Jim Panamick attended day school until he was 14 years old, then left to help his father, working in the bush. Has worked as wood cutter for most of his life. Well-known locally in his younger days as a baseball player.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Memorable baseball and hockey games and some of the Manitoulin people involved.
  Jim: (Ojibway)

  Ernest: (Ojibway)

  Jim: (Ojibway)

Tony: You worked out right along the north shore as well before?

Jim: Well, some. I went back to this big company here, Espanola. I went up there twice. Three times, I went up
there. I worked all winter on the sleigh haul once. Once I knew how dangerous it was, I never went back to it again.

Tony: Doing what?

Jim: On the sleigh haul, like hauling pulp wood. The wood that was cut during the summertime, they hauled it out on the sleighs in the wintertime. Like out to the river. So they could drive it down on the river in the spring, when the spring break up comes. I never liked that job.

Tony: You say you did it until you found out how dangerous it was. Why was it dangerous?

Jim: Well, there was quite a few men died in the river drive.

Ernest: Drowned.

Jim: Drowned or... and I heard one old guy said, well he tried it one time and he never liked it. It was just as I said now.

Ernest: Another thing, too, you'd be in the water. You'd be in the water right up to here.

Jim: Yeah, right up to your waist.

Ernest: And then you go to sleep in those tents like that. You know, I think a lot of people got a lot of ills maybe later on, I think.

Jim: Sometimes you'd fall in the creek. And then those logs will push you down the river. And sometimes you'd drown right there. Some guys just stand on the shoulder; there is nothing they can do. They just watch you die over there. There was nothing they could do.

Ernest: Been quite a few out at Wikwemikong. A lot of Wikki guys drowned there.

Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest: Even lately.

Jim: Especially those logs, log drives.

Ernest: Log drives.

Jim: Yeah. It was very dangerous.

Tony: Well, did they have white people working with the Indians, too?

Jim: Oh yes, yeah. French, just about every...

Ernest: Every nationality but the majority are French-Canadians and Indians.
Tony: Did they work in the river, too?

Ernest: Yeah.

Jim: Oh, yeah.

Ernest: Those French-Canadians are famous for riding the logs. They jump in with the logs. And a lot of Indians, too. Now, of course, they talk about a lot. You'll find that on the north shore, if you go over there, in Cutler. They did a lot of that.

Jim: He says there's another good place to find these things out. I was there just last summer. Blind River, that museum.

Ernest: Oh, yeah.

Jim: They have all kinds of tools that were used then. They're not in use anymore today. But you'll see a lot of how they worked in the bush, how they drove them logs out, like on the river. You see sawmill pictures and the old tools, logging chains, cant hooks, decking lines, I don't know what you call them. The jammer they used to load the logs with on the sleighs. And the boats they used to have on the river drive. That's a good place to find out lots of things like them logging days. Well, we haven't got them anymore.

Ernest: You know, there was a Steven Buzwah. Did you know Steven Buzwah?

Jim: Yes, I knew him.

Ernest: He was like Joe B. Debassigae. He looked like him. He said something that was carried on, picked up by the papers and finally by the Canadian Press, Associated Press, and I even saw it in Reader's Digest. He come to sell blueberries in Gore Bay when the uranium mines were starting. So they wondered what he thought of the whole thing because he'd seen the days from the heavy lumbering days. And he said, "It's a funny thing about the white man," he said. "First he came for the animals, heavy trapping. Pretty near cleaned out the animals. And then he started cutting the bush, logging. And finally he took pretty near all the logs out. What wasn't burned, he cut out. He left nothing but the rock. Now he come back for the rock." (chuckles)

Jim: That was when....

Tony: Pretty accurate.

Ernest: Yeah, that hit Reader's Digest, that was old Steven Buzwah. His name wasn't mentioned but he was the one that said it. That was Ernestine's father-in-law.

Tony: Did you have a big family yourself, Jim? When did you get married?
Jim: Oh, I was 26 years old when I got married. And we had ten kids, seven boys, three girls. One of them was here just a while ago. She's the oldest one. Got one in Sudbury. And the youngest one's out in the country there.

Ernest: Danny's wife.

Tony: Yeah.

Jim: And oh, I'm not sure. I think I must have about twelve grandchildren.

Ernest: Most of his, a third of our hockey team is his sons. Jimmy...

