Yes. We travelled quite a lot; we belonged to the K'san Performers—that's the K'san Dancers. So the tribe saw the place—across Canada and some parts of the States. And we mix our skits, ourselves—like last time—that's when we went to Hawaii. We travelled quite a lot.

Is there anything else that you'd like to mention about tribal activities?

I'm a councilor, not at the present time. You understand what a councilor is, eh? The ones involved in all community things. We have a chief councilor and a council/and I thing I missed about one term/and I started when I was around about 28 or 29. I'm councilor for about the longest time than anybody else in the

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Gitamaax Reserve.

Is there anything else that you'd like to talk about?

Yes, in line of sports I was the coach for the soccer team—that's the Hazelton United. There still pretty good today. I was the couch for about 10 years, and I was the one that named the team; United! I don't know what it was called before but, I was the one that called it

'the united! And also, another girls softball team after that, its the Gitksan Mates, and I coached them for about 10 years. And we've been to a lot of places like the furthest we go is Kamloops in the provincial playoff, and we come in third in the whole B.C. So

I figure it was pretty good for a small town—like when some teams from Vancouver come and play, they beat some of those teams.

Jillane Spence