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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Account of the preparation and tanning of hides.
Evelyn: The following is an interview with Margaret Eagle of
Cape Croker. The interview is being conducted in 14 Spadina
Road on July 27, 1983, by Evelyn Sit.

Evelyn: When and where were you born?

Margaret: Cape Croker Reserve, Indian Reserve. I was born
November 19, 1915.

Evelyn: Do you have an Indian name?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: So what does Margaret Eagle stand for?

Margaret: That's -- Eagle is my married name. I got married in
Shawanaga Reserve, up above Parry Sound.

Evelyn: How big was your family?

Margaret: How many children I had?

Evelyn: Or how many brothers and sisters did you have?

Margaret: Oh, I have no brothers left, but I only had two brothers so far as I know, remember. I got about six, five sisters left now, all younger than me. I'm the oldest now.

Evelyn: But did you have this many brothers and sisters when you were young?

Margaret: I had more than that.

Evelyn: Yeah, when you were a child.

Margaret: Yeah. My brother was the oldest one and I was the next one. So I'm the oldest now, because my brother passed away when he was forty-two.

Evelyn: So what were your brother and sisters' name, the one that, when you were a child?

Margaret: Peter. Peter, and Clara, and Loretta and that's all I can remember. Oh yeah, I have a sister, she's a twin, but the boy died when he was a baby -- his name was Lawrence, but she's still living.

Evelyn: So you had a total of five sisters?

Margaret: Yeah, living. I have five sisters living now.

Evelyn: Yeah, but when you were a child?

Margaret: Oh, I had more than that but I don't remember.

Evelyn: What was your home like?

Margaret: My home, it was a log house and we had to burn wood. And we had no hydro, you had to burn a coal oil lamp. But we had cows, chickens, pigs, horses -- I was brought up on a farm. I used to help my dad work out on the farm -- cut hay. And I had one horse, I used to hitch him up on the stoneboat and go along the bluff and pick up dry wood, dry sticks, fill up the stoneboat and bring it home. And I used to cut it up with a bucksaw, because it doesn't throw too much heat, the dry wood,

in the summertime, when we make fire in the stove to cook. My mother used plant a lot of corn, and beans, and my dad a lot of potatoes. He had the thing like a plow; he used to go along and we used to drop potatoes along, and then the same way with the corn. He used to go along with the cultivator and cultivate the corn, and the same way with the potatoes when they come up. We used to have a lot of potatoes, and turnips as well, but they fed the turnips to the cows in the wintertime. And chickens, oh, we had a lot of chickens. It seems to me we had a chicken almost every day -- chicken and

dumplings -- it was good. And my mother used to make Indian corn soup, a big pot full, a cast iron pot she used to have. I used to see her sifting the ashes from the stove. And you have to burn hard wood to get the ashes, and then she'll cook up a whole batch of those corn and put them in a basket and take them down to the well and wash them real good. And then she'll put some away for the next meal, like. We didn't have no fridge or nothing, but everything kept all right in the cold weather. And we had a lot of salt pork and she used to put that in a pot, make a pot full of Indian corn soup. Makes scone, bannock; that's all I ever remember is eating is salt pork, potatoes, turnips, beans, lots of beans, and once in a while she'll give us a treat, she'll make a whole pan full of rice and raisins -- pudding, or bread pudding. She used to buy rolled oats by the bag, and brown sugar by the bag, because we had lots of milk because we had cows.