Jim: Yeah, he's the most aged of all teams.

Ernest: He's the one that just walked in there with the... Jimmy's a top player. If he's not suspended again.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: And Jimmy is quite a ball player. He was just finished when we were starting. I used to watch them play when I was a kid.

Jim: Yeah, I played a lot. How I got started, when we lived in Cutler, we used to go to the ball diamond on Sunday and watch a game. And I used to sit there and watch every move they'd do out there. The pitchers, the catchers. I remember one old guy over there. Well, he might not be living. Maybe he's dead now. (Ojibway) He used to have a bow leg, a lefthanded pitcher. They say he was pretty good. I can still see him over there standing on the mound with his left leg a little bowlegged. And he was pretty good. If you got off the base, that first base over there a little bit, soon as he moved his hand the ball would be right over. Then they got you. Lots of times, he was pretty quick.

And then when I used to play outside at our home, I used to play alone. Like an imaginary... I'd get a small board, get a few stones. I put a base over there, another one over there and then I'd throw up a stone and bat it. So I started running, slide into that base over there. Just...

Tony: All on your own?

Jim: On my own, alone. Just like I seen them doing it over there last Sunday. Sometimes I'd jump over there and run back and slide into that base. Sometimes I was out. And sometimes I was safe. (chuckles) Sometimes I'd make a home run. Knock this little stone way out and then I'd take my round them bases. And then slide into the home plate. I always had a rag ball, my own making. Then once I got big enough, played ball. Well, I played ball ever since I can remember. Here,
every Sunday out on the ball mound, every night even. So that was what I was telling the boys here. They've been losing a game here and there this winter. Sometimes they'd be here. I tell them about that. You got to have practice. I think they did lose two or three times this winter.

Ernest: Yeah. I know when we were playing too, after his generation, we'd be there every night.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: If there was nothing to do, we'd be there in the morning.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: And then sometimes in the afternoon. Well, after dinner, okay let's go over again. Then at night. Three times a day. So you're bound to get pretty good if you play. And by the way too, I'd like to go to Sudbury sometime. If I could pinpoint the date, the time we went to Sudbury.

Jim: Oh, yeah.

Ernest: We won the championship there in 1946. So the commercial travellers - there is a traveller here interested in baseball so they arranged it. The traveller's association, they sponsored us. They sent a chartered bus here to pick us up and we played the Sudbury Shamrocks, the top team. When that was in it's heyday. A lot of imports. We were even scared to play them because it was from all over Canada. Americans, too, came in there. And that was the first year they installed lights, that year in Sudbury. Queen's Athletic Field. Oh, there was a lot of advertising. "See the Redmen Scalp the Irish," it says.

(all laugh)

Ernest: Oh, it was heavy advertising, big crowd there. And I remember Jim played first base for us. It was a great big full page, almost two pages, the cover of the next day. And I wish I had those.

Tony: And you beat them?

Ernest: No, they beat us, but not too bad though.

Jim: It was pretty good. Five-three I think the score was.

Ernest: Yeah, they were the top team. They won that year. I just got a write up, that man, the manager, there was a write-up. He was honored as one of the most famous in Canada as far as sports. He was named to the Boxing Hall of Fame. He was a promoter and he promoted this team. And he said in all his life his greatest thrill was when the Shamrocks won the championship, the Nickel Belt. And that's the year we played
them. We played the very best team. And we come in, we laughed. They were in field practice and the way they were snapping that ball around. And one of the guys said, we were walking in, "We'll probably be in the field all night." But we didn't do too bad considering we were bush league, you know. And I think we only got three hits and Jimmy got two, Jim got two of them. If I could pinpoint that date I'd like that just for reserve history. From the Sudbury....

Tony: You could go back through their files.

Ernest: Yeah, but I know, was it in July or August?

Jim: I think it was in August.

Ernest: So if I can pinpoint this. It was in 1947.

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: That would be easy enough to find.

Ernest: I knew most of those players, too. Some of them, quite a few have died, the Shamrocks.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: The left fielder, he died. The short stop died, Hadeau, Harry Hadeau. He just died this last summer. And a lot of those guys were great athletes. So that was quite a thing.

Jim: That was the first time we played under the lights.

Ernest: Under the lights.

Jim: And then if it was in daytime, I think it would have been....

