Imbert: What time of day did these things start?

Mrs. Joyce: Well, in the first part of it we had a fun part, as they call it. Everybody comes there, they make out they're going to have a big potlatch, and they really have fun. It's just what they call the fun part of it, one day, whole day of it. I don't know how it lasted years ago, but everybody had a funny name. I had a funny name, mother had a funny name and then they'd have jokes on each one, it was really fun. And that was during the day. A lot of it was done in the daytime, but mostly at night. And then the only lights we had was the big fire in the middle of the house, that's all the lights. But later years they started to use gas lights. (laughs) But
then they still had the fire in the middle of the house, which I think set off the thing.

Imbert: It must have been very dramatic.

Mrs. Joyce: Oh yes, yes. Well, it's not very many years ago. I know every time I went home, like when my dad and my uncle were living, they'd always have to give potlatches because I went home visiting -- that was at Gilford. But I never went to Kingcome, I'd like to go back to Kingcome. Anyway, it always seemed... I think they were just so happy to see us come home that they'd have to have a potlatch, just because they were glad to see us. We'd have to dance Indian, our own dances, you know. They weren't, I didn't say, like I didn't go out. You do see imitation dances among the religious here and now on the coast. But every dance has every movement that you make with your hand has a meaning if you know the dances. Sure, I can go there and walk up or dance around and swing my arms around like this -- that's nothing. It's, unless you know the meaning you have to dance toward the words to your song. You have to follow the words with your hands, something like any other white dance, like the, what do you call it?

Unknown: Hawaiian dances, I would say.

Mrs. Joyce: Yes.

Imbert: There are a lot of Eastern dances that are like that. (Inaudible) and so on. Each thing has a meaning to it.

Mrs. Joyce: Well, that's what the younger generation don't know now today. They don't, they can go up there and swing their hands around and the white people say, "Oh, that's an Indian dance." But they don't understand. That's for commercial purposes I guess, you know.

Imbert: Could you describe one or two of these dances? First of all the costumes that would be worn and the masks and so on. And just describe the dance as you can remember it, either somebody else's dance or your dance.

Mrs. Joyce: Well, I'll describe my cousin's dances. She was -- I forget her Indian name -- anyway, she's passed on now. She danced a fish dance they called it. Instead of swinging her arms around sideways like you do see now, it had its ways. She swung her arms up and down -- each hand -- one hand would go up and one would go down. I don't know how they fixed it but they had little fishes in the middle of the floor and she was dancing around these little fishes. I don't know what they would call it, I suppose a fish dance. But she got them as she was out in the wilds and they were her treasures and she was showing it to her people. So that was the fish dance.

Imbert: Some of the dancers had masks, did they?

Mrs. Joyce: Oh yes, well even the wild man has a mask. I guess
you've... Have you seen them?

Imbert: I think probably I have.

Mrs. Joyce: Yes. Oh yes, they have a mask after their... Say I come out and dance and then later on my mask will come out and I won't be in it. Somebody else might come and dance with my mask just to show it off. But I guess years ago I would have to take it out myself. But they get boys to do that, because they don't know that that's a boy, but they do know it's yours, you see.

Imbert: I didn't quite gather that. You have a mask and then how would the, what would the boys do with it? I'm not quite sure.

Mrs. Joyce: They come out with the mask on and then they dance my dance. That's my mask, you see.

Imbert: They're allowed to dance your dance?

Mrs. Joyce: But they don't know, he's only, what would you call that, proxy for me? That's all.

Imbert: You would, and you would have a mask.

Mrs. Joyce: Some dancers do, but not all.

Imbert: But if you were dancing your dance would you have a mask too?

Mrs. Joyce: No. Not mine. I've got, I think I have one sister that has a mask.

Imbert: But if somebody is dancing you could either dance the dance yourself with your mask, or somebody else could put the mask on and dance for you?

Mrs. Joyce: Yes, yes. But it isn't, they don't say, "Well, this is so and so dancing." But they just say, "This is her mask." You see, they don't say, "This is so and so dancing in it." You know.

Imbert: And the costume goes with the mask?

Mrs. Joyce: Oh yes, yes. Sometimes they have different things altogether. Say like imitation cedar blankets, like they used to use years and years ago. They make that and then he puts it on. He doesn't wear the Indian blanket. Or sometimes he will.

Imbert: Would any of them dance a story dance?