I used to get up at 5:30 in the morning and milk cows, and clean out the stable, and feed the chickens, and feed the pigs. And I used to help my dad cutting wood, splitting wood. I used to have to bring it in the house. In the summertime I used to drive a team of horses to cut hay, rake it up, and then we used to pile it up in little coils like, then I'd load it on up on the wagon and then we'd take it to the barn and put it in the barn. I worked like a man. I didn't know how to do housework

because we didn't have no fancy furniture. I didn't know how to do housework, but I knew how to scrub wooden floors. And until I got out on my own, then I learned how to do housework, like polish the furniture, and the floors, hardwood floors. But where I was brought up we burned wood so that's... And during the night if the stove goes out I had to heat the milk on the coal oil lamp for my brothers or sisters, and feed them during the night for my mother. She used to get me up to get up to do that and change diaper for the baby. I didn't have much rest because I had to get up early morning to milk cows and then go to school. But I managed to pass grade eight, but I couldn't go on going to school because we had no money to pay for my room and board in town.

Evelyn: How were you treated as a child?

Margaret: I was treated nice, and my parents were good to me. But Christmas time they had a hard time to try and get something for, you know... We used to hang up our stockings. We didn't know who Santa Claus was in those days. We were lucky to get candy at that time and some little toy. We didn't get much, but what we got we were glad to get it. Grandma used to send over some nice apples that she used to get them off her orchard in the summer and put them away for winter. Send some little things, like, she used to send over with my uncle. My parents were good to us, all of us, although there was a lot of us in the family, but we were all treated equal. We ate good and we didn't starve. The only thing, we had to do our share, we had to work. My brother was too young to do anything when I was at home. But I left home when I was old enough to go out

and work and earn my own clothing, because my dad didn't have no money to buy clothing for me. And I used to work for \$10. a month in those days, \$10. is nothing now. In those days you

were able to buy a good pair of shoes, and a new dress, something to wear, out of \$10. I didn't spend that much time at home. When I was old enough, I got out. I was too independent.

Evelyn: Did you ever make any trips outside of the home?

Margaret: When I was young? No.

Evelyn: So you never went to another reserve to visit?

Margaret: Well, where... In Shawanaga, I went to visit some people I knew and I stayed there. So that's where I got married. Just across the bay from where I was born.

Evelyn: So where did you go to school?

Margaret: Cape Croker, where I was born.

Evelyn: What were the teachers like?

Margaret: They were good. They were good teachers. That's why I got along good in school. But I didn't start until I was eight years old. We had to plow through the snow to go school; nowadays, the kids are lucky -- their roads are snowplowed; all they got to do is run to the road and get on a bus. But me, I walked long ways to go to school, through the deep snow.

Evelyn: How were you treated?

Margaret: In school? Nice. The teacher used to make -- well it was the Indian Affairs used to supply the stuff, like peas and some other stuff -- she used to make a big pot of soup for the children to eat their lunch at noon hour, besides their

lunch what we'd take. So we were treated good. When Christmas comes we had a great big Christmas tree, and nice gifts from the teacher -- well, not from the teacher, I guess, from the, you know, Indian Affairs. We used to have a concert. The teacher used to teach us how to do recitation and dialogue, and the schools used to be crowded. People come to watch us put up a concert, some kind of concert. But the teacher used to teach us what to do, you know. You had to get up there and say your recitation, whatever she gives you to say. So I liked it in school.

Evelyn: What were the kind of things that you were taught?

Margaret: How to knit the scarf, and how to make a dress, sew it by hand -- that's all that I can remember that they... Yeah, knit a lot of things, different little things. Depends on the teacher, you get one teacher we got, she didn't hardly teach us anything, but one teacher we got from North Bay, she

was very good, she taught us a lot of nice things to make. And we used to make a garden. So when the fall fair comes, we used to take those to the fall fair -- that's when they used to have fall fairs on our reserve. They don't do that any more now. We had our own gardens, so we used to have to look after our gardens during the summer holidays. So we used to get a prize for that.

Evelyn: What were the other students like?

Margaret: They were all good. They were all from the reserve, like, you know, they were all good. They played well together.

Evelyn: So what kind of games did you play?

Margaret: Baseball. (laughs) That's all we knew, and tag. (laughs) We didn't know what skipping rope was, we'd never seen it. Yeah, tag, and baseball, that's all.

Evelyn: Did you ever play any Indian games?