Ernest: Yeah, I think we'd have done better in the daytime. Because that was strange. And we had never played with a mound either.

Jim: No.

Ernest: They had the mound, you know. It looked like the pitcher was standing up on a mountain, on a hill.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: I never forget that. That was quite a trip. And we weren't allowed to drink then. So it was all arranged. The city police were told. They brought beer into our dressing room. We weren't supposed to have it but they were standing outside, the city police, to kind of watch that nobody saw what was happening. That's how crazy things were. And the Shamrock
players came into the dressing room.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: To come and mix, shake hands and kidding around. That was quite an event in our lives then.

(Break in tape)

Tony: Do you want to tell us about this game in Cutler?

Jim: Yeah, it was, I don't know what time of the summer it was. Anyway, my dad used to come in at dinnertime talking about this big game coming up. The Gore Bay team, Frank Debassigae was going to be in it and so was Dan, the Cutler team. That's where he...

Tony: What year was that?

Jim: Oh, that must have been....

Ernest: In the twenties anyway.

Jim: 1922, somewhere's around there. 1922, it could have been 1923 or 1921. They'd come across on a boat to Cutler. And at the dock over there, you'd have to go through a tunnel like a tramway up on top there. And this road goes out and then you come out to the store, the town like, in Cutler. The boarding house and everything there, the stores. So this here Cutler outfit, they put a sign up there. They had a picture of a skunk; they were going to skunk this team from Gore Bay. So they went through there. But there was another pitcher, what's his name?

Ernest: (Ojibway)

Jim: Alec Thicks. So he started for Cutler. Maybe about two innings, I think. And that's where the Gore Bay got their two runs.

Ernest: Oh, they got two runs.

Jim: They got two runs off him. And then they...

Ernest: Put Dan in.

Jim: Put Dan in. Then Gore Bay never...

Tony: Put who in?

Ernest: Dan Pine.

Jim: Gore Bay never, yeah Danny, Daniel.

Tony: Dan Pine?
Jim: Dan Pine.

Ernest: Yeah, he didn't start the game. He...

Jim: And they never got no runs.

Ernest: Once Dan come in, there was no...

Jim: Once Dan came in there, they never got no more. Well, maybe one guy got to first base but that's as far as he went. And then Cutler made one run and that's all they got. So the score was two for Gore Bay and one for Cutler. Frank, he started and finished.

Tony: Frank Debassigae?

Jim: Yeah, Frank Debassigae.

Tony: The team at Cutler, where did they come from? Who were they?

Jim: Well, it was Cutler. They didn't, well they might have got one from Blind River. And they must have got one from, like Massey.

Ernest: One from that, that Indian that caught Dan Pine was Lapointe from the States.

Jim: Oh, yeah.

Ernest: Drummond. I met him after. I got a story, a fascinating story to tell you about.

Jim: But the rest was all Cutler, like.

Ernest: What there used to be years ago was, there wasn't so much as organized leagues, they were challenge games between towns. I read that that happened in the States, too. Where this company would try to beat a community and they'd hire players to bring them in.

Tony: That would be where you had a company town.

Ernest: Yeah, they'd give them jobs. Well, they were pros a lot of them, semi-pros. They'd be hired to beat this town. And that's what they did. And they should have won. Cutler, I guess, had a lot of good players, eh?

Jim: (Inaudible) Yeah, there were three brothers. Yeah, George, he was the catcher. Frank, he was the centre fielder, that's another (inaudible). Alec, well he was a pitcher, too.

Ernest: My dad was telling me, my dad was there.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: He said he saw the catcher, they call him (Ojibway),
like a black man. But he was Indian, dark Indian.

Jim: Yeah, very dark Indian.

Ernest: Yeah, and my dad says that's the greatest catcher that he ever saw. The one that handled Dan. So years later, I had a cousin that almost died in a car accident in the Sault (Sault Ste. Marie), Stella. (Ojibway).

Jim: Oh.