Mrs. Joyce: Well, that's all what the dances are mostly, stories. Every dance that there is I think it's mostly stories.

Imbert: I see what you mean. And would there be sometimes
several dancers acting out a story, or just one dancer at a time?

Mrs. Joyce: Oh, depending if they want to rush it through, yes, there would be several of them maybe. Like, yes, I could dance with my sister, or four sisters. We could all dance together, yes.

Imbert: And tell a story?

Mrs. Joyce: Yes.

Imbert: And they wore these blankets. What did they wear on their feet?

Mrs. Joyce: Nothing, just a cedar band dyed red and natural cedar on your feet. Something like the Hawaiians do, very much similar. I think a lot of them came here. (laughs)

Imbert: Were some of the dances quite wild?

Mrs. Joyce: Oh yes. Yes, some of them were very wild. That's what I was saying. Some of them -- as children we were quite afraid of them. Yet after we grew up to understand it it wasn't nothing to be afraid of. (laughs)

Imbert: Well, what about the singing or drumming that accompanied these dances, how were they done?

Mrs. Joyce: They'd sing for me. They know they're going to sing for me. Is that what you're referring to? They know they're going to sing for me because they announce me, I'm going to dance. And then they sing my song. I have not only one, I have several different songs myself. They know you're going to dance that dance. Maybe your father, my father will say, "My daughter is going to dance that so and so dance." And then they know exactly the tune and the words. Of course, I know it too so I go out and do what I'm supposed to do, the movements and everything, because I've danced it several times and I understand it.

Imbert: What kind of a drum would it be?

Mrs. Joyce: Oh, they have this... Of course, I don't know what they had years ago but I do know later years they had the drums what they do use for dances now. They just bought it and took all the other things off and used that. But they did have drums. I've seen pictures of... Like, something like the Mexicans. I've seen them on T.V. So they were that long, barrel shape like, you know. I did see a few of them, but later on I didn't see anymore, I think they must have either spoiled them or sold them. Because a lot of that was sold, an awful lot of it was sold. I know I was adopted by a very old man. His mother thought the world of me; I can just barely remember her. And they had, he, she, oh, he was the only child. He was quite old, quite a bit older than my uncle. So
when, before she died she told him, "That's going to be your mother when I'm gone. You give my name, give her everything what I've got." So that's what happened. I took her name, took her standing. So I've got too many different standings at home. (laughs)

Imbert: Tell me about practising for these things and composing these dances in the first place and so on. How did that come about?

Mrs. Joyce: Well, it is a dance that they danced for years. Maybe your mother danced it, maybe your aunt danced it and they just teach you. That came from your aunt so your aunt has to teach you because she only danced it from my father so it's got to go to his children now. That's the way we were taught, or else our mother taught us, or maybe the old uncle taught us.

Imbert: Did any people make up their own dances?

Mrs. Joyce: Not at home that I know of. It was from way, way back, I guess, that they got it from. It's, I don't... If there was any such thing it would only be laughed at. They didn't... The made up things weren't... You had to have it from way back. It wasn't... Nothing was supposed to be made up. Yet they could make up a song, a new tune. But it was only for you, yourself. And you'd have to pay for it too.

Imbert: Who would you pay for it?

Mrs. Joyce: That man that invented the tune and the song.

Imbert: Were there some people that were noted for making up songs?

Mrs. Joyce: Yes, yes. There was old Mungo Martin did a lot of it. Knowing your family history, he would have to know it anyway, so therefore he put the words into it and...

Imbert: And then he sold it to you?

Mrs. Joyce: Yes. Because he was asked to.

Imbert: Were there any people that were especially noted as dancers?

Mrs. Joyce: In my time, yes. But then, as I say, we were taught those dances. Of course I could be very sickly and couldn't dance very well, or it was just according to your health, I always think.

Imbert: I just wondered if some of the people were sort of specialists in dancing, that did a lot of training and this sort of thing.

Mrs. Joyce: No, no. It was just, say, as I said, maybe my mother taught me because she danced it, and it was just passed
on.

Imbert: Same with the boys and the men?

Mrs. Joyce: The very same.

Imbert: There weren't any special dancers who were trained to...?

Mrs. Joyce: Oh no, no, no. It, they took it anyway. It was theirs and they'd seen it when it was done so it didn't take much for them to learn it, because they've seen it from the time that they were children on up till they were able to do it themselves.

(END OF INTERVIEW)

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