Margaret: No, because we don't know what Indian games are. (laughs)

Evelyn: Do you remember your ancestral history?

Margaret: No. I used to hear a lot of things, but I don't remember them. I've forgotten all those Indian... old stories I used to hear when I was a little girl. I don't know if they were real or just make-up old Indian stories. There's a lot of old Indian stories I used to hear, but I don't remember how they used to tell them, I forget.

Evelyn: So you don't remember any of them?

Margaret: No. No. I don't remember any of the old Indian stories. I used to hear them but I don't remember how they used to tell them, old Indian stories.

Evelyn: Concerning your ancestral history, what did your great-grandparents do, and your great-great-grandparents do before?

Margaret: Oh, I don't remember my great-grandparents. I only had one grandmother that I... My mother's mother died when she was a little girl, and her father. She was raised by some old lady. But my father's mother -- but I didn't see my grandfather. But I used to see her making flour out of corn. It was a big log that was dug out in the middle and a stick, and she'd be pounding away at that corn to make flour, and she used to make corn bread -- it was good.

Evelyn: So you don't remember your parents ever saying anything about your great-grandparents or what they used to do?

Margaret: No, no, my mother didn't remember any of them, and I

never heard my other grandmother saying what they used to do years ago. But my dad used to tell me years ago they used to wear moccasins, Indian moccasins, all the time, rain or shine and their feet used to get wet. And then they'd have, oh, more than one pair, and they'd hang them up to dry when they make a fire. They didn't have no tents but they'd build a place of some kind of shrubs like cedar balls, something like that, make a shelter and have a fire. And tipi, make a tipi out of deer hides. Deer hides, bear hides, anything. And that's how they used to make their clothing, and they'd tan them. And they used to make a needle out of some kind of animal bone and thread them with -- I don't know how they used to cut them -- with some stones, and they had flints to light the fire with; they never saw a match. That's what my dad used to tell me. He used to rub the stone flints together to light a fire so they can cook, cook outside, their potatoes. See, they had potatoes in those days. And they cooked their corn, they had corn in those days. You know, you see those colored corn, different colored corn, well that's real Indian corn. And then they made flour out of that corn to make their bannock, they'd cook it on... bury it in the ashes and cook it like that. They say it's good -- I've never tasted it. That's what my dad used to tell me and what they used to do years ago; that's what his mother used to tell him I guess. I guess they did because there was nothing here before anybody else came.

And the beads, they found those beads amongst the rocks -- all different colors. I don't know where they came from, they must have formed somehow. And you often see the Indian costumes with beads -- that's how they made them. And I don't know what

they used to, what they used for thread but they did have something to use, some kind of tree that you can, you know, take apart and sew them on the deer hide. They lived on fish, and wild meat, certain kind of wild animal, not every animal -- partridge, porcupine, beaver, and muskrat, and moose, and fish, different kinds of fish, that's what they lived on.

Evelyn: Did your dad tell you any more experiences?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: That his father went through, or his great-grandfather went through?

Margaret: I don't know whether he remembers or not, but he didn't say anything to, you know, anything, anymore, because that's all we ever used to hear him talk about. I guess he knew more but he didn't tell us much about the background, what his father used to tell him, and his grandfather. The years ago there, the Ojibways and the Hurons used to fight each other. And they kept, they were forever running from one place to another, and that's how they used to make a tipi, and then stay there. And I don't know when they quit fighting, but they did, they finally did, I guess, and settled down, all along Lake Ontario, all along Georgian Bay, all along those places.