Ernest: She was the only one that survived the crash. So my uncle Angus and Margaret, they asked me to go with them and Charlie to bring the body back. They wanted me to go with them for moral support, my cousin. So we went over there, over across the mission, Plummer? Memorial and I remember looking at it. We went in there. She was in, like a crib thing, all wired up with this and that. She just stared, I guess she didn't.... The nurse told us to go in the waiting room and the doctor wanted to speak to us. They thought for sure she was going to die, you know. I can't explain it but her life signs are.... "She's going to be alright." So my uncle was really happy. And Charlie too, because you know how Charlie is. He didn't want the idea of bringing a body back. (chuckles)

So, "Let's celebrate a little. Let's have a drink." So we went in a bar in Sault, Michigan. And my Aunt Mary is there, Mary Roy. And she's sitting with an old man, white-haired man, dark Indian. All dressed up, well-dressed, top coat. I think this was in the fall, kind of chilly. So we all sit down and Mary introduced us to him. And when he mentioned my name, Debassigae, first thing he asked me, "How's Frank Debassigae?"

"Oh, he's fine." He says, "He was one of the greatest pitchers I ever saw," he says. "I played against him." And I said, "That's the catcher, that's the guy." And he was on his way, this John Lapointe... I don't know if he'd be living today. I wish I could see him. If he was, he would be very old. He was on his way to Jim Thorpe's funeral. You've heard of Jim Thorpe?

Christine and Tony: Yeah.

Ernest: To Talahoma I think, Oklahoma. And he said he went to school with him because being on the American side, Drummond Island, he went to school in Carlyle. And he said he played with him in the summer league, you know, with Jim Thorpe in the summer. That's when he lost his medals. And he said, "I played with Jim Thorpe." So I mentioned to him, "My dad saw you. He says you were the greatest catcher he ever saw." And he laughed, he says that's the only time he ever caught in his life. "I was an outfielder," he says. "I played pro ball," he said, "with Jim Thorpe." But that's just how great an athlete he was. He could just step in and handle them. "I'm not a catcher, I wasn't a catcher," he said. But he was that great an athlete. But he was on his way to Jim Thorpe's funeral. There was a chance for me to ask them all about Jim Thorpe.
because they were very close. They played together professionally, semi-pro in the south. But his sons would be on Drummond, you know, his family. And maybe, there would be pictures maybe. But that's a follow up to that. I remember I took... I brought that picture in to the Expositor. They were doing human interest stories and old stories. I said, "Why don't you do a story." So we went over there and told. She didn't write very much but he was a great.

And later on, he was very modest, Frank. He never mentioned very much. And I didn't know that he had played in that Nickel Belt league. He never mentioned it. Dan told me. I said, "Dan, when you played in the Nickel Belt for Espanola, how many pitchers did you have?" "Well, there was just three of us. Me and Frank." "Which Frank?" "Frank Debassigae. Him and I pitched in Espanola in the Nickel Belt." Frank never told me that, that he played in the Nickel Belt. And they honored him here last summer at the elder's conference. Everybody went to that Birch Island hall. They had that jig, stepdance contest and all that.

Those Fielding brothers. You've heard of the Fielding brothers in Sudbury. They were all athletes, mostly in boxing. And they've gotten very rich. And somehow they followed Dan Pine's career and they're very close friends, him and Carmen Fielding. They own pretty near everything in Sudbury. Millionaires, big directors of CPR, that's how big they are. They're very close friends of Dan Pine and Dan told me that Carmen Fielding had a dinner about twelve years ago for old timers, Nickel Belt. He says they went over to the banquet and they presented Dan Pine with a Blue Jay uniform and an autographed ball from the Blue Jays. The Blue Jays sent him a complete uniform. And we made him put it on, put the sweater on and the cap and had his picture taken. And we got one of his old teammates from Espanola, a French guy, he was the short stop. Oh, you know, it was quite a sentimental.... And one of Canada's greatest women athletes, she came there and she gave a talk. She described the game. She got on the microphone and she started off like she was reciting a, "This is Dominion Day, July 1, Copper Cliff. And it's Espanola coming in to play Copper Cliff." And Copper Cliff was one of the finest teams in Ontario and she mentioned all the players. They were all pretty near in the district hall of fame athletes. And she says, "So and so come up to bat. McLaughlin, that's out. Just three pitches, Dan Pine. Flynn, the greatest player in Ontario, just strike, all three walked off." Nobody could touch Pine, you know. Cliff Fielding got up and he says, "I used to walk four miles," he told the crowd. "Espanola were the most hated rivals," he says. But he says, "I didn't come to see Espanola. I really didn't come to see a ball game. I came to see Dan Pine." God, that was a lot of feelings felt. Last summer if you'd have... I wish somebody would have taped that program, gone with him.

Tony: John Lapointe.
Ernest: John Lapointe from Drummond Island, Michigan.

Tony: John or Jean?

Ernest: John. Just John. I used to drink with a fellow in San Francisco. His name was Jean Ramirez. "Hey John," I said. "No, Juan."

Tony: Juan Manudo.

Ernest: (chuckles) Yeah, Juan Manudo.

Tony: So you played ball and raised a big family, eh?

Jim: Well...

Tony: In between cutting pulp, you had a pretty busy time.

Jim: Oh yes, yeah.

Ernest: He was also a great skater but there was no hockey played then.

Jim: Yeah, I used to skate quite a little bit, too.

Ernest: I saw him. Out here sometimes that bay would be like glass and I used to see, just free skating. You just tied the blade onto your shoes with ropes.

Jim: Yeah, I used to just tie my skates.

Ernest: I don't know what they could have done with real skates. And I remember just the things they could do on those skates. And fast. Israel, I remember Israel. And you, your brother Johnny.

Jim: Yeah, Johnny.

Ernest: And Jim Migwans.

Jim: Jim Migwans, Jim Beesow.

Ernest: Jimmy Renebawon. God, they were great skaters but there was no hockey then. Just free skating.

Christine: Was this out on the bay?

Ernest: Yeah, out on the bay. Sometimes it would be like glass there.

Tony: When did they start playing hockey here?

Ernest: Oh, just before the war, eh? Just, you know who brought...

Jim: About ten years now. Yeah, just after the war.
Ernest: I think pretty well who brought hockey there, I remember when Lawrence and Maywos starting coming home from Spanish and they brought us. We didn't know how. We didn't know anything about it.

Christine: What was in Spanish? From the school there?

Ernest: That's that residential school.

Christine: Oh.

Ernest: They had great hockey teams there. They were so good. Finally there after the war when Joe, our chief, was going there. The juvenile league on the north shore of Blind River, Espanola quit playing them. They were just considered too good. So I remember the year Joe played there. The priest entered the Sudbury district juvenile which is the breeding ground for national hockey, these players. And they took it. They won. Joe was playing, our chief was playing defense. Alfie Morrison was picked by the Blackhawks and, I don't know, I guess he didn't make it. He played Junior A for a little while. Bernie Jacobs, remember Bernie Jacobs?

Jim: Yes, I remember that guy.

Ernest: All those guys. Leslie Day. They went on for the Northern Ontario championships and I went to see them in Espanola. But those guys were huge, holy name. They were pretty near the perennial Ontario champs. But to get that far against that type of.... I remember I was broke that time. I think I only had five dollars or six dollars and we didn't have much to eat. My wife told me to go and get a chicken, "We'll make some chicken soup." I went to Iver's and they were just loading on. Ivan had a little van, "We're going to watch the game." I didn't know about it. The Espanola-Spanish game. And Ida was there, Pattie. They were all for hockey then because Joe was playing. "Come on!" "Okay," so I jumped in. And I spent all that money. I was afraid to come home. (all chuckle)

Tony: No chicken.

Ernest: No chicken. (chuckles) I often think that that Spanish team, if they had professional coach hired, I don't know what they could have done with those boys. But what happened, those priests just took turns coaching them. And they didn't know anything about hockey. And it made them look good. The only fact was they were good, they were residents and they lived there and they lived on that ice and they knew one another. But if they'd had a coach, a real coach, I think there'd have been a lot of.... The priests were just living off those accomplishments of those kids. When we played in Wikki (Wikwemikong), we had Father Rushmond as a coach. And he didn't know anything about hockey. But we made him look good. We just got to know, we'd been playing together.
Sometimes they asked us to coach here. "Why don't you coach?" How do I know, nobody coached me. Nobody coached me. And I often think of that, if that school had hired a real coach. They came here, I'll never forget. Providence Bay, they formed an intermediate league, one notch below senior. So they thought they'd make some money and they thought they were pretty good. Those McDermott boys and so.... Did you go there the first time Spanish...?  

Jim: Yeah, I must have been there.