I know my dad was cutting wood one time -- he had to cut wood for a living, and he had found a great big cast iron pot. I don't know where the old ancestors used to get that cast iron pot. I guess they must have been there. He was going to make a fire and he kind of dug up the ground a little bit to make a fire in the wintertime and then he kind of hit something, and here it was, that great big pot. And he brought it home on a

sleigh and they used that to make syrup. They used to tap the maple trees in the spring and have sap and then boil the sap water and make syrup out of it, maple syrup. Lots of Indians used to have those big pots. Well, I guess the old ancestors used to have those, I don't know where they got them, or how they got them, but they must have had them for so long. I guess they must have formed somehow. He even found a peace pipe one time. Yeah, he had it for a long time, but some American that he used to guide -- he was after that and so finally he sold it to him. He must have sold it to the museum in the States, I guess, maybe that's what he did. But I don't know what they used for forks -- wooden ones, carved them out I guess, spoons to eat corn soup. I don't know what they used for a knife -- stones, you know, to skin their hide. Yeah, they must have used some kind of sharp stone to skin their hide because they never had a knife.

Evelyn: Where did your dad find the peace pipe?

Margaret: Under the ground. Sometimes when they used to work on the road, you know, they have a sandpit they called it, a pit where they used to get all the gravel, a gravel pit, gravel to put on the road. And that's where he found it, under the ground. I guess the old ancestors used to bury that stuff, you know, when they know they were getting old, too old to do anything. I guess they used to bury the stuff. And then they find, that's how they used to find those things, I guess, you know, when they made the road after. And before that they have nothing but trail and then when the other people came over, well, when they made the roads and they had a place where they used to get the sand and that's how come they used to find that stuff. Even when they were building houses along -- the people didn't know what those stones were, arrowheads, they didn't know what those were. But we did, the Indians know what those

were. Those are flints that they used to use to light the fire with. They used to find all kinds of those, construction people. Especially the Indians, when they were with construction, when they saw them, well, they bring them home because they know what they're for, for a souvenir. I used to have some but I don't know what happened to them.

Evelyn: What is the name of your tribe?

Margaret: Ojibway.

Evelyn: And do you know what it means?

Margaret: I don't. There's all kinds of different tribes amongst the Indians. It's the same as Germans and Russians, just like that. Each tribe has its own language.

Evelyn: The name of your reserve is Rama Reserve?

Margaret: No, Cape Croker.

Evelyn: Oh, Cape Croker.

Margaret: Yeah.

Evelyn: How did the reserve get it's name?

Margaret: I guess when other people came, when they made out the map, I guess that's what they named it. It must mean something in Indian, same as Toronto, that's an Indian name, it means something.

Evelyn: Toronto means "meeting place".

Margaret: Yeah, I guess it is. I don't know whether it's Ojibway language or... it must be Ojibway language.

Evelyn: Do you know where your people came from?

Margaret: Pardon?

Evelyn: Do you know where your people came from?

Margaret: No, I don't.

Evelyn: How big was the community, as a way of number of people?

Margaret: On my reserve where I was born? Oh, there must have been over six hundred Indians on that reserve.

Evelyn: Can you describe the reservation?

Margaret: It's on Bruce Peninsula, on Georgian Bay side past Owen Sound, about twenty miles past Wiarton.

Evelyn: What was on the reservation at the time, when you were a child?

Margaret: Nothing that I know of. Just land and farms, and gardens. They used to plant wheat and they used to take that wheat to Wiarton Flour Mill and get a flour made out of it. And they used to take... I never knew anybody planting barley, just wheat, you know, to make flour. They had to take it to the mill in Wiarton.

Evelyn: Anything else on the reserve beside farms?

Margaret: Nothing, nothing much. Because where I was born there's bluffs, two bluffs. So you couldn't plant nothing on the bluffs. There was nothing, it's near the water, by that Georgian Bay, which... It was nice.

Evelyn: Was there a chief on your reserve?

Margaret: Yeah, oh yeah.

Evelyn: What was his name?

Margaret: The one I know when I was a child, his name was old Charlie Jones.

Evelyn: How was he elected?

Margaret: They had a council meeting, they have councillors, and they had a meeting every month. And then once in a while they used to change, different chief takes over, different person takes over as chief. Even councillors, if they resign, well, they have to choose another councillor. And there was a band. My dad was the, on one part of the reserve, my dad was one of, the head band master. And the other part of the reserve there was somebody else, he was a band master. There was two groups of band because there were a lot of people on the reserve. They even taught the little boys when they were old enough to... Even, they tried to teach the girls, too. My sister was one of them, two of my sisters, two of them played clarinet. But after a while everything seemed to die down; they didn't go on with it. Since my dad died, well, I guess everybody went, you know, didn't... There was nobody to teach them to play music. My uncle was one of them too, but when

they all died, my uncles -- they were all music teachers, because they went through music, they had their certificates. But when they all went there was nobody else.

Evelyn: So the chief was elected and it wasn't hereditary?

Margaret: Yeah, he was elected.

Evelyn: What were his duties?

Margaret: To see if everything was all right. Just the same as, like, you know... He was the head of the reserve, to make sure everything goes -- if there's any trouble, well, he had to see, straighten things out, see that everything runs smooth. And they had a policeman too, my uncle was a policeman for a long time. They never had any trouble as far as I can remember, not like they have now. Things have changed quite a bit since, as far as I can remember.

Evelyn: What were some of the ways they've changed?

Margaret: Well, the kids, they used to go to Sunday school, and they were well behaved, and they used to work around and make gardens -- and now nobody makes garden. And the children

nowadays -- you ask them to do anything, you think you're asking them to do hard work. They think it's hard if you ask the girls to do dishes -- they think it's going to kill them to do dishes. But when I went to school there was a pile of dishes for me to do and I had to do them, because if I don't I'd get a strapping. So I had to obey my mother, I had to do what she asked me to do. And I could never answer my mother back -- not the way the kids are, you often hear the children telling their mothers, "No, I don't want to do it, I don't have

to." We couldn't say that to our mother. We had to do what we were told to do. That's what I mean, things has changed, because the kids nowadays tell their mother what to do, instead of the mother telling them what to do. That's what I mean, things has changed quite a bit, the kids are different now. But I don't know what it's like on the reserve, because I've been off the reserve for quite a long time. But I didn't lose my language, I still speak my language. There is quite a change, you'll notice when you get up to my age, you'll notice things will change. Things won't be the same like today if you happen to get up to my age. (laughs)

Evelyn: Is that the only sort of change that you can see?

Margaret: Well, there's lots of other things. As far as what I see of people, I think they're too busy drinking now than what they used to in my days. I never seen any young people drinking, they were busy going to Sunday school and doing work in the garden; and now you don't see that because they're busy drinking. That's not good. It's just the same as here in Toronto, what people are doing. If that thing hadn't been brought across before in the first place they would never have known that. That's how they got this country, because they got the Indians drunk and stole this country, that's how they got it. Because the Indian never saw English-speaking people before, until they discovered this continent. They got the Indians drunk and then they practically stole this country. That's what I used to hear my father saying.

Evelyn: So your father said the same thing?

Margaret: Yeah. Oh yeah, he used to tell us that.

(END OF SIDE A)

Evelyn: Were there any other important individuals on the reserve besides the chief and the councillors?

Margaret: No, not that I know of.

Evelyn: Did you have any pipe carriers?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: Did you have any Medicine Men on your reserve?

Margaret: Not that I know of, no.

Evelyn: So you never had any sort of Medicine Men?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: What were some of the ways one could make a living on the reserve?

Margaret: Just cut wood, pulp wood, that's all the men had to do to make a living. Fish. There used to be, trout used to be plentiful years back, but everybody was out there trolling for trout and they used to sell it to make a, you know, to buy something. But now there's, they say trout is scarce now there. I guess they get some now and then.

Evelyn: Was it always this way?

Margaret: Yeah.

Evelyn: Did you have any sort of modern conveniences on the reserve?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: None whatsoever?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: So no one had a Model T Ford car?