Ernest: And they were pretty famous. The island people here always heard that Spanish school. And they came and I went with my uncle Angus and we had a few drinks before we left so we were late. We got to the game, the place was packed. And we got in and Providence Bay was all around the Spanish net, you know. Spanish couldn't do nothing, they were losing the puck, just messing up. So I asked somebody, "What's the score?" "Five nothing." "For who? Providence Bay?" "No, Spanish." They say as soon as the puck was dropped they just bang, bang, six goals. And so the priest told them to take it easy, so they were fooling around.

(All chuckle)

Ernest: And my ear was bleeding. I come into the game, I had my hands in my pockets and I had those big steel toe rubber boots. They caught between the steps and I went down. My uncle was just opening the door and I whacked my head on the... and cut my ear. (chuckles) Blood all over. So I watched those kids down the (inaudible) and they were just flying, three abreast. They'd shoot, they'd miss the puck, they'd miss the net, they'd shoot up on the screen and wheel about and just let it go and skate back, let Providence Bay pick it up. That's how good they were. They just...

Tony: They just played with them.

Ernest: Seventeen to one or something. They could have put thirty, they could have put forty. That's how good they were. And we played them that same, no, that was another time. They made two trips. We played them in Wikki (Wikwemikong) and the Killarney guys went there. Maxi wasn't there so the only senior players there were me and Francis and Pius. All the rest we just had to pick up from the reserve there. Adam was playing for them. And those guys beat us by that same score, those kids, kids. Sixteen, seventeen something.

Tony: This was the team from Spanish?

Ernest: Yeah, we couldn't do nothing with them. Finally Francis says, "Let's try and play defense." And we couldn't do anything because the guys up there couldn't stop them. And we had that Johnny Pete playing goal. Johnny Weetock and a funny character. And he was no good. What he'd do, he'd go down on
his knees. These guys were coming and then he closed his eyes. And the kids knew he had his eyes closed so they'd go around him and put the puck because he had his eyes closed.

(all chuckle)

Tony: Just poke it in. That's pretty funny.

Ernest: And then after the second period he takes his sweater off and he takes that big body protector and he heaves it on the floor. Then Francis asks him, "Hey Johnny, are you quitting?" "No," he says, "this thing is bothering me. I never wear anything like that when I'm cutting pulp wood," he says. (all chuckle) So he goes out there and right away the kids knew he didn't have a...

Tony: Protector on.

Ernest: Protector, because he looked slim. So you know what those kids were doing? They were flipping it and hitting his chest. (chuckles) And we skate back, we're playing defense, they'd just go by us and he'd turn around and he'd be digging that puck out of the net real slow. And he says - in Indian we call a hockey net the same name as a fish net - "Oh," he says to me, in front as he dinged the puck up, "Is my net ever good. I'm really catching a lot of fish," he says.

(all laugh)

Ernest: He couldn't stop it. Yeah, and it was funny. They were just instituting a high school course there in Spanish, the last few years. And two boys got degrees. That Basil got a pre-law degree.

Tony: Who?

Ernest: Basil Johnston.

Tony: Basil Johnston?

Ernest: Yeah, and I think he flunked in Osgood. So then he became a con-artist. (chuckles)

Tony: I'm going to play this tape back to him when he gets to Toronto.

Ernest: (chuckles) Sometimes he comes out looking for me, too. So Alfie Cooper is a doctor up in Timmins. And all of a sudden they closed that school up. So I brought that up at the Union of Ontario meeting, the originator says because our kids are starting to get smart, are getting educated, they closed the school. Closed it because they were learning too quick. Well, you can see the problem they're having, the first ministers, with these people sitting across the table from them talking in their language. And they're having a hard time. What if they had educated these people fifty years ago? You could see
Tony: Why they didn't.

Ernest: Yeah. If these people, if these warriors could fight so hard and fight so intelligently, they'd be a terror if they were educated. That's probably the...

Tony: Yeah.

Ernest: And probably their minds were much better then. They were alert. Probably more alert. This booze and this easy living has dulled our wits. (chuckles)

Tony: Too much manudos.

Ernest: Too much manudo. I think that's what I'm going to do. If I want a girl, I'll make some manudo and put that trillium bulb inside there. Mix it. (chuckles)

Tony: Better make sure the right girl gets it.

Ernest: Yeah. (chuckles) I remember my Aunt Mary, you know how heavily she believed in this witchcraft. (Ojibway), my aunt.