Margaret: Oh, my dad had a Model T. He taught me how to drive it. But I never got licensed to drive it, but I used to drive around the reserve, and he'd teach me how to drive it. But later on he bought a later model, not a Model T, and then when I got married we had a Model A, and then that's where I got my license to drive then. And then I haven't drove since 1960, I didn't renew my license then, so I figure I wouldn't have no money to buy a car, so I didn't bother.

Evelyn: So wasn't that considered a certain luxury to have a car on the reserve?

Margaret: Oh yeah. Yeah, but now, I forget what year it was when they started building new houses. And they put hydro in it, and running water, inside toilet and bathtubs -- it's all modern now. But they have to pay for their hydro, and the telephone -- they have phones down there now, which they didn't have before. So people are pretty well civilized now and modern. But I don't think I'd want to go back and live on the reserve. You see, I'd have to go back to the reserve where I got married, that's where I belong. I still got my rights, I can go back any time, but I don't think I'd like it because I'm too, so used to living in a city -- everything is handy. Out

there it's too hard. It's all right if you had a car to get to town to do your shopping, otherwise you'd have to hire

somebody, and then you got to pay enough -- they charge quite a bit to take you to town. And then by that time you hardly have enough, you know, much money left from your pension. And it's better here, you just pay your rent and then just take it easy, go shopping -- that's why I go to the clubs, something to do. I haven't done much yet. (laughs)

Evelyn: Was your family affected by the War?

Margaret: My dad was in the First World War and he came back. In the Second World War my brother went over and he came back, but he died, he's gone. He was fifty-five when he died; he died of cancer. So I have no brothers. Those are the only ones that went over.

Evelyn: Did they ever share any of their experiences with you?

Margaret: No.

Evelyn: Was there a lot of natives that went over to war?

Margaret: Oh yeah, there's a lot of them that went over and a lot of them didn't come back. They have a monument with all the names on it that didn't come back.

Evelyn: So you know about the trapping process?

Margaret: I never went out trapping. I don't think my dad went trapping at all. I know they have hunting grounds near (inaudible). They go and hunt deer there when the deer season

is on. But hunting and trapping up where I was born, there was none going on like that, but where I got married my husband used to hunt and trap beaver, and muskrats. I used to go and get partridge myself, just around the edge of the bushes.

Evelyn: So, can you tell me the process of preparing a hide?

Margaret: Oh, a lot of work to it, it's not easy. When you see the moccasins there you might think they are an awful price but it's a hard work to fix that hide. You got to soak it, and you got to scrape the hair off, and you got to stretch it -- it's pure white by the time you're finished with it -- and then you got to tan it with some kind of, you use some kind of, certain kinds of cinders. Make a fire in a pail and hang it over it, tan it, brown it -- that's why it smells so nice -- on the certain kind of cinders that they use. It's a hard work. That's why they charge quite a bit for the moccasins, and it's worth it too, for all the work you have to do. My mother-in-law taught me how to do that, how to tan a hide and... But since I came away from the reserve, well, I've got away from that. And I used to make boxes, and a few things out of birch bark, and porcupine quills, and sweetgrass. But since I came away from the reserve I don't bother with... You'd have to go up there and get that stuff yourself out of the bush, you know,

the birch bark; a certain time of the year it comes off easy. It's a hard work, it's not easy.

Evelyn: So is the same process of preparing a hide with all animals the same?

Margaret: Yeah. Like beaver, well, they just dry that and they sell it like that, but I don't know what they do, they tan them in the tanner(?) with the hide. But the deer skin and the moose skin and pig skin, well, they scrape the hair off, and

then they tan those. I never seen anybody tanning a pig hide but they do it here in the city.

Evelyn: Can you get a lot for something like a pig hide?

Margaret: I suppose.

Evelyn: When you were a child did you get a lot?

Margaret: They didn't, you know, when they used to kill a pig they used to cut it up and they used to use fish boxes, and they used to salt it down for the winter. But they used to -- when my mother used to cook the pork, she used to cut the hide and save it, and then what she used to do is put all the hides in the, the hide of the pork, in a pan and roast it in the oven. It comes out nice and crisp and you make a pot of soup out of it.