Jim: Oh, yeah.

Ernest: Well, you know how she talked about this old lady. (Ojibway)

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: Bear Walker.

Ernest: Yeah. Oh, my aunt, oh she really believed in that strong. And she mentioned, she says she was dangerous.

Christine: Is there still much of that going on now?

Ernest: A lot of people would say, like my dad, "Oh, that's no good." Like the priest would say you got to forget all this. But my dad would say, (Ojibway) "I don't believe it." But yet that old lady (Ojibway).

Jim: Oh, yeah.

Ernest: She used to come in the house and people would say she was a witch. And she'd say, "David, give me a match or I'll do something to you." And the old man would rush about. He was scared. He's telling us, "Don't believe in that." Yet, he was afraid of it. He was that generation that wasn't sure. And I myself, well I'm supposed to be the generation that's supposed to be the enlightened generation. Completely civilized. But I don't know what to think when I listen to Jim and I listen to other people that are perfectly sane. And then when I think of
what we're taught by the church, that this priests, what they call transubstantiation. That you can change the bread into the body and blood of Christ. That's his actual body. Am I supposed to believe that? And then, they teach us in the church that our saints perform miracles. So did our holy men. They tell us our holy men, our medicine men perform strange things. How come is it that only white men can do that?

Tony: Yeah.

Ernest: So, if they expect us to believe that their holy men can do such things. Well, why don't they believe that our people could do such things? I think the power of belief can do some strange and unexplained things.

And it's just like Alfred was telling me, when Joe Pelletier used to have this powwow and know some Indian songs. He says he'd sing in Indian for these tourists coming around. And these old, very old Indians in Wikki (Wikwemikong) (Ojibway). "He doesn't know very much. He doesn't know that song. One song especially, he doesn't know that." And Alfred has the name for that song. That's the song the warriors sang so he wouldn't get hit by a bullet. (chuckles) "He doesn't know that, he doesn't know anything. He's supposed to know that," the old people would say.

Jim: Well, I don't know if there's any of that around now. I don't know of anybody that would...

Ernest: Yeah, if there is anybody.

Jim: A Bear Walker.

Ernest: What did you think of John Paul? Was he just using this?

Jim: Well, it was hard to believe and...

Ernest: And they have always said that of people like that anyway. Some will believe him and some won't.

Jim: Yes.

Ernest: The same with Christ.

Tony: John Paul, I've heard of him. He was a medicine man?

Ernest: Yeah. Some people said he was a phony and just trying to make money out of it. But they have said that of all of them. They even said that of Black Elk among his people. See. There are always people trying to put down somebody.

Tony: I might have met that John Paul.

Ernest: Yeah.

Tony: Because I knew Tommy Pelletier that had that Manitou
Arts Foundation and I think that he was always hanging around with him.

Ernest: Oh.

Tony: Quite a bit.

Ernest: I know there is another fellow that just used that to fool people. (Ojibway)

Jim: Oh, yeah. He was a phony guy.

Ernest: Yeah, he was a phony.

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: Who was that?

Jim: Jacob.

Ernest: Assinewe.

(Ojibway)

(End of Side A)

(Side B)

Ernest: And the old David Fox and his sons, they're all heavy drinkers. And oh, they were happy to see people from Wikki (Wikwemikong) you know. They, oh, "We'll have a big party." So they went down, "We'll go and get some booze. Get some drinks." Whiskey or wine, whatever. So they went down. I guess while they were downtown they thought they'd just go in a hotel and have a drink. And they got stuck there instead of going and just bringing the stuff back and they never come back. And Joe is just waiting there, nobody to visit him. That's why he came there but these guys went out and got drunk. So the old lady, Dave's wife says to Joe, "I'm sorry Joe. These guys should be ashamed of themselves. They're supposed to get something for you, you know, have a party here. Here they're out celebrating by themselves. They're celebrating your visit but they're celebrating out there, not here." Oh, Joe Jocko says, "No, that's all right, that's fine. You know that happens in Wikki (Wikwemikong). The Bishop comes every four years. Everybody waits for four years, and everybody makes moonshine. And everybody gets drunk because the Bishop is coming but nobody ever offers him any moonshine."

(all laugh)

Ernest: "So let them have fun," he says. "As long as..."

(End of Side B)

(End of Interview)
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