Evelyn: Did you have any sort of Indian festivals that you celebrated?

Margaret: Yeah, we used to have, like, Christmas dinners, and the 1st of November we used to have feasts, some time.

Evelyn: What was that feast?

Margaret: Then New Year's, they used to have that, but they don't do that anymore. And in the summertime they used to have a picnic for the whole reserve. They don't do that anymore now, it's all died down. Like I say, things has changed.

Evelyn: You mentioned a feast at the 1st of November. What is that celebrating?

Margaret: Halloween night. You eat with the witches. (laughs)

Evelyn: And you used to have big community events as picnics?

Margaret: Yeah.

Evelyn: What went on?

Margaret: It went on till as far as I can remember. Then when I left home, then after a while I noticed things weren't going on like that anymore. And then they used to have field days,

they used to have football games, and baseball games -- all kinds of games, racing, and all that; they don't have that anymore. They had a park where they used to have all that stuff going on; and they don't have a park, it's all built up with houses now.

Evelyn: So these were major community events?

Margaret: Yeah.

Evelyn: Can you describe what went on during the picnics?

Margaret: Like, they have races, and tug-of-war, and baseball, and football -- that's what they used to have. And they used to give out prizes.

Evelyn: Other than these community events, did you have anything else that involved the whole community?

Margaret: No, that's all I can... And then at Christmas time they call that, they used to have a public tree. You can buy a present for anybody and hang it up on the tree, and the tree looks so pretty. And they used to have a meal downstairs in

the hall for everybody, the whole community like. Everybody'd take something, I guess, to make a big feast. But they don't do that anymore -- that's all died down. And they used to have concerts, like, make up a concert. And they don't have that anymore. That's what I mean, things has changed -- they don't have things like they used to have years ago.

Evelyn: With that many... In your community there was something like six hundred people.

Margaret: Yeah.

Evelyn: Did you ever have community events such as meetings?

Margaret: Well, they used to have council meetings, as far as I know.

Evelyn: But nothing that involved the whole community?

Margaret: Well, it's supposed to, but just a few of them went to the meeting to see what's going... If anybody's got anything to say, well, they go, and they bring it up to the council meeting then.

Evelyn: So anyone was invited?

Margaret: Yeah, anyone was invited if they had something to say, to go.

Evelyn: What holidays were important to your family?

Margaret: Christmas and New Year's.

Evelyn: So what did you do on Christmas and New Year's?

Margaret: Well, mother used to cook fowl because we had geese, and we had a lot of chickens. So she used to cook geese and invite all her relatives and have a big feast. And New Year's too, the same thing. She used to do a lot of cooking and invite all the relatives and have a nice big feast together. They don't do that now.

Evelyn: What were some of the traditional practices during these holidays?

Margaret: Nothing that I know of.

Evelyn: Did you ever sing any Indian songs?

Margaret: No. (laughs)

Evelyn: So you never learned any at all?

Margaret: No, I never learned any Indian songs. We had an English-speaking teacher, we didn't have a Indian-speaking teacher. But nobody taught me how to sing Indian songs.

Evelyn: So none of your parents or anyone?

Margaret: No. The only thing they have is Indian Hymn Book -- I can't read Indian; but I speak it and understand it, but there's such long words I can't pronounce them, even if it's my own language. (laughs)

Evelyn: The Indian Hymn Book -- they never had any kind of Indian pop songs or anything like that?

Margaret: No, no, no, it's all hymns, it's all hymns.

Evelyn: How did you know if there was an upcoming event? If you knew someone was going to have a baby or a shower or something like that, how would...?

Margaret: I never heard of anybody having a shower in my days, no.

Evelyn: If there was a special event or something how would people know?

Margaret: Oh, they hear about it I guess. But anybody at all, if they want to give this girl or a person that's had a baby, well, they go there and go and give them something. If they think they can't afford anything, well, they go there and give them something that they think what they need. That's as far as I can remember what they used to do. Because I used to remember my mother making up baby blankets, home made blankets, and go and give them to this girl that she thinks that needs it. You know, some people they don't have anything, didn't

have anything, because there was no job there, no work. That's all I know.

Evelyn: Did people talk of heroes or people from other tribes?

Margaret: No, I never heard anybody talk about... I used to just hear them talking about what used to happen years ago when the Hurons and Iroquois, whatever you call them, fight against the Ojibways -- they were always fighting. But they, I don't know when they finished fighting.

Evelyn: Was your family affected by the Depression?

Margaret: 1930, after the War?

Evelyn: Yeah.

Margaret: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I was, after the World War... Well after the Second World War I know they used to give us stamps. You were only allowed so much sugar, butter, tea, and gas, and tires. But my husband worked at the war plant so he was allowed, he got coupons to buy gas. So when he needed a tire, well, he had to have passengers, enough passengers in order to get a tire. But he used to have passengers -- it was twelve miles from where we were where the plant was. I worked there too. But we managed, the coupons what they gave us, they used to give us coupons every month I think. But my sister-in-law she had, her children were bigger than mine and I used to run out of tea. Just my husband and I, we used to run out of tea. But I had lots of sugar, and I had a lot of butter coupons; but my sister-in-law, she was running out of butter coupons and sugar coupons. So we dealt at the same store all the time, so we used to go to the store and we used to tell the store keeper, "I'm going to let her have some of my coupons so she can buy what, butter and sugar. She's going to let me have some coupons to buy tea because I run short of tea coupons." So that's the way we used to do it. We had to get along some way or somehow. (laughs) Share.

Evelyn: But you had a farm with cows and...

Margaret: No, no, that's after I got married, that's the Second World War. But in the First World War I don't remember what happened, because I was only about four years old. See, I was born in 1915, see. I don't know, mother said it was a

depression, too, in those days. But having a farm when my dad came back, well, we got along good on that -- we didn't, you know, we made out all right. But when, after I got married, my husband didn't farm. But I used to have a garden.

Evelyn: You married a native individual?

Margaret: Yeah.

Evelyn: Would your parents have opposed if you had married

non-native, someone non-native?

Margaret: No, I don't think so. It was, you know, it was my choice, because I was old enough to be out on my own. I went out on my own when I was seventeen and worked. I didn't go outside the reserve, I just worked on the reserve for some people that had a store, and milked cows, they had cows. And then after that I went to visit up north -- these people wanted me to go up so I went up, and that's where I got married.

Evelyn: So no parents arranged anyone's marriage?

Margaret: No, no.

Evelyn: You made the choice of your own?

Margaret: No, not like years ago. Years ago the old people, if they liked this girl, if they had a son and if they liked so and so's daughter, they would go and ask the old people if their son could marry their daughter. If they say, "No," I guess that's it. And if they say, "Yeah," well, they get married then. But in my days well it wasn't like that, it was different then. You could marry who you want to marry. But I didn't want to marry anybody else except my own kind of people.

Evelyn: Was there much opportunity to meet someone on the reserve?

Margaret: Well, for myself, practically all the kids there I knew, and most of them I went to school with. So, you know, they're more or less... You got used to them and you didn't want to have anything to do with them, like to marry them or anything -- I don't know why.

Evelyn: When was your first encounter of non-natives?

Margaret: What do you mean?

Evelyn: When did you first meet a white man?

Margaret: Oh, when I was young. Because we used to have to go outside the reserve sometimes, you know, to bigger store to buy things like clothing. That's when I first seen the white people. But they used to come to the reserve when anything goes on. They were interested in coming to the reserve when we have a feast. What they used to come for, they used to like Indian meal, like, such as fried fish. (telephone rings)